

## Win festival tickets!

Felix Music previews **Bloc.2012: Page 21**



## Imperial falls in student experience survey

### Workload woes for College students while Dundee leads latest list

**Sophia David**

Imperial has dropped nine places from last year in the *Times Higher Education (THE)* Student Experience Survey to take joint 71st place with Canterbury Christ Church University. The University of Dundee topped the survey with a score of 85% while Imperial scored 73.4%, slightly lower than the average of 75.1%.

Imperial scored in the lowest quartile of universities in the categories 'helpful/interested staff', 'good social life', 'good community atmosphere', 'personal requirements catered for', 'good personal relationships with teaching staff', and 'tuition in small groups'. The College also obtained the lowest score out of all universities for 'fair workload' and a lower than average score in the category 'I would recommend my university to a friend.'

However, Imperial scored highly in the categories 'good sports facilities',

'good library and opening hours', 'good industry connections' and 'high quality facilities'.

The survey gathered the views of over 13,000 undergraduates from 105 UK universities who were recruited through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Students were asked to rate 21 aspects of university life on a seven-point scale. Each aspect was then assigned a weighting by examining the factors most closely correlated with good scores in the category 'I would recommend my university to a friend.' The average number of respondents from each university was just 132.

Scott Heath, ICU President, said, "What we have to remember is that lots of surveys are based on people's perceptions, expectations and opinions. These are always difficult to turn into comparable data sets."

He added that, "The union has been ...Continued on Page 3

## New Postgraduate Sabbatical position considered: Page 8



## DOUBLE VISION

Rector's role to be split into two positions as Imperial announces Provost for 2013: **Page 4**

## ARTS



Studying the Turner Prize nominations  
**Page 18**

## FILM



A Joss Whedon big screen double bill  
**Page 24**

## GAMES



A return to Oddworld and its inhabitants  
**Page 28**

# HIGHLIGHTS

## What's on

### Location location location

A lecture by Professor Xin Lu on restoring P53's tumor suppressive function in human melanoma cells. Open to all.

**Anthony de Rothschild Lecture**  
Theatre, 2nd Floor, SAF  
St Marys Campus  
08 May 17:00-18:00

### Energy carriers from biomass

As part of the Chemical Engineering Distinguished Seminar Series, Professor Johannes A. Lercher, currently Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Catalysis, speaks at Imperial. Open to all. Contact [s.everall@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:s.everall@imperial.ac.uk) for further information.



**Lecture Theatre 1, Department of Chemical Engineering, ACE Extension,**  
South Kensington Campus,  
09 May 16:00-17:00

### Imperial Festival

This brand new annual celebration aims to showcase the accomplishments of staff and students at Imperial. Open to all. Contact [h.martin@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:h.martin@imperial.ac.uk) for further information.

**South Kensington Campus,**  
11-12 May 16:30-22:00

## Business School BEST Programme 2012-2013

### Registration for Business for Engineering, Science and Technology (BEST) courses for 2012/13

Registration for BEST courses will open at **9am** on the following dates:

**Thursday 17th May - Autumn** (Entrepreneurship, Managerial Economics, Innovation Management)  
**Monday 21st May - Spring** (Finance and Financial Management, Project Management)

Similar to last year, you will be able to enrol via the Departmental Student System (DSS), please visit [www.imperial.ac.uk/dss](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/dss).

These courses are only available for students who wish to gain academic credits. **Places on all courses are limited and will be allocated on a strictly first-come first-served basis.**

For more information and course outlines please visit <http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/business-school/programmes/undergraduate>

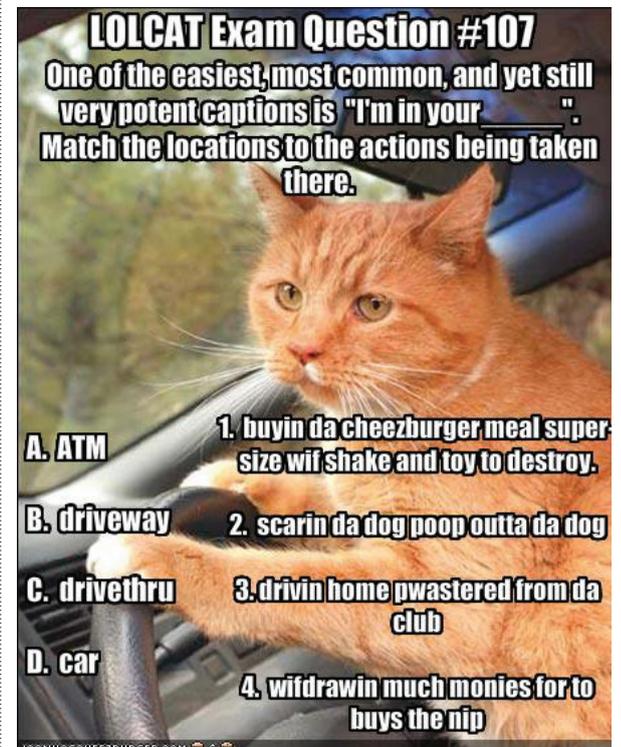
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## Lolcat of teh week



# FELIX

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NEWS

# Library highs and workload lows

St George's highest performer across London universities



St George's, University of London

...Continued from Front Page working with the College to help improve the community feel. This will be realised in investments in common rooms, the changes to the Holland Club and a greater Union focus on activities like buddying.

**"I think Imperial has scored highly in most places that we'd expect"**

"Workload has also been a personal campaign point. I felt during my degree that I was doing work for the sake of doing work, that I was over-assessed and often asked to do something that didn't test or practice a new skill. We have been encouraging departments to use a flow-chart which originated in Engineering to 'test' whether assessments are necessary and see whether you can get people to develop their skills with less time-consuming activities."

Richard Bennett, an ISE student, said, "I think Imperial has scored highly in

most places that we'd expect such as industry connections and facilities which, in my humble opinion, are some of the most important factors for academic success. However, the one point that worries me is the low score in the category 'I would recommend my university to a friend', which shows most of all that Imperial students are possibly not enjoying their university experience."

Third year biologist, Joe Herbert, commented that, "Imperial can never achieve the same standard of social life as universities which demand less work but people come to Imperial knowing they will have to work hard for a worthwhile degree."

He added that, "If you want to spend your whole time with your head in a book, that's your choice. Social life is what you make of it."

London universities generally scored poorly with the highest ranking institution in the city being St George's of the University of London at 27th position. UCL took 49th position, King's College took 55th while LSE was behind Imperial at 85th position.

Oxford and Cambridge took fourth and fifth positions, respectively. Oxford was found to have the best quality staff and lectures, and both obtained very

high scores in the category "I would recommend my university to a friend." However, similarly to Imperial, both scored low on "fair work load".

The *THE* editor, John Gill, said, "While universities must never put the student experience before academic

**"If you want to spend your whole time with your head in a book, that's your choice"**

concerns, its value to undergraduates cannot be underestimated. We hope this year's survey will help universities to raise their game, learn from the best and meet the challenges of higher expectations and greater "consumer" demand."

Imperial was placed 8th in the *THE* World University Rankings for 2011-12 and 10th in *The Guardian* University league table.

With thanks to **Matt Allinson** and **Philip Kent** for additional data analysis.

Sponsored Editorial

## More student cuts

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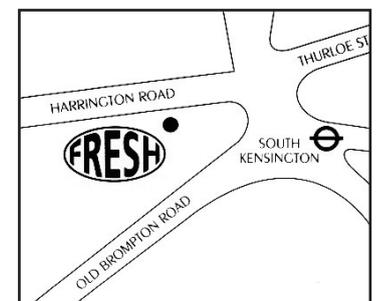
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News Editors: **Sophia David**  
**Alex Nowbar**

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# NEWS

## Students compete for global health project prize



Rector Sir Keith O'Nions spoke at the launch of the Institute of Global Health Innovation

### Sophia David

At the end of last term, the Institute of Global Health Innovation (IGHI) held the final of a new competition in which five students presented a global health project with which they were involved, competing for a prize of £2000 to put towards their project.

The students had ten minutes each to impress three judges, former Chief Medical Officer and Chair in Health Policy at the IGHI, Sir Liam Donaldson, a BBC health correspondent, Jane Dreaper, and founder and president of the charity, PiggyBankKids, Sarah Brown.

The competition was open to students studying for a BSc, MSc, MEng, MBA, MPH or MRes with final year projects being the basis for their entries.

### “The incidence of CCA is increasing worldwide”

The winner was John Chetwood, a fifth year medical student, who undertook work on cholangiocarcinoma (CCA), or bile duct cancer, in Thailand for his BSc in Gastroenterology and

Hepatology.

The incidence of CCA is increasing worldwide and is particularly prevalent in areas of South East Asia. A major risk factor for the disease is infection with a parasitic liver fluke, *Opisthorchis viverrini*. The cancer is invariably fatal.

John spoke about how this cancer is often detected too late due to a lack of accurate diagnostic biomarkers. His project, which he worked on for three months, aimed to explore whether metabolic differences between urine samples of healthy controls and cancer patients could provide the basis for a novel detection method.

Indeed, he found that healthy controls and cancer patients had distinct urinary metabolic profiles with significant differences between levels of citrate, hippurate and glycine.

John said, “I’m extremely pleased to win the first Institute of Global Health Innovation student challenges competition, particularly as I had to rush back from playing hockey at Varsity to compete for the prize. It was very exciting to present my project to such high-profile judges, and such an award validates the emerging role global health is playing in international research.”

He plans to use the £2000 to further validate the findings in a larger study. Another goal is to create a urine dip-

stick which can detect the presence of the cancer early and accurately. He said, “Such a cheap and easy method has the potential to save many lives.”

Also highly commended was another medical student, Yu-Jeat Chong, for his project which used satellite technology to monitor salinity in drinking water.

**“Such a cheap and easy method has the potential to save many lives”**

The Institute hopes the competition will become an annual event and entries can already be submitted for next year.

The final was followed by the IGHI’s annual lecture given by Sir Liam Donaldson on “Polio: The challenge of making it history”. Sir Liam is currently the Chair of the International Monitoring Board (IMB) on polio eradication.

Since the goal of polio eradication was declared by the WHO in 1988, the number of cases has been reduced by 99%. However, the remaining 1% remains elusive and there is concern that polio will not be eradicated before funding dries up.

## President and Provost roles introduced



Imperial follows in the footsteps of universities such as Harvard

### Alex Nowbar

Imperial College is to have a Provost. Where once there was a Rector there will be two positions, a “President & Rector” and a “Provost of the College”. What is a Provost, one wonders. By definition, a provost is the head of a college. What, then, is a rector?

Following a decision by Imperial’s Council, the governing body of the College, Imperial’s leadership arrangements are set to change. The distinction between the two new roles is clear; the President & Rector will oversee all functions with particular emphasis on external matters both in the UK and overseas including alumni and industry while the Provost will focus more on academic affairs. The Provost will report to the President & Rector. Chair of Imperial’s Council Baroness Manningham-Buller believes the change will “allow Imperial to maintain its position as one of the world’s top universities” in the face of “tough challenges” to higher education.

The challenges Baroness Manningham-Buller refers to are reduced state funding for UK universities and competition between universities for the best students and staff. Splitting the role of Rector enables the President & Rector to focus on building relationships with alumni, governments, industry and supporter, promote Imperial and raise funds, and the Provost on Imperial’s fundamental academic mission - educa-

tion, research and translation.

On Monday 30 April 2012, Sir Keith O’Nions assumed the position of President & Rector while a search for the first Provost was launched. However, Sir Keith is due to retire at the end of 2013. Therefore, in addition to the current search for Provost, a search for a President & Rector to succeed Sir Keith will commence at the end of May 2012. Thus the new leadership arrangement will not be fully in place until the end of 2013.

**“The new leadership model is not as alien as it might sound”**

The new leadership model is not as alien as it might sound. Indeed, it is well-established in many American universities including Harvard, Princeton and Stanford universities to name but a few. Sir Keith said of his new role, “The President & Rector, as the College’s leader, will promote Imperial’s position as a global university, moving it into a different league in terms of development potential, and influence of higher education and research policy. The Provost will ensure the standard and quality of the academic programme is maintained and enhanced.”

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# NEWS

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**Alex Nowbar**

[news.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:news.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

## Croquet Club dormancy debated

### Clubs and Societies Board decision leads to question of legitimacy

**Alex Nowbar**

A Clubs and Societies Board (CSB) meeting on 27 February 2012 resulted in a decision to close the dormant Croquet Club along with 6 other clubs. According to Deputy President of Clubs and Societies (DPCS) Monya Zard's "Clubs to Close" paper, the decision was on the grounds that the club had less than 20 members (3 members in fact) and had not completed the relevant documentation or training.

The Croquet Club had been made dormant on 8 December 2011 following a RCC (Recreational Clubs Committee) dormancy review, as typically happens to the club each year. The club's members argue that croquet is ostensibly a summer sport. Furthermore the club leads open training every summer run by active Life members such as ex-DPFS Christian Carter.

Croquet Club treasurer, Eugene Chang, claims he was not informed of the potential closure prior to the meeting. Moreover Chang is adamant that the

closure is "illegitimate" thus seeking to appeal the decision preferably through Court rather than the CSB. Both Chang and the club's chair, Joseph Rumer, who tendered his resignation on 29 February 2012, denied being warned of the threat of closure and claimed the closure "ultra-vires" based on a Clubs and Societies Policy available online.

It would appear there are two key re-futing claims.

Firstly DPCS Zard did email the club's chair, Rumer, on 31 January 2011 clearly voicing her concerns about the club and asking him to contact her or the RCC Chair "to discuss how to reach the targets you've been set, or how to adjust the targets so that they are achievable. Please treat this as urgent." Zard went on in no uncertain terms, "taking no action will mean that your club will suffer during budgeting, and could ultimately lead... to the club being closed down". It's not clear whether this message hit home and RCC Chair Dominic Andradi-Brown can confirm that no monthly dormancy reports were being filed as required by Clubs

and Societies Policy. Remarkably, RCC Chair Andradi-Brown seems to accept some of the blame; "I must say that I did not remind them at the point they were made dormant that they should be doing [the monthly reports] so some of the fault for not doing them is probably on me." Andradi-Brown discussed the club informally with Rumer in early February receiving the following impression "He did not attempt to defend the continuing

**"Chang is 'interested in submitting an appeal'"**

existence of the club that he was Chair of or offer any suggestion that he would be getting the club going in the summer."

