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# REGIONAL EDITION

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## UNITED KINGDOM | IRELAND

### Editorial

February marked the official month of celebrations for the Unione Ticinese on its 150<sup>th</sup> jubilee. Three days filled with meaningful events were organised with the aim of 'bridging' a temporal gap to connect the past and traditions with the present and future of the club.

Among the highlights, the visit to the cemetery with the laying of a wreath on the tomb of the founder Stefano Gatti, the exhibition of historical materials from the Ticinese club, and the presentation of young Ticinese artists and

talents in London. The gala evening at the Embassy hosted representatives from the Grand Council of Ticino, with greetings from Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis. As Hon. Filippo Lombardi remarked, the vitality of Swiss clubs and associations worldwide is a reminder that the expatriate community has to reconnect with its roots to keep its cultural identity alive in this ever-changing world. In this issue, you will also find interviews, in-depth articles, and updates from clubs, showcasing the vibrancy of the Swiss community in the UK.



GIOIA PALMIERI,  
«UK & IRELAND PAGES»

### Unione Ticinese's 150<sup>th</sup> Jubilee:

## Bridging past, present, and future in a celebratory homage

Last February, the Unione Ticinese (UT) has entered into the heart of its celebrations for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. 8<sup>th</sup> of February is indeed the UT's founding day. The first significant commemorative act took place in the Kensal Green Cemetery with the laying of a floral wreath on the

tombstone of UT founder *Stefano Gatti*, who 150 years ago established it as a benevolent society for Ticinese immigrants in London.

The visit to the cemetery was presided over by the club's president, *Emilie Martinoni*, members of the committee, and Ticinese authorities, the latter having come to

London to officiate the three days of events organized by the club for the jubilee. The visit, as emphasised by President Emilie, 'The emotions were high as we paid tribute to our roots and Stefano Gatti's vision that brought us all together. It aimed to be an official moment but also a personal expression of gratitude to the founder, without whose dedication we wouldn't be part of this history.'

Historical heritage was the common thread that accompanied the three days of events: 'For us in the UT committee, it is essential to underline that, on the occasion of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we wanted to build an imaginary bridge between the past and the future. A bridge that spans our present but rests on the shores of the past, on the tradition and history that preceded us, and projects onto the shores of the future. The future for us is our young members and the young Ticinese who have now landed in London to shape their destinies.'

CONTINUE PAGE 2...



Laying of a floral wreath on the tombstone of UT founder, Stefano Gatti.

...FROM PAGE 1

In celebration of the UT150 Jubilee, the event at the London Metropolitan Archive Museum on February 9<sup>th</sup> marked the inauguration of the imaginary bridge connecting the club's past and future. At the start of the event, an exhibition was presented which was curated by historian Peter Barber (OBE). The exhibition displayed all official documents, correspondence, photos, invitations, agendas, and notebooks that have been held by the society since its inception. The exhibition also included the very first register of members, open on the page of founder Stefano Gatti, as well as a notebook entry from choir leader Louis Bruni on their 'finest hour' performing at the Royal Festival Hall.

Mr. Barber introduced the work done and guided the attendees on a historical journey, revisiting the most important moments of the association. The floor went then to young Ticinese talents in the UK: Gianpaolo Simone, a versatile and award-winning graphic animation artist, showcased the behind-the-scenes of his works, while singer-songwriter Leti brought the afternoon to life with the performance of her songs. To conclude the event, actresses Nabila Dolfini and Martina Greenwood performed an excerpt,



Recreation of the 1903 UT banquet photograph during the gala soiree at the Embassy on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February.

translated into English, from the theatrical piece that won the 'New Theatrical Show' competition. Congratulations were officially extended to Lea Ferrari, who received the award during the event. The piece, titled 'Valchera's' is set in the eponymous restaurant owned by a Ticinese family in Richmond and explores the themes of migration from the perspective of two women, Iride and Tina. The goal of the UT is to present the show in London and Ticino in the fall.

The most official part of the celebrations concluded on Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, at the Swiss Embassy with a gala evening in the presence of Ambassador Markus Leitner, the president of the Swiss Abroad Council Filippo Lombardi, and various representatives from Canton Ticino. The evening began with thanks from the president and honorary president Mr Ambassador Leitner, followed by a long and heartfelt recorded message

from Hon. Ignazio Cassis, who greeted the attendees and emphasized the vital importance of the club for Ticino. Greetings were also extended by the King of Rabadan (historical Carnevale of Bellinzona), who on that very day opened the doors of the Ticino capital to the festivities.

