

FELIX

"Keep the Cat Free"



07/12/12
Issue 1534
felixonline.co.uk

Lording it over us?

An interview with Lord Norton about the House of Lords and reform. Pages 8-9



Pick up your copy. It may even be next to Felix...

Massive building project underway

Maciej Matuszewski Reporter
Tim Arbabzadah Editor-in-Chief

Any keen eyed students who were at Imperial last year will definitely notice the differences around campus, specifically the Mechanical Engineering Building. This is not a simple re-cladding to revamp the building's look. It is in fact part of a major redevelopment of building on the South Kensington campus. Steve Howe, Director of Capital Projects and Planning, has said that what you see is just the "tip of the iceberg" describing the plans as a "huge project".

The multi million pound project, believed to be costing roughly £39m, has been termed the Aeronautical Mechanical Engineering Project (AMP). It will be performed over a number of years, meaning some changes may not even be seen by the current cohort of first year students. >>7



Imperial get all Gok Wan with a refurbishment and refreshment. Before (above) and after (below) of the Mechanical Engineering building



Over £45,000 raised in Charity Week



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A company trying to get female students to pay for their student loan with escorting has been found

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Following on from the story about the fees paid by international students, we get some opinions on the matter

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BUSINESS



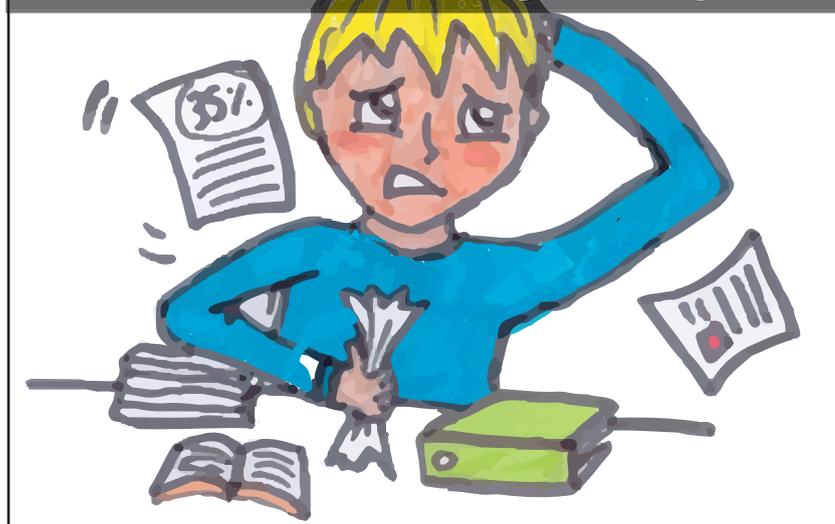
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Fashion has been gone for a while but makes a glorious return just before the end of term. This week, is high fashion becoming fast fashion?



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It's the best holiday movies for the ridiculously cold nights. Home Alone is a must really.



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LAST CHANCE

The last chance this week to storm up the leaderboard and become the biggest FUCWIT of them all. Plus a festive, massive, nonogram.



CLASSIFIEDS

Tutor wanted for A Level

I am looking for a tutor to review my daughter's A2 Biology coursework (EDEXCEL). She is repeating in January '12 but is getting little help from school and we need someone who is experienced with EDEXCEL coursework and can give her advice on where she is going wrong and how to improve it. There probably is no need for you to meet my daughter and everything can be done by email/phone. She can send a pdf by email and we can discuss how you can help, what you will charge and how to pay you.

If interested get in contact with Paul
email: tutor_needed@afe2.org.uk

LOLCAT OF THE WEEK: Finding these is a perk of the job



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Have a great holiday everyone!

Merry Christmas



Tim Arbabzadah
Editor-in-Chief



The title says it all really! Merry Christmas and have a fantastic new year everybody. If you have exams, then, as I said before: relax, panic a bit, but try to take at very least Christmas Day and New Year's Eve off. Saying that, I'm pretty sure that for my third and fourth year exams I didn't take New Year's Eve off. Not to rub it in your faces, but this is the first exam free holiday I've had in years and I'm frankly absolutely loving it.

I also want to use this opportunity and space to openly invite every single person to write for Felix! Honestly, I don't bite, unless you're into that sort of thing. It really is a great break from your work and can be lots of fun. Plus, groan, it may even look alright on your CV.

There are some other issues to address though. The Holland Club will soon be closing its doors. Maybe it'll pop

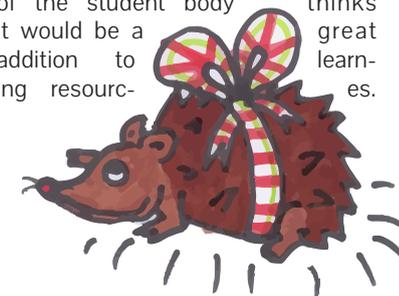
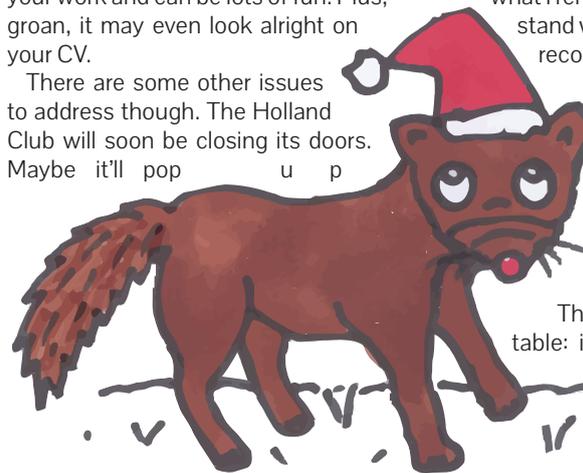
somewhere else at some point, but it will be interesting to see what happens with that space.

Podcasting, well, it's a reality in a way. It was a big thing a while ago and they are crawling their way out. By that I mean that they are being rolled out at a pace that a snail would scorn for being "a bit slow". The big question really is: if others can do it, why can't we? Yeah, obviously you shouldn't just do something as others do, but that's not the point here.

This is an issue I find interesting as I think it would have been pretty useful. There was one lecturer who did podcasts in my time, but that was it from what I remember. I don't understand what's so tough about recording something and shoving it on the internet. Obviously, that's not the hard part. The tough bit is the boring stuff about people not wanting to be seen lecturing in public.

