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view



A-list entertainment and travel

Inside man

Simon Pegg reveals his top-secret plans for world domination

A WALK TO REMEMBER
Take a South African safari on foot

THE UNUSUAL SUSPECTS
Could Ocean's 8 really happen?

SKELETON CREW
Meet the team rebuilding dinosaurs for real





NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

OCEAN'S 8 SEES SANDRA BULLOCK AND CO ROBBING THE MET GALA - BUT IS IT POSSIBLE? WE ASK THE EXPERTS

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ILLUSTRATIONS SIMONE MASSONI

Every year, on the first Monday in May, New York loses its cool. While most people are grudgingly ending their first day back at work, the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York City – aka the Met – holds its annual fundraiser for the Costume Institute, attracting the most glittering group of celebrities in the world, and leaving normally unflappable New Yorkers starstruck.

For high-end jewellers, the gala also represents a chance to have some of the most recognisable faces advertise their wares, as the red carpet essentially becomes a catwalk. With so much money hanging from the necks, ears and wrists of the great and the good, it's perhaps the single most valuable jewellery collection anywhere in the world – pretty tempting if you're a jewel thief. Which is why, in *Ocean's 8*, an all-female squad led by Debbie Ocean (Bullock) sneak into the gala to rob one of its attendees of a Cartier necklace worth \$150m.

In reality, it's incredibly unlikely the event would be robbed – much less by a wise-cracking hit squad – but if it were, would they have any chance of pulling it off? We spoke to a few of the real-world players. Admittedly, some were more forthcoming than others.

“ALTHOUGH YOU WOULD THINK THAT SAFETY IN NUMBERS IS A GOOD THING, MORE PEOPLE CAN MEAN MORE UNPREDICTABILITY”

THE SECURITY EXPERT

George R Foster, the group managing director of Intelligent Protection International, a security firm which handles events such as the Met Gala

What are the specific challenges of working at a high-profile event such as the Met Gala?

“Event security will have a challenging time dealing with things such as crowd control, managing the press, liaising

with the other security teams and doing major incident management planning should something significant go wrong. Asset protection will have their own challenges in looking after the highly valuable exhibits at the event, and the close-protection teams will be there in droves trying to look after the interests of their principals [clients], including their personal safety, the avoidance of embarrassing mishaps, handling logistical challenges and also the protection of the assets that they may have on their person.”

Does having all those extra people in attendance make things more difficult for the security detail?

“I'd have to say that, although you'd think safety in numbers is a good thing, more people can mean more unpredictability. It's important to strike a balance when you refer to 'extra people', as they will ultimately have their own directives and this can cause difficulties. If you are not able to adapt and overcome while maintaining a highly comprehensive level of safety for the guests, then you'll have a very difficult time.”

