



MAGPIE

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See and be seen

If you're looking for the places to go and people to be seen with, these would be our top picks right now ...

Seymour's Parlour at The Zetter Townhouse

28-30 Seymour Street, London W1H 7JB

Long time Zetter Group collaborator Tony Conigliaro is set to transform the cocktail bar at the soon-to-arrive Marylebone-based Zetter Townhouse into something resembling a regency style parlour. One of the most anticipated openings of the year, guests can expect equine surroundings and extinct recipes revamped. Opening dates are still TBC.

Ceviche, Old Street Bar

2 Baldwin Street, London EC1V 9NU

Pioneers of the Peruvian food scene, Ceviche, are set to open a 60 cover Pisco bar behind the main restaurant. Classic cocktails will be given a South American twist as their own brand of fusion cuisine is distilled in the cocktail menu – with standard spirits giving way to the Peruvian national drink creating new flavours you'd happily cross the Andes for. From March 2015.

Social Wine

39 James Street, London W1U 1EB

Ex-Gordon Ramsay general Jason Atherton is turning his hand to London's revitalised love of the 1980s wine bar with the launch of his latest venture. With rumours swirling as to what format it will take, the general consensus is posh plonk, small plates and a shop. Slated to open its doors to the general public in Spring 2015.

Biblioteka

12 St James's Street, St James's, London SW1A 1ER

Biblioteka is from the folk behind Bob Bob Ricard and will blow the budgets of many a Londoner when it opens later in 2015 in St James. With a dedicated champagne bar behind the enormous 250 cover restaurant serving British and Russian food with fine wines, vintage Champagne or rare spirits dating back to the 1800s. Only oligarchs need apply. Date TBC.



App-spiration

Whether you'll respond better to a carrot or to a stick, there's an app out there that promises a better you.

Self-improvement is no longer a topic confined to a list of resolutions at the beginning of each year; and the increasing advocacy of everyday app tracking means that setting, monitoring and achieving life goals is (technically) easier than ever before.

However, although apps certainly help make self-improvement more attainable, they often can't translate our impulse to improve into the action to get up and go.

We're seeing brands embracing the classic "carrot" approach – incentivising change with personalised rewards and discounts to help consumers achieve their goals.

And for those who require a little bit of tough loving, bullying apps tapping into a dose of "stick" are on the rise too ...



Carrot Hunger prides itself on being your judgemental calorie counter. Using threats of social media shaming, penalty fines and the odd bit of nasty name-calling, this tough-talking app has been downloaded over a million times by people hoping to shed the pounds.
meetcarrot.com/hunger



Foodtweeks pairs with local food banks to offer charitable slimmers in the US the ultimate motivation to cut their calories: converting successful diet days into meals for struggling local families. All users need to do is follow tips to reduce a meal's calorie content in order to donate the equivalent amount to someone in need in their own community. foodtweeks.com

Scraping by

Scrapers are, on the one hand, low-budget bike customisers and, on the other, a social movement waiting to happen.

A “movement” started as far back as 2011 by one Tyrone “Baybe Champ Da Scraper Bike King” Stevenson in Oakland, California, Scraper bikes are going to tip.