This raises the inevitable: if you've got nothing to hide, then what's the problem question. That is-

sue is actually just one of many with lecture videos/audio, but, as it's Christmas, and unless you want smaller pretty pictures (which you don't) I will leave it at that and let you mull over the idea of podcasts yourself. They were brought up, specifically unprompted, in back questionnaires. However, think about this: do you want them if you don't have them? Do you use them at all if you do? It would be really interesting to see how much of the student body thinks it would be a great addition to learning resources.





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NEWS

Over £45,000 raised at Charity Week

Hazem El Turk

Reporter

Last month Imperial saw the return of Charity Week, an annual campaign organised by the Islamic Society with the aim of raising as much money as possible for orphans and needy children worldwide. This year the Week was held between 29 November and 4 December, however some events were held outside of this week due to room booking constraints. Months of preparation and behind the scenes work culminated in a series of exciting and innovative events, including the now much renowned 'Battle of the Societies' quiz night, which saw over 20 societies fight it out to win the coveted trophy and all the glory that comes along with it (won by the Tamil Society), as well as street and tube collections all over West London which over 100 students took part in. The Week reached its climax with the prestigious Charity Week Annual Dinner, this year held in Hammersmith Town Hall, which was attended by over 250 Imperial students and staff, including Paul Beaumont, Union President, and Deputy President Henry Whittaker, Deputy President (Clubs & Societies). A massive £18,000 was raised on the night, partly down to the ex-

citing auction (which saw a chocolate cake go for £1,250), but also due to the generosity of 21 individuals who each sponsored an orphan for a year's duration.

Charity Week is a national campaign facilitated by one of the UK's leading charities – Islamic Relief – one of 14 charities that make up the UK's Disaster Emergency Committee. For this specific campaign, they operate under a 100% donation policy, meaning that every penny raised by students will go towards helping orphans and needy children worldwide (the exact destinations will be voted on shortly), without there being any admin costs. As stated in their mission statement, they allocate resources regardless of race, political affiliation, gender or belief, and without expecting anything in return.

All in all, Imperial College students managed to raise £46,939, coming third after UCL and Kings (who raised £50,748 and £50,369 respectively), but considering that Imperial has nearly half the number of students that either institution has, this was a tremendous effort by all those who participated and donated, and the Islamic Society said that they would like to thank everyone who took part.



It's the return of the yard

Tim Arbabzadah Editor-in-Chief

Paul Beaumont, Union President, has proposed a new "Retailing of Alcohol" policy to the Executive Committee (Exec.), which will change the bar opening hours and yards.

The bar will now have to remain open until the advertised closing time (which is section 5 of the policy).

Yards, as mentioned above, will also be affected. This is the largest insertion into the policy. It will mean that they are allowed and it sets out the process for doing yards. The procedure will be how it has been ever since they were brought back – yards were banned for a short period of time.

The policy was one of Beaumont's manifesto points and he said that he wanted to "review it whilst remaining within the law and the spirit of the law".

The Alcohol Policy Committee was something that was put in place in 2010 by the DPFS of the time, but, technically, it was breaking the Constitution (the document that governs the rules by which the Union is to be run). It contravened the Constitution by having staff on a committee, which is prohibited, and so, is now gone.

So Close: Imperial at THE Awards

Kanchanca Niruttan Reporter

Imperial College was nominated for two Times Higher Education Awards this year: Most Improved Student Experience and Outstanding Support for Early Career Researchers. Imperial however lost out in each category, losing to the University of Chester and the University of York respectively. The nominations; particularly for 'Most Improved Student Experience' ought to be good news for Imperial that has lagged behind other universities in student satisfaction ratings which has contributed to disappointing Guardian Rankings in recent years. (It came in 13th in the 2013 rankings behind the University of Bath, The University of Essex and perhaps most disturbingly, UCL).

The awards that aim to "recognize excellence and reward extraordinary innovation, talent and imagination of UK higher education" were initiated in 2007. Judging was carried out "by a distinguished panel of experts" that included Sir Deian Hopkin, President of the National Library of Wales and Liam Burns, President of the National Union of Students. Universi-



ties that do not traditionally top the League Tables have dominated the Awards; it indicates perhaps a degree of complacency among the 'more prestigious' institutions. Imperial has however won awards for 'Outstanding Contribution to Innovation and Technology' in 2009 and for Outstanding Support for Early Career Researchers in 2008.

Times Higher Education currently ranks Imperial 8th in the world putting it in A league with MIT and

Stamford and a couple of places ahead of Yale and Columbia (but a mere 49 places ahead of King's College London). The rankings have however been criticized for the importance given to citations in calculating its rankings which has led to a sidelining of universities whose language of instruction isn't English. Imperial currently ranks among the Top 10 universities in the world among most major surveys including the QS Rankings and THE.

Sponsored Editorial

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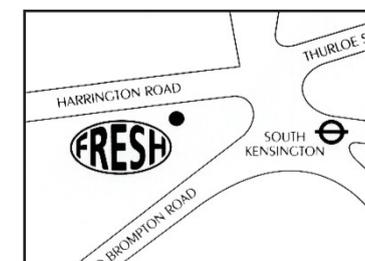
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Podcasting arrives, well, sort of...



Tim Arbabzadah

Nida Mahmud News Editor

The implementation of video lecture recordings across the College has been a hot topic for discussion of late. Although video lectures have been piloted in Imperial for certain years in certain departments, the scheme is not yet available to all students.

The Panopto lecture recording suite is being implemented over a three year plan across the College. However, the enthusiasm exhibited by departments varies drastically. Although College need to allay staff fears to ensure students in certain departments are not disadvantaged by lecturers not participating in this scheme. Members of the Union have praised the College for the introduction of online lectures as they believe it will enable students to revise better and be an attractive plus point for prospective students.

Video podcasts can help students consolidate their learning, particularly students whose first language is not English or those who find note taking difficult. The scheme should ideally be available to all students, both undergraduates as

well as taught postgraduates; especially as this academic year the number of incoming postgraduates exceeded undergraduates.

The College is behind international competitors such as MIT in the delivery of video lectures. Other UK institutions such as Cambridge, UCL, Manchester and Oxford have podcasts and video lectures to aid in learning. Manchester is one of the Universities that was short-listed for the Times Higher Education Awards 2012 for the Outstanding ICT Initiative of the Year award. Furthermore, Manchester is also running workshops to educate participants about the best practice in the use of lecture capture in teaching and learning.