A significant part was the establishment of a scholarship for young Ticinese wishing to pursue their professional education in London, created precisely on the occasion of the jubilee, to leave a future legacy for young Ticinese in continuity with the spirit of the club's founding fathers. Mr. Filippo Lombardi concluded the evening by reminding the attendees that, more than anything else, people living abroad need roots and identity because we all carry our origins and our land in our hearts. The vitality of clubs provides the opportunity to rediscover and reaffirm our identity.

GIOIA PALMIERI



The official delegation of Cantone Ticino.

**London:**  
Pro-Ticino Delegates Assembly

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> of May; 7 pm**

Voce del Brenno concert at the Swiss Church

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> of May 2 pm**

The Pro Ticino Delegates' Assembly, followed by a dinner cruise on the Thames and the social program on Sunday morning, with the option of a guided walk led by Peter (limited spaces) or a visit to the London Canal Museum.

Info: [utlondon.org/150th-jubilee](http://utlondon.org/150th-jubilee)

## AGM and upcoming events: FOSSUK President maps future amidst challenges



Recently re-elected FOSSUK President Loredana Guetg-Wyatt provides insights into the future of this umbrella association. The discussion takes place in the context of the upcoming FOSSUK AGM and a social event scheduled in London from May 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>: the Pro-Ticino Delegates Assembly and the unveiling of Monico's plaque at Piccadilly Circus, which will involve both Swiss and British authorities.

*As the new President of FOSSUK and the UK Delegate for the Council of the Swiss Abroad, can you provide your assessment of the challenges Swiss clubs in the UK currently face?*

We are at a crucial juncture marked by a generational transition, impacting the continuity of Swiss clubs. Shifts in how we approach relationships, connect with our roots and perceive our status as foreigners present challenges. Today, young individuals find it challenging to commit to clubs due to technological advancements and easy travel, minimizing the perceived distance from our home country. Bureaucratic obstacles also deter both younger and experienced members, as club participation involves patient management and adherence to regulations.

### *What solutions do you propose?*

A comprehensive evaluation is crucial. Streamlining and simplifying club management without excessive formality could be beneficial. A reconsideration of the structure or a youth-centric approach to aggregation might address these challenges. Importantly, involving both young and older members in the change process is key. Clubs, beyond presidents, have committees, and collective involvement is essential for successful transformation. A club that does not

obtain the support of its committee and members is unfortunately destined to disappear.

### *How can FOSSUK support clubs during this transitional period?*

FOSSUK can play a pivotal role by leading the way in this transition, aligning itself with contemporary challenges. It should gather ideas and needs from other clubs, creating a unified voice for Swiss clubs and Swiss citizens in the UK. To achieve this, FOSSUK is preparing a survey to collect concerns and ideas from all relevant parties such as Swiss Clubs, Swiss organisations and societies as well as Swiss living in the UK, fostering collaboration for mutual assistance and support.

GIOIA PALMIERI



## Save the date: Congress of the Swiss Abroad UK 10–11 May

New Fossuk President Loredana Guetg-Wyatt is pleased to announce the date of the next Congress of the Swiss Abroad and Cultural Weekend which will take place in London from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of May 2024.

This year we are thrilled to be supporting the Unione Ticinese and join their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary events. The New Helvetic Society will be responsible for the cultural programme which will take place on Saturday afternoon.

Be ready for an eventful weekend where on Friday you will be amazed by the Ticino Choir 'Voci del Brenno' and then transported back in time as you dine at Champagne Charlies, originally owned by Carlo Gatti. On Saturday morning, you will be able to discuss

amongst other Swiss fellows' key issues related to Settle Status and living or working in the UK whereas in the afternoon you will be catapulted back in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to learn about Swiss painter Angelica Kauffman, a founding member of the Royal Academy of Arts.