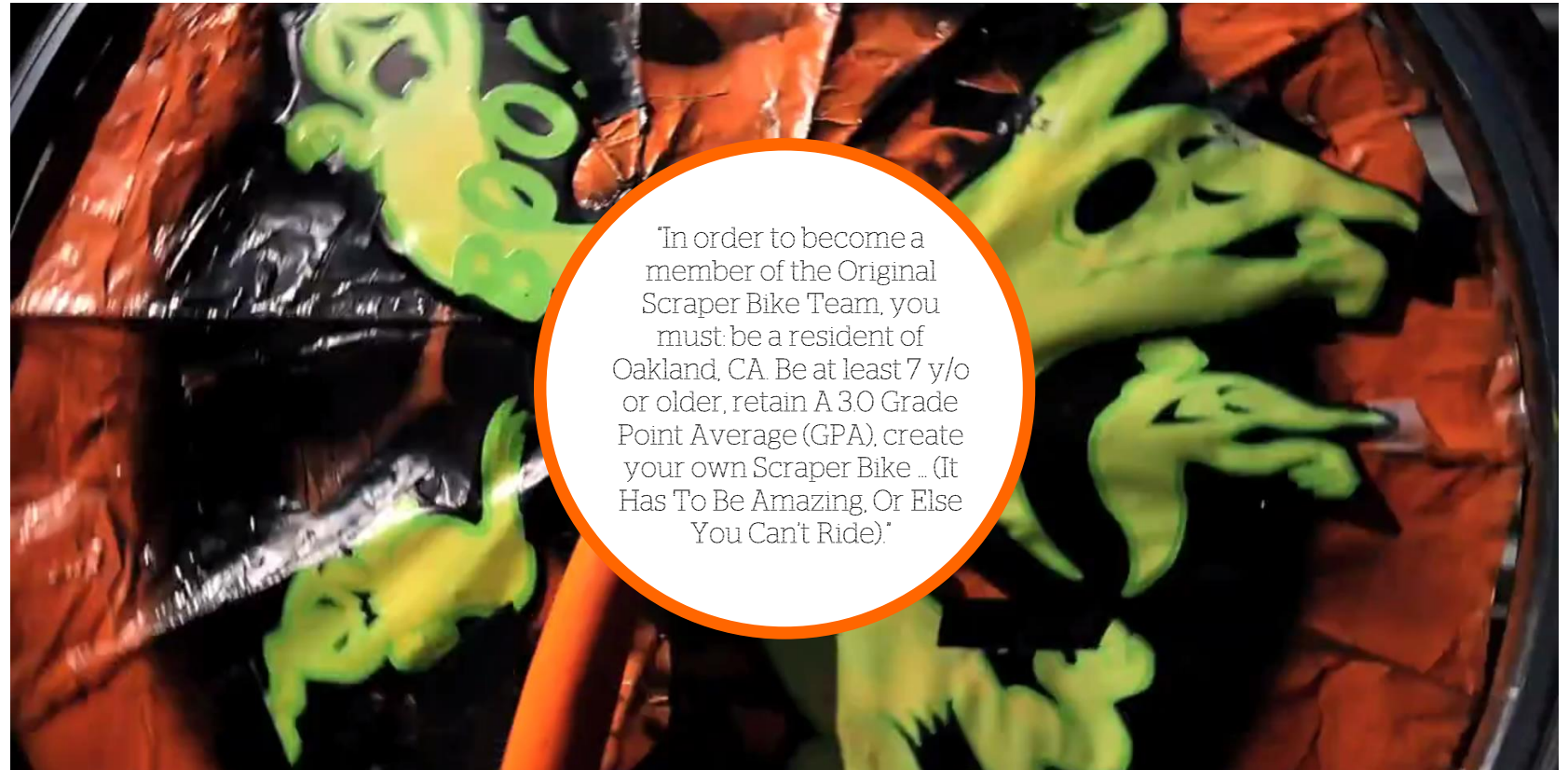
You mark our words.

Scraping means to customise a bicycle in the scraper style. That might include spray painting the frame and embellishing the spokes of the bicycle wheels using duct tape, aluminium foil and candy wrappers.

But the movement has a deeper purpose than that – keeping kids off the streets, keeping kids in school and, in a unique way, making the world a better place.

From its origins in California, our bet is that Scraper bikes is a movement ready to go global. The only question that remains is: who’s going to be first in to support it while retaining its organic nature?

vimeo.com/9702393



In order to become a member of the Original Scraper Bike Team, you must be a resident of Oakland, CA. Be at least 7 y/o or older, retain A 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA), create your own Scraper Bike ... (It Has To Be Amazing. Or Else You Can't Ride).'

Instant expertise

The shift from the value placed in material possessions to experiences and skills has been embraced by brands.

With social media kudos becoming increasingly more valued than a designer wardrobe, it's apparent that the quality of our lives is judged less by the things we own and more by the things we do.

The shift from status symbols to status skills means time-poor consumers are increasingly searching for products and services to help them achieve top level results without the ground work.

In the same way Instagram spawned an army of amateur photographers, we're seeing brands tap into our desire for professional results at the push of a button. Long live the life-hacks that offer us instant experiences!



SeedSheet is designed to offer would-be growers fool proof planting.

Initially, an online service matches users to ideal plant specimens based on their location and enables them to digitally plan their outdoor space. Once the area has been mapped, a bespoke "SeedSheet," embedded with seeds, can be rolled out over the area. All the amateur allotment keeper needs do is add water and enjoy the produce once it's grown!

