



TOPOLSKI MEMOIR: ARCHIVE, STUDIO and BAR

Feliks Topolski's vibrant studio on London's South Bank holds untapped potential to transform London's cultural landscape. Your investment can unlock it for future generations.

Table of Contents



Executive Summary

The Opportunity
The Challenge
The Ask
Why Now?

Context

Mission
Strategic Plan & Timeline

Funding Ask

Funding Proposal Summary
Studio & Archive
Bar Topolski
Operating Partners - Frank & Jackson Boxer
Employment Capacity

Activities

Education
Outreach & Engagement
Commercial

About Us

3

8

11

17

21





Feliks Topolski & his
Buckingham Palace
Panoramas



Executive Summary

We are Topolski Memoir, a charity dedicated to preserving the legacy of Feliks Topolski RA, one of the 20th century's most remarkable artists and chroniclers.

The charity is at a critical juncture, and we are seeking funding to catalogue our archive, hire a team and take advantage of an opportunity to reopen a bar-venue space that will help us achieve a sustainable income.

Your support will not only revive a cultural icon but also create a buzzing space for music and creativity in the heart of London. Join us in preserving Topolski's legacy as a Polish icon in the city, and shaping a new chapter for London's cultural scene.

"This unique, wide-ranging biographical and artistic archive sheds light on Topolski's achievements and British social life alike, offering an irreplaceable resource for researchers and artists."

— Dr. Julia Griffin : Art historian & curator



The Opportunity

Our ambitious vision includes cataloguing Topolski's archive, growing our educational programmes, and transforming the nearby Bar Topolski into a dynamic venue, taking advantage of contacts with the Polish Jazz and arts scene to bring artists to London. This links poetically with Topolski's own legacy, welcoming the public into his studio and becoming a port of call for artists, rebels, politicians and poets from across the globe.

Situated in a prime, central location and operated by a reputable operator partnership, the bar-restaurant has the potential to become a thriving hub for live music, arts, and community, generating a reliable income stream to ensure the continued growth and development of Topolski's artistic legacy.



Topolski's studio prior to renovation.

The Ask

We seek £615,000 over three years to:

- > **Preserve the Archive:** Cataloguing and digitisation to unlock its global significance.
- > **Expand Outreach:** Hire a team to manage and run artist residencies, talks, workshops, and exhibitions to inspire diverse audiences.
- > **Revitalise Bar Topolski:** Secure the lease and relaunch it as London's most spirited new jazz venue, projected to generate £60,000 annually for the charity by Year 3.

Why now?

- > Renewed interest in Topolski's work and Polish-British cultural exchange.
- > A talented operator ready to bring fresh energy to the bar.
- > Poised to take advantage of the rising cultural renaissance in Jazz.
- > Strong desire for community-driven arts spaces, combining real heritage and counter-cultural rebellion, with a commercially viable plan.



Feliks Topolski's palette

Now is the time to act. Topolski's work is ripe for rediscovery, with its relevance to current global and cultural conversations. However, the charity's potential is constrained by limited funding. To address this, we are pursuing a multi-faceted strategy that combines public funding, private donations, and commercial revenue.