Put together, all the signs indicated non-compliance with rules and no sign of life; Croquet Club was no longer a functioning club and now warranted not just dormancy but closure. If Croquet Club's

committee members were set on reactivating the club in the summer as they have done in some recent years, it begs the question as to why they did not comply with CSB's policy and why Rumer did not respond to the concerns when they were voiced. Phrases such as "dysfunctional committee" have been used in reference to the dispute.

Apparently documentation and training was lacking from Croquet Club Secretary Scott Heath. Constitutionally Scott Heath is not required to do so and the online Activities System which flags up outstanding forms did not pick this up. However there is no excuse for the incomplete Financial Responsibility form. It is also apparent that no one took responsibility to maintain the club. Other summer clubs manage to comply fully with CSB's requirements, e.g. Cricket Club. In fact the Activities System show a spate of incomplete tasks across clubs and societies but it is not until a club fails to meet its minimum membership that the CSB takes action.

Secondly, as to CSB's power to close

clubs, the current version of the Clubs and Societies Policy available online indicates that the CSB have appropriately followed club suspension procedure. Chang's "ultra-vires" claim was based on an outdated version of the Clubs and Societies Policy. There may be areas for improvement in the CSB's handling of communications on the matter but Zard gave the club reasonable opportunity to remedy the situation earlier on.

In this ongoing dispute Croquet Club Treasurer Chang and Secretary Scott Heath (also Union President) are the only remaining committee members following Chair Rumer's resignation. Chang is "interested in submitting an appeal" and says "The Union in my opinion, have been inconsiderate and demonstrated a lack of understanding of a club that has a past history of being a summer club, has reached 20 members in the last 3 academic years and has only been dormant for 2 months." The result of the appeals process will not only shape the future of Croquet Club but also demonstrate the calibre of the CSB.

## Imperial TEDx talks prove popular online

**Matt Colvin**

Video footage of March's TEDxImperialCollege event is now available to view on YouTube, with a talk by programmer John Graham-Cumming about Charles Babbage's Analytical Machine enjoying over 18,000 views at the time of going to print.

TEDx is a program of local and self-organised events based upon TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) conferences. The Imperial College event, held on 24 March, saw over 700 guests attend an afternoon of talks on a wide manner of topics. One such talk was given by Imperial student Joanis Holzigel, who discussed his involvement with student project e.quinox and efforts to provide electrification in an African village.

On the day itself, the Twitter hashtag #TEDxIC trended on the social networking service in both the United Kingdom and London.



John Graham-Cumming discusses the Analytical Machine

# Union election results (finally) announced

Record turnout for Imperial as controversy and delays hit this year's campaign trail

Matt Colvin



From left to right: Tim Arbabzadah (Felix Editor), Henry Whittaker (Clubs & Societies), Paul Beaumont (President), Stefan Nubert (Finances & Services), Douglas Hunt (Education) and Rebecca Lane (Welfare)

## Matt Colvin

The results for this year's Union 'Big Elections' were announced over a staggered period this year. The elections, which saw a record turnout of 41.09% of students, also saw a technical issue that and disagreements between candidates over campaigning that ultimately led to a delay of the declaration of results.

After voting began on 12 March, and as previously reported, the online voting system failed to display Deputy President (Welfare) candidate Jack Hewitt's manifesto on the "inline" view. Hewitt claimed that this was a "massive disadvantage", with 11.5% of the total votes being potentially affected by the error. While the

Elections Committee originally ruled that all affected votes be struck, this decision was appealed and taken to Union Court, where the decision was quashed and declared unconstitutional.

The Presidential campaign was also affected by delays as individual candidates brought forward complaints against tactics used during the campaign.

The results for Deputy President (Welfare) and President were delayed until 22 March and 27 March respectively rather than the 20 March for the other positions.

*Presidential candidate Abdul Patel comments on this year's elections: Page 14*

## Results

### President

Paul Beaumont: 2658 – Elected  
Abdul Patel: 2300 (Second Round)  
Henry Abbott: 660 (First Round)  
RON: 288 (First Round)

### Deputy President (C&S)

Henry Whittaker: 2629 – Elected  
RON: 655 (First Round)  
Joachim Dias: 447 (First Round)

### Deputy President (Education)

Douglas Hunt: 3167 – Elected  
RON: 673 (First Round)

### Deputy President (F&S)

Stefan Nubert: 1809 – Elected  
Chandana Shankar: 1701 (Second Round)  
RON: 367 (First Round)

### Deputy President (Welfare)

Rebecca Lane: 1291 – Elected  
Jack Hewitt: 1230 (Fourth Round)  
Binayak Basnyat: 874 (Third Round)  
Reuben Margerison: 609 (Second Round)  
RON: 334 (First Round)

### Felix Editor

Tim Arbabzadah: 2153 – Elected  
Alexander Karapetian: 1713 (Second Round)  
Laurence Pope: 500 (First Round)  
RON: 242 (First Round)

### ICSMSU President

Shiv Vohra: 940 – Elected  
RON: 208 (First Round)

# College Day changes opposed at Council

Heath also outlines plan to introduce Postgraduate Sabbatical position

Thomas Lim



Heath opposed the extension of teaching on Wednesday until 1pm on the grounds of students having to miss lectures in order to reach sporting events on time

## Maciej Matuszewski

The latest meeting of the Student Union Council was held this Tuesday. One of the issues that dominated the meeting was the proposed changes to the teaching day announced by the College Management Board on 28 March. The board has decided to phase out the current noon to 2pm undergraduate lunch time slot, “beginning with first year students in 2012-13, and extending to second year students in 2013-14 and to third year (and above) students in 2014-15”. Instead, individual departments will each choose the time when their students have a lunch hour.

## “[Heath] recognised the problem the changes might pose”

Union President Scott Heath explained that he believed that, in principle, the change was a good way to give departments more timetabling

flexibility, with the College insisting that the actual number of contact hours for students would not go up. However, he recognised the problem the changes might pose to student society and welfare events, with there no longer being a single block of time in the middle of the day when most students are available for such activities. Heath assured the Council that he is in discussions with College in an attempt to get a guarantee that there will be at least one day a week when all undergraduates have their lunch hour at the same time.

Rolling out with the same timetable as the lunch time changes, all departments will have to set aside two hours a week, starting with 4pm to 6pm on Mondays for all first year students in the 2012-13 academic year, to allow for ‘co-curricular teaching’. This will be compulsory and allow students to learn skills that complement their subject but are not necessarily part of it. Part of the driving force for introducing this programme is employers’ observations that Imperial students often fail to get employment due to a lack of transferable skills. The Sabbaticals stressed that the exact shape of this new initiative has not yet been

decided upon and encouraged students to pass all suggestions onto them so that they may raise them in meetings of the Co-Curricular Committee.

## “employers observe that students lack transferable skills”

The final major change introduced by the Management Board was the extension of the teaching on Wednesday till 1pm. Heath outlined his strong objection to this change based on British Universities & College Sports (BUCS) regulations state that inter-University sporting events can start at any time from 1pm. This would place many students in the difficult position of either skipping lectures and labs or missing their sporting event. The situation would be particularly difficult for international students, the visa conditions for many of which state that they must attend lectures.

Heath believes that this change is a

simple oversight by the Board that arose as a result of a lack of consultation with students. However, he believes that this is part of larger problem of the Management Board not listening to student opinion, pointing to the Life Sciences restructure and the closure of Claypods as other important issues that the Union was not consulted on. As a response the Council unanimously passed a resolve demanding that “on Wednesday the College day end at twelve o’clock” and that “the Management Board consults the Student Union on any paper relating to student issues”, further recommending that “any papers considered by the Management Board relating to student issues must be countersigned by a Sabbatical Officer to indicate that they have been considered by the Union”.

The Council concluded with a paper presented by Heath proposing changes related to the Union’s summer elections. The Council accepted plans to officially make all Welfare officers Officers of the Union, giving them a place on the Council where they might share their expertise. Furthermore the separate positions of Court Advocate, which served to provide students advice

on their dealings with the Union Court, was abolished, with the Advocate duties being transferred to the Council Chair.

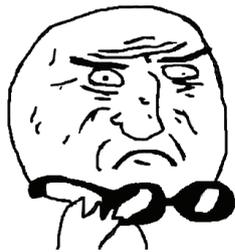
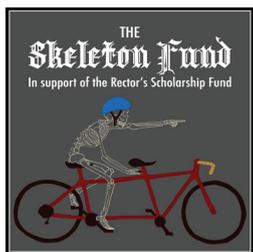
## “the position of Court Advocate was abolished”

There was more discussion about Heath’s plan to, should he be able to secure the funding, introduce a postgraduate Sabbatical position. There were concerns about the plans to make this position separate from that of the Graduate Students’ Association president. Heath, however, explained that he believed if the two positions were combined the new Sabbatical would find most of their time occupied with organising events rather than working on education issues. The Council eventually voted to accept the idea of the new sabbatical in principle, however another vote will be held when Heath secures the funding and presents a full job description of the new role to Council.

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Features Editors: **Katy Bettany**  
**Stephen Smith**

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# FEATURE

## Unseen Imperial

More anonymous accounts of students and their experiences with depression

**T**here are some aspects of our lives that we just don't talk about. This makes it easy to think that we're alone in our experiences, when in fact, we're probably not. Last term the Union asked the student body to submit anonymous accounts of their experiences of mental health. Once again, the sincerest of thanks to everyone who took part:

**I**n the second year of my degree at the College I made an appointment to see my GP, not because I had a chest infection or another physical complaint but because of something else. In the 6 months preceding this appointment, my affect or mood had significantly altered, a feeling of sadness that had initially waxed and waned was replaced by a persistent flatness of mood that progressively became more pronounced, culminating in crying myself to sleep on most nights.

**“She asked what was making me feel like this and I couldn't tell her”**

Upon entering my GP's office, my response to her enquiring as to how she could help was to burst into tears. She asked what was making me feel like this and I couldn't tell her. She then asked whether I had been feeling suicidal and I replied that I had. She responded with a tremendous compassion that made me feel safe and calm, reassuring me that everything would be alright. To this day, her gentle and caring response provides great solace. I then filled out a questionnaire and was subsequently diagnosed with depression, prescribed a month's course of fluoxetine (Prozac) and referred to the Priory clinic for psychotherapy. My GP implored that I inform my parents of our appointment and its outcome.

As I exited the clinic I felt a powerful sense of relief for I had finally begun to confront this thing that was slowly tearing me apart. For any person struggling with suicidal thoughts, a consistent blunted mood and/or a prolonged disinterest in once cherished pastimes



Email [icu-disabilities@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:icu-disabilities@imperial.ac.uk) if you would like to share your anonymous experiences of topics that are not openly discussed

– do not remain pensive and isolated with these ruminations, for they will only get worse and more disabling for you, the moment you seek support is the moment where things start to get better. Seeking support for depression is an immensely hard thing to face up to but a decision that eventually may save your life.

Whilst I have described my diagnosis in a positive light, by no means was this the catalyst for a speedy recovery but it did mark the start of improvements even if there were and still are many obstacles. Unfortunately my parents did not respond in the same way as my kind GP and I found antidepressants really didn't help that much; they left me feeling nauseous in the morning, gave me an infrequent resting tremor, exacerbated my weight loss and ensured I had some rather surreal albeit slightly disturbing dreams. Moreover, the Priory refused to see me and instead referred to local services for supportive counselling (which I

later declined). The only thing that really helped me was being open with the people that I was closest to and also mediating with persons who had inadvertently contributed to my feelings of sadness. After letting things fester inside you for so long, getting such suppressed thoughts of your chest is incredibly therapeutic.

**“You will not be judged for being depressed”**

I did reluctantly inform the college of my predicament and they responded with a great deal of respect and support. You will not be judged for being depressed, there is a dedicated and caring team who will support you in any event. Don't be afraid to let personal tutors etc know what is going

on, depression is a disabling affliction that negatively impacts on your sense of worth, your relationships and your studies and the College is acutely aware of this and will do all it can to ensure you return to good health whilst staying on track with your course.

Since being diagnosed with depression, I have experienced two further periods of intense sadness, similar to when I was first sought help. During these periods, a feeling of helplessness and weakness yet again dominated my thoughts and left me feeling distraught. Again, in these moments of desperation, speaking to loved ones proved to be the most effective in alleviating such feelings.

It has been nearly seven months since I last felt depressed as described above, I increasingly feel extremely about positive about my life, my relationships and the future. I am now more open about being depressed with close friends and am more aware of my triggers to feeling flat and feel confi-

dent I have can mitigate such things to remain contented and enthused.

Being depressed is a dark and lonely place to be but things do get better, it will take time and it may not be a smooth passage back to feeling like you once did but once you to start to be open with yourself and then with friends and family, you are moving in the right direction. Importantly, enduring such a consuming and debilitating

**“Things do get better”**

illness will empower you with a great sense of empathy for the many others experiencing what you have been through, enabling you to provide a kind word and a tissue shoulder for someone who will greatly appreciate the support you will provide.

I have deliberately refrained from

## FEATURE



describing depression in purely clinical terms or elaborating on the actual triggers for what made me depressed, I wanted to draw attention to the importance of seeking support from the professionals and loved ones, and that my initiating these steps you demonstrate bravery, intelligence and a strong desire to love life once again.

**D**epression wasn't something that happened to me at university. It had always been there really but at a manageable level and I, as everyone leaving for university, thought that I would escape the problems of the past, move on and have a fabulous time.

And for a while it worked. I met new people, I didn't do too badly, I had enough stuff to keep me busy. But as first year wore on, my energy ebbed

and I felt myself getting very lonely and increasingly solitary.

I looked for help at the beginning of the Spring term in the form of the Imperial counselling service and found myself pouring my heart out for an hour to someone willing to listen. But outside that one hour a week I felt totally lost.

**“It had always been there really but at a manageable level”**

It is not that none of my friends tried to help. Most of the ones that noticed the difference in me put it down to exam stress and getting dumped by my boyfriend. But what they didn't know was it was the way I was feeling that had led both of those things coming to a head. How could I pass my exams

when I couldn't keep it together for more than 5 minutes?

I remember breaking down after coming out of the shower, sitting in the corridor sobbing wearing a towel while a concerned friend wondered what to do. And being chaperoned to and from a café by my friends on their way to uni every day throughout study leave.

