# **File name:** BM podcast\_20 Great court 20.mp3

**Moderator questions in Bold,** Respondents in Regular text.

KEY: **Unable to decipher** = (inaudible + timecode), **Phonetic spelling** (ph) + timecode), **Missed word** = (mw + timecode), **Talking over each other** = (talking over each other + timecode).

**(TC: 00:00:02)**

**Sushma Jansari: Hello and welcome back to the museum podcast, this is the monthly podcast that delves deep into every aspect of the British Museum. I'm Sushma Jansari, and I'm here with-,**

**(TC: 00:00:12)**

**Hugo Chapman: Hugo Chapman.**

**(TC: 00:00:14)**

**Sushma Jansari: So, Hugo, how has it been? I hear that you're going to get a puppy.**

**(TC: 00:00:17)**

**Hugo Chapman: It's true, yes, we've been finally worn down, and I think like many households in Britain we've decided that the way to over the lockdown blues is to bring a puppy into our lives, so yes, somewhere around Christmas, either just before or just after, a goldendor is going to be added to the Chapman household.**

**(TC: 00:00:39)**

**Sushma Jansari: What exactly is a goldendor?**

**(TC: 00:00:42)**

**Hugo Chapman: I think it's a mix between a golden retriever and a Labrador.**

**(TC: 00:00:48)**

**Sushma Jansari: Aw, that's sound really cute and gorgeous. We have a puppy as well, and he's a pompadour, so he's a Pomeranian/Labrador, and he's sitting right next to me right now, all curled up fast asleep, which is very cute.**

**(TC: 00:01:02)**

**Hugo Chapman: Yes, well you brought me down to earth with your talk that we should get powder when said puppy pees all over our rugs, that we should invest in some powder to, you know, which is very good advice.**

**(TC: 00:01:18)**

**Sushma Jansari: Thank you. It's just one of those random discoveries of lockdown, puppies do wee everywhere, unfortunately, and somebody recommended to me this particular kind of powder which soaks up urine, so yes, it's a lovely way to introduce the podcast.**

**(TC: 00:01:37)**

**Hugo Chapman: Amazingly, we got to December, I think we should all pat ourselves on the back for having survived one of the worst years in human history.**

**(TC: 00:01:50)**

**Sushma Jansari: Do you think human history? I don't know, Black Death was pretty bad.**

**(TC: 00:01:54)**

**Hugo Chapman: Yes, no, Black Death.**

**(TC: 00:01:54)**

**Sushma Jansari: A couple of world wars, they were pretty bad.**

**(TC: 00:01:58)**

**Hugo Chapman: I agree, maybe not, no, maybe that's hyperbole.**

**(TC: 00:02:03)**

**Sushma Jansari: No, it has been very hard, though, hasn't it?**

**(TC: 00:02:04)**

**Hugo Chapman: A pretty awful year, come on.**

**(TC: 00:02:05)**

**Sushma Jansari: No, it's been a tough one, actually, and I think we all need a bit of Christmas cheer this year, probably more than normally. Have you been doing any Christmassy stuff at home?**

**(TC: 00:02:17)**

**Hugo Chapman: No, not really, I mean, I've been engaged in complicated negotiations with our children as to whether they want to come at all or which is the bubble. I mean, it makes the EU negotiations seem quite tame in comparison, I think. If we can do this, you know, fish quotas will be easy in comparison.**

**(TC: 00:02:41)**

**Sushma Jansari: Fair enough. Well, my daughter and I spent the weekend making two enormous Christmas cakes, and I managed to soak them both in an entire bottle of brandy, I don't quite know how that happened.**

**(TC: 00:02:52)**

**Hugo Chapman: Wow.**

**(TC: 00:02:53)**

**Sushma Jansari: The whole bottle went into both of them, and we also did a few jars of mincemeat, but there is no alcohol whatsoever in those because we needed something that's not quite so boozy that she can also eat, because she is six.**

**(TC: 00:03:06)**

**Hugo Chapman: Right, that's good that you're not going to intoxicate her on Christmas day as she takes a slice of the cake.**

**(TC: 00:03:13)**

**Sushma Jansari: Well, it might be a quiet way to have a Christmas day maybe, I don't know.**

**(TC: 00:03:19)**

**Hugo Chapman: Well, I felt the stirrings of, because we put up our advent calendar somebody sent us, so that's the, sort of, those doors at the beginning of countdown towards Christmas, which I love. You know, one, sort of, why one gets excited a door and seeing a robin, I can't think, but somehow it's a, sort of, childish delight that we give to our children to do, but really I think it's my wife and I are the ones that really love it.**

**(TC: 00:03:53)**

**Sushma Jansari: It's interesting how that works, I think my daughter is mostly interested in the chocolate.**

**(TC: 00:03:58)**

**Hugo Chapman: You see, this is just one of those old-fashioned ones where it's just a picture, and you think, 'My goodness, it's a present, it's a piece of holly. It's a robin,' you know.**

**(TC: 00:04:06)**

**Sushma Jansari: Oh no, you're robbing your children of the joy of chocolate in their advent calendars.**

**(TC: 00:04:13)**

**Hugo Chapman: Well, only because I suspect the person who would eat the chocolate would be me.**

**(TC: 00:04:20)**

**Sushma Jansari: That is fair enough.**

**(TC: 00:04:23)**

**Hugo Chapman: So, we've got an interesting array of subjects on the podcast this month.**

**(TC: 00:04:34)**

**Sushma Jansari: We do, yes.**

**(TC: 00:04:34)**

**Hugo Chapman: With the beloved Stella the hawk. Have you seen Stella ever?**

**(TC: 00:04:39)**

**Sushma Jansari: Do you know what? It's incredible, yes, Stella the hawk. Laura, who is the, I don't know, what would you call, the hawker? I don't know, is there a name for somebody who wields hawks?**

**(TC: 00:04:53)**

**Hugo Chapman: Let's go for hawker, I'm sure there'll be angry letters from the true name of what hawkers are, but yes, the hawk handler, the falconer.**

**(TC: 00:05:07)**

**Sushma Jansari: I believe it's a Harris hawk that she has, and what I found was fascinating was she mentioned that they're the birds that, so as Labradors are the really cute, docile, sociable, lovely dogs of the dog world, apparently Harris hawks are that for the bird world. I had no idea, and so apparently the hawk chats to Laura during the day, likes having her head strokes. Really, I had no idea at all.**