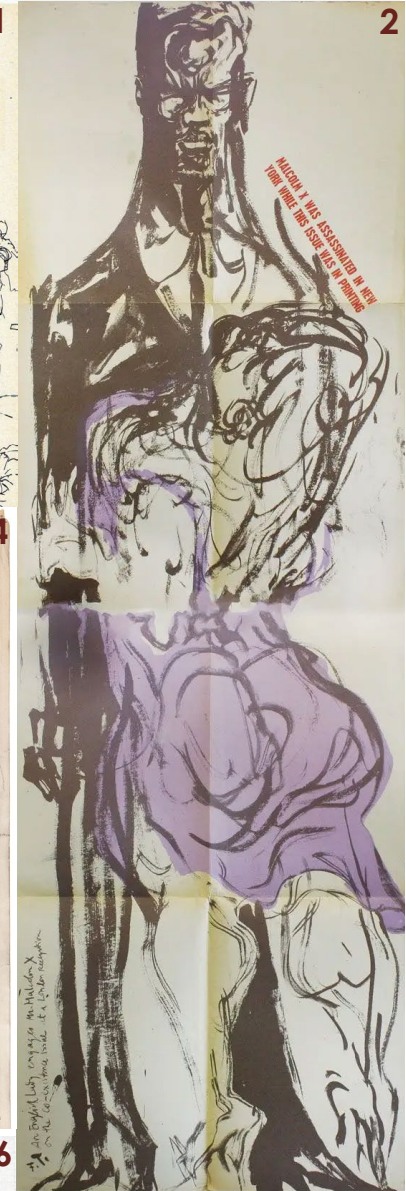
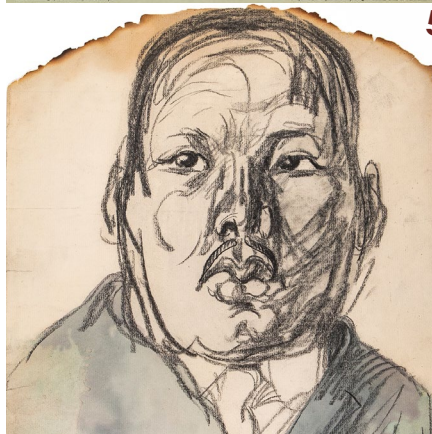
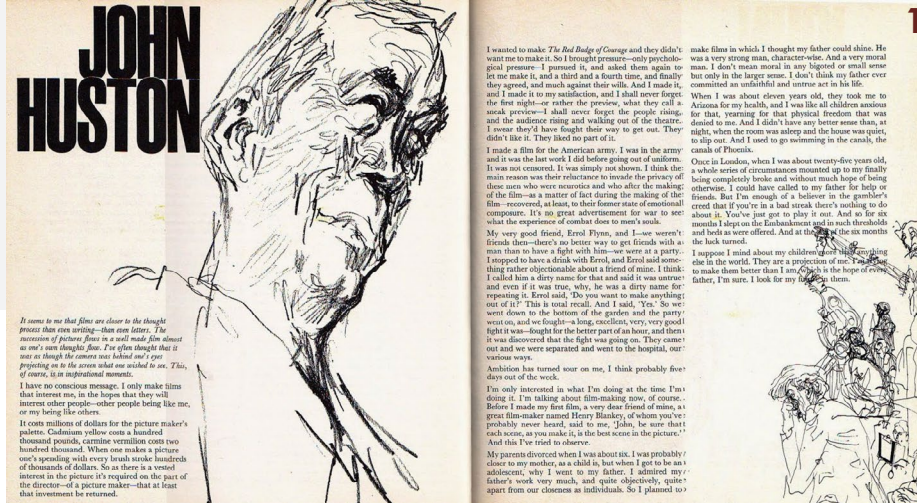
A critical component of this plan is the revitalisation of Bar Topolski, which can serve as a sustainable income source to underpin the charity's core activities. We have built a relationship with two of London's most reputable and original operators in Frank and Jackson Boxer, partnered with Next Door Records to take on a new lease and energise the space as a mixed use, bar, restaurant and music venue. The operators are committed to investing £300k into the space, as well as covering the lease costs.

Context

Feliks Topolski RA was a British-Polish chronicler and one of the most widely travelled artists of the 20th century. His vivid, expressive drawings captured pivotal moments in modern history and portrayed influential figures such as Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, and Elvis Presley. Topolski's works are housed in major collections worldwide, including the Tate, British Museum, National Portrait Gallery in the UK and the Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, the Jagiellonian University and institutions in the US, Israel, Japan, Australia and more.

The charity operates from Topolski's historic studio in Waterloo, a unique heritage site where the artist created his iconic works and hosted social gatherings with an open door policy. This space serves as both a repository for Topolski's archive and a hub for educational and artistic activities inspired by his principles of curiosity, openness, and tolerance.

1. Edition of Face to Face featuring illustrations of John Huston by Feliks Topolski. 2. Illustration of Malcom X with an English lady in London. 3. Winston Churchill and fragment from "We shall fight on the beaches" speech in 1940. 4. Andy Warhol, Ultra Violet and the artist's daughter Teresa in 1968. 5. Portrait of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1961. 6. Cover of London life magazine featuring an illustration of Prince Philip in 1966 by Feliks Topolski. 7. Duke of Kent visits Louis Armstrong in his dressing room in 1956.





TOPOLSKI'S CHRONICLE SUMMARISES
„ANNUAL ABSTRACT OF STATISTICS
FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM” (1954)
PUBLISHED BY CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE



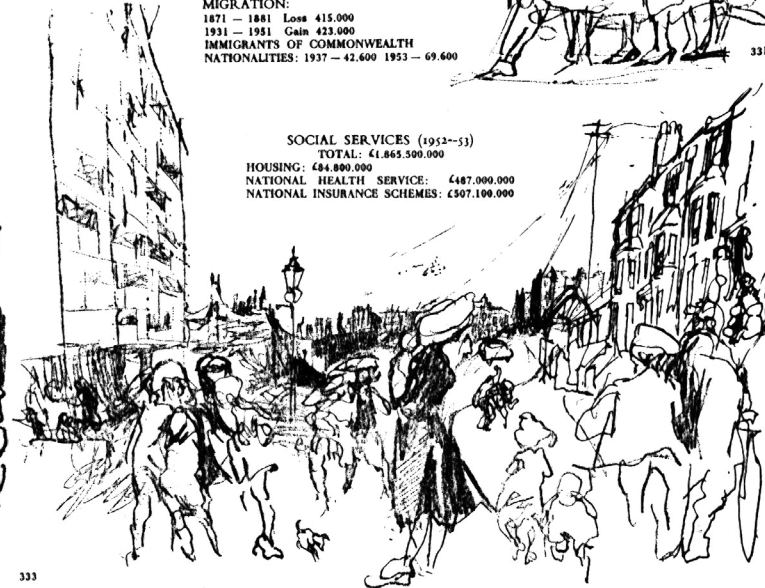
POPULATION: 1851 — 22,259,000 1953 — 50,292,000
 NUMBER OF ELECTORS (1951): — 34,919,000
 NUMBER OF VOTES RECORDED (1951): — 28,597,000

MIGRATION:
 1871 — 1881 Loss 415,000
 1931 — 1951 Gain 423,000
 IMMIGRANTS OF COMMONWEALTH
 NATIONALITIES: 1937 — 42,600 1953 — 69,600

SOCIAL SERVICES (1952-53)
 TOTAL: £1,865,500,000
 HOUSING: £84,800,000
 NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE: £487,000,000
 NATIONAL INSURANCE SCHEMES: £307,100,000



JUSTICE AND CRIME (England and Wales)
 Persons found guilty:
 1930 — 787,402 1945 — 467,700 1953 — 704,441
 Juveniles found guilty:
 1930 — 55,511 1951 — 75,857 1953 — 63,770



ENTERTAINMENT

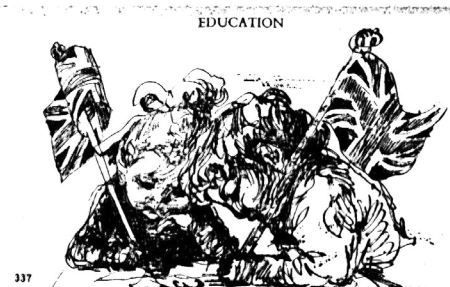
BROADCAST LICENSES (1953):
 Sound — 10,750,000 Television — 2,142,000

CINEMA ADMISSION:
 1950 — 1,395,000,000 1953 — 1,204,500,000



INTOXICATING LIQUORS

LICENSES:
 1913 — 111,068 1952 — 97,085



EDUCATION

GRANT-AIDED PRIMARY and SECONDARY SCHOOLS: 1953 — 6,318,721 pupils
 UNIVERSITY STUDENTS (1952-53) — 81,474



FUS (1951)
 TOTAL — 17,817,000
 Insurance — 1,043,000
 13,406,000
 11 — 887,000
 — 2,155,000



1 — 2,154,000
 Bank vessels 11,649

Mission

Studio & Archive

Despite the significance of the archive, much of it remains unstudied, offering untapped potential for academic research and public engagement. The archive chronicles the faces, places, and events of the last century, providing a lens into history through the eyes of a remarkable artist.

With such a rich legacy at the crossroads of art, society and history, the project has the potential to resonate strongly with a modern audience. Therefore our mission is:

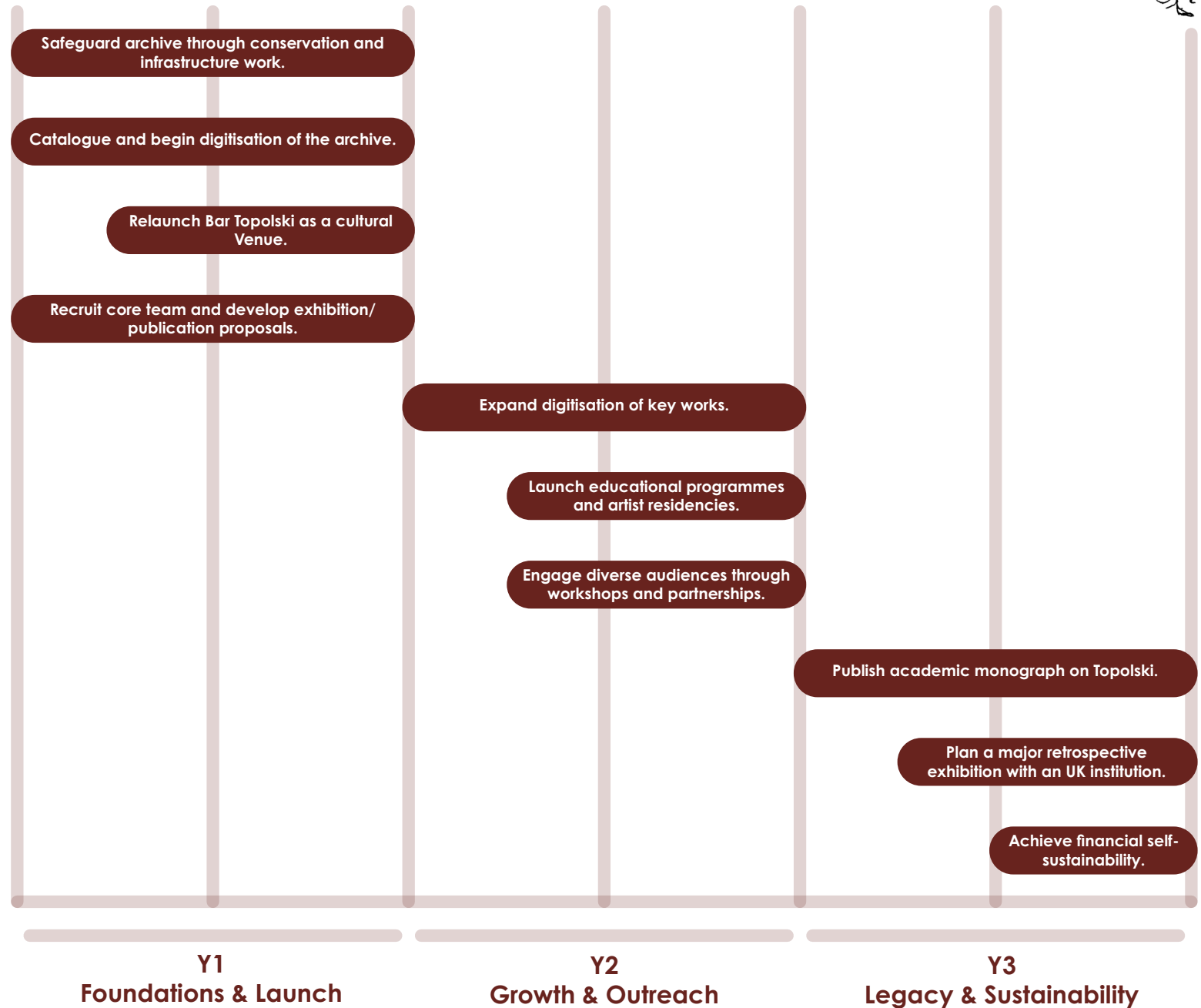
1. To preserve, study, and share Topolski's work with contemporary audiences.
2. To champion the practice of reportage and documentary artwork through residencies, exhibitions, and workshops.
3. To transform the Topolski brand into a household name, supported by retrospective exhibitions, publications, and multimedia projects.

Strategic Plan & Timeline

Supporting Strategies

- > **Marketing:** Build awareness through social media, podcasts, and cultural articles.
- > **Partnerships:** Strengthen ties with educational and cultural institutions.
- > **Monitoring:** Track KPIs to ensure progress and impact.

Topolski Studio Strategic Plan



Collection of Topolski's drawings.



Funding Ask



We are looking for **maximum funding of £615,000 over 3 years, split into two areas; the Archive and the Bar**. Some of our supporting funding will be available in kind through partnerships, the skills of trustees, and pro-bono assistance from nearby institutions.

Archive

A £415,000 donation will allow us to take advantage of recent momentum and fund the cataloguing of our archive. This will be followed by associated publications and exhibitions as well as educational work, and a regular artist residency.

Bar

A £200,000, 0% interest loan would be tied up in deposits to secure the bar space, and would be returned upon the end of the lease. This is an opportunity to safeguard a cultural institution whilst minimising risk for funders. **There is also scope to provide a loan to our operators in exchange for equity or an agreed interest rate.**

By Y3 we hope to be able to largely fund our own activities through the income from the bar, commercial activity and other grants, gradually allowing ourselves to be totally free from the need for any external funding and donations to carry out our core goals. If we exceed expectations with commercial work, then the required funding would reduce. We propose to retain this income for the first three years in our reserves in order to give ourselves some operational headroom and deal with unforeseen challenges.

