



It's Saga's 60th birthday this month – and look how far we've come since our early days. To celebrate, we asked futurist Derek Woodgate to imagine what life will be like for 50-somethings in another 60 years' time

# Welcome to the world of 2071



20TH-CENTURY FOX/THE KOBAL COLLECTION

**M**OST OF US WILL REMEMBER illustrations from our childhood of 'what life will look like in the year 2000'. There would be fantastical images of teetering skyscrapers wound through with monorail trains and floating cars with people zooming around wearing jet packs.

That didn't quite come to pass, but much

else did. Things that are commonplace now – mobile phones, the internet, paperless books, gene therapy – were unimaginable 60 years ago when Saga Holidays began in 1951.

So let's fast-forward another 60 years to 2071. And based on budding technologies, climate and societal changes already under way, let's try to project how life will be for someone turning that magical Saga age of 50.



## What will it be like?

ALREADY, FUTURISTS GUESS THE 2060S TO BE THE GOLDEN DECADE, mainly because it is expected to be free from global wars, for the first time in 20 years.

In addition, amazing steps will have been made in dealing with the negative impacts of global warming as humans will have found 'intelligent' solutions to the consequences of the already restrained population growth.

We can expect space-based solar power to be transmitted from giant constructions operating continuously around the sunlit Earth orbit.

More strangely, humans will have learnt how to interconnect and collaborate with *cyborgs\**, and the results of the *singularity\** that humans and their *avatars\** will have had to deal with. (\*See glossary)

On the other hand, 50-somethings will most decidedly be seen as the new 30-somethings. Though today's thoughts that ageing could be slowed down will turn out to be wrong, 50-year-olds in 2071 will revel in the thought that they will still have half a century or more to enjoy life. With a little help from their friendly avatars, they will still be a decade away from their mid-life crisis and 30 years from average retirement age.

## Travel

Space will become a common holiday destination. And the expression 'dream holiday' will come true as *virtual\** and *augmented reality\** will be introduced as an alternative way to travel – they could even showcase other people's imaginations.

*Telepresence\** will enable us to be in more than one place at a time; virtual and much of normal life will be conducted through a personal avatar.

Developments in the lifespan of

batteries will make electric cars fast and efficient, and sustainable travel will unfold with magnetically controlled high-speed trains.

## Lifestyle

The 50-year-old, eco-conscious fashionista will relax in the knowledge that small gadgets built into his or her clothing will harness energy from their movement, recharging communication devices on the go and acting as a hub for digital communication.

When it comes to social activity, we'll be able to translate brain activity into actions and augmented reality will become an everyday practicality. One use will be in internet social networks, where we will be able to 'meet' and 'talk' online using implanted *nanotechnological\** brain devices. In short, communication with a computer, using thoughts.

The old distinction between spectator and performer will be blurred, as *Artificial Intelligence (AI)\** will enable viewers to project themselves into the spectacle or be superimposed over what is being screened. TV will be completely interactive, too.

## Health

In the knowledge that life is at the halfway stage, investing in future health will be as important as financial wellbeing. Having 'health capital' in the body bank will be a key measurement of wealth. To make this easier, humans will be *genetically scanned\** as infants in an effort to predict the likelihood of succumbing to future ailments, so that corrective action – genetic interventions and nutritional as well as fitness regimes – can be adopted at the earliest opportunity.

To a certain extent, there will be less of a need to focus on diet and nutrition. Food companies will be >

## Glossary:

**Cyborgs** Beings with biological and artificial (mechanical, electronic, robotic) parts  
**Singularity** The future emergence of greater-than-human intelligence through technological means. The point at which computers have greater intelligence than humans  
**Avatars** A digital embodiment of a person – an interactive agent  
**Virtual world** A computer-based simulated environment  
**Augmented reality** A real-world environment enhanced by computer-generated input such as sound, video or graphics  
**Telepresence** Telerobotic technologies, which allow a person to feel as if they were present, to give the appearance of being present, at a place other than their true location  
**Nanotechnology** The study of manipulating matter on an >

< fully responsible for producing food that is specifically adapted to a customer's *genetic signature*\*. At the same time, the human digestive system and metabolic processes will be fully understood and even re-engineered to improve absorption in the digestive tract. *Nanobots*\* circulating in the body will deliver optimal levels of nutrients directly into the bloodstream. They will prevent excess calorie absorption, which will be crucial as a person's calorie intake will be double that of today.