At that point I was having very dark thoughts which led me to stand with my back to the wall of the platform waiting for the tube every time I used it. I was scared of what some part of me might want to do. I never self-harmed as such. I just remember digging my nails into my arms whenever anything got too much, without thinking, even while just having a conversation. The small amount of pain reminded me that I was still there.

My department were very supportive. I saw a doctor, ignoring his insistence that medication was necessary. I finally told my mum what was hap-

pening to me. I got through my exams, spent the summer recuperating and returned in good spirits for second year, only to find the same pattern of decline throughout the year. This time, however, I had some support from friends and family.

**“I am not better, but I have found ways of coping”**

I am not better, but I have found ways of coping. Loud music helps, as does taking time away from work to do things I want to do. I am hoping my final year will pass with fewer hitches as I really want to enjoy my time at Imperial and remember it more positively.

I have met, in my time at university, many people who believe that mental illness is a weakness and it is

created solely by yourself. The only way I have been able to talk about my experiences, even with my friends, is through a series of incredibly inappropriate jokes about me being 'crazy' which make everyone uncomfortable. But isn't it sad that is the only way I can express how I am feeling? So I would entreat you to listen to what your friends are saying, you might not understand but, at least for me, trying is good enough. An inappropriate joke is in fact a cry for help.

We'd really like to run more articles like this. If you'd like to share your experiences of anything people don't openly discuss, such as faith, sexuality, body image, mental health, disability or discrimination of any kind, please email [icu-disabilities@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:icu-disabilities@imperial.ac.uk). You can create an anonymous email address to send it from and any details which could be used to identify you will be edited out.

**Only 7 issues left!**

**There's still time to  
get involved.**

**Especially if you're done  
with exams (lucky you).**

**FELIX**

The student voice of Imperial College London since 1949

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## Union Awards 2012

Do you know someone who has done an outstanding job as a representative? A club or society member? someone involved in welfare support? Or a really good events organiser? The Union Awards recognises outstanding individuals each year; any student can nominate someone and we are accepting nominations from now until 30 May. There are thousands of volunteers working in all parts of the Union from clubs and societies to representation and we believe those who have gone over and above what is expected of them should be recognised. The awards are:

### Union Colour

The Union Colour should be awarded to those individuals who have given significant and repeated outstanding contributions to the student experience at Imperial and the life of the Union throughout the year.

### Outstanding Service Award

The Outstanding Service Award should be awarded to those individuals who

have, in addition to the requirements for a Union Colour, gone above and beyond their role, repeatedly, to enhance the student experience and life of the Union across a broad spectrum of areas during the year.

### Imperial College Union Fellowship

The Imperial College Union Fellowship shall only be awarded to those individuals who have continuously served the Union and/or enhanced the student experience in an exceptional manner, usually over a number of years. Each individual, so awarded, will be granted Honorary Life Membership of the Union, and given a pin and pewter tankard with the year engraved.

### Imperial College Union Fellowship with Distinction

The Imperial College Union Fellowship with Distinction shall only be awarded to those individuals who have exceeded the criteria of the Union Fellowship of longevity and excellence of service to the Union. They should additionally achieve



being a significant party in making an innovative development to the work of the Union such as to leave a positive legacy that will make a lasting impression for future members. Each individual, so awarded will be granted Honorary Life Membership of the Union, and given a pin and pewter tankard with the year engraved.

To nominate someone for an award, you need to fill in the online form at:

[eactivities.union.ic.ac.uk/awards](http://eactivities.union.ic.ac.uk/awards)

Nominations will close on 30 May so make sure you get yours in early!



## your SABBATICALS

### Scott Heath

President  
president@imperial.ac.uk

Keep up-to-date with your Sabbaticals at:  
[imperialcollegeunion.org/sabbs](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/sabbs)

**The Green Living Survey**

What do you think about sustainability?

How can Imperial help you to live more sustainably?

Fill out the short survey and help us find away to minimise your environmental impact.

A student is doing a project on what you do to minimise your environmental impact, what your motivations are for doing so and what you think Imperial could do to make it easier for you. Your answers will be fed directly to the College to make the improvements that you want to see and let them know what initiatives you'd take part in. The survey is ten questions long and you can fill it out here:

[surveymonkey.com/s/QL6GQ7R](http://surveymonkey.com/s/QL6GQ7R)

Comment Editors: **Tim Arbabzadah**  
**Sam Horti**

[comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

# COMMENT

## FELIX

### To vote or not to vote: what's the problem?

So somebody's been elected London Mayor, apparently. When it comes down to those gosh darn Thursday elections, Felix finds itself in the unenviable position of not being able to report on who won. Anyway, as tempting as it might have been for Felix to run an incredibly localised and ultimately wildly inaccurate exit poll, we didn't particularly wish to tempt fate. What is fact, however, is the potential clout that students had in the vote. With nearly 450,000 London-based students eligible to list their preferences for Mayor of London and members of the London Assembly, a real difference could have been made to the results if all were to stand up and be counted. Of course, this wasn't entirely the case.

The ability for students to be able to vote for Mayor of London is something that should be seized with both hands. The manifesto points of the candidates have a real difference in the day-to-day lives of Londoners. Yet, there are inevitably those who didn't go to the polling booth. One prevalent excuse from those I've discussed the election with was that they simply "couldn't be bothered". Is this really acceptable? It's one thing to vote for a candidate for a reason, but not being aware when the decision makes a real difference to life in London? That's another thing entirely.

There's also the issue that the contest has been veering towards a war of words and personality, much to its detriment. From the usual Boris gaffes to the much debated Ken tax affair there has been distressingly few proper discussions and debate between candidates that didn't descend into mud slinging. Even the live debates have been little more than candidates attacking other candidates. It's little wonder that while there are those who fervently oppose candidates, there are those who simply can't make head nor tail of the situation. And this isn't a situation that we should be in.

An issue connected to this election and one that divides Londoners to the same degree are the upcoming Olympic Games. For those who despair at the bill, there are those who fervently believe in the resulting legacy. Then there are those who don't particularly mind that much at all. They should be caring about this and the Mayor of London. Beyond the rhetoric and campaign trail, there are real changes that will be affecting the city we work, study and live in.

## My view on the elections



**Abdul Patel**

I would like to start off by saying from the bottom of my heart that this note is not designed to offend. I was urged to write this for my own peace of mind and also for those who put their hearts and souls into supporting me. I hope to clarify some events of the election, which may not have come to light. Lastly, I would also like to state that I would have released a similar article had the outcome of the election been different.

As you probably know, I ran for Union President during March. One of the primary reasons for me running was that I was fed up with the way the College and departments were treating some of the students, with low reported student satisfaction affecting the university's position in the national league tables. I also opposed the neglect some students were receiving, such as the absurdly small grants – compared to other societies in the Union – given to the OSC, which supports International students. I believed I could have made a tangible change.

What should have been an enjoyable campaign soon turned sour due to the amount of negative campaigning I faced during those weeks. One of my opposition's campaign team actively went around spreading false rumours about me such as: I was suspended from my posts and banned from lectures, amongst others. Furthermore, they accused me of being a racist and sexist, despite my blunt demeanour this is a completely false accusation and extremely offensive. I appreciate that the opposing candidate had limited control over what his campaign team were spreading, but questions must be asked, when he allegedly said to a few of his friends 'I am going to find out all the dirt I can about Abdul' before the elections had even started. Members of my own campaign team asked me if I wanted to retaliate by doing the same, to which I replied with 'no don't bother, if I lose, at least I lost with integrity'. I stick by those words.

This brings me onto my next point. Many of you may have read the blog titled 'why you shouldn't vote for Abdul'. Whereas I believe the author is entitled to their beliefs and opinion, what came later in the anonymous comment section was horrifying. The majority

of the comments on that article were fallacious and with malicious intent; someone went as far as accusing me of having a criminal record and another of bringing the college to disrepute during my time in Texas (which in fact goes against the praise I received from the International Office for my work there). At the time I did not know how to respond to this form of sabotage and, maybe to my detriment, I felt it didn't warrant a response so decided to concentrate on my own positive campaign.

Another topic that has perplexed many people is the negative campaigning through the use of Twitter, most notably, from ex-ICU president Alex Kendall. During the live 'Meet the Candidates' show on the elections webpage, live tweets were displayed on the side for all to see. During which, Kendall accused me of being disciplined by the college. This unfounded lie was in due course dealt with by the Union and as such Kendall had to issue an apology tweet under the instruction of the returning officer, Michael Foster. However, the apology tweet acknowledging that what he said wasn't true only came a couple of days after the initial one so the damage was already done and, due to the high profile of the author, the original tweet had a significant detrimental impact. Regardless, during the following week he dedicated the bulk of his tweets on the '#voteicu' twitter page to attacking me. He refers to me as a 'homophobic bully' and reminds people not to vote for me, seldom giving an explanation as to why any of the other candidates would be more suitable. Many people may wonder what created this hatred he has towards me. Last year during the summer elections, a friend of mine (who asked not to be named) was subjected to harassment from Kendall and he went as far as calling that person

'bloody pathetic' amongst other things in emails (proof can be supplied on request). It got so bad that he reduced this person to tears after a Union court case. Seeing this I confronted him about his actions. In response, he filed two complaints against me to the college tutors for homophobia and intimidation, based on what other people put on my Facebook page. After realising that the evidence was weak and he was overreacting, the college tutors dismissed his accusations.

I did, on multiple occasions, appeal to the election committee and the returning officer about these unsavoury tactics and if anything could be done to prevent members of the opposition's campaign team from spreading these libellous and malicious rumours. Almost all of my appeals were readily dismissed and the impression I got was that there was a huge bias against me. It was as if the selection had already been made on who was to become the new President before the election had even started. When having the audacity to attempt something different by parading through campus with a megaphone (which is a common occurrence in other universities during campaign week) I was issued with a fine and threatened with, amongst other things, disqualification. Dealing with these complaints is one of the reasons why the Presidential results took so long to be released.

Some of you may ask me why I bothered to write this article and what I hope to achieve. I am not expecting any further action to be taken and my time in the Union is almost over. All I ask for is the truth to be released and to make students aware of it. The Union boasts about its diverse and democratic nature but in my personal opinion, after the recent treatment I was subjected to, I would argue otherwise.

**Are you boss? Well then, head on over to: [felixonline.co.uk](http://felixonline.co.uk) to get your voice heard.**

## COMMENT

# Holes in postgraduate representation



**Vanessa Hume**

In the recent elections one of the Union's main concerns was the lack of postgraduate participation in the voting. However, postgraduate representation at Imperial is pretty poor and it is unsurprising that they were feeling a little uninspired to vote. The focus should have been on getting postgraduates to run and thus improving representation in the first place.

During the elections, I received an email urging me as postgraduate to vote. By this point I had already placed my votes with regards to the Sabbatical positions but had left the GSA ones for another time. So after receiving the email I decided that I might as well get it over and done with and complete the rest of my voting. However, to my surprise, I discovered that out of all the GSA positions available only one person was running. ONE.

Well obviously the next step was to air my opinion on the matter via twitter:

“Just got an email urging me to vote as a postgrad in the IC elections. Bit difficult with no GSA candidates to vote for #voteicu”

Following this, I received a rapid reply from @icunion:

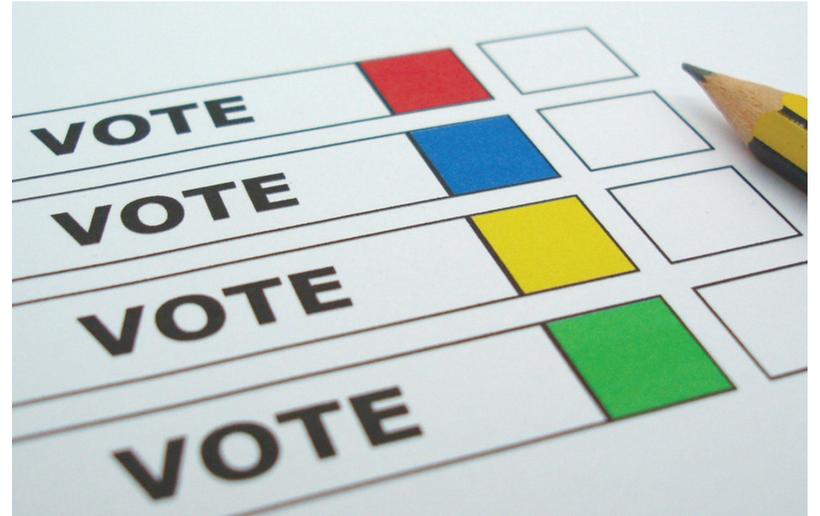
“The Sabbatical team represent all students at Imperial, not just UGs. It is essential that PGs vote in these elections! #voteicu”

Well that's nice and everything but I pointed out that with no PG reps running there was no choice but to rely on the Sabbs for representation. Unfortunately, the Imperial College Union twitter account was not quite so quick to reply this time (I'm still waiting in fact). Furthermore, HOW do the Sabbatical team represent postgrads. Apart from the Postgrad Mingle and a few emails from the Union President aimed at postgrads, I'm unaware of any sort

of concrete representation. Why should we have to rely on purely the Sabbs? Although they would like to think otherwise they come across as very undergraduate focused and it feels as if the union elections completely overshadowed the GSA ones.

Postgraduates have a different range of problems, and candidates running in the elections need to make it clear how voting can improve things specifically for postgraduates. It's no good just sending emails urging people to vote. According to the email I received, I have a departmental representative who has been working really hard to improve my student experience. I'm really curious as to who this entity is as I have never received an email from them or even been informed who they are and how I can contact them. But apparently they have made a really big difference. I'm sure it would have been even bigger if they had actually contacted the students they were supposed to represent. I must point out that I am a Masters student in the Humanities department so this is based on my own experience rather than those in other departments or who are PhD students.

However, as a Masters student I feel like I've fallen in to a big Imperial College blindspot. I didn't get to vote for the GSA reps before I started and voting this year is a little irrelevant as I won't be around next year. Someone informed me recently that they were interested in running this year but were not able to as they weren't a postgraduate until next year. Basically, everyone who isn't midway through their PhD is excluded from going for a position. The elections are rerun in September but any new incoming students will be so preoccupied with settling in they won't have much of a clue about it. I'm lucky in that I did my undergrad degree here and I was a student rep, I



GSA elections were online, mainly because this is what the ballot paper would have looked like. Grim

know who to contact if problems do arise but I'm sure that new incoming PGs haven't the foggiest. I expect no major complaints are logged because they don't know who to complain to. The GSA does provide the structure to deal with unique PG problems but what happens now when this structure is clearly not effective and at the moment non-existent. The union's knee-jerk reaction to this appears to be implementing a dedicated postgraduate Sabb. I very much approve of this idea; I just hope that the infrastructure will be in place to support this person because otherwise they will be carrying a lot of responsibility on their shoulders.

