



URBAN ECOLOGY

The benefits of green spaces in cities: Page 12

“Keep the Cat Free”

ISSUE 1486

FELIX



18.03.11

The student voice of Imperial College London since 1949

Medics’ union faces £40,000 funding cut

Miles Robertson



Alex Nowbar

Imperial College School of Medicine Students’ Union (ICSMSU) is facing a £40,000 cut to its funding, as Imperial College Healthcare Charity withdraws its support over the next 5 years, with a 20% reduction each year. This will be especially detrimental to the electives fund and ICSM Gazette. ICSMSU President, David Smith, is confident that the Union will acquire self-sufficiency with more alumni support in the next five to six years. According to the only

candidate running for ICSMSU President 2011-12, Suzanne Rayner, “we’re looking to our faculty and they seem supportive, and there are other areas that contribute like St Mary’s Association and St Mary’s trustees”.

The changes come following the formation of Imperial College Healthcare Charity in April 2009 from the merger of the Charitable Fund for Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte’s Hospitals (who previously provided funding for ICSMSU) and St Mary’s
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FEATURES

YOUR GUIDE TO RENTING IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR CENTREFOLD



Are Mirpuri Pakistanis Arnie-wannabes? Page 9



The Japanese earthquake: Page 15 & 18

ELECTIONS



The results of the 2011 Sabbatical elections: Page 3

MUSIC



A night out playing the Nintendo? Sign me up!: Page 30

Details of new bursary scheme emerge

● Threshold for bursary likely to rise from £50,000 to £60,000

● Survey shows cash-in-hand preferred over tuition fee waivers

Katherine Bettany

A College committee is working on proposals to increase Imperial’s bursary provision that could see more students receiving financial aid. The proposals from the Fees and Financial Aid Working Group would see students from families earning £60,000 receiving bursaries (up from the current £50,000), while the amount being paid kept constant, if not

increased. The news comes as Imperial College Union announced the results of the Bursaries Survey, showing that students valued financial aid during university above tuition fee reductions.

The results of the survey highlighted a clear discrepancy between government efforts to force universities to offer tuition fee waivers and the demands of Imperial students.

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FOOD



Comparing London’s meat institutions: Page 40

HIGHLIGHTS

felix@imperial.ac.uk

On campus

Rave for Japan

RAG are hosting a night of live music from Imperial's finest on Monday night, with styles ranging from Bollywood and jazz to rap and rock. Prizes are available to the person with the most multi-coloured costume. All proceeds from this event will go to the Japan Tsunami Aid and charities helping the victims. Tickets are £4 and are available from the Union website.

The Union, Metric
21 March 19:00

Cinema All-Nighter

ICU Cinema is hosting its second all-nighter of the year, featuring highlights of the Oscar season. Tickets will cost £10 for the whole night or £3 a film, with a full schedule available at www.icucinema.co.uk and on the Facebook events page: (search 'ICU Cinema')



The Union Concert Hall
22 March 18:00

Metric Carnival

It's time for another end-of-term party at Metric, and the line-up is as good as it always is. Ultra and NY will surely urge you to "get your hands up high and jump around". This terpsichorean extravaganza will be followed by Capital FM's Roberto to keep the party pumping with an amazing selection of what the Union website refers to as "banging tunes." Tickets are £4.00 online or £6.00 on the door.

The Union, Metric
25 March 20:00

Good luck with exams!

Neville Miles



While you chumps are revising over Easter, I'll be rocking up in Laos. Or, sitting alone in the Felix Office... Which would be far less badass

It's that time of year again, when exams roll around and we get to use the tired old phrase, "It's that time of year again". First years, I wish you the best of luck as you realise how pitifully easy your A-levels were in comparison. Final years, I hope that you did really well on your project and that these exams are just a matter of not completely balling them up. If it all gets a bit much, the Health Centre will be able to help you cope with exam stress. Aside from that, there's little else to say except try to not get too depressed by all the travel photos I start posting up on the Felix Facebook page.

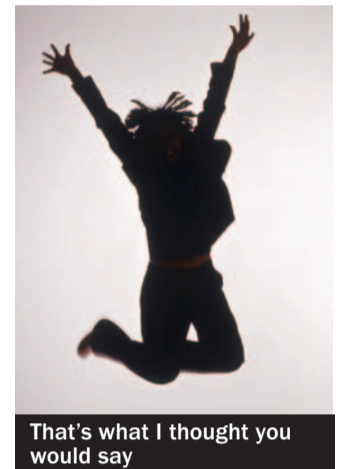
Editor

Notice

New Felix website

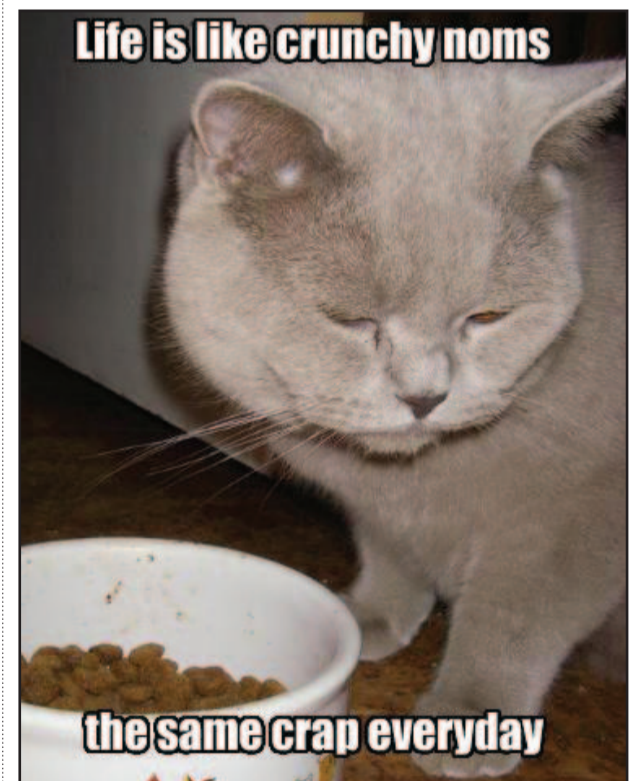
Coming next term

Over the last few months, we've been secretly designing a completely new website and it's nearing completion. The design is much cleaner and we're going to have new features like photo and video galleries as well as audio like radio shows. Whilst you're all revising over Easter, we'll be tidying it up with an aim to launch at the beginning of next term. Look out for it!



That's what I thought you would say

Lolcat of teh week



FELIX

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Election winners announced

Miles Robertson



From left: Monya Zard (Clubs & Societies), Jason Parmar (Education), Scott Heath (President), Michael Foster (Finance & Services), Matt Colvin (Felix Editor) and Nicolas Massie (Welfare)

Maciej Matuszewski

The Imperial College Union Sabbatical and Student Trustee election results were released last Monday at Council. RCSU President Scott Heath beat closest contender Danish Khan in the third stage of the voting process by 1983 to 1593 votes to be elected Union president. Heath said in a statement that he “would like to thank everybody who voted”, including his opponents “who made the election fun and ran good

campaigns”. He hopes that he will “repay [his voters’] trust and faith with a great ICU 11/12” and “continue the trend of good student-sabbatical communication”.

In other results, Monya Zard, who ran uncontested, was elected as Deputy President (Clubs & Societies). She said that she was “excited to be sharing an office with Michael Foster,” who was elected as Deputy President (Finance & Services). Jason Parmar narrowly beat Stefan Bauer to become Deputy Presi-

dent (Education). Nicolas Massie was elected as Deputy President (Welfare) and Matt Colvin as Felix Editor. Felix Editor was the most closely contended position with Colvin beating Alexander Karapetian by only 68 votes.

Nathaniel Bottrell, Eugene Chang, Ravi Pall and Abdul Patel were elected to roles of student trustees, who sit on the Union’s Trustee Board, its governing body, without taking a year out. Heath praised those elected for their “broad range of skills and ideas”.

Record turnout as Union innovates with live voting stats

Aemun Reza

Imperial College Union had one of the highest election turnouts, so far this year, of any UK university, with 32.5% of students voting. A record 5,033 out of 26,809 students participated, which is an increase of 50% from last year’s 3,387 voters. For the first time ever, the Union showed live voting stats on their websites throughout the voting period, allowing students to see turnout for different departments and halls.

The Faculty of Natural Sciences had the largest turnout with 41% of students voting. The engineers came in second with 35.3% and the Medics came third

with 23.5%.

Every hall of residence voted and had at least a 10% increase on the number of people voting. Additionally, Medicine undergraduates saw the largest increased turnout compared to their previous year.

For the second consecutive year, the Life Sciences department has had the highest voting turnout. Materials students went from the lowest voting recorded last year straight up to the highest turnout for this year for the Engineering department. Although most other universities are still in the election process, the participation from other student unions that have completed their elec-

tions has not matched up to Imperial.

Even though Southampton had a staggering 7,285 voters from a student body of 23,000 students this was 30% of their eligible students. Kings College Union had a record number of voters – 4,024, which only made up 18% of their students. Only 12.14% of University College London students voted in their elections, giving a total of 2996 voters. Edinburgh had 22% of their students voting and Sheffield had 24%.

Therefore in terms of percentage of students that participated in the student elections, with 32.5% of the student body voting, Imperial currently holds the top position in the UK.

The results

President

Scott Heath: 1983 – ELECTED
Danish Khan: 1593 (3rd Round)
Naida Dzgal: 1227 (2nd Round)
Ron: 235 (1st Round)

Deputy President (Clubs and Societies)

Monya Zard: 2447 – ELECTED
Ron: 733 (1st Round)

Deputy President (Education)

Jason Parmar: 1563 – ELECTED
Stefan Bauer: 1471 (2nd Round)
Ron: 443 (1st Round)

Student Trustees

Abdul Patel, Eugene Chang, Ravi Pall and Nathaniel Bottrell were elected

Felix Editor

Matt Colvin: 1472 – ELECTED
Alex Karapetian: 1404 (3rd Round)
Indy Leclercq: 967 (2nd Round)
Ron: 234 (1st Round)

Deputy President (Finances & Services)

Michael Foster: 1847 – ELECTED
Chia Lim: 1276 (2nd Round)
Rebecca Clark: 639 (1st Round)
Ron: 273 (1st Round)

Deputy President (Welfare)

Nicolas Massie: 1704 – ELECTED
Mevani Jagodage: 1223 (2nd Round)
Jehan Pasangha: 666 (1st Round)
Ron: 279 (1st Round)

The elections are run with a Single Transferable Vote system. These results are the final tally of votes after 2nd and 3rd preferences are included.

NEWS

News Editors: **Matt Colvin**
Alex Karapetian
news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Financial Emergencies

How the College can help you if you're facing financial trouble

If you suddenly find yourself in financial hardship, for example finding that you're unable to pay your rent for that month, the College can help you and may give you money (which you don't have to pay back). As well as the processes described below, they will also provide emergency assistance or loans. So if you're facing a financial crisis, email student.funding@imperial.ac.uk and they will do everything that they can to help and advise you.

Home Students Access to Learning Fund

The Access to Learning Fund (ALF) is a pot of money that is supplied by the government and distributed to home students who are experiencing "genuine financial hardship". Of course, judging whether your hardship is genuine is something that happens when you apply, but they do ask that you've explored other routes of financial aid before applying (for example if you haven't signed up for a full student loan, then you can't apply)

If you do qualify for support from the ALF, you will receive between £100 and £3,500 that you do not have to pay back. There is a thorough application process, however. They examine your bank statements and compare your income and your "essential" expenditure (meaning that they don't look kindly on subscriptions to, for example, online gambling sites) to calculate your deficit.

EU/International Students Hardship Fund

The Hardship Fund is a fund that is supported by donations and the College directly; as opposed to the Access to Learning Fund (ALF) which is funded by the government. It's aimed at EU and International students who have "experienced a change in their financial circumstances after registering with the College".

The fund offers between £100 and £1,000 and as with the ALF, the money does need to be repaid. However, it is subtly different to the ALF in that it not designed to aid with long-term living costs. It is for "short-term and urgent situations only".

Your Senior Tutor, Postgraduate Tutor or supervisor will be contacted about your attendance and academic progress if you make an application to ensure that they are "satisfactory".

Both funds are for undergraduate and postgraduates. They are not available to assist with tuition fees payments. Contact student.funding@imperial.ac.uk if you have any queries. More information is available at: imperial.ac.uk/registry/studentfinancialsupport

We need the money now

Debt reduction rejected as students point to living costs, not hi

...Continued from Front Page

A majority – 60% of the 460 students that responded to the survey – said that they preferred cash bursaries to either lower accommodation costs or tuition fee waivers. The survey was only targeted at the 1261 students who receive financial aid.

One survey respondent said that tuition fee reductions "would be a complete waste", adding "It is the upfront cost of living that deters poorer students from higher education, not tuition fees." Union President Alex Kendall said that whilst he "understood" the government's point of view, it was clear that the best way to help poorer students was through cash bursaries.

At present, Imperial College offers many forms of financial aid to its undergraduates and postgraduates. It spends £4.5 million annually on bursaries for students from households with an income lower than £50,000. £4 million of this comes from Home/EU tuition fee income (equating to 17.5%), whilst the other £500,000 comes from the College Endowment Fund.

The Student Financial Support (SFS) team, which comprises of only four members of staff, manages the distribution of this money (and other funds) to students. The survey showed high satisfaction with the SFS team, with over 90% rating the service as 'good' or 'excellent'.

With the increase in tuition fees to £9,000, the College's bursary system is being reviewed, with Union President Alex Kendall calling the new bursary system "much more generous". Plans include raising the threshold for bursaries to households with incomes of up to £60,000 instead of the current £50,000,

Kadhim Shubber



The survey suggests that poorer students would prefer cash in hand rather than a r

as well as some tuition fee reductions for poorer students.

Alex Kendall confirmed that there would be some reduction in tuition fees, not only because of pressure from the government, but also to show the university's willingness to address the problem of debt deterrence. He said that the amount paid to students would not decrease. However, the results of the survey also suggest that the College still has work to do to ensure that prospective students are aware of the financial aid that they are eligible to receive.

It found that almost 25% of those

surveyed had no knowledge of the bursary system before applying. 10% only found out about the bursary system after arriving at Imperial. One student highlighted that they didn't "feel enough information was given to students about the bursary during the application process. Whilst I still applied, I suspect Imperial's reputation as an expensive university might put off potential applicants who were unaware of the bursary." Clearly, Imperial will have to raise the awareness of prospective students about the bursary scheme to ensure that it continues to

The bursary means I don't have to constantly worry about money

Peter Roberts talks to Kadhim Shubber about how the College's Student Support Bursary makes life easier



Tell us about yourself

I'm a 3rd year Mechanical Engineering student. I'm on the full Imperial bursary as well as the government grant and have been for my whole time at university.

Would you have been able to come to Imperial without the bursary?

Maybe, obviously living in London is expensive but the bursary makes things a lot easier. It means that I'm able to have a flexible student life, for example in terms of living with friends after 1st year, I didn't have as many constraints on who I could live with or where I could live. But in terms of coming to Imperial, I imagine that people who don't have parental support find it just as difficult, even though they don't qualify for a bursary.

Now, say students

Higher fees, as the main barrier to attending university



reduction in their fees

Tuition fee waivers or cash bursaries?

The rise in tuition fees has sparked a contentious debate about how to ensure the participation of those from poorer backgrounds in higher education. In this rather topsy-turvy argument, it is the government – who raised the fees in the first place – that are arguing for lower fees, while universities are more inclined to charge the top rate and offer greater cash bursaries to students.

A cynic might say that the government is motivated by a need to reduce its own costs, rather than concern for students. It costs the government money to provide tuition fee loans for students. It estimated that universities would charge an average £7,500 in fees. As it becomes

more likely that many will charge the full rate, the government has suddenly found that it has massively under budgeted.

Because the government doesn't have the legal power to force universities to charge specific fees – aside from legislating a maximum – it is now looking at other ways to recoup its costs. The universities minister David Willetts has threatened universities that charge the £9,000 rate with further cuts in funding.

The shadow universities minister Gareth Thomas perhaps hit the nail on the head when he said that this government has ended up charging students “more and more” while saving the government “less and less”.

attract the diverse range of students it currently enjoys. Gerry Greyling, Student Finance Support Officer, agreed that Imperial must do more to inform prospective students: “As fees increase students will be looking at their university choice not only in terms of the quality of course but also at what funding the university can offer. So there's a real incentive to collate all the information about scholarships and funding in one place.” He recognised that Departmental Scholarships are very decentralised, highlighting the lack of a central place where students can find

information about all of them. Student Finance Support is currently working on the creation of a portal on the central bursaries website, where they can collate all of the available sources of funding and advertise them to students.

What is clear from the results of the survey is that Imperial is already doing an exemplary job at providing financial aid to its students, a fact made all the more impressive considering how many people SFS employs. Moreover, Imperial already meets the requirements set out by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) in response to govern-

ment changes in tuition fees. The future of bursaries remains unclear – there is government pressure to offer ‘freebies’ in the form of fee waivers; but students still require substantial help with rising living costs. Kendall pointed out that the survey goes some way to settling the argument over the future of tuition fee waivers and bursaries. The future is likely to see a balance being struck between implementing fee waivers and reducing the amount of ‘cash in hand’ students receive, in order to ensure students can still afford to apply to and study at Imperial.

Did the bursary help determine your choice of university?

I wouldn't say so. Obviously I was worried about the living costs but it was the government grant that was more important in terms of feeling comfortable about coming to London. I knew about the government bursary well before I applied to university but I only found out Imperial's bursaries during the application process.

Do you have a part-time job?

No, the bursary means that I don't have to do that, which makes it easier to concentrate on my studies. The reason why the bursary is so helpful is that you don't have to constantly worry about money and have that on your mind constantly.

What do you think of the bursary service? Is it straightforward?

Yes, it's very easy and hassle-free. They email you at the beginning of each year to remind you about the applications.

What would you like to see as fees rise? More money directed to bursaries or reduced fees for poorer students?

The problem with bursaries is that students from higher-income families, who don't receive support from their parents, miss out. I don't believe in higher fees, I'd like to see them stay at the minimum £6,000. However, reducing your debt after university doesn't help with living expenses during university so in that sense, more bursaries are beneficial.

Chemistry student taken to hospital after suffering burns

A second year Chemistry student was taken to hospital on Tuesday 15th after suffering burns. It is believed that diethyl ether vapour ignited causing the parts of the student's body to catch fire. Another student present put him out with a labcoat. The student was taken to Chelsea & Westminster hospital via ambulance.

Faculty elections



Deepka Rana

Although the biggest results have already been announced this Tuesday for the Imperial College Union elections, election fever is far from over, with nominees vying for the votes for positions on the committees of the RCSU, CGCU and ICSMSU. All three unions are running their own election for members to choose a new committee to represent them for the upcoming academic year.

ICSMSU nominations closed last Sunday, with the final hustings taking place tonight at the Reynolds Bar, Charing Cross, where candidates will be questioned on their experience and ideas for representing Medicine, Biomedical Sciences and Pharmacology students. 16 positions are available, with only 4th Year medic Suzie Rayner running for President (Interview: Page 8). She is the only candidate running for the position. She said that she is paying close attention to the ideas being put forward by candidates for other positions: “There's so much competition this year for some of the positions that it's been great listening to it.” She added that “I've been scribbling down ideas either thinking how similar they are to mine, or how good other ideas are that I want to borrow.”

Colin Hill, Julian But, and Tsz Kwan are all running for President of the CGCU, whose elections are also cur-

rently in full swing. Efforts will be focused on increasing the turnout after disappointing figures in previous years. According to current President, Victor du Mesnil du Buisson, this is partly due to problems in management that the union has faced. He believes that “the CGCU needs some kind of rebranding to become more approachable to students” and hopes that next year's committee “is firmly prepared and are motivated to start the next year and bring back CGCU.”

The RCSU will also be looking to increase participation amongst its members, with nominations having closed on Thursday. Current president, Scott Heath, hopes that the turnout for these elections will mirror the record-breaking figures from the ICU elections earlier this week. However, he admitted that it's not going to be an easy task with about 40% of the voting population in the RCSU being postgraduates. He says he finds it “very difficult to get them enthused about the election”. When considering only the undergraduate turnout, the figure stands at roughly 24%, and this year's plans to get more students to participate in the elections include lunchtime hustings with free food, in the hope of increasing the turnout.

Hustings:
Medics – Friday 18th, 7pm, Reynolds.
RCSU – Monday 21st, 12:15pm, Student Activity Space, 2nd floor Union

Police warn about bicycle thefts

Alex Nowbar

The police are investigating a recent series of bicycle thefts from the bike shed, including one student who placed a lock around the front wheel and thus lost the whole bike, apart from the front wheel. The suspect, caught on CCTV, tends to wait for a user to let him in, as a card is required for access. Then he carries a bicycle in and leaves some time later with a stolen one, often of high value.

Surveillance of the bike shed shows the great extent to which students tailgate and allow others to tailgate. The advice for bike shed users is to ensure they lock their bicycles up with high security locks (ideally a “D” lock should

be attached to the main frame, not to the wheel!) and to avoid being tailgated. While the spate of thefts of laptops, iPods and phones, even in secure areas, is a result of students and staff leaving property unattended, it is also a product of letting unauthorised people into restricted areas.

College Security said that they were unable to release CCTV images of the suspect as they have “not been proved to have committed an offence yet.”

The Head of College Security, Terry Branch, reminded students to not allow “tailgating” into the bike shed and that the College sells gold standard D locks at half the usual price to help students secure their bicycles.

NEWS

Overseas Societies

Find out how you can win funding for your Freshers Event; quick, the deadline is the 13th of May!



Last year the Indian Society won £200 for their meet and greet event

Calling all heads of Overseas Societies! This year, the International Office is once again running a competition for overseas societies to win funding for their Freshers' Orientation / Pre-Arrival Event.

These events are really useful for freshers to get to know one another and begin to take an active role in their society. Previous events have included a freshers' camp, a dinner, an evening out and various other events. International Office funding can be really helpful in getting your event off the ground.

Arta Babae, who heads up the Iranian Society, won a prize of £200 last year to put towards his society's event in an Iranian restaurant. He said: "The first event of the year is an important one as this is the event we show the freshers we are there for them when we need us. Most freshers join the society officially when they buy their tickets for the freshers' event. Our prize helped us to subsidise our event so that more freshers could buy tickets and join us and also we were able to hold the event in a great venue in High Street Kensington. We were also able to lower the ticket price at the same time which was a great achievement."

Ashmi Mehta runs the Indian Society and last year won £200 for a meet and greet event. He said: "We were able to hire a bigger area because of the prize and attracted more students as we could provide a variety of food and drinks. Fresher events are key to ensure the success of a society during the year. They allow new students to meet older year students as well as other people from different halls and courses. This year we held our meet and greet, The Indian Soc Jam, at the Eastside Bar and we had a huge turnout. We had soft drinks, food, as well as music which made it a relaxing atmosphere for everyone to talk and mingle."

Heads of overseas societies should start thinking about their entry proposals now, as the deadline for entries is 13th May. Some of the best events are low-cost – e.g. a meeting in a cafe – the main thing is to give freshers the opportunity to get to know one another!

If you are member of an overseas society and you would like to organise an event, contact the International Office at international@imperial.ac.uk for further guidance on how to submit your competition entry.

Strike to go ahead but numbers still unknown

Departments calm as few declare intention to strike

Haralambos Dayantis

The University and College Union (UCU) has officially confirmed that members at Imperial college will be striking on the 22nd and 24th of March. It is still unknown exactly how many lecturers will strike but around as of Wednesday 17th, a dozen had already declared their intentions to College, with more expected to follow.

At the time of writing, Physics, and several engineering departments, had confirmed that few or no staff had declared their intention to strike. However, staff have some time yet to notify the College of their intentions. The Department of Life Sciences confirmed that taught postgraduate courses are likely to be unaffected.

The strike is the first at Imperial for almost a decade. The last time strike action was taken was in 2002, when academics across London protested a freeze to London Weighting, an additional allowance for working in London. Imperial academics have not, in recent history, gone on strike over local matters, thanks to what the College describes as a good working relationship between itself and the unions at Imperial. The strike is over proposed changes to the pension scheme, which would see existing academics making increased contributions and newer employees receiving lower final pensions. Sally

Hunt, general secretary of the UCU, said: "University staff [...] have made it clear from the start of this dispute that if the employers were not prepared to negotiate then we would be left with little option but to take strike action."

Louise Lindsay, Director of Human Resources at Imperial, emphasised that the reforms are aimed at reducing the cost of pensions, to avoid contributions increasing significantly in the future. She argued that long-term trends make the current system unsustainable. Two years ago, when employers' contributions to the scheme rose by 2%, Imperial had to pay in an additional £3.1 million per year.

The reforms would see existing members of the scheme paying a contribution of 7.5% of their annual salaries to the scheme. New members would pay the lower 6.5% rate, but receive a pension based on their career-average salary rather than their final salary. In addition, employers and employees will share any increase in costs; up until now employee contributions have remained fixed, while employers' contributions have been more variable.

On the days of the strike, staff will not receive salary or be covered by the pension scheme. One consequence of this is that their life insurance policies will not, by default, be covered on these days. This means that in the unlikely event that

a staff member dies on a strike day, their dependants don't receive the life insurance payments. Indeed, some institutions such as Lancaster University are refusing to pay the life cover of their staff on strike days. However, Imperial will be paying life cover contributions on strike days, as they deem it to be the "right thing to do" and have expressed a willingness to maintain positive relations with their staff.

In a message to staff, the College said that picket lines were possible but they assured staff and students that "they will not be prevented from going about their usual business on the day of the action if they wish to do so."

The Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), which administers university pensions, originally planned to pass the reforms by the 1st of April. However, the UCU's refusal to pass the reforms means that "it is not possible to forecast when any changes might be finally decided on." The deadline was important for tax reasons, but now employees look set to lose out on tax relief due to the delay. In a statement, the USS said: "Regrettably the recent events have also affected the ability of the trustee company to implement options to mitigate or eliminate the new tax charges that arise for some members as a result of the government's forthcoming changes to the pensions tax relief rules."

Students improve Tanzanian water

Timothy Thang

Raincatcher Imperial is an annual student-led project that aims to improve the standards of living in Tanzania through the provision of clean drinking water. According to Tanzania's Ministry of Water, 70% of its rural population have no access to safe water, causing the deaths of 31,000 children due to diarrhoea each year. In the remote regions, even unclean water is in short supply as the dry season lasts for up to eight months of the year.

Raincatcher Imperial was started in 2008 when the Development Officer of the Anglican Church of Tabora wrote to the Engineers Without Borders society at Imperial. In the summer of 2009, 10 Imperial students visited Tanzania to construct three Rainwater Harvesting Systems (RHSs) in the towns of Kahama, Nzega and Igunga. The following year, a new team travelled to the town of Tabora to construct an underground tank for the Mihayo Secondary School.

Raincatcher Imperial bears all of the construction costs for all projects, reaching up to £15,000 per RHS. This year's team require a collection of £25,000 to send teams to construct two RHSs.



Students building a Rainwater Harvesting System

The project recently secured sponsorship from a competition held by financial services firm UBS, called "Fund Your Vision". Raincatcher Imperial has also organised fundraising events throughout the year to meet the necessary construction costs.

Last Saturday, the 16 students of the 2011 team carried out a sponsored Water Carry, in which team members each carried 10 litres of water for 10 miles. A band night has been organized for the Union tomorrow night.

One site has already been identified for this year's project while the second site is currently under consideration. The first is St Mary's Secondary School in Tabora, a boarding school accommodating over 300 girls.

The second site has yet to be confirmed but two potential locations have been identified. The first is a local hospital, where a ferro-cement tank would provide clean water for a newly formed surgery unit at the hospital. The second is a refugee camp, where a ferro-cement tank would provide clean water for members of the local community.

The RHSs are specially designed to collect rainwater from the gutters attached to the roofs and have in-built water filters to ensure that the water is drinkable.

Raincatcher Imperial will train members of the local community for the construction and maintenance of the RHSs, and will be working with the local Tanzanian universities to help them conduct similar projects in the future.

If you would like to find out more about Raincatcher Imperial or would like to support their efforts, please visit their website at www.rwh-tanzania.co.uk or contact Demetris Hadji-georgiou at demetris.hadji-georgiou10@imperial.ac.uk.