**(TC: 00:05:36)**

**Hugo Chapman: Not quite so cute and fluffy if you're a pigeon.**

**(TC: 00:05:40)**

**Sushma Jansari: No, that's very true, but thank goodness, because otherwise we would be completely inundated with pigeons, but she thankfully drives them off. What I didn't realise, she doesn't, sorry, Stella the hawk, I should say, she doesn't actually kill the pigeons, she mostly just, it's just the act of her flying close to them drives them away. I didn't realise that, I assumed that what she did was fly around and grab the pigeons and do them to death, but she doesn't do anything of the sort.**

**(TC: 00:06:09)**

**Hugo Chapman: I think considering the number of pigeons there sometimes are, and even Stella would, unless she has, even her talons would not be sufficient to grab all the pigeons. No, I think, I suppose the idea is that, in their tiny pigeon mind, lodge that the British Museum is a place where Stella lives and to stay away. I'm not sure it's whether that works with seagulls, which are a bit more of an issue, but anyway, I loved seeing Stella, I've seen her a couple of times, and she's utterly beautiful and captivating, so I'm all for Stella, I'm a big Stella fan.**

**(TC: 00:06:49)**

**Sushma Jansari: Aw, absolutely. Well, let's look forward to seeing her again sometime in the New Year.**

**(TC: 00:06:53)**

**Hugo Chapman: We should also thank Nick Harris, who recorded Laura talking about Stella, because it's a bit of sound recording he did a couple of years ago, and we've saved for a special moment to lift all our spirits.**

(TC: 00:07:09)

Laura: I'm Laura, and I work for Rentokil, and we are with Stella today, and she is our resident Harris hawk. For myself personally, I started volunteering when I was at school at my local bird of prey centre, and I just started out as a Saturday girl just cleaning out aviaries, just feeding the birds, doing all the, yes, your manual side of things, and then it just developed from there. I then studied my apprenticeship with the company, so I did a year-long apprenticeship for falconry, which is quite an obscure thing to study your apprenticeship on, and then after that they just took me on, and I've never left, so I've been there for about six years now, straight from school. We are out here today just to keep the pigeon numbers at bay, so Stella's not here to catch or kill anything, she is just here to fly around and be a natural deterrent to these pigeons that like to reside out here and eat people's lunches. She is a Harris hawk, and their natural diets do not consist of birds normally, they much more prefer ground prey, so you're looking at things like rodents, squirrels, rabbits, I don't want to mention all the cute things, but you are looking at things that are cute and fluffy that run across the ground. She's not too interested in things that are airborne, they're a bit harder to catch. What we do is we turn up and normally nine times out of ten we have got a group of pigeons sat out on the steps that are looking for food, and we literally just let Stella go, and it's as simple as that. She'll do a lovely circuit of the area, she'll just go and fly somewhere, and just her flying in this area is enough to clear them out. If they start then coming back in we just carry on flying her, and it's really one of those things that you have to see it to believe it, it sounds pretty obscure.

I must say before I even started doing anything like this I used to think, 'How does that work?' and it really is as simple as you just fly a hawk, she does not need to be on their tail chasing them, trying to catch them, she just simply needs to be flying around close enough, so she has got to be fairly close to them just to get that deterrent there. By all means, every now and then she can be a little bit cheeky and she may give things a little bit of a chase, but she's only about a year old, so she is only a baby, so that's more her playful side of things. She is trained to see this glove that I'm wearing, as just something to come back to and as a beacon for food. If she sees me stood stretching my arm out, I put a piece of food on there and she just knows that cue, just even my arm going out as a cue to this bird that there's going to be a treat on the end for her. These are purely food orientated, she is here for lots of treats and lots of attention. This one, we've had her since she was about two days old, so it means she's imprinted, so she is very, very used to humans, which is why she's sitting here so very relaxed. She does in turn see me as mum, so she does talk to me throughout the day and she'll interact with me as if I'm another hawk. So, she'll chitter-chatter, she'll preen my hair for me occasionally, but as you can see now she's quite content sitting there, she has got a bell on her ankle which does jingle as she flies, and she's aware of it now, and that just gives me a heads up on where she is, and it's also meant to help clear the pigeons out too. It's a bit like when you put a bell on your cat's collar to stop it from ideally catching too many things, same for this, so it just gives things a little, a two-second heads up that (TC 00:10:00) there's something on its way and that they need to be aware that there's something in the area.

How it works is we do have our own individual hawks as such, so Stella, I will work with her all day every single day, and that then forms a bond with both of us. She gets to know me, I'm then that safe beacon to fly back to, and most importantly that beacon that has lots of food, and for me I get to know this hawk. Now, hawks are just like your cats and your dogs, they have personalities, characters, and we've got about twelve Harris hawks and every single one of them is completely separate and different to the next. So, I then get to know this hawk and her little quirks, her little traits, what she likes and what she doesn't like, because it does change, just like a human.

(TC: 00:10:37)

Nick: Is there anything in particular Stella does or doesn't like?

(TC: 00:10:39)

Laura: Oh, she does not like dogs. Now, she hates dogs, the worst she does is she just stands there and she screams, and it's a really horrible scream, it's quite like a human screaming, and that is just her way of saying to it, 'I'm big and scary, I don't like you, go away,' but other than that she's actually very, very good. Not many things phase her, but she doesn't like hoovers either, not when they're on or even plugged in. If it's just a random static hoover she is unsure of that, so that is quite a random trait that she has, but that is her.

(TC: 00:11:11)

Nick: Thank you very much.

(TC: 00:11:12)

Laura: No problem.

(TC: 00:11:12)

Nick: I don't know if there's anything that you feel you want to know about hawks that-,

(TC: 00:11:16)

Laura: Let me think of random facts. Their vision's about nine times than a human's, so to put that into an example, she could read a newspaper headline from about two miles away, so the whole term eyes like a hawk has got a true meaning, their vision is absolutely incredible and way better than any humans could ever be.

(TC: 00:11:35)

Nick: Sorry, one final thing, then, on that point is you said all of them are Harris hawks, is there a reason why?

(TC: 00:11:39)

Laura: Pretty much, so just because they're renowned for being very docile, they're very sociable, and so they're great for this kind of work. Obviously, a place like here we get lots of members of the public coming up to us all day, and obviously we don't want a bird that's naturally quite skitty, not really wanting that attention, whereas birds like Harris hawks are renowned for just, they're called the Labradors of the bird world. They love food, they love attention, they actually love a head tickle every now and again too, so we might as well bring birds that we know aren't going to freak out and be completely calm in this sort of environment. As you can imagine, walking through with a Harris hawk, people naturally want to come over and be like, 'What on earth are you dong?' so we do get lots of photos taken throughout the day, we get lots of questions, but it keeps my day interesting, so I don't mind it.

