

selves to tree trunks to save the grebe, I'm rooting for the protesters. You don't need deckle edges on your shelves to be glad that they exist.

I fancy that Spear's readers will, on the whole, number among those with the broadness of spirit to share that view – not to mention including a few cultivated souls of a bibliophilic bent who will positively revel in the deckle edge. The deckle edge, be it never so minority an interest, is a thing that gives the books of today a subtle but classy connection to the books of the past – those rough-edged signatures, those bare ruin'd quires – that your 18th-century gent would have gently cut with a paper-knife as he progressed through his book. Its vanishing as if it had never been, we can count as a little victory for the forces of ignorance, and a small but telling step in the direction of an algo-directed publishing monoculture.

I'm told Mr Bezos and his minions have some unsound views on 'French flaps', too; but I think that's probably something best left uninvestigated. 📖

THE ART WORLD

ENDLESS LOVE

Anna Solomon

BOBBI BROWN'S New Jersey annex/studio is your quintessential beauty tycoon's New Jersey annex/studio: exposed brick, a Union Jack-embellished chesterfield sofa and a Labrador. Brown fits the part too: boldly accessorised, fashionably bespectacled and very American.

Our video call started with a lot of rustling, PRs jumping on and off and me saying 'Hello?' into the void for about 20 seconds. Chaos gradually abated. 'I love Zoom! Not really,' said the

beauty entrepreneur who founded an eponymous make-up brand. 'Hey guys, how are ya? I'm moving over here because I hate side light.'

Also calling in, from Italy, was contemporary artist Endless, a favourite of Brown's. He was a perfect foil. Reserved and enigmatic, he wore a black T-shirt but not his trademark face-covering (even before Covid he would never appear in pictures without the bottom half of his face obscured). 'How should I refer to you?' I asked. 'Endless is fine,' said Endless.

Brown discovered Endless on a trip to London with her husband. 'It was a crazy work week, and I usually leave one day for messing around and on all the sides of the buildings were these Endless graphics and I said to my husband, "I love this stuff, I want to check it out!" The next day I went to the gallery and fell in love. When I got home I called and bought a piece, I think I own four of them now.'

Endless started as a street artist, hoping to get noticed after graduating from art school and realising that it had taught him nothing about converting his talent into business: 'Street art is free advertising. If you hit the right spots at the right time, you can get the exact viewers that you want,' he said. 'That's why I always used to put it in West London and Central London.'

One day, the then-managing director of Liberty London, Ed Burstell, happened to spot some of Endless's work in West London, and was impressed (coincidentally, Burstell and Brown are close friends and discovered their joint passion for Endless over tea at Brown's apartment). Endless was invited to decorate the Liberty storefront and secured an exhibition soon after. 'It's all just spiralled from there. Now I'm doing shows all over the world.'

His work retains a graffitied feel, depicting themes of celebrity culture and consumerism. Brown's enthusiasm for it is infectious. One of the pieces she owns is the bright pink 'Lizzy Vuitton' (acrylic and spray paint on canvas of the Queen wearing Louis Vuitton). 'The art just makes me feel good,' said Brown. 'It's the colour explosion and the juxtaposition of subjects – a combination of these bright neons with things that I love. It actually calls to this crazy brain.'

But Brown isn't just a fan; the art influences her work, too. 'Being a full-on visual person, I don't really care about words. As a creative, there's nothing like things that inspire you, whether it's colours, art, fashion. Beauty and art have always worked together.'

In this spirit, Brown is getting Endless on-board with her new venture: Jones Road



Bobbi Brown



Beauty. Brown started out as a freelance make-up artist with a speciality in natural looks. She sold her first 10 lipsticks out of her house before a major department store took a chance and launched the product. 'Bobbi Brown' soon became a household name and was acquired by Estée Lauder after five years. Brown remained an employee for 22 years before leaving to embark upon Jones Road Beauty, a 'clean make-up brand that teaches people how to just look like themselves but better – and it's all UK-inspired'.

