

Solar Flares and Happiness

It isn't only the moon that affects human emotions and behavior; the sun does, too.

There is evidence that restaurant diners tip better on sunny days and that the American stock market performs better on sunny days. On the other hand, reports The Conversation, one Australian study found that shoppers exiting stores correctly recalled seven times as many random objects placed near the checkout area on cloudy days as on sunny days.



On August 31, 2012 a long prominence/filament of solar material that had been hovering in the Sun's atmosphere, the corona, erupted out into space at 4:36 p.m. EDT. Seen here from the Solar Dynamics Observatory, the flare caused an aurora on Earth on September 3.

*photo credits:
Solar
Dynamics
Observatory*

Let's face it, mood could affect all of these situations and many more -- for better or worse. According to Communities Digital News, from 1948 to 1997, the Institute of North Industrial Ecology Problems in Russia studied the effects of the three annual peaks in solar flare activity during those years. Each peak mapped to an increase in human anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder and suicide in the city of Kirovsk.

Researchers speculated that the solar storms changed the circadian rhythms

december 2016 contents

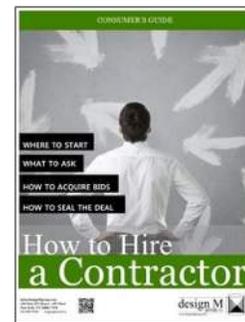
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Did You Know ?

We are the leading local provider of tools and resources for people planning on adding on to, renovating or building a home.

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**One of our recent publications is...
"How to Hire a Contractor"**



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Archi-fact:

Topkapi Palace in Istanbul was designed over many years by as many as four (4) different architects. Depending on which parts of the buildings are included in its measurements the size of it approaches for 7,500,000 square feet. There is a magnificent view of the river from many parts of the Palace which makes the visit even more enjoyable.

Iconic Building of the Month

The Topkapi Palace at Istanbul

For nearly 400 years, the Ottoman sultans ruled their empire from Topkapi Palace at Istanbul, Turkey. In 1459, Sultan Mehmed II conquered Constantinople and began building the palace in the renamed city. The palace housed up to 4,000 people and included a hospital, bakery and mint.

Several architects designed the various parts of the palace, which was added to over the years. One of them was Mimar Sinan, said to have lived from 1489 to 1588. He traveled throughout Southeastern Europe and the Middle East. As a result, both Christian and Muslim styles influenced his work.

The palace is a bulwark topped with domes and featuring arched doorways, gilded eaves, fountains and pavilions. Complexes of rooms, including 400 that formed the harem

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photo credits: G.dallorto



Archi-Quote

This month we are quoting a non architect. However since this invention changed the world he is worthy to be included.

“Concentrate all your thoughts upon the work at hand. The sun's rays do not burn until brought to a focus.”

Alexander Graham Bell

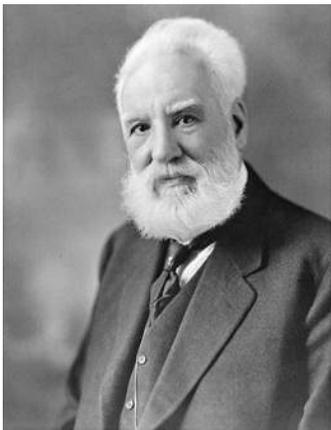


photo credits: Moffett Studio - Library and Archives Canada

Solar Flares and Happiness

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that in turn impacted the endocrine system. “The pineal gland in our brain is affected by the electromagnetic activity,” they said. This causes the gland to produce excess melatonin, and melatonin is the brain’s built in ‘downer’ that helps us sleep.”

“It all comes down to a complex relationship among sunlight, melatonin and serotonin that we’re only just starting to understand,” reports the website Science: How Stuff Works. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that is tied to states of wakefulness, being in a “good mood,” and happiness. Plenty of time in the sun helps with this, and sunscreen does not interfere with the process.

Vitamin D, which we make when the sun hits our skin (but only when there is no intervening sunscreen), helps keep serotonin levels high. All it takes is 10 to 20 minutes or so of sun exposure several times a week.

Plus, “too much exposure to limited-spectrum indoor lighting, and the related under exposure to full-spectrum light, has been connected with problems like fatigue, reduced immune function and possibly fertility issues,” according to Science.

So pull up those blinds! Throw open the curtains and get some sun!

Iconic Building of the Month

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that also housed the mother, children and servants of the sultan, cluster around four major courtyards, the open air centers of daily life. Ornate floral designs and colorful tiles cover many of the walls; others are whitewashed. Passages link the complexes and provided escape routes for the sultan. The Throne Room's opulence is complemented with gifts from foreign rulers, such as clocks given by Queen Victoria.