Felix caught up with the Chemistry Department to learn about the use of technology in lectures. Alan Spivey, Director of Undergraduate Studies, commented on the fact several staff have produced podcasts of their undergraduate lectures. As well as this, a series of one-off "research highlights" lectures have been recorded as podcasts. "There are several factors limiting further expansion. The process for getting these recordings approved by Comms and

uploaded to the College iTunesU site is not as straightforward as would be ideal and their uploader does not support enhanced podcasts. The slow emergence of tools to allow lecturers to assess the likely benefit and IP/copyright position of prospective recordings is another factor. With the introduction of Panopto recording facilities into many College lecture theatres, the opportunity for making podcasts has increased and the energy barrier to do this has also decreased. The main advantage of the iTunes-U format over Panopto is the compatibility with mobile devices as I see it"

Doug Hunt, Deputy President (Education) said: "Other Russell Group Universities are offering audiovisual lecture podcasts to their students and to stop Imperial students being dissatisfied, we should be installing it across our lecture theatres as quick as possible, while putting enough resources behind training academics to use it.

It needs to be rapidly rolled out to prevent some students in certain departments and years who are not receiving it, becoming disgruntled and the College needs to handle its implementation, the best it can by effectively communicating with all students on this issue."

The Business School currently has video lectures. Other departments such as Chemistry and Maths are piloting it. The Chemistry pilot is focused on first and second years. The issues that have been raised by staff include: intellectual property, decline in student attendance to lectures, illegal distribution, rights of students asking questions, the time taken to upload the videos and the cost incurred due to installation. Other department specific issues, such as for physics, include the cost of filming equipment for the different boards; but a student has suggested the lecture can be filmed by a student moving with the board.

All too small scale rollout



Jason Parmar

Deputy President (Education) 2011-12

Video podcasting is undoubtedly beneficial for students here at Imperial College, as well as potentially beneficial to the Imperial College brand.

The reason I campaigned for podcasting is because I believe it can significantly improve the student learning experience and further enhance students understanding of key concepts taught at university.

Students can't always grasp concepts or all content during a lecture, either they have momentary lapses in concentration or can't quite pick things up as fast as some. Through re-watching, these students can pick up what they missed out on, as well as reinforce previous understanding, this aiding their understanding on the whole.

There were really just two main qualms I've come across that have hindered a significantly large scale rollout of podcasting, although we successfully achieved a small scale rollout that I believe has gone successfully. The first was attendance and the second, a more significant reason, was cost.

The first problem I came across were claims, or worries, that attendance would fall. However, I saw no evidence what-so-ever for this being true, to the contrary, I was actually told of evidence that it had no effect at all by lecturers who had piloted it and also from the business school who have had lecture captures for several years now.

Interestingly, the statistics from the Business School showed large spikes in re-watches of lectures during revision, as students re-watched specific parts of lectures to refine their understanding or lectures they had in fact attended. Some students also

... until there's a bigger budget to be spend on the student experience we'll have to be happy with smaller scale podcasting projects within some departments"

do use the system to re-watch missed lectures, often as they are unable to make it due to other commitments (e.g. job interviews), not because they're lazy. All-in-all if students are going to miss lectures, they are going to miss lectures, regardless of whether the lectures are recorded or not.

The more significant of the two problems is cost.

This is what I believe is the real reason there hasn't been a significantly large scale podcasting initiative introduced (although, again, I want reiterate there has been a small-scale rollout this year).

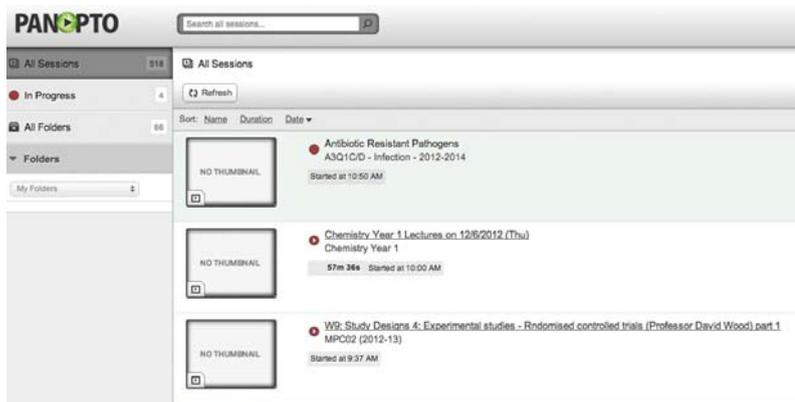
The cost, depending on how large the project, could be very large for the College to bear.

With the large expansion of the College to Imperial West and not to mention gigantic government cuts, it's understandable that the College has had to tighten its belt.

Although we are told that the College is focusing on the student experience, it would appear that the budget for this focus is minimal, which, although annoying, is understandable.

For us to live up to what we are often referred to as "the MIT of the UK", we would need a big injection of cash to rollout the system for all lectures, in all lecture theatres at the College and also expand our ICT resources & staffing as well as departmental staff to manage the large system.

Overall, at the moment, I feel that podcasting is underway on the small scale and has the potential for a large full scale rollout in the next 5 years. However, until there's a bigger budget to be spend on the student experience we'll have to be happy with smaller scale podcasting projects within some departments that choose to adopt it.



A screenshot of Panopto - where all podcasts can be found

UCL piloted a programme of lecture recordings in 2008/09 to determine if there was a requirement for a podcasting service. The success of the pilot has led to UCL investing in recording equipment for lecture theaters. They found:

- "The staff felt that podcasting had added value to their teaching and would recommend it to others.
- 85% of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that podcasts aided understanding of the module.
- 91% agreed or strongly agreed

that podcasts would be useful for revision - one student noted that the podcasts were 'probably the best form of revision material I have come across'.

- Some students noted they helped support different learning styles.
- Students valued the opportunity to clarify topics and concepts which had been missed during the class, and to improve their notes.
- A number of students asked for 'podcasting in every lecture'.

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NEWS

Female students recruited to be escorts

Aemun Reza

News Editor

The Independent has uncovered that female students are being offered up to £15,000 a year to pay for their university fees in return for having sex with a stranger. A website called SponsorAScholar.co.uk proclaimed that they have set 1,400 women between the ages of 17-24 with wealthy businessmen that funded their studies.