On a more personal note, another characteristic of my MSc blindspot is the fact I've been given this title of postgraduate yet I'm not allowed to use the SCR or the Holland Club. My department is tiny and doesn't provide a space for me to work or relax; the common room is reserved for PhD students. I'm restricted to the Library and

other general areas, which is altogether thoroughly uncomfortable at times especially now in the peak of exam season. A designated PG space that I, as a Masters student, could use would be much appreciated. And before anyone brings it up, yes I have put this as part of my feedback on the PG student survey. Suffice to say, it certainly hasn't done anything for my satisfaction in the Imperial College student experience.

Elections are over now, but with only one GSA position filled who knows how successful the next round will be. I'm sure the Union has a whole host of reasons as to why this situation is as it stands, but with student satisfaction becoming one of its priorities I feel that this is something that needs to be addressed. When this is added to the growing frustration of the postgraduate population due to the threatened closure of the Holland Club and the disposal of Clayponds, something has to be done to show that postgraduates are still a valued part of the student body.

Postgraduates have a different range of problems, and candidates running in the elections need to make it clear how voting can improve things specifically for postgraduates

## Cat got your tongue?

Wrote up some notes on Monday, took a past paper on Tuesday, I was revising on Wednesday, and on Thursday and Friday and Saturday and then wrote for Comment to complain about it on Sunday.

[comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk)





**Imperial College Swimming & Water Polo Club** take a break from  
If you want to take part in your own centrefold, email [centrefolds@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:centrefolds@imperial.ac.uk)

HARD  
T WET!  
SRWP

POOL DEPTH  
HERE  
1.9m  
↓



m revision.  
k

## ARTS

## The Poet's Column

The Sunlight on the Garden  
by Louis Macneice

The sunlight on the garden  
Hardens and grows cold,  
We cannot cage the minute  
Within its nets of gold,  
When all is told  
We cannot beg for pardon.

Our freedom as free lances  
Advances towards its end;  
The earth compels, upon it  
Sonnets and birds descend;  
And soon, my friend,  
We shall have no time for dances.

The sky was good for flying  
Defying the church bells  
And every evil iron  
Siren and what it tells:  
The earth compels,  
We are dying, Egypt, dying

And not expecting pardon,  
Hardened in heart anew,  
But glad to have sat under  
Thunder and rain with you,  
And grateful too  
For sunlight on the garden.

## It's competition time, yo!

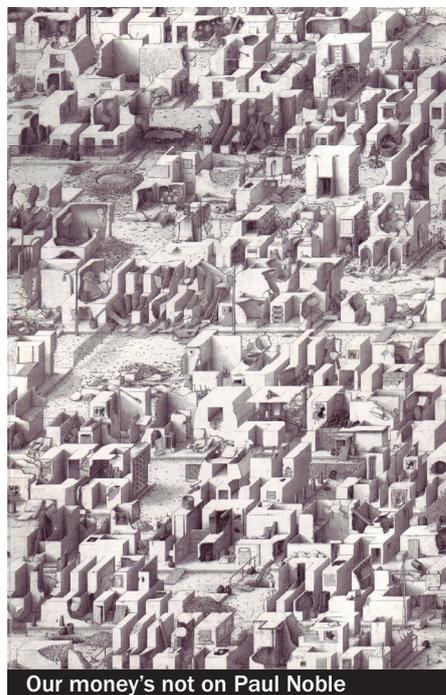


The lovely folks at Festival of the Spoken Nerd have given us a pair of tickets to their upcoming sell-out show  *$\pi$ -curious* at **The Bloomsbury Theatre** on 21 May. Blue Peter's resident science expert Steve Mould, stand-up mathematician Matt Parker and geek songstress Helen Arney (a product of Imperial's very own Physics department) lead the audience through an evening of scientific adventure and comedy, described by the Edinburgh fringe bible, *Three Weeks*, as 'riotously funny'.

To be in with a chance of winning, we're asking you to send us in a  $\pi$ -ku (think a haiku but with a mathematical slant) to the email at the top of the page, and you and a friend could be spending an evening breaking the exam monotony in a way that practically counts as revision. Get writing and good luck!

Turner Prize: What's  
art got to do with it?

George Lucas' latest changes to the Original Trilogy caused some distress

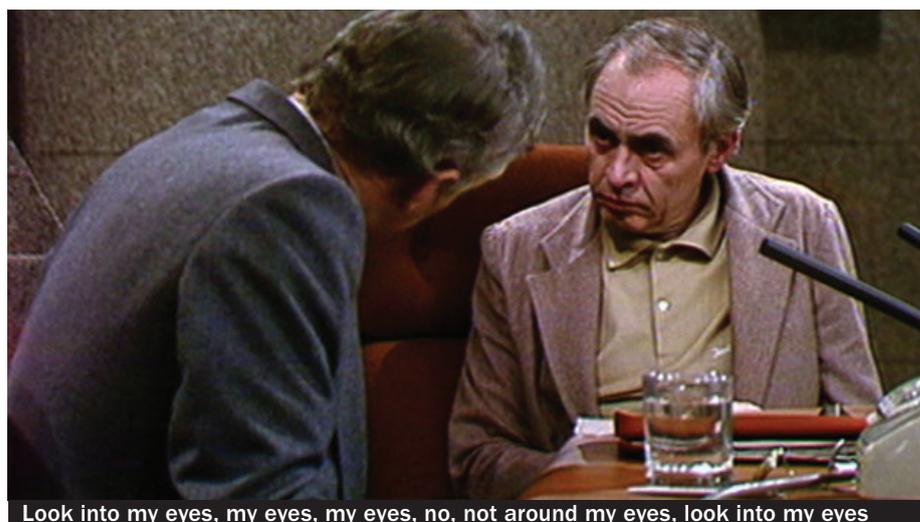


Our money's not on Paul Noble

## Will Prince

Yes, people. It's that time of year again! Exam season. And you know what that means? You guessed it! Felix, like a crack-addled vagrant, becomes a gaunt shell of its Autumn and Spring term self as we struggle to fill the column inches in the face of exam terror. But luckily for us here at the Arts section, the Turner prize nominees were announced earlier this week, presenting us with a cracking opportunity to print loads of photos with minimal text.

Sounding more like a late entry to the Grand National than an art prize nominee, Spartacus Chetwynd entered the public consciousness this week for her (at times Star Wars inspired) living sculpture pieces. Luke Fowler received a nomination for his cinematic work exploring the life of his fellow compatriot, the Scottish psychiatrist R.D. Laing, as did northerner Paul 'Our Paul' Noble for his classial take on Google Street View. Elizabeth Price got the final nod, for something like what Luke Fowler did, but not as good.



Look into my eyes, my eyes, my eyes, no, not around my eyes, look into my eyes

Arts Editors: **Will Prince**  
**Eva Rosenthal**

arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Cillian  
Murphy  
Mesmeric  
in NT's  
Mistermen

## Caz Knight

God, redemption, religion, the forces of good and evil. It is hard to tackle these none too light topics in a manner which doesn't become cumbersome. Peter Cadwell did it in *The Fighter's Ballad*, but confronts the bull head-on – the film is no laughing matter. Enda Walsh's *Misterman* deals with similar ideas of Right and Wrong, albeit couched in the very Irish and Catholic setting of Innisfree – a small isle lagooned in the Emerald Isle.

Whether or not one could call *Misterman* a comedy is difficult to say. Cillian Murphy's slapstick careering about the stage in veritable circus style, hurling props, scrambling eggs and spraying the stage with his saliva lend Walsh's production a humour which is distinct contrast to the play's grave messages and violent ending.

Murphy is the only actor but this is easily forgotten amid the colossal set – which extends some twenty metres from the audience – the jumble of paraphernalia that populates Holy Fool Thomas Magill's decrepit warehouse dwelling, feats of lighting that would put New Year's Eve to shame, sound design on a huge and innovative scale and Murphy's stellar rendering of Thomas and the ten-odd other inhabitants of Innisfree he meets as he pops out to the shops to pick his Mammy up some Jammy Dodgers.

Walsh has created an experience as well as a play. The imagination is allowed to run wild – A= myriad of gaps is left for us to fill in. Aesthetically it is glorious.

The play's premise and flow I found to be patchy and at times unfathomable. And it's deeper and more religious passages were a bit too tedious for this lapsed Catholic. But Walsh's script had moments of rapid wit and jocularly that were brought to life wonderfully by Murphy, who gives a startling high-octane level of performance for the complete ninety minutes.

One wonders whether Walsh has been inspired and influenced by Philip Ridley's earlier plays. *Misterman*, written in 1999, is a surreal and messy depiction of reality where the sublime is twisted up with the violent and a young person lives in squalor and his own inner world. Jamie Vartan's epic set design certainly recalls those used in recent productions of Ridley's plays *Mercury Fur* and *The Pitchfork Disney*. But the light of heart and stomach need fear not: *Misterman* is most definitely not a Ridley play.

*Misterman* runs until 28 May at the **National Theatre** (Lyttleton). Tickets start at £5 for 16-25 year olds.

# Phoenix

HATCHING JUNE 2012



Imperial College's annual arts magazine is back. **Phoenix** has showcased the work of student poets, writers, photographers and artists since its foundation by H. G. Wells in 1887.

If you fall into one of these categories please get in touch. We welcome submissions in all genre of visual arts and written word.

DEADLINE EXTENDED TO  
14<sup>TH</sup> MAY



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[facebook.com/Phoenix.IC](https://www.facebook.com/Phoenix.IC)

# MUSIC

## 5/4 Respect: A Tribute to Math Rock

Pt. I – Slint



Possibly the most original of all the bands I will be covering, and by far the most influential, **Slint** first formed in their native Louisville, Kentucky in 1986. In addition to reuniting for some live shows in 2005 and 2007, they existed for 5 years, breaking up in 1991 after the completion of their opus, *Spiderland*. Like many math bands, they are not seen as purely math rock, and their importance to other rock subgenres such as post rock, which arguably would've never existed in its current form without *Spiderland*, labels them as more than just a math rock band, but I feel makes a point about the genre itself. Math rock is perhaps not a genre in the strictest sense of the word. I would propose that it is a sound that involves the use, primarily, of unusual time signatures, and often occupies the more 'thinking man's' end of the rock spectrum, also including influences from prog rock, metal and even minimalism à la **Steve Reich**. Therefore, many of the greats of Math rock aren't even labelled as such by many, for example Slint, who are widely considered post-rock.

What is for sure is that Slint were both awesome and experimental, and not a little bit bizarre. Their debut album, the Steve Albini produced *Tweez*, features 9 tracks, each named after one of their members' parents (except 'Rhoda', named after drummer Britt Walford's dog). This sort of humour is another characteristic feature of Math rock, with the instrumental bands giving their songs frivolous titles, and bands with vocals, such as Slint, carrying it right through into their lyrics. Guitarist/vocalist Brian McMahan, sings, talks, samples and shouts his way through both albums, completely obliterating any monotony as well as deepening the ambience of the album, particularly the spoken word, which reminds me of slowcore (another genre people have tried to label Slint) titans **Codeine**.

MacMahon's spoken word is often coupled with repetition of riffs played on clean guitar, giving a hypnotic tone to the music with a sense of unease created by dischords and lyrics about alienation. This builds until, often unexpectedly, distortion takes over with the frequent use of harmonics somewhat jarring to the listener. This shows their supreme ability in storytelling and setting an atmosphere, but this mastery of dynamics also goes some way to explaining Slint's importance to the post-rock genre. This is a common format for Slint, especially on *Spiderland*, but it must be noted that one of the things that makes Slint so great is the variety of approaches in music and lyrics, sometimes clean guitar, sometimes in your face distorted riffing, sometimes depressing lyrics, sometimes light and frivolous spoken word.

Riaz Agahi

Music Editors: **Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto** **Alex Ramadan**  
**Ross Gray** **Mark England** **Simon Hunter**

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# The Dandy Warhols

Aditya Narayanan starts a mosh pit in Kentish Town

**T**he band is **The Dandy Warhols**. The location is the Kentish Town Forum. The mission? To start a mosh pit. My friend, a die-hard punk fan who is also coming to see the gig remains sceptical. A band known for producing radio-friendly power pop hits to supplement their back catalogue of psychedelic stoner rock is – in theory at least – unlikely to attract the energetic and robust crowd required to partake in behaviour traditionally more suited to more aggressive forms of music.

We enter the venue halfway through the warm up act – an electro band called **AKDK** who are two drummers/synth players playing arbitrary combinations of either instrument in a largely improvised set. A little rough around the edges and somewhat downbeat, the music itself is decent but lacks the dynamism that characterises good warm up performances.

After a quick soundcheck, it is time for the main event. Courtney, Zia, Pete and Fathead stride onto the stage, each kitted in their own individual styles. There is the customary roar of anticipation as we await the first notes. Without delay the mesmeric 'Be-In' serenades a swaying crowd, slowly gathering in numbers. Although one of their lesser known songs, it is a perfect opener, gently building the atmosphere, priming us for what is to come. Second song of the night is the rousing 'We Used to Be Friends' followed without pause by the classic 'Not If You Were the Last Junkie on Earth', causing ripples of excitement to swirl through the crowd.

With over 140 songs in their arsenal, the Dandy Warhols have the same dilemma that afflicts most established bands, where their need to showcase new material must be balanced with the demands of fans to play the more popular songs. In this regard they achieve the ideal blend, following a string of crowd-pleasers with a selection from the new album *This Machine*. The band, and in particular singer Courtney interact minimally



They most certainly look dandy

with the audience, but are always completely in tune with their adoring fans. A short toilet break for Zia causes Courtney to lead us through an acoustic sing-along of 'Every Day Should be a Holiday'. The fact he messes up the chords on the first time only endears him to us more.

The original plan for moshing seems like it may not achieve fruition. Sizing up the audience it seems that everyone is either over 50 or has come as part of a couple. Squares of blue pepper the audience – the ever ubiquitous mobile phones used to create a snapshot of the moment – and my neighbour is on Facebook. As if savouring the intensity of the moment is insufficient without the cold proof of a picture, a status update.