Medic Union facing £40,000 cut over 5 years

Miles Robertson



The Union are looking to increase alumni funding in the long-term

...Continued from Front Page
Paddington Charitable Trust. The charity has become increasingly oriented towards supporting the patients and staff of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust. In other words, they are prioritising patient care. ICSMSU intends to appeal against the decision, fearing that the reduced funding will not be enough to sustain vital aspects of the union.

ICSMSU has traditionally received £40,000 a year from the Hammersmith Charitable Trust. This was received for 2009-10 immediately following the charity's transformation but the union was warned that this wouldn't last. ICSMSU have been awarded £40,000 for 2010-11 and grants for the next four financial years decreasing by 20% each year.

Allocation of the £40,000 is £8,000 for equipment purchase, £4,000 for ICSM Gazette (which produces 3 issues per year), £10,000 for elective awards, and £18,000 towards the ICSMSU President's (£24,000) salary.

Electives, during which final year students embark on medical placements abroad, can often be a financial challenge and this hardship fund is a highly sought after resource. If the cuts do go ahead, it is likely that ICSM Gazette's funding will be completely cut.

The hope in the long-term is to move towards acquiring funding from the ICSM Alumni Association. Of course, encouraging donations from alumni is a challenge, but support appears to have been building year on year. Suzanne

Rayner believes that in order to maintain the provision of funds, people need to be persuaded of the importance of the union's role.

The use of charitable funds in healthcare is a well-established tradition; most of the hospitals within Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust were founded by independent charities as voluntary hospitals pre-20th century. The idea behind these hospitals was to provide for sick working-class citizens, the "deserving poor". Despite the shift to government funding for health, with the establishment of the NHS in 1948, hospital charities have persisted; Imperial College Healthcare Charity is a descendent of the charities which founded the hospitals constituting the Trust.

Oxford University formally signals rise to £9,000 fees

Matt Colvin

The University of Oxford has become the fourth institution in the country to officially announce a rise of tuition fees to the maximum figure of £9,000.

Following in the footsteps of Imperial, Cambridge and, most recently, Exeter, Oxford's move to increase the fees for home and EU students has been anticipated since the beginning of February, following a debate held by students and senior university figures. The university unveiled its proposals earlier this week, confirming the proposed tuition charge for a year of undergraduate study to be £9,000. Alongside this, the university revealed its plans for making financial help readily available to English students from less privileged backgrounds.

Students joining the university from

households with an income of less than £16,000 will be required to pay a subsidised figure of £3,500 for their first year of study, with this amount rising to £6,000 for the following years.

Those from a household income of less than £25,000 will receive a reduction in the tuition fees, with students from a household earning more than this being required to pay the full £9,000.

However, those from a household income of less than £42,600 will receive a means-tested bursary. It is expected that approximately 10% of students will receive the highest available bursary of £4,300 in their first year, falling to £3,300 thereafter.

Fee reduction and bursary support for students from the rest of the United Kingdom and European Economic Area countries is listed on the university's

website as 'still being reviewed'.

Oxford's proposals are subject to approval by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA), with this caveat also applying to the other universities wishing to charge more than £6,000. Confirmation is expected by the end of July.

Professor Andrew Hamilton, Vice-Chancellor of the university, wrote an online statement in response to the proposals, stating, "It is deeply regrettable, as the University has made clear, that the Government is reducing drastically direct public investment in university teaching."

"Excellence is not cheap and the funding gap is wide. This means that in reaching difficult judgements about how to deal with immediate challenges, Oxford also has to be attentive to longer-term ones."

Doctor! Doctor! Fix my teddy bear!

Students host Teddy Bear Hospital

Irum Sunderji
Priyanga Vijayakumar

On Wednesday 2nd March, the Imperial branch of the European Medical Students Association (EMSA) held their annual Teddy Bear Hospital (TBH) Event at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. This year, they invited children from St Luke's CE Primary School and St Stephen's Primary School. Over the course of the day, 100 hyperactive school children aged 5-7 were let loose on the TBH manned by over 60 medical students from Years 2-6.

TBH is a place where children can bring their sick teddies to get better. Through "make-believe", Teddy Bear Hospital aims to help alleviate the common childhood fear of hospitals.

Simply put: the Teddies are the patients, the children are the parents and the medical students play Teddy Doctors.

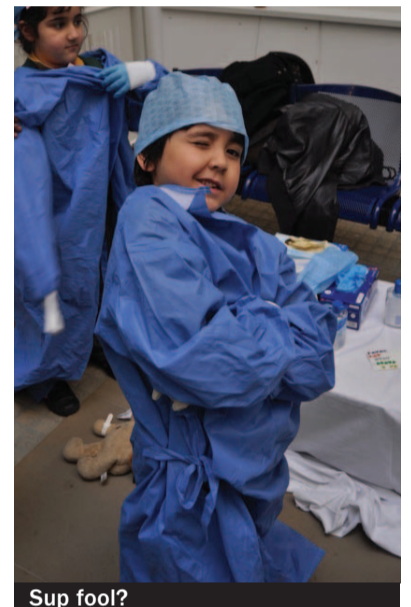
Children were taken on a journey through the healthcare pathway via ten different stations, some of which focused on experiences and others on education.

The children started off by filling out 'Patient Notes' detailing Teddy's ailments before dialing '999' and having Teddy whisked away on a stretcher to the 'Teddy Ambulance'.

Later on, it all got messy at the plastering station where each child was given the opportunity to plaster their little finger and decorate it with their own artistic flair.

One of the most popular stations every year is Teddy Surgery. Children dress up as mini-surgeons ready to fix Teddy. After sending Teddy to Dreamland they take Teddy apart, find out what's wrong with him and put him back together again.

Education was made fun with odd



Sup fool?

combinations of fruits selected by the children blended together to make surprisingly delicious smoothies at the Healthy Living Station. Meanwhile, at the exercise station, everyone had a work out by playing 'Simon Says' and 'Punch Balloon'. The students seemed more worn out than the children by the end of it!

The kids got ready for their close-ups on camera at the diary room station. They then relaxed at comfy beanbag station, whilst reflecting on the day.

The day was a great success with positive feedback from not only the kids and the medical students but also the staff and parents. The EMSA would like to thank everyone who helped and hope to see new faces in the future.

Videos and photos of the day will be up on the new TBH website soon, so be sure to check it out: <http://www.icsmsu.com/tbh/>



"Who wants me to poke out its eyes?"

Features Editor: **Lizzie Crouch**

FEATURES

felix@imperial.ac.uk

Miles Robertson



Suzie Rayner is running uncontested for Medic President, but is she the right person for the position?

THE NEXT MEDIC PRESIDENT?

Interview by Kadhim Shubber

This is your second time running. What do you think that says about you?

I think it probably shows how much I want the position. Obviously I've had to rethink it this year and it's quite a weird experience running for it for the second time, but it's also quite exciting.

You're unopposed, would you rather have had somebody running against you?

It would be great to win when you're way into it, but last year it was very close and very stressful, and I feel that I proved myself last year. So I'm not worried about being the only choice students have, because I think I had enough support last year to prove that I'm ready.

Do you think there's a lack of choice in the sense that there isn't someone else offering a different set of policies?

I suppose so, but I think you have to rely on the fact that I will pick up ideas from some other members. And there's so much competition this year for some of the positions that it's been great listening to it. I've been scribbling down ideas either thinking how similar they are to mine, or how good other ideas are that I want to borrow.

What would be your focus next year?

One of the two main areas I've always thought was essential to a President's role is maintenance of what has come before. This tends to be forgotten when people come in all guns blazing talking about the things they're going to change. The other area a lot of the academic reps are talking about is the feedback from faculty to student. We have an excellent system of feedback from student to faculty, but it always gets stuck halfway back. We want to

make the system easier to access, like by putting it on the website.

So, to use the old phrase, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. What things are in your opinion not broken, and so don't need to be fixed?

Welfare, for instance, has come along amazingly these past few years, but the obvious problem with the welfare system is that new problems arise all the time, so it's working off the solid base we've got now.

After the controversy with the Daily Mail article, do you think there's anything that still needs to be addressed on that front?

I think the main things that came out of that were issues about the Reynolds, and areas where we weren't fulfilling our responsibilities. Those need to be worked on gradually, and some of the dramatic changes we've made recently have caused massive uproar but have been effective.

Were, say, the sports teams a bit upset about these changes?

I think they were more concerned about what could happen, and the threats that they wouldn't be allowed to stay in the Reynolds. But clearly they have, and so the changes we've implemented are not so disastrous.

Do you think Medic 'antics' are given too much attention?

I think the reason their antics get overhyped is that, like with the Daily Mail issue, we see headlines saying "This person will be your doctor" while we see them behaving like any other student, to be honest. So yes, I think it does get overblown. Having two different bars does also add to the air of mystery about the medics' behaviour.

Is there a sense that medical students who don't drink feel excluded from their Union?

It seems to me that because people go on about catering for 'drinkers' or 'non-drinkers', they're escalating a divide that probably wasn't there to begin with. Obviously there are people who will never want to go to the Reynolds, and those are the people we need to make sure we're catering for. There's less of a problem with drinkers and non-drinkers than there is with people not being interested in the same events.

How big do you feel the divide between Medics and the rest of Imperial is?

I have a couple of non-medical friends from Halls, but other than that most of my friends from halls were also medical students. The divide ultimately comes down to the degree being 6 years instead of 3 or 4, and the different locations medical students have to go to over their time here. It's not necessarily a good thing, but there are clear reasons for it. It is, however, a shame to have rivalry in the wrong places. So at Varsity, for instance, rivalry is brilliant. But when it's people saying "Oh, I hate medics" or the other way around, that's clearly not healthy.

Does this divide need to be closed, or are you happy with the current state of affairs?

Ultimately, it does need to be people's choice. Everyone should be made aware of the clubs or activities available in the main student Union, so that it starts being seen as acceptable; a friendly approach from both sides is essential. However, I don't think the best way is to try to force people to integrate.

You're a fourth year now, so where did your journey to this point begin?

I remember that I spoke with the current President, Dave Smith, on day three of university, and he said "I want to be president". I never had that. I just couldn't imagine why a person would want to take year out at any point.

So I suppose that a lot has changed. Probably one of the big things that I've done personally and for the Medics Union is my work as RAG Chair in second year. That's one of the biggest reasons why I realised that I could do the job of President.

If you love your subject, and you really want to be a doctor, why would you take a year off and push back becoming a doctor by a year?

That was always the reason that I hesitated about it. I love medicine and that's one of the biggest cons to running for President. However, the skills that I'll learn and the importance of the role to the Medical school are most important. I love medicine but I also love the medical school as much, if not more. I believe that I have the traits to do the job well, but we'll see obviously. I know that I would do it well.

What are those traits?

I know that if someone came to an open day and met me, I'm pretty sure that they wouldn't forget me. That sounds really arrogant I know, but what I mean is that I feel that I could give people a good impression of the medical school and get them enthusiastic about it.

The Medics' Union is facing large cuts over the next 5 years. How big a deal is this?

This is a big deal, we're hoping that the cut will be much smaller than what they're threatening at the moment. The area that we hope to move to in getting funding from is the ICSM alumni. It's building every year.

What can you do to fight these cuts?

I'm very pro student opinion but I also know that if you go into meetings saying "we want this, we want that" that you're not going to get anywhere. I will compromise on certain things, to get the more important things. However, what's essential is that we continue to persuade people of the importance of the Union's role.

FEATURES

From the Midlands back to Mirpur

PART TWO

**Omar Hafeez-Bore and
Kahfeel Hussain** on how Mirpuris
shaped the British Isles and how
they themselves were changed

People grow roots slowly; it happens unseen, and unknown. Certainly they were hidden from the Mirpuri men who came here 40 years ago, intending to spend some years working and sending money back from the verdant land of Valaid, of England. Afterwards they'd return to build their lives in the new towns of the Mirpur region and New Mirpur City itself. England was just their land of opportunity, and it wanted their help.

On arriving here they packed into cheap rooms and flats, all working throughout the day, some donning western suits and dubious dance moves at night. Photos were sent back from studios in Manchester and Bradford, of newly dapper husbands grooming their moustaches and confirming the fantasy of this new life in England to those back home.

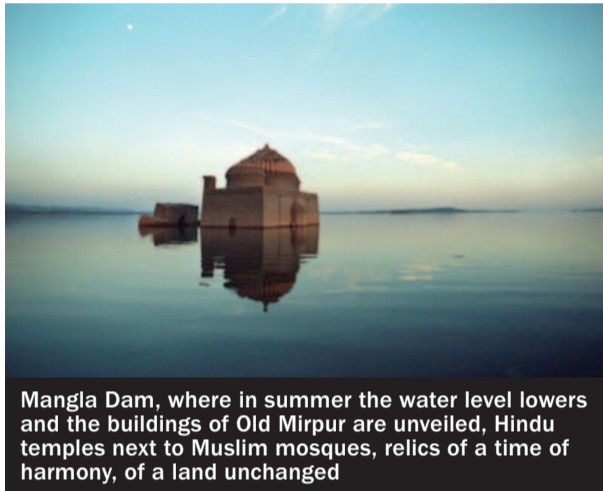
But this temporary period grew longer and longer, and by the time the men's wives came over to help, it was too late. Their roots had grown too deep. With a few halal butchers, makeshift mosques and community ties, the men had unwittingly started teasing England's soil into something more habitable. Something new.

At least, it looked new. In reality the community had just donned a new garb, a patchwork mix of old Mirpuri traits and new British outlets for them. The practical skill of these ex-farmers was channelled into mechanical expertise, an in-depth knowledge of cars and a male duty to 'parallel park' better than you can sit in a chair.

Mirpuri knowledge of famous poems like Saif Ul Malook was replaced by a passion for Hollywood action fests like *Commando* and *Predator*. The rapid-fire Potahari tongue was remixed with English staples such as *Pantry*, or *Pehntree*, whilst the old remedies of *Chicken-broth Yukhni* and *Kichri* were supplemented by a Western elixir of life; antibiotics. (And of course *Vicks*, the miracle rub able to cure coughs, seal cuts and fix broken limbs).

But despite these British flavourings, the Pakistani and Mirpuri communities soon formed their own urban niches, bustling roads became cluttered with packed kebab houses and supermarkets that sold mangoes by the box-load and flour by the sack-full. Research by the Office for National Statistics shows that British Pakistanis are more likely to be self-employed than any other ethnic group, and all those old jokes about Asians being the corner shop kings now ring a bit hollow. Corner shops are now just the bookends to whole streets of Pakistani, often Mirpuri businesses.

These shop fronts, all Karachi-this and Kashmir-that, are little windows into the modern British Pakistani community, and its evolution. Girls wearing the latest kameez fill fashion stores next to Islamic bookshops overflowing with prayer beads and books. Travel agents promising cheap flights to the mother land



Mangla Dam, where in summer the water level lowers and the buildings of Old Mirpur are unveiled, Hindu temples next to Muslim mosques, relics of a time of harmony, of a land unchanged



**“A diet of their dads’ 80s
action films and their
community’s stress on
physical capability has
turned Mirpuris into gym-
going Arnie-wannabes.”**

squeeze next to taxi firms promising more local bargains. But it's in the barber shops that you can spy the young men, the future leaders of the community, and the current lifeblood of the streets.

The bros. They sit in the barber shops waiting for their 'short-back-and-sides', with an extra streak of 'patterns' for the stylish or a beard trim for the overtly religious. For all of them it is likely their second visit in as many weeks and, judging by the slight blurring of their hair-line edge, they're already a few days overdue. They lounge on the chairs in tracksuit-trainer combos that look casual and unfussy to the untrained eye, but are in fact a proud fashion. One not influenced by any music band or GQ fashion spread; no one at Nike or Rockport ever made a poster with their products worn like this, and none of these guys ever needed them to. It is just what bros wear. A precise alchemy of trainers and dark sports gear that suggests athleticism, and a manly lack of anything so girly as colour. It is being ready to do all sorts of hard stuff like go to the gym, or fight, or disguise as a shadow or whatever.

It most definitely is not 'gay'.

Which is funny, because (whisper it) it is only the clichéd stereotype of gay men that can rival young Mirpuris in their desire to get ripped and look big. A diet of their dads' 80s action films and their community's stress on physical capability has turned Mirpuris into gym-going Arnie-wannabes. Being huge brings not only respect and admiration, but some protection from guys scared of big hits by big biceps.

These young men do not follow the usual teenage rites of passage expected in the west. For them there are no rebellion years, no punk phase or needy angst. There are no music festivals to go to nor alcohol-soaked house parties. These are all the domain of the British, with just a bit of clubbing and a few British birds pulled as the only (non-'gay' you see) deviations made from their social regime.

Their yardsticks of youth are different; cruising in cars, playing snooker and cotching in kebab shops.

Like the recent addition of Sheesha Cafes, these kebab shops are like Pakistani pubs of the urban sprawl, where guys can talk passionately about which takeaway is better than another. After Pakistani men took over fish-and-chip shops and claimed Turkish doner-style meat as their own, it was left to the young to train their palettes on the ingenious mutant dishes that came out of the mash-up. Ask a group of Pakistani youths about the chicken Tikka baguettes you can get in Digbeth, or Caspian's Tandoori pizza, and you can expect a street-talk ode to meat texture and grease doses.

Or just ask co-author Kahfeel about doner meat and witness his pained expression at being

reminded of how much London's fatty, brown strips of khobez-wrapped meat differs from the dark ribbons of smoother, firmer protein found in the fluffy naan-beads of Derby's food houses.

And as he will also tell you, it is being so embedded into this lifestyle that makes it so difficult when severed from it; cut from the fold of community and the familiar rituals of this urban existence. Going away to a university with few spicy-food-fixes and even fewer people able to speak the Pakistani patois of the north can be alienating. In fact, in some ways it's even more alien than travelling the 6,000 miles across the globe back to Mirpur and New Mirpur City.

Because New Mirpur is different, full of strange tourist-traps for a people who once called it home. There is the 'Megamart' department store for western-style shopping and 'Mina Kebabs' for all one's doner needs. Wannabe-British politicians campaign there for British votes, strips of barber shops vie for the attention of bros and shops sell British ketchup at British prices.

And there is a population of people there who can afford none of it. This stuff is for the Brits, arriving on packed flights in their Easter and Summer holidays, and leaving a debris of unattainable aspirations in their wake.

In Mirpur City these Brits stay in 5-bedroom Ghotian, luxury houses that can cost around £200,000 to buy, an investment for families who leave them empty for the majority of the year. It's an investment into a false fantasy; that somehow Mirpur is still home, the final destination.

It isn't: Now, here is home. But that final destination is still uncertain. Some Mirpuris are making the most of the education system and becoming professionals, but many more carry on in static comfort bubbles, protected from the challenges of meaningful integration and contribution to wider society. There is a renaissance in real Islamic understanding, with all the connotations of peace and productivity that practising the religion carries. No longer is it just the cultural Islamic inheritance of their parents. But there is also confusion, and some anti-Western sentiment in a community that struggles to articulate its concerns. A tight community that is suspicious of change, one that struggles to accept difference in its ranks as if it were a dangerous mutation.

As the well-worn cliché goes, the future lies with the youth. It lies in the acceptance and encouragement of difference and progress, without sacrificing the strong values of the past. Like Mangla Dam, where in summer the water level lowers and the buildings of Old Mirpur are unveiled, Hindu temples next to Muslim Mosques, relics of a time of harmony, of a land unchanged.

Unforgotten.

FEATURES

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Nightline: a last resort for many

The Imperial-born charity celebrates 40 years of supporting students this year

Elizabeth Burks

We've all heard the rumours about the 'real' reason why the Queen's Tower doors remain shut for most of the year. Regardless of whether they are true, it is recognised that university life can be extremely stressful and that students are a high risk group for suicide. In 1969, a study conducted with British and American students found "an unusually high rate of suicide among college students", a fact still true today. This highlighted the necessity of emotional support for students. Following a spate of suicides at Imperial College, in 1971 a small college-based project known then as West London Nightline was born. Now 40 years on, this registered charity (re-named London Nightline) offers confidential listening and support to students from all over London and Brighton. The 60-70 active volunteers that work with the charity – all of them students like you – are there for students all night, every night during term time. These volunteers would like their fellow students

to know that sometimes it's tough and there are people who care.

Originally, Nightline was set up with the help of the Samaritans with the aim of reducing suicides at university. However the service is not exclusively for those suffering from depression or with suicidal thoughts. Over the phone, via Skype, email and instant messaging, Nightline volunteers will listen to any topic you wish to talk about. It is not a counselling service but provides an impartial, non-judgemental and empathetic ear. Most of us have felt the daunting feeling of moving to a new city where you may not know anyone and have to navigate for yourself. So Nightline provides information that could help with common student issues from taxi numbers to where to find an STI clinic or financial advice.

Imperial College is an institution which praises science and logical thought, but that doesn't mean we always master our emotions. The founding of Nightline offered a haven for students to talk freely about whatever

weighed on their minds. Nightline was a rapid success and within 4 years was offering the service to 20 colleges in West London. Today, London Nightline runs at over 60 universities and colleges, with a catchment exceeding 300,000 students. However, the journey of Nightline has not always been smooth. In 1986, it threatened closure due to funding problems. At the time, IC paid the bill for the majority of the charity's costs and, although they were still happy to provide accommodation and administrative costs, they looked to other London universities to help contribute to Nightline's survival. Even today, the charity relies on funding provided by affiliated colleges or universities and their student unions. Sadly in 1989, after 18 years of generous support from Imperial, Nightline was forced to relocate to make space for more student accommodation. Although the charity could no longer call Imperial home, the college and union have remained affiliates to this day.

The Independent reported in 2008 that "more than half of the students who went

"Nightline is one of Imperial's many remarkable achievements"

for help at university counselling services in the 2006/2007 academic year did so for depression, compared with about a quarter in the 2003/2004." Suicide and mental health are still subjects that most avoid. Yet the support for services such as Nightline is increasingly important, especially as university budgets are being cut and counselling services are struggling with demand. Current Nightline co-ordinator, Francesca Alton explains "Students are more in need of support than ever due to the increasing stresses on them such as financial worries and pressure to fit in and succeed. All these reasons, combined with proposed rises in tuition fees and fierce

competition for graduate jobs mean it is more important than ever for us to be there for as many students as possible."

When asked about how Nightline plans to celebrate four decades of student peer support she replied: "to mark our anniversary we will be conducting the biggest ever survey of our service users, releasing a commemorative publication and hosting a celebratory event to thank all those who have been involved with Nightline and acknowledge their hard work, and to celebrate the achievements of the organisation over the past 40 years."

The creation of Nightline is one of Imperial's many remarkable achievements, and what started as a small college-based project has blossomed into a London-wide charity that has helped, and continues to help, thousands of students every year. So, with 40 years of the organisation, let's just recognise the achievements of those Imperial alumni that had the compassion and ingenuity back in 1971 to reach out to their fellow student.

Julia Langer nudges alumni towards Memory Lane

So I see the advert: "Student Caller Campaign For Annual Fundraising". In my head I'm thinking, "Yes! This ticks a lot of boxes". Like many fellow Imperial students, my CV is too science-focused. I have got lots and lots of experience in labs but I feel like I need some other type of work experience to show I am an employable individual.

One of the attractions of this campaign is that it's a chance to be a part of something positive and help future students studying at Imperial. The perks: it pays £7.50 per hour, it's compatible with my studies, and it's only a four-week campaign so there is no long-term commitment. The campaign is raising funds for three areas: the rector's fund, the student opportunities fund, and the junior research fellowship fund. So what did I learn whilst being a student-caller on the fundraising campaign? This is my personal account.

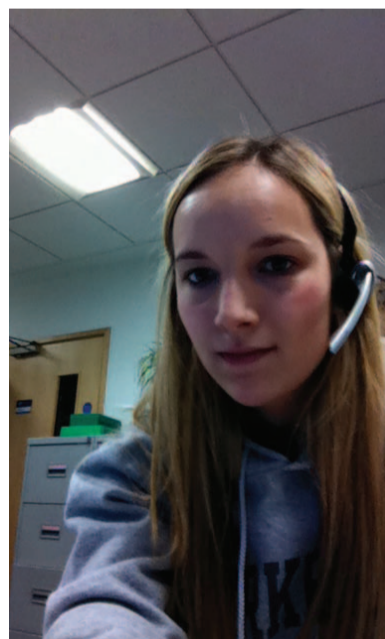
What do the alumni think of Imperial 10, 30, or 50 odd years after graduating? The majority spoke fondly of their time at Imperial. Almost immediately, many mentioned that they had to work hard, but made life-long friends, and that their degree from Imperial opened all kinds of doors for them.

It was astonishing that what is es-

entially a cold-call could lead to a 30-minute conversation with a complete stranger. Some alumni had very limited contact with the college, but despite the years that had passed since they last set foot on campus, they warmed over the phone and told me of their personal experiences.

What were the moments that they remember best? Many of the engineers talked about the lack of female students on their course. I spoke to one woman, who had been one of only 41 female undergraduates at the time. A chatty physicist remembers sitting in lectures with Brian May, prior to his successful career as a musician with the band Queen. A post-war graduate described how the student population changed from a predominantly British institution to a multi-cultural university. One of my favourite stories was that of a 61 year-old physicist who attempted to climb the Queen's Tower after a few beers too many at the union bar. Then there was the chemist who proudly claimed to be the first Imperial graduate to get a "pass" as his final degree award. I learned about the mysterious tunnels under the South Kensington campus and of the College's history.

In addition to hearing the experiences of alumni, I was able to tell them about my impression as a current Imperial



"One alumnus I spoke to got a lot more than just his degree at Imperial; he met his wife!"

student, and issues, such as the funding cuts, that concern us as students. To my surprise, some of the alumni were very well informed on recent events and developments at Imperial. Alumni newsletters, emails, and fundraising events have been a great way of maintaining contact.

Whilst most alumni reflected affectionately on their student days and wanted to give to the College, some were positively appalled at the idea of being asked to donate money. Comments ranged from feeling no affiliation to the College, to alumni expressing that they had an awful experience and that their time at Imperial was the most stressful of their life.

So why is fundraising of such importance to Imperial? Most will agree that actively calling alumni appears to be a rather American strategy, and perhaps even a bit aggressive. In recent years, there has been a huge push by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to alter the approach to philanthropic giving in England. Between 2008 and July 2011, the matched funding scheme for voluntary giving has been running. Imperial has taken advantage of this scheme, by which private donations are matched by the HEFCE on a 3:1 ratio. Under this scheme a £300 gift can sum up to a £500 donation. Im-

perial has already reached the maximum limit of £2,750,000 being allocated by the HEFCE on the matched funding scheme.

Over £1 million has been raised by the previous telephone campaigns at Imperial to date, from over 5,400 alumni. That's right, their hard-earned cash is going to benefit us, the students at Imperial, despite the many years that have passed since their graduation.

Surely this can't be simply because they had a jolly-good time at Imperial? Many people would agree that they made friends and had fun at their first bar or part-time job, but as far as I am aware, nobody donates to these organisations! The truth is that your degree from Imperial could be one of your greatest achievements. It may be the foundation for your chosen career, the friends and contacts you make, your first move away from home, your sports team, or what you learned about yourself. One alumnus I spoke to got a lot more than just his degree at Imperial; he met his wife!

After reflecting on my conversations with the alumni, the message that I can pass on to our current students is to work hard, take up the opportunities that are on offer, and enjoy whatever else it is that makes Imperial special to you.

FEATURES



Nom, nom. Easter Eggs

Burnt Sugar

"Pretentious hipster shit, but damn these extra honeycomb sweets are good." **3/5**



Lindt Bunny

"Essential Lindt taste: tasty milky yumminess" **5/5**



Green & Blacks

"Just the egg, and it also tastes far too healthy. Another thing: weird after-taste" **2/5**



Choices

"Quite light, and not that rich. Acceptable if you're allergic to everything." **3/5**



Maltesers

WINNER!

"A deep rich taste that leaves you gagging for more" **5/5**



Thorntons

"Not how an egg should behave, I don't agree with its sensibilities. Too chewy." **1/5**



Guylian

"Like being pummelled in the face by a younger, leaner Frank Bruno: dangerous" **4/5**



Twirl

"Doesn't capture the magic of Twirls. Nothing about it is 'Twirly'" **2/5**



Monty Bojangles

"Thin egg for starters. Looks fancy, tastes boring." **1/5**



Baileys

"So much promise, so little satisfaction. Baileys on the rocks over this anyway." **2/5**



Quality Street

"Irrationally suprised by extra treats even though they're displayed on the box. Egg's alright." **2/5**



Wispa

"Has the consistency of a Wispa bar twice-melted in a hot car. Generic taste too." **3/5**



FEATURES

Imperial's CO2 Savings



An important part of ecology is looking at ecosystems' net carbon dioxide exchange levels. Urban ecosystems are net producers of CO₂, but steps can be taken to reduce the amount of CO₂ they add to the atmosphere. Below are just a few of the measures being taken here at Imperial's South Kensington campus to help meet the university's target of reducing CO₂ emissions 20% by 2014.

