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# THE NEW YORKER

## The Daily

Monday, November 29, 2021

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### In today's newsletter:

- [The E.U.'s shadow immigration system](#)
- [Henry Kissinger and the Middle East](#)
- [Santa vs. the supply chain](#)

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## The Libyan Prisons Keeping Migrants Out of Europe

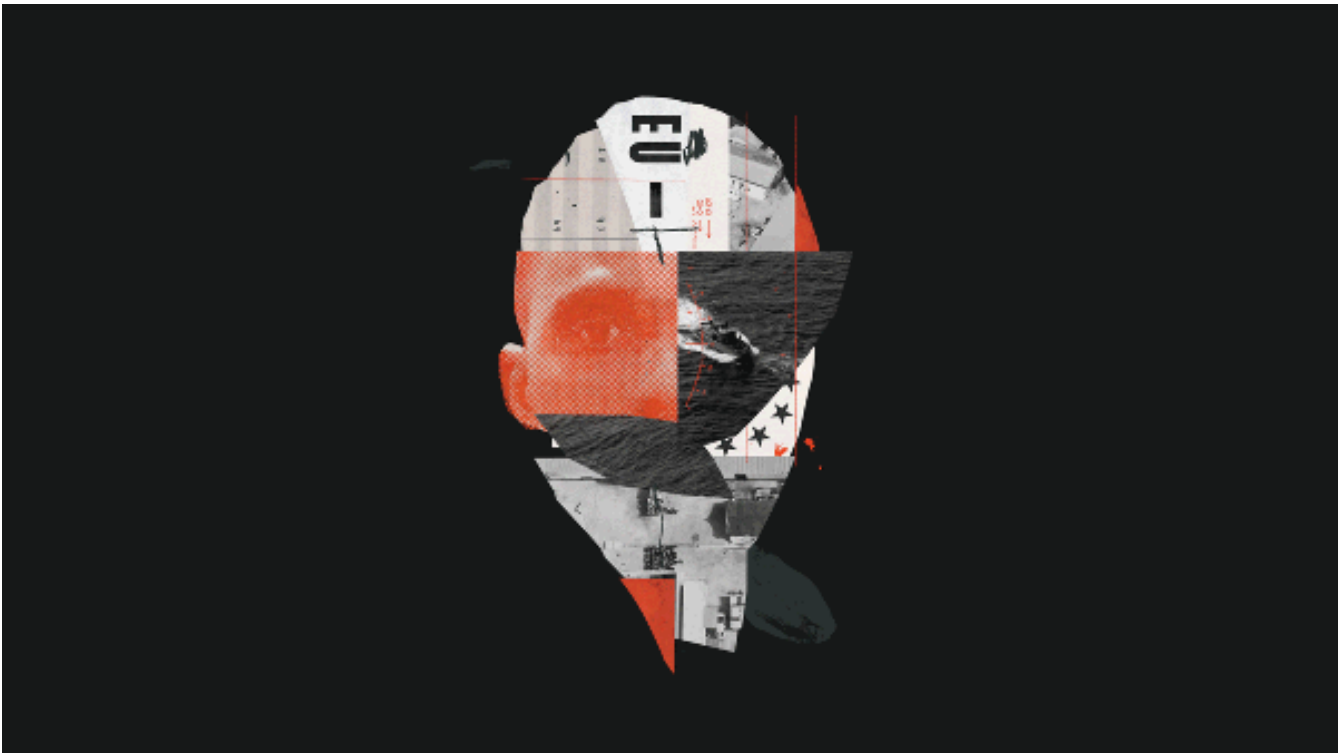
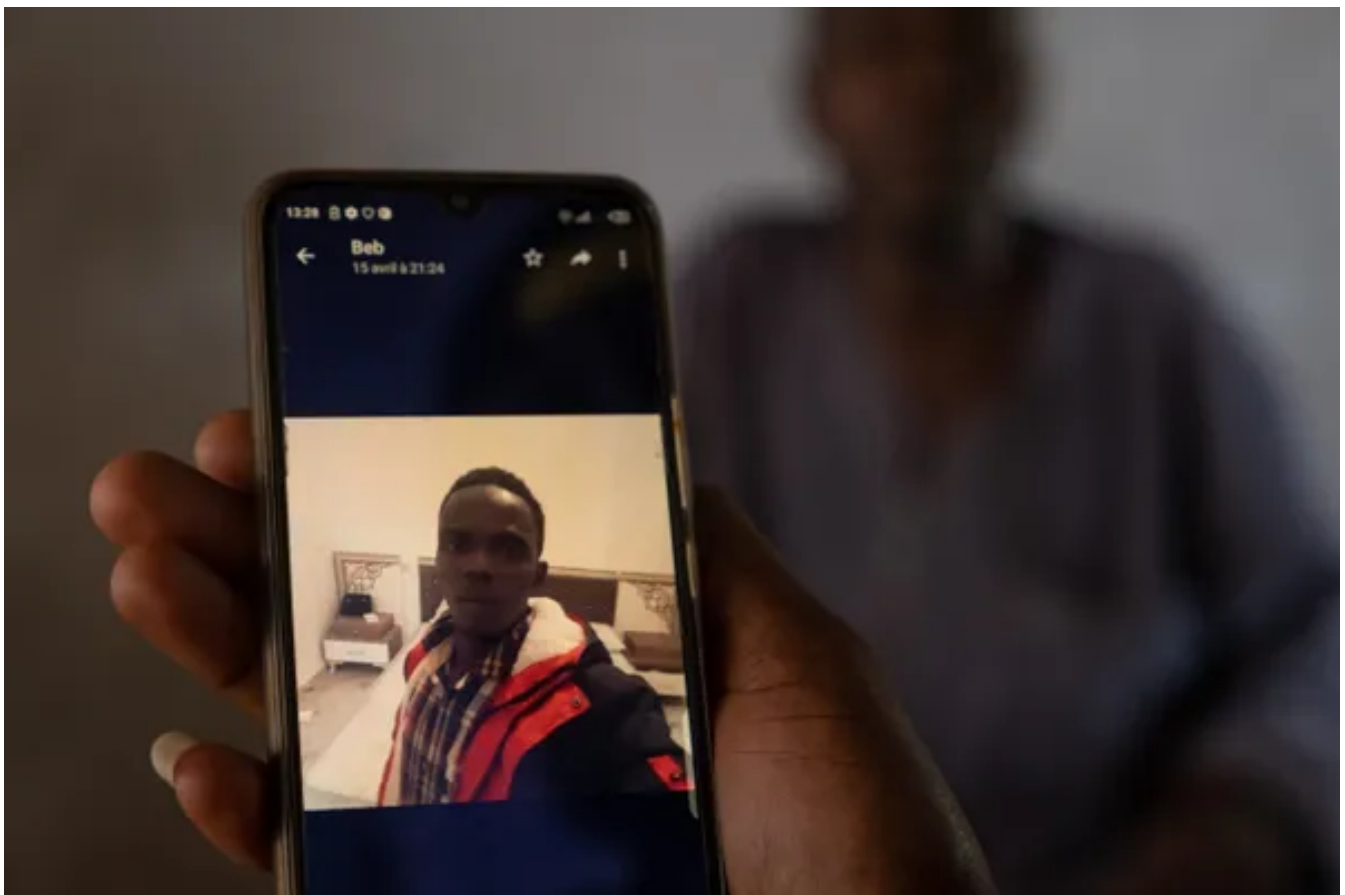