A lone pocket of energy exists a few rows from the stage; a drunk breaking rhythmical convention to leap as high as he can in defiance of the beat of the music. Seizing our opportunity, we charge through the crowd to his vicinity, aided by a pack of eager 16-year olds looking to prove themselves amongst adults.

There are around nine of us jostling in our impromptu mosh pit and while it is fun the lack of bodies in the pit is only serving to exhaust us within seconds.

And then, as if our minds have been read. The hush and the delicate synth intro. We know what is coming. B D A E. The four chords that signal the Dandies signature tune 'Bohemian Like You'. As if a beast has been awoken from slumber; the entire standing section one large convulsing serpent. This momentum continues as the band segues into 'Get Off' and then the raucous 'Horse Pills'. One of the band's enduring talents has been their ability to transmit the mood of their lyrical content perfectly into their music and live it is no different; I have been immersed from the first chord.

The set is over, and as we are serenaded to the exit by Zia – the band believe encores to be fake – I feel an odd mixture of elation at having experienced such an exhilarating concert and disappointment at having it end so abruptly. What's that quote about leaving them wanting more?

# Leslie Feist at the Royal Albert Hall

Falling in love all over again with Canada's finest

**Diogo Miguel Geraldos**

The Royal Albert Hall was ready to welcome back the queen of Broken Social Scene for a truly magical end of 2012's spring equinox weekend after **M. Ward** played a very pleasant stripped down version of his repertoire and **David Bowie**'s 'Let's Dance'.

**Leslie Feist** set the tone for the following breathtaking couple of hours with a powerful sweep through 'Metals', dominated by her immense vocal range and the brilliance of her new work's architecture. A trip into 'The Re-

minder' split the beacon of London's live venues into an enchanting four-note backing choir for 'So Sorry' and the upbeat 'I Feel It All' got its seating plan all mixed up for the first time in the evening. The flawless set then launched into a rawer version of 'My Moon, My Man' followed by an a capella rendition of 'Cicadas and Gulls' helped by the crystalline **Mountain Man**. An interactive 'Sea Lion Woman' then led the set into a beautiful end dominated by Feist's shivering wails.

Canada's finest voice came back on stage with **M. Ward** to homage **Jesus and The**

**Mary Chain** before inviting the couples in the public for a slow dance on stage while she hypnotised the remaining audience with 'Let It Die'. A third encore gave London a rendition of **James Blake**'s version of her own 'Limit To Your Love' followed by a perfect ending in communion with the public with 'Intuition'.

Leslie Feist has this vocal gift of tickling that place inside you that gives you butterflies, making the experience of watching her live quite exhausting; one can only fall in love so many times.

# Bloc: Bigger, Better and Free?

Felix Music looks forward to the Bloc. weekender and offers up a pair of tickets

With a new location, bigger names, and a wider line-up than ever, Bloc. 2012 looks to be a must-see for any electronic music lover. Covering big dubstep drops (Kode9, Loefah), alternative hip-hop (Doom) and pioneering minimal composers (Steve Reich), the range at this year's London based event will satiate almost all discerning tastes. Previously hosted at Butlins, Minehead, Bloc. has decided to become "bigger and better", moving to the abandoned industrial-looking complex somewhat ironically (in this day and age - it used to be a haunt of London socialites) named London Pleasure Gardens and pushing harder than ever for an eclectic line up. Below are some of our picks for the best of Bloc., and we even have a competition to win two tickets!

## Orbital

Renowned for their massive live shows, **Orbital** have been captivating rave and festival audiences since their lauded debut *Orbital* in 1991. Their new album, *Wonky* seamlessly blends in their old-school summer anthem style with the biggest sounds from UK bass over the past 2 - 3 years. DJs will be dropping these tunes all over the shop this festival season, so why not get one step ahead of the game and see them live? Orbital's energetic performance, complete with that all-so-rare electronic improvisation, could well end up being a highlight of the festival. - R

## Actress

London resident Darren Cunningham DJs lo-fi, hazy house beats for dark rooms of youtube generation, messy ravers on a regular basis. I have experienced such sets and, they are utterly phenomenal. His new album, *R.I.P.*, pushes further towards weird ambient



haziness. It's hard to categorise his music; he describes it as "R&B concrete". His DJ sets are well known for their incredible eclecticism, and I'm sure he will refuse to pander to the dance floor live. And he used to play for West Brom - a true character. I am positive Bloc.'s new industrial location, combined with a minimal lighting set up, will establish a fantastic mood for **Actress**, in a rare live appearance. Personally I pray he's on Stubnitz. - R

## Ceephax Acid Waltzers

Headed by practically-Bloc.-resident **Ceephax Acid Crew**, brother of the incredible **Squarepusher**, this stage, debuting at Bloc. 2012, promises to be quite the spectacle. With legends such as **Nathan Fake** doing a speed garage set on a stage that appears to be, quite literally, waltzers, this is the kind of full on nonsense that you won't witness anywhere else. Featuring (amongst a host of others) **Mark Archer**, half of the legendary rave duo **Altern8**, this brand of insanity exactly what defines BLOC, and you'd be a madman to miss it. You'll probably also have to be a madman to be there. - R

## Raster-Noton

Raster-Noton are a one of a kind imprint taking the intersection of sonic and visual art with no salt. In a sort of hive mind nature, its roster counts a number of artists combining the two formats in a single unifying aesthetic of black & white clicks & cuts. Unlike other A/V contemporaries, the aim of R-N has always been to tie the two seamlessly, so that every sound piercing through the speakers is also manifested directly on the screen. The subtle shifts in a beat illustrated as a wall of scattering dots, geometric shapes bending to the rumble of the frequencies. This label has taken audiovisual interpretation to an acme. The correlation between the sounds and the picture is uncanny, giving the listener a closer insight into the intricacies of the glitchy dance music emanating from the bass bins. Aesthetically, one might imagine a conversation between a vending machine and a type writer, in their own electromechanical language. Mind you, this is the future. - I

## Nicolas Jaar

It's now over a year since **Nicolas**

**Jaar** released *Space is Only Noise* - the album that made techno-heads, jazz fiends and generally anyone else who's a bit pretentious declare it their new favourite record. It was, indeed, a very good record. Since then he's continued along the same path; delicate piano and guitar melodies float over brooding, melancholy synths. Soulful vocals are looped upon a backdrop of minimal percussion treated with dollops of reverb. The result is music that winds you into a trance, while the understated bass lines ensure it doesn't lose its way. Nicolas Jaar will be quite a contrast against the likes of **Carl Craig** and **Ricardo Villalobos**, but hell, when you're at a 16 hour party, melting into a half hour trance might be just what is needed. - S

## Stubnitz

This world-renowned arts institution (pictured bottom left) has been touring Europe since it was converted from a freeze & transport vessel in 1993, but this is its first ever London appearance. Presenting the whole spectrum from theatre to art to music, its presence at Bloc. is truly something to look forward to. If for nothing else, take a peek online at the inside of the ship - I'm not sure I can think of any cooler environment for some of the world's most cutting edge electronic artists. Previous performers have included the phenomenal **Chris Forsyth**, who we reviewed in autumn term, and Bristol legends **Bronnt Industries Kapital**. This relatively small (despite its massive outside size) stage could really bring something new and special to the Bloc. environment. It's not every day you get to hit a boat party (well, outside of Croatia). - R

## Arpanet

In what is possibly this millennium's most impressive booking, Bloc. have managed to secure the performance of one of Detroit's most reclusive and secretive acts. **Arpanet** is believed to be lead by, or possibly solely, Gerald Donald, also of the pioneering **Drexciya** and **Dopplereffekt**.

This one should really appeal to all us Imperial nerds (my apologies for the stereotyping). Donald is fascinated by science and technology, and Arpanet's first album, *Wireless Internet* (2002) has lengthy samples detailing how we would interact with the internet in the future, some of them eerily accurate. This is layered on top of empty, "futuristic" electro. Arpanet employ outdated sci-fi sounds to give an odd glimpse into how those in the past viewed the sound of the future. Oh, and did I mention they/he/who knows have only ever performed live once before in their 10 year history? - R

## Snoop Dogg

Undoubtedly you've heard of **Snoop Doggy Dogg**, so it's kind of hard to pin this one as much of a well-kept secret of the festival. Despite this, he's well worth a mention; his 1992 album *Doggystyle* introduced the up-and-coming G-Funk to the mainstream audience, and since then his distinctive voice, as well as his style of lyricism and flow, have been well recognised as a cornerstone of west-coast hip-hop. With all the hard partying that will surround it, this may come as a relieving opportunity to sit back and chillax for an hour or two. - R

For a chance of winning the two tickets, answer the following simple question: "**Which Imperial alumnus is playing Bloc?**" Answers should be submitted to [music.felix@gmail.com](mailto:music.felix@gmail.com) - the deadline is Wednesday 16th at 4pm, and the winner will be announced in our section in the following edition of Felix. The winner will be picked at random from all those who have the correct answer.

Have no fear if you miss out on our competition; Bloc. are also offering an unbeatable student deal this year. For every 5 tickets you buy, the 6th is free. A valid NUS card must be produced on entry. More details can be found here: <http://www.blocweekend.com/union>, with the code **UNIBLOC497**.

We shall be in attendance and hopefully providing live updates of what we are seeing so we really hope to see you there!



The incredible Stubnitz party boat and charitable arts institution

# DIGGIDY DAWG

F E L I X M U S I C N I G H T

W I T H T H E I N C R E D I B L E

## SUN GLITTERS

"[Sun Glitters] pitch-shifted vocals and chopped-up melodies create a compellingly itchy, glitchy R&B"

- the Guardian

A L S O F R O M X V I R E C O R D S

## HENRY WU & EVERMEAN

L O V E

4 X V I

T. Williams

"Really good vibe"

Mary Anne Hobbs

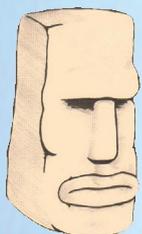
"Superb"

Alexander Nut

"Sounding large!"

L O V E

4 X V I



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Books Editor: **Maciej Matuszewski**

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## BOOKS

# Will this book crash and burn?

## Rhys Davies finally gets down to reading a dated classic of SF literature

**M**y friend read this and raved about it to me. Quickly sold (mainly by the main character's name, Hiro Protagonist), I vowed I'd read it as soon as I could. That was in high school. Some ten years later, I've finally got around to it.

*Snow Crash*, by Neil Stephenson, was written in 1992, so even when my friend convinced me to read it, it was already a few years old. Now it's twenty years old, and like most sci-fi, is beginning to show its age. However, that adds to the charm, reading about what the future might be like from the point-of-view of the past. Wikipedia informs me that the book is set sometime in the early 21st century and, thankfully, things have not turned out quick so bleak as Stephenson paints it.

**“The novel is certainly imaginative with a broad scope in mind.”**

The book is set in a dystopian California where national government has largely disintegrated. In its place are big businesses (where franchises act as colonies) and ‘burblaves’ – gated suburbia, each with their own law enforcement (contracted out, naturally). The plot revolves around Hiro, a pizza delivery boy (imagine if *The Transporter* had been about pizza) and a hacker. The internet, as it exists in the book, is called the ‘Metaverse’ where users as-

sume avatars to navigate by. Early on, I had an epiphany – Stephenson predicted *Second Life* a decade before it happened. In the Metaverse, there is a computer virus that is leaching out into reality and doing to people's brains what it usually does to computers. This is the eponymous Snow Crash.

Reading this twenty years on, and as a medical student, made me giggle but I decided to keep my disbelief suspended for the time being.

A secondary protagonist, Y.T. is a ‘Kourier’ – a skateboarder/courier who navigates the deadly Californian highways by harpooning other vehicles with an electro-magnet on a retractable cable. Through her dealing with Hiro, she too is drawn into the mystery of Snow Crash.

The novel is certainly imaginative, with a broad scope in mind. Through the course of the book, Stephenson ties together computer hacking, neurolinguistics, and middle eastern mythology. This is on top of a fleshed-out world where pizza-boys drive armoured 4x4s, franchises run everything and the internet is *Second Life*.

On reflection, this feels like a book of two halves. Half the book is heavy on the action, advancing the plot at a rate of knots and in a very cool fashion. The other half feels like a very accessible textbook on linguistics and Sumerian culture. While I found these chapters (mostly dialogue between Hiro and a computer program-librarian) interesting (because I am a geek like that), it only struck me later that they were massive tracts of straight exposition. In fact, this thought struck as Hiro reiterated it for the benefit of the other characters. Furthermore, it would be hard to redact most of this because without it, the plot

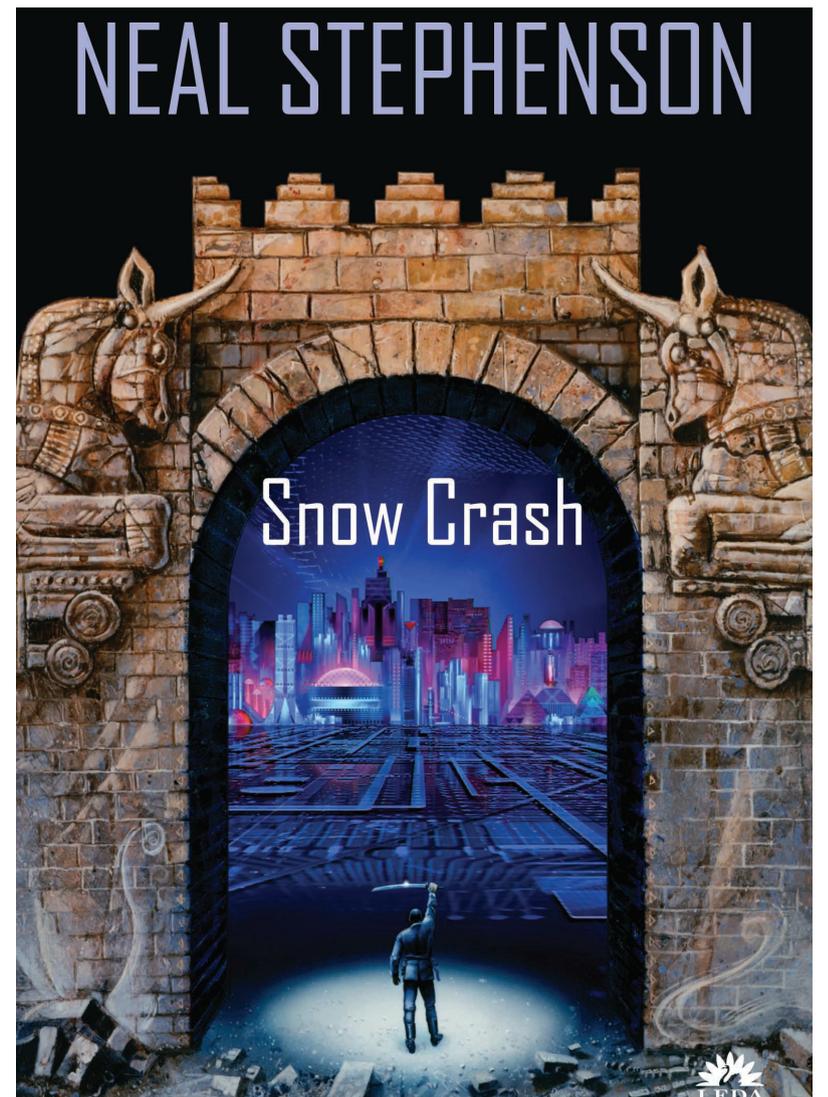
becomes quite shallow. Stephenson has tried to juggle intellectual depth with plot and whilst admirable, and successful, it is evident what he was trying to do.

