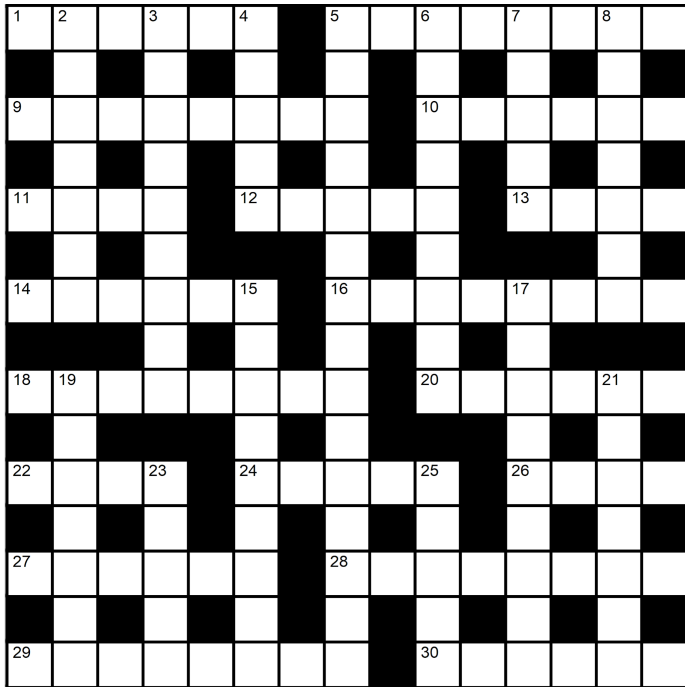


Genius No 268

Set by Odo



Wordplay in each across clue generates an extra letter that doesn't belong in the grid; in order these letters should lead the solver to a thematic modification of a single word in each down clue.

The unclued down entry is thematic.

Deadline for entries is 23:59 GMT on Saturday 1 November. You need to register once and then sign in to theguardian.com to enter our online competition for a £100 monthly prize.

Across

- 1 One's cutting with praise, craftily (6)
- 5 Soldier and doctor circling mine, for example (8)
- 9 A special project with German aggressor (8)
- 10 Movie producer's exercise in art: *The First Love* (6)
- 11 Retired professor put on weight for nothing (4)
- 12 Neural convulsing of kidneys (5)
- 13 Cause pain to the heartless chest (4)
- 14 Tailless bird in river for 60 minutes (6)
- 16 Bouncer - doorman, essentially - in charge briefly of strongbox (8)
- 18 Daring shop taking on hotel in walled city (3,5)
- 20 Waitress finally arrived with epic shelled seafood (6)
- 22 In Bulgaria, money from rent very advanced (4)
- 24 Newton, one collecting infrared iridescent material (5)
- 26 Nine months? Three months! (4)
- 27 On the counter, provided travel bag to carry duck dumplings (6)
- 28 Cruel to bury entertaining Scotsman (8)
- 29 Witch 'English Nelly' knocked back chemical (8)
- 30 Latin writer is almost straightforward in terms of narrative (6)

Down

- 2 Correct to cycle on hard local seaweed close to land (7)
- 3 Wealthy new theatre's deserted (9)
- 4 In contest win exhausted horse (5)
- 5 [Not clued] (8,2,5)
- 6 Again picks lesser canine, oddly lacking height somehow (9)
- 7 Up in the first half but floundering in uncertainty (5)
- 8 Smirk provided by pleasant afternoon these days (7)
- 15 Starting late, lose elegant rambling rose (9)
- 17 Saddler perhaps can't initially settle farm down (9)
- 19 Wrong fish over in current moving with wind (3,4)
- 21 Head of harsh country has curtailed swimmer (7)
- 23 Ultimately broke, after a fashion, leading to lack of energy (5)
- 25 Alcohol essentially thrown up, washing liquid limiting depth (5)