(TC: 00:12:21)

Nick: Nice one, and I imagine not all of them chuck an enormous microphone in your face.

(TC: 00:12:26)

Laura: I must admit, I'm surprised Stella's not too interested in that, she normally quite likes fluffy things, but I'm sure if I let her get any closer she certainly would have a little peck.

(TC: 00:12:33)

Nick: Yes, cool, well, it's got a cage underneath, it would probably be fine, but I'd prefer it if she didn't.

**(TC: 00:12:39)**

**Hugo Chapman: Then, it's Sian and Francesca talking about twenty years of the Great Court, and I am course such a grizzled old curator that I can remember the whole construction of the Great Court and the excitement of seeing it unveiled, so yes, twenty years seem to have passed in the flash of an eye.**

**(TC: 00:12:59)**

**Sushma Jansari: Gosh. Were you actually working at the museum when it opened?**

**(TC: 00:13:04)**

**Hugo Chapman: I was, yes, I lived through the period when we, there was a time about twice a week the fire alarm would go off because there was so much smoke, well, there was so much dust in the air that the fire alarms would think it was simple, so we used to get very used to trooping out and, depending on the time of year, either shivering or basking in the heat at the back of the museum until all was clear and we were allowed back in.**

**(TC: 00:13:37)**

**Sushma Jansari: Oh, really?**

**(TC: 00:13:37)**

**Hugo Chapman: Yes, it was amazing, one thinks about it, to have the museum still working and doing such an incredibly huge job in the centre of it. I mean, it, sort of, boggles your mind, because almost every other museum would've said no, let's close down and concentrate on building work, but we didn't do that.**

**(TC: 00:13:57)**

**Sushma Jansari: No, we do things differently.**

**(TC: 00:14:00)**

**Hugo Chapman: We do, we kept open, and I think the Great Court is still one of those spaces that when you go into it, it lifts your spirits.**

**(TC: 00:14:14)**

**Sushma Jansari: It really does. Do you know? I think that year, year 2000, or was it 2001? Was actually the first time I ever visited the British Museum, I'd never been there before.**

**(TC: 00:14:24)**

**Hugo Chapman: Well, you were a child, I mean, you know, you were so young.**

**(TC: 00:14:30)**

**Sushma Jansari: Well, no, this was actually the year I started university in 2001, and I went to university just down the road, so yes, before I started my mum, my brother, and I came to just, you know, come down and look around and see the area and get to know it a bit better, and it was incredible. I remember walking in and not expecting this huge, light space, but you walk in and, as you say, your spirits soar, it's incredible. You can't help but just, you walk in and you immediately look up, and in fact so does everybody else around you, so you have a whole group of people just standing there with their heads pointed to the ceiling, which is just incredible, it's such a beautiful, beautiful space.**

**(TC: 00:15:12)**

**Hugo Chapman: Yes, the way you come into that rather dark Victorian entrance and then out into that light is a real thrill to your senses.**

**(TC: 00:15:27)**

**Sushma Jansari: Here's Sian and Francesca talking about the 20th anniversary of the Great Court.**

(TC: 00:15:33)

Sian Toogood: It's archive hour. Well, welcome back, we are in the Round Reading Room, once again, to talk archives. I'm Sian Toogood, the producer of this podcast, and I'm here with Francesca Hillier, archivist. Hi, Francesca.

(TC: 00:15:49)

Francesca Hillier: Hello, Sian.

(TC: 00:15:51)

Sian Toogood: It's nice to be back, even under such circumstances.

(TC: 00:15:55)

Francesca Hillier: Socially distancing in the Round Reading Room, with not a single soul out in the Great Court.

(TC: 00:16:01)

Sian Toogood: There are definitely worse places to socially distance, especially given that the space is pretty epic. Do you want to tell them what we're talking about today?

(TC: 00:16:09)

Francesca Hillier: Well, it seems like a good moment to talk about the twenty-year anniversary of the opening of the Great Court.

(TC: 00:16:15)

Sian Toogood: Indeed, of which we are sitting in the middle.

(TC: 00:16:18)

Francesca Hillier: Of which we are sitting in the middle, and which opened on 6th December, 2000.

(TC: 00:16:24)

Sian Toogood: Gosh. So, I walked across a completely empty Great Court today, which was extremely sad, footsteps ringing, but it's an amazing and beautiful space. What did it look like before?

(TC: 00:16:40)

Francesca Hillier: It's quite an interesting history, the space that is now occupied by the Great Court. When the museum, the second museum building was built, started to be built, in the 1820s, there was no plan to put anything in the middle, so you would just have the quadrant and all four wings round the outside.

(TC: 00:16:59)

Sian Toogood: So, sort of, how the V&A was before they put in their new bit?

(TC: 00:17:04)

Francesca Hillier: Yes. We obviously got there first, but that's fine.

(TC: 00:17:07)

Sian Toogood: That's no big deal.

(TC: 00:17:08)

Francesca Hillier: Yes, that's no big deal, it's no big deal, and we're not in competition.

(TC: 00:17:11)

Sian Toogood: The V&A space is glorious.

(TC: 00:17:13)

Francesca Hillier: Also amazing.

(TC: 00:17:14)

Sian Toogood: Especially in summer, so slightly jealous of their outside space with that nice pond that children just go running through in the summer.

(TC: 00:17:23)

Francesca Hillier: In.

(TC: 00:17:25)

Sian Toogood: Yes, in. So, yes, and it was going to be a courtyard.

(TC: 00:17:30)

Francesca Hillier: Was going to be a courtyard, and you access the courtyard, you come in the front door and the idea was that you would access the courtyard walking through a doorway that they were going to put opposite the south front, which is the main entrance to the museum.

(TC: 00:17:45)

Sian Toogood: So, it's pretty much the same front hall that we've got today.