**“Whilst cool and edgy, it has also grown rusty in the last twenty years.”**

From a purely technical standpoint, the book is very readable. Even through the exposition-laden chapters, it remains fairly well paced and interesting.

Looking back on this book with 21st century eyes, some parts are unintentionally humorous, others are unfortunately cringeworthy. Hiro is half-black, half-Japanese and carries a pair of Japanese swords with him at all times. Cool without trying, I know, but after two decades, I have seen tropes like this surface again and again, done worse than in this book, and they leave their anachronistic imprint all over it. I don't know if Stephenson was treading new ground with a character like this but now, he's a little embarrassing. Likewise, in the wake of William Gibson's *Neuromancer*, hackers were blessed with mad tech skills. These days, they are associated with the like of Wikileaks and Anonymous. Y.T. too; a typical Californian skateboarder, her dialogue is littered with cool lingo and slang which has now dated horribly. Then again, it might be worth reprinting the book with a glossary at the back, similar to *A Clockwork Orange*.

On the whole, I thought this was a



good book (despite a weak ending). As well as going for grunge sci-fi dystopia, Stephenson also strives for an element of intellectual rigour. It might not be better than most novels but it's trying

to be smarter and that deserves some recognition. Whilst cool and edgy, it has also grown rusty in the last twenty years. However, as a snapshot of 1990s imagination, it still gleams.

# Alastair Reynolds' *Pushing Ice* – a modern hard SF classic

Maciej Matuszewski

While hard SF writers such as Asimov are some of the best known names in science fiction I feel that the sub-genre has been somewhat neglected of late. There are of course, several exceptions, some of the most notable of which have to be the works of Alastair Reynolds.

While best known for his *Revelation Space* series I first got acquainted with Reynolds through his stand-alone novel *Pushing Ice*. Set in the 2050s, when massive corporations use manned spacecraft to mine comets the novel follows the crew of one

such vessel, the *Rockhopper*, who are ordered away from their latest job on an extraordinary mission. Janus, one of Saturn's moons, has broken free of its orbit, revealing itself as a giant alien vessel, and the *Rockhopper* is the only human ship in range that can intercept and examine it.

The novel shows the clear influence of Arthur C. Clarke's *Rendezvous with Rama* and, though it might be a slight spoiler to say so, Poul Anderson's *Tau Zero*. As well as similar plot elements there exists in all three novels a great sense of the wonder of the unknown, one of the cornerstones of good hard SF. A major difference, however, also

soon makes itself abundantly clear. While the protagonists of the two older novels were pretty much the best people to face the challenges they

**“The book shows the influence of Clarke and Anderson.”**

encountered it soon becomes clear how out of their depth the crew of the *Rockhopper* really is. Combined with the corporately ruled world of *Push-*

*ing Ice*, as compared with the more idealistic settings of the previous two novels, this leads to a great deal more interpersonal conflict. While this is taken too far in some places, with the character Svetlana Barseghian in particular coming off probably far more petty and dislikeable than Reynolds intended, you do get a feel that this is how real people would behave if placed in the extraordinarily difficult situations presented here.

Another difference is that, unlike the other two novels, *Pushing Ice* depicts direct contact between humans and various different alien species. This is brilliantly realised,

with the aliens being wonderfully weird – Reynolds having avoided the mistake of many lesser sci-fi writers who make their aliens far too human, whether in appearance or behaviour. My only complaint on this aspect of the book is that the various alien cultures encountered could have been explored far more deeply. Together with the somewhat open ending this means that, though one isn't strictly necessary, this is one book where I certainly wouldn't mind a sequel.

*Pushing Ice* is a brilliant read, one that I literally couldn't put down, and I can recommend it to you all, whether you are already fans of hard SF or not.

# FILM

Film Editors: **John Park**  
**Lucy Wiles**

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## Quite the 'best' exotic marigold hotel

### The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

**Director** John Madden  
**Screenwriters** Ol Parker, Deborah Moggach (novel)  
**Cast** Bill Nighy, Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Dev Patel, Tom Wilkinson, Penelope Wilton, Celia Imrie, Ronal Pickup

#### Cecile Borkhataria

John Madden's uplifting dramatic comedy offers a perfect blend of laughter, tears and depth. The film, based on a novel by Deborah Moggach, follows a group of British retirees including Judi Dench, Bill Nighy, Maggie Smith and many more British talents, in search of a place to outsource their retirement. Each of them look no further than a glistening advertisement for a retiree resort entitled 'The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel', in Jaipur, India, for the 'elderly and beautiful.' However, upon arrival, the retirees soon realise that the hotel is not quite how it was portrayed on the advert, but rather an old dusty building with major renovation work needed.

Evelyn (Dench), around which most of the plot circulates, is a housewife turned widow who discovers that her



late husband's debts had run up so much that she had to sell her house. Her decision to travel to India marks her newfound independence and letting go from her much doted upon husband. Madge (Imrie) is an aged single girl who's on the hunt for a rich husband, and Norman (Pickup), also single and ready to mingle, wants a girlfriend, or anything he can get, even if it's just 'one night of passion.' Douglas (Nighy) and Jean (Wilton) are a couple that have lost most of their retirement fund invested into their daughters failed internet-company. They decide to get away to India for a break from their daily routine.

The film wonderfully portrays the

old British fascination for India, particularly during its colonial days, when Graham (Wilkinson), a high court magistrate who grew up there, tries to seek out people, memories and familiarities from his past there. Maggie Smith's performance as Muriel provides endless chuckles, owing to her xenophobic views. Her only reason for travelling to India is for a hip operation.

If you watch this movie in a cinema, you'll notice two things: most of the people there are over the age of fifty, and the movie theatre is filled with laughter at the culture shock that develops when the retirees arrive in India. The different hygiene standards, food, cultural customs, religious beliefs and

caste system all surprise the retirees in some way, with an amusing scene showing all the retirees rushing to the toilet after having their first meal at their Jaipur resort.

This film shows the colours and richness of Indian culture and the warmth of its people. It portrays a touching message to the audience, where life is seen as a gift, and not a right. This is reflected in the warmth of Patel's frantic character. Although his beloved hotel is a shambles, his never-ending quest to please his guests and improve his hotel is endearing. Patel's performance as a young troubled man trying to restore his deceased father's hotel to its former glory is convincing, and his

acting skillset has much progressed, along with his faux Indian accent, since his performance in Danny Boyle's Oscar winning *Slumdog Millionaire*.

Although the film is very comedic in nature, the touching messages carried throughout, along with side plots involving love dilemmas, make for a film that will keep you on your toes. All in all, this movie, brimming with outstanding performances owing to its talented cast, is an uplifting tale of a group of people that discover a different culture and develop a new outlook on life. Through shared experiences, they make friends and some find love along the way by letting go of their past.

## Where's Buffy when you need her?

### The Cabin in the Woods

**Director** Drew Goddard  
**Screenwriters** Joss Whedon, Drew Goddard  
**Cast** Kristen Connolly, Chris Hemsworth, Jesse William, Fran Kranz, Anna Hutchison

#### Lucia Podhorska

Usually, I am not a fan of horror movies, but knowing that this was written by Joss Whedon – the genius behind *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* – was enough to make me risk potential nightmares and watch it. And I'm glad I did – even though I haven't really been able to sleep since.

Together with Drew Goddard, Whedon has brought audiences a retelling of a classic horror story, with numerous modern and humorous twists. For those unfamiliar with the tale – a group of people (generally teenagers or ridiculously hot young adults) go to a deserted cabin in the woods for a weekend getaway, but not everyone manages to come back home as they are soon killed off by some crazy woodfolk. I can't really give away much more of



the plot, as the best thing about this movie is not quite knowing what exactly you're getting yourself into.

Shot back in 2009, the release date of the movie was pushed back indefinitely due to financial difficulties at MGM Studios. Being aware of the fate of many of Whedon's projects, I had pretty much given up hope that this would ever make it to cinemas, and so was pleasantly surprised when the promotional posters first appeared. The success – both critical and commercial – of the film is, in my opinion, not that

surprising, as Joss Whedon doesn't do anything by halves and audiences can once again expect a viewing experience that is equal parts original, intelligent, satirical and comical. The laugh-out-loud moments were my favourite part of the movie, as they gave the whole thing a very surreal feel while also allowing me to calm down after a jump-out-of-my-seat scene.

I might be exaggerating the overall scariness of the movie (please bear in mind that I'm a bit of a wimp), so don't let that put you off watching this. It

is definitely nowhere near as scary as *The Woman in Black*, for example. The characters are genuinely entertaining – especially Marty (Kranz from *Dollhouse*) – and you're kept guessing until the very end of the movie as to what is really going on. Goddard, who has previously worked with Whedon on *Buffy* and J.J. Abrams on *Lost*, makes his directorial debut and does a fine job.

Described by Whedon as a 'critique of what we love and hate about horror movies,' the film manages to have copious amounts of blood and gore

without making viewers uncomfortable. The ending felt a bit rushed, but it was still completely unexpected. Fans of Whedon's previous works will be pleased with this offering, whilst – I hope – newcomers will also appreciate his oftentimes undervalued talent as a storyteller. *The Cabin in the Woods* might not be for everyone, but I for one thought it was good fun and recommend it if you enjoy movies that are unafraid to take risks and that are not at all how they appear to be at first glance.

# In brief: what we watched over Easter



## 21 Jump Street

American teen comedy isn't dead after all. Two rookie cops (Channing Tatum, Jonah Hill) are assigned an undercover mission in a high-school to track down the supplier of a deadly new drug. Hilarity ensues as the two thirty-something year-olds try to fit in whilst realising that the high-school they left behind years ago isn't quite the same anymore. The shockingly brilliant Johnny Depp cameo is a huge plus.



## Act of Valour

A shamelessly patriotic film made by Americans, for Americans: real U.S. SEALs were used for this, which more than explains the stilted acting. Holding them back more is the paper-thin script that gives us no insight into any of its characters, and so even its attempt at tear-jerking drama never quite works. The combat scenes however, are undeniably impressive. Think of it as a fancy recruitment piece.



## Battleship

Five far superior and technologically advanced alien ships land on Earth after nosy scientists thought it would be a good idea to bother them on their own planet. Now the fate humanity rests on three human navy ships as they go head-to-head. Sounds ridiculous and, for the most part, it is, but the carefully crafted action scenes are so entertaining that you might not even notice the film's many holes.



## Bel Ami

R-Patz decides to stick his schlong where it doesn't belong, sleeping his way through the richest, most powerful married women in 1880s Paris, France. The three ladies who fall for his looks (Uma Thurman, Kristin Scott Thomas, Christina Ricci) fare better than Pattinson's rather one-dimensional performance, but the film's sensual ambiance almost makes up for the leading man's lack of magnetic charisma.



## Contraband

Although retired from his life of illegal smuggling, family man Chris (Mark Wahlberg) is forced back into pulling one last job for his screw-up brother-in-law who ends up owing money to dangerous men. There are moments of genuine tension, but it's more of a rehash of the same thing. Wahlberg doesn't disappoint in an easy role, and he's supported by the suitably insane Giovanni Ribisi as the villain.



## Gone

The only thing worse than the wide-eyed and otherwise blank Amanda Seyfried going on a mad rampage to find her past kidnapper who has now abducted her sister, is that this thinly drawn psychological thriller makes very little sense. Add to that there is actually no moment of genuine tension due to so many absurd plot developments and silly characters. Most definitely one to avoid and ignore.



## In Darkness

Last year's Oscar Best Foreign Language Film nominee, this extraordinary true story of an initially greedy city plumber (Robert Wieckiewicz, on top form) hiding a dozen or so Jews in the complicated underground sewers during World War II, is both a haunting and deeply touching tale. It's long, with its fair share of heavily dramatised moments, but the final emotional payoff is well worth waiting for.



## John Carter

This box-office failure will cost Disney around 200 million dollars but financial loss doesn't necessarily mean bad film. Burdened with an unappealing title, an unknown hero and giant insect aliens, there is no way this could have marketed well enough to pull in the big crowd. But Disney's latest attempt at the superhero genre remains an entertaining spectacle, full of colourful images and breath-taking action.



## Mirror Mirror

The tacky marketing doesn't do this film justice. It may not be a radical reimagining of the classic tale but with director Tarsem Singh's focus on dazzling visuals and stunning costumes, the first "Snow White" adaptation of 2012, is worth checking out. Julia Roberts is at her hilarious best as the evil queen, Lily Collins is innocently beautiful, and Armie Hammer is effortlessly charming as the prince.



## Salmon Fishing in the Yemen

Two of the most likable actors from Britain (Emily Blunt, Ewan McGregor) form a sweet and charming duo in this sugary sweet rom-com. What they get up to is dead predictable from its uninspired title, but Lasse Hallstrom's latest is a highly enjoyable blend of drama and comedy, the latter thanks to the priceless Kristin Scott Thomas.



