**BURNING QUESTION**

By Heidi Mitchell

Can Soda Soothe Your Stomach?

**MANY PEOPLE** who grew up in the 40s and 50s had a quick remedy for an upset stomach: a few sips of soda. Those little bottles and box of sugar were said to soothe the quassy feeling that comes with eating a massive meal or not-too-fresh fish. Is there any science to back up this age-old remedy? One expert, Dr. Gutierrez, a gastroenterologist at Washington University in St. Louis, explains how the fizzy drink feels good and the historic significance of the cola bean.

Check

According to Dr. Gutierrez, the stomach lining has a high sensitivity to irritants, such as alcohol, coffee, and spicy foods. A high in fat and sugar also decreases mobility, further enhancing the effects of these irritants. The body will react by secreting more acid, leading to discomfort and pain.

To soothe the stomach, Dr. Gutierrez recommends drinking a glass of water or a mild antacid. Avoiding caffeine and alcohol can also help.

**THE OLYMPICS OF THE ART WORLD**

The Venice Biennale is steering clear of politics this year and exploring light themes.

**BY KELLY CROW**

The Venice Biennale is trying to lighten up. Organizers of the century-old exhibition of contemporary art, which opens to the public May 13, have toned down the political aspects of the show, focusing instead on playful, colorful, and whimsical installations.

The exhibition, titled "The Venice Biennale: A Celebration of Light in the Art World," features works by 120 artists from around the world, including Venice-based artists such as Tino Seurat, who created a large, colorful mural on the walls of the main exhibition hall.

**THE CITY OF VENICE**

Venice is known for its unique architecture and culture, and this year's biennale is no exception. The city is filled with beautiful Venetian palaces, gondolas, and canals, providing a perfect backdrop for the art exhibit.

**OFF TO THE SIDE**

On the outskirts of Venice, the city's famous islands of Murano and Burano are also worth a visit. Murano is known for its glassblowing industry, while Burano is famous for its colorful houses and lace-making traditions.

**NOTES**

- The Venice Biennale is one of the oldest and most prestigious art events in the world, attracting artists and art lovers from around the globe.
- This year's biennale is the first to be held under the leadership of British curatorugs, including Tino Seurat, who created a large, colorful mural on the walls of the main exhibition hall.
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**HEALTH**

**REE THERAPY? ‘FOREST BATHERS’ SAY IT HELPS**

"Lake Valley," left, is an example of work by Rachel Rose, whose work will appear at the Venice Biennale. "The Mountains," below, by Mustafa Feri, also will be exhibited at the biennale.

from the world's largest salt flat in Bolivia's Andes mountains.

Another up-and-coming is Rachel Rose, a New York artist whose haunting video work from 2015, "Everything and More," was inspired by an interview with austrianc artist David Wojnarowicz. The two artists, who met at the biennale opening, are now working on a new project together.

"Lake Valley," left, is an example of work by Rachel Rose, whose work will appear at the Venice Biennale. "The Mountains," below, by Mustafa Feri, also will be exhibited at the biennale.

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Venice

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many in 1994 who now live in Italy and is known for transcending entire books and newspapers into a sketch script that's unreadable—a gesture that turns language into line. Her dealer Allison Jacques said Ms. Blank will show some of her earliest pieces from the late 1960s. Dan Gilliam, a Washington-based painter, is also making a return appearance 45 years after he became the second African-American artist to show in the biennial. This time, his dealer Kurt Mueller said Mr. Gilliam is making a "spectacular" new painting that nods to his earlier Color Field breakthroughs.

In addition to the main show, 85 nations are participating with their own shows around town, including first-timers Nigeria and the tiny Pacific island of Kiribati. Malta is back after a 17-year hiatus. Dozens of art foundations, museums and private collectors are also arranging separate exhibits citywide—a collective effort that is expected to draw 350,000 people to Venice over the next seven months, organizers say. Exhibitions run through Nov. 28.

The national pavilions will feature plenty of social criticism. Tunisia enlisted a German company known for making most of the world's encrypted security papers to design an imitation travel document. Curator Lisa Lezana said Tunisian migrants who had previously gone to Europe to secure their own visas to Italy tend to hand out 20,000 of these "messy" at klansy seaside. "Because of Venice, we were able to get them in," Ms. Lezana said.

James Lee Byars' 65-foot-tall "Golden Tower" structure will also go up along the Grand Canal near the Accademia museum; it was gilded by the Italian firm that gold-leafed Versailles, and Byars' dealer Gordon Veneklasen said, "It's meant to remind us that art can transform humanity." He says some other national highlights.

U.S.

Los Angeles artist Mark Bradford is already an established figure, but that doesn't mean he took a casual approach to representing the U.S.

"The significance of Venice rises up over you like Atlantis in the ocean," Mr. Bradford said. His response: "I started swimming." Pavilion curator Christopher Bedford said the artist, who is known for sanding and layering found paper into abstracts, "wrote himself out" for the occasion with new sculptures like "Spoiled Foot." This red, cellular blox will be suspended from the ceiling in a way that forces viewers to inch around it, an uneasy scenario that Mr. Bradford said matched his current sentiments about his country.

Canada

Canadian artist Geoffrey Farmer is known for attaching paper cutouts of people and places that fascinate him onto spindly wooden sticks and arranging the multitudes into a sort of splayed, visual encyclopaedia. But for Venice, he wanted to "shift to something new," so he teamed up with a Swiss foundation to help him turn the Canadian pavilion into a "fontain," he said. Mr. Farmer's new bronze sculptures still delve into dense histories: This time he reveals a traumatic secret involving his grandfather.

Poland

When Los Angeles-based artist Sharon Lockhart went to Poland eight years ago for a show, she fell hard for its people and has since traveled back nearly two dozen times to make films and mentor teenagers she befriended at a home for young women in Rudzianka called the Youth Center for Social Therapy. For Venice, she said she enlisted 47 girls from the center to comb through back issues of "Little Review," a popular children's weekly that ran in Poland in the 1930s and 1940s. The girls picked 29 issues to be translated into English, and Ms. Lockhart will distribute them: once a week, at the Polish pavilion. (She and the girls are writing and editing their own new issue of the "Little Review.")

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's artists are gaining major traction among collectors in Africa and beyond right now. They are holding a group show of works by modern master sculptor Sylvester Mubayi and young upstarts like architect Dana Whaitris and painter Charles Biehle and Admire Kamudzengeere. Mr. Kamudzengeere produced a series of expressive portraits printed on Harare phone book pages in a nod to the belief that people too often get reduced to numbers and statistics.

Egypt

Egyptian artist Mostafa Aarash has carted dirt and bricks from home to build an immersing backdrop for his latest multi-screen video installation, "The Mountain," which chronicles the day—and night—of a fictional Egyptian village. As the hours tick by, its residents appear to grow increasingly suspicious, but the reason seems unclear. His dealer Mario Cristiano said Mr. Aarash wanted to show "fear from a poetic point of view."

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