'Are you a fan of the UK?' I asked, remembering the chesterfield. Brown scoffed. 'Let me show you a couple things.' She took us on a tour, through a cavernous shooting studio to an office where employees were tapping away at their laptops. She pointed at two Endless pieces on the wall and a Union Jack refrigerator. 'Honestly, don't ask what's wrong with me. I'm completely obsessed with your Queen, and this was way before The Crown.'

As we said our goodbyes, I was surprised to learn that this was the first time that Brown and Endless had spoken 'face-to-face'. 'It was a pleasure to meet you, Endless,' said Brown. 'The first thing I do every morning is look at my bright pink Queen in my bedroom. I will look at it in a more personal way now.' 📍

POSTCARD

WORK WONDERS

Max Johnson

WE SPENT THE first lockdown in Exmoor. It was a gorgeous spring, and going on sun-bathed walks was a highlight of what was a difficult time for many. But when word spread that there would be a second wave of the virus, I knew that meant another lockdown. With a baby now filling our lives with joy, I just couldn't face being confined to our home for a long Covid winter, having our social freedoms eroded until all we had left was Ocado and BBC iPlayer.

I'd read a lot about people relocating to Bali to 'work from home', or to send their kids to the

eco-inspired Green School. Fortunately, my work afforded me the opportunity to come to Asia (principally to Hong Kong) so that's what we decided to do. When there was a gap in the various lockdowns, we seized the chance to visit Bali. And how good was it that we did.

When the news came that we would likely have to isolate or, at worse, quarantine in some shabby airport hotel in the UK on our return, the blow was softened by the surroundings that morning. We were staying at the luscious and resplendent Villa Melissa, nestled up the coast in the quiet neighbourhood of Pererenan, complete with two infinity pools and a tennis court. There could be very little wrong with 'working from home' for the next few days.

Bali is an island rich with culture and a depth which is readily evident every morning as offerings of small baskets woven from palm or banana leaves, holding flowers, oils, salt, money, and cookies, are placed outside the homes. Scooters buzz along the lanes shuttling people to and from ceremonies, elegantly dressed in white robes and adorned with colourful arrangements of flowers. A convenience store will often sit next to a temple. It is a special place where kindness and friendliness come first. Hindus, Christians, Buddhists all make up a vibrant community and to be a guest here at any time is a privilege.

But this is a very different time. As I write, the borders have been closed to tourists and many, if not all, of the hotels stand empty. The streets of Kuta are deserted. The traffic jams are gone. And in truth it is a real struggle for people to make ends meet. If there can be a

place on your to-visit list, please make it Bali, or Indonesia in general. Lombok, now complete with an international airport, will soon host a Moto GP. Komodo and Raja Ampat are the stuff of diving dreams. Even in Bali, it is very easy to hire a car and drive off into the hilly uplands of Ubud, cruising along rice fields and finding hidden waterfalls or lakes. Exploring Indonesia is nourishment for the soul.

Villa Melissa sits right on the ocean with a stunning lawn adjacent to the beach and a rolling surf break called 'Punch'. A team of 12 staff tend to your every need and when you just want to lie back and sip on a coconut all you can hear is the sound of the waves breaking. Or you can have a massage at a secluded end of the garden. We were gloriously well-looked after.

Bali for me is a significant place. I got engaged here and married on the nearby island of Sumba. I've seen how Covid has decimated lives and industries and I was impressed at how seriously people were taking their approach to social distancing. Curfews were in place, vigorous hand sanitising was in force.

The number of options available to travellers to Bali can be overwhelming. But a complete stay would include a visit to Uluwatu, Ubud, the gold beaches of Nusa Dua or Jimbaran, and North Kuta or Canggu. It is the latter which would make Pererenan the perfect place from which to explore the island.

'Working from home' may not suit everyone, but if we could all do it from places such as this, I would certainly be all for it. 📍

Villa Melissa can be booked via theluxenomad.com or villamelissabali.com



Villa Melissa, Bali