## The Hunger Games

A thought-provoking, futuristic thriller that is superbly acted especially from the young members of its cast (Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson), as two of 24 teenagers forced to fight to their deaths until there is one victor, whilst the whole world watches them for amusement. The powerful social commentary makes for an interesting watch, but just don't expect a bloody American *Battle Royale*.



## The Raven

When a deranged psychopath decides to reenact all the grizzly murders written in Edgar Allan Poe's gothic horror stories, it is up to the author himself (an eccentric yet oddly brilliant John Cusack) to outsmart this obsessed-fan-turned-serial-killer. Part torture horror, part detective thriller, part period drama, it's an entertaining enough, yet not-at-all deep, exploration of the much-celebrated novelist.



## This Must Be the Place

Playing a retired rock star who goes on a journey of self-discovery following the death of his father, the usually intense and fiery Sean Penn's incredibly soft-spoken, gentle performance is the absolute highlight of this otherwise slightly chaotic and messy road-trip movie in which the long-lost son seeks out the man who humiliated his recently passed father during World War Two.



## We Bought a Zoo

Matt Damon is a widower who doesn't have a clue on how to raise his two kids. Wanting a fresh start, he buys a house that comes with a zoo, to renovate and reopen it for business. Difficulties lie ahead, including his angry son, money problems, pedantic zoo inspectors, and escaping animals. It does take forever to get to its predictable happy ending, but Damon's likable performance keeps everything together.



## Wrath of the Titans

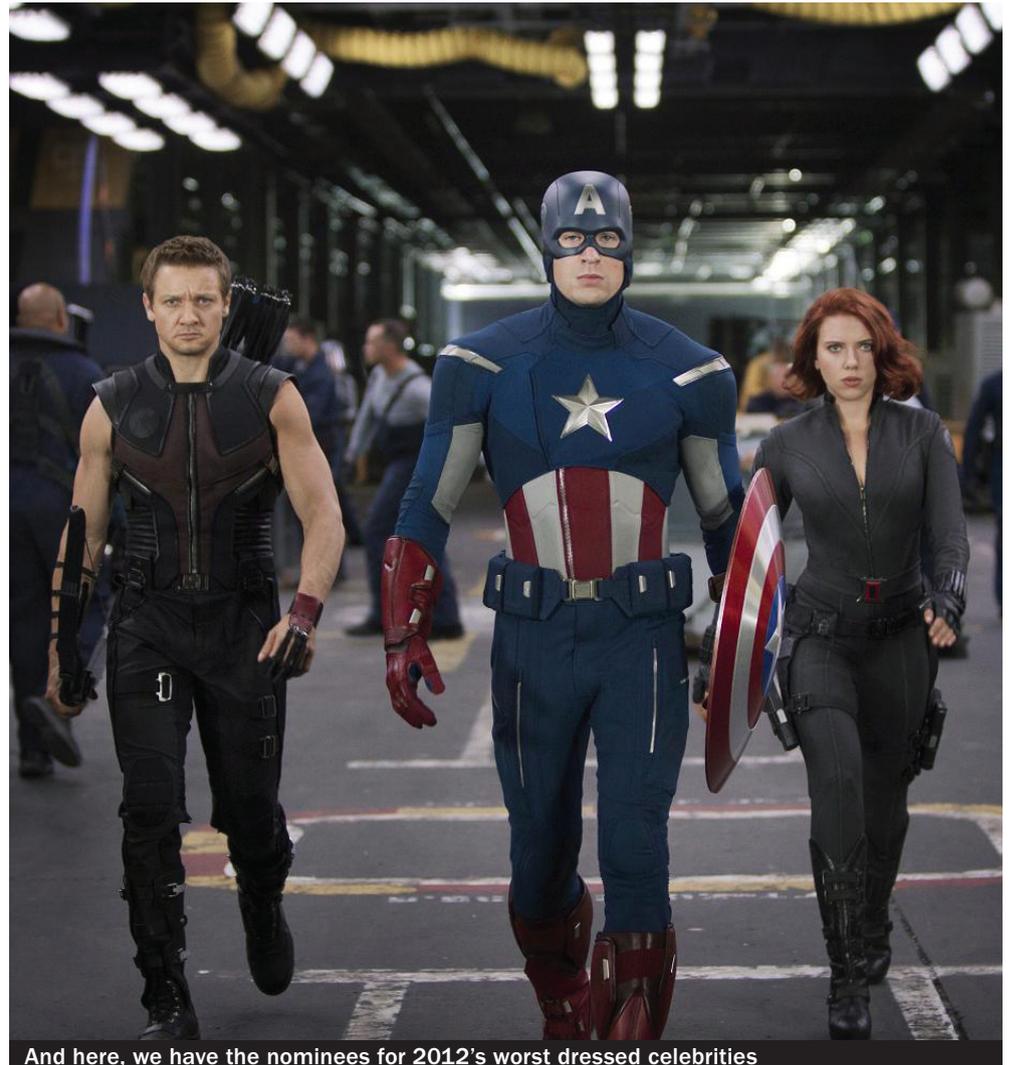
This time, unlike its predecessor, there are actual Titans, but everything else is a mess. The plot and character developments don't make any sense, and despite the loud action sequences, the film doesn't know what to do with Perseus (Sam Worthington). Once again tasked with saving the world from evil Greek Gods, he embarks on a dull quest with absolutely useless "warriors" (e.g. Rosamund Pike).



# Assemble for *Avengers Assemble*



Place your bets everyone, place your bets! Who'll win this fight?



And here, we have the nominees for 2012's worst dressed celebrities

## Avengers Assemble

**Director** Joss Whedon  
**Screenwriters** Zak Penn, Joss Whedon, Stan Lee, Jack Kirby  
**Cast** Robert Downey Jr., Chris Hemsworth, Chris Evans, Scarlett Johansson, Mark Ruffalo, Jeremy Renner, Samuel L. Jackson, Tom Hiddleston

### John Park

Whether you like it or not, The Avengers have been assembled, and the lineup is unbelievably impressive; there are six pumped up heroes, an intense director of a top-secret organisation who brings them together, and a villain commanding an army out to annihilate Earth. There, that's the general gist of the plot; the kind of formula many superhero films put to use. But *Avengers Assemble* (an unfortunate last-minute title change here in the U.K.) is a lot more than that. Joss Whedon's mass ensemble, 200 million-dollar rollercoaster ride makes the two-and-a-half-hour long running time worth every minute, as Whedon pays as much attention to his many characters and humour as he does to delivering the high-budget spectacle.

It takes a while to actually get every-

one in the same room. And even after that Nick Fury's (Jackson) job isn't quite complete. With big egos and personality differences, characters clash, and as Bruce Banner (Ruffalo) correctly points out, they're not a team, but instead a time bomb, a term Dr. Banner himself is all too familiar with, since he turns into a giant raging green monster if he fails to control his anger. Captain America (Evans), a former WWII soldier transported and adjusting to the 21st Century (long story, watch his film released last year for details), works through his nightmares by taking out his frustration at the hopelessly vulnerable punching bags he has lined up. He too, cannot be said to have a sound mind.

The fact that it's Loki (Hiddleston), Thor's (Hemsworth) brother, who is out for Earth's destruction arouses some conflicted feelings. Thor wants to reach out to his brother with sentiment, whereas a certain arrogant yet brilliantly intelligent and self-proclaimed billionaire philanthropist has a problem with that approach. Of course, Tony Stark (Downey Jr.), the Iron Man, is not someone who plays well with others. Oh, and that Stark doesn't respond well to orders? Captain America, always the dutiful soldier, might have a problem

with that too. The confrontations these characters often get into show that, despite their extraordinary powers, deep down they are flawed creatures like the rest of us; Whedon, although not so heavy-handedly, shows the weaknesses they share, furthering exploring everyone's unique identity.

So the superhuman heroes are struggling to be merry. But what about the two agents already a part of the Fury-directed S.H.I.E.L.D.? They are Natasha Romanoff, aka Black Widow (Johansson), a deadly spy/assassin, and Clint Barton, aka Hawkeye (Renner), an expert archer. Barton gets into a little trouble of his own in the killer opening scene directed with flash and necessary pace by Whedon, who knows how to start off the most anticipated film of the year. Thanks to Loki, a whole base is wiped out in the first ten minutes of the film, and from this point on, we know that a) Samuel L. Jackson is pissed off, and b) Whedon means business: a combination that produces something truly wonderful.

When the heroes can't quite play along, Whedon rightly hits the pause button on the action, whilst using every change he gets to slip in a line or two generating quality laughs. This way he gives the film a much-needed breather,

whilst also building his characters even more. A lot of credit must go to Downey Jr., who has owned the role of Iron Man ever since his first outing, and the jokes he delivers are pure comedy gold. The unexpected surprise here however, is Ruffalo, who in his first ever portrayal of Dr. Banner comes out as the real winner both in terms of his contribution to the team as well as his several scene-stealing moments. Both Eric Bana and Edward Norton have tried in the past to bring out their own versions of The Hulk, but Ruffalo, comically timid and nerdy before he turns green, is who truly embodies the role, and he deserves a feature film of his own in the future.

As tension escalates and the fate of humanity hangs in the balance of what these six individuals are capable of, an endless swarm of aliens start invading Earth, and it's time for the heroes to unleash their abilities and fight a highly outnumbered war. And from previous films, we have seen what Captain America, Iron Man, Thor and The Hulk can do. Although there is no short supply of focus on their action highlights, *Avengers Assemble* is absolutely right in not sidelining any of its team members. The less familiar, seemingly weaker, more human players, Romanoff and Barton, are given just as much time

to shine on their own terms. Johansson gets to twist and bend her body as she takes down multiple targets with her fancy moves, and Renner doesn't disappoint in another action role following his impressive stint with *Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol*. The fact that he's an archer may scream snooze fest, but make no mistake: with his wide range of slick arrows, Hawkeye turns into a valuable member of the initiative.

Squaring off against the good guys is the lone-standing but insane and at times creepy Hiddleston. He has more determination and vengeful anger this time around, shown very clearly in his disturbing eyes and smiles, and it's a role that Hiddleston commands with fiery intensity, even more so than his last outing with *Thor*.

The action, as expected, is breathtakingly fun, and the exhilarating excitement on screen once The Avengers unite under one common goal is astonishing. The danger with a superhero ensemble piece like this is overcrowding, but within its healthy running time, all six protagonists are given proper attention to, and Whedon finds that right balance between full-blown action and spot-on humour. More superhero films are lined up for 2012, and *Avengers Assemble* has truly set the bar a lot higher.

# GAMES

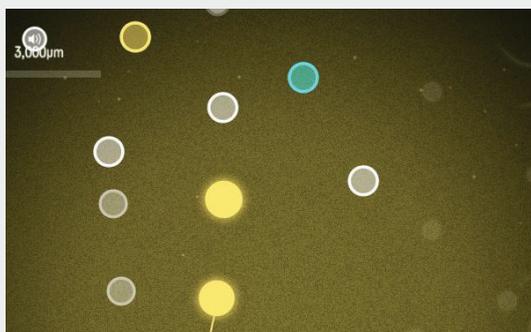
games.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Free Web Games

Oh, so you have exams huh? Really, really tough ones that could determine the rest of your life, eh? Well, who cares about revision when you could be enjoying these two totally awesome web games that you can play right now in your web browser. In order to play these you're going to need the Adobe Flash Player plug-in, which can be installed from <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>

### Axon

<http://www.newgrounds.com/portal/view/592325>



As a biochemist who's taken a course in neuroscience (never mind that I probably failed it) a game titled Axon naturally grabs my attention. Would I be treated to an educational game detailing the physiological properties of a neuron? Thankfully not.

Axon is instead a simple, addictive game in which you 'grow' a neuron by connecting it up to balls of protein, steadily increasing its length. Beyond facing off invading neurons that wrestle for available space you're also on a time limit, and waiting too long before making a new connection kills off your budding neuron. Snag four gold proteins in a row and your amacrine cell just became a trunk dorsal root sensory neuron! (That's good, by the way.)

### Eggstinction

<http://www.newgrounds.com/portal/view/592709>



So you're not into biochemistry? How about archaeology? More specifically, DINOSAURS.

Being a newly-hatched dinosaur is (or was) pretty tough, and no-one likes the hassle of fighting off alien invaders seconds after hatching. And yet, this is what you are tasked with doing, be it with mini-guns, rocket launchers, or a whole host of other weapons that probably didn't exist in the Late Cretaceous period. Deal enough damage and you can Digimon-style evolve into a laser-spewing T-Rex for a few seconds. Take THAT Darwin.

This game is crazy insane, crazy fun, and certainly good enough to hold off revision for a little longer.

# A very Odd-World indeed

## Laurence Pope on how Oddworld's rampant industrialisation makes for a pretty cracking game series

It's a shame Oddworld Inhabitants, an American game company founded way back when I was just knee-high to a grasshopper, stopped making games. Why? Because they made some pretty kick-ass stuff, that's why. So kick-ass in fact that many modern-day game developers could learn a thing or two from them. They won't, obviously — until reading this piece, that is. Maybe.

For the unfamiliar, Oddworld Inhabitants were the creators behind the Oddworld universe, the backdrop for their game series, the *Oddworld Quintology*, a planned pentology that ended up a tetralogy. Though the series didn't extend as far as they had planned the universe they had created by the time they threw in the towel was already packed with a multitude of playable and non-playable races. In the first game alone you're introduced to Mudokons, Glukkons, Sligs, Slogs, Scrabs and Paramites.

More importantly they're not just thrown together in a clumsy, failed attempt to create 'richness' or 'variety'. The races of Oddworld are woven together in a credible backstory that would fill more pages than my editor would allow for, but in essence revolves around a dystopian society created by the industrial Glukkons, who are in the process of enslaving, exploiting or eating every other species on the planet. There is of course more to it than that, and as the series progresses more races and challenges appear, as does more story to blend it all together.

The first two games of the series, *Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee* and *Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus*, are arguably the two games that defined the Oddworld series, and in part the PlayStation era; *Abe's Oddysee* was one of the games



Unlike most other games from the Playstation era *Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus*, released in 1998, still holds up to this day, both graphically and gameplay-wise

placed on the demo disk that came boxed with the now primitive gaming console.

Unlike the following two games, *Munch's Oddysee* and *Stranger's Wrath*, both in 3D, *Oddysee* and *Exoddus* were 2D platformers. The art sported by both games was well ahead of its time, and has often been described as early PS2 generation rather than PS1. Game elements were rendered with 3D modelling systems, with the backgrounds being hand-painted, a feature that has helped the games remain attractive even whilst game graphics improved around it.