(TC: 00:17:47)

Francesca Hillier: Yes, but the museum was built wing by wing, and the front section, which we call the south front, was the last bit to be built, and Montague House had stood on the site where the current museum stands, and that was where the first museum was housed, and they pulled Montague House down wing by wing and built wing by wing. The original design for the new building didn't include anything in the quadrant, so it was to be four wings all the way round a large courtyard, and the courtyard was to be a beautiful garden for promenading and walking around, and it was only when the building was completed that they realised that nowhere near enough light was going to get into the beautiful garden, so there was never any chance of it being a beautiful garden. I'm sure I've read somewhere that they actually neglected to put an adequate doorway into the space so that actually you really couldn't walk around it without any great ease if you were a member of the public.

(TC: 00:18:47)

Sian Toogood: What do you mean, like a tiny doorway like Alice in Wonderland?

(TC: 00:18:50)

Francesca Hillier: They didn't put a doorway in, because by the time they got to the last wing I think they'd realised that it was never really going to be adequate. So, the building was finished by the early 1850s, in 1855 was when they started building the Round Reading Room in the middle of the quadrant because they realised really quickly that, 'Actually, we've got this fantastic new building but we still don't have enough space for books, and why don't we use this big muddy area in the middle of the museum's estate, which now cannot be an adequate garden?' So, the Round Reading Room was built, opened in 1857, and it had all the way round it, had all the way round, so you've got the round building in the middle, all the way round it was what was called the Iron Library, so there's a big oblong of ironwork and shelving with staircases all the way round for book storage, and the last piece of that, last quadrant of that, came down to build the Great Court.

(TC: 00:19:55)

Sian Toogood: I have to say, I have to say, (TC 00:20:00) it's the bane of my life, that phrase, anyway, the pictures of the Iron Library are just the stuff of dreams, like, it is an amazing looking space.

(TC: 00:20:12)

Francesca Hillier: We have got some really-, I did a blog on the library space, the Reading Room and the building.

(TC: 00:20:18)

Sian Toogood: Available at blog.britishmuseum.org.

(TC: 00:20:21)

Francesca Hillier: Yes, and that has pictures of the Iron Library all the way round, but apart from the, so you've got the Round Reading Room I the middle, you've got the oblong Iron Library all the way around the edge of it, which is quite large, and then you still had an inner road between that and the main museum, which was open to the elements.

(TC: 00:20:46)

Sian Toogood: Did you?

(TC: 00:20:47)

Francesca Hillier: Yes.

(TC: 00:20:48)

Sian Toogood: I never realised that, I don't think. It must have been just for staff, though, no?

(TC: 00:20:53)

Francesca Hillier: You couldn't really access it, and it very quickly got filled up with temporary structures and the nineteenth century equivalent of Portakabins, I think, for storage and for that sort of thing, but you can see, we have drawings of it where you can see the inner road. In order to get from the front of the museum to the back of the museum you had to go up the stairs, you couldn't walk from the front to back unless you went straight through the middle of the Reading Room, which the library team weren't keen on at all.

(TC: 00:21:34)

Sian Toogood: I must have incurred some displeasure, because I was going to say I first visited the British Museum when I was seven, when I first came to London on a holiday with my family in 1990.

(TC: 00:21:46)

Francesca Hillier: You're giving your age away.

(TC: 00:21:47)

Sian Toogood: I don't mind, young at heart, and we came here, and all I can remember of the entire museum is this room, and walking through, like, coming up the front to the colonnade, so big, grand temple of learning entrance, coming in, dark front hall, really dark, the dark-coloured wood, kind of, lined corridor into big, airy, beautiful blue and gold room, and then walking straight through to the back and then going out. That's all I can remember, and I'm sure my parents must have spent a couple of hours here taking me round and being like, 'Mummies, Rosetta Stone, Parthenon marbles,' all of that. No, not a bit of it, that, sort of, birth canal, to coin a phrase.

(TC: 00:22:38)

Francesca Hillier: Then, you would have been allowed to walk through the library, but in the earliest period of the Round Reading Room the library admission was very carefully controlled, and you had to get permission from the director, principal librarian, then in order to be allowed admission, so then even staff weren't meant to walk through from one side to the other. The corridor that you mention, that went through the inner-, that was basically a covered-up bit of the inner road so that you could walk from the front door into the Reading Room through the front hall, but if you think, the front hall used to be much bigger than it is now because a section of it was taken to build the Great Court.

(TC: 00:23:18)

Sian Toogood: Really?

(TC: 00:23:19)

Francesca Hillier: Yes.

(TC: 00:23:19)

Sian Toogood: Interesting. Okay, so we're getting onto the Great Court building now. How did that come about? I feel like we should get back to the twenty-year anniversary of the Great Court as is.

(TC: 00:23:33)

Francesca Hillier: Well, it was a Millennium project, like the Millennium Dome, as it was called, it was one of the Millennium projects, and it very successfully, I think, marked the Millennium in the life of the museum.

(TC: 00:23:50)

Sian Toogood: This is a good moment, I think, to credit the creator, I guess, of the Great Court, the architect-,

(TC: 00:23:57)

Francesca Hillier: Foster.

(TC: 00:23:58)

Sian Toogood: Norman Foster. You know, he's had an amazing effect on the London skyline.

(TC: 00:24:03)

Francesca Hillier: I mean, you see an aerial view of the museum with the Great Court roof and the dome of the Reading Room, and it's just an amazing view, but you can see the Great Court roof through the windows of the Reading Room, and you just realise the complexity of each pane of glass and how each glass is different and trying to-, we broke one not so long ago, one got broken. Was it a firework or something like that? Somebody told me had landed on the roof?

(TC: 00:24:32)

Sian Toogood: Something landed on it and it cracked.

(TC: 00:24:35)

Francesca Hillier: It was a bit of an effort to work out which pane it was, so we have a plan of all the panes, and each one is slightly different.

(TC: 00:24:40)

Sian Toogood: That's so cool.

(TC: 00:24:41)

Francesca Hillier: So, trying to work out which pane had broken so that we could replace it was harder than it needed to be, I think.

(TC: 00:24:47)

Sian Toogood: The jigsaw puzzlist in me-,

(TC: 00:24:49)

Francesca Hillier: Very much a jigsaw puzzle, yes.

(TC: 00:24:50)

Sian Toogood: Is very, very excited right now. Yes, I remember, I remember coming into work that morning that they were replacing the pane, and there are moments in the Great Court where I suppose it's a bit like, you know, it's weird, it's one of those, like a standing stone monument or something, where the sunlight shines at the right intensity and the right time of day, you get the pattern of the roof across the court. So, I walked in and it was doing that thing, and didn't think much of it, and then all of a sudden there was this big, huge, bright triangle where the panes of glass in the roof are double glazed and polarised to stop the intensity of the heat, and obviously when they took that one out it was just, like, full-intensity early morning sunshine on the floor, and it was the most amazing thing. Okay, I have one question that you may or may not be able to answer, and I apologise if-,

(TC: 00:25:51)

Francesca Hillier: Putting me on the spot.