The website advertises women with glowing testimonials from satisfied customers and claims that most of the sponsors are “men between the ages of 28 and 50 who run their own successful business and want to have discreet adventures with a student whilst helping them fund their studies through a scholarship”.

The website states: “Because of the considerable sums of money our sponsors are offering in scholarship, they tell us that they have expectations of a high level of sexual intimacy with their chosen student.”

SponsorAScholar.co.uk offers young women “up to 100% of your Tuition Fees” in return for two-hour sessions with men in hotel rooms or private flats up to four times per term.

The website takes advantage of the ‘grey area’ of Britain’s sex laws that allow escort agencies to function legitimately by offering introductions between clients and sex workers. It is illegal to run a website where sex is offered for money but as a bypass services can offer models and escorts instead. People can only be arrested for controlling prostitution if there is direct evidence that sex is being exchanged for money.

On the SponsorAScholar.co.uk website the extensive terms and conditions describe an agreement which covers time and companionship to-

gether. It says the “level of sexual intimacy” is privately agreed between student and sponsor whilst the owners of the website are not responsible for what occurs between consenting adults in a hotel room.

An under-cover female reporter for *The Independent* secretly filmed an interview she had with a male ‘assessor’ from SponsorAScholar.co.uk who told her that: “The more you’re prepared to do, the more interest you’re going to get, obviously the more sponsorship amount you’re going to get for that.”

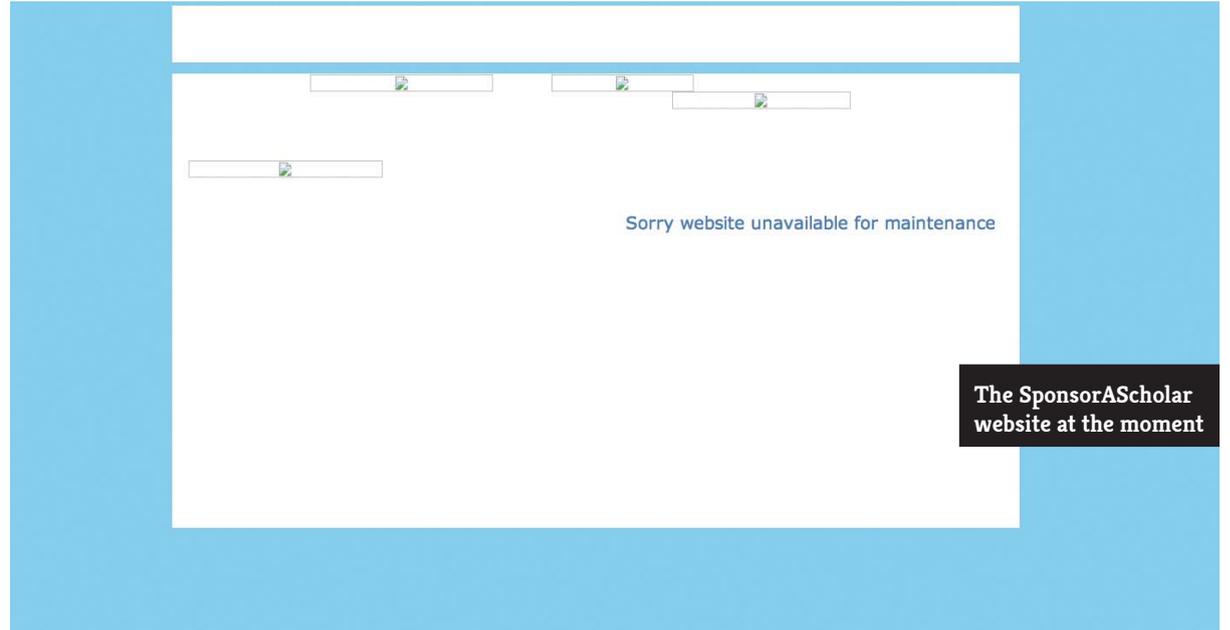
He went on to say that she would have to undergo a ‘practical assessment’ with him for ‘quality control’ purposes and explained that “We have to do that, to make sure when we put you in front of your sponsor you’re confident in doing the things you said you would do.”

The man added: “You see what you’re trying to do is attract a certain level of sponsorship, you don’t want to go up there saying you know you’re not even going to hold hands type of thing... cause you’re not going to attract any interest at all”

The male ‘assessor’ was later identified as Mark Lancaster. He refused to speak about the Sponsor a Scholar scheme when asked by a television programme. The website was taken down soon after the *Independent* published the story and secretly filmed video. The website has been altered and now say: “Sorry website unavailable for maintenance”.

Despite the website closing, a female escort claimed that she was approached by a man claiming to be from the website and are still trying to find new “scholars”.

Kelley Temple, NUS Women’s Officer, said: “It appears to be... exploiting the fact that women students are in dire financial situations in pursuit of an education.”



An anonymous student told Channel 4 News that when she went to a rented flat with the man for an interview, she was made to dress up in a schoolgirl outfit and pressured into having sex with her ‘assessor’.

When it came to the ‘practical’ part of the interview, the student found herself unable to fight off his advances. She said, “then he just kissed me before I really had time to think about it or ask any questions... and I just froze because I really didn’t know what to do. Then he started undressing me.”

“I was in a different city, and he’d picked me up from outside the place and walked me in so in my mind I was, like ‘I can’t leave right now because I don’t know where I am and if I do leave and he chases me, I don’t know what to do.’ So I just froze and went along with what he was doing.”

Even after having sex with the stranger she was sent an email rejecting her from the scholarship programme but

told her to reapply later. She said she had contacted the website as she was struggling to pay her university fees.

Concerns have been raised that due to the rise in tuition fees, some students will end up graduating with debts of up to £53,000. It has been thought that due to these huge debts students are turning to ulterior forms of employment such as pole dancing, escort work or prostitution in order to pay back these debts.

It has been said that university welfare officers are largely unaware of these situations and are poorly equipped to deal with these issues and the increase in young student’s involvement which such activities.

Research by Dr Ron Roberts, of the University of Kingston, published in 2010 suggested that one in four students know someone who had worked in the sex industry to fund their studies – up from three per cent in 1990. Dr Roberts found 16 per cent would consider working in the industry

while more than one in 10 were open to the idea of being an escort.

Dr Dan Boucher, Director of Parliamentary Affairs for the International Christian Charity Care, said young people should not have to subject themselves to exploitation in order to complete their studies. “*The Independent’s* investigation has revealed one particular and disturbing manifestation of sexual exploitation.