As I've said many times in the past, graphics do not make a game. They help it for sure, but as *Transformers: Dark of the Moon* showed

us great effects can't make up for shoddy plot (sorry Mike), just like shiny graphics can't cover shoddy control systems or easy 'challenges'. In some ways Oddworld Inhabitants overcompensated — both games are mind-bogglingly hard to complete, let alone complete to 100%. The protagonist of both titles, Abe, is tasked with saving his fellow people, the Mudokons, from Glukkon extortion, first from the delightfully named meat factory Rupture Farms and then from the bottling plant Soulstorm Brew. Along the way he's harassed by guards, assaulted by meat packing machinery and a whole host of other dangers that are all one-shot kills.

**“Timing and accuracy are both key; miss a jump by even a fraction and you're gone. Duck a second too late and you're squashed.”**

Timing and accuracy are both key; miss a jump by an even fraction and you're gone. Duck a second too late and you're squashed. Secret rooms are rampant: in both games there's one in the very first screen, and there even are secret rooms WITHIN secret rooms. *Oddysee* and *Exoddus* come from an era when challenges were incredibly difficult, and going back to them years on makes for a very refreshing change of pace.

Both games are available on the PC via Steam, or there are always some discs floating about on Amazon. Pick up copies if you can! (Or, at least, after your exams are over.)



Abe's nickname of 'Stitch Lips' is not entirely unjustified

# CHURCH

[everynation.co.uk](http://everynation.co.uk)

EVERY NATION

**SUNDAYS**  
ACTIVITY SPACE 1  
**STUDENT UNION**

Free café – 5:30  
**LIVE BAND**



# TRAVEL

## Wishing you were here



'Milking it in Delhi' by Prakash Singh

## Travel on your doorstep



Stunning skylines from Parliament Hill

**Get there:** Gospel Oak/Hampstead (Overground)  
**See:** One of the best skyline views of London  
**Eat:** Amazing gastropub fare at The Bull and Last  
**Cost:** £10-20 for a meal, or £2-7 for nibbles

Visit Parliament Hill **this Saturday** to browse one of the most picturesque weekly farmers' markets in London and for stunning views of the capital's landmarks. Situated on a corner of Hampstead Heath, which covers 800 acres of grassland, this is the perfect place for a chilled evening out in one of the most beautiful parts of North London.

**Planning a trip?** Want some quick advice from experienced travellers? Have a travelling tale to share with Imperial?

Drop us an email at [travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk), or send us a tweet using [#FelixTravel](https://twitter.com/FelixTravel)

# Summer festival ambitions

Why Benicassim should be the top of your list for 2012



Sweaty, sun-singed and fired up on sangria: maybe you should reconsider those summer internship plans

## Chris Richardson

I'm sure we all agree that much of the British festival scene is in tatters. Sure, if you're willing to deviate from the likes of Reading you might catch some acts that are a little (read: endlessly) more interesting than Kasabian, but ultimately you'll probably still be forking out far too much money to drag your wellingtons through the rainy mud as the droves of post-GCSE revellers continue to feel each other up and piss on your tent.

For these reasons, most people seem to have made the transition to the international festivals on offer around Europe. At a minimum, it's an excuse to check out a new place and meet a wider variety of people. Added bonuses include lower ticket prices, and a better chance of sunshine. While there are many such festivals around these days, Benicassim continues to be a personal favourite. Thanks to other travel plans I've not been in attendance over the past couple of years, which is why I'm excited about my triumphant return to Spain's gorgeous East coast.

Far from being just a festival, Benicassim doubles up as an excellent beach holiday: there's great beach to be discovered if you head a little out of town, and the holiday element is made even easier by the 8 nights free camping included in the festival ticket. There's no better way to meet new people before the festival, or unwind for a few days after the partying, than kicking back on the beach with a jug of sangria and ridiculous sun hat. It's also possible to squeeze in a lot of beach time throughout the festival, as the music doesn't even start until the sun sets, allowing you to recover from the night before and kick-start yourself for the evening's affairs.

And let's not forget the music. Rather than honing in on vegan crunk or moombahton in particular, the festival offers an eclectic mix of sounds to cater for all palettes. Between the three

stages and the silent disco, you'd struggle to avoid being entertained. The fact that the music rolls on all night also means that you can dance your socks off without really worrying too much about hyperthermia or sunburn. Being a creature of the night I often find it hard to get my body moving before lunchtime, making the evening-centred music just perfect.

## "eclectic beats, fantastic eateries and sunshiny days"

The town itself is also absolutely lovely, and surprisingly affordable if you're willing to hop away from the main streets into the smaller side streets, where you'll easily find paella and sangria at about half the price and double the quality. Having such great restaurants and countless hip bars at your disposal makes the festival camping experience a lot more enjoyable. Being quaint and small, the contents of Benicassim are also in such close proximity that any form of navigation is pretty much idiot proof.

While some festival-goers opt to travel over to the festival with the beloved folk at RyanJet, an increasing number are starting to turn the journey into a bit of a road trip. Providing you have the time, this is certainly a great way to do it. After all, Benicassim is just a short drive from the charming old city of Valencia. In addition to more great beaches, restaurants and bars, the city has countless interesting things to check out. Beyond its incredible exterior, the City of Arts and Science offers a slightly different angle on the topics covered at the institutions around South Ken, and neighbourhoods like the *Barri del Carme* manage to capture so well the iconic

features of traditional Spanish life.

The city is now equipped with *Valenbisi*, the city's answer to the Boris Bike. Of course, given the sheer flatness of Valencia and the lack of lunatic city boys on the roads, the experience here is a lot more serene. It's a great way to amble through the old neighbourhoods and stumble across undiscovered boutiques and hidden landscapes looking out of the city. And of course, the city is equipped with plenty of affordable accommodation to rest your weary head at the end of it all.

Benicassim ticks all the boxes for me: eclectic beats, fantastic eateries and sunshiny days. The international festival brings together a great mix of people in an interesting place that'll keep you busy until your eight day camping pass expires. And if you've got the funds, it's a great lead-in to nearby Valencia and the rest of Europe. It just doesn't make sense to keep bouncing around the same old festivals in England when there's more out there to see. As far as festivals go, Felix Travel's mind is made up. Hopefully you won't miss out and we'll see you on the beach for a refreshing sangria!



**Benicassim 2012** is taking place from the **12th to the 15th of July**, and features over 100 acts across 3 stages. This year's lineup features the legendary Bob Dylan and New Order, recently reunited Stone Roses, Florence and the Machine, and a huge list of other brilliant acts from across the globe. For tickets and further information visit [FiberFib.com](http://FiberFib.com) or contact the Editor.

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# PUZZLES

## Nonogram – Abstract

			3	1															
			1	1							1		1	1					
			1	1	1						1	1	1	3	2				
	6	6	1	3	7	7	7	4	4	3	2	3	4	2	2				
	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	3	4	2	2	2				
	4	4	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	5	1	5				
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It's back with a vengeance.

The cells in a grid have to be coloured or left blank according to numbers at the side of the grid.

The numbers measure how many un-

broken lines of filled-in squares there are in any given row or column. Look at last week's solution to see what a typical solution looks like.

This week, the overall solution won't

yield a worthwhile picture, seeing as our artistic skills are suffering from near constant revision.

As usual, answers to [puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk).

## It's Murdoch O'Clock!



Rupert and James can't quite recall who to talk about at the Leveson Inquiry. Help them to remember the following celebrities! Answers on a postcard to [puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk).



## Cryptic Crossword 1,516

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9				10								11		
12		13						14						
15						16		17				18		
19				20								21		
22		23				24		25						26
27				28								29	30	
31								32						

### Across

- 1 In the kitchen, Edward mixed and condensed (9)
- 6 Enjoyable government issue mushrooms (5)
- 9 Nothing before large end (5)
- 10 Brutally slain with talons (5)
- 11 Twitch twitch in twitch (3)
- 12 First lord swallows charged atom (7)
- 14 Puzzle over anagram without a first thought (7)
- 15 Tramps in league with psycho boss (5)
- 16 Cold damage scrambles to be first (9)
- 19 Southern volunteer with Catholic in caper (9)
- 21 Be allowed onto atoll (5)
- 22 Fish boat in garage (3,4)
- 25 Rotate pi to mecca to uncover condensed work (7)
- 27 Allegedly works to deserve a vase (3)
- 28 A piece in pieces (5)
- 29 Seam containing a gram to register (5)
- 31 Twentieth sword in tent (5)
- 32 Weed source foundation (5,4)

### Down

- 1 Army sounds honest but quiet (5)
- 2 That is, about a hundred diamonds (3)
- 3 Artist comes between king and the mayor's sea-monsters (7)
- 4 Point on alleged seer earns no money (3-6)
- 5 Float into 500th fissure (5)
- 6 Angle ten back in draughty stockings (4,3)
- 7 Annotator doesn't hesitate (5)
- 8 Lying about earnings is crooked, it seems (9)
- 13 Revolution rather than piece? (5)
- 15 Chief nobleman numbers a group (4,5)
- 17 Instruments from sun god after gold chest (9)
- 18 I go around truncated low ice house (5)
- 20 Proper drink for about a pound a litre in the east (4,3)
- 21 Cecil is confused about stalactites (7)
- 23 Nur (3,2)
- 24 One thousand rang for a stripped whale carcass (5)
- 26 Choose to let the European community disperse (5)
- 30 Head off after the German pair (3)

### FUCWIT League Leader Board

Stay on the edge of your seat and check back next week for the latest scores!

The Felix University/College-Wide Invitational Tournament League is both new and improved, with prizes for both the winning team and the winning individual. Points are awarded for each puzzle solved, double if you're the first correct solution.

The competition is hotting up, each wave of solutions more climactic than the last. Can you really afford to miss out?

Send your solutions to [puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk)!

# BACK PAGE

## Recession hits Sport section

Back page “shadow of its former self”, says Sport Editor

**T**he world of sport was plunged into turmoil this week when it emerged that Britain’s descent into a double-dip recession has shaken the confidence of those working on Felix Sport. “We deal in sport every day and we know when it’s on shaky ground. We don’t care if Roy Hodgson is set to be England’s saviour, these are dangerous times. Also we have exams.”

The news arrived as a severe blow to the average man on the street: “This is a severe blow,” said one individual who wished to remain anonymous, primarily because he’s my housemate and was the only person I asked.

“You know, you go from the highs of that Varsity Live Blog last term ([felix-online.co.uk/varsity/](http://felix-online.co.uk/varsity/)) to this. Questions really need to be asked. And then

answered. And then lessons need to be learnt too.”

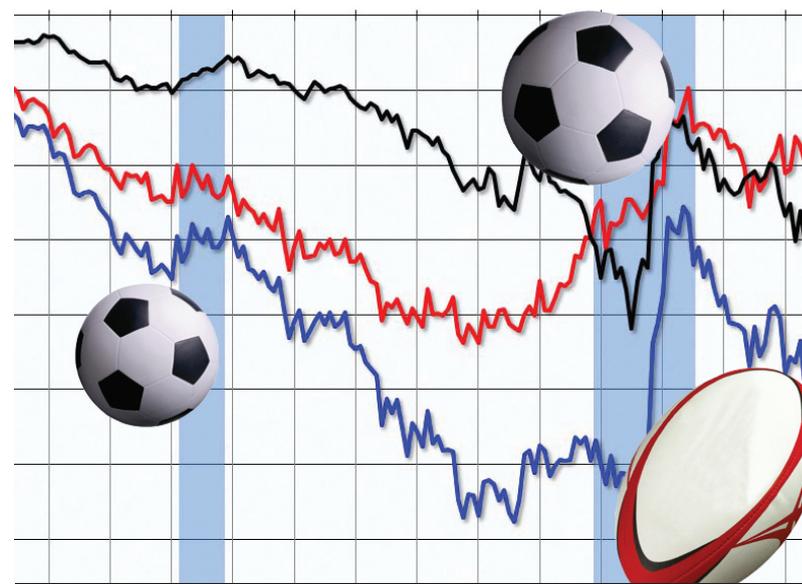
**“I’m really excited about the return of those Credit Crunch Lunches”**

Not everyone was apprehensive about the ongoing financial situation, however. One individual that Felix found camped out on Level 4 of Central Library assessed the positives that

a recession brings to the local food and drink industry.

“I’m really excited about the return of those Credit Crunch Lunches they do around South Kensington. I don’t even care if they cost the same as any other meal usually does, they really capture the zeitgeist of impending financial doom.”

**Can you help?** Are you a sport fanatic mourning this week’s missing sport section, but with the instinct, tenacity, wit, charm, and copious chutzpah to carry the torch for Felix Sport for the next few weeks and perhaps even beyond? Failing that, what should we have here in place of the usual Sport section? So many questions, so little time. Get in touch with us at [felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:felix@imperial.ac.uk).



This easy to understand infographic explains everything

## Another marquee discovered

Who wants to revise outside anyway?

### Marquee Joe

Speculation is still rife over the coming and going of the marquee on the Queen’s Lawn, despite the fact that it was revealed a while back that it was the holding place of the 34th International Charing Cross Symposium during the period of 14 – 17 April. Despite the onset of vascular specialists on Imperial, some students have still been floating around theories that even

L. Ron Hubbard would probably have balked at.

“I’m pretty sure they excavated the Ark of the Covenant,” said one fresher following the event.

“Nah mate, it’s a sophisticated way of keeping everyone from revising on the grass,” a passer-by suggested.

A third party swiftly joined the impromptu debate, “Oh come on, it’s clearly a giant professorial sweat lodge.”

Tensions are clearly high, yet this is not the end of the intrinsic relationship between the Queen’s Lawn and marquees. On Thursday construction was spotted of a new marquee ahead of next week’s Postgraduate Graduation Ceremony, to be held on Wednesday 9 May.

Plans to launch a ‘Marquee Watch’ campaign on this very page met a serious obstacle when it emerged that no-one particularly cared enough.

Watch this space.



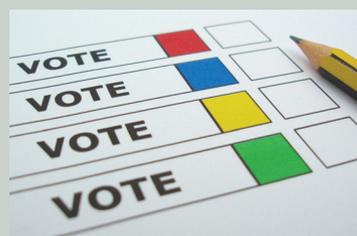
“Hey, is that a new sweat lodge?” “No, it’s another marquee.”

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