Funding Proposal Summary

Year 1 Request: £400,000

- > One-off Expenses: £275,000
 - Bar-related deposits: £200,000 (Recuperable)
 - Conservation of archive & infrastructural work: £30,000
 - Cataloguing: £40,000
 - Rebranding: £5,000
- > Salaries: £125,000

Year 2 Request: £115,000

- > Digitisation: £15,000
- > Salaries: £85,000
- > Outreach funding: £15,000
- > (Contribution from Paul Mellon Centre to cover Archivist Salary: +£40,000)

Potential Income

- > Bar fee: +£40,000
- > Commercial work: +£7,500-15,000

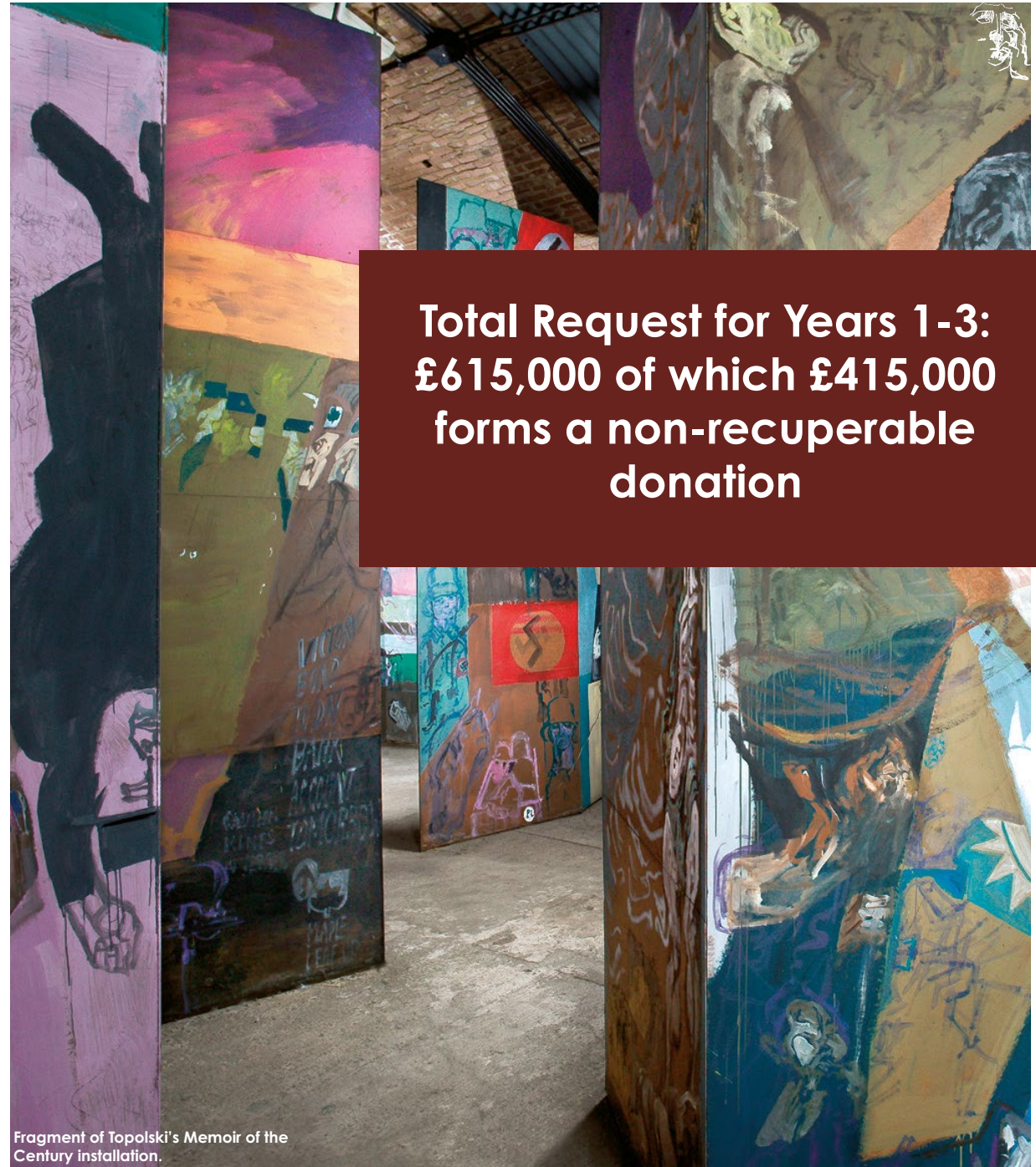
Year 3 Request: £100,000

- > Salaries: £85,000
- > Outreach funding: £15,000
- > (Contribution from Paul Mellon Centre to cover Archivist Salary: +£40,000)

Potential Income

- > Bar fee and share of profits: +£60,000
- > Commercial work: +£20,000-40,000

**Total Request for Years 1-3:
£615,000 of which £415,000
forms a non-recuperable
donation**



Fragment of Topolski's Memoir of the Century installation.



Bar KPI's

Year 1: Foundations and Launch

- > Bar operational by Q3, generating £40,000 in revenue for the charity by year-end.

Year 2: Growth and Outreach

- > 25% increase over Year 1 revenues.
- > 15% of total bar revenue generated through cultural events (ticket sales, private hires, special events).
- > Establish formal partnerships with at least 3 cultural institutions or festivals.