“With a background of an 8 per cent fall in applications to university this year and mounting concerns about debts, it is clear that sexual predators have seen an opportunity to exploit the financial vulnerability of struggling students,” he said.

The police are currently examining the evidence collected during *The Independent’s* investigation and will try to establish whether the people behind the website can be prosecuted for the accused offences of incitement into prostitution and sexual exploitation.

Feasting on sciences at Imperial Fringe

Yulia Negreskul

Reporter

Following the success of last week’s Imperial Fringe event focused on bone research taking place across the College, which was estimated to have gathered around 400 people throughout the evening with 120 people participating in the panel discussion, a new event called ‘A Feast of the Sciences’ is about to take place.

This month’s event includes a wide range of disciplines such as thermodynamics, biotechnology, agriculture, medicine and many others. Nevertheless, all of them are there to celebrate the festive spirit to create a true ‘Feast

for the Sciences’.

The evening will start with the presentation of Miss Cakehead, a renowned confectioner who’s famous for a variety of her works, including ‘Eat your heart out’ series of anatomically decorated edible arts. This time the audience will be delighted with a variety of Christmas dainties made of sponge and sugar. This will be followed by a great number of other yummy treats including ice cream out of a fire extinguisher presented by Professor in thermodynamics Erich Muller, honey from Imperial’s own hives located in the garden just behind Ethos and Alchemists Dreams offering to create and taste your own seasonal drinks.

On a more serious note, the speakers will touch upon the issues of food production including Imperial’s own fertilizing machine, its sustainability and security as well as health related food concerns such as obesity.

Event organiser Harriet Martin said: “A food and drink-themed Imperial Fringe at Christmas is the perfect seasonal way of introducing people to some of the College’s research. We hope that members of the Imperial community as well as external audiences will enjoy the exciting activities, as well as sampling some festive delights.”

The event is open to general public including, of course, Imperial stu-



dents, and will take place on Thursday the 13 December 2012 at the Main Entrance of the South Kensington

campus between 5 and 8 pm, however, everyone is free to come and go as please.

Business school gets triple accreditation

Nida Mahmud

News Editor

Imperial College Business School has achieved triple accreditation. This comes after meeting the required standard from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

The Business school is now in the top 1% of business schools in the world to have triple accreditation from the largest and influential business school accreditation associations. These associations are the AMBA (Association of MBAs), EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) and now the AACSB.

Professor Dorothy Griffiths, Acting Principal for the Business School, said: "We are delighted with today's announcement that confirms our position as a world-leading Business School. Our programmes combine the highest academic standards with the very latest business practices. By virtue of our unique position in Im-

perial College London, we are able to collaborate with world-class experts in science, engineering, technology and healthcare, to ensure that our research has real impact and influence in business and government, as well as engaging the wider public."

The AACSB international accreditation is achieved after the AACSB staff undertakes a meticulous review of the business courses, which can take years to complete. There are 21 quality standards that must be met. The criteria relates to faculty, resources, the communication between staff and students, and the demonstration of a commitment of continuous improvement of the programmes.

Factors mentioned in the business school review report include: the high quality faculty and staff, the commitment to excellence, the strong research environment and the supportive culture. The review also states that the applied, practical nature of the programmes is valued by students.

The President and CEO of AACSB



Imperial College London

International commented as follows: "We warmly congratulate Imperial College Business School and welcome it into the AACSB family of internationally accredited business schools.

AACSB accreditation represents the highest achievement for an educational institution and its college of business. The Principal, faculty, directors and administrative staff of the

Business School are to be commended for their dedication and commitment to continuous improvement, and for their role in earning initial accreditation."

An international response

Maciej Matuszewski

Reporter

Concerns have been raised about the high fees that Imperial charges international students. The average (excluding medicine) yearly undergraduate international fee is over £24000. This is greater than most UK other UK universities – UCL charges £18500 a year for laboratory based subjects while Kings charges £17800. The fees, however, are one par with Oxbridge, once their additional College fees are taken into account, and the most prestigious US universities – MIT asks students for \$40732, equivalent to about £25580.

Fen Wong, a Chemical Engineering student whose course costs £24500 a year, told Felix that she "definitely think we're being overcharged". She said that while she has "access to the pilot plant, which is supposed to be a huge deal and a great learning experience" and while she maintains that "Imperial is a good university, if not in terms of student satisfaction, then in terms of education" she thinks that the College "would need gold-plated furniture and a butler to carry my bags around in order for the fees to be worth it". Another Chemical Engineer, first year David Leng, added that Imperial was "the most expensive University in the UK" that he's seen and that while he believes that it "is of good quality" its "still a bit too ex-



Outi Supponen

pensive".

Second year Aeronautical Engineering student Quraisyia Talib-Merican went further, questioning whether the College provides good enough facilities for the amount that it charges: "My course costs £24000 in Imperial. It costs £13000 in City [University Lond]. Compared both courses; pretty much the same [and] City has better facilities."

Winston Barry Lee concurred, saying: "I think we are overcharged. It is a shame that Imperial treats overseas students as some sort of fixed source of income because they know that overseas students value the Imperial brand. Imperial is very inaccessible to those who have academic merits, but not the means."

Not all international students, however, believe that the College charges an excessive amount. Emmilyn Yeoh,

a first year Materials student told Felix that she didn't "mind if we pay slightly more than other people (like maybe 18-19k or something) for the facilities, location and stuff." Another student, who wished to remain anonymous urged those who think the fees are too high to consider the many additional resources provided in and around College, saying: "Go hog library, bother tutors, careers fairs come to your doorstep, take advantage of all of this! London is so central, such a fantastic environment to work and play and live in. For those who want to learn more there are ample libraries, museums, landmarks and all of it is steeped in history."

While opinion about the fees remains divided it seems unlikely that the College is set to cut down on such a lucrative income source any time soon.

Grantham says scientists should be more vocal

Outi Supponen



Tim Arbabzadah Editor-in-Chief

Jeremy Grantham, who, through the Grantham Foundation for the Protection of the Environment, funds the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change (of which there is one in Imperial) has written for *Nature* saying that scientists should "Be persuasive. Be brave. Be arrested (if necessary)". He wanted scientists to speak out forcefully over issues that concern

global warming. He argued that there was a resource crisis coming and that more scientists need to speak out about climate change. In the opinion piece for *Nature* he said: "It is crucial that scientists sound a more realistic, more desperate, note on global warning". In the article he also discusses economic issues such as food prices. He ended with: "This is not only the crisis of your lives – it is also the crisis of our species' existence. I implore you to be brave."

