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British artist Sacha Jafri shakes hands with Andre Abdoune, who bought his artwork for \$62 million at auction in Dubai.



The original painting, "The Journey of Humanity" by British artist Sacha Jafri, holds the Guinness World Record for the largest art canvas.— Reuters photos

Largest art canvas sells for \$62 million

Work by British artist Sacha Jafri consisting of the world's largest painting on canvas has been sold for \$62 million at an auction in Dubai, organizers said on Tuesday. The "Journey of Humanity" is split into 70 framed sections spanning 1,595.76 square meters-equivalent to nearly four basketball courts. Organizers said in a statement that the work sold for \$62 million, double the amount targeted, with the money going to charities helping children.

Andre Abdoune, a French national residing in Dubai—one of the seven emirates that make up the UAE—bought all 70 segments on Monday at an auction in Dubai's "Atlantis, The Palm". The work, confirmed by the Guinness World Records as the "Largest Art Canvas", had been put on display in the ballroom of the opulent hotel, and was originally meant to be sold in segments. "I come from a poor family, and I knew at times how it feels to have nothing to eat,

but at least I had the love of my parents, schooling, and support," Abdoune, who runs a crypto-currency business, told AFP. "The painting was very powerful when I saw it, and, for me, it would have been a mistake to separate the pieces," said the former stock trader. Abdoune also highlighted the coronavirus pandemic, noting how it had taken a toll on children around the world. "We have to react, so if I can bring my little piece in the puzzle,

I'm happy," he said. Jafri had aimed to raise \$30 million to fund health, sanitation and education initiatives for children in impoverished parts of the world. The 44-year-old contemporary artist is hoping his painting will spark a humanitarian movement. Children from 140 countries submitted artwork online to be included in Jafri's creation, which was completed at the end of September. — AFP

Prince Harry joins \$1.7 billion US counseling startup

Britain's Prince Harry on Tuesday added to a growing portfolio of post-royal jobs, becoming "chief impact officer" at a San Francisco startup that provides mobile-based coaching, counseling and mentorship. Amid a highly public spat with Buckingham Palace, Harry and his American wife Meghan Markle, a mixed-race former television actress, now live in California after stepping away from royal duties. An explosive interview they gave to Oprah Winfrey this month in which they claimed an unnamed royal had asked how dark their baby's skin would be-plunged the monarchy into its biggest crisis since the death of Harry's mother, princess Diana, in 1997.

In his new role with BetterUp, the Duke of Sussex will champion the importance of maximizing human potential worldwide, according to chief executive Alexi Robichaux. "I firmly believe that focusing on and prioritizing our mental fitness unlocks potential and opportunity that we never knew we had inside of us," Prince Harry said in a BetterUp blog post. "As the Royal Marine Commandos say, 'It's a state of mind.' We all have it in us." BetterUp's platform combines behavioral science, artificial intelligence, and human coaching to optimize personal growth and professional development, according to the company, which last month announced it had raised \$125 million in funding at a valuation of \$1.73 billion.

In his new job, the prince—who said he had used the BetterUp platform himself—will not manage employees or have direct reports, according to The Wall Street Journal. Founded in 2013, BetterUp has grown to more than 270 employees and a network of some 2,000 coaches. A list of its clients included NASA, Chevron, Mars, Genentech, Snap, and Warner Media. Since leaving their roles as working royals, Harry and Meghan have already signed lucrative digital media deals to capitalize on their celebrity—one to produce content for Netflix, and another to present podcasts for Spotify.



In this file photo Britain's Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, speaks to members of the media at Windsor Castle in Windsor. — AFP



Romanian national and the main dancer of the Moulin Rouge Alexandru Nicolae Denes aka Alex Denes poses during a photo session at the Moulin Rouge in Paris. — AFP photos



Romanian national and the main dancer of the Moulin Rouge Alexandru Nicolae Denes aka Alex Denes poses during a photo session.

Moulin Rouge counting the days until cancan returns

The feathers may be gathering dust, but a year into its longest shutdown in more than a century, at least the windmill is still turning atop the Moulin Rouge. "It would be too sad otherwise," said Jean-Victor Clerico, whose family runs the Parisian landmark. The sails are moving, but everything else has been frozen since the last cancan was performed on March 12, 2020 — the longest break since the theatre was destroyed by fire in 1915.

Clerico recalls the following day, phoning round 1,600 ticket-holders to tell them the show was cancelled: "It was unprecedented and painful, and we never could have imagined that the closure would last this long." He thought it would end in the autumn, then the spring. Now, with non-essential businesses again shut to guard against a fresh spike in infections, he would be delighted with June. "It's hard on morale," he admitted.