The weekend will culminate on Saturday night as guests will be able to enjoy a dinner cruise on the river Thames with music and dancing. The Congress is a wonderful opportunity for you to meet compatriots from all over the UK, as well as explore and learn more about this wonderful city. AGM documents and information will be published on the website:

Info: [www.swiss-societies.co.uk](http://www.swiss-societies.co.uk)

## Leti: Crafting musical alchemy – a fusion of genres, myths, and connection



Swiss artist Leti, based in London, defies traditional roles as a singer and songwriter. Rooted in Ticino, now blending electronica, jazz, folk, and ambient sounds in London, her philosophical lyrics explore self-inquiry, joy, and social-political reflections. While pursuing a Master's Degree in songwriting, Leti leads song composition circles and advocates for women in creativity, fostering genuine connections through her intricate musical exploration.

*Leti, your unique music blends genres and influences. Can you briefly discuss how your Ticinese heritage and experiences in both Ticino and London shaped your distinctive sound and themes?*

At 12, I began songwriting, crafting introspective and poetic pieces that reflected my inner world. Longing to share yet remain private, my teenage self revelled in the picturesque natural surroundings and yearned for self-expression. Influenced by the Italian 'cantautorato' and enamoured with jazz and soul, artists like Nina Simone and Ella Fitzgerald shaped my early musical journey. Relocating to London prompted a shift towards indie, folk, and ambient synth genres, encouraging experimentation and the incorporation of improvisation. Embracing the British influence redefined my approach to music, pushing me beyond my ordinary singing style.

*Given your background as a storyteller in your songwriting, can you share what inspires your passion for crafting philosophical lyrics, and how do you weave these themes into your music, creating a unique fusion of electronica, jazz, folk, and ambient elements?*

Immersed in Yoga, meditation, and non-dual traditions for 15 years, I've taught them for a decade. Yoga supports my mental well-being, aligning with my fascination for self-inquiry and spirituality. Spirituality, focusing on 'being,' permeates my music and songwriting. Both serve to make sense of the world, process emotions, and connect with my challenged self. Lyrics and music emerge from nothingness; I employ various processes, from harmonic constraints to improvisation. My music's fluidity, blending different worlds, reflects my true self, inspiring the concept that my voice and writing are vessels for expressing what already exists within.

*Your music is described as delving into self-inquiry, joy in the mundane, and reflection on social and political issues. How do novels and myths shape your song narratives? How do you view songwriting as a potent tool for connecting and conveying messages beyond musical elements?*

Music creates a third space, uniting artist and audience, transcending concerns for an experience of freedom and being. Post-concert, people share how they journey through my music, reflecting on life and rediscovering themselves. This connection, free from roles and labels, embodies the power of music. My Master's exploration into myths offers a framework, constraining and providing perspective. Mythical stories convey messages, as in 'Orpheus,' emphasizing trust in life. Currently integrating myths into my Master's project, shapes my writing, promising more discussions in the future.

GIOIA PALMIERI

Info:

[www.letimusic.com](http://www.letimusic.com)  
[instagram.com/leti\\_music](http://instagram.com/leti_music)

[tiktok.com/@thisisleti\\_](https://tiktok.com/@thisisleti_)  
[facebook.com/listentoleti](https://facebook.com/listentoleti)



Leti leads song writing circles and advocates for women.

## Swiss Club Manchester: A year of shared joy and community spirit and a call for new committee members

Members of the Swiss Club have had a joyous year of shared experiences. They kicked off the year with a New Year's Lunch at the Best Western Pinewood Hotel, attended by 34 members. Swiss Honorary Counsel Hans Scheiwiller sponsored the Swiss welcome drink, making the event extra special. The much-awaited Raclette party, held in March, had 59 attendees.

At the Annual General Meeting, held in the same month at the Brookdale Club, club president Juerg Bentele reported that not many members seem interested in minutes, agendas, accounts, or committee elections. However, the Swiss National Day celebration was a standout event, with 55 members attending. President Bentele expressed gratitude for the favourable weather, which allowed the bonfire to be lit without any issues. He also thanked Philip Pasteiner and Ian Baker for arranging the van hire and wood collection, and Helen and Neil Grundy for playing beautiful Alphorn tunes to enhance the atmosphere.

Regular coffee mornings at the Wilmslow Garden Centre, attended by around 20 members, fostered a sense of community. In the absence of Samichlaus, a festive Christmas meal at the Wilmslow Garden

Centre brought together 24 members. President Bentele conveyed his appreciation to Laure for decorating the long table and providing lovely Swiss chocolates. In a special appeal, Mr. Bentele seeks new committee members to continue the club's popular activities. He expressed gratitude for members' support and loyalty and emphasized the minimal commitment required for committee meetings to plan events. Interested individuals are encouraged to contact him for more information.