Not just a superficial change for South Ken

Imperial College London



» continued from the front page

The AMP has many aims that are all hoped to work together to refurbish and refresh the buildings, improve the thermal performance, and (subjectively, of course) make them more aesthetically pleasing. The thermal efficiency increase should cause savings that mean that the building work will pay for itself

More specifically, the aims of the project, as told to Felix by Steve Howe, are:

- Revitalising the services within the Mechanical Engineering building.
- Extensively refurbish the southern column and south-eastern annexe of the Mechanical Engineering building; this is so that Aeronautics can move in there.
- Using the above, release the Roderic Hill (Aeronautics building) and Bone buildings (Chemical Engineering currently inhabit it).
- Refurbishment of the northern and central columns of the Mechanical Engineering building to accommodate Mechanical Engineering.
- Connecting the Mechanical Engineering and Skempton buildings to allow teaching facilities to be shared between multiple departments (Mechanical, Civil and Aeronautical Engineering and the Business School).
- Improve the aesthetics of the Im-

perial buildings with more modern facades to complete Exhibition Road and Unwin Road.

The Mechanical Engineering building was the first to be noticeably changing. The services within it have reached the end of their working life and are increasing the risk associated with operations inside the building. Mr Howe said that “numerous elements and services are approaching the end of their life expectancy” and mentioned the “pressing need to renew the areas to meet the current requirement for a world leading engineering research and teaching facility”. The AMP gives the opportunity to meet current health and safety standards as well as energy standards.

During the project there will be an almost musical chairs required to complete it. The optimum phasing has been found by representatives from the departments involved agreeing them. The phasing of the project, which is to say the practicality of where and how it is done, has been agreed on a “room by room” basis. Mr Howe also said that “particular requirements for teaching, research or support functions” have been recognised, hence the room by room analysis.

Discussing the project, Mr Howe said that “the AMP projects provides for the collocation of the Department of Aeronautics into the existing Mechanical Engineering Annexe and Skempton Buildings and, at the same time, refurbish the remainder of the

Mechanical Engineering Building”. He went on to say that the project “aims to refurbish the buildings in a way that ensures their long-term sustainability but which avoids the cost of radical restructuring.” At the same time, the project will address the fact that some buildings are over 40 years old. How said that it will address “the backlog of maintenance issues, the external fabric of the building and the services, plant and infrastructure”. The project will also free up space, which is currently occupied by the Roderick Hill and ACEX buildings.

With respect to the new facade of the Mechanical Engineering building, construction of which was completed in early summer of this year, there has been some response from those involved. Plans for the works on the building, situated in the South East corner of the South Kensington Campus, were proposed in 2010, when the College was informed by local authorities of the full extent of their plans for improvements to Exhibition Road. Plans for the £1.19 million project were approved in 2011, with the initial plans being produced by regular College architects Sheppard Robson and further design, as well as the final construction, carried out by D&B Facades.

Facilities Management Director Nicholas Roalfe told Felix: “My view is that the Recladded Annex provides the first visual impression of Imperial College London especially with the Lon-

Main aims of the AMP

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don 2012 Olympic and World Wide audience. The location is very prominent with the Exhibition Road Campus buildings, including the setting with the other neighbouring buildings and the Local Authorities improvements to Exhibition Road.

In terms of quality, the impression is of a new building albeit the original Annex Building structure remains. In my opinion, it is a vast improvement on the original 50+ year old building, whose window and fabric had gone past its economic life. To date, we have received many compliments from College Staff, Students and Local Neighbours”

As well as improving the building’s outer image the new facade was also

designed to improve its energy efficiency. Nicholas Roalfe added: “the cladding is also having a significant impact on the building thermal performance, it isn’t just a redecoration of the building”.

The new facade is just the first phase Aeronautical Mechanical Engineering Project, which aims to refurbish not only the Mechanical Engineering building but also parts of Skempton, with a final goal of creating space to allow the Department of Aeronautical Engineering to move into the buildings and join the other departments already housed there. The next stage of the project is under design review, with the College aiming to finish the entire development in 2017.



A Lordable conversation

Alex Morton interviews constitutional expert **Lord Norton** about constitutional reform

Alex Morton: Thank you very much for giving up your time this afternoon Lord Norton. Could you briefly explain the principal functions of the House of Lords, and why it matters?

Lord Norton: It matters because it is the second chamber, and because it is not elected it is complimentary to the first chamber, and that is what gives it its value as it's neither duplicating nor challenging the elected first chamber. It adds value by pursuing tasks that the first chamber doesn't have the time, the political will, or it may not have the resources. Its principal tasks are legislative scrutiny, different from the Commons, which focuses particularly on the principle – so if you like, the ends of legislation – we don't seek to challenge that as the unelected chamber. So we focus on the means and therefore devote our time to looking at the detail, trying to improve legislation. This can be time consuming and can be very demanding and the sort of thing we can do because of the nature of our membership and because we don't need to do things, which if you like, are high profile – [we don't] get political attention the way that MPs do. That is why we compliment the Commons and the nature of our membership allows us to do it, because we are a House of experience and expertise, which can therefore examine legislation in a way the elected politicians may not have the time or the will so to do.

Legislative scrutiny is our main activity, it takes fifty to sixty per cent of our time in the chamber, and then executive scrutiny, or scrutiny of public policy. Not just [UK] Government policy, but European policy as well, that is one of our strengths. And again, we seek to compliment the work of the Commons, we don't duplicate, we're increasingly specialised through the use of committees, but whereas the Commons has got departmental select committees, Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, and so on, we go for cross cutting committees that transcend different departments. So we add value by looking at areas that are not covered usually by the Commons, and again complementarity, for example, in scrutiny of European Union proposals. The Commons has the European Union scrutiny committee, but that checks every document, if you like it goes for breadth, against particular changes. We go for depth with our EU committee, just selecting those proposals which are politically or legally

significant, adopt to one of the sub-committees and therefore examined it in detail. So there is great liaison between the two committees, we complement one another, and it makes us one of the more effective Parliaments within the EU with scrutiny of the EU proposals.