(TC: 00:25:52)

Sian Toogood: Well, I'm putting you on the spot either way. The quote, 'and let thy feet, millenniums hence, be set in the something of knowledge.'

(TC: 00:26:03)

Francesca Hillier: Midst.

(TC: 00:26:03)

Sian Toogood: 'Midst of knowledge,' thank you. That was off the top of my head, Alfred Lord Tennyson. How did we pick it?

(TC: 00:26:11)

Francesca Hillier: Well, there was a committee.

(TC: 00:26:13)

Sian Toogood: I'm sure.

(TC: 00:26:14)

Francesca Hillier: Everything goes by committee. There was a committee, and I'm assuming that suggestions are put forward, and who picked it, don't know who decided on it, but the committee would've discussed it. That's something I could look up. We have the Great Court committee papers in the archive. Not now, I'm not looking at it now, but I could look it up.

(TC: 00:26:39)

Sian Toogood: 'I could, but I won't.' No, fair enough, looking at a volume of them, I can appreciate why you wouldn't want to start trawling through it now. I have always wondered about how with all of the English poetry in all the land, how they chose that particular line. I mean, it works, but I always-,

(TC: 00:26:58)

Francesca Hillier: Tell me it again.

(TC: 00:27:01)

Sian Toogood: Damn you. 'And let thy feet, millenniums hence, be set in the midst of knowledge.'

(TC: 00:27:08)

Francesca Hillier: It's just because it's got millennium in it, I should think, because that was the point, wasn't it?

(TC: 00:27:12)

Sian Toogood: Alright.

(TC: 00:27:13)

Francesca Hillier: I bet you that's why they picked it.

(TC: 00:27:16)

Sian Toogood: Fair enough.

(TC: 00:27:16)

Francesca Hillier: It was a Millennium project, so that must be why they picked it.

(TC: 00:27:19)

Sian Toogood: I understand, I understand that it was a Millennium-,

(TC: 00:27:22)

Francesca Hillier: I suspect that's the only reason, but it's lovely.

(TC: 00:27:27)

Sian Toogood: It is lovely, and it very much fits in with the museum, and you're right, it is très on the nose.

(TC: 00:27:35)

Francesca Hillier: We've got so much building-related archive, the documents, the building of the Great Court, and we're looking at some of the photographs now, and you can see quite clearly the inner courtyard.

(TC: 00:27:51)

Sian Toogood: I mean, as you say, in some of them they do look like a bomb has gone off just with the level of destruction-,

(TC: 00:27:57)

Francesca Hillier: It's such massive-,

(TC: 00:27:59)

Sian Toogood: Tearing down, and then putting back up.

(TC: 00:28:01)

Francesca Hillier: What you also don't realise is what's underneath, because if you look at pictures like this one, which has a floor that comes halfway up the level of the Round Reading Room.

(TC: 00:28:12)

Sian Toogood: Oh, yes.

(TC: 00:28:14)

Francesca Hillier: They had to excavate al of that in order to build the underneath the entire museum the tunnels, and storerooms.

(TC: 00:28:21)

Sian Toogood: Of course.

(TC: 00:28:22)

Francesca Hillier: It's a maze underneath, and they had to build all of that as well, so there is a circular tunnel that runs all the way round underneath the Great Court.

(TC: 00:28:34)

Sian Toogood: One of the most, because I'm a massive loser, one of the most exciting things that I've done behind the scenes at the museum was go into the spider room, which is not a room full of spiders, you will be happy to know, listeners, dear, it's the old Victorian central heating unit underneath the Reading Room, and it is class.

(TC: 00:28:54)

Francesca Hillier: Yes, and still works.

(TC: 00:28:57)

Sian Toogood: Whilst also being incredibly boring, and it still works, obviously.

(TC: 00:29:00)

Francesca Hillier: We're sitting in here now, and it's cold outside, and it's lovely and warm in here.

(TC: 00:29:03)

Sian Toogood: Even though we've got, you know, however many feet, metres, whatever, above us.

(TC: 00:44:11)

Francesca Hillier: It looks like a pillow to me, the Great Court roof.

(TC: 00:29:12)

Sian Toogood: Oh yes, I can see that.

(TC: 00:29:12)

Francesca Hillier: If you look down on it, it's more undulating than you realise it is when you stand and look up, and if you look at it from above and you can see the dome of the Reading Room and then the glass all the way round.

(TC: 00:29:25)

Sian Toogood: Yes, it's quite steep.

(TC: 00:29:27)

Francesca Hillier: It's much more undulating, if that's the word, if that's the right word, than you imagine.

(TC: 00:29:30)

Sian Toogood: Yes, it curves over into the dome, but it also curves away to each of the corners as well, so it's got that, kind of, very sculptural, 3D.

(TC: 00:29:41)

Francesca Hillier: Undulating.

(TC: 00:29:42)

Sian Toogood: Pardon?

(TC: 00:29:43)

Francesca Hillier: Undulating.

(TC: 00:29:44)

Sian Toogood: Undulating, indeed.

(TC: 00:29:46)

Francesca Hillier: When you look at the archive that we have that relate to it, there's just so much going on, so much building work went on, it's really quite astonishing. That's a good one that really shows the inner courtyard. (TC 00:30:00)

(TC: 00:30:01)

Sian Toogood: Well, I'll do your trick. South-west (mw 30.04), I mean, they all say the same thing, south-west quadrant from the south-west.

(TC: 00:30:09)

Francesca Hillier: The south-west quadrant was the last quadrant of Iron Library to come down.

(TC: 00:30:14)

Sian Toogood: Got you, that makes sense because then you've got the height.

(TC: 00:30:16)

Francesca Hillier: That needed a different type of-, yes, bits of which we've still got.

(TC: 00:30:22)

Sian Toogood: We've still got bits of the Iron Library?

(TC: 00:30:24)

Francesca Hillier: Yes.

(TC: 00:30:24)

Sian Toogood: That's cool.

(TC: 00:30:26)

Francesca Hillier: Every time there's been building work in the museum, a bit of every bit of the historic part of the building has to be kept.