Illustration by Mike McQuade

**In May, Ian Urbina and a three-person team travelled to Libya**, to investigate the country's brutal migrant detention centers, including a collection of makeshift warehouses in Tripoli known as Al Mabani, where thousands of people have been held in deeply inhumane conditions. [In a shocking new piece of reporting](#), published in partnership with

the Outlaw Ocean Project, Urbina documents the horrors endured by these detainees, and the extent of European culpability in this cruel, deeply cynical, and largely unknown system.

- Abuses identified at the roughly fifteen such prisons in the country include “detainees tortured with electric shocks, children raped by guards, families extorted for ransom, men and women sold into forced labor.” Urbina adds that “migrants in Al Mabani were beaten for whispering to one another, speaking in their native tongues, or laughing.”
- The European Union has equipped and trained the Libyan Coast Guard, “a quasi-military organization linked to militias in the country, to patrol the Mediterranean, sabotaging humanitarian rescue operations and capturing migrants. The migrants are then detained indefinitely in a network of profit-making prisons run by the militias.”
- “If the E.U. did not finance the Libyan Coast Guard and its assets, there would be no interception, and there would be no referral to these horrific detention centers,” a member of the European Parliament explains to Urbina. Libya’s former Minister of Justice is even more blunt: the plan by the E.U. was to “create a hellhole in Libya, with the idea of deterring people from heading to Europe.”