1. Traditional tube heat exchangers

Traditional tube heat exchangers have been replaced with energy-efficient plate heat exchangers, saving 20 tonnes of CO₂ every year.

2. Insulating heating pipes

Imperial's heating system consists of over 3km of pipes. Insulating these pipes has the potential to save a whopping 1,500 tonnes of CO₂ per year. Work to do this has already started and, for every 3m of pipes insulated, enough energy is saved to heat an average house.

3. Imperial power

Imperial now has its own combined heat and power plant, which is far more efficient than traditional power plants, where large amounts of energy are lost through heat to the atmosphere.

4. Central cooling system

Over 150 individual cooling units spread across the campus have been replaced with a more-efficient central cooling system.

5. Voltage control

Did you know that Imperial has its own private electrical network, which allows it to control the voltage from sub-stations? By reducing the voltage by just 5%, roughly 500 tonnes of CO₂ can be saved every year.

URBAN ECOLOGY

Machete in hand, **Andrew Purcell** sets off to explore our urban jungle...

Over half of the world's 6.9 billion people now live in urban areas. So, perhaps it's time for us to embrace the ecology of our urban areas, look at the species that thrive in these environments and take steps to protect them. At the same time, we must ensure that our urban environments do not unnecessarily encroach upon remaining green spaces and our cities do not grow in an unsustainable manner.

Here at Imperial College, we are right in the centre of one of the world's great cities, capital of one of the world's most industrialised nations. So, how much do we know about our urban environment? And, what kinds of efforts are being made to improve the ecology of our campus?

Of course, London is famous for its great parks and Hyde Park is just a couple of minutes walk away from campus. However, whilst London's parks are undoubtedly great places to spend a sunny Sunday afternoon, they aren't always necessarily home to the most diverse range of plant and animal life. This is where TrUE comes in. TrUE stands for the Trust for Urban Ecology, which was set up by environmentalist Max Nicholson in 1976. TrUE now runs four sites here in London: Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park, Lavender Pond Nature Park, Dulwich Upper Wood and Stave Hill Ecological Park. These sites provide important habitats for many species, but they're also about education, with lots of school activity programmes and opportunities for local people, like us, to get involved. Mick Wheeley, site administrator at Greenwich Peninsula, said: "Some of the kids who come down here really have no idea about British wildlife – they come down here expecting to see crocodiles! But they learn lots

Andrew Purcell



at our site and they're still excited by looking at the newts, frogs and birds we do have here".

Even closer to home, here at Imperial College, there's also a community of volunteers keen on protecting our natural environment. Environment Soc is led by Reuben Gibbon, a medical student with a passion for all things green. Reuben and his band of just 16 urban ecowarriors work on a small garden plot, hidden away behind Ethos. The garden is officially called 'Prince's Gate Garden', but it's affectionately known as 'the secret garden' amongst society members. The garden has a pond with a thriving frog population and there are a number of small allotments where a range of fruit and vegetables are grown – they even have a banana plant. However, Reuben is keen to stress that the society isn't just about gardening: "We also get involved in lots of environmental campaigning. Last year, we were particularly involved in the 10:10 campaign to tackle climate change".

Along with Stef Piatek, Reuben is also Environment Officer for Imperial Col-

lege Union. The pair recently pressed the Union to remove Blue Shark from the menu of FiveSixEight. Stef argued that, "selling shark meat just doesn't make sense, blue fin sharks aren't quite... [an] endangered species yet, but they're pretty close, so I don't really think they ought to be selling this sort of meat".

Of course, it's not just students who are looking after Imperial's green spaces and making sure we reduce our negative environmental impacts. Last month saw the first batch of compost from Imperial's new ComPod programme used by gardeners on the South Kensington Campus. ComPod is a food composting plant, designed using technology developed here at Imperial, which composts the 1.1 tonnes of food waste produced at the College each week. Imperial College has been given two Rushlight awards for this programme. Whilst this is certainly good news, Imperial College's main contribution to the world of sustainable urban ecology is undoubtedly through its leading academic research.

Dr Simon Leather is a reader in applied ecology at Imperial's Silwood

FEATURES



“Research has shown that people who drive to work along streets lined with trees tend to arrive at work in a happier frame of mind than those who drive to work along streets without any greenery.”

Campus. For over twelve years now, he has been studying roundabouts in Bracknell, treating the roundabouts like small islands of green in a sea of tarmac and concrete. Dr Leather had this to say on the subject: “At the beginning, I started looking at roundabouts as purely an academic exercise, but I soon realised that it was a great way of getting people interested in Urban Ecology. There is a huge abundance of wildlife which thrives on roundabouts; I like to think of them as urban nature reserves”.

Dr Leather is somewhat sceptical about the extent to which green spaces in cities and ideas such as vertical gardens and skyscraper farms can help reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide levels. He argues that, although most of the world’s population now lives in urban areas, the actual area our towns and cities take up on the globe is still relatively small. As such, Dr Leather believes that green areas in cities are unlikely to ever make a significant impact in reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide levels. Instead, he argues: “Green spaces in urban areas are much more about mitigating

the effects of climate change, rather than tackling its causes. Large green spaces in cities can actually help reduce the temperature a small amount.” According to Dr Leather, the two main benefits of green spaces in urban areas are undoubtedly preserving biodiversity and reducing flood risk: “People are constantly tarmacking over their gardens so they have a place to park their cars and this leads to significantly reduced run-off times when it rains. Maintaining green spaces can help us avoid this problem”.

However, the benefits of urban ecology don’t end here. Dr Leather argues that green spaces can also have a massive affect on human psychology: “Trees can make you feel calm and peaceful; research has shown that people who drive to work along streets lined with trees tend to arrive at work in a happier frame of mind than those who drive to work along streets without any greenery”. In addition, the ability of trees to improve our mood manifests itself in economic terms: “If you have two similar streets, one with trees on it and one without, the houses on the streets with trees are likely

to be worth significantly more”.

The effects of urban ecology on our human psychology is a subject which Professor Nigel Bell of the Imperial College Centre for Environmental Policy has also looked into closely. He says: “green spaces are certainly good for people’s mental well-being; it has been shown that giving hospital patients a view of green space from their window can actually improve their chances of recovery”.

However, Professor Bell’s main area of interest is air pollution. Air pollution causes around 4,500 premature deaths in London each year. Professor Bell has published a number of papers on how air pollutants, produced by cars and industry affect our urban ecology. He believes: “London probably has more green space than any other city in Europe; it’s really important that we have this vegetation to help filter out these air pollutants”.

In 1993, Professor Bell chaired a review group on urban environmental science. In a report which Professor Bell himself describes as “pretty dam-

ning”, he argues: “Over 90% of British people live in towns and cities, yet the government has no department directly responsible for urban areas – this seems ludicrous to me”.

Yet, Professor Bell isn’t just concerned with urban ecology in London, or even just in the UK. He has also looked at the effects of air pollution in cities in India, including Delhi and Varanasi. He argues that this is a huge problem which needs to be tackled: “Air pollution has a major effect on urban agriculture, it dramatically reduces yields. But this problem is not even recognised by the Indian government”. According to Professor Bell, it is mainly people who have small subsistence farms in these urban areas who suffer as a result. As with many of the issues surrounding urban pollution, he argues: “it is once again the poorest of the poor who end up suffering most”.

Thus, our ability to protect urban ecology is not only of paramount importance for protecting plant and animal biodiversity, it also plays a vital role in improving the quality of our lives too.

Guerrilla Gardening

What the hell is ‘guerrilla gardening’? Although the term was first coined in New York in the seventies, ‘guerrilla gardeners’ have actually been active in the UK since the 17th century. Put simply, ‘guerrilla gardeners’ are people who garden other people’s land without permission. The motivations for doing this can be diverse: the ‘guerrillas’ may simply be gardening to improve the aesthetic qualities of land neglected by its legal owner, or it may be politically motivated. Either way, ‘guerrilla gardening’ is usually kept top secret and is often carried out under the cover of darkness. Back in 2004, Richard Reynolds from London set up a blog detailing his ‘guerilla gardening’ activities. Initially, he was just a frustrated gardener who decided to spruce up a neglected council block in Southwark. But his exploits have now inspired ‘guerrilla gardening’ activists all over the globe. In 2008 he published a book about ‘guerilla gardening’, which details the activities of ‘cells’ in thirty different countries.

Feel inspired? New York’s ‘Green Guerillas’ used to use simple ‘seed grenades’ to help them do their illicit gardening activities back in the seventies. You can make your own ‘seed grenade’ by following these simple steps:

Step 1: Get one of the condoms still in your drawer from Fresher’s Fair (be honest)

Step 2: Fill the condom with wildflower seeds, water and fertiliser (no, not that sort)

Step 3: Toss the condom over a fence onto neglected land

WARNING: Do not reuse these condoms for sexual purposes – this may lead to genital rag-worts

Magdalena Paczkowski



SCIENCE

Science Editors: **Kelly Oakes,**
Charlie Harvey, Thea Cunningham
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In brief



An a-peel-ing water filter

If you thought banana peels were only useful for practical jokes, think again. According to new research, the slippery skins can also prove a dab hand at removing toxic heavy metals from contaminated river water to make it safe to drink. Waterways are commonly contaminated with heavy metals such as copper and lead that result from mining processes, industrial wastes and runoff from farms. This contaminated wastewater poses a threat to humans, the aquatic environment and the fish, plants and sediments that inhabit it.

To filter out these harmful elements, scientists use a number of extractors including silica, cellulose, and aluminum oxide, which contain acids that bind to the metal ions. However, these technologies have proved costly and the extractors themselves can be toxic. Using natural materials to extract heavy metals from river water is a more appealing purification method because it is both cheaper, and more environmentally friendly. Natural materials also don't need any chemical modification like other extractors do. So far, scientists have used natural materials we often consider waste, like sugar cane and peanut shells. In Brazil, Gustavo Castro of the Botucatu Institute of Biosciences, and his colleagues, proposed that banana peels might be capable of purifying drinking water too. To investigate, the researchers ground banana peels to identify the atoms that allow it to coordinate metal ions. They then used the peels to make filters through which they fed the contaminated water.

The team found the fruit peels were better at extracting lead and copper from riverwater than the filter technology they compared it with. They concluded banana skins can be used to identify metal contaminants in raw river water. What's more, the results suggest these fruity filters can be re-used 11 times without losing their filtration ability. The study was published in the American Chemical Society's journal *Industrial & Engineering Chemistry Research*.

Thea Cunningham

Upcoming Science Events

From big bang to biosphere – Lord Rees

22nd March at 17.30 in Lecture Theatre G16, SAF
Is life common in the cosmos? Lord Rees traces the emergence of complexity from its simple beginnings.

Do changes in the Sun affect the Earth's climate?

23rd March at 17.30 in Lecture Theatre G34, SAF
Head of Physics, Prof. Haigh reviews the current understanding of the Sun's impact on our atmosphere.

A medical adventure: the beginning

Samuel Furse

MRI machines make a peculiar sort of layered whirring noise, both when one is in them and one is waiting to be in one. At other times too, I should think, but I did not stick around for those.

First, I was waiting there. The cheery woman took my forms, checked over the sundry details, sat me in the room with the lockers in it and explained about what to do with the key and so on. I suppose I needed to wait until the previous patient's scans were complete. It was a slightly nervous wait in a small room, with large, off-white cabinets on either side of me, the large surface of the doors broken up only by plastic badges reading SIEMENS in that revolting green they use. My foot's smarting a bit. I have walked for over an hour today, I calculate, more than I have done for a while even if it was mainly in trainers. After I do not know how long, my phone being both off and in the locker, I get called in.

At the beginning of last December I was unwise enough to wear hard shoes on hard ground. This is normally fine, though in the past I have had achy feet from doing this for too long. This time is not 'fine'. My left foot, one of the metatarsals in fact, is very slightly achy after wearing those shoes on the Monday. I choose to ignore it, I am unfit and the left leg is the weaker anyway. After Tuesday it is really quite painful so I stop wearing those shoes and revert to my rubber-soled hush puppies. The achiness gets no better and over the next few weeks, the damned thing starts to swell up as well. I put this down to a bit of a trauma – this was the diagnosis last time anyway, and I can rest it soon as it is sit-on-your-arse-it-is-Christmas time. I am still limping but whatever.

Funnily enough, I was seeing a medic around this time. Needless to say she asked me why I had not been to see my GP. I said it was all rather trivial and would get better. The fact was, I could not walk far without being in



Samuel Furse recounts his long journey from an aching foot to the MRI machine

some pain. Still, I rested it over Christmas, after I got back from my parents'. All seemed to be better. I wore trainers for as long as I could, and looked forward to my second placement which would have to be in softer shoes. This all seemed better though once the swelling of the soft tissue had disappeared I was left with a hard lump on my foot. This clearly was not going away, and neither was the on-and-off aching. At this point I did book an appointment. I had to wait three weeks as there was nothing outside the hours of 9am and 4pm before then. Sigh.

I chatted to my GP, who was great; she referred me for an x-ray. Being nosy, I wanted to look at the images, so I did, albeit only on a small screen. A large calcified lump was evident, two in fact, one on each of the two larger metatarsals. Evidence of at least one stress fracture – oh bugger. Turns out the disapproving medic had been right after all. I cheerily went on my way, texting her with what little mobile phone battery I had left at the time, to say she had been right.

What I was not expecting was a second re-

ferral. My GP rang me personally to say that the consultant radiologist had recommended that I go for an MRI scan urgently as a close inspection of my x-rays had indicated that the bone growth was abnormal. She knows about my research background and so she needed to say no more than that to get her meaning across. I did not know what to think. I still do not, now.

I went for the scan. It seemed to go along alright. I left in rather a daze. Outside was colder than inside, unsurprisingly, though switching my phone back on I got a message saying I had not been given a job I had put in for earlier. No feeling. I had asked to see the images after the scan, but after a momentary stiff pause the unidentifiably-accented radiographer declined with a tone that suggested it was more trouble than it was worth to organise. I had no desire to be rude so accepted this without playing 'the doctor card', and left.

The next piece in this particular story has yet to come I am afraid. Hopefully I will know whether or not I have cancer by the time you read this, though. Watch this space.

SCIENCE FICTION CONSIDER PHLEBAS

Maciej Matuszewski
discovers the rich and
detailed universe of
Ian M. Banks

Today, I'm going to talk about Ian M. Banks' first science fiction novel, *Consider Phlebas*.

The story is set in the midst of a war between two societies: the human 'Culture' and the alien 'Idirans'. Banks draws the reader in from the very start with the fast paced first chapter describing how a sentient Culture computer crash lands on a desolate planet, Schar's World, after managing to escape an Idiran attack. This is one of the best introductions I've ever seen in a book, introducing readers to a rich and detailed universe and leaving them hungry for more.

The story follows Culture agent Perosteck Balveda and Bora Horza Gobuchul, a human working for the Idirans, as they struggle to find a computer, whose advanced design could greatly help whichever side found it. The book's middle section is probably its weakest part. Separated from the Idiran fleet, Horza is forced to join up with a group of pirates to get to his goal and has to help out with a number of their illegal raids. While each of the set pieces in this part of the book are certainly diverting, overall, they are somewhat forgettable and

seem to lack focus. The group's incompetence quickly gets annoying and apart from the admittedly brilliant character development this section adds very little to the overarching story.

The novel really picks up again when Balveda and Horza finally make it to Schar's World. The conclusion was very surprising, not because of how unbelievable it was but rather the opposite. I hadn't expected a book like this to have such a bleak and yet truly great finale: a gripping and poignant examination of the horrors of war and how very little individual people can matter in the grand scheme of things. This is where all the character development really pays off, the ending being far more powerful for us having grown to care for Horza in the previous chapters.

While certainly not for those who like happy endings, and though much of its middle is needless filler which could easily have been removed, this is a must read book. It forms the perfect introduction to Bank's brilliant series of Culture novels and I guarantee that the final chapters will move you like few other novels could.

SCIENCE

Scientific foundations of Tōhoku quake

How Japan's buildings coped in the face of one of the worst quakes in recent history, and the struggle to secure the Fukushima nuclear power plant

Like all large earthquakes, the Japanese quake occurred in what is known as a subduction zone. In these zones – which are common in the Pacific – large slabs of solid rock called tectonic plates move towards each other. When they collide, the less dense plate will ride over the denser plate, which is forced below the other.

Micheal Warner, Professor of Geophysics at Imperial College, specialises in crustal seismology. Warner explained, “as the plates push past each other, the friction created locks the plates temporarily together in a boundary zone. Elastic stresses build up in the rocks in this boundary. Eventually this stress is sufficient to overcome friction and essentially breaks the locked boundary between the plates. This causes a sudden release of stored elastic energy. Some of the energy that is released propagates as seismic waves. It is these waves that knock down buildings”.

The total amount of energy released depends on the strength of the rocks, the size of the fault (the fractures in these rocks) and the total ‘slip’ that ensues when the friction becomes too much. “Strong rocks, a large fault, and large slip gives a big event”, says Warner. “In subduction zones – the faults are long, the cold rocks are strong, and there is a

“The tsunami is very difficult to protect against other than by being elsewhere”

lot of accumulated slip to release”.

Tsunamis, like the one that followed last Friday's earthquake, are triggered when the sea bed moves and “displaces a column of sea water vertically. Gravity works to restore a horizontal sea surface but the resulting disturbance propagates as a wave. This wave has small amplitude in deep water, but the amplitude grows dramatically as the wave enters shallow water – somewhat like a conventional wave steepening before it breaks on a sloping beach.”

It was the tsunami rather than the earthquake that drove the majority of the devastation in north-east Japan,

Warner explains. “Japan has very good earthquake resistant building codes. Most damage and loss of life was as a result of the tsunami which is very difficult to protect against other than by being elsewhere.”

Thea Cunningham

EARTHQUAKE PROOFING

Building in an earthquake zone is, unsurprisingly, a tricky business. Japan is no stranger to earthquakes, so it has a strict building code in place and some very sturdy buildings. After the Kobe earthquake in 1995, which killed about 6000 people, Japan put enormous resources into designing new buildings that could withstand major earthquakes and also retrofitting older, more vulnerable ones.

Instead of trying to make buildings earthquake proof, engineers instead design them to be damaged – but in a controlled way that aims to only affect specific parts of the structure.

Peter Stafford, from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Imperial, explained why:

“The act of getting damaged is the way in which structures are able to dissipate the energy put into them by earthquakes”. If there was no damage, there would be nowhere for the energy

of

and forth more easily than shorter buildings, and because of this, counterintuitively, they are safer. Short buildings are very rigid and can be shaken violently as the ground moves during an earthquake.

Earthquakes cause sideways forces that shake buildings. Some buildings rest on huge rubber and steel pads that can slide from side to side when an earthquake hits and disperse this sideways energy. However, these pads only work for structures up to 20 or 30 storeys high; any taller and the building squashes the pads and makes them useless.

Some Japanese high-rise buildings also have a skeleton of steel braces and hydraulic shock absorbers. These dampen the earthquake energy as it moves up the building.

Japan is also well prepared for tsunamis, with seawalls in many coastal towns that can be as high as 40ft, and tsunami shelters on higher ground.

“Getting damaged is the way in which structures are able to dissipate the energy put into them by earthquakes”



FIXING FUKUSHIMA

As well as causing billions of dollars worth of damage to the buildings in the Tōhoku region of Japan, the earthquake has created one of the most serious building casualties in history – the Fukushima I Nuclear Power Plant. The earthquake, and subsequent tsunami, has resulted in a series of incidents that has led to dangerous levels of radiation leaked to the local environment – an accident that will cost several billion more to fix.

The earthquake, while destabilising the building integrity of the reactors, also resulted in the automatic shut down of the reactor cores. The subsequent tsunami, however, delivered the potentially fatal blow, by knocking out the generators used to power the water pumps used to cool the spent fuel storage pools. Normally, pools are kept at around 25°C, but with the temperature in Unit 4 at 84°C as of the 15th of March, the risk of the water level dropping sufficiently to expose the fuel is rising. Were this to happen a risk of radioactive leak could occur.

Dr John Hassard, a reader in Physics at Imperial, believes the worst is yet to come. “The fact they are pumping in sea water to cool the cores is desperation. It is not good practice.” Indeed, the situation is getting so desperate, authorities have had to arrange water drops via helicopters onto the overheating fuel

stores. According to Hassard, the incident is a disaster for nuclear power – not just for Fukushima, but for its reputation as an uncontrollable and dangerous force. “It's not that we expect tsunamis in Sizewell B, but it shows how complex the systems are and how difficult it is to mitigate against failures for complex systems like nuclear plants.”

Dr Hassard points out that while the wind direction has helped divert a majority of the contamination toward the Pacific, it cannot be relied on for too

“The fact they are pumping in sea water to cool the cores is desperation”

long. “The local people are definitely in danger”, he says. “The radiation will be dominated by Caesium-134 and 137, and a number of other radionuclides, most with shorter half lives.”

While the full extent of the damage is yet to be known, Hassard notes that reactor safety technology has evolved since the 1980s. Had there been a temperature excursion in the RBMK reactors of Chernobyl, we would very likely have seen a situation much much worse.

Charlie Harvey



Fukushima I before the tsunami. Temperatures in the nuclear storage cooling tanks are rising, with it the risk of a major radioactive leak occurring

Kelly Oakes

TECHNOLOGY

Technology Editors: **Samuel Gibbs**
Feroz Salam

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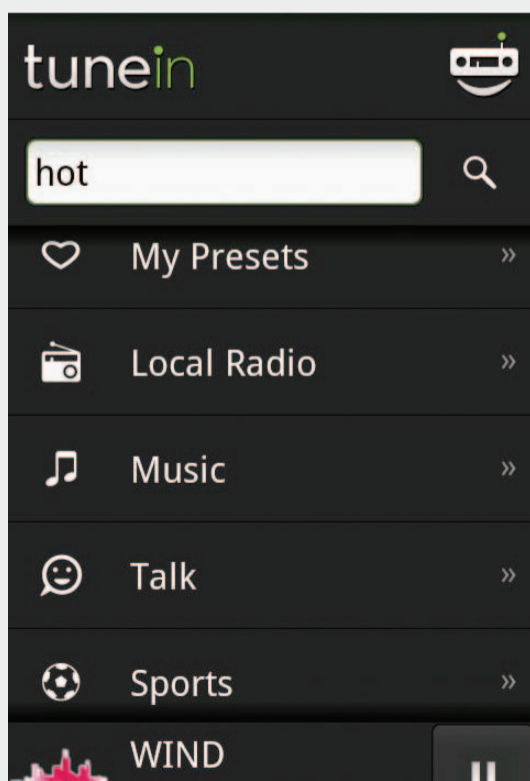
Free App of the Week

iOS - Radio Player



The iPhone might not come equipped with a radio tuner, but as they say, there's an app for that: Radio Player. Simple, free, and plays in the background.

Android - TuneIn Radio



Android's got its fair share of streaming radio apps, but TuneIn is a solid option with a load of stations to choose from. Ad-supported, free radio sorted.

iPad 2 blows away rivals

Feroz Salam

If preliminary reactions are anything to go by, it appears that Apple might have pulled another winner out of the bag with the newly released successor to the original iPad. The fully upgraded model has been garnering some serious attention from reviewers over the week, with the almost unanimous conclusion being that the device delivers exactly what was promised on the tin, if not more.

With many reviewers having stripped the tablet down to its innards, it's been found to pack a 900 Mhz dual-core ARM chip and another dual-core processor in the form of Imagination Technologies' GPU. The integrated performance of both chips has managed to blow away standard benchmarks used for judging graphics performance, both when compared to the original iPad and to other similar competition.

Reviewers are so far reporting that the latest incarnation of the slate manages anywhere between 50 – 65 frames/second under the GL-Benchmark for graphical performance. This is in comparison to the original iPad's performance of between 15-20 frames/second and the Motorola Xoom's 25-30 frames. Admittedly, the Xoom is running on a slightly higher resolution than the iPad 2, but the figures indicate a performance gap that can't be explained by the fewer pixels on screen.

The latest reviews will be worrying for Apple's competitors. Unlike the mobile market, where Android handsets have proved more than able to match and improve upon Apple's iPhone, there has been little to indicate that they have anything new to offer in the tablet market, despite having a year to plan a response.

For much of 2010, the iPad was the only viable option for those looking for a quality tablet. While many Windows tablets were announced at trade fairs, there were none to be seen on sale; Android tablets proved relatively numerous but also relatively poor, seeming



I still think anyone with a tablet looks like a massive prick

largely like outsized Android handsets (to a much greater extent than the iPad).

Early 2011 brought announcements of Motorola's Xoom slate, the first tablet that would sport Android's tablet-oriented Honeycomb OS. Powered by a dual-core chip and some highly promising graphics, there was high expectation that the device could finally be a worthwhile response to the iPad.

Yet any progress the Xoom has made has probably been undone over the last few weeks. The device was more expensive than most reviewers were expecting and on the back of the quality performance by the iPad 2, including the addition of the cameras the device was sorely lacking before, it's hard to see why customers looking to buy a tablet wouldn't choose Apple.

The increased graphical performance of the iPad also means that the devices have more to offer gamers, with the larger screen giving a much wider range of interface options for developers, now with the ability to display pretty

pictures too. It's definitely not the focus of the device, but it will be interesting to see how quickly developers pick up on the possibilities of the platform.

It's not all doom and gloom for the Xoom though: with 4G capabilities and working Flash on the way, it's still got much to offer that the iPad doesn't. Apple's App Market and software distribution system still suffers from the same lock-in problems that Android doesn't, and Android keeps its usual edge on customisability.

The issue of picking between the tablets seems to boil down to the regular question of freedom versus user experience. The iPad 2 appears to have been tailored for a quick and neat user experience, with enough similarity to the old iPad to keep the learning curve shallow yet enough behind-the-scenes improvements to deliver a noticeably better experience. The competition is going to have to do a lot better before they can even consider wooing consumers away from Apple.

Keep scratches at bay the LA robe rose

Samuel Gibbs

Slipcases are pretty standard fare for laptop protection these days. From the cheap and cheerful to the leather-clad, there's a slipcase to suit every taste and budget.

The LA robe for Apple's MacBook Pro line from be.ez fits into the middle range of slipcases. It incorporates some fancy Low Resistance Polyurethane (LRPu) foam into a fairly standard zippered slipcase design. The foam absorbs impact energy by freely deforming under load, reducing the amount of energy that can pass through to your laptop. It's different from other foam in that it puts up less resistance to deformation and therefore absorbs more of the impact energy.

In practice this means that it dents easily and then slowly recovers to its original formation

once the load is removed, which can be pretty disconcerting when you first start using the case, but does work as described.

The case is designed to fit specific models ranging from the 15-inch MacBook Pro to the 13-inch polycarbonate MacBook, however in our testing with the 13-inch MacBook Pro, the fit wasn't snug enough for our liking, meaning that the laptop moved around inside the case rather a lot. The lining of the case is soft velvet, so perhaps this isn't too much of an issue, but we would have preferred a better fit given the model specificity that be.ez claims.

If you're putting your laptop in a regular backpack, this slipcase might do the trick, but without any sort of cable storage or handle, it's not going to be all that useful on its own. We liked the LRPu foam, but the LA robe certainly didn't fit well enough for a simple slipcase.



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LEAKING

A BOOK
REVIEW BY
GUO HENG CHIN

WIKILEAKS

Since Wikileaks published their first leak in 2006, it has grown to become one of the most controversial website in the world. Wikileaks lubricated the whistle-blowing cog, resulting in a Cambrian explosion of leaks in the past couple of years via their website. Some leaks are mere objects of amusement, like the publication of the secret handbooks of American university fraternities (frat boys despair as their secret handshakes are no longer secret). Some, like the Collateral Murder video footages and Cablegate, triggered widespread socio-political debates. Wikileaks leads the charge for more transparency but the irony is that the organization itself is rather opaque. That is until last month, when Daniel Domscheit-Berg, the ex-spokesperson and former second-in-command of Wikileaks, published *Inside Wikileaks*, the account of his time at the “world’s most dangerous website.”