(TC: 00:30:32)

Sian Toogood: As part of your archive?

(TC: 00:30:35)

Francesca Hillier: It's, sort of, like an archive, it's bygone furniture and fixtures and fittings, but we keep a bit of everything so that we always have, we've got old bits of display cases, and shelving, and other bits of, a desk, even, and chairs, so that we always know what was in the museum.

(TC: 00:30:54)

Sian Toogood: Wow, that's almost like we're a museum.

(TC: 00:30:56)

Francesca Hillier: Yes.

(TC: 00:30:58)

Sian Toogood: Never throw anything away.

(TC: 00:31:00)

Francesca Hillier: Any building project, and particularly a building project on a site like this, involves a certain amount of proper excavation, you know, proper archaeological excavation, and a member of our staff who was an archaeologist took charge of that, and I think there were a lot of finds, we've got archive relating to the finds that they found, what they found when they did the excavation.

(TC: 00:31:21)

Sian Toogood: So, I did hear that when we were excavating in similar fashion for the new, in inverted commas, WCC, the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre, I always forget the correct order of that, that we didn't really find a huge amount, because usually because it's London there's quite a bit of junk to find, not junk, but, you know, archaeological detritus.

(TC: 00:31:51)

Francesca Hillier: Yes.

(TC: 00:31:54)

Sian Toogood: Underneath buildings and so on, but because the museum has been here for so long, that there wasn't much of that, but they did find part of a Civil War trench in the WCC, so this must have had some cool stuff.

(TC: 00:32:08)

Francesca Hillier: Yes, because Montague House was here before the museum, this museum building, and before that it was fairly rural.

(TC: 00:32:19)

Sian Toogood: Yes, I suppose it was all fields, muddy fields.

(TC: 00:32:21)

Francesca Hillier: It was, I mean, we have a drawing of Russell Square as a hayfield, and you had Southampton, is it called Southampton House?

(TC: 00:32:30)

Sian Toogood: Yes.

(TC: 00:32:31)

Francesca Hillier: Over the other side of the square from Montague House, but apart from a few grand mansions it was really quite rural. We have got a record of what was found, but I know that a stone corbel from Montague House was discovered.

(TC: 00:32:45)

Sian Toogood: Okay, and you are going to have to tell me what a corbel is.

(TC: 00:32:47)

Francesca Hillier: A corbel is a decorative thing that holds up, I don't know how you'd describe a corbel.

(TC: 00:32:54)

Sian Toogood: Like a finial?

(TC: 00:32:56)

Francesca Hillier: No, that's more like a-,

(TC: 00:32:58)

Sian Toogood: Like, the top bit?

(TC: 00:32:59)

Francesca Hillier: No, it's the bit that goes under a shelf or ceiling to hold it up, so you might have it in a-,

(TC: 00:33:05)

Sian Toogood: Oh, like a bracket?

(TC: 00:33:06)

Francesca Hillier: Yes, more like a bracket.

(TC: 00:33:09)

Sian Toogood: Like a bracket.

(TC: 00:33:09)

Francesca Hillier: I think it's more decorative than actually functional.

(TC: 00:33:13)

Sian Toogood: Okay, so it doesn't actually offer support, it just pretties it up a bit?

(TC: 00:33:16)

Francesca Hillier: I think maybe they sometimes do, but that there, this gold squirly twirly thing.

(TC: 00:33:23)

Sian Toogood: No, what gold squirly-, oh, right, yes, okay, fine.

(TC: 00:33:26)

Francesca Hillier: That's a corbel.

(TC: 00:33:27)

Sian Toogood: Oh.

(TC: 00:33:27)

Francesca Hillier: I believe.

(TC: 00:33:29)

Sian Toogood: Goodness me, every day's a school day. Is that in the archive?

(TC: 00:33:34)

Francesca Hillier: I've got a wooden one, I have got a brick from Montague House in the archive that came out the ground.

(TC: 00:33:39)

Sian Toogood: Filed under 'B'.

(TC: 00:33:40)

Francesca Hillier: Filed under nothing at all, just on a shelf.

(TC: 00:33:44)

Sian Toogood: I think we might have talked about that in our first ever interview, because we talked about the bit of wood.

(TC: 00:33:50)

Francesca Hillier: Yes, that came in via a patron.

(TC: 00:33:53)

Sian Toogood: Yes. One thing I suppose we should talk about is funding for the space, because obviously it was a huge undertaking, and we had many, many funders, including the lovely members of the British Museum helping us to achieve a huge project.

(TC: 00:34:15)

Francesca Hillier: Members were vital, the members were really vital. There was a project called Raising the Roof. We have in the archive a large volume with all the names of people who contributed to each pane of glass.

(TC: 00:34:28)

Sian Toogood: Oh, that's cool.

(TC: 00:34:29)

Francesca Hillier: Each pane of glass is numbered, and each person who contributed has a number, and their name appears next to their number in this large volume, but yes, it couldn't have been done without donations of patrons and members, valuable as they always are.

(TC: 00:34:45)

Sian Toogood: Well, so this is going out, I think, a couple of days before the twentieth anniversary, and hopefully if the museum is not already opened, reopened, after second lockdown it will be reopening extremely soon, so if you can, please do come and visit the old girl, give her a bit of a happy birthday boost, and I guess in the meantime have a wonderful Yuletide period.

(TC: 00:35:20)

Francesca Hillier: Let's catch up next time.

(TC: 00:35:25)

Sian Toogood: Hi, everyone, I'm going to pause the podcast for just a moment to tell you a little bit more about British Museum membership. In the archive section, Francesca and I mentioned how invaluable the support of British Museum members was in achieving the Great Court project, and the museum has so many more plans and projects that we need support for. In addition to improving the British Museum's buildings, we also need money to conserve and research the vast collections of the museum. In return for that support, members get free unlimited access to the temporary exhibitions, exclusive online content, a whole host of members-only events, both on-site and online, and we like to think that they get a lovely warm glow when they think about how they've ensured that the museum will be around for generations to come. Oh, and you also get 10% off in the British Museum shops and cafes. So, why not gift the person you love best with two million years of human history? To find out more, head to britishmuseum.org/membership.