For one of the stars, 32-year-old

dancer Mathilde Tutiaux, that means more months of trying to rehearse in her small Parisian apartment where the kitchen counter doubles as a stretching barre. "This third lockdown is demoralizing but we remain hopeful. We will return to the stage. The worst is past," she told AFP. There are 60 members of the cast, all stuck at home now for a year, trying hard to keep in shape for when they need to resume one of the most demanding of dance routines.

"Dance is not only stretching. It's hard to keep the rhythm and maintain the shapes, so we have organized sports sessions on Zoom with our ballet teacher and I go running as much as possible," said Tutiaux. They are at least supported

by the state. "There is a little loss of income, but we can't complain in France. In London and on Broadway, it's been terrible for our fellow dancers," said Tutiaux.

'Give hope'

The Moulin Rouge at the foot of Montmartre opened at the height of Belle Epoque Paris in 1889, quickly associated with the wild cancan dance and immortalized in the paintings of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. It has lived many lives, rebuilt after the fire, surviving through World War II, its boards graced by legends from Edith Piaf to Charles Aznavour, and then getting another global boost with the release of the 2001

eponymous film starring Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor.

Today, it remains a favourite with tourists, who account for half its business in normal times. Clerico remains hopeful it can work even with a limited reopening. "Social distancing won't be a problem. Although the numbers will certainly be reduced, we are optimistic given the attraction of the Moulin," he said. The other neighboring temples to "nude chic"—Le Lido, Crazy Horse—are in the same boat. Le Paradis Latin, across the river on the Left Bank, managed to reopen for a few short weeks in the autumn before another lockdown hit.

"Despite everything, we saw the reopening as an act of citizenship," said owner Walter Butler. "We had to give hope to the public and the troupe." Like many cafes and restaurants, they have taken advantage of the break to spruce up and say they are ready to go. Well, with a bit of a limbering up. "As soon as we get the green light, we will need six weeks to get the machine moving again. The cancan requires a lot of rehearsals," said Clerico. — AFP



Jean-Victor Clerico, owner and great-great-great grandson of the founder of the Moulin Rouge poses during a photo session at the Moulin Rouge in Paris.

Oscar-nominated US actor George Segal dies at 87



In this file photo actor George Segal puts his hand on his star during his Walk of Fame ceremony in Hollywood, California. — AFP

US actor George Segal, whose long film and television career spanned from the 1960s to the present day, has died at age 87. Segal, who was nominated for an Oscar for the 1966 drama "Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf?", died in Santa Rosa, California of complications from bypass surgery, his wife told the Hollywood news publication Deadline on Tuesday. While younger viewers may know him as grandfather Albert "Pops" Solomon in the ABC network TV series "The Goldbergs," his long film career included starring roles in "The Duchess and the Dirtwater Fox" (1976) with Goldie Hawn, and "Fun With Dick and Jane" (1977) with Jane Fonda.

"We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of George Segal," Sony Pictures Television—which produces "The Goldbergs"—said in a statement. "He was a true icon and legend in this business and an integral member of our Sony family." "So sorry to hear about George Segal's passing. We had such fun making Owl and the Pussycat," tweeted Barbra Streisand, who co-starred with Segal in the



This photo actor George Segal at AFI Life Achievement award to Mike Nichols held at the Sony Studios in Los Angeles.

1970 romantic comedy, "May he Rest In Peace." And James Gunn, writer and director of Marvel's "Guardians of the Galaxy" films, wrote on Twitter that he was "a movie star who commanded our attention while still seeming like one of us."

Born February 17, 1934 in a small town in the state of New York, Segal studied acting and had early roles in Broadway theater productions. His first major Hollywood role was in "The Young

Doctors" (1961), and later in "The Longest Day" (1962) about the allied landing in Normandy during World War II. In "Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf?" he played a young professor alongside two megastars of the time, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. Segal won a Golden Globe award for his role in "A Touch of Class" (1973) with Glenda Jackson.

On TV Segal was known for his roles in shows such as the NBC sitcom "Just Shoot Me!" (1997-2003), and later "The Goldbergs," which began its run in 2013 and is still in production. "Today we lost a legend," tweeted series creator Adam Goldberg. "It was a true honor being a small part of George Segal's amazing legacy. By pure fate, I ended up casting the perfect person to play Pops. Just like my grandfather, George was a kid at heart with a magical spark." On its official Twitter account, the TV show posted: "His talent left an indelible mark and we're grateful for the laughter and joy he has given us all." — AFP