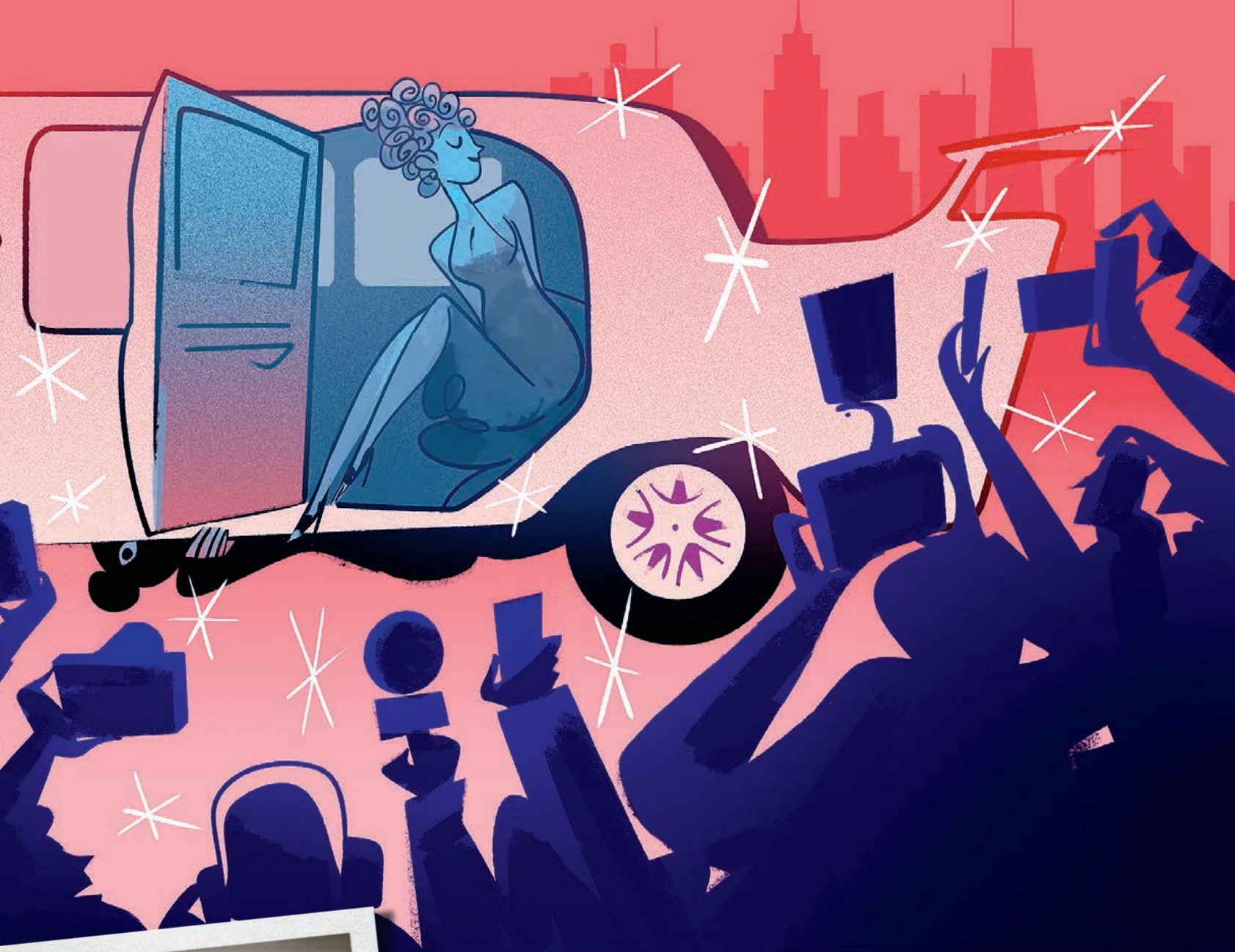
If something goes wrong – say a high-value item goes missing – what's the protocol?

“Everyone should know exactly what their role is – and if they don't, you may have a problem. From a medical emergency, to a gas leak or fire, to a heist, everyone should know what to do. It should all be predetermined and all the relevant personnel briefed so they should know exactly what to do should something such as a heist, or an attempted heist, occur.”

In the film, some of the celebrities are depicted as being really bratty – has that ever been an issue for you?

“Honestly? Yes, of course. But I've been fortunate enough to work with some exceptionally kind-hearted and well-mannered principals too.”





THE CELEBRITY HOTELIER

Isabelle Hogan, the chef concierge at The Mark, the New York hotel that hosts more famous guests than any other on the night of the Gala

Things must get pretty hectic on the evening of the event, right?

"It's crazy, amazing. You get all that adrenaline, you know? For us, everything has to be perfect. The guests and fashion houses have reserved a year in advance. They know we're sold out months before the event, so the planning normally starts six to eight months ahead. It's incredible."

How do you coordinate it all?

"Normally you could walk to the Met in under 10 minutes, but on the night there's a huge line of cars outside for all the fashion houses. They call me and say, 'Mrs So-and-So will come down,' then we have to make sure the right car there is at the right moment so we don't put the wrong person in the wrong one. It can be very stressful, but also fun. You have