Part memoir, part expose, *Inside Wikileaks* traces Daniel’s time with the organization from its infancy until September 2010, when Daniel and a group of Wikileaks dissidents left. Daniel first met Julian Assange, the enigmatic founder of Wikileaks at a hacker conference at which he had arranged for Julian to speak. Back then Daniel had a full time job in designing network security at a large American company, and was actively involved in the open source community.

Julian, though unknown publicly during then, was regarded in high esteem by Daniel. The lanky Australian standing at the podium, addressing a dismal turnout of less than twenty, had a reputation in hacking circles. Going by the pseudonym of ‘Mendax’, he was one of the ‘International Subversives’, a trio of high-profile hackers, and the co-author of the hacking cult classic *Underground: Hacking, Madness and Obsession on the Electronic Frontier*. Julian has his share of battle scars as well, being convicted in Australia for 25 hacking charges, narrowly escaping jail term on account of his disrupted upbringing. The man with the wispy platinum hair was a hacking superstar.

Daniel had his first taste of its power when he dealt with the Bank Julius Baer leak. The documents detailed the Swed-



Julian Assange and Daniel Domscheit-Berg

ish private financial institution’s elaborate tax evasion scheme that involved exploiting a complex subsidiary system and shoring funds on Cayman Islands. Injunctions procured by the company lawyers and furious threats failed to take down Wikileaks, giving Daniel his first taste of victory over Goliath.

Inside Wikileaks is as much a story about Julian Assange as it is about the structural cogs and gears of Wikileaks, as Daniel had the rare chance of spending months with Julian Assange. At the same time of the Julius Baer leak, Julian moved in with Daniel. Julian does not have a permanent address and leads a nomadic lifestyle, relying on the goodwill of supporters for a bed to bunk in, and carries all his worldly possessions in

a large rucksack. The two freedom (of information) fighters developed a genuine camaraderie working together on Wikileaks, and Daniel became Julian’s confidante. However their relationship would eventually unravel in the likes of Mark Zuckerberg and Eduardo Saverin during the dramatic founding of Facebook.

Julian Assange is a figure that intrigues as much as he is admired. He styles himself as “founder, philosopher, spokesperson, original coder, organizer, financier and all the rest” of Wikileaks, a lengthy title reminiscent of a British monarch. Julian is an idealist championing for a more open world, but at the same time kept Wikileaks’ finances and administration secret from the public. Daniel accuses him of running a dictatorship at Wikileaks and compares the cult-like organization of Wikileaks to that of the Church of Scientology, of whose secret bible they leaked in 2008. As the leaks got more controversial and attracted more media attention Julian began to become suspicious that Daniel was seeking to replace him.

Julian Assange is known to be on the paranoid end of the spectrum. He attributes his nomadic lifestyle to avoiding surveillance from the enemies he accrued. He also points a finger at a US conspiracy to smear him when he was charged with sexual crimes in Sweden. On the other hand, Julian carries with him a certain charisma. Perhaps his magnetism comes from the fact that he is a rebel with a cause. An Oxford University student who volunteered with Wikileaks likened him to the Pied Piper, attracting followers over the Internet with the maverick tune he plays.

When Daniel first got onboard, the

team working on Wikileaks full time consisted of less than five people. Julian role-played multiple characters when it came to external correspondence to give the impression that Wikileaks was a formidable organization.

The state-of-the-art encryption technology Wikileaks employ to protect the anonymity of the whistle-blowers is so sophisticated that only a few programmers in the world could design it but the unnamed architect left together with Daniel and took with him together the codes. They both now work on OpenLeaks, a new whistle-blowing website less focused on sensational leaks targeted at the US.

Inside Wikileaks focuses on the story of Wikileaks rather than the technical side, making it widely accessible. It is generally well paced, and it is spattered with plenty of humorous anecdotes about Julian Assange’s eccentricities like how Daniel psychoanalyzed Julian’s character from the way Julian dances in a club. Following the success of David Fincher’s *The Social Network*, Dreamworks optioned *Inside Wikileaks* to be made into a feature film. However, sometimes Daniel’s rapid assault on Julian’s character, down to the most trivial idiosyncrasies, makes one feel that the book is written to get back at Julian – whining that Julian drank all his cocoa powder probably should not have gotten into the book). It is worth a read if you would like a peek into the workings of Wikileaks and spend a day with Julian Assange. Maybe when Julian Assange publishes his autobiography late this year, we would be able to hear the other side of the story and hopefully more hilarious eccentricities of Julian.



[Domscheit-Berg] compares the cult-like organization of Wikileaks to that of the Church of Scientology



Stills of footage from leaked US Military video showing the killing of Reuters journalists and civilians

COMMENT

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FELIX

Higher Education Lunacy

We have the deepest sympathy for Imperial's senior management. The government's schizophrenic and frankly gormless policy (or lack thereof) on higher education must be infuriating for those trying to formulate long-term plans and strategies for this institution.

The attitude adopted by recent governments towards universities can best be compared to a bully in a school playground holding smaller children by the arm and forcing them to slap themselves. "Why do you keep hitting yourself?", is the taunt, as universities find themselves criticised for actions they had no choice but to take.

Remember the idealistic push to have 50% of young people attending university? Fees were introduced to help fund this push. However, as fees increased, government funding was comparatively stagnant, or worse. And universities who exceeded the government's cap on how many students attended university (yes they do cap it, handing out loans to cover the tuition fees that they introduced is expensive business) would be heavily fined. The current government has increased fees to £9,000. But at the same time as increasing fees – ostensibly to give universities more freedom – they also hoot and howl at universities who set their fees at the amount to which they legislated to increase it.

This government has heavily cut funding to universities, and raised fees to make up for this loss. But now, the government is threatening to make further cuts to universities who charge the maximum level of fees. Stranger still, they would prefer universities to offer tuition fee waivers to poorer students instead of higher cash bursaries during university; even though everyone except Nick Clegg can see that cash bursaries are a more effective way of ensuring that poorer students are able to attend university.

Finally, the government has begun to suggest that universities charging £9,000 should set quotas for the number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. When universities are forced to select students by metrics other than ability – for the crime of seeking to plug the holes in their funding that the government has brought about – then it is clear that somebody, somewhere has been grossly incompetent.

Which is probably the closest to the truth that we're going to get. The government, bizarrely, didn't think that universities would try to charge £9,000. They falsely believed that the increase of the cap on fees would result in price competition (a result no previous rise has achieved) and as a result they have massively underestimated the amount they are going to have to extend to students to pay their tuition fees. Now universities' senior management have to deal with the government's mad ramblings as they try to control this growing financial mess. Once again, they have our deepest sympathies.

Mad Muammar

Gaddafi has once again demonstrated what a nutcase he is



Tim Arbabzadah

Muammar Gaddafi has been an outstanding figure on the world scene, in terms of absolute lunacy. When it comes to stories about him, it's hard to separate fact from fiction. Usually, as is often the case, the fact is stranger than the fiction. His Facebook page lists his interests as: "Libya", "Pan-Africanism", "Hating America", "Justin Bieber", and "cock." The last two were the result of an unimaginative Facebook rape, I assume.

Colonel Gaddafi is currently in the midst of what is almost a civil war. His reaction has been, well, exactly what you would think from a man like him. That is to say, angry, violent, and totally insane. Most noticeably he has given some erratic speeches. Making the effort to watch these is really worth it. Most of the time you can even audibly hear the translator struggling to understand what on earth he is going on about, and how this could be translated into English. The shortest of such appearances occurred from the back of a car when Gaddafi gave a short statement to tell people he is still in Tripoli and hasn't fled.

He energetically delivered a speech, transmitted on the 24th of February, in front of his old house. As it is Gaddafi we are talking about, this wasn't quite symbolic enough. So there was also a large sculpture of a fist holding a US fighter jet and crushing it. Don't be alarmed; the stress of work has not got to you. That last sentence said exactly what you think it just said.

It is debatable as to whether the translators took liberties, but either way there were some highlights. Gaddafi said at one point: "I am a fighter, a revolutionary from tents." That sentence really ran away from him there. It started out strong, but then, tents? Is he a Boy Scout revolutionary? My personal highlight in terms of inspirational rhetoric was: "Libya wants glory; Libya wants to be at the pinnacle, at the pinnacle of the world." Get T-Pain to sing that, add in "shawwwty", slap a triumphant beat in the background, and we have a hit single on our hands.

Baffling rants are not exactly a new phenomenon for Gaddafi; he delivered

Ben Kennedy



Just let go Gaddafi, you massive raving lunatic...

a 96 minute speech to the UN in 2009. At this point, you may be wondering who on earth gave the okay for that. The answer is that nobody in the world said yes. He was given a 15 minute slot, but got a bit carried away. I suppose at the centre of diplomacy it would be a bit frowned upon to stand up and shout "Get off the stage, you're shit."

The other regimes to be toppled did so at the cost of lives. Sadly, I fear that here there may be an even greater human cost. This time, the fighting is fierce and Gaddafi hasn't lost the support of the military. Once more the international community is unhappy about the violence against protesters. Ban ki-Moon is, as usual, not too impressed. At the end of February, he said that he found the scenes of demonstrators being fired upon "disturbing" and "shocking". He said: "This is unacceptable and must stop immediately. Seriously guys, is no one listening to me? Does it not say Secretary motherfucking General anywhere on my suit? That's it, I'm about to impose some sanctions all over your ass." Guess which part of that quote the media decided to report.

At this point I will break up the article with a note on the oddity of the rank he chose. Gaddafi claimed that he did not promote himself to General because he does not need any grand titles, as his government is one of the people. This rings a

"I am a fighter, a revolutionary from tents." What is he – a boy scout revolutionary?

bit hollow when coming from a man who has more AKAs than a west coast rap star. He goes by: "The Brother Leader", "The Guide", "Brotherly Leader and Guide of the First of September Great Revolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya", "Brother Leader and Guide of the Revolution", "Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council" and (my personal favourite) "King of Kings of Africa". So, as he said, no grand titles then, really staying grounded. He's still Muammar from the block.

Anyone else in his position would realise the game is up, and just hand over power. The question is: will this be the end of Gaddafi's reign? The BBC certainly doesn't seem to think he will win this battle, judging by the headline: "Libya crisis: no 'happy ending' for Colonel Gaddafi." so maybe they were just talking about an unsuccessful trip to a "massage" parlour. It's hard to predict the outcome except to say that Gaddafi will not go quietly.

Gaddafi will not go quietly.

Have your say on this article at felixonline.co.uk

COMMENT

The opinions expressed on the Comment pages represent the views of the author only.

Bursaries make university fun



Melissa Lever

“I think the bursary should continue to be given to students cash in hand”

Living the typical meagre student existence at Imperial College in South Kensington, one of the wealthiest boroughs in one of the world’s most expensive cities, was never going to be easy. But my soon-to-be alma mater (assuming I pass my damned degree) is going to make it a whole lot harder with the increase in tuition fees. The powers that be feel that Imperial is esteemed enough to demand £9,000 a year for a degree, and had this been the case when I was applying for university, I feel my parents would have been far less supportive of me coming here. After all, they have had to suffer most of the costs.

I am fortunate though. This year my parents have fallen on hard times and so I am a recipient of a Study Support Bursary (SSB). This bursary, with the addition of a maintenance loan and grant mean that I am quite comfortably staying afloat without being a burden to my parents. In fact, I have more disposable income than they do, and without the support of the bursary I would have already maxed out my overdraft, spent all

my savings and be spiraling into debt. Admittedly part of this could be blamed on my penchant for clothes and cocktails, but I don’t want to give the impression that the bursary goes towards funding a life of luxury. My indulgences come from savings that any sensible person would conserve for the future. I hope my parents don’t read this.

But it is the absence of worries of mortgages, children and taxes that makes student life so enjoyable. This is why I think the bursary should continue to be given to students cash in hand. Sure, it would be nice to think that my future burden of debt could be slashed, but a more immediate necessity is having a roof over my head, affording food to eat and doing those recreational activities that make life at Imperial bearable. In all honesty, I’ve been almost unflinching about the rise in tuition fees. Part of this is down to a heavy case of Imperial student apathy, but it’s also because the future repercussions of tuition fee and maintenance loan debt feel completely imaginary.

Relieving accommodation costs would theoretically be the best way of

ensuring that the bursary is spent the right way – akin to giving food vouchers to the homeless. But this is impractical after the first year when students move out of halls. It’s true that the bursaries can be abused, especially when you are surrounded by predominantly affluent students and an expensive location. The nearest Aldi is miles away and I still find South Kensington a culture shock, having come from a bland estate in Reading. I am continually bemused that there is so little disruption in the borough that council employees spend their time painting garden railings. Back home I’m more used to seeing charred bus shelters being repaired. Maybe I’m embellishing a little; it has only happened a few times.

In essence I’m saying vive le SSB, and may it continue to support the living costs of students in need. I know the system isn’t entirely fair, since I know students whose parents have a higher income than mine but do not provide as much as the combination of bursary and government contributions do. But then distribution of wealth has never been fair, and it’s important that those most in need receive help. Especially me.

A beginners guide to ‘Brit-ing’

I don’t know about you, but whenever I venture beyond the borders of this fair nation into the foreign, I’m always convinced that everyone hates the British. Not so! Being unashamedly British is a real asset at times.

The first rule of ‘Brit-ing’ abroad is this; do not try and act like a native. After all you aren’t one and you’ll end up doing it wrong and potentially offending someone. Trying too hard to look like you’re not British will be seen as being spineless (we don’t want that, our spines are fine thank you very much) and secondly, you give the impression that you are not proud of being British. Then you open yourself up to endless criticism, and sentences starting with “You know what’s wrong with the British?” become tiresome ever so quickly.

The second rule of ‘Brit-ing’ is to dress appropriately. I don’t mean wear a top hat and tails to breakfast, but I do mean that letting your beer belly hang loose from under the old and stained fake England football shirt is entirely unnecessary. Just like we shouldn’t be ashamed of being British, we shouldn’t feel the need to inform the waiter that “I’d like chips with that please” by our t-shirt. Discretion is key.

That’s how not ‘to Brit’, so how do we ‘Brit’? Simple. Let your guard down. Inside every Brit there is a self-deprecating, witty and cynical narrative. Let the inner Brit roam free. The best way to make friends and more is humour and there’s nothing quite like British humour, it will serve you well. Humour and laughing at yourself is an essential part of ‘Brit-ing’.

If you really want to ‘Brit’ properly you must play the part. Foreigners and in particular Americans like to think that we are a nation of James Bonds that take tea and say ‘lovely’ all the time. Play up to this and make sure to milk the accent for all it’s worth.

So remember, don’t be ashamed, don’t wear England football shirts, do show your humor and do play up to the stereotype!

Happy Brit-ing.

Benjamin Plackett

Discovering this weird world



Rhys Davies

“Is it cool, or mature, to be unimpressed with everything we see around us?”

The other day I saw something strange and wonderful. I was walking along the street, happily minding my own business, and happened to stop at a junction. All normal so far. Then, a lorry stopped beside me – a FedEx lorry with the FedEx logo emblazoned all over. And that was when I saw it; inside the FedEx logo, there was an arrow!

I am not ashamed to admit that I fell to my knees and wept with awe at the sight. There may be some of you wondering how some trickery of design could evoke such a reaction. To these people, I suggest to go away, find the FedEx logo and when you see it, I’ll be here with tea and biscuits and we can all share our experiences.

The odd thing is that I’ve seen the FedEx logo hundreds of times before and I’ve never seen that arrow before. Maybe it was the lighting, or the angle of the lorry or...whatever! For some reason, it suddenly decided to click. This is indicative of something wider, something greater. I get the feeling we are simply drifting aimlessly across the millpond surface of a much stranger reality.

For example, we like to think that the Oracle of Delphi, who famously messed with people’s minds, was just another

tale confined to antiquity. We were wrong. She just relocated, to Reading of all places! My favourite sign along the M4 corridor reads “For the Oracle, turn off at Junction 11.” I would go and visit her but I’m afraid I might end up doing something I didn’t mean to, like killing my father or poking a badger in the eye or something equally tragic.

Sometimes, we are accustomed to the strangeness only when it’s presented as fiction. If I were to describe a magical blue box from a faraway land that is bigger on the inside than the out, most of you would instantly jump to TARDIS. Not many of you, I reckon, would immediately think of Ikea, but that is exactly what it is! I’m sure at its heart is a flat-pack forest, from which they make all the furniture – not that I’ll ever find out of course.

I’ve always been confused that, of all the great panoply of creation, most things taste like chicken, especially since chicken doesn’t taste like much at all. My bamboozlement was ended by the application of Occam’s Razor, or rather, Occam’s carving knife. The reason why everything tastes like chicken is because all these animals are chickens in disguise. For larger animals like crocodiles, imagine a pantomime horse but with more players. For a bird that cannot fly

or run for any meaningful distance, this is a wise survival strategy. It’s just unfortunate that people will eat anything. In a similar vein, human beings taste like pork (or so I’ve heard) because some of us might actually be pigs in disguise. This theory might not be kosher but I’ve never seen a Jewish cannibal.

The Pythia in a power suit. Swedish spooning of the Laws of Physics. Fancy-dress parties for poultry. I won’t blame you if you don’t believe these discoveries – they are incredible, literally. But the more we learn about our world and our universe, the more amazing it becomes, to me at least. When explorers first stumbled across the duck-billed platypus, scientists dismissed it as a taxidermic joke. Nowadays, we barely raise an eyebrow at this egg-laying, poison-barbed, duck-billed and beaver-tailed monotreme, although they are still kind of neat.

I think with each new discovery, we risk becoming complacent to just how amazing reality is. When did we become so jaded? Is it cool, or mature, to be unimpressed with everything we see around us? If so, call me an immature loser! I don’t think there is a worse crime than ignoring how awesome this life is.

Except perhaps poking badgers in the eye.

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ARTS

Read a New Release this week...

Eva Rosenthal Mena tries a new edition of a book by the author of *Lolita*, first published in 1969

Ada or Ardor Vladimir Nabokov

"I, Van Veen, salute you, life" opens the final part – you might call it an epilogue of sorts – of Nabokov's exquisite novel *Ada or Ardor*. The novel itself, as though keeping a promise, salutes life, with all its wondrous moments and tragedies.

Van narrates the action, which commences when he is 14 and visiting the home of his aunt and cousins. Here he meets for the first time his cousin (and sister) wilful Ada Veen, 12, and falls as irrevocably in love with her as she eventually does with him that same summer. Nabokov, in incredible style, treats both incest and age in such a casually erotic tone that all inhibitions are completely relinquished. Van and Ada are subsequently separated. *Ada or*

"Nabokov treats both incest and age in such a casually erotic tone that all inhibitions are completely relinquished"

Ardor follows Van the philosopher without Ada, travelling, lecturing, writing and growing beyond her reach. Their brief, but always passionate meetings throughout time are a testimony to their incredible love.

Nabokov in 'Ada' has invented two universes. Antiterra, in which the characters live and interact, is not too far removed from our own. Its counterpart, Terra the Fair, is where the characters dream and sometimes go mad. The time periods of each world overlap so that in Antiterra, planes whizz about, but cars are interchangeable with horses in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Nabokov integrates both universes with each other and with our own naturally and gracefully so that dates are both meaningful and meaningless in that they exemplify the passage of time whilst breaking down its straight trajectory.

'Ada' is written in magical prose that reads and flows like poetry. Nabokov fills the novel with allusions, wordplays and puzzles that mirror Van and Ada's youthful first summer. The supporting characters in Van's life are masterfully sketched and Nabokov inserts and removes them from the narrative with skill; their part in the tale is never forgotten. 'Ada' can also read as a philosophical examination of time, which Van is forever trying to understand. But above all, 'Ada' is an astounding love story that leaves one with a lust for life, imagination and the beauty of words.

Ada or Ardor by Vladimir Nabokov – Limited Edition newly published by Penguin Modern Classics

Fenimism with flair

Fen kicks off a showcase of female playwrights in Fulham

Christina Flanagan

My first impressions on entering the Finborough Theatre, having climbed the stairs from the wine bar below, were dubious. The middle of the theatre was covered in earth, liberally strewn with potatoes, the room hummed with eerie folk music and for a good five minutes an actress in farmer's garb darted from side to side, shaking her rattle at imaginary birds.

Despite this unportentious start, *Fen* far exceeded my expectations. I have never seen a play by Caryl Churchill before and I was struck by how brilliantly she writes from life. She is able to get right inside the heads of nasty children, bullying stepmothers and converts to Jesus and perfectly captures a sometimes infuriating irrationality and pettiness in her dialogue.

The play is set in the 1980s in the English Fens. The people have little money and fewer choices. Churchill is unashamedly socialist and feminist in her views and her characters make an excellent case for her principles. The women's monotonous work out on the cold, dark earth speaks for their cold, grim lives. They have no money, no avenue of escape and so they attempt to lose themselves in religion or forbidden love, but solace always evades them.

The damned-ness of Val, a young mother whose only three choices are to leave her children, to tear them away from their father or to live without love highlights the particular way in which women become trapped by early choices and forever held in place by a web of interdependencies and the fixed mindsets of their community.

Several of the female characters in this play are not much older than I am (Val's mother remarks that she was a grandmother at 36) and



Crouching in the mud. Guess whether this is about the low or high status of women

yet I largely felt that the themes explored were too mature for me to be able to properly empathise. I certainly left feeling grateful to live in a liberated society and to be allowed to be young and female but still free.

Just as impressive as the writing is the ability of the six actors, five female and one male, to inhabit the vast range of roles: from Japanese business man to petulant six year old. I was especially impressed by the mostly flawless Norfolk accents. On the other hand, I felt having only one male actor was a weakness, as he found it hard to make the adjustment between the male romantic lead and the curmudgeonly old farm owner role.

The maliciousness of Nicola Harrison's Jackie as she psychologically tortures her vulnerable step-child and derides her craving for

Jackie's own approval is harrowing to watch.

Yet, there are also some excellent humorous moments, particularly the physical comedy of the picnic for great-grandmother's birthday and the spontaneous song of the children with its refrain of "when I grow up I want to be a hairdresser – or a housewife!" accompanied by Spice Girls-style dance moves, darkly reflecting on the poverty of their ambitions.

The acting was certainly of a better quality than I had expected from such a small theatre but demonstrated why the Finborough Theatre is the Stage 100's Fringe Theatre of the Year. This play is the first of six in the "In Their Place" season which will showcase the work of female playwrights over the next three months. *Fen* is certainly a promising start. Until 26th March at Finborough Theatre

Amateur serpents and super amorists

Mozart's famous opera *Die Zauberflöte* was produced last week on Gloucester Road with London Youth Opera and Imperial's own choir

Kelly Osborne

I was apprehensive when I heard that, because the budget would not allow for period costume, this production was to be a contemporary version of the opera. That is not to say I know anything about opera, but for me part of its appeal is the historic context and atmosphere that it exudes. However, I was very pleasantly proven wrong.

The opening scene of the traditional opera shows our gallant hero Tamino, the height of princely handsomeness battling a ferocious serpent. Again, for budget reasons this was

actually a man in a shoddy dinosaur costume. Interspersed between the powerful operatic tenors opening notes were unenthusiastic roars that had the audience in stitches.

The plot was too complex to be fittingly summarised here, but essentially the dashing prince falls in love with the daughter of the Queen of the Night, who turns out to be evil (I think they ought to have guessed by the name).

After an attempt to save the daughter and several convoluted plot lines, kidnapping, becoming monks (etc. etc.) he and his lazy half-man-half-bird friend succeed in eliminating the

evil queen and getting married. All in time for a late afternoon cup of tea.

The performance was excellent and managed to be entertaining for two hours even though we were sitting on hard church pews. It was funny whilst still displaying the original integrity of the opera and displaying the astonishing talents of the entire cast.

During the infamous 'Queen of the Nights' solo, I'm sure the stained glass windows were trembling in their frames, leaving the audience flabbergasted. While on the subject of windows, the venue was stunning, and the orchestra superlative.

Tate Modern's blockbuster Orozco

We ask whether this high-class freak show is more than the art of drawing crowds

Rocío Molina Atienza

Is it worth going to see another exhibition full of quirky art put there just to leave the onlooker wondering how anyone can call it 'Art'? Beyond the bewildering first impression, Orozco's exhibition at the Tate evokes a personal and surreal world where playfulness comes side by side with death. On entering the gallery, you can find a primaevial clay heart made simply by the artist's hands compressing a piece of mud. It has a simple but powerful beauty to it.

And rapidly the tone shifts – in the next room, *Black Kites* (1997), a human skull meticulously decorated by the artist with a black chequered pattern stands in the middle of the room. Hung around this image of death there are extracts from the obituaries of complete strangers published in the *New York Times*. Surrounded by such a display, I could not avoid thinking what line would sum up my life. Will I ever have a line written for me, by those who remain alive after my death?

Walking on through the rooms, I found myself in a floating graveyard. *Lintels* (2001) is a collection of the lint left behind from the filters of drying machines. When approached closely one can see the residues left, and even make out strands of human hair. Though repulsive at first, it leaves a more lasting imprint that invites a deeper reflection. This piece, first displayed in the aftermath of 9/11, evokes a moving vision of a necropolis; imagine how striking it

could have been to those who had just experienced death so closely. In contrast to this, the main room shows an eclectic arrangement of pieces, much more upbeat. The walls of the room are covered by a series of photographs taken in Berlin, where the artist would stop whenever he saw a motorbike the same as his.

Overall, I found that piece dull in the extreme, though together with the other pieces in the room it conveyed a twisted version of the industrialism that surrounds us. More engaging, was the artist's own reworking of a Citroen DS that dominated the room. The car had been sliced in three, the middle part taken out and reconstructed again to create a sleek car reminiscent of Formula One.

Other pieces in the room left me cold: a random shoebox, remarkable only as having been used by artist, had been placed on the floor, and not very far

“Art is a way of demolishing [...] preconceptions ... an invitation to those who dare to join the game of observing reality from a different angle”

away there was an empty elevator compartment from a building in Chicago. Nonetheless, there was in that room a piece that struck me: an arrangement of four bikes modified such that they were attached to each other, like a twisting skeleton of worn out snakes biting each other's necks. Finally, from my visit, one anecdote is fixed in my mind. “*Car-ambole with Pendulum*” is a twisted game of billiards where the table is now elliptical, with no pockets and only three balls, one of which is hung by a pendulum from the ceiling. With cues stacked in the corner of the room, anyone can pick one up and play, according to their own rules, this surreal game.

As I'm standing there watching others play, a family enters - two children mouth-full of question followed by two parents. The girl, not older than seven, asks again and again if she can have her go as her father starts playing with the balls and the cue as if he were the child. Meanwhile, the mother contents her with some reasons of why it's not her turn. This little scene just got me thinking how conditioned most of us have grown up to be, never daring to play after years of parental repression.

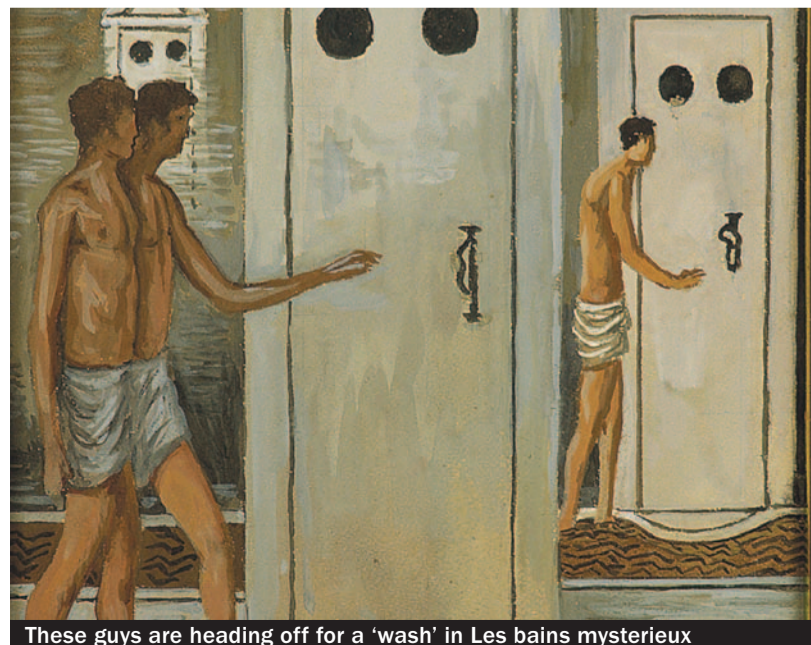
Art is a way of demolishing these learnt preconceptions; it is an invitation to those who dare to join the game of observing reality from a different angle and taking part in it. Orozco's exhibition is definitely a good starting point to embark on this trip – then again, it might just be a break from the adult world of Imperial life. Until 25th April at Tate Modern

Gabriel Orozco 'Black Kites'



Why always skulls? We get it already, it's just a dead person's head

Estorick: The little Italy hidden away in Islington



These guys are heading off for a 'wash' in *Les bains mysterieux*

Rafael Benitez Cabral

Canonbury Square, postcode N1, is not my usual haunt on a Wednesday afternoon. I have navigated my way here from Highbury & Islington station and arrived in front of a handsome Georgian house on the square where George Orwell once lived.