Year 3: Legacy and Sustainability

- > Maintain existing partnerships and add at least 2 new strategic artistic collaborations, such as international jazz festivals or Polish cultural institutions.
- > Minimum 24 cultural/music events (e.g., concerts, talks, exhibitions).
- > Achieve at least £30,000 from profit share (indicating profits clearly over £350,000).

Studio KPI's

Year 1: Foundations and Launch

- > Archive storage conditions meet conservation standards by Q2
- > 30% of the archive catalogued and 10% digitised by year-end.
- > Full team in place by Q2, with exhibition and publication proposals completed by Q4.

Year 2: Growth and Outreach

- > 60% of the archive catalogued and 30% digitised by year-end.
- > Deliver six workshops, host four residencies, and engage 500 participants in Year 2.
- > Host four artists-in-residence, with outputs shared through two public events.

Year 3: Legacy and Sustainability

- > Monograph published and distributed by Q3, with an initial print run of 1,000 copies.
- > Exhibition dates, venue, and curatorial framework secured by Q4.
- > Generate £150,000 in annual revenue, achieving self-sufficiency by Q4.

Studio & Archive



- > **Conservation of archive & infrastructural work:** £30,000.
- > **Cataloguing:** £40,000 (This can potentially be covered or shared through a National Archives grant).
- > **Digitisation:** £15,000.
- > **Rebrand:** £5,000.
- > **Outreach Funding:** £30,000 p.a.

TOTAL: £120,000



Topolski's studio space prior to renovation.

Bar Topolski



Bar Topolski

> Lease and Financial Setup:

- Lease cost: £200,000 p.a., fully covered by operators (Frank and Jackson Boxer).
- Funding ask: £200,000 for a deposit (£100k) and 6 months' rent (£100k) as risk contingency.
- Recuperable Guarantee: Entire sum returned at the end of the lease.



> Revenue Potential:

- Minimum operator contribution: £40,000 p.a.
- Profit share: 10% of profits above £200k, and 20% of profits above £500k.
- Additional income: Venue events, gigs, and gallery space rentals (~£50,000 p.a.).

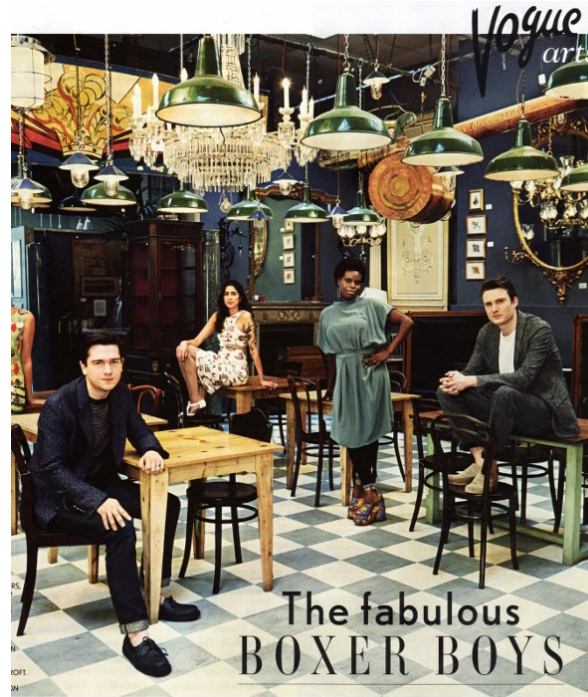
> Cultural Vision:

- A vibrant jazz and cultural hub, aligning with Topolski's legacy of creativity and community.
- A modern connection to Topolski's social gatherings and artistic spirit.

> Partnership Strength:

- Operated by Frank and Jackson Boxer, renowned for London venues like Brunswick House and Frank's Cafe.
- Proven track record in creating successful cultural and hospitality destinations.

TOTAL: £200,000



Operating partners - Frank & Jackson Boxer

Frank and Jackson Boxer are brothers and hospitality founders who have spent the last 10+ years creating some of London's leading food and drink destinations.

Together they are co-owners of Brunswick House and Below Stone Nest, as well as the following projects:

- > Frank's Cafe Peckham
- > Orasay
- > The Camberwell Arms
- > Jackson Boxer at the Corner (Selfridges)

A new, committed partnership will bring a vitality to the Topolski legacy so deeply connected to the area. The spirit of Topolski's own bon-viveurism, facilitating and hosting legendary social meetings at his nearby Studio, builds a tangible, albeit modern, connection between the arches' past and its future.