Photograph of Aliou Candé courtesy the Outlaw Ocean Project / Ricci Shryock

This story of systematic abuses is also the story of Aliou Candé, a twenty-eight-year-old migrant who left his family’s failing farm in Guinea-Bissau and ventured across North Africa, only to end up in Al Mabani. And it’s the story of Urbina’s own terrifying experience

in Libya, where he and his colleagues were taken captive for six days and interrogated by men who claimed to be members of the country's intelligence service. As Urbina writes, "The experience—deeply frightening but mercifully short—offered a glimpse into the world of indefinite detention in Libya."

**[Read the full story here, complete with illuminating photographs, videos, and other multimedia materials that are exclusive to the Web.](#)**

*Subscribers to the magazine should also watch their in-boxes for a special newsletter, in which Ian Urbina will share more of his experiences while reporting this groundbreaking story.*

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### *Editor's Picks*

#### *Books*

## Understanding the Body Electric

Strong current can kill us, but electrical impulses let us live—a power even the ancients may have attempted to exploit.

By Jerome Groopman



#### *Q. & A.*

## The Lessons of Henry Kissinger's Diplomacy

A new book examines the former Secretary of State's maneuvering in the Middle East.

By Isaac Chotiner

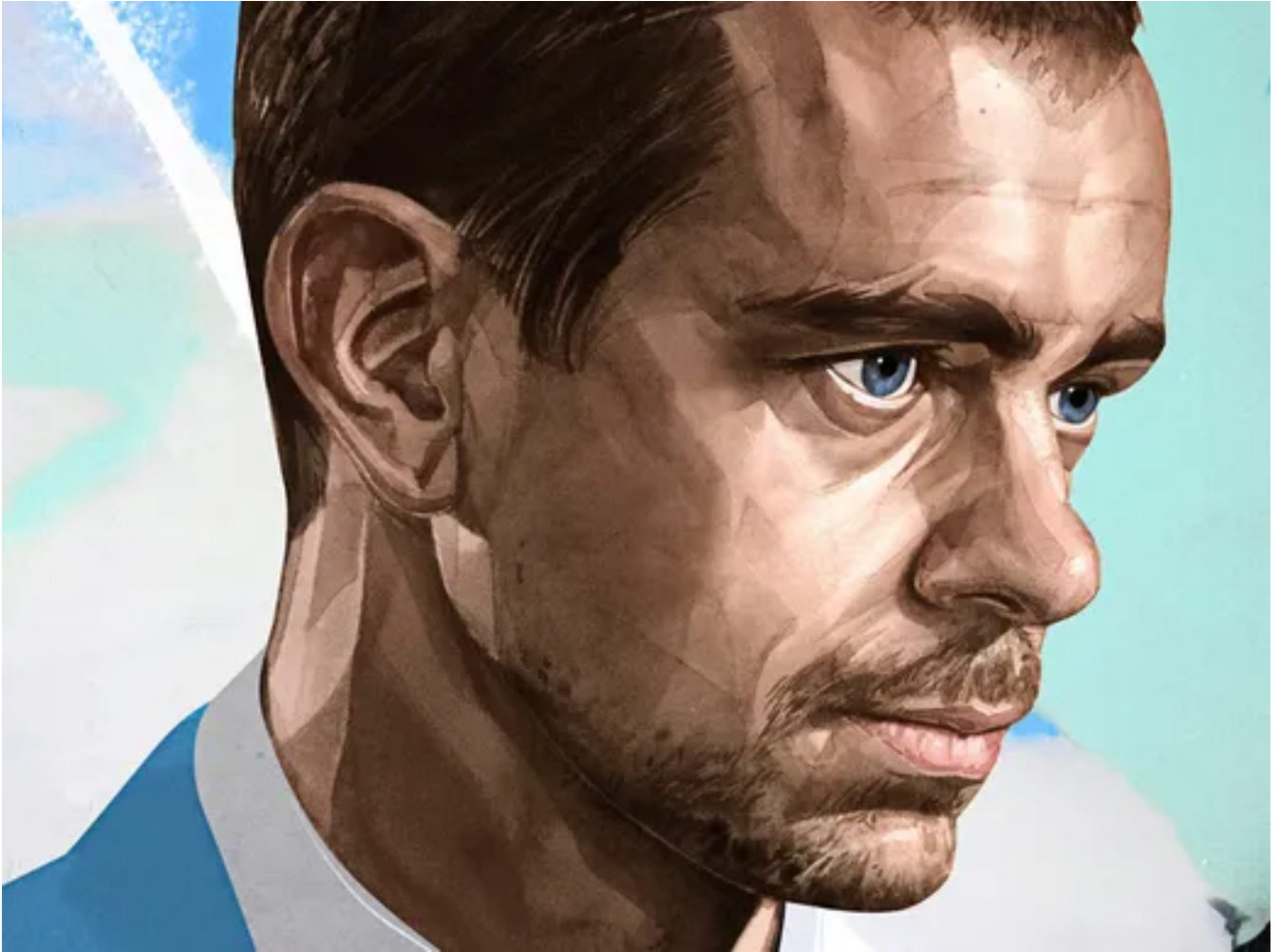


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### *Cover Story*



**The artist Mark Ulriksen** talks about his latest cover, “Ever Giving,” and remembers the moment when his belief in Santa Claus was shattered: “I asked my mom a very, very serious question: Is Santa real? She told me that whatever I believed would be my reality. My faith in Santa ended soon after.”

*From the Archive**Profiles***Jack Dorsey's Good Luck**

The C.E.O. of Twitter is stepping down. From 2013: Inside the founding of the company, and Dorsey's first stint as its idiosyncratic top executive.