The Estorick Collection is a small museum of modern Italian art whose permanent collection includes works by Balla, Boccioni and Modigliani, but I am here to visit the temporary exhibition *From Morandi to Guttuso*. The forty selected pieces provide a comprehensive overview of Italian Modernism, from Futurism and Scuola Metafisica to Novecento and Corrente.

On entering the exhibition, I was drawn to a meditative still life in earthy tones by Giorgio Morandi which shows a

will to communicate the magic and poetry of ordinary objects. Initially, I was underwhelmed by Gino Severini's small-sized *Window with Pigeons* (c.1930-31). I later learned that Severini started his artistic career in the pre-World War II years as a Futurist, insisting on the centrality of modern subject matter and sensations. The piece strikes me as being the perfect embodiment of the “return to order” phenomenon, whereby artists of the inter-war years abandoned the iconoclasm of pre-war artistic currents and shifted focus to more traditional subject matter. Giorgio de Chirico's *Les bains mystérieux* (c. 1934-36) then caught my eye and instantly became a personal favourite. Part of a series, it reveals an enduring fascination with the iconography of classical antiquity.

As I proceeded to the next room, there were some fine examples of works by

Italian Futurist painters Enrico Prampolini and Fortunato Depero. I was struck by Prampolini's *Synthesis of Taormina* (1939), which aims to capture the drama of flight in its depiction of Mount Etna and small, historic Taormina at its feet. *Scantly-dressed women* (1940) by Renato Guttuso, an exponent of Corrente, is visually engaging.

There I finished my visit. It is worth mentioning that Della Ragione donated his extensive collection to the city of Florence as a gesture of solidarity after the devastating 1966 floods which carried away in its waters so many works of art. The collection was last exhibited five years ago and had been in temporary storage. Whether you are Italian or not, don't miss the chance to see masterpieces from a collection that has been invisible for so long.

Until 3rd April at Estorick

PHOENIX



SUBMISSION DEADLINE 1ST MAY

Founded in 1887, Phoenix is the annual arts magazine of Imperial; it will be published late in the summer term. It is a channel for the artistic output of all members of the College. It is open to all art forms imaginable: from poetry to painting, short stories to symphonies.

Send entries to: phoenix@imperial.ac.uk

Great Balls of Fire!

Society's production of
'Forbidden Planet'

Friday 18th: 18:30 & 22:00

Saturday 19th: 19:30

Students: £6

Union Concert Hall



Photo by James Perry

Graphics: Veronika McQuadeova
 Illustrations: Hamish Muir
 Words: Matt Allinson

Special thanks to Trevor Johnson
 and Sue Mannion from the
 Accommodation Office

Living Arrangements

There are few general rules about this as every person you can live with will be different. That said, if you have any doubts about

any of your prospective flatmates it's best to get it all out in the open before you become a legally combined entity on a tenancy contract. The most common type of contract al-

lows your flatmates to leave and burden the rest of you with the shortfall in rent so don't be complacent about working on personal relationships in your house.

Living alone

You may not find a group of people that are right for you. Don't sweat it. Living alone lets you get more work done and avoids the issue of find-

ing that your friends are less enjoyable when you live with them. The main cons are the increased cost (you have to pay your bills all by yourself)

and the solitude. However, if you're a person who values their space, the solitude could be a plus! Don't rule out living alone as an option.

Dealing with messy housemates

The general rule is that if you live with loads of people and don't think that any of them is a complete disgusting slob, it's probably you. If you are worried that this is this case, then living in a house with only one other person is the best way to go. Mostly because it is easy to distinguish whose mess is

whose, and it is harder to hide behind the excuse that it's someone else's turn to tidy up. Don't ignore the fact that your untidiness can have a real impact on your friendships, even with your closest friends, so do make an effort. Cleaning rotas can be helpful to make sure everyone does their fair share.



What is it like living with a couple?

Have you got a two-bed flat? And a flatmate who's like, totally in love with this girl? What are you going to do when he asks you one day whether it's cool if she moves in with him. Are you happy with that? Ashton, a final year Materials

student who said yes tells Felix, "I knew both of them well before they were going out,". He stresses that, as with all housing situations, it depends upon their personalities. Occasionally arguments happen (as with anyone), but that

"happens even if you don't live with a couple, and they're probably being even more careful about how much I'm involved." He went on to say that it was, "probably the best living arrangement [he'd] had at university."

Living as a couple

The sure fire way to save on rent is to share a one bed flat with someone you love, or hell, if you're free and easy, share a one bed flat with several people you love (Felix doesn't recommend this). This can also be very good for your relationship; it will either bring you incredibly close together or very quickly let you know that it's not meant to be. However it's important to remember that finding out your true feelings for your better half and complying with a legal obligation to pay rent for a set period of time can conflict with each other if things go south in a bad way. Fernanda, an Imperial student who found herself



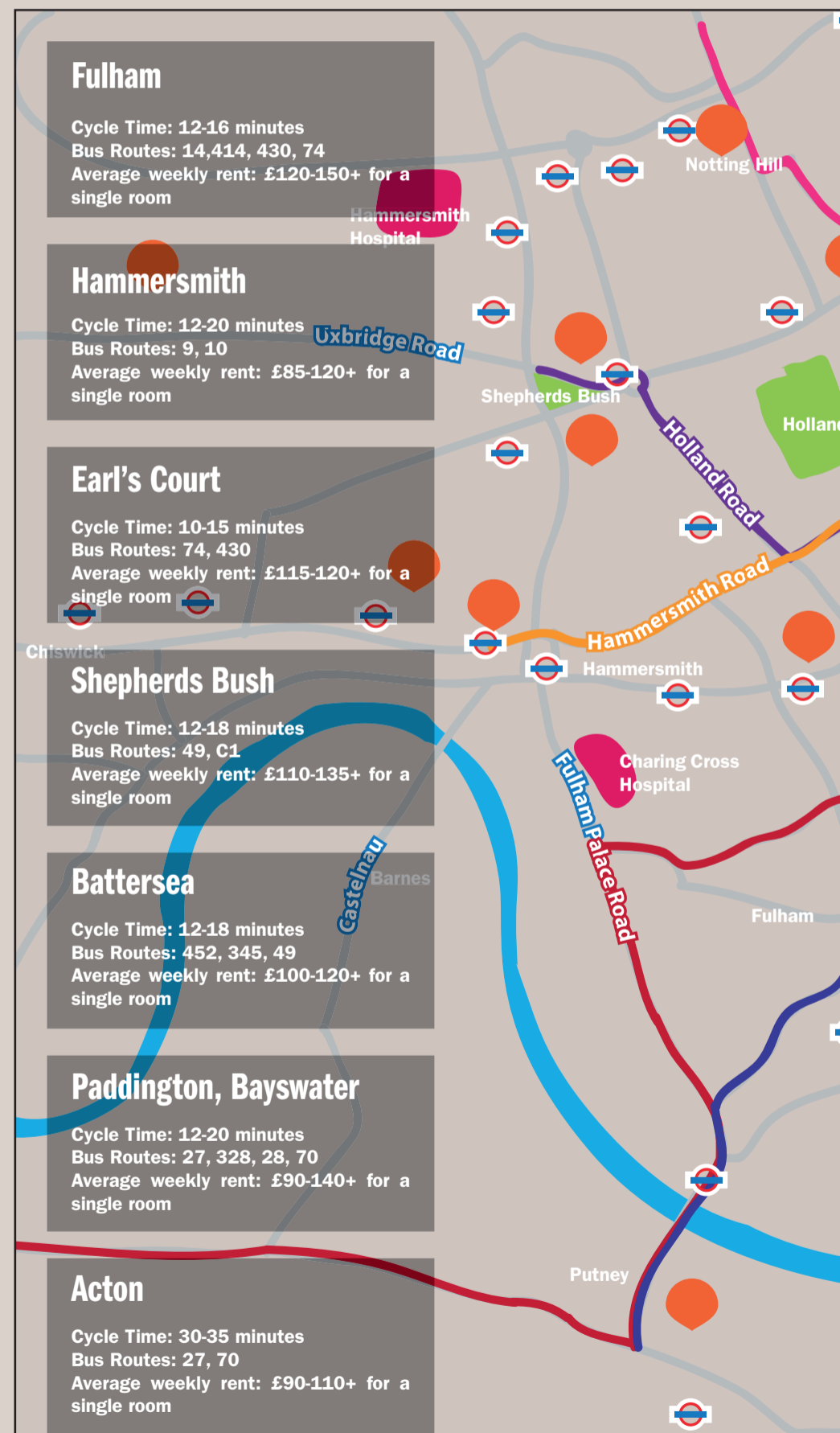
in this situation warned, "We moved in and started making less of an effort to see each other, and then the arguments started and we would

say things we didn't mean but couldn't take back." Still though she doesn't want to put anyone thinking about it: "I still think it was good, and it was especially useful in the long run." There are many success stories as well, Kat, a postgrad in Nat Sci who has been living with her boyfriend since they met in Beit says "we realised we would live well together in halls in first year and have been living together ever since. It is good for saving money as you only need one room and, if you listen to each other and give each other space when necessary, it can be the perfect living arrangement."

FINDING A

What to think about when Housing is arguably the most important part

As with most important decisions in life, mistakes get made. But whether you're an intrepid bunch of mates from your corridor or are an old hand who's been through it all while they sleep it's important to remember the help and information



Bus Routes: 52 & 452, 414 & 14, 430 & 74, 49

A HOUSE

www.imperial.ac.uk/accommodation
accommodation@imperial.ac.uk
020 7594 9444

Are you looking for a house? Part of university life, or frankly life in general

Whether you are looking to move out of halls for the first time with no dreams of punching their crusty, disgusting flatmates in the face, or a house available to you.



345 9 & 10 Supermarket Tube stations

The College is here to help you

Finding a house

The accommodation department's new database, Imperial Home Solutions, has information of all the landlords registered with Imperial. It also has a new student message board, allowing you to see what other people are saying about their housing issues and ask for advice. The database can be accessed from computers in the Student Hub.

Contracts

The Student Accommodation Centre can also give you Advice on all aspects of your tenancy. Including advice on Tenancy Agreements/Licences. The Student Accommodation Centre has a large amount of various booklets on available tenancies and Tenancy Deposit Protection, one of the more expensive aspects of renting a property.

Information

College can help you both find accommodation and help if you are having problems with your agent or landlord once you've moved into accommodation.

They can give you details of registered estate agents and other accommodation providers and have over 30 estate agent registered with them, as well as 400 private landlords.

How much could you pay in fees

You'll be required to pay some fees before you're allowed to move in, expect something similar to the following:

Holding Deposit

If you like the place, this is what you pay the estate agent to take it off the market for you. Usually a weeks rent – **£120**.

Security Deposit

Usually equal to 6 weeks rent, **£720** that you get back at the end. Make sure that you keep

the house clean and everything is kept in good order and there won't be a problem. The Student Accommodation Centre have a lot of advice on this, which can be found on their section of the college website.

First Month's Rent

If you don't have a UK based guarantor they may ask for up to the first 6 months upfront. If the agent does this, Accommodation services recommends haggling if need be. The agent

may not budge on this but it doesn't hurt to try – **£530**

Admin Fee

You'll pay this if you go through an estate agent, which is usually sensible, to be honest. Can be anything between **£100** to **£250**, and may be rolled in with your holding deposit as one payment. Some agents have special arrangements with Imperial to waive this fee, more information can be gained from the Student Hub.

Bills

As always, common sense is the order of the day. It's easy to keep putting it off, but to avoid getting unexpected humungous bills at the end of the year (or visits from bailiffs) sort out your utilities (water, gas, electricity, phone line) as soon as you move in. In terms of paying if you're sharing a house, provided everyone agrees how they are going to split it and roughly when they're expected to pay it, things should pass off without a hitch. Joint accounts can be a great way of sorting this out if everyone has a set direct debit to it each month to keep it all ticking over, although setting these up and closing them at the end can be a faff, especially with large numbers of flatmates.

Your Landlord... Dun dun dun!

Depending on the type of contract that you have, you'll spend more or less time dealing with your landlord. Obviously you are going to want to have as friendly a relationship with him or her as possible. Remember that you're landlord cannot simply turn up. They have to give at least 24 hours notice. But if they do visit, ensure that you tidy the house in advance, don't needlessly aggravate them. Your landlord is responsible for reasonably maintaining the property. Notify your landlord if there are any problems with your property, such as

blocked sinks. Keep a record of all your communication.

An obvious one: pay your rent on time, every time.

Finally, be good to your neighbours, chances are they'll complain to your landlord if you keep them up all night partying.



Goodness Gracious

Musical Theatre Soc
'Return to the F



Do you want to do a centrefold?
Email felix@imperial.ac.uk – it's not just for Clubs & Societies!

Photosoc and Leosoc go head to head

What do they really think? The two societies review each other's recent exhibitions.

Wreckage, reviewed by PhotoSoc's Sam Whitcomb

I'm not really sure how to consider Leonardo Fine Art Society's latest show; *Wreckage*. You see, I'm used to seeing a scattering of photos on those pasty walls, or even a flock of birds swooping through the gallery – not a torn mass of paint regurgitating out of the walls, nor a colossal Hepworth-esque tangle of strings extending up out of and down into oblivion. The effect was powerful.

That's what's so tricky about a society wide exhibition: The struggle to connect pieces which have been submitted exclusively, some by a group, and some as individuals. I found, however, that *Wreckage* bypassed this difficulty with ease, sidestepping the preconceptions that all pieces were required to hold a connection. Of course, narratives could be formed if pushed hard enough but on the whole each piece was so startlingly different from the last it became necessary to allow yourself to observe each piece in isolated consideration.

Attending the gallery opening granted me an additional insight, that of the artist. Perched delicately on a secluded podium lay what I assumed to be an old wrecked book with someone's green scrawl crossing, commenting and cannibalising the words.

On approaching the artist, Maria Han Veiga, she explained, "the book displays language as it should be, as it was. I've corrected the text so it's more in tune with the way we communicate today, depicting how language has evolved to accommodate our steadily adapting vocabulary." And although it was hinted that the further we evolve our language, the more we dilute, pollute and ultimately wreck it, she draws an interesting paradox between what to some is considered creation and others destruction.

Another novel idea presented itself in the form of a computer game written by Hugh Osborne, depicting the familiar and frustrating cleanup operation following a house party. Bottles deposited in unlikely places, beer cans abandoned in an inebriated search for more. Your task simple: To insert the rubbish into bins, a task which was ironically fuelled by the free flowing wine provided! But it was this which fascinated me: the stark differences between the individual pieces and their blinkered nature, crafted by completely independent thinking.

Possibly the most disturbing, yet brilliant piece was entitled, 'Imminent Wreckage'. Hidden in a row of cabinets in the shadow of the main gallery lay a series of balloons hung an instant from destruction. Spikes surrounded and flames abounded; each balloon was doomed to die in its own sickening way yet it was death by the knife, a few tantalising millimetres from the surface of the stretched



A piece from *Wreckage* – looks like a pretty damn good pizza. I need more of those easter eggs...



Mery (left) from LeoSoc, wrote (right) about Sam (right) who wrote (left) about Maria (centre). Confused?

rubber, which concerned me. It is a feeling I have felt a million times over, one which I feel sure every member of Imperial has felt one too many times. The realisation that you're teetering on the edge. That deadline is about to pass, that exam is about to be failed, or that you've drunk too much and you're about to explode. For me it was an unsympathetic analysis of that realisation of doom, and its loneliness was stark.

It's exhibitions like these which allude to the fact that Imperial College is multitalented, that perhaps some of its students' genius is in the subtle use of intellect to evoke feeling. That being said, it is perhaps the demanding intellect of our students which keeps them at home studying, for the gallery opening was not well attended despite a reasonably far-reaching poster campaign.

Still, the exhibition has been well received by those who attended, and it is exhibitions like *Wreckage* and *Untethered* which have ensured the continued eminence of student art in the Blyth Gallery.

Wreckage has closed.



This is *Wreckage*. Not going to argue with that.

Reflections Through the Aperture, reviewed by LeoSoc's Meredith Thomas

Photography has always been a bit of a mystery to me. I understand the fascination with trying to capture a moment in time. I also see that cameras can capture more than just scenes. However, as a painter, the camera seems to me to be a very blunt, restrictive tool. That said, the geek in me is pretty interested in those sleek, expensive looking cameras and the lazy artist in me is definitely interested in works of art you can produce at the push of a button.

Armed with this array of prejudices I pottered along to PhotoSoc's exhibition *Reflections Through the Aperture*. My initial reaction was quite positive. The exhibition is imaginatively hung, and this dynamic approach to curating really brings the exhibition to life. There was also a lot more colour than I was expecting, and was I impressed by the subtle progression from realism to abstraction.

So how had the contributors chosen to interpret 'reflections'? Unsurprisingly there were quite a few pictures of reflective surfaces. However, I was far more drawn to the abstract and interpretive works. There was certainly a wide variety of these. A few deserve special mention. 'Vanishing' by David Zheng, hung at the end of the gallery, shows a double expose of a long corridor superimposed under cables emerging radially from a pylon. The impression, of bleak, drawn-out perspective is quite powerful.

My favourite set by far, wistfully titled 'You use a glass mirror to see your face; you use works of art to see your soul', by Ewa Lachowicz, consists of three portraits. The female subject is poised amidst a whirl of her own movement and ethereal lights. The sense of warmth and intimacy is palpable. Ewa says of her work that "[it] explore[s] purely aesthetic forms as well as deeply personal reflection". This sentiment is much more in tune with the aims of the contemporary and traditional artists I am more used to reviewing.

My reaction to the exhibition was not entirely positive. A group of prints showing out of focus macros of shiny things, while pretty, seem to lack depth. Similarly the trend for photomontages involving contemporary and historical photographs of urban scenes appeared to be more of an exercise in Photoshop than a serious attempt to explore the theme. This idea has been knocking around the internet for long enough to gain the dreaded mantle of cliché.

My feeling is that this particular c-word is harder to avoid in photography. You may have expected this review to follow the classic "author's preconceptions are shattered" structure. Not quite. I am, however, glad to see that there is imaginative artwork at Imperial that starts life as silver nitrate and not in a tube of paint. Now Showing in the Blyth Gallery

MUSIC

Music Editors: **Greg Power**
Luke Turner
Christopher Walmsley
music.felix@gmail.com

Album of The Week



Frank Ocean
Nostalgia, Ultra
Self-released
2011

Look, I know I'm always talking about **Odd Future**, but if you still doubt that this crew is overflowing with talent, just check out **Frank Ocean's** first self-released debut mixtape on Tumblr! Anyway Ocean is a bit of an anomaly amongst OF: rather than rapping about rape, he tends to croon about how good a lover he is. Def Jam originally picked Ocean up for a record deal but then dropped him when they succumbed to their recent financial woes. What a mistake that was. If you're trying to make money as a label you probably shouldn't let go of one of the most promising, soulful and inspired R&B singers around. All you need to get the Ocean bug is to come into contact with amazing tunes like 'Novacane', 'Swim Good' or 'Songs for Women'. This album is pretty much the audio equivalent of crack: once you try it, you just can't let go man. Seriously, how many R&B singers have you heard sampling Kubrick movies, or rhyming about poon over **MGMT**? Genius. **Greg Power**

Most listened to this week by Felix Music members on last.fm

1. Radiohead
2. James Blake
3. Arcade Fire
4. The xx
5. Muse
6. The Strokes
7. Daft Punk
8. Kanye West
9. Red Hot Chili Peppers
10. Bloc Party

Join in at: <http://www.last.fm/group/Felix+Music>

Make sure not to miss
The Hamptons

12 Bar Club, Denmark Street
Wednesday, 30th March 2011
www.soundcloud.com/the-hamptons

This gig may not be until next week, but this source of biblical knowledge won't be around then, so listen. This London-based six-piece are taking to 12 Bar Club for a night of rocking the tennis socks off their pounding feet, and possibly the tops off their female fans. Featuring vocal/guitarist cousinly love from across the pond and a comradeship through their music, the benefits of the American/English influence are clear here, keeping the rock alive in the heart of both sounds. Known for keeping venues on their feet through their flying guitars and clearly colossal sound, these boys are sure to provide your Wednesday night with that wall you'll probably end up running into anyway and some high energy antics. Having featured on BBC radio and US stations in Gainesville and Tampa, this is one not to miss... Trust me. **Luke Turner**

Videogames + Music = AWESOME

Charlotte Levin takes us to the strange party that is Nintendisco: a celebration of games, music and geekery

Have you ever felt like going to a pub, having a couple of pints, playing some old style video games and hanging out with friends? Yes? Well, you're not alone. Two guys, Nicholas Thurgood (Nicky) and David Lightfoot (Dave), have just started running a monthly event called *Nintendisco*. The basic idea is to get people together and hang out in a bar, and then play videogames together, whilst listening to music, from contemporary radio hits to video game theme tunes!

Nicky and Dave have both been gaming fans since they were kids. Dave's first console was a 48k Spectrum that he shared together with his brother, and this is what started his lifelong passion. From this starting point, both guys spent time in signed, touring bands before joining the two interests together and starting *Nintendisco*. They explain that they "wanted to combine our live musical/promoting experience with our love for games and make an event that everyone could enjoy. Sort of like gaming karaoke, or watching a football match on a big screen, but watching a round of Mario Kart instead." As a start-up, they spent some time going through different games, looking for retro, fun and accessible games that could work well on a big screen.

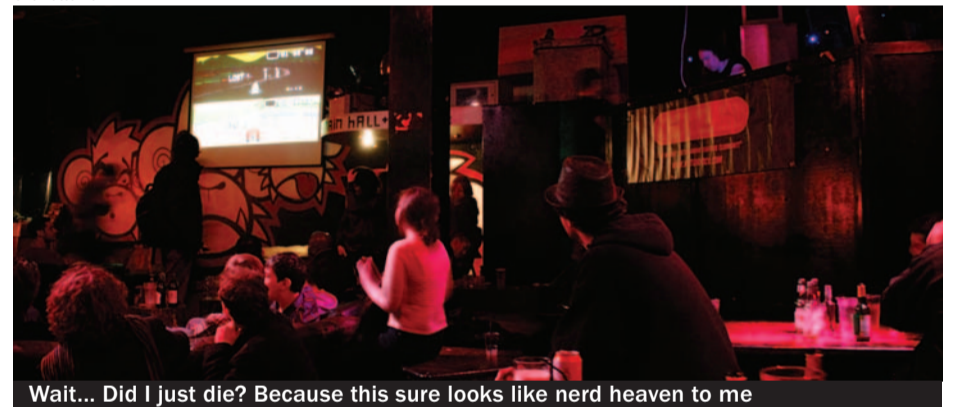
The first event was at the Lock Tavern in Camden. Nicky and Dave were at first worried about how many people would show up, being unsure of people's interest. It turned out to be the least of their worries, and they moved to a larger venue: 93 Feet East on Brick Lane. This is where

they held their 5th, and latest, event. It's still a fairly small pub, with some leather sofas spread around, a DJ podium in one of the corners and the screen on the wall facing the entrance. The atmosphere is laid back, two players at a time sitting down on one of the sofas and by the podium the hosts take turns in presenting the players and commenting on the game. To get to play you hand in a piece of paper with your name and which game you would prefer to play, e.g. Super Mario Kart or Street Fighter. They recommend you hand in the paper fairly early to make sure you get to play, a challenge that has turned out to be much bigger than getting people to the venue. To make sure that there isn't one person dominating all night long, there is a small prize ceremony after a certain number of victories; how many depending on the game being played. During the ceremonies, the *Star Wars Imperial*

March soundtrack plays in the background and the winner is placed on a podium where he receive a small gold medal and a t-shirt.

If this is something that interests you, the next event will take place 28th April. Although, already next week, on the 24th March, Nintendisco will be a part of the launch event for Nintendo 3DS. Instead of focusing on their regular old school games only, they will hold a 3D Tournament, but still play the mixture of Nintendo sounds and contemporary music. This launch event is at HMV Oxford Street (Oxford St, London W1A 1AB), so why not celebrate end of term but getting together a bunch of friends and challenge each other on video games? To follow coming events and updates on what games will be on, have a look at the Facebook group ("Nintendisco") or follow them on Twitter (@Nintendisco).

Charlotte Levin



Wait... Did I just die? Because this sure looks like nerd heaven to me

Light Asylum @ Corsica Studios

Light Asylum; the dark wave, 'enough-balls-to-bust-up-Schwarzenegger', electroclash duo from Brooklyn are Shannon Funchess and Bruno Coviello. They came for Club Motherfucker's eighth birthday at Elephant and Castle's

Corsica Studios. The pair address the stage like a boxing ring with the crowd as their opponent as they limber-up for their set at 12.30. Breaking into swirling synth sounds they engage in tear-your-face-off songs from their new EP

In Tension, as the crowd welcome the music drone and power from both vocals and synth. Funchess' vocals bring memories of a female Ian Curtis with attitude as she yelps and shouts with a shocking vocal range through the microphone, using smartly placed loops to weld into Coviello's rhythms. The sound matches **New Order's** electronic reign post-Curtis, with his female successor. The hugely dramatic event keeps the crowd enticed and on the verge of anarchy. Using recognisable themes and forceful bass and lyrics, the two keep the intensity at bursting level as they career through their appropriately named album. 'Knights and Week Ends' along with 'Skull Fuct' send patches of the crowd into apoplexy and patches into jaw-dropping shock.

The fearless New Yorkers just started the fight and wont be going down in the first round. This is only the start for Funchess and Coviello. The dark dungeons of Corsica studios being an ideal place for this round, **Light Asylum** have started making waves.

Luke Turner



The Brooklyn twosome start a right raucous night in South London

MUSIC

Creativity & Intuition

Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto de Troya on his second year EEE group project entitled “Musical Expression”

Blanca Martínez de Rituerto de Troya (www.escapecomplex.com)



What follows is an extract from the research proposal presented by a group of 2nd year students in the Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering. The project, entitled “Musical Expression” aims to develop an entirely new musical instrument which is, above all, intuitive to use, and which facilitates the creative process by collapsing the barrier between idea and creation.

Music is one of the most widespread yet least understood aspects of human culture. Indeed, some say the human capacity to appreciate music is what makes us human. It seems strange then, to think that although we can all enjoy music, be it by ourselves or with other people, not all of us can make it.

Why is this so? In our opinion, it is to do with the structure and technique of musical instruments. They are the tools with which music is made, yet they are complex and refined to be operated in a very specific way, requiring a great amount of skill from the player. Yet this seems to go against the notion of the instinctive nature of music. Effectively, the relationship between the tool and the craft is skewed so that we are left to devise a set of methods and techniques that

we must learn before achieving anything.

This is not only an issue for the layman but also for the seasoned musician who tries to explore the infinite possibilities of music. Often they are faced with technical or practical limitations which stand in the way of realising their artistic intentions and what's worse, often these limitations or the path to overcome them will corrupt the idealised concept. While this may always yield interesting results, as is observable in the more adventurous styles of music, it becomes little more than a frustration for those seeking to bring their ideas squarely into being.

Most people have a natural disposition towards music developed through evolution and social adaptation. Music is enjoyed as a means of celebration, entertainment, an intellectual exercise or as a vehicle for human interaction. However, this deep seated affinity for sound remains largely passive for the greater proportion of the human population. This is largely due to the division between music listening and music making or the separation between audience and performer. The greatest barrier between enjoying and producing music lies in the sound sources themselves, the instruments.

Musical instruments require a great

deal of skill and education before one can play them properly or at a satisfactory level. The reason why this is so is because of the way the instruments work, requiring a great deal of memorisation and familiarity before producing any appreciable composition of sounds. This is a problem of design which doesn't optimise the interaction between the user and the tool. When else do we encounter

We want to “develop a more intuitive and natural way to create music”

a line of strings or a row of buttons in our daily life? These vehicles are inherently alien to the human condition. They must be strictly defined and explained within a particular context in order for them to bear fruit.