**(TC: 00:36:27)**

**Hugo Chapman: I mean, it's been a tough year for all museums, and the British Museum are incredibly grateful for all our members who've stayed with us, because they've never been more important to us, so please, if you can, find some more members because we really do need you. So, as we move towards Christmas, our minds turn to boardgames, and who better to talk about the history of boardgames than Irving Finkel from Middle East?**

**(TC: 00:36:59)**

**Sushma Jansari: The doyenne of boardgames.**

**(TC: 00:37:01)**

**Hugo Chapman: Well, i'm a bit of a, you know, I love Monopoly because it almost always ends in a vast family row.**

(TC: 00:37:09)

Laura: That's a good thing?

**(TC: 00:37:12)**

**Hugo Chapman: Many of my happiest memories of me upturning Monopoly sets as my sister trounced me as I landed on Mayfair with her hotel. Happy days.**

**(TC: 00:37:24)**

**Sushma Jansari: Oh, my goodness. Well, I can tell what you guys are going to be doing for Christmas this year.**

**(TC: 00:37:30)**

**Hugo Chapman: Who doesn't like killing Colonel Peacock with a lead pipe? That's another one that I like. Cluedo.**

**(TC: 00:37:38)**

**Sushma Jansari: This is interesting, I've never taken you for a violent type, Hugo, I think all the base instincts are coming straight out here.**

**(TC: 00:37:47)**

**Hugo Chapman: Well, you know, that's the joys of boardgames, is that they can allow these violence to be expressed in a socially acceptable manner, more or less. Perhaps my sister would disagree.**

**(TC: 00:38:00)**

**Sushma Jansari: More or less, crikey.**

**(TC: 00:38:06)**

**Hugo Chapman: What about you? What are your boardgames of choice?**

**(TC: 00:38:10)**

**Sushma Jansari: Me, I really like Trivial Pursuit, I absolutely love it, and on those few occasions when I lose, I have to say I do go off in a bit of a huff.**

**(TC: 00:38:18)**

**Hugo Chapman: I like Trivial Pursuit too.**

**(TC: 00:38:20)**

**Sushma Jansari: It's a good one.**

**(TC: 00:38:21)**

**Hugo Chapman: Thing is, you have to keep up with the, you know, you have to modernise the cards because it otherwise gives you an enormous advantage that you can remember old 1990s pop hits.**

**(TC: 00:38:34)**

**Sushma Jansari: What is wrong with that, I ask?**

**(TC: 00:38:36)**

**Hugo Chapman: Well, it's a bit unfair on the younger generation.**

**(TC: 00:38:41)**

**Sushma Jansari: Actually, this summer we got a family edition of Trivial Pursuit, and even my six year old can get some of the questions, which is really quite sweet, so she plays with us. Yes, that's quite interesting. I see that there are Harry Potter Trivial Pursuit cards, so I'm angling for a pack of those for Christmas.**

**(TC: 00:38:59)**

**Hugo Chapman: Okay, good idea. The podcast will probably come out a little bit too late for your family to hear it and rush off, but maybe not, I don't know.**

**(TC: 00:39:09)**

**Sushma Jansari: Well, my husband is sitting right across from me, and he's listening in.**

**(TC: 00:39:15)**

**Hugo Chapman: Okay, dropping subtle hits there, Sushma.**

**(TC: 00:39:17)**

**Sushma Jansari: Very subtle, yes, I'm a subtle person.**

**(TC: 00:39:19)**

**Hugo Chapman: Anyway, Irving, of course, has collected boardgames for the British Museum based on the historical collections we've got all the way back to the Game of Ur, and yes, he knows a huge amount about the development of boardgames through the centuries.**

**(TC: 00:39:41)**

**Sushma Jansari: That's incredible, yes. I believe there is even a set that came to us via Hans Sloane, a set of chess, which was bought by his nephew when his nephew was travelling in India, which is fascinating, actually, so we do have quite a few lovely sets of chess at the museum, and in fact Snakes and Ladders, another (TC 00:40:00) one from India which is quite fabulous.**

**(TC: 00:40:03)**

**Hugo Chapman: Yes, we have quite a lot of, in the Prints and Drawings we have obviously the printed boards, things like Game of the Goose, which is a bit like Snakes and Ladders. Obviously, across the centuries the need to fill in time, you know, before television was, boardgames were incredibly important, and we found ourselves playing a lot more of them over lockdown, I have to say.**

**(TC: 00:40:29)**

**Sushma Jansari: Definitely, yes. All of a sudden, we were playing things like, as you say, Cluedo or Guess Who, Ludo, we played Ludo almost every single day over the summer, we've now put that quietly away for a little while.**

**(TC: 00:40:43)**

**Hugo Chapman: Right. I love a bit of Ludo.**

**(TC: 00:40:47)**

**Sushma Jansari: So, here's Irving talking about games. This segment is from the Albukhary Gallery of the Islamic World microsite, but there is lots of content about all aspects of the Islamic world, from astrolabes to mosque lamps and so much more. The website address is Islamicworld.britishmuseum.org.**

(TC: 00:41:06)

Irving Finkel: Hello, I'm Irving Finkel, and I'm the curator in the British Museum who everybody seems to think knows all about board-games, so now they've asked me to say something about board-games in the Islamic world, and some of the things which you can see in our new gallery. So, to start off with, an interesting matter is that board-games have been played in the Middle East for a very long time indeed, because archaeologists who work in the Neolithic period, about 8000 BC, have not infrequently found what are obviously gaming boards with two rows of holes carved in a flat piece of stone at a time long before writing, long before we have any extraneous knowledge about how people really lived then, but they were clearly gaming boards. They are important because they show that when people settle and they live in the same place, and they have leisure, and their urban life develops, then the role of board-games is established for the first time, and they are a very important part of humanity's daily life all over the world. Sometimes, they are for stimulating hostility, sometimes they are even for gambling, but normally speaking, people take recourse to board-games for amusement and entertainment, and to fill in time when it's too hot to do anything else. So, this certainly applies in the Middle East, and when we look at the history, subsequent to the very earliest times, some board-games stand out very strongly. When you look at all the games of the world in an encyclopaedic way, there are some among them which are what you might call world conquerors, and two of these world conquerors are very much bound up with the world of Islam, one is chess and one is backgammon. So, everybody knows, or everybody ought to know, that chess is a game of war for two players played on a gaming board, of course, of 64 squares, and what happens is that you have an army on each side and you battle with the idea of dethroning and killing the enemy king, in which case the game is all over.