Our third function is essentially debate, not just debating legislation, but debating issues, many of which come outside the context of the normal party debate and issues that can affect people or sections or particular groups in society, which may not be that popular, but nonetheless have a case that deserves at least to be heard. And we've got as a subset of that debate function, an agenda setting role. So sometimes we will be able to bring on to the agenda a subject that's not been considered before or hasn't been considered for quite a considerable period of time – make sure it's heard, but not for resolution or legislation, but to get the ball rolling on the agenda. Good recent example: assisted dying. Controversial, deserves to have an airing, some MPs a bit wary, controversial, keep an eye on their constituents. We raise it, get the ball rolling.

AM: Considering your unelected nature, how can the public actively engage with you if are not accountable at the ballot box?

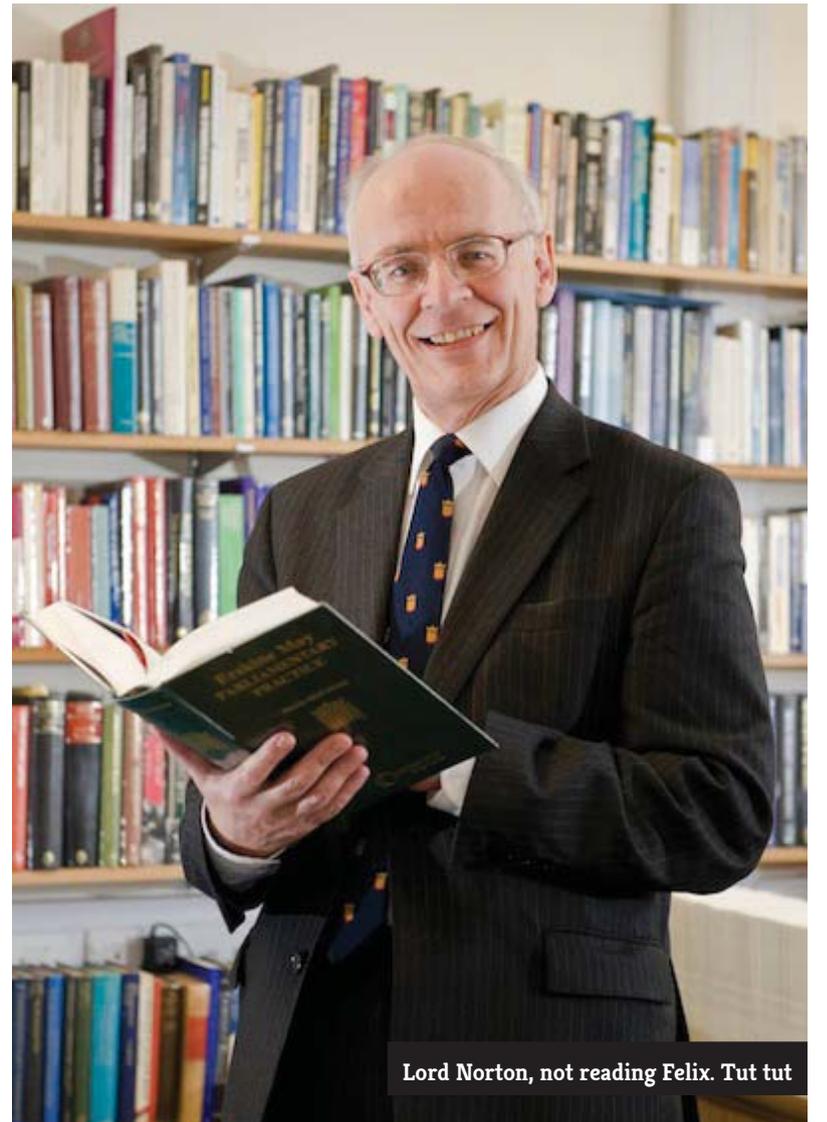
LN: They can engage with us quite easily in the same way they can with MPs, in a sense, insofar as we're accountable, it's more collectively through the Commons because ultimately the Commons can get its way. If you like, more generally, more basically, we are fairly transparent and people can see what we are doing, and we do welcome input. So we try to exploit all the opportunities we can to encourage people to make clear their views when committees are considering matters, or indeed when legislation is going through. Let's say it's a bill, which has been sent to a Joint Committee, the Lords members will be effective as the Commons members in soliciting views of interested parties. We do get lots of representation from individuals and from groups on an ever increasing scale. People are aware of what we are doing, and we welcome it, and we can engage with it because we've got members who can understand the subject and therefore can engage with people outside who are also informed about it. We can have a proper dialogue as a prelude to our scrutiny of legislation, and indeed of raising other

issues.

Also, we try to be fairly proactive. For example through the "Peers in Schools" programme, we are going into schools to explain what we're doing, and so far we've reached about fifty thousand. And of course we are reaching teachers who can then continue disseminating the information. So we are trying to engage with people. We are now trying to reach out more generally at the University level, so that people who weren't aware of what we're doing are now more aware [of both what we are doing] and the fact that they can have some engagement. We're as keen to hear from them as anyone else, in terms of making their views known to all.

AM: Earlier this year you were a member of the Joint Committee appointed to conduct pre-legislative scrutiny on the Draft House of Lords Reform Bill. As well as sitting on the committee, you were a signatory to the Alternative Report that was published. What prompted you and eleven other members to produce this report?

LN: A number of reasons, mainly the deficiencies with what the Government had brought forward in terms of their Draft Bill. We were limited, we had to deal with the bill before us, so it wasn't a case of looking at the issue from first principles, reform [by] electing the second chamber was taken as a given, and that's never really been addressed in terms of "Why?". We had to deal with the detail of the bill. The detail of the bill itself was fairly... deficient... for all sorts of reasons. It's a bad bill, lots of problems with it, including the attempt to try and ensure the primacy of the House of Commons, in relation to the Lords. The way they try to do that through Clause 2 was inadequate, and that wasn't just the view of those who signed the Alternative Report, it was the view of the whole committee. It was fairly unanimous. That was a particularly serious problem. There are others as well. So the report was flawed, our Joint Committee report drew attention to that, but the alternative report went further because we actually questioned the need for electing the second chamber and felt the need to stand back and look at the role of the House of Lords as part of Parliament and what they expect of Parliament in our political system. My argument is that the bill looks at it from the wrong end of the telescope. It's dealing with composition without



Lord Norton, not reading Felix. Tut tut

addressing form, and you need to start with what we expect the institution to do, then you create the people to carry out the specific tasks you expect of it. Not the other way round.