What we propose is to investigate and develop a more intuitive and natural way to create music, a way to bring out each individual's intrinsic desire to create

something in the world and to express their otherwise inexpressible whims. In so doing we wish to connect a person to their creative instincts via an entirely non-invasive electronic interface and expose the potential for creative abstraction not often associated with rigid technology. In order to do this we must first observe the successes and failures of traditional as well as modern musical instruments, and consider the opinions of musicians as well as non-musicians with an inclination towards music.

We believe there is a better method for interacting with machines, especially in creative contexts. It is important to identify and establish the right language for communication between the object and the subject in question so that we may use technology to realise our ideas and visions.

We hope to have a finished prototype within the next year. To follow our research please find the link to our website in the Facebook group “Musical Expression: Creativity & Intuition” or contact the author via im808@ic.ac.uk. If you'd like to contribute towards the development of our new instrument, the website also features a 1-minute survey about musical creation and inspiration – we would love to hear your thoughts!

The Experimental Interface List

In keeping with the spirit of the Musical Expression EEE project, we present you with a list of some of the more interesting musical interfaces out there today. Check these badboys out on YouTube.

ReacTable

Big ass musical table for you and your friends to drool over

Tenori-On

Gorgeous 16x16 matrix of LED switching device for solo play

K-Bow

Violin with bluetooth sensors, captures motion like a WiiMote

Tangible Music

Use tokens, toys and blocks to create music;

MAKE: Online

Shitloads of home-made instruments

Join the “Musical Expression” Facebook group for more novel musical interfaces.

If you want to share a mind-blowing playlist send it in to music.felix@gmail.com

Mr. Scruff
KOKO, London
19th February, 2011
Katherine Portilla

“Two teas please.” Not the usual order one makes at a bar, however this is not a ‘usual’ gig. **Mr. Scruff** is not only famous for his random, yet surprisingly popular tea stands though. You can expect a full six hour DJ set from the man himself. A medley of hip-hop, jazz, swing and dubstep keep the tunes fresh and the crowd on the dance floor. At Camden's impressive KOKO, a former theatre, **Mr. Scruff**'s tunes were accompanied by two large screens at either

side of the turn table. Home-made animations and messages such as “incoming bass alert” flashed on the screen, much to the amusement of the bouncing crowd.

The dance floor is packed before you know it and browsing the turnout, the crowd is as versatile and charming as is the tunes streaming from the sound system. Here's the key point, anyone can enjoy **Mr. Scruff** for he plays for no genre, let alone age group. This Manchester based DJ had six albums worth of work to pick and choose from, managing to sell out his 11th show in Camden, with no support act to boot. To get you started, check out **Mr. Scruff**'s

‘Get a Move On’, his most notable hit. Perhaps, trip-hop would be the best description his music, but most of his work just keeps you guessing. His work with the Ninja Tune label, which I recommend for its handful of similarly groovy artists, is a real treat for your ears my friends.

*Mr. Scruff will be returning to Koko on Saturday 21st May 2011.
Tickets on sale now.
£15*

More info, music and weird cartoons on www.mrscruff.com

make us a brew!



Mr. Scruff has a freaky sense of humour. But seriously we want a brew

FILM

Classic Cinema

Make Music Mine



Make Mine Music is an interesting piece of cinema, firmly rooted in its own specific time and enjoyable – with a pinch of salt. On limited release in 1946, as the first in a series of ‘Package Films’ made by Disney as a way of keeping its studio going in the resource-stretched wartime, this feature length film is a collection of ten musical segments that presents popular music of the time in short animated tales. It is like *Fantasia* for the forties but, unlike the classical music of *Fantasia* that found its own niche in which to remain timeless and lauded, *Make Mine Music*'s soundtrack has dated quickly.

It is, nevertheless, a classic slice of Americana, showcasing the talents of Benny Goodman, The Andrews Sisters and Dinah Shore among other big forties names that have, for the most part, been lost over the decades. Its stories revolve around small-town baseball games, and teens dancing to jukebox hits at the “Malt Shop” in a compilation of what are now nostalgic little snippets. Though this may sound entirely un-relatable, or even unbearable for some, *Make Mine Music* has the advantage of being created right in the middle of Disney's heyday. It remains charming with its meticulous hand-drawn animation that has lost out to the mightier Pixar Studios in recent times, and the simple creativity found in this – still only Disney's eighth feature film – is appealing.

Some of the content has to be taken with a pinch of salt, however, with the fat girl being hilariously shunned at the dance until she is re-drawn thinner and the occasional appearance from a blacked-up minstrel sending shudders of 21st Century social sensitivity down the spines of the audience at the BFI. Still, *Make Mine Music* is a curious production that encapsulates 1940s America in an entertaining and unique way.

Jade Hoffman

Emilio's on his way

Father and son team up in this ultimately muddled re-interpretation of Chaucer's classic *The Canterbury Tales*

The Way

Director Emilio Estevez
Screenwriter Emilio Estevez
Cast Martin Sheen, Deborah Kara Unger, James Nesbit, Yorick van Wageningen, Emilio Estevez

Jay Hoffman

Emilio Estevez wrote, directed and appears in *The Way*, so it's fair to say that this – his seventh film as director – is a markedly personal effort. Set on the route of medieval Christian pilgrimage the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, it was filmed on location in Spain with a small crew and stars Estevez's father Martin Sheen. This good-hearted, earnest effort was even inspired by the director's own Camino with his son.

Sheen plays Tom, a widowed ophthalmologist shocked out of his comfortable day-to-day existence by the freak death of his son (Estevez) in the Pyrenees on the first leg of the journey. Upon arrival in France to identify the body

he decides to walk the 480-mile route himself and thereby complete it for his son, whose ashes he carries with him and scatters in instalments along the way.

We follow him over some stunning scenery as he forms relationships with fellow hikers, including a rotund Dutchman (Yorick van Wageningen) and a spiky Canadian (Deborah Kara Unger). Indeed, the film is at its strongest documenting the Chauceresque hijinks common to bands of pilgrims: joking, drinking, and ‘living off the land’ (aka thieving). Such lightness of touch is welcome in what is at heart a serious story, and it must be said that Sheen acquits himself superbly in a challenging role. His decades of Hollywood experience are almost visible on his face in every shot, whether playing for laughs, intensely emoting, or even – every actor's toughest test – playing drunk.

Unfortunately though, *The Way* is well-intentioned, admirable even, but significantly flawed. The direction is formulaic, perhaps reflecting the repetitive structure of the hiking routine but in truth suggesting a lack of imagi-

nation – for instance, you can set your watch by when an aerial-shot walking montage is coming up. The script, too, is clunky, especially in the opening 15 minutes of lame exposition in which Sheen is clumsily introduced playing a round of golf with his similarly knitwear-clad country club buddies. And after he receives the bad news, his relationship with his late son is too-briefly summarised via the medium of melodramatic TV-movie flashbacks.

Worse still, at points it feels like Estevez wants us to celebrate the simple humanity of no more than a cast of borderline-offensive continental stereotypes. The film deals almost exclusively in them: the laid-back Dutchman who likes a crafty ‘schmoke’, the old Spaniard who ‘always wanted to be a matador’, and the twinkly-eyed boozy Irish poet. Finally, these major issues are compounded by a couple of fist-chewingly awful ‘message moments’ (so Gypsies aren't all thieves and scoundrels, you say? Why thank you, Emilio!) Unfortunately for Estevez, liking this film is easier if you haven't seen it.



One does not simply ‘Charlie Sheen’ into Mordor!

iCU Cinema - All Night at the Oscars!

Once again, iCU Cinema is finishing up the term with its six-film all-nighter on Tuesday 22nd March. After the success of last term's all-nighter, which had massive turnout for *The Social Network* and a good group of dedicated film-lovers sticking it out until the morning, iCU Cinema is looking to up its game once more. For its final event of the academic year, before going on an exam-induced hiatus over the summer term, the club is holding a “Night at the Oscars” all-nighter which will showcase some of the biggest and best films to win or be nominated for awards in last

month's Academy Awards.

Perhaps the most hotly anticipated film being shown that night will be this year's runaway hit, the British film *The King's Speech* which took the awards for Best Picture, Best Director and Best Leading Actor among others. Though this film is slated to be shown first in the bill, it is by no means an early peak. The rest of the night promises more of this year's major award-winners like *Black Swan* and *The Fighter*.

The full line-up for the event, which is kicking off at 6pm on Tuesday and ex-

pected to end at around 7.30 on Wednesday morning, is as follows:

- **The King's Speech**
- **Black Swan**
- **127 Hours**
- **Alice in Wonderland**
- **The Fighter**
- **The Kids Are All Right**

Tickets to see all six of this year's biggest films are £10 and the Union Bar will be staying open all night to fuel the most dedicated iCU Cinema patrons. More details can be found on the Facebook event and online at www.icucinema.co.uk

Hollywood gets flattened in *Battle: L.A.*

Battle: Los Angeles

Director Jonathon Liebesman
Screenwriter Christopher Bertolini
Cast Aaron Eckhart, Michelle Rodriguez, Ramon Rodriguez, Bridget Moynahan, Ne-Yo

Ed Knock

The recent resurrection of the sci-fi genre has changed how many people view this typically maligned section of cinema but *Battle: Los Angeles* fails to match the quality of the critically claimed films *Moon* and *District 9*. *District 9* was intriguing by being set in the little filmed Johannesburg whereas Los Angeles is familiar city of endless identical suburban houses and as a horde of aliens quickly reduce the place to a heap of smouldering rubble, I can't help but think that no-one would really care if this characterless metropolis was vaporised.

The film is essentially a re-hash of *Black Hawk Down*, though replacing the faceless Somali insurgents with faceless miniaturised versions of Optimus Prime, and it suffers from the same problems

as Ridley Scott's muddled war epic – namely characterisation. We're introduced to a gang of multi-ethnic fresh faced marines at the start and they're subject to the usual clichés; either they're over confident bad-asses or insecure newbies. Attached to the platoon is a world-weary veteran played by Aaron Eckhart who has a reputation for getting his soldiers killed. It's not long before mysterious asteroids start bombarding the coasts of New York, Tokyo, London and errr Galway and news soon filters through of an extra-terrestrial invasion before our plucky soldiers are whisked off to extract civilians from L.A. as emotionless mechanical E.T.s emerge from the ocean to begin their murderous assault on the local surfers.

Director Jonathon Liebesman provides some flimsy answers for the aliens motives; they're here for our water and to successfully colonise our planet they must exterminate the native population. But any references to post-colonial guilt are quickly swept aside and replaced with American paranoia of invading foreign forces. In fairness, he does create a generally creepy atmosphere as the

marines locate an over-run police station amongst charred bodies and an unseen enemy with tense jump in your seat moments. However the aliens reveal themselves all too soon and the film descends into a standard 'shoot em up' and unsurprisingly the marines are perfect shots, whereas the aliens, with all their sophisticated firepower and technology, miraculously can't hit a thing.

There's a brief interlude in an abandoned airbase where attempts at deep dialogue between characters betray the cringe worthy failures of the script and once the action resumes, the chaotic scenes of warfare quickly become tedious. Michelle Rodriguez joins the cast to play a vulnerable, sensitive victim. Sorry, I'm pulling your leg, she fills her stereotyped boots as the usual tough girl alongside Aaron Eckhart who was so brilliant in *Thank You for Smoking* and *The Dark Knight*, but here he just grunts out his lines with a permanent textbook expression of exasperation. *Battle: Los Angeles* has a promising start but a weak script, uninspiring plot and poor characters quickly turn it into traditional brain dead action fare.



Wait, wait! Aaah man, it isn't Batman.

6:00pm

All-Night at The Oscars

22nd March

6pm - 7:30am

1:00am

8:30pm

3:15am

11:00pm

For Country fans only

Country Song

Director Shana Feste
Screenwriter Shana Feste
Cast Gwyneth Paltrow, Tim McGraw, Garrett Hedlund, Leighton Meester, Marshall Chapman

John Park

As her performance on *Glee* showed us all, it appears that Gwyneth Paltrow can both act AND sing. She was just a substitute teacher on the hit U.S. TV show but with *Country Strong*, the film is all about her, starring as famous country singer Kelly Canter from Texas, trying to make a comeback in the music industry, whilst being threatened by a younger, hotter and talented teen. To add to more drama, she is an alcoholic with a tumultuous love life – throw in some rehab, and this completes the most clichéd set-up for a musical drama.

It was recently announced that Paltrow is very close to signing a record deal – and it's not difficult to see why. With her clean-cut voice, she carries the country songs well. She may not have the most powerful set of lungs, but vocally she seems more than capable of handling a solo stage. It's a shame, then, that Paltrow is far too underused musically. Her character is mostly involved in sense-

less, meandering, alcohol-fuelled drama that she doesn't get a lot of screen-time to show off her singing abilities.

Kelly Canter has been in rehab after a disastrous, drunken performance in Dallas attracted much criticism. Even worse she was 5-months pregnant at the time, which subsequently led her to lose the baby altogether. She is released a month ahead of schedule, and obviously has been let go far too early, but her ambitious husband James (Tim McGraw) insists that she makes her comeback now and turns it into a memorable one. The pressure is on for Kelly, with her overbearing, affection-free husband being of absolutely no help, and the stiff competition from an up and coming young rising star Chiles Stanton (Leighton Meester). Though she finds solace in her concerned rehab worker, Beau Hutton (Garrett Hedlund) who is genuinely looking out for Kelly's well-being, Beau also just happens to be a talented country singer and is asked to join them on tour.

Predictably, Kelly continues to go on more drinking benders, but the alcoholism aspect of the film seems to come and go at the film's convenience. In one scene Kelly is waving around a litre of vodka, drinking it straight out of the bottle, and in another scene, alcohol

has disappeared completely, with no further mention or development on her problems. Nothing is told of how this dependence started, and though Paltrow displays depression and repressed emotions well, the script does not offer any decent depth for Paltrow to portray on screen.

Whatever emptiness there is on screen cannot be blamed on the actors. Despite all the rash decisions and melodramatic choices they make, there is not even the slightest hint behind the characters' intentions, which is why it's even harder to find some meaning to justify the film's rushed, irrational and "tear-jerker" ending.

Manipulative is too weak a word to describe the extent the film is willing to go to just for another heavy, emotional scene. Much like its protagonist, the film needs to take intermittent breaks from all the intense, though quite frankly, silly, drama. There's a fight, then a concert, another argument, another concert in a different city, and this cycle goes on and on. If you're not a fan of country music, you can forget about watching this; half of the film is filled with mellow, acoustic guitar-backed songs full of corny lyrics. Aside from this – which may still appeal to some – the story itself leaves no noticeable impact.

All-Night At The Oscars

Single: film £3 members, All-night ticket: £10
 Unlimited food: £5
www.lcucinema.co.uk [facebook](#) [twitter](#)

Fashion Editor: **Saskia Verhagen**

fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk

FASHION

What's hot for Autumn

As fashion month draws to a close, **Saskia Verhagen** and **Alice Yang** scour the catwalks

Textural Layers



Gucci Alexander Wang Christian Dior

Mixing and matching is the way forward next season. Whether it's vintage tweeds, warm knits, toughened leather, pretty lace or sheer silk, this season has us all wrapped up. Textural hybrids were seen at Alexander Wang with elegant silk trains flowing from beneath cosy ponchos, whilst Chanel brought life to its smouldering catwalk by layering feathers and tweed on top of sheers. Eveningwear had a romantic twist: at Gucci, fluttering jackets were layered over sheer floor length gowns, and despite being shrouded in rumours, a swashbuckling Karlie Kloss opened at Christian Dior to much applause.

How To Wear It: For those daring enough, self-created texture hybrids will guarantee plenty of warmth come winter, but for rookies, tactical layering is key. A smooth elegant sheer base is essential, then go wild and throw on the chunkiest knits you can find. Whatever you do, make sure you pile it on. **AY**

Androgyny



Dolce & Gabbana Stella McCartney Paul Smith

Suits, ties, waistcoats and mannish trousers: this is definitely one of my favourite trends for this Autumn. The look is perfectly smart, sophisticated and sexy, and is a perfect solution to rejuvenating a workwear rut. With fully suited-and-booted ladies alternating with starry ultra-feminine girls at Dolce and Gabbana; boxy, oversized jackets at Stella McCartney and Céline and incredibly sexy tomboys at Paul Smith (one of my favourite shows of the season, with by far the best trousers of the season) - there's excitement for a revival in preppy, polished shirts and slacks for girls: tailoring brought bang up-to-date.

How To Wear It: The item of the season as far as this trend is concerned is the perfect pair of trousers: well-cut and beautifully fitted, they will be one of your most-used pieces for the cold seasons. If you're feeling up to it, ties for girls seem to be key - keep them skinny and minimal. **SV**

Billowing Sleeves



Stella McCartney Jil Sander

Lanvin

Gone are the days of the power-shoulder: arms are fashion's new erogenous zone. With any echoes of the 1980s long gone with the end of 2010, we might attribute it to fashion's new decade of choice: the 1970s. Looser silhouettes were dominant throughout but especially notable was the bulging and billowing sleeve, seen at Burberry Prorsum on the coats, and then at Stella McCartney and Jil Sander with dropped shoulders tapering into a wide sleeve. A definite favourite was at Lanvin: Alber Elbaz elegantly and effortlessly added the wide upper-arm to his gorgeous cocktail dresses.

How To Wear It: It's easy to add a fashion-forward edge to a classic pencil skirt a-la Stella McCartney with a rippling sheer blouse. It gives sexy touch but the long sleeves keep it demure, while the sheer fabric ensures that you don't add any extra weight to your upper arms. **SV**

Fur In Colour



Gucci

Bottega Veneta Missoni

Fur: the most opulent, controversial and outspoken material of fashion luxury, is once again the hot-ticket for next season. However, fashionistas take note: not just any old piece of fluff will do. The bright colours for the summer have filtered through onto Autumn catwalks as the stand-out fluffy pieces came in the boldest hues. Gucci, Dior and Bottega Veneta all featured furs in jewel tones ranging from golden yellow to peacock blue; whilst a pastel palette was favoured at Missoni, with sugary lavenders and spearmint greens. Giving a more natural feel, Celine and Marni showcased patchwork pieces in rusty oranges and deep forest greens.

How To Wear It: Go all-out and make sure no one misses you with a bright, eye-catching fur coat, or rejuvenate a plain outfit with a statement fur skirt. Or keep it more subtle, keeping touches of eye-popping furs to bags, hats and stoles. **AY**

FASHION

Autumn/Winter 2011

...s from New York to Milan to give you Felix's predictions for next season

Sparkle and Shine



"All that glitters is not gold" – maybe so, but this season both glitter and gold have lit up catwalks from New York to Milan. This season at Ralph Lauren, exotic velvet gowns embroidered with beaded art glided the catwalk, a glimmering emerald dress teamed with red peep-toes delivering an oriental twist. Models at Oscar de la Renta and Versace shone in figure hugging dresses intricately covered in sequins and beads. Meanwhile, feminine strength came through at Louis Vuitton with sharp, geometric oversized sequins covered restrained silhouettes. Who said winter had to be dark and dull?

How To Wear It: Party girls should try a short shimmering dress, channelling 1970s disco diva, or add an androgynous twist to laid back glamour with a sequin jacket. If you really want to steal the show, you must sparkle from head to toe, but be warned: this body-skimming look is not for the faint-hearted. **AY**

Teal Green



Amongst the autumnal hues seen on the catwalks for next season, which ranged from deep purples and reds from rust to tomato, a colour that dominated on both sides of the Atlantic was definitely teal green. A nice change from fashion's go-to non-colour of choice, black, this Autumn/Winter season seems to come in a rather richly coloured package. The teal came thick and fast in fabrics ranging from shimmering silk-satin at Gucci, raw silk at Haider Ackermann and bright, blocky opaque wool at Hermes. Whatever fabric they chose, looks incorporating teal always stole the show.

How To Wear It: One piece in teal is crucial for Autumn/Winter this year. Whether you go for a full-length evening dress, blouse, jumper or maxi-skirt, it's the key colour for next season. Combine it with denim or leather, for a chic twist to an off-duty casual look, or go all-out teal for the evening with golden accents. **SV**

Polka Dots



Stripes will have gone with the sunshine of the Spring/Summer season, the new pattern of choice is definitely the polka dot for next season. Diane von Furstenburn showed spots of all shapes and sizes combined, whilst Stella McCartney favoured a more graphic approach with a scatter-graph of spots in monochromatic black or white forming a key trend in the second half of her show in Paris. Marc Jacobs arguably began the trend in New York, with chic, 40s inspired silhouettes featuring petite polka dots being combined on pieces from top to toe. The look is piling on the polka dots with different colours and sizes, creating a cohesive yet creative ensemble.

How To Wear It: Too much just isn't enough with spots next season: pile on your polka dots but keep it elegant with a smooth, fitted silhouette and a defined waist. For the less adventurous, a cute polka dot blouse is a sweet and simple solution. **SV**

Accessories



Belts: With so much concentration on the powerful, strong woman, the lure of a defined waist was inescapable. Alberta Ferretti and Jason Wu chose thin belts with a decorative bow and belts were even worn atop coats at Burberry, Yves Saint Laurent and Valentino for added elegance.

Boots: As expected for the colder seasons, boots stomped down catwalks everywhere. High high boots featured in pretty embellished jewel-coloured velvet at Alberta Ferretti, whilst Prada showcased playful and vibrant python knee-highs and Chanel exhibited flat, toughened biker boots in mixed textures with wide grungy scrunched ankles.

How to Wear It: With such an array of variations, there is no excuse for either cold feet, or a baggy waist. Shops will be brimming with accessories to suit every personality, so it's a great time to invest! **AY**

384 students have contributed to Felix this year.* Where have you been?

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Adam Cutmore
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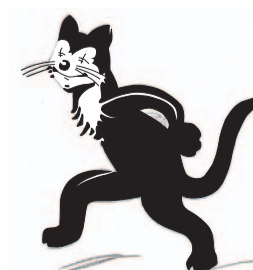
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It's never too late to write for Felix.
Email felix@imperial.ac.uk to find out how.

*Every effort has been made to include all contributors. Our warmest apologies if we have missed you out.



FASHION

Strut Our Science: fashion with a twist

With the increasing role of technology in the innovation of fabrics and design, Imperial showcases some of the best examples in the field: **Mithila Patkunan** reports

Following WSET's (Women in Science, Engineering and Technology) success of previous years with celebrating International Women's Day with the 100Women100Visions Project, We.Are.Science Photography Competition and Exhibition of Women in Science, they held: Strut Our Science. This was a celebration of the science and technology that is increasingly involved in the fashion industry, with Imperial College's female students taking the stage. With the recent success of the Spray-On Fabric developed at Imperial, it seems fitting to explore the role of science in fashion.

The show featured the finalists for a competition WSET had been running

"There was a parade of 'high-tech' wear"

on campus for students to re-style the high visibility jacket. Alongside this there was a parade of 'high-tech' wear including Super Fibre, metal threading, laser-cutting, self-cleaning & much more. The WSET team worked with students from the Materials department to create microscopic images and learn the scientific backgrounds of the materials they used.

The team was joined by inspirational fashion designer Britt Lintner. She previously held a leading role in the world of finance, but left to launch her epon-

ymous label. This was a response to a fashion market wholly unsuited to her needs as an executive woman.

The show was held in the prime location of Imperial's Main Entrance, attracting a great crowd, including the male students!

Featured garments were then exhibited for the rest of the week in the main entrance. This event was sponsored by RBS and IBM.

The student society WSET is about promoting the SET courses to more girls and helping the existing Imperial students into continuing into industry or academia.

They hold open days for school girls during the year and CV and Networking sessions for students.

Aeneas Wiener



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GAMES

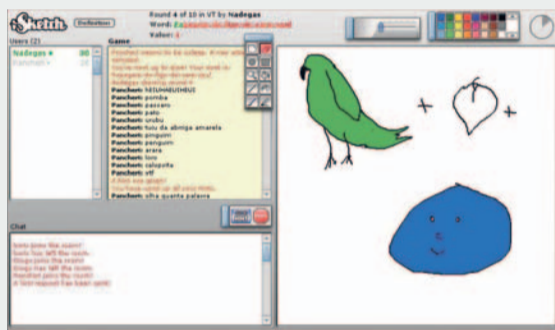
Games Editor: **Simon Worthington**

games.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Web Games

Each week we're going to bring you a selection of fresh, free and fun web games that you can play right away in your browser. Unless otherwise specified, you're going to need the Adobe Flash Player plug-in which can be installed from <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>.

iSketch isketch.net



Despite being around since the mad, bad days of Web 1.0 when really annoying Flash introductions were cool, *iSketch* is still going strong and is still enjoyable even though it's starting to show its age a little. The classic *Pictionary*, where players have to draw a picture to describe a word or phrase, has been brought online and thrown into the wild world of multiplayer action.

Players take it in turns to draw against the clock. The more correct answers, the more points, and answerers get a bonus for answering first. Drawing is definitely the highlight and the chime the game makes when you're first to answer soon becomes the most pleasurable sound it's possible to hear. If friends want to play they can join the same room for some co-op or team-based action. Trolling random strangers on chat is fun too!

Carveola Incident tinyurl.com/carveola



In this gallery shooter, you play a World War One army sergeant faced with something much worse than the Axis powers: zombies. After teaming up with German counterparts, you'll take on all manner of undead in the traditional fashion.

Only, the mist over no-man's land brings more fear than usual, not least because you're stuck with awful guns from *Call of Duty 2*. Night levels rack the atmosphere up a few notches, giving some great moments.

Trouble in paradise

Laurence Pope on *Baron Wittard: Nemesis of Ragnarok*

You can generally assign video games into one of three categories. The first group houses the games that you just can't stop playing. If you're in a game and your friends start to ask you if you ought to eat and suggest that you might want to take a shower sometime, then it more than likely falls into this group.

The second category contains mostly single player games, ones you can play a few times without getting too bored. Fun, but replay value is limited. Finally there are tier three games, games which are just plain bad. The only reason you play these abominations is to justify the cash you splurged out on them.

Baron Wittard: Nemesis of Ragnarok, henceforth shortened to *NoR*, falls somewhere between categories two and three. It's not so bad that I ever considered tooth-pulling more enjoyable, but it's not so amazing that I'll be playing it a second time.

NoR was created by a two person development team called Wax Lyrical Games, and serves as their first title. It follows the tale of a photographer sent into an old abandoned city called 'The Utopia', built by the title's aforementioned Baron Wittard. Naturally, any idiot who calls their creation 'The Utopia' is just screaming out for fate to smack them around the chops and turn their Utopia into a Dystopia. Of course, everything went tits up and by the time your character arrives two years later everything's just a little bit old and mouldy.

Now, to review this game I'm going to start with my rough line of thought when I started playing. First things first, there are no video settings. The resolution and graphical quality are fixed, and I spent the whole game playing with black borders that letterboxed the screen. Whilst I understand that top-tier graphics aren't always available to smaller developers, I would have appreciated the ability to at least alter the game's resolution.

The movement controls. Oh yes, the movement controls. *NoR* is a point and click puzzle game, so naturally control is somewhat limited versus say an FPS, but I've seen point and click done better than this. The last game of this type I played was *Sam & Max: The Devil's Playhouse* and that managed it really well, giving you full control over a small interactive area. In *NoR* you can't freely move your character about, and you're limited to moving to set positions in the environment. This became particularly irritating when I was rolling the mouse about the screen to find the area to move to next.

OK, now we're into gameplay. Gameplay makes or breaks a game, as redundant as that may sound. The controls can be stodgy, the graphics average, but if a game has a succinct plot and challenging elements that drive it along these smaller gripes can be ignored. Only, *NoR* doesn't quite deliver, and the aforementioned gripes are only amplified.

To put it simply, *NoR* is, in essence, a string of various logic puzzles strung together with a fairly average story and cliché horror elements that are about as scary as a kitten arching its



You might be a ghost but that doesn't mean you have to stand like a moron

back and mewling dangerously. The game's box doesn't seem to promote it as a horror beyond 'Spine-Tingling Mystery Adventure Game', but the flickering lights and use of darkness imply it's trying to be one. Without the horror or a properly convincing story it's just a big puzzle game.

Now, there's nothing wrong with puzzle games, but the way the player has to solve puzzles is poor at best. There's a lot of going back and forth – first you need to locate ten hidden rune stones, find their meaning in one book, then find out which room you have to take them to from another book in another room, which contains a puzzle whose solution is found in another wretched room. You see where this

“If a game has a succinct plot and challenging elements that drive it along, the smaller gripes can be ignored.”

is going? This is where the above-mentioned gripes kick in. The average-at-best movement system makes navigation a chore, and with the amount of navigation required to solve each of the puzzles you feel the game taking its toll on you.