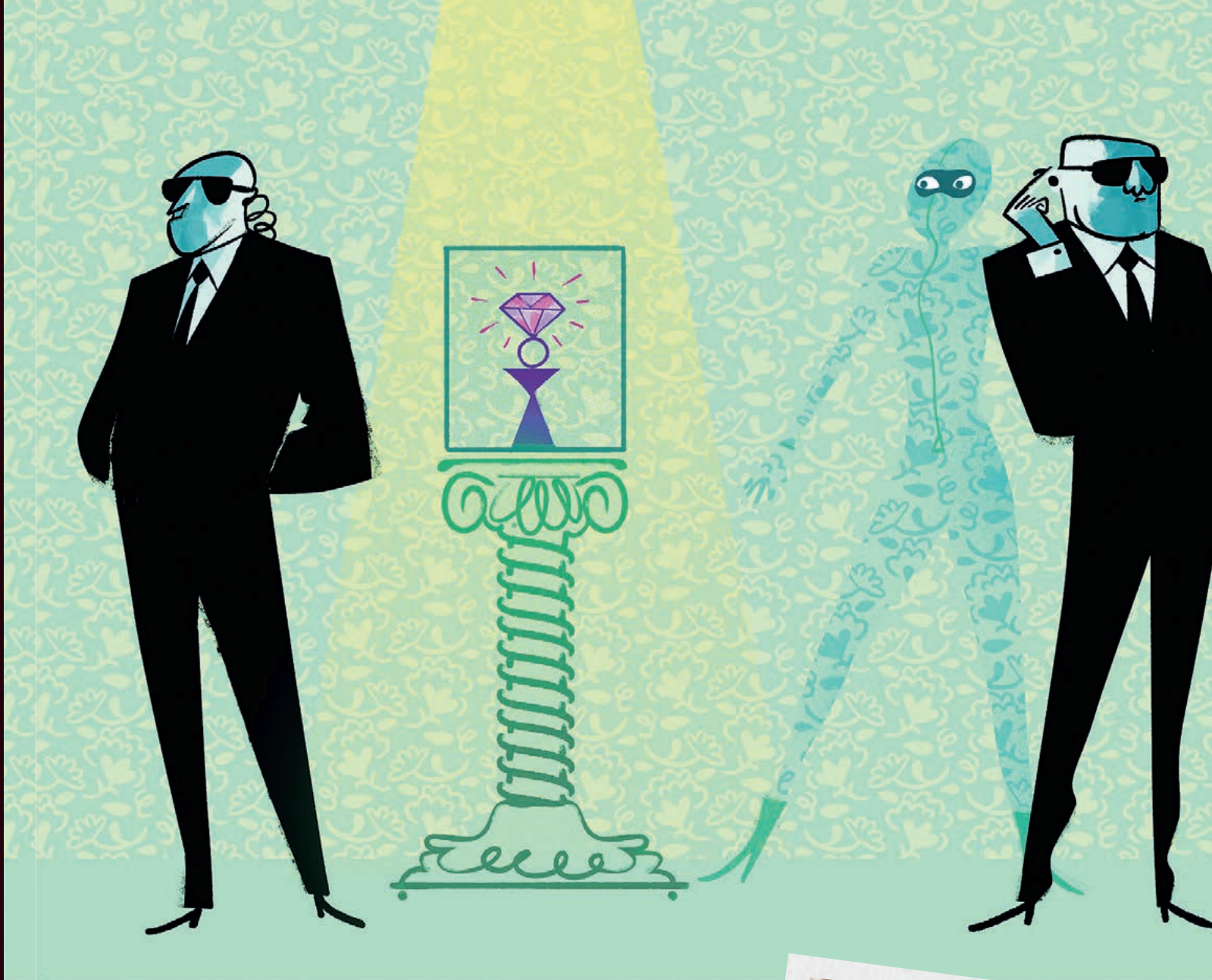
all the arrivals and all the celebrities getting ready and we get as excited as they do."

How about security?

"The public have to be kept back, and there's security throughout the hotel. Even with the dresses we have to make sure we know who's bringing what and when. The dresses themselves can be worth thousands and thousands of dollars so they can't be misplaced. We have very high-profile guests with very expensive jewellery. Some of it arrives with a policeman, and then we have to get the guest down to the lobby to sign for it - we can't accept it ourselves. There's a lot of hair and make-up stylists and artists too. We have a special elevator for them so we can track where they are and make sure everyone is accounted for."

Is it all your own security?

"We have our own, plus second- and third-party security inside and out. We also have a few inspectors we know from the NYPD who stay outside. Some of the guests bring their own, too, so we connect with them. If anything was to happen, of course we'd let the authorities know immediately." >



THE JEWELLER

Pierre Rainero, head of heritage and style for Cartier. The company worked closely with the producers, who based the film's Toussaint necklace on an invaluable piece designed for the maharaja of Nawanagar

Did Cartier suggest that the Nawanagar necklace was featured?

"Yes. Warner Brothers wanted a piece so grand it could be divided into several jewels among the eight main protagonists. We referred to statement necklaces made for the maharajas, known for their significant size. The Nawanagar necklace was chosen, as the original piece no longer exists. We could then replace the coloured diamonds with zirconium oxides without having to consult the owner."

Are there really legendary pieces in the Cartier vault which are rarely removed?

"Cartier has a collection of vintage pieces that are held in an undisclosed location. They are exhibited to the public in some of the world's most prestigious cultural institutions,

to raise awareness of the art of Cartier, our exceptional design and craftsmanship."

Which is the most valuable?

"None of the pieces are for sale as they are invaluable – not only from a monetary point of view but also because they attest to a specific know-how or time period."

How important is the Met Gala to Cartier?

"It's an event with worldwide resonance, and consequently it is important for Cartier to be present. VIPs often reach out to us and it is a pleasure for us to accommodate them."

How complicated is the security?

"We never discuss security-related matters."

Do you provide insurance for the jewellery on loan?

"We never discuss security-related matters."

Do you provide security details as depicted in the film?

"We never discuss security-related matters."



1. Dye hair blonde
2. Feign interest
3. Snaffle necklace