Operating partners - Next Door Records

Next Door Records was founded in 2020 by Thom Parris, Louis Raworth, and Alfie Aukett as a hybrid record store, bar, and live music space. Known for their expertly curated vinyl, dynamic events, and community-driven ethos, they've built a reputation for blending music and hospitality. With a second location opening in 2024, they continue to create vibrant spaces for discovery and connection.

In collaboration with the Boxer brothers, Next Door Records will oversee cultural programming at Bar Topolski, curating a diverse lineup of music, live performances, and events that honor the venue's artistic heritage while bringing fresh energy to its spaces. They will also manage the commercial sale of records within the venue, adding an additional revenue stream and further embedding music into the fabric of Bar Topolski.



Employment capacity

Currently, the charity is voluntarily run by the board. We will require 2 full time employees and 2 part-time employees to deliver our activities. We have received very positive feedback from the National Archives about our grant application which would fund an archivist role, so their salary is only included for Y1.

We require funding for the annual salaries for the positions below:

- > **Director-Fundraiser:** £45,000 p.a.
- > **Experienced Archivist:** £40,000 p.a.
 - (Potential for sponsorship from the National Archives)
- > **Part-time Programme Officer:** £20,000 p.a.
- > **Part-time Communications Officer:** £20,000 p.a.

TOTAL: £295,000



Conservation work being done on fragment of Memoir Of the Century

Fragment of Topolski's
Memoir of the Century.



Activities



Education

- > Exhibitions
- > Publications
- > Collaborations

Outreach & Engagement

- > Artist residencies
- > Classes & workshops
- > Talks

Commercial

- > Sales of prints
- > Studio hire
- > Group tours & classes
- > Bar Topolski
- > Brand partnership

Education

Following our first exhibition at the Studio last year of Topolski's work, we will:

- > Hold exhibitions that bring contemporary reportage artists into conversation with Topolski's record, building cross-historical shows of personal experience.
- > Work towards the first Topolski retrospective with a major UK institution.

We will publish:

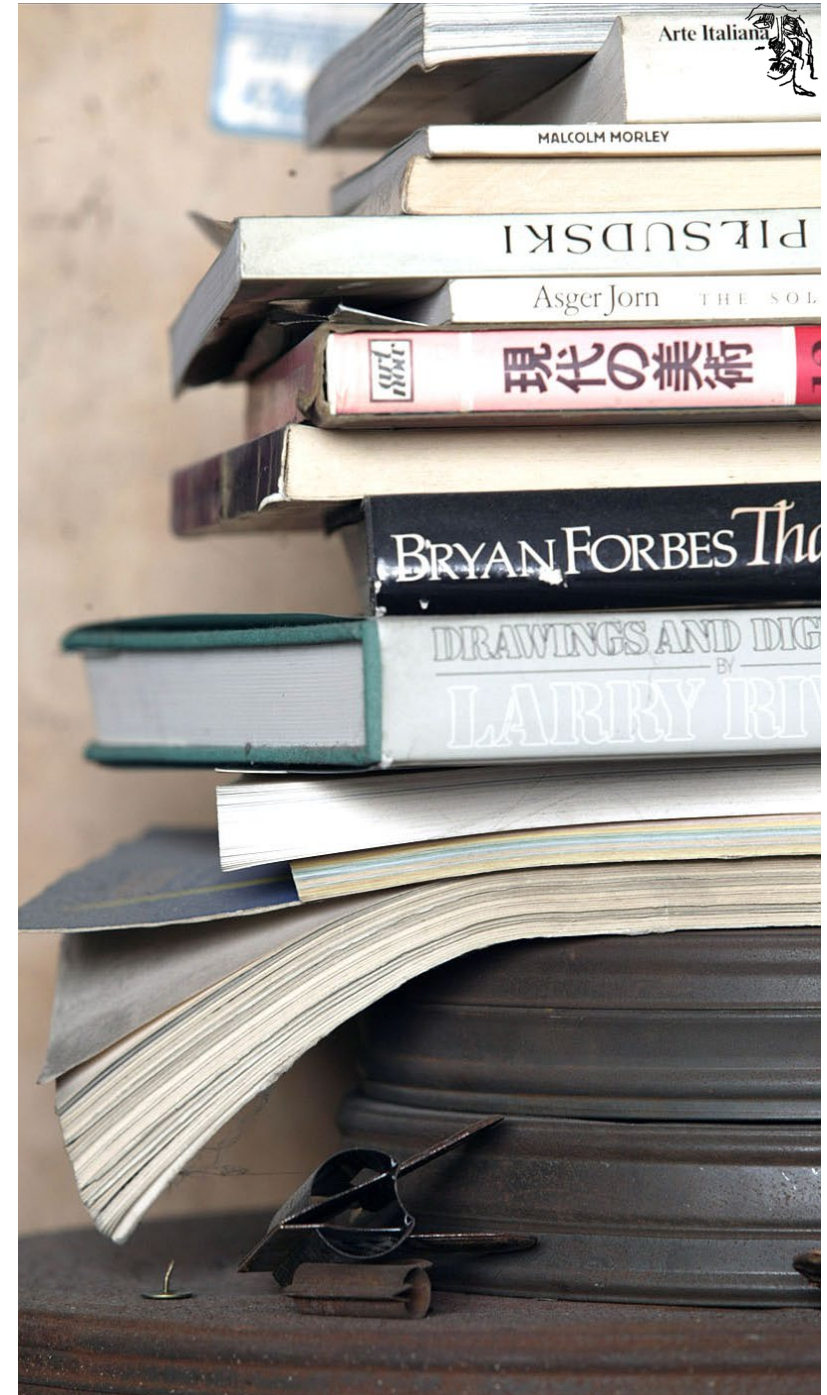
- > The first monograph of Topolski's life and career, building on progress with UK publisher, Lund Humphries.
- > Smaller publications on specific topics and themes in collaboration with institutions (IWM, NPG, Royal Drawing School).