### Upcoming events:

**Sun, 24.3.2023:** Raclette Party at Brookdale Club  
**Thu, 18.4.2023:** AGM at Swiss Relief Society and Swiss Club Manchester  
**Thu, 23.5.2023:** Coffee Morning at Wilmslow Garden Centre  
**Sat, 27.7.2023:** Swiss National Day Party at Brookdale Club  
**Thu, 10.10.2023:** Coffee Morning at Wilmslow Garden Centre

For more information, please contact [laure.pasteiner@ntlworld.com](mailto:laure.pasteiner@ntlworld.com) or [margrit@btconnect.com](mailto:margrit@btconnect.com)



## New leadership at New Helvetic Society: Léonore Lavorelle takes the helm

Léonore Lavorelle has been appointed as the new president of the New Helvetic Society (NHS), succeeding Loredana Guetg-Wyatt.

Loredana is recognized for her dedicated leadership and nurturing strong connections within the club. Léonore, also known as Leo, has experience in promoting Swiss culture as the former president of LSESU Swiss Society. She aims to expand youth membership and foster a community of young Swiss adults in and beyond London. The NHS is excited to have her as their new leader.



## UK Alphorn Network's PlayDay 2024: Calling all Alphorn enthusiasts for a musical gathering!

Join us on Sunday, June 2, 2024, from 10 to 16 at Woodcote Primary School, just off the A4074 between Oxford and Reading. Open to all UK alphorn players, PlayDay promises a day filled with music and friendship.

Bring your alphorn and register by May 1, 2024. Enjoy complimentary tea, coffee, and biscuits, and don't forget to bring your mug. Lunch is a packed affair. The schedule includes warm-up sessions,

small group play, and an informal performance. It's not just a musical gathering; it's a chance to connect with fellow alphorn enthusiasts. Guests are welcome to attend the 14:30 performance. For more details and registration, please write to [frances@amazingalphorn.co.uk](mailto:frances@amazingalphorn.co.uk). Let's make PlayDay 2024 a melodious memory!

FRANCES JOHNES



Bring your Alphorn and register by May the 1<sup>st</sup>.



This event promises a day filled with music and friendship.



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To get informed about the latest from the Swiss clubs and community living in the UK and to get in touch with the UK OSA delegates, please visit the website [swiss-societies.co.uk/](http://swiss-societies.co.uk/) and FOSSUK's social media:

[@ukswiss](#)  
 [@FOSSUK](#)

## 1: Swiss Club Ireland's fabulous Fondue feast

On February 17<sup>th</sup>, Swiss members gathered for the traditional fondue evening in a lovely new venue at the Lutherhaus in Dublin. The event had a large turnout as usual. Michel helped to prepare a delicious fondue. Swiss wine offered by Ambassador Gubler was greatly appreciated. The event was a great way to reconnect with other Swiss members and to meet new ones.

For information about future events, please send an email to [swissclubireland@hotmail.com](mailto:swissclubireland@hotmail.com) or follow us on Facebook or Instagram.



Gathering of members at Lutherhaus in Dublin.

## 2: Southern Area Swiss Club enjoys January lunch

In a delightful gathering, 26 adults and 1 child savoured the Southern Area Swiss Club's January lunch at The Castle Farnham. The event, skilfully organised by Karin, brought members together for a convivial and enjoyable afternoon.

BERNI BERNI@NBTSCL.PLUS.COM



The event's wine provided by Ambassador Gubler.



26 adults and 1 child savoured the Club's January lunch.



The club's raclette feast was hosted by Christiane Greening.

## 3: Somerset Swiss Club unites for the annual Raclette

The Somerset Swiss Club recently gathered in Taunton for their annual Raclette feast, warmly hosted by Christiane Greening. New and returning members alike were welcomed, ensuring a delightful time for everyone. This event, along with the Spring and August 1<sup>st</sup> celebrations, strengthens the bonds of friendship and connection to their homeland. A heartfelt thank you to Christiane for orchestrating this enjoyable occasion.

For information about future events, please send an email to [marcols.atkinson@gmail.com](mailto:marcols.atkinson@gmail.com)

MARIA ATKINSON



## Leadership Opportunity: Join the committee for London's Swiss National Day Celebration!

Opportunity to Lead! Seeking a co-lead and committee members for the Swiss National Day celebration in London. The committee is looking for volunteers to continue the tradition of organising a memorable event that brings together Swiss in London and beyond.