Topkapi Palace is now a museum and tourist destination, providing a glimpse into another way of life.

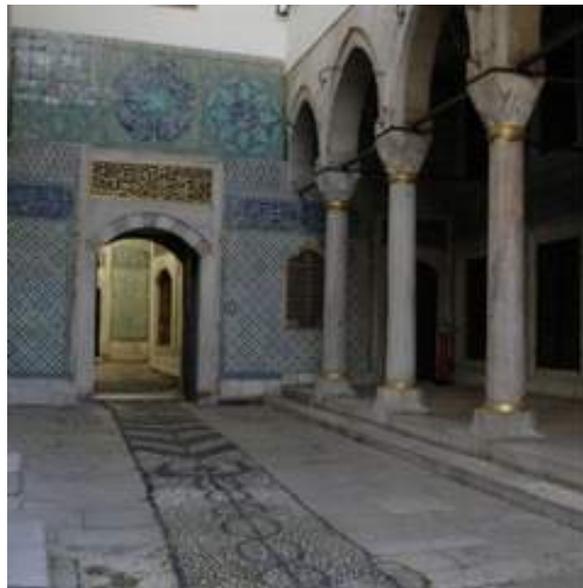


photo credits: G.dallorto

Archi-Speak

Can you find these architecture features?

COURTYARD

PAVILION

FOUNTAIN

TERRACE

PAGODA

R X Z S W D L R D T O C O J N
 K A D O G A P G H O Z Q D B E
 P R P I P G B A Y P U Z M W L
 J L L H O F C E N T X H X Y J
 O N O I L I V A P I N N O O Z
 T G V H L T L S D G E N J A G
 N S B V R I K P N Q I M J V K
 O L W I F O R D I L Y I L I S
 P J H J C A R E A Q Z W G D V
 C V E J Z B B D T A F W Q A F
 X F P C V C A X N G T H Z X T
 Q Y D R A Y T R U O C N F T T
 R F S F H A U O O D C H X U Z
 U C W F X F J T F I P K O B W
 F X N D M A B E E C A R R E T

Ask M

In the James Bond books and movies the character "M" heads the Secret British Intelligence Service known as MI 6, of which James Bond is Agent 007.

When contemplating adding on to your home or building, renovating or building a new home or building you should have someone like "M" on your side. Each month the "Ask M" column will answer a reader's question to place more information at your finger tips.

This month's question.

Now that Winter is upon us I am wondering if it is better to have blinds on my windows or draperies to help keep the house warm?

Marie R

Marie,

Draperies especially heavy ones are great to keep the cold at bay. In fact in the middle ages they used heavy tapestries on the walls for insulation. However in modern homes radiators are usually at the windows. In this case draperies should be close to the windows and not in front of radiators. Of course blinds are still useful provided you always adjust them so that the air flow in front of the blinds keeps warm air away from the windows in the cold weather and the warm air away from the room in the hot weather.

Email your questions to info@designMgroup.com, and in the subject line type in "Ask M". We look forward to hearing from you and hope we can answer the questions to everyone's satisfaction.

Want to speak with the Architect

Do you have questions but do not know where to start?

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About

Marcus Marino, RA, AIA
President



photo credit: Jenna Glatzer

Marcus Marino, RA, AIA is a leading architect in New York City. He received a Bachelors of Architecture from the prestigious Pratt Institute and a Masters in the Science of Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation. He received his license to practice architecture in New York State in 1981 and is licensed in a number of other States. Marcus Marino has served on numerous Governmental Panels and serves as an expert consultant to other architectural firms and legal firms. Presently he serves as the Vice President of Public Advocacy of the New York State American Institute of Architects.

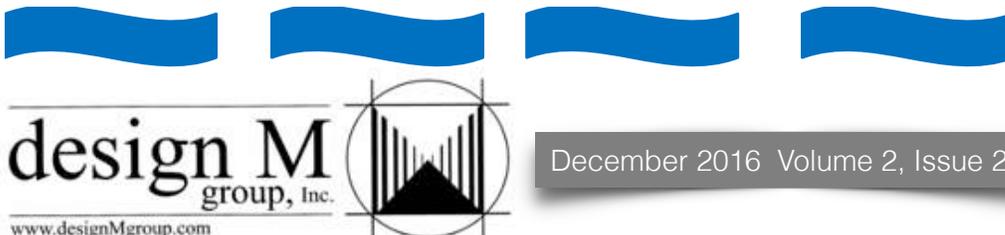
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Architects should help provide information to our fellow world citizens about their homes, offices and the built environment in general.

Your Home should move you emotionally like your favorite song does.

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info@designMgroup.com

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