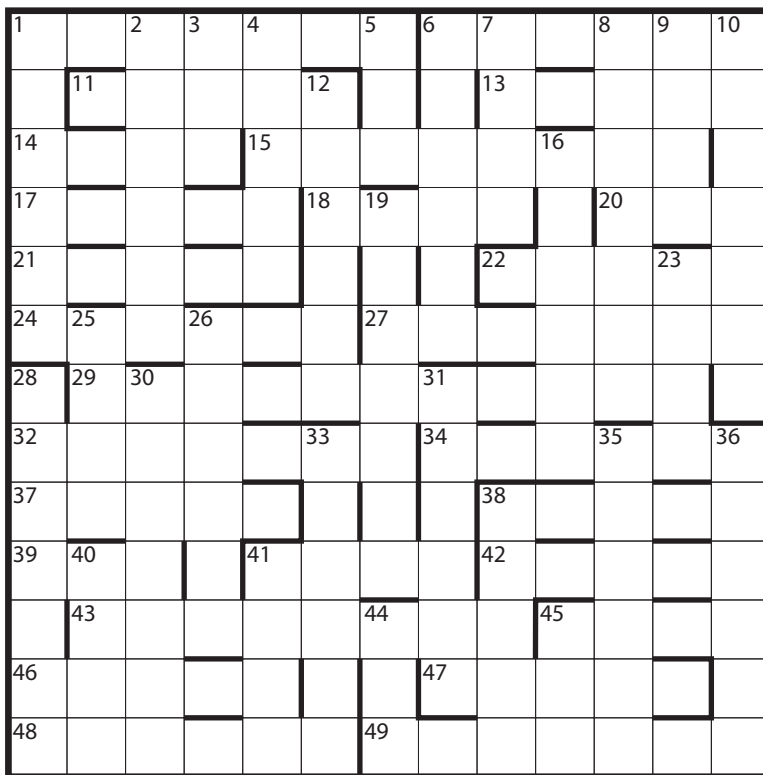


MAKING CONNECTIONS

by Mark Halpin

Fifteen unclued entries span this puzzle's grid. These are divided into five sets of three entries each, labeled for reference only with otherwise meaningless letters. Within each set, two members are connected in a certain way (a similar way in all five sets); the third member in each set is unrelated.

The song inspiring this puzzle is identified by two normal crossing grid entries. A notable performer of the song crosses one of these words, though is not clued as such. This song provides an ordering for the five sets (though a certain liberty has been taken with Group D). The unconnected members of each set, taken in this order, form a final cryptic clue for an apt two-word phrase, enumerated (7, 8).



ACROSS

- 1 Camel, if mistreated, is really nasty (7)
- 6 *Group A*
- 11 Helping of broccoli caused toddler's distress (5)
- 13 Spot possibly retro earring inset with piece of coral (5)
- 14 Out of maidens in ...*Forum*? Rely on Marcus! (4)
- 15 *Group B*
- 17 Liza's premier dismissed by "airheads and phonies" (5)
- 18 Peeled banana spread all over Indian bread (4)
- 20 Certain digits among Susan's odd features (3; *abbr*)
- 21 *Group A*
- 22 An ape composed song of triumph (5)
- 24 Starting late, ran into jumbled thematic link in this puzzle (6)
- 27 *Group C*
- 29 *Group D*
- 32 Misspelled words in royal family's name (7)
- 34 Peons labored at earliest of chores with no guarantee of being paid (6; 2 *wds*)
- 37 Foundering café that's closing one side (5)
- 38 Shakespearean character ignoring forward duo's greeting (5)
- 39 Mortal denuded Venus in a Terry Gilliam film (3)
- 41 *Group E*
- 42 Polish guys adopted by Ed (5)
- 43 *Group B*
- 45 Shark running amok (4)
- 46 Ultra-frolicsome species of otter (5)
- 47 Build up or tear down noisily (5)
- 48 Tall tales about earliest of erotic desires (6)
- 49 *Group B*

DOWN

- 1 *Group D*
- 2 In the sticks, behold bathroom equipment (6)
- 3 *Group C*
- 4 *Group C*
- 5 Computer's brain required for esoteric puzzle (3; *abbr*)
- 6 Gloat obnoxiously eating last of delectable dessert (6)
- 7 *Group E*
- 8 Upset those at an interrogation site (7, 2 *wds*)
- 9 Vice squad unit cools things down considerably (4)
- 10 *Group D*
- 12 Putting a tapered edge on redesigned coin? No good (6)
- 16 Well-organized tsarina losing no regal headgear (6)
- 19 *Group E*
- 23 Pulitzer-winning writer's endless pages covering "end of innocence" (4)
- 25 *West Side Story* character missing opening song (4)
- 26 Blind entertainer to some extent is set back (6)
- 28 *Group A*
- 30 Hopelessly trace an obsolete online encyclopedia (7)
- 31 Barber of old decapitated consort, quite insane (6)
- 33 Disgusting surfeit of drugs (they replace chips, sometimes) (6)
- 35 Penny, get an apartment, I'm begging you (6)
- 36 Woodland critters injected with 500 units of DNA (6)
- 38 Six people perhaps give the evil eye to Assistant Director (5)
- 40 Wear an unhappy expression leaving interior of morgue (4)
- 41 Vocal in opposition to Asian ruler (4)
- 44 Outstanding two-person song abruptly terminated (3)
- 45 A tiny distance space station shifts right to left (3)