The groundwork has been laid in previous years, and interested people have the support of experienced committee members. If you're interested, please visit [www.snd-london.com](http://www.snd-london.com) for more details and get in touch with [andreas.feller@dehl.ch](mailto:andreas.feller@dehl.ch)



Priya to headline UK shows in April 2024: Manchester, Bristol, and more.

### Music: Priya's acclaimed live performances

Priya Ragu is set to play three headline shows in the UK in April 2024, in Manchester, Bristol, and her biggest headline show to date at KOKO in London. Priya's acclaimed live performances have included sold-out headline shows in London, New York, and Los Angeles, gigs as a special guest to Jungle, and festivals as varied as SXSW, Prima-vera, and the Montreux Jazz Festival.

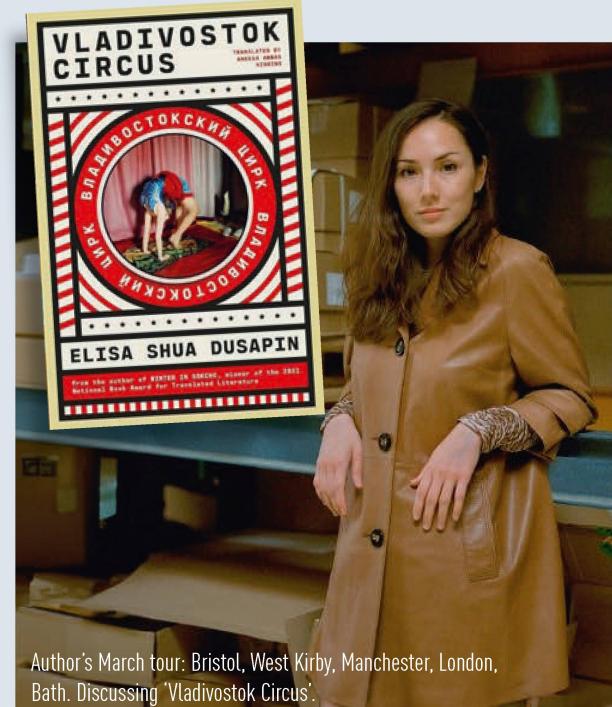
Her debut mixtape *damnshesstamil*, was a delight with music so vibrant, fluid, and musically broad that it transcended the artist making it and took on a life of its own, finding love among a global community of fans and critics alike. Ragu's wholly unique approach, dubbed *Raguwavy* by the singer, is vast and dauntless, incorporating simmering and sun-dappled R&B, masterful pop hooks, earthy soulful vocals, hip-shaking dance beats, and the warm tabla rhythms, heart-swelling strings and spiralling melodics of Tamil music. 24.4. Canvas (Manchester), 25.4. Thekla (Bristol), 26.4. Koko (London). More info & tickets: [www.aegpresents.co.uk/event](http://www.aegpresents.co.uk/event)

### Culture: The writer Elisa Shua Dusapin's tour

Award-winning writer Elisa Shua Dusapin visited Bristol, West Kirby, Manchester, London, and Bath from 11 to 15 March. She discussed her third novel, *Vladivostok Circus*, translated by Aneesa Abbas Higgins and published by Daunt Books Publishing.

When asked to choose one word to describe Vladivostok Circus, Elisa Shua Dusapin answers: “‘Confiance’ (trust). Because the coordination between the acrobats in the story depends on absolute trust to succeed in their act, where their lives are literally at stake.

I found this quest for vital trust between people a very beautiful and powerful metaphor for the kind of trust I try to portray in general in my novels, where my characters always have difficulty really ‘meeting’ each other.” The Embassy of Switzerland in the UK published an interview in English and French as part of their series of events marking the Mois de la Francophonie in March. Find the full interview on [weareswitzerland.uk](http://weareswitzerland.uk).



Author's March tour: Bristol, West Kirby, Manchester, London, Bath. Discussing 'Vladivostok Circus'.

#### IMPRINTS

HOW TO CONTACT THE EDITOR: Reports of Swiss society activities, news, coming events, correspondence, articles and advertising for the 'Switzerland in the UK & Ireland' section of the Swiss Review, should go to the editor:

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