Find it on Kickstarter, where it is fully-funded.



Coc is a new countertop cooking device that you can control with your smartphone.

Promising to ensure that even the most complicated of recipes is perfectly cooked, this high-tech kitchen aid uses a number of recipe-specific cooking programmes to help even the most amateur cook achieve chef-standard results.

The sensor-equipped device connects to an accompanying app which can be controlled from anywhere via Wi-Fi. impelstudio.com/cooc

Wearables become ... wearable

Many in the tech and fashion industries have worried that wearables need to become more desirable to take off. And now, that's starting to happen ...

Wearable technology has undeniably taken off in a big way, and the next step in the evolution of this phenomenon is set to be customisation.

Several well-known and respected designers have already thrown their hat into the ring when it comes to creating the perfect blend of fashion and function, including Lauren Bowker, Liz Bacelar and Michael Bastion.



Headress by fashion company "The Unseen" made of brain activity Swarovski gemstones grown in a lab which light up as you think.



Ringly, a line of "connected" rings which sync to your smartphone to alert you to key notifications.

We Soju, do you?

The drink of the season could well turn out to be Korean tippie, Soju. Head East to discover more ...

As the UK remains enamoured by the allure of all things Eastern, the appeal of Korean cuisine looks set to remain very much of the moment in 2015, bringing with it Soju.

Massive in Korea, this low ABV booze doesn't really taste of much - mainly because its made from fermented rice or sweet potatoes - but is a big favourite in its native land, with the likes of Jinro selling more than any other spirit worldwide.

Combined with the other burgeoning drinks trend of 2015 – tea cocktails – this Eastern delight will be making its way into many a menu on the London bar scene, combined with suitably spicy, sour and citrus flavours often found in Korean gastronomy.



Art for social good

The medium of art is increasingly being used to illustrate – and bring to life – social problems, alongside the needs of various charities.

The now well-established Crisis Commission and more recent exhibition of the highs and lows of belonging to a family with disabled children for Contact A Family – a charity backed by Samantha Cameron – are just two examples of this trend, which looks to use people's love of great art to engage their charitable nature.



Image from Contact A Family's "Pictures From Home" exhibition, which follows two families living with disabled children.



Crisis exhibition by contemporary artists to highlight issues of homelessness.

Girl Power

Our Virgin Active campaign – Active Inspiration – was bang on-trend. Brands addressing the intersection of self-esteem and sport for women and girls is everywhere all of a sudden.

The quest for female equality continues in full force, however we're seeing it expand beyond the fight for equality and into the realm of "real women".

Campaigns are upping the ante by challenging perceptions of womanhood in the modern world, reinstating the message that girls can do everything boys can and celebrating the differences that make women unique.



#LikeAGirl has attracted more than 80 million views. Hoping to empower adolescent girls by breaking down the negative connotations around doing something 'like a girl', the campaign gained massive exposure as part of the Super Bowl adverts and was heralded as a big high five for girl power across the globe.



The empowering This Girl Can campaign has attracted a lot of attention and for good reason. Aiming to inspire and empower women to take part in sport whilst addressing the huge disparity between male and female participation in the UK, the tongue-in-cheek viral campaign celebrates the jiggles and wobbles, rather than masking them.

Art meets interactivity

Gone are the days when art was purely about appreciating great work from afar.

The “look, but don’t touch” mentality has been completely reversed by modern artists who are actively encouraging people to physically interact with their work.

The approach blurs the line between the artist and the art-viewer and is proving to be very popular, if the success of the Marina Abramovic installation 512 hours and Martin Creed’s infamous “Half the air in a given space” room of white balloons are anything to go by.



Two guests play in Martin Creed’s “Half the air in a given space” exhibit at the Southbank Centre.



Marina Abramovic “512 hours” installation at the Serpentine Gallery, which saw her interact with her visitors in unexpected ways.

One to watch: Jaroslav Wiczorkiewicz

When an artist is creating fashion from milk of all things, you've got to foresee a bright future.



Artist Jaroslav Wiczorkiewicz creates unique photos by making “garments” from milk. Milk is thrown at the models and is captured using three different cameras. The images are then layered on top of each other to create the “dresses” seen in the photographs. Following his pin-up calendar in 2014, he returned in 2015 with a superhero-themed effort dubbed “Splash Heroes”.



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