To make matters worse, you can't record anything in-game. If you find a pass code, or door combination, or instructions to solve a puzzle you have to write it down, and I ended up keeping a notebook and pen next to me as I played. Maybe this is what appeals to some people; maybe making notes as you play makes

you feel like a proper detective. If that's you, great, go buy *NoR* now. To me, it simply felt clunky. The guy has a camera in his inventory for Pete's sake; I was honestly expecting the ability to take pictures for reference which could be scrolled through at another point in the game. I can't see why Wax Lyrical Games didn't – it'd provide a method for keeping everything neatly on hand without the game giving you any clues or requiring a pen and paper, AND it wouldn't feel out of place in the slightest. But no. You use your camera once. ONCE, for a completely arbitrary puzzle. A wasted opportunity, guys.

Look, for all my hate, *Baron Wittard: Nemesis of Ragnarok* isn't by any means a train wreck that should be avoided like the bubonic plague. *NoR* has the potential to be a really great game. It has sturdy foundations but paper-thin walls. There were no bug issues that cropped up, the puzzles were hard enough to keep my large Imperial brain ticking over and the music was nicely fitting. The story could have benefited with a little extra work, and as I said above a system for capturing images would have alleviated a lot of fiddly note taking when it came to problem solving.

Would I recommend this game? It depends on if you believe indie developers deserve your money to create a new and better title by correcting their mistakes. A company's first game isn't always their magnum opus, and I think Lyrical has shown that they are capable of greatness; they just need to take criticism onboard and try again.

Baron Wittard: Nemesis of Ragnarok is available now from Iceberg Interactive and Wax Lyrical Games for PC. It is available in major retail stores, on digital download portals or through the Iceberg Webshop at iceberg-shop.com/baron-wittard.html.

You'll need a lot of *Gray Matter* to enjoy this one

Great story but nothing new, says **Sean Harbison**

Gray Matter starts off as any mystery game would: a creepy old mansion, half an hour's bus ride from Oxford, during the middle of a storm. Sam Everett is an American who practices magic and is searching for a secret magicians' club known as the Daedalus Club. Her motorbike breaks down in the rain and she happens to stop near the mansion. To blag a room for the night, she pretends to be the new assistant to the owner, Dr. David Styles, an expert in the field of 'unusual neurological abnormalities'. In the morning, Sam realises that she can make a bit of money by continuing her deception, and so starts performing tasks for Dr Styles. She must gather up several guinea pigs for his next experiment, so she goes to Oxford to find students (pretentious or otherwise) to take part. Of course, the good Doctor has a shady past, about which more is discovered throughout the storyline.

There is definitely a lot of intrigue in *Gray Matter*. The storyline is gripping and really makes the player want to keep playing in order to find out everything about the game world. Jane Jensen, the game's designer, has clearly done a lot of research. By exploring the game, players can find out so much and not all of it is necessary for the game. You can access libraries and file cabinets, giving you access to a vast plethora of information about either Oxford, magic or neuroscience – the scale really is impressive.

Music in the game works very well, adding much to the atmosphere and accentuating the feeling of mystery in a lot of the settings. Occasionally sound effects were far too loud, just to make it obvious something was there. For example in the tutorial, the sound of the rabbit chewing was unnaturally loud. It overpowered the music and any other sounds, and just felt unnecessary.

Graphics, however, vary hugely in *Gray Matter*. During gameplay there's a vast amount of effort put into even the smallest of details, and it really looks spectacular. The backgrounds are well thought-out, and the whole game has a really realistic look. However, during cut scenes the visuals really fall apart. The characters judder and any realism is gone – yet this is how the game opens, rather disappointingly. For a game that has been in production for eight years, I feel the cut scenes could really have been improved upon.

Gray Matter works like most other 'point-and-click' adventures. Players



Maybe if you got back to reading the article you'd know the graphics rock!

find points of interest around the room, clicking on them to get information and to go to different places. The more you click on, the more information you get. Sometimes you must use items in your inventory to progress and certain rooms remain inaccessible until you have completed certain tasks. Like the majority of these games, it can sometimes become a bit boring. This is even worse if you get stuck, as you often find yourself going to the same rooms and looking for the smallest detail that could help you.

"There is no hint system, which I feel is actually a good thing"

There is no hint system, which, despite the difficulty, I feel is actually a good thing for this style of game. Often these systems cheapen the game and make it far too easy, but this choice may put off players that are finding it hard to progress. There is, however, a chance to show every item in the room with which you can interact. This allows you to see what you can interact with but doesn't show how important certain things are, or tell you if items might need to be used on them, therefore keeping the difficulty at the same sort of level.

Gray Matter also brings a new idea to the table. As Sam is a magician you have

access to 'The Magician's Guide Book' – by choosing certain tricks from this tome you can progress through situations that might have otherwise been impossible. After selecting the right trick you must combine a series of 'moves', if you will, to pull off the trick successfully; for example, a slight of hand or slipping items up your sleeve. Every trick is explained in the book, but you have to choose the right items in order to complete the trick. This is a really fun way to solve some puzzles, as you can trick characters along the way in order to progress, giving a new side to the 'point-and-click' gameplay. Obviously there are some puzzles that are simply riddles, jigsaws or scavenger hunts, but these are to be expected in this style of game.

All in all, *Gray Matter* is enjoyable but can sometimes disappoint. It's come out at a time when this style of gameplay has really passed. Although it brings a few new ideas to the table, it is really just a standard 'point-and-click' game and feels a bit out of date. One thing that I will reiterate is the amount of detail that this game goes into with its background information. If you spend a lot of time going through every last piece, you'll really get a lot out of *Gray Matter*. However, if that isn't what you're looking for, it can really feel like it's dragging on. With eight years of production, I really feel this game should have done so much more.

Gray Matter is available now from WizarBox and Lace Mamba Global for PC and Xbox 360.

Not exactly cutting edge gaming

Whip out your scalpel and forceps in *Surgery Simulator*

Chris Bowers

Surgery Simulator literally consists of eight different operations. One of which is called 'Road Traffic Accident'... this is the sort of level we're operating on (pun intended). Oh, and I should warn you: "This product is a computer game and not for training or tuition purposes!!!" So you Medics that have picked up this title to enhance your surgical skills, think again.

I can't get over the brevity of this game. Eight operations – that's it. You can perform each operation in either a Campaign mode, which requires you to complete each operation in turn before progressing to the next, or Free Play mode, which lets you play any operation straight from the off. Additionally, there are three difficulty levels for the whole game and you can choose to have the game tell you everything to do, or nothing at all. That is the entire scope of this *Surgery Simulator* – it's the sort of level of depth I'd expect from a Flash game.

However, the operations themselves do have some merit. Although I have no surgical experience, the operations consist of a seemingly logical series of steps, and it's not difficult to imagine the real-life operations being reflected in these simulations. This, with the added "realism" of monitoring and correcting levels of anaesthesia, at least creates a feel of a semi-real operating theatre.

But you can't kill anyone! No matter how many times you try and cut at the innards of your unfortunate patient, all

you get is the word 'Error' projected at you, and no ramifications. I mean, come on, everyone has that little bit of sadist in them that wants to just be able to have their scalpel accidentally slip. The only way you can fail an operation is if you choose the wrong instrument use it on the patient too many times, or if their vitals get to dangerous levels.

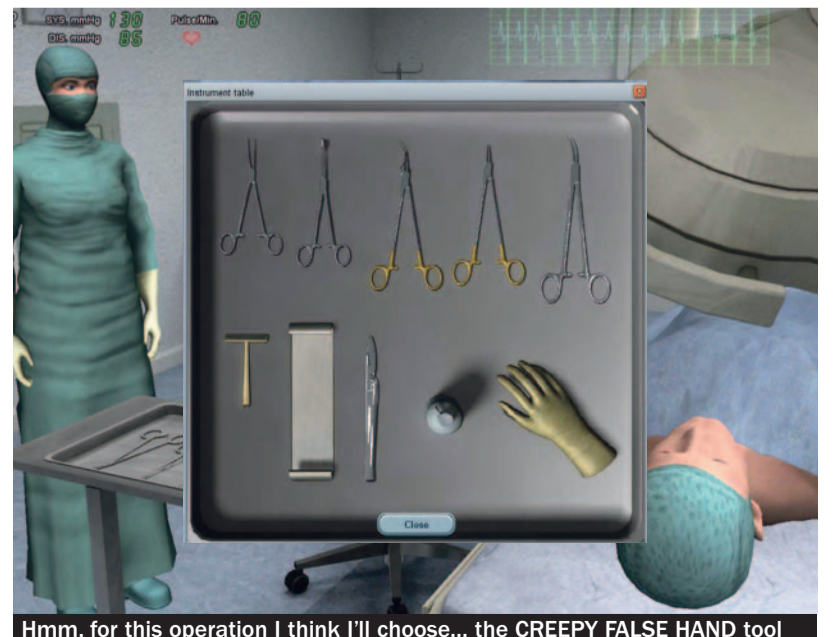
This isn't the only thing to jar you out of the simulated world. You are required to shave hairless areas, right over the wound that you are to be operating on.

"It's the sort of level of depth I'd expect from a Flash game"

Not only is the step apparently unnecessary, I imagine it would be dangerous and counter-productive. But hey, what do I know? Then you have to disinfect the area, which has no visible effect on the skin, making it very difficult to complete. For a simulator, these non-realistic effects really spoil the illusion.

In short, *Surgery Simulator* does one thing well – and that's the procedures themselves – but apart from that, it sucks. It has nowhere enough content to warrant its price tag and what there is feels too restricted and isn't at all gripping. One to avoid, in my opinion.

Available now from Rondomedia and Excalibur Publishing for PC.



Hmm, for this operation I think I'll choose... the CREEPY FALSE HAND tool

FOOD

Food Editor: **Dana Li**
Vicky Jeyaprakash

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Gastronomical Musings

Vicky says:



Easter smeester! Give me a pretzel any day

'Tis the season to be stuffed like a Lindt chocolate truffle: chocolate eggs, crème eggs, mini eggs... or any egg you can get your hands on that fulfills the criteria of: subpar chocolate egg shell, a mini surprise of the branded chocolate you could have bought without the subpar chocolate egg shell and a taste that makes you wish you hadn't eaten the subpar chocolate egg shell. Of course, all this wouldn't have to happen if you'd just paid attention to the Annual Felix Easter Egg review.

But what else is there to eat during Easter apart from chocolate? A plenty lot more, I tell you. Next time you're eating a warm hot cross bun, think of Eostre, the springtime goddess that you're inadvertently honouring by consuming the bun. Swap your normal Sunday roast to a roast lamb dinner on Easter Sunday, as it is thought that the angel of God will pass over your home and bring no harm. And if that sounds all too surreal, feast your eyes on the pretzel and try to imagine the torso of a person with their arms folded praying. I wonder who George Bush imagined as his pretzel when he famously choked on the snack. Osama Bin Ladan perhaps?

Oh no! The Wafflemeister vouchers have expired!



THE BIG MEAT FIGHT

Aki Matsushima compares the giants of the meat world

This year, it's all about meat in the London restaurant scene. Hot new arrivals include pop-up joint #Meateasy (New Cross) serving minced 28 day aged chuck steak

burgers, Philly cheesesteaks and other North American grill classics. Satisfying our pure, primitive desire to eat meat provides the comfort that lets us forget about the grim times we're in. Aside from the new

faces, capitalist London is full of legendary gastronomic rivals who strive to outdo each other in nothing other than preparing the most exquisite meat. So where's the beef?



THE BURGER Haché vs Byron

The cheeseburger, with a massive juicy grilled patty and oozing melted cheese, accompanied by crisp fries. Interestingly, this is the most popular last meal chosen by death row prisoners in America. Please don't tell me you still go to GBK to have this revered dish when there are at least two top notch burger joints charging similar prices nearby. The "Haché or Byron" debate has divided Londoners for a few years. If you're a vegetarian, you'd say Haché. Their falafel sweetcorn burger with beetroot is the only vegetarian dish that

I'd ever order and has the power to salvage any vegetarian-carnivore relationship. (At Byron the veggie option is an oversized mushroom wedged between buns.) However, Haché's crucial beef burgers are ironically spoilt by their signature ciabatta buns that don't really work. Nevertheless, they have very strong patty potential. Byron, despite their patchy service, makes incredible burgers that are perfectly medium-rare. They're even better than in Gordon Ramsey's Maze Grill.

Haché: 329-391 Fulham Road.
Byron: 75 Gloucester Road.

THE ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BRAZILIAN BBQ

Rodizio Rico vs Rodizio Preto

Are you looking for a meat orgy? Or is it meat asphyxiation? Head to one of these havens that'll leave you paralysed in pleasure. In the Rodizio, or Brazilian barbeque, waiters glide from table to table with hunks of meat on swords, stopping to carve a pile on your plate until you tell them to stop. It's about quality, quantity, and variety too. There's straight-off-the-barbeque beef ribs, lamb, gammon, chorizo, chicken hearts, baby beef and more, which will work you up into a frenzy. You name a cut of meat, they'll have it. If you somehow get bored of the pro-

tein monotony, there's a colossal buffet of Brazilian dishes such as fritters, feijoada stews, rice and salads too. Out of the two restaurants, Rodizio Rico has the edge with their wonderfully flavourful, smoky cuts of meat and cheerful service. At £23.50 a head, it might feel slightly pricey but you'll get your money's worth if you play it right, i.e., fill up on sirloin. There's a Rodizio Rico branch opening in Fulham Broadway soon. Definitely something to look forward to.

Rodizio Rico: 111 Westbourne Grove.

Rodizio Preto: 72 Wilton Rd

OUR LOCAL FAVOURITE

Best Mangal vs Bodean's

People travel miles on their bicycles and through zones on the tube for the best kebab in London at Best Mangal (West Kensington). How lucky we are to have the beautifully charred, boldly marinated Turkish barbecued meats piled high, just on our doorstep. The multitudes of Meze dishes are colourful and exotic both in appearance and flavour. It's a delight to mop up the juices with their homemade breads whether it's out of the takeaway box or off the plate in their cosy restaurant.

Bodean's American Diner with a branch in Fulham Broadway is another local that does barbeque, but in an oak-burn-

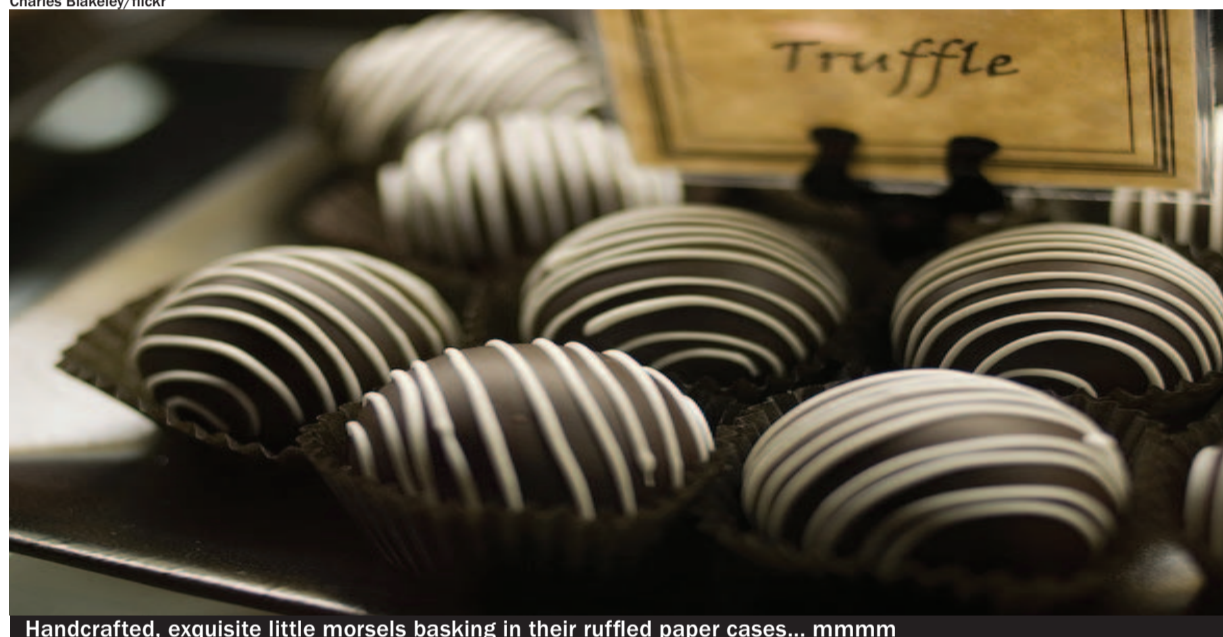
ing smoke-pit rather than over charcoal. Their slow-cooked goodies include ribs, chicken wings, pulled pork and beef brisket burnt ends. Be prepared for some unsophisticated hands-on meat-eating with sticky barbeque sauce everywhere. My recommendation is the shared platter for two, which lets you sample everything they have in the smoke-pit. The free "Q-card" membership card entitles you to some decent offers such as a complimentary dessert, like a big wedge of gooey American pecan tart, or schnapps.

Best Mangal: 104 North End Rd
Bodean's BBQ: Fulham Broadway

What's the fuss with truffles?

Sam Furse explores the wonders of chocolate

Charles Blakeley/flickr



Handcrafted, exquisite little morsels basking in their ruffled paper cases... mmmm

Truffles have always sounded slightly removed from anything I eat on a regular basis. Not because they were impossible to get hold of, just something I was unlikely to stumble across. And if, like me and Daniel Barenboim, you are more immediately interested in the impossible rather than the very difficult or the unlikely, perhaps they are not something you have yet considered much either. Ever the scientist though, my interest to learn more was primed from conflicting information I had heard about them. The truffle is a name applied to both chocolate and also that fungus that is grated or thinly sliced onto (savoury) starters and soups. Manifestly they were not the same and so I took my sweet tooth, grabbed the chocolate bull by the horns and set about trying to find out more.

Like most people I have had truffles in chocolate selection boxes, especially as those which include truffles start more or less a cut above the cheapest ones. I found these a disappointment I'd rather avoid now: poor-quality chocolate with a chalky texture and too many nuts. I do like the milk chocolate concoctions more than most of the others, but if it's too milky or greasy I can't say I would consider it for anything other than a source of fuel.

Next, rather than look up what it was or should be, by chance I came across some much better ones, namely the Pink Marc du Champagne truffles

"If it's too milky or greasy I can't say I would consider it for anything other than a source of fuel."

from Charbonnel et Walker. These are quite exquisite, if you can get past the frankly unnecessarily pink presentation. I think that they are sufficiently well put-together that one alone is just right. I should say how these are constructed. They use white chocolate, and so do not contain any pure cocoa, only cocoa butter in them. The filling is Marc du champagne which is an impossible-sounding thing really; Marc is a drink made from the fermentation of grape skins alone, after they have been removed from the wine, or in this case champagne, making process.

Typically, this is done to supplement income when a bad year drives down the yield of grapes. The same thing happens in Italy but there it is known as Grappa, and is perhaps more familiar than Marc, though both are very bitter. Pink Marc is perhaps unusual as it requires a mixture of both white and red grape skins to make it. Either way, the bitterness seems at odds with the white chocolate, but in this case it works well as it ensures the sweetness and deca-

dence of the butter are reined in and so the flavours balance well and are deeper. The trouble is that a box costs £10 in the Gloucester Road Waitrose and there are only about nine in each box. Personally, however, I consider it well worth it. Pralines are often mixed up with truffles, and quite frankly they're fairly similar. If your experience is like mine, they will also have been disappointing if not very similar to the cheaper truffles noted above.

They are supposedly a type of truffle which does contain nuts; made from either almonds or hazelnuts. Normal truffles are made with chocolate mixed with cream or butter and flavoured, typically with a spirit. This is similar to the ganache used to decorate pâtisseries in which chocolate is melted at body temperature before the cream and/or butter is mixed with it. I must say that mixing chocolate and cream and adding a flavouring sounds rather achievable. Time to experiment myself I think...

I'm not allergic to nuts or anything but I'm not a massive fan either. However, a recent present of chocolates and champagne showed me that truffles or pralines can be done well with nuts. And more to the point, milk chocolate. Truffles are an indulgence that I shall be thinking twice about now, whether it be buying them for myself or others. Like all things, especially luxury items, spending a bit more and going for the packet with the gold embossing ensures a very satisfactory experience for all.

Lunching in Knightsbridge: Daphne's

An escape from lunch at College

Charles Betts

Spring fever is fast approaching. And as Mark Twain puts it, "when you've got it, you want - oh, you don't quite know what it is you do want, but it just fairly makes your heart ache, you want it so!" Except, Mark, you know perfectly well what you want. You want to enjoy ice-cold beers in the park, a chat with that fruity bird you seemed to have missed when she was wearing more layers in the winter, and a healthy dose of copulation.

What you don't want is to be sitting in the library studying. Setting exams at the heart of spring has always been one of life's immense injustices, the greatest annual manifestation of academic schadenfreude there is. The stupidity of it all ranks up there with anyone that has woken up one day and thought "Wouldn't my life be more complete with an iPad?"

Indeed, science has never drummed up quite as effective a tranquilizing agent as a sunny spring day. Thought that maths module on Fourier transforms was dull in mid-December? Try focusing on it when everywhere there's suddenly more colour, more flesh, more daylight. You'd much rather be outside having fun, ogling and cavorting with that girl sitting opposite you in the quiet study area. Without any sort of respite, your revision focus will slowly dwindle.

Which brings me to lunch – the perfect excuse to grab a well-earned rest from a morning's hard studying and a stroll with your favourite Biologist. You won't be welcome in the SCR, where they now check swipe cards to prevent any UGs from tasting their attempts at food – as if exclusivity would somehow make the place more desirable. There are a few sandwich outlets on campus, but frankly they don't sufficiently appease the frustrated, overworked, ir-

ritable student. What will do the trick, however, is a sunny 15 minute walk to Daphne's restaurant.

I'm not going to claim it's the best restaurant in London. I haven't eaten at enough places, my range of London dining falling shamefully short of anyone else pretending to know something about food. But in my desperation at the state of the SCR, I have tried most of South Kensington's eateries. And none offers as enjoyable a lunch as Daphne's.

Sitting in the conservatory, surrounded by olive trees and relaxed daytime shoppers, the place is a world away from the library café with its baked beans and potatoes. Serving hearty Italian cuisine, the place feels very laid back, unpretentious, and the staff are friendly. Having lunch here really does lift the weight off your shoulders.

The set lunch menu is £17.50 for two courses (or £19.50 for three), and changes regularly. Don't let the price put you off. You're getting top food for Carluccio prices, which makes it damn good value. The dishes are rustic, regional, and utterly authentic. There's something for everyone, be it butternut squash soup, pork saltimbocca, veal ravioli or homemade pistachio ice-cream. Although the portions tend to be on the less-generous side.

I don't want to set you up for a disappointment. I wouldn't go there for dinner – the food doesn't warrant the à la carte prices and the atmosphere becomes a bit too stuffy, a bit too full of dimly self-important pithy bankers and the worst of the nouveau riche. But the place really is good, very good, at lunch. And you'll feel that little bit less devoured by your exams.

Daphne's Restaurant
112 Draycott Avenue
London SW3 3AE
020 7589 4257



Flowers and candlelight at lunchtime. Now that's luxury

Travel Editor: **Chris Richardson**

TRAVEL

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Tall tales and the runs

Recovering from food poisoning in the remote Chilean outback, **Priya Garg** retells some of the prominent anecdotes circulating South America's beloved gringo trail

Mendoza is a cosmopolitan city in the north of Argentina, crushed by an earthquake and rebuilt from the foundations, leading to expansive sunny reading parks with blue tiled fountains, cathedrals, large plazas and shopping malls. In the parks lie big wooden chests in which you can pick out copies of anything from *Teach Yourself Spanish* to *The Life History of the Bin Ladens* and settle on a bench, reading on a warm spring afternoon. On every street corner you will find a carved cathedral and a 'helado' shop, selling you ice-cream in any flavour from tiramisù, to lemon meringue pie, flan and 'Bari-loche' chocolate.

Taking a bicycle a couple of miles out of the centre, you discover over 1300 wineries around the Mendozian area, each growing the 'Malbec' grape as their speciality. Rows upon rows of green vineyards, covered netting, oak

“One backpacker ended up fighting over his digital camera with a seven year old drug dealer”

barrels and quaint French-style buildings, painted white with a terracotta roof tiling. Outside Argentinean farmers toil at the seed of the land. At our wine tasting we were surprised that the most aromatic and beautiful wine was white, as in England it was agreed that we would normally associate it with the taste of acrid petrol. Suddenly we could smell apricots, honey, and elderflower. It was easy to romanticise life at an organic winery, crushing grapes by hand, using the skins and seed, throwing the stems for compost, labelling your own bottles, exporting hand-picked goods.

Leaving Mendoza after just two days, we took a tourist bus through the spectacular Andes up across the border of Chile and in to Santiago. The driver dribbled the bus around the windy mountain path like an NBA basketball player, swirling past great sweeping snow covered landscapes. However, a bout of food poisoning meant that I was capable of vomiting both on the Argentinean and Chilean sides of the border and once in metaphorical no-man's land



If you look carefully in the distance, you can just about make out the last of Charlie Sheen's dignity...



No, no, no. First you waft the aroma! Philistines...



It's too late to start worrying about leaving the oven on now...

between the two countries, making our crossing an altogether less enjoyable experience. However, I was able to use my limited Spanish "banos, vomitar!" to locate the nearest bathroom, whilst my travel-buddy Becky tried "mes amigo is missing, ¿árrete le autobus!" – a fantastic panicked mixture of English, Spanish and French, to prevent the coach from travelling into Chile without me.

So whilst I have been struck down with

food poisoning, I am sitting in Becky's friend Daniela's beautiful house in Santiago, with the Andes mountain range directly behind, a veranda to write on, a swimming pool slightly cracked from a recent earthquake ahead and cloudless skies above. Here I thought I would fill you in on some of the more gripping tales we have heard from travellers in South America.

Although Argentinean and Brazilian

culture means they are warm, open, generous people, this openness also means that crime, whether petty or more sinister, is rife. On our journey the first warning came from a chef who had gone to an all night fiesta in Rio de Janeiro, ended up drinking beyond his companion's leaving time and woke in the morning beside a Brazilian girl in a favela. Discovering at the doctors that his drink had been spiked with Rohipnol, he was just

starting his course of anti-retrovirals for HIV prophylaxis as we left.

The second came from the stories of the 'favela tours' in the centre of Rio, where tourists can experience the murky underbelly of Brazil's poorer districts led by ex-gang members, with profits going back to regenerate the slums. Despite the safety of fellow non-local companions, taking photographs is strictly at your own risk. One Israeli backpacker got a little too snap-happy and ended up fighting over his digital camera with a seven year old drug dealer who thought the guy was going to sell his photograph to the police.

More sinister was the account on a long-haul bus where masked gunmen stopped travellers on a night bus between Rio de Janeiro and San Paulo with shot-guns, by peppering the windscreen with bullets. Boarding the bus they forced the driver to take it miles into the deserted sugar cane fields whereby all males on-board were led out and stripped naked before being locked in the luggage hold.

“South America is a crazy continent”

The gunmen then re-embarked to strip-search the female passengers and thrust the barrels of their guns in their faces until thousands of pesos and personal belongings were taken. Following the incident the frightened and upset group were finally taken to the local police station with the hope of nothing more than a report and a claims receipt.

Luckily we have felt safe until now, although not as safe as one Italian backpacker we met, who has been hitchhiking lifts from Argentinean truck drivers up and down the country based on his reasonably decent patter of Spanish. Despite the phrasebook's best intentions, the stream of dialect that follows a question is almost impossible to keep track of and their English is almost always better than our Spanish. Recalling an American girl who spouted off "no NINTENDO" rather than "no entiendo" (I do not understand) a lack of Spanish is a frustrating obstacle to throwing yourself fully into the local culture, although potentially allows you to avoid more dangerous areas by adhering very closely to the well-walked gringo trail.

South America, from what we have seen so far, is a crazy continent, one that has provided spectacular views, breathtaking experiences and extreme warning scares. As Sinatra said, "that's life".

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HANGMAN



hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Twitter



SexyOsama69

Sooooo.....



Barack_attack_I33thaxor

Hey



SUPERACEGORTHEROAR87

.....



Cameron_DA_Maneron!!!

sigh



The_Cleggomatortrontown <3

Why are you guys being weird?



The_Cleggomatortrontown <3

guys?



The_Cleggomatortrontown <3

have you seen the news?