We will collaborate with:

- > BA Character Design and BA Advertising and Brand Design courses from Ravensbourne University, as well as the BA Illustration and BA Visual Media Design courses from London College of Communication (UAL), through workshops and projects, with which we already have a well-established relationship.
- > Partnerships with art history, sociology, design and history departments at universities to facilitate high level research into the archive's contents.

Contingent on:

- > Employment of Director and Archivist.
- > Professional cataloguing and digitisation of the collection held by the charity, to understand its contents in depth before approaching prospective cultural partners about collaborative projects.



Outreach & Engagement

We will initiate:

- > Artist Residencies in partnership with the Woolwich Contemporary Print Fair, bringing 4 artists into the Studio annually to respond to the collection, producing exhibitions and engaging with Topolski's artistic legacy, including 'open studio' social salon evenings.

We will expand:

- > Art classes, talks and workshops, focusing on drawing, painting and promoting documentary artwork. These are currently ongoing at low cost to the charity, and with funding could be expanded.

Contingent on:

- > Employment of part-time Programme Officer and Communications Officer.
- > Infrastructural development at the Studio to physically secure archival content. At present, any visitors to the studio must be supervised by a voluntary Director.
- > Professional cataloguing of the collection, as above, to provide easy reference to resident artists.



Workshop taking place in Topolski Studio.

Commercial

We will generate sustainable income through:

- > Sales of editions e.g. continuation of Topolski's Chronicle, an arts broadsheet circulated amongst subscribers, with resident artists in partnership with the Woolwich Print Fair (~£10,000).
- > Sales of prints, merchandise and the sale of books (~£30,000).
- > Studio hire e.g. for meetings, book launches or rehearsal space (~£12,000p.a.).
- > Group tours and classes (~£8,000p.a.).
- > Brand partnerships e.g. Interest from Burberry for fashion campaigns. (Would constitute a step change in the charity's financial outlook).

The Bar will provide:

- > Operator contribution of £40,000 p.a., with minimum risk to the charity and all costs covered by them, and an upside of 10% of profits above £200k, and 20% above £500k.
- > Commercial opportunities for events and rental of Gallery Space in Bar Topolski (~£50,000p.a.)

Contingent on:

- > Employment of team.
- > Digitisation.
- > Rebrand.
- > Securing the lease for the bar venue.
- > Physical security of the archive to facilitate visits by large groups and the hire of Studio.



**Potential inflows of ~£150,000
p.a. by year 3**

About Us



The charity has been revitalised by the artist's grandson, **Lucien Topolski**, working with a board of dedicated trustees with experience working in major cultural institutions, able to leverage their experience and contacts to support the charity. With a clear direction and strategy, the charity is now looking for funding to make the most of its unique position.



Baron Timothy Razzall
Solicitor, Member of
House of lords.



Suzy Topolski
Daughter in law of Feliks
Topolski with extensive
knowledge of estate.



Teresa Topolski
Daughter of Feliks
Topolski with extensive
knowledge of estate.



Hugh Patrick Matheson
Trustee member of
the Grimsthorpe and
Drummond Castle trust.



Andrew Baird
Financial officer
with experience
working in investment
management.



Robert Gillespie
Board member of
notable organisations,
previously, Chair of
Somerset House.



Thank you.

Join us in reviving a legacy with the potential to leave a lasting cultural impact on London and the global canon of 20th century art history.

Lucien Topolski
lucien@topolski.org
+44 7933 512 621

TOPOLSKI MEMOIR

SBC Access Road, Arch 158,
Hungerford Arches, Belvedere Rd,
London SE1 8XU