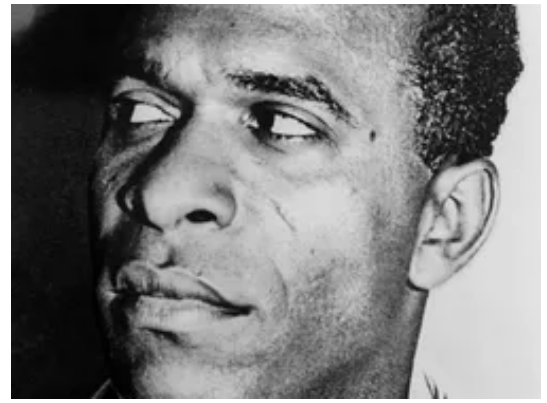
By D. T. Max

*Culture Dept.**Books***Frantz Fanon's Enduring Legacy**

The post-colonial thinker's seminal book, "The Wretched of the Earth," described political oppression in

psychological terms. What are its lessons for our current moment?

By Pankaj Mishra



### *The Art World*

## Sophie Taeuber-Arp's Crafting of Abstraction

The Swiss artist, an early member of Dada, played an integral role in the emergence of nonfigurative art, whether she was using a brush or a needle.

By Peter Schjeldahl



### *The Boards*

## Kathleen Turner Isn't Just a Movie Star

The actress turned singer dishes on the things and the people that have annoyed her, including Meryl Streep and young agents.

By Rachel Syme



*Fun & Games Dept.*



### *Name Drop*

#### Play Today's Quiz

Can you guess the notable person in six clues or fewer?

By Matt Jackson



### *Crossword*

#### A Challenging Puzzle

Drawings that get drunk: eight letters.

By Patrick Berry



### *Daily Shouts*

#### Online Confessions

Bless me, Internet, for I have sinned.

By Eugenia Viti



### *Daily Cartoon*

#### Monday, November 29th

By Jason Adam Katzenstein

**📌 P.S. More than fifty people were** trapped this past weekend for several nights in an English pub along with an Oasis tribute band, after drifts of snow piled up outside and the government declared travel unsafe. It's probably best that the real band, led by the famously feuding Gallagher brothers, wasn't stuck there in tight quarters. But, then again, such a down-to-earth turn might have been fitting for a band that thrived on its image of regular guys made good. As Hua Hsu has written, "They had discovered that the secret to superstardom is embodying a paradox: they were normal guys, just like their fans, living a dream on behalf of the masses. It could have been anyone."

*Today's newsletter was written by Ian Crouch.*



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