Other nanobots will destroy undesirable substances. So humans will be able to enjoy the pleasurable, social aspects of eating without worrying about the effects.

So what will 50-year-olds eat? Mycoprotein steaks derived from fungi, and in vitro meat – grown on a Petri dish, rather than as an animal – will be hugely popular. As for

## Humans will know whether or not they are healthy and how long they are likely to remain so

drinks, a whole range of neural-enhancing beverages will improve cognitive functions: the opposite effect of our present-day G&T.

But mental decline will be a primary concern, particularly as humans will be required to interface more and more with cyborgs, robots and 'intelligent machines'. But cognitive enhancement drugs will be available to help individuals maintain cognitive function.

Humans will know whether or not they are healthy and how long they are likely to remain so. Health-responsive homes with monitors embedded in various appliances and technology in the

< ([glossary continued...](#))

atomic and molecular scale  
**Artificial Intelligence (AI)**  
The intelligence of machines

**Genetic scanning**  
Assessment of an individual's genetic make-up to detect defects

**Genetic signature**  
An individual's specific sequences of genetic information

**Nanobots** Nano-size/microscopic robots; autonomous and self-propelled devices that may reproduce  
**Androids** A robot resembling a human being  
**Metaman** A super organism, combining man and machine

1951



2011



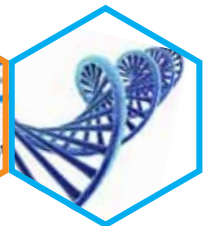
2071



**TRAVEL National** In 1951, we went to the seaside for our holidays  
**Global** Today, cheap air travel offers breaks in far-flung places  
**Virtual** In 2071, a trip into space will be the 'dream holiday'



**LIFESTYLE Post** In 1951, we were communicating by letter  
**Posting** Today, we catch up with each other via the internet  
**Projection** In 2071, we'll be chatting 'brain to brain'



**HEALTH GP** In 1951, we went to the doctor when we felt unwell  
**Google** Today, we check out our symptoms on the internet first  
**Genetics** In 2071, genetic scanning will help fend off disease



**FITNESS On the wane** In 1951, we began to slow down after 50  
**In the pink** Today, we try to keep fit to prolong an active life  
**In our prime** In 2071, at 50 we'll be as fit as a 20-year-old



**MONEY In decline** In 1951, earning power decreased after 50  
**At the top** Today, 50-to-60-year-olds are at the top of their game  
**In the pipeline** In 2071, still 30 more years of earning to come



**WORK Man's world** In 1951, it was mostly men in the workplace  
**Managerial world** Today, technology allows both sexes a role  
**Woman's world** In 2071, robots and women will be doing the work



**FAMILY Marital bliss** In 1951, children before marriage was a no-no  
**Marital delay** Today, our offspring produce children later in life  
**Marriage extinct** In 2071, extended families with many partners will be the norm

home will ease health worries. As the saying will go: 'Life begins at 70'.

### Fitness ∞∞

Part of the health investment will be physical exercise, which will be seen as essential to keep disease at bay. In fitness terms, 50-year-olds won't differ that much from 20-year-olds, so they will be able to play a major part in sports, and inter-generational events will be increasingly popular.

Coaches (real and virtual) will use the same genetic markers that identify propensity towards certain health issues for planning fitness regimes – both as a preventative tool as well as for body enhancement.

### Money ∞∞

With many experts predicting 80 as the average retirement age, by 2071 50-year-olds will only just be

starting to optimise their earnings. They will have entered the workforce in their late twenties and 50-year-plus mortgages will be available.

With no government pensions, people will already be used to saving for the future, with part of their savings coming via compulsory savings schemes, public and/or occupational. Attitudes to inheritance will have changed vastly; 50-year-olds will not expect to pass on their wealth to younger generations but will look to spend their savings on themselves later.

However, there will be a shift from ownership to access. By 2071, the majority of items and services – from your own avatar to a uniquely constructed virtual world – will be available to lease, rather than owned outright.

The gap between rich and poor will remain, but values based upon

experience, knowledge and skills, as well as health, will be the new measurement of wealth.

### Work ∞∞

The future promises a plethora of humanlike machines and artificially enhanced humans, as well as intelligent machines that are nothing like humans, each with their own role. By 2071, the world will have gone through numerous social and ethical battles over rights, what is natural, and the very definition of what it is to be human.