It's always a problem when you try to find the first evidence for something archaeologically, very difficult indeed. We don't have very early chess pieces in museums or from excavations, but we have some poetry which suggests that in about the sixth century AD, something like that, chess took shape as a game of war played for entertainment. It's been suggested, with a great deal of plausibility, that in fact it grew out of something which was not really a game, that you had a society where there are knights, young knights, who had to be trained in warfare, who had to be schooled in the principle of safe attack and sides working together. People carved little bits and pieces and had boards on the ground to demonstrate how troops, and infantry, and elephants, and camels can work together in a furious battle in order to win. I think it's probably quite a reasonable theory, a lot of people believe this, that it was that sort of device which gave rise to what became really a board-game, where the enmity and the ferocity of real warfare was diminished to such a point that people no longer felt physically frightened. So, the very early chess pieces are hard to find, but as a matter of fact in the new gallery we have some of the best ever discovered, there's a small group of them, which are quite small, and they're carved of ivory, and then they are painted in many colours. It's an unusual thing if you don't think about such matters, that if you carve something in such a beautiful material as ivory, which has been in use for centuries and centuries, that are painted afterwards seems rather strange, but it's often been true of Indian chess pieces that that was what was done. In this particular set there are two major pieces with very lively looking war elephants, and in front of them a couple of pawns, and these pawns are little guys sitting down holding very powerful looking muskets or some primitive form of gun, with which they're going to attack the enemy side.

They're very charming and pretty when you see them in the case, but if you imagine life size, them coming towards you in order to deal with you firmly they are still possessed of this kind of militant quality. An interesting sideline about these chess pieces is that, as I said, we don't have any really early ones, and these ones are probably quite early in the whole history because they used to belong to a man called Sir Hans Sloane, who had a very important role to play in the creation of the British Museum, and his collections form the nucleus of what we have today. He was the sort of collector who obviously suborned people whenever they went somewhere to find curiosities for him for his museum, and this small group of chess pieces was purchased in India by Hans Sloane's nephew. So, this nephew has obviously been browbeaten regularly, saying, 'Any time you go, keep your eyes open, I'm always looking for interesting things,' and so he came back with a velvet chessboard with this handful of chess pieces, not by any means the complete set. It was probably handed over to his uncle in about 1710 or 1720. We can be sure that when he acquired them, they were already old. They must have been a curious set from a long time before that turned up somewhere because he would never have bought a new set that wasn't complete, so we can probably add another couple of hundred years onto that chess set from the time of acquisition, so we've probably got something from about 1500 or so, which is rather startling. So, within Islam, for example, in the caliphate in Baghdad, there were on the staff chess grandmasters who could beat all-comers, they were such a skilful set of players that they could play blindfold, and they also invented chess problems. People know about chest problems in newspapers, sometimes if you've got absolutely nothing to do on a train journey you can try and work out how to win in an impossible situation, but this is a very old matter.

In the Baghdad court there were these grandmasters who bequeathed us in manuscript form chess pieces which are a puzzle for a grandmaster today, so even though it may not be that the best chess player in the eleventh century would have beaten Bobby Fischer with his eyes shut, but I think he would have given him a run for his money. Chess, of course, is not a game where luck is really supposed to have a role, although of course if you look at it realistically, if you play somebody who's not as good as you, that is good luck, so that is a helpful thing, but in general the success of a player does not depend on fortuity. The other giant game which held sway in India and also travelled round the world and is played all over the world in a rather similar way to chess is the game of backgammon, sometimes called nard, which is also a world conqueror of equal strength, and it's successful for a different reason. The thing about that game is that it has dice as a crucial component, but no one can throw the dice throws that they desire, so the skilful player has to learn, has to know has to, once he's made a throw, make the best possible use of it, so you have a game where the person in control of their side is given data, so to speak, to work with. So, you have a game where the best players always win because they're best at doing it, so that the balance between skill, intellectual skill, and pure luck in throwing dice, is on a good footing so that the boardgame is moved away entirely from that huge family of race games which existed before and of course still exist elsewhere in the world where the dice are everything and it's just lucky, and you throw the dice and you sometimes hold your breath, sometimes you mutter things, sometimes you swear under your breath. In order to get the special throw that you want, people get very excited, and all sorts of groans when they fail to do it.

There are many games like that which are played with a lot of pleasure all round the world, but backgammon is like the sophisticated descendant of this onto a different footing. So, assuming that the world survives and all the people who live in it continue to do what they are doing, chess and backgammon are probably here for good, and presumably before long will be being played in the (TC 00:50:00) planets of the solar system in the same kind of way.

(TC: 00:50:05)

Sian Toogood: Hi, everyone, it looks like I have just enough time to tack on another shameless advert for the Britishmuseumshoponline.org. In the Britishmuseumshoponline.org you will find so many gorgeous boardgames, perfect for friendly or not so friendly get togethers this winter. We have playing cards, replica chess sets and a replica of the Game of Ur, not mentioned in this podcast, but we do have a lovely video of Irving playing the Game of Ur on the British Museum's YouTube channel, so don't forget to check that out. Just in case you thought I'd forgotten, we have a delightful tea towel featuring the Lewis chessmen, so why not head to the Britishmuseumshoponline.org today?

**(TC: 00:50:51)**

**Hugo Chapman: You and your bloody tea towels, a woman obsessed.**

**(TC: 00:50:56)**

**Sushma Jansari: I have that one, and these are just the two that are on the back of the chairs, and I've got this one as well, the Troy one.**

**(TC: 00:51:02)**

**Hugo Chapman: Oh, god, I'm surrounded by tea towel fanatics.**

**(TC: 00:51:06)**

**Sushma Jansari: I do like tea towels, actually.**

**(TC: 00:51:10)**

**Hugo Chapman: Okay, so we've reached the end, thank you very much for listening, and we look forward to getting back together in the new year, but we're going to take a little break, isn't that right?**

**(TC: 00:51:24)**

**Sushma Jansari: Yes, we're just going to take a couple of months out, and then we're going to come back to you with lots of great new content in the new year. In the meantime, do please rate and review the episode on the pod capture of your choice, and feel free to e-mail us, which is podcast@britishmuseum.org.**

**(TC: 00:51:40)**

**Hugo Chapman: If you can follow us on social media at British Museum, we'd love to hear from you.**

**(TC: 00:51:45)**

**Sushma Jansari: Yes. So, in the meantime, have an absolutely wonderful Christmas.**

**(TC: 00:51:49)**

**Hugo Chapman: And a Happy New Year. May 2021 be a hell of a lot better than 2020.**