Cameron_DA_Maneron!!!

NO! What's with the accusations? FFS



The_Cleggomatortrontown <3

Oh my god...you guys are just desperate to make a Japan joke, aren't you!



SUPERACEGORTHEROAR87

Seriously Cleggman, it's fucking killing us!

DRUNKEN MATE OF THE WEEK

Send your photos to felix@imperial.ac.uk. For triple-WIN, send them to the Daily Mail

The Hangman Census – You will be fined £1000 for ignoring this

1. Gender

- Male
- Female → Go to 7

2. Nationality

- Chinese
- British Born Chinese
- Nerd
- Other (e.g. white)

3. What grades did you get?

- 5+ GCSEs (any grade)
- 5+ GCSEs grades (A*-C)/1 A level
- 10 GCSEs (grades A* and A), 4 A levels (grades A* and A) but Oxbridge, the fucking bastards, didn't take me.

4. How often do you check that girl that you are secretly in love with's facebook profile?

- 5 times a day → Go to counselling
- 1 time a day
- 1 time a week
- Never → Go to 10

5. Do you enjoy science?

- Yes
- No
- I used to but Imperial has pummelled the enthusiasm out of me like it's Chris Brown.

6. This box is intentionally left blank. The reason is super secret, and beyond a pathetic being like you

7. Rate yourself out of 10?

- ≥ 8/10 → Go to my bed *wink
- 7/10 → Go to 8
- 6/10 → After I've had 4 pints go to 8
- below 6/10

8. Do you 'go down'?

- Yes → Go to 9
- No

9. Please write your mobile number in the space below

□□□□□□□□□□

10. You're only lying to yourself, twat

the turnip

Hangman's Finest College News Source



Union to serve Rhinoceros

In light of the unparalleled success the Union's offerings of exotic meats has had on getting students to actually eat the shit they serve there, FiveSixEight will have a 6oz Sumatran Rhinoceros burger as its guest burger next term, caught wild in the deepest forests of Borneo. Despite protests from vegetarians and other self-righteous douchebags, the decision to put the endangered – we mean – delicious species between two buns next to some curly fries was made last Friday, when it became clear that the College's populace had developed quite a taste for undomesticated animals following record sales of the Zebra Burger. Still, Imperial's large Chinese demographic welcomed the move, with one particular student stating that "it's not quite the ground rhino horn we were after, but it's a start".

It is also rumoured that this controversial menu item is merely a way of disposing of the rhino carcasses that were dumped outside the Rector's office as part of the protests against staff cuts in the biochemistry department without riling PETA. PETA has had a long history of conflict with Imperial's Union: last



The extremely rare and majestic Rhinosceros is endangered, and yummy. The one pictured will be available on Thursday

year one of their members defecated on one of the pool tables and proceeded to incriminate UCL by spraying their initials on the floor.

Rhinoceros meat is naturally low in cholesterol while being high in iron, zinc and other transition metals your body needs. Before you tuck into the latest fad be advised, however: it is also high in tasty yet heart-stopping saturat-

ed fats, so the government recommends that you limit your intake of rhinoceros meat to just three 6oz burgers per day, roughly equivalent to an entire animal every eight months.

Of course, with fewer than 300 animals remaining the burger won't stay on the menu forever, so get down to FiveSixEight and order one while you can!

THE NEWS WITHOUT THE NEWS

Gandalf & Co forced to take Mines of Moria with artillery



DRUNKEN MATE OF THE WEEK

I like to think that when he woke up, he didn't squirm and roll, causing the whole thing to fall down. No, it's far more enjoyable to think that he started screaming with pain: "Guys, I think I've broken a rib..."

Horoscopes

Aries

This week, you're on the beach watching some girls tan a few tens of metres away. You go to speak to them but just before you reach them, you trip up and end sprawled all over their oily bodies, shouting "oops I fell OVER." They stop buying it when you refuse to get off....

Gemini

This week, you're at the Union when you notice everyone looking at you. Aw yeah. you're getting attention tonight, right? Wrong. They're staring at you because you've experiencing a double prolapse and your rectum is consuming your body. But hey, at least you'll be remembered!

Leo

This week, you think you're Charlie Sheen. The real Sheen hears this and challenges you to a drug-off. You spend 33 days on a pussy-filled, cocaine smothered hellamashup before you die. The next day Charlie calls you a chump on live TV. The planet nods in agreement.

Libra

This week, you're not even sure if it's physically possible to be this tired. Duh! Of course it's "physically possible" you hyperbole-spouting newspaper cunt! How can you be typing these words if it's not "physically possible". Sheez who the fuck writes this bullshit anyway?

Sagittarius

This week, you were awfully disappointed by the Libra horoscope. You write a letter to your MP complaining about the lack of originality and vomit-inducing pus. Your MP replies by sending you a bucket of his own pus. You've got to love democracy.

Aquarius

This week, a meteor appears in the sky and ends civilization? Why didn't scientists spot it and tell everyone? Well they did spot it, they just figured that if most people died, they'd have a better chance of getting laid with the horribly scarred and brutalised survivors.

Taurus

This week, you've got your eyes close while walking along. You keep pushing yourself and before you know it, you've walked a whole 5 minutes without opening your eyes. Suddenly someone calls to you. They say, "GET OFF THE TREADMILL ASSHOLE."

Cancer

This week, you got five guys in your bedroom and there's splaff EVERYWHERE. I know, right? They lick it all off you and then they start getting off with each other, all over again. You wake up to find your boyfriend, half-asleep, fumbling around your knees. Real life is so shit.

Virgo

This week, you're going mad. You know this because the hybrid parrot-monkey that lives on your shoulder has turned blue. He only turns blue when you're going mad. If he goes to purple it'll be fine. If he eats your ear, you've won a year's supply of Mike Tyson branded Tangfastics...

Scorpio

This week, you're seriously considering leaning forward and saying to the guy in front of you in lectures (do it now), "I'm going to lick the back of your head, and there's NOTHING that you can do about it... baby." Either do it or die! Your choice, Imperial...

Capricorn

This week, you're feeling incredibly sad, and horny. Which can only mean one thing... yooooouuuuu're LONELY. Wait, that isn't funny... That's actually kind of sad. Man, why am I so horny? I guess that means I'm...? Ah, of course, I get it now. Damn...

Pisces

This week your boyfriend is a massive turnip. A proper, bonafide plonker. He's inconsiderate and doesn't respect you or your friends. He doesn't have time for you either. He spends half of his time bitching and the other two halves failing basic mathematics exams.

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Wilson whitewash inter-hall paintball

Scott Esnouf

Last Saturday was the epic inter-hall paintball games. We arrived at Mayhem Paintball in the morning. Bernard Sunley, Tizzard and Parsons Halls combined to form a compact team of only 11 people called The Blues, vastly outnumbered by the other 3 teams with each over 20 people. Wilson wore silver, a colour Wilsonites associated with victory. Pembridge were taped with 'fragile' - would they live up to their name? Beit had yellow and black striped tape: a warning to others - or themselves?

The first two matches were Wilson vs. Pembridge and Beit vs. The Blues. The Wilson / Pembridge match took place on a vast field with many obstacles including a log barricade, which turned out to be the crucial pivoting point during the game. The objective is to capture the flag. Wilson started uphill, having two large flanking groups lead by none other than George Georgio and Tom Alpe, veterans of the game. Pembridge had a strong flat line defense, which was holding Wilson down, until Scott Esnouf and Lee Sewell sneaked in through the barricade. Scott made home with the flag for their first victory. Another solid game from Wilson gave them a 2-0 win over Pembridge, who graciously in defeat praised Wilson's tactics and players. The Beit match was hotly contested despite the Blues being outnumbered 11 to 21. The Blues managed a draw for the first

Florian Rathgeber



match, but eventually lost the second match to Beit.

The next matches took place in the most popular arena: Urban. This close quarters combat requires lots of balls. First up Wilson vs. The Blues. Sadly, The Blue's determination, bravery and grit couldn't hold off the Wilsonites and they lost the two games. Next up was Pembridge vs. Beit, who took one game each, both with the strategy of taking,

holding and pushing from the critical barn. Wilson had 4 wins, Beit and Pembridge were tied for second, and The Blues with their limited numbers but skillful players had 1 draw and 3 losses.

For the final matches, Pembridge faced off against the Blues in the dense forest of Aeroplane Wood while Beit vs. Wilson took place in Bridge Wood. The Blues started strong against Pembridge, using their skill to pin down the greater

numbers of Pembridge and pick off those who dared run or peak from a barricade. This strong start gradually diminished as the Blues went low on ammo, giving Pembridge a chance to push towards the Aeroplane, where they were able to keep the Blues at bay to take the draw. For the next game, The Blue's ammo was at critical level and they gave it their best shot, but Pembridge were too much for them and they lost the second game, but

not without a fight. An exceptional last ditch effort by The Blues captain, who took 5 enemies before being shot.

The confident Wilson did not let their guard down against Beit. Eventually, Wilson grabbed their 5th win. With Wilson losing only 3 players in the game, Beit were in a very sour mood and threw rash insults at Wilson. Wilson kept quiet, knowing how they would take revenge for these accusations. The next game was a chance for Beit to stop Wilson taking home the Championship with a whitewash, but they failed to do so. A huge sprinting start by the entire Wilson team put them in forward positions. Skillful Wilson players shot down any Beit player who dared to peek from their barricades. Javier and Scott made a suicidal dash to the flag and would have been gunned down by the remaining two players of Beit, had it not been for Claire Lynn's superb cover fire. The Spanish steed that is Javier desired nothing but glory, hence he sprinted for the flag covered by Scott who made a crucial pick on the second last Beit player. Javier dived and slid feet first across a mud patch while gunning down the last Beit player, grabbing the flag and running home for the best ever score in inter-hall paintball. Beit were very sore second place losers. Pembridge graciously accepted a joint second place and the Blues took the last place. The day ended with a huge battle, Wilson and the Blues vs Beit and Pembridge - there were no survivors.

Gospel Choir sing for charity

Tobi Obisanya

Gospel music is a mixture of jazz and blues and has strong roots in the African-American communities of the southern states yet it is loved and performed by masses worldwide and is constantly under metamorphosis with new gospel composers incorporating a variety of new shades from neo-soul and indie to straight up UK funky. As amazing as this genre of music is, what is special about it is its ability to bring people of different backgrounds together. The gospel music sung by the IC Gospel Choir is much more than the dynamic music, the syncopated rhythms and the passionate performances - it is very close to the choirs' heart and our lives.

So after weeks of dedication, hard work and preparation, led by Music Director Kadisha West and accompanied by the freshly established and soulful Imperial College Gospel Choir Band (led by Leonard Aidoo Micah), the IC

Joanna Kefas



They remind me of the band at my mother's first wedding...

Gospel Choir executed on Saturday the 12th March, our second show of the year: 'The Reason Why We Sing'. Time seemed to stop in defiance of all the pressures this time of year brings, and every moment was complete with exuberant joy, contagious laughter and rhythmic clapping which filled the at-

The Rahab Project in Earls Court gives working girls a way out of the sex industry

mosphere as the students in the choir sang a mixture of songs from the heart. Some of these included 'God Great God' by gospel artist Kurt Carr; an enthusiastic song with intricate harmonies that had the whole audience on their feet as the line between the stage and the audience became invisible.

Other acts on the night included a contemporary dance piece performed by the MOCA group Gospel Glee Project and the talented and energetic Kings College Gospel Music Society's Choir with which the IC Gospel Choir sang the final song, Total Praise. All the proceeds from the concert were donated to the Rahab Project in Earls Court who reach out to the working girls of the area and try to provide a way out of the sex industry for them.

The choir has come a long way since I joined two years ago and what I love about it is the miracle that could be easily overlooked of strangers coming together and encouraging one another as a family. Proverbs 18:21 says that "the

tongue has the power of life & death" and for us, the life that the music we sing brings is relevant to every sphere of our lives. Singing gospel is actively practicing what it says in Psalms 150:6 "Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord!" and I have it on good word that even the mice in the vestiges of the Clore Lecture theatre were getting their groove on!

As the newly elected Music Director I look forward to meeting more amazing people and seeing the scope of the choir broaden. My vision is for the heart of the Gospel to be heard in our singing & that many more within the IC community will hear, experience and take part in the joy of singing gospel music.

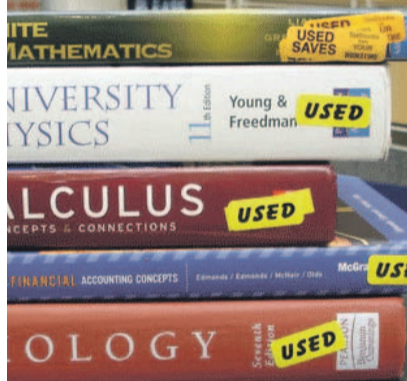
As Imperial turns to exam season and the pressure mounts, the words of a song called 'My Help' we sang seem appropriate; they simply say "All of my help comes from the Lord!" I hope it encourages you! That glimmer of hope that comes from above is without a doubt, The Reason Why We Sing.

CLASSIFIEDS

To place a free advert, please email felix@imperial.ac.uk

Felix accepts no responsibility for items/services bought/sold

Deadline for adverts is Tuesday midnight



ROOMS

Flatmate wanted

Flatmate needed to share two-bed flat in West Kensington with male undergrad.

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MISC

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Will pick up and drop off at college.

email: mph.icdriving@gmail.com
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by Phil Hanna: £18

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by Jeff Prosise: £18

Programming Windows with MFC

by Jeff Prosise: £18

High Performance Computer Architecture

by Harold S. Stone: £ 10

Object Oriented Software Engineering

by Bernd Bruegge and Allen H Dutoit: £ 10

For all above, contact Navin at: n.cota@imperial.ac.uk

LOVE

Send us your adverts. It's a great way to reach a large number of readers and hopefully find what you're looking for. For now, enjoy these (fictional) lonely hearts entries.

Women Seeking Men

Frontarmy.co.uk model looking for gullible Imperial nerd to fool into thinking that I would date him. If interested send £1,000 to the Muscovian Bank of Nigeria.

Women seeking Women

Lonely lady, with banging booty, looking for alliterative action with whiny West Kensington wench. If interested, indicate your intentions by showing your saucy self at my wild and whacky house party next week.

EVENTS

Imperial Skate Jam
Sunday 20th 2pm onwards, meet outside the Business School

Skateboard / longboard / inline +anything else
For tricks, slides, slalom +hints &tips

Equipment available including pads

Beginners welcome

We'll find some skate spots, then post session cool-down pints

Post online!

You can also place free adverts online! Simply head to iconnectimperial.ac.uk, create an account and post on their online marketplace!

iConnect

SPORT

Water Polo: Close fought battle see Imperial edge ahead at the end to beat Medicals

Thomas Trimmell

Varsity Water Polo

Imperial 9 - 8 Medicals

Right from the outset the Imperial College team looked to dominate the game with goals coming from the BUCS women's Waterpolo finalists. Two goals by Sarah Bennett within the first 3 minutes and a third from Lisa Goers lead to a cracking first quarter score: 3-1 to IC.

The second quarter saw further excitement as the Medics tried to close the gap which the girls had made at the start. Ian Welch-Phillips opened the scoring for the IC team and then followed it up with a second, this time from a penalty. However, the medics were clawing at the feet of the IC team and had narrowed the gap to 5-4 by the half way point.

With tension high and still all to play for both teams went into the third quarter with something to prove. Once again the IC team were first to open the scoring

with a great goal from Stefano Longo. But, with two late goals from the Medics, the fourth (and final) quarter started as a tie; with neither team willing to budge.

An early goal from the Medics put them into the lead for the first time in the game. Excellent play by the IC team, however, counteracted this travesty only 15 seconds later with another goal from Stefano. And IC then went back ahead after a terrific goal from Daryl Khoo.

The Medics, not wanting to take another beating, fought back to once again equal the scores, leading to the most nail biting final 3 minutes of the game. Even when IC inevitably went ahead due to another brilliant goal by Ian W-P, the game went on till the very last second; the Medics eventually beaten by the clock whilst in a last ditch attempt to salvage their dignity.

IC reins victorious again, but with the Medics drawing ever closer, next year's Varsity match will be one not to miss.

Hockey: Medics put up good fight, but Imperial ladies remain victorious

Carina Carter

Varsity Women's Hockey

Imperial 1st 2 - 1 Medicals 1st

Following Imperial's early morning successes courtesy of the Mens 3s and the Ladies 2s it was time for the Ladies 1s to take to the pitch to continue ICs unbeaten run.

As with all Varsity matches there was pressure from the start from both teams in front of a growing crowd including the medic's chicken. The IC ladies were on top form from the start quickly putting pressure on the medics and packing out the d with a series of shots on goal. Unfortunately the medic keeper kept getting in the way but finally, thanks to a lovely chip around the keeper by Teddy, IC took the lead.

After half time the medics came out strong and some lovely hockey was played by both sides. IC midfielders and forwards kept driving forward into the d and it wasn't long before the ball was in the back of the goal courtesy of a shot by Teddy that went just past the keepers left leg. The medics responded with several breaks but were unable to convert their runs into goals. Their chance came from a short corner, and they scored bringing the score to 2-1. IC continued to push for another goal, but unfortunately 10 minutes before the end of play Dobby had to be taken off with a knee injury. Thankfully Kathryn from the Ladies 2s had remained in kit so stepped in keeping Imperial with 11 players on the pitch. The match finished 2-1, continuing ICs Varsity hockey success.

Surfers enjoy the hospitality of Belushi's whilst away in Newquay

Lizzy Griffiths

Elliot Taylor

Imperial SurfSoc invaded Newquay for the second time this year. Armed with boards, wetsuits and Mexican themed fancy dress, we hit the road with the intention of having a calm, relaxed weekend away from the stress of city living. Didn't happen, it was mental. After a minor detour due to a loo stop (Sarah really needed a poo) and poor navigation ("should we turn left?" - "There's not another one for miles" - "So turn left then?" - "My name's Thom"), we finally made it to Newquay. We headed straight for the bar to make the most of our 10% Belushis discount before it closed, so everyone got pretty battered. A few pints too many later and it was time for a romantic night-time stroll on Towan Beach (there are unconfirmed rumours Harkin may have slipped Harvey a digit). As everyone knows, the sensible thing to do when it's pitch black and you're drunk is to get naked and wonder into the Atlantic Ocean. Surprisingly (to us at the time), not so much looking

back on it, the police rocked up. Unfortunately they declined our invitation to join in. Q: How do medics reproduce? From what I saw that night it can't be the same way as the rest of us...

The next day, after complementary breakfast in Belushis (WIN), it was time to get kitted up and into the water. The less confident of us opted for lessons, which proved a wise choice as the waves were huge and the instructor was pretty fit (3/10, but I take what I can get/what can't get away). The water was surprisingly warm (and this is coming from someone who usually gets out the water shivering with blue hands) so we were only lured out by burgers and hot chocolate. While most of us destroyed a well-earned lunch, Harkin was sadly disappointed due to his burger being accompanied by the excrement of a passing seagull (Harvey's revenge for the unconfirmed 'fun' the previous night). A committed few returned to the swell after lunch, while the rest of us enjoyed a nap (yes, we're that hardcore) in preparation for the evening.

The evening started with pre-drinks in Belushis, then bowling at an alley that

appeared to be connected to a swingers hotel. Then back to the bar for the traditional SurfSoc Ring of Fire (like normal ring of fire but crueller), and Fines. We turned Mexican (F-off Clarkson) with lucky-dip moustaches drawn in permanent marker. Error. The night continued with various antics, including the Irish contingency chatting up some 50 year old local talent, Hardcore Harvey's usual lairy dance moves, and a failed 'after-party' involving unsuccessfully dragging Karvelas and Utley from their beds. By 'after-party' I mean rape.

The effects of the previous night did not lessen Sunday's surfing potential, with everyone keen to make the most of the last session before leaving Newquay. We spent a chilled morning nursing hangovers and ripping barrels; the more experienced conquered the 10ft swell while the rest of us stuck to the shallows. After hot showers and finally being able to eat something that stayed down, we reluctantly loaded the minibus and headed back to London. In summary: It was awesome. You missed out. Sort your life out and get involved!



They seem unfazed by the gringo who has infiltrated their ranks. Look at her, smiling... What's she up to?

SPORT

Hockey: Imperial come back from behind twice, to keep their record intact

Keshava Murthy
Varsity Men's Hockey
 Imperial 5 - 4 Medicals

After watching Imperial register two wins and a draw against the Medics, there was a lot of pressure on the Men's 1st team. Imperial played to their full potential and ran out 5-4 winners.

Imperial started in the best possible manner, winning an early short corner. Sam injected and Jaideep Desai set himself up for a huge hit that resembled a golf swing more than a hockey shot. This hit popped up in the air, and JD reacted first to the loose ball, playing in captain Ewan Quince for him to put Imperial 1-0 up.

Imperial continued their dominance and good midfield work from veteran Nick Jones led to Ewan setting up Koch for a golden chance, which sadly went straight at the keeper. The Medics soon won a short corner, which would have gone in, but for Matty J's interception. Sadly, from the resulting short corner, the Medics converted to enter the half time at 1-1.

At this stage, it was anyone's game, and an inspirational team talk from Ewan was necessary. Imperial took this to heart and early in the second half, Jones, the Finesmaster for the team, broke with outrageous pace to set up a chance that Koch put just wide.

Imperial kept knocking at the door. Another piece of beautiful play from Jones saw a cross go agonisingly past JD's stick. All this good work was undone in one swift move as a Medic counter attack saw them win another short. Despite the best efforts of Lars, a

great routine saw the Medics bury a shot into the bottom corner, just past Vish's dive.

Imperial's response was almost instant. Great work from Gilles on the right saw Imperial win a short corner. Tom Koch's excellent drag flick pulled Imperial level. The Medics response was swift and deadly, with College caught napping, The Medics were ahead again. A great response from Imperial almost followed, with Ewan rattling the crossbar. This was followed up by Ewan hitting the side of the goal from a Nick Prior through ball. Imperial did not have to wait long and a hit from Gilles saw captain-elect Sam put the equaliser past the keeper.

Straight from the push off, Imperial pushed and JD converted a Jones cross

to put College 4-3 up. The message was clear, be certain and composed, clearly no one told Sam who got himself a yellow and a ten minute sin-bin. Despite the Medics advantage, Imperial managed to go 5-3 up. Ewan with his back to the goal swiveled and roofed his shot into the top right. It was no less than IC deserved.

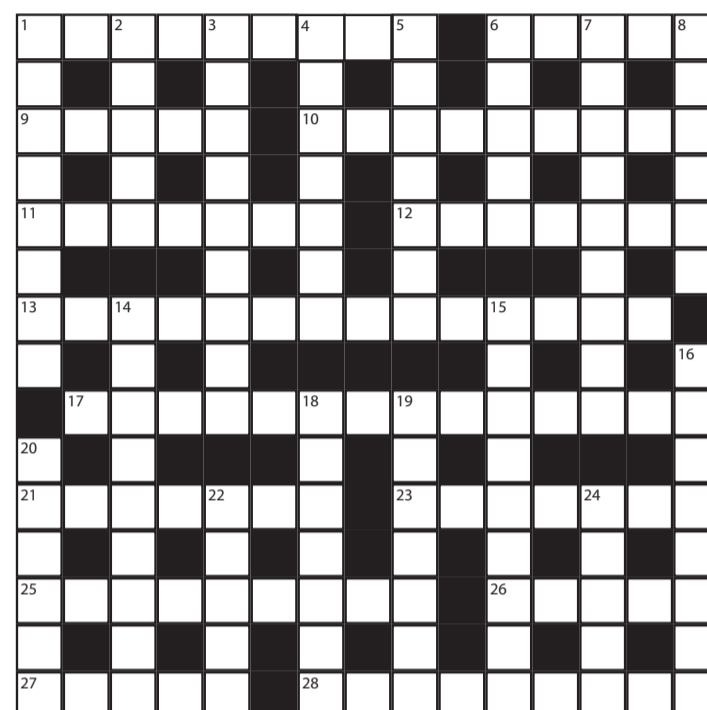
The Medics were not done and a drive down the right hand side saw the Medics score from the top of the D. No sooner did IC relinquish their one man disadvantage, did Tom Koch get himself sent off. The Medics won a short to push for an equaliser, but stern defending from Lars and Matty J. saw IC see it, and the game, out. A 5-4 win, a pulsating match and proof that, in hockey, Imperial are better than the Medics.

Christopher Walmsley



Come on! Get up you mummy's boy!

Cryptic Crossword 1,486



Across

- 1 Include English computer license (9)
- 6 Prophet, or egghead who lets moss grow around him? (5)
- 9 Also known as Kamal, I assume? (5)
- 10 Take a guess on sending some filthy money back, in this trend (9)
- 11 Ninety-nine swimming birds flying backwards over the floe (7)
- 12 Dynasty gentlemen go off-topic (7)
- 13 S.U.I.t. (5, 4, 4)
- 17 "The harness clicked strangely", wrote the author (7, 7)
- 21 Cleaning product made from fake excrement (7)
- 23 Smudge the French with a small spot on the skin (7)
- 25 Circle about what sounds like Cockney horse talk (9)
- 26 Ending of off-key chorus indicates Latin below (5)
- 27 Play badly with the beginning of severe muscular paralysis (5)
- 28 Powerful ruler puts an author around a tent the wrong way around (9)

Down

- 1 To become extremely thin and wasted, he came back before I ate (3)
- 2 Lawlessness in historically disputed Russian territory (5)
- 3 One of three mutes reek curiously (9)
- 4 Priest is no part of twisted savageries caused by spear (4)
- 5 Doubter infected, catching cold (7)
- 6 Grieve for you in the morning (5)
- 7 The fabric of the cosmos; an energy pastime ruined (5-4)
- 8 Awkward hustle of a detective (6)
- 14 Run-through in which Pierre hears all (9)
- 15 Erections explode into production of bodily fluids (9)
- 16 Strange antes in use in Congress (2, 6)
- 18 Alien about to leave causes cut in self-aggrandizement (3, 4)
- 19 Sweet gets worried without a cause (7)
- 20 Finished up around unsettled bills (4, 2)
- 22 The end of the internet telephony is a hoax! (5)
- 24 Metamorphosis created by Brazilian footballer with French heart (5)

Photos from Varsity

Christopher Walmsley



Imperial's Tommy Bowe makes a flying tackle during the 2nd XV match at Harlington

Christopher Walmsley



The teams line up before the ninth annual Varsity match

Girls water polo make it through to BUCS Final

Alexandra Charleson
 Water Polo

IC Women's 9 - 5 UWIC
 IC Women's 8 - 3 Warwick
 IC Women's 13 - 4 Exeter

On Sunday the IC girls' water polo team deservedly qualified for the BUCS trophy final after playing incredibly well throughout the season. They played a gruelling three consecutive matches and impressed in all of them. Initially the girls were down a couple of goals in their first match, and their second, but their determination and team-work brought them back to win their matches 9-5 against UWIC, 8-3 against Warwick and 13-4 against Exeter. By the end of the day it was clear that IC girls were a formidable force!

By winning their matches on Sunday the girls' team have won the southern second division trophy league and so in the final will go up against the winners of the northern division.

On Sunday the top goal scorer was captain; Sarah Bennett. However, the season's top goal scorer has been tightly contested between Sarah, Vera Gielen and Hannah Collins, leaving the final as a decider as to who claims the title. Special mention has to go to our goalie on Sunday, Anna Joy Drury, who played despite being very ill. She made some amazing saves and appeared to be completely on the ball despite her illness.

The only thing she failed to realise was they had actually won the first two matches, rather than lost them, like she thought!

The team consists of girls from all disciplines, from Chemists to Medics, and they all came together as an incredible team to achieve their well-deserved success.

Since the girls won their group, South East England, they now will move up to the 1st division to compete against teams like Oxford and Cambridge in the championship. In the first round the girls had an incredible goal difference of over 60 points. Throughout the season they have not lost a single match and are beginning to appear invincible. Let's hope that this continues right through to the final and on to next year.

The girls could have not performed as well as they did if it hadn't been for their fantastic coach, Adam Walzer. Who encouraged and supported the girls even through the hardest and most stressful matches.

At the end of this year unfortunately both Vera Gielen and Sarah Benett will be leaving, after 5 and 3 years respectively, of being part of the water polo team. They will be greatly missed and next year the team hopes to continue the great successes that they have brought to the club. Congratulations also go to the IC mixed water polo team who won the ULU league after a nail-biting final game against UCL.

Christopher Walmsley

Nine in a row for Medicals

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