In many cases there will be no strict boundaries between machines and humans or the ways in which they will work together and communicate. The blending of man and machine has long been the keystone of sci-fi narrative and visualisation, but by 2071, the convergence and blending of humans with technologies, such as *androids\**, *cyborgs* and non-human-resembling robots, will be the norm.

This will dramatically affect the type of jobs that humans will be able to undertake. Humans will carry out hi-tech jobs in creation, development and control, while AI will be designed to do manual jobs.

Human contact, interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence will be at a premium. These will be important arenas for older workers, especially women, although the question of gender will not be as clear cut as it is today. The so-called feminine traits of intuition and empathy will be highly desirable skills in the workplace.

Employees in 2071 will be groomed for perfection. The accumulated and specific skills and approaches of the various players within the mix will be constantly monitored for effectiveness.

While the manager may be a *metaman\**, or multiple agents ▶

◁ using distributed intelligence for decision-making, the 50-year-old human with a particular wisdom and judgment may be the team member most in demand.

## Family

By 2071, it is projected that more than 40% of global society will be over 65 years old. Part of this slow-growing process will be caused by population limitation rules introduced in the 2030s and 2040s. However, by 2071 families are expected to increase in size, due to advances in IVF enabling them to have children into their fifties.

The concept of family will be very different. These will be years of great human, socio-economic and technological advancement, but certain more conventional values and topics, such as marriage and religion, will not be so important.

Despite the likelihood of earlier (2040s) religious wars, the institutions of marriage and religion will be in virtual free-fall. So while family size will grow, in 2071 family composition will be a much less formal concept but more an extended social network, likely to include blood relatives, children from various relationships, and friends.

Polyamory – having more than one open romantic relationship at a time – will be normal and divorce will be a thing of the past as most people will never wed. ◆

*British born Derek Woodgate, a practising futurist and author, is president of The Futures Lab consultancy based in Austin, Texas, USA. It specialises in creating future potential for major corporations and institutions, especially in the fields of entertainment, media and culture.*

*Derek has helped to compile a series of reports on the changing face of life at 50 to commemorate Saga's 60th birthday. Watch out for future reports at [saga.co.uk](http://saga.co.uk)*

# Win a fabulous Baltic cruise for two aboard the Saga Sapphire

## Worth more than £6,500!



To celebrate Saga's diamond anniversary we're offering one lucky reader, plus their partner or friend, the chance to enjoy the cruise of a lifetime aboard the newest ship in the Saga fleet

The winner (and companion) of our grand prize draw will join the luxuriously refurbished *Saga Sapphire* on her 15-night classic spring cruise of the best of the Baltic – rich in art, architecture and maritime history.

Departing from Southampton on May 6, 2012, the comfortable and elegant 750-passenger ship will visit captivating cities in Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Germany and Norway, with a longer stay in magnificent St Petersburg and the opportunity to discover the historic heart of Berlin.

Accommodation will be a spacious twin-bedded, outside en-suite cabin with windows, and all meals in the many restaurants on board are included, along with a full programme of entertainment and activities to complete an unforgettable trip.

### The prize also includes:

- ◆ Travel insurance (for UK residents/passport holders)
- ◆ Return UK mainland travel service between home and port
- ◆ Porterage of luggage at the port and on board
- ◆ All on-board gratuities
- ◆ Shuttle bus service from the port to the town or city



### HOW TO ENTER

- ✉ Send a postcard, with your name, address and contact telephone number to: Saga Sapphire Prize Draw, Saga Magazine, The Saga Pavilion, Enbrook Park, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 3SE

### HURRY The Prize Draw closes on December 31, 2011

**Terms and conditions apply:** 1. All bookings are subject to the booking conditions of Saga Holidays. 2. The prize cannot be combined with any other offer. No alternative cruise is available. 3. This prize draw is open to those aged 50 or over. A travelling companion or family member may be aged 40 or over. 4. The prize draw is not open to employees and retirees of Acromas Group Limited or any subsidiary and their families. 6. There is no cash alternative. For full terms and conditions, please write to: Saga Sapphire Prize Draw, Saga Magazine, The Saga Pavilion, Enbrook Park, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 3SE. Please see brochure for full cruise details or visit <http://travel.saga.co.uk/cruises>