AM: How would you respond to comments, such as those from Lord Ashdown, that there are only a very few other chambers in the world which are non-elected? Do we want to be, as he puts it, in such company as Belarus, Bahrain and Yemen?

LN: Well, we're not. As I've pointed out to him, he's wrong. In many respects, he's blatantly got his figures wrong, both in terms of elected second chambers and indeed where they are elected, the relationship between them and the first chamber. So, bit flawed. There's only a minority of second chambers that are wholly elected, a minority are appointed, and the others are a mixture of them in form of composition. It varies, so you can't generalise particularly, but we can say we are not the only appointed second chamber. And even if we were the only

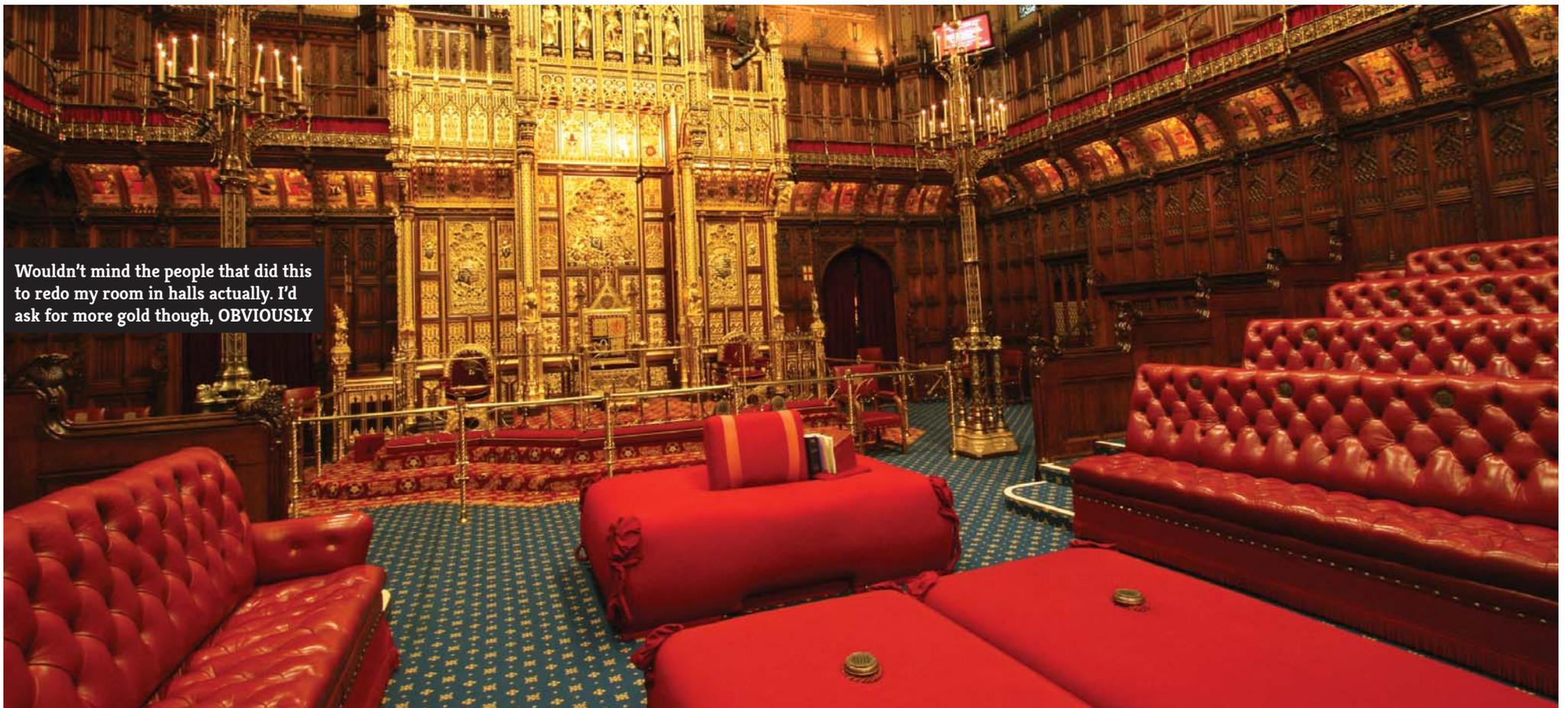
appointed second chamber, that's not an argument against having an appointed second chamber if you can demonstrate the benefits that derive from it. To say that there are elected second chambers elsewhere and they work is not to suggest in any way that they are better than the second chamber we have and the job that it does.

AM: Given that you are against the abolition of the House in its current form, what sort of reforms would you like to see introduced to the chamber?

LN: There are quite a lot of changes that can be made, because I'm in favour of reform but against election. I want it to be effective but not elective. It's really strengthening the existing House in what it does, because it does add value to the political process. However, an elected chamber arguably is value detracting as there is no obvious benefit that would derive from it in terms of what it would do, because, as electors would be voting for the second chamber on exactly the same ba-

Features Editors: Stephen Smith,
Caroline Wood
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FEATURES



Wouldn't mind the people that did this to redo my room in halls actually. I'd ask for more gold though, OBVIOUSLY

sis as they vote the first chamber, there would be an element of redundancy in the process. So it's a case of strengthening what it currently does. Some of that can be achieved by the House itself without legislation, and we've already strengthened our resources over the years and we continue to do it. We are looking at a lot of our procedures; [to] see how those could be strengthened. We've made some changes [and] we're discussing more. Also, enhancing our use of specialist committees, I want to see more evidence taking in dealing with legislation. But a number of changes require legislation – putting the Appointments Commission on a statutory basis, getting rid of the by-election of hereditary peers making them de facto Life Peers. We want to have provision for expulsion of some members, particularly if they have committed serious criminal offences, so to bring us into line with the procedures and rules of the Commons, but also, if necessary, to be able to expel members. I'd like to see a cap on the numbers as well (we're quite a large chamber), and make provision for those who don't attend, or have more direct methods to reduce the number of members. Those changes, I think, would enhance what the House

does. I think what it does, it does well, particularly, legislative scrutiny, the difference it makes there to legislation, but you must never be complacent in what we do well, we could do even better. So I think we need changes, and that's what we're exploring at the moment.

AM: Frequently, over the last decade or so, there has been considerable appetite for constitutional reform, recently the Fixed Term Parliament Act, and with the last Government, the abolition of the Law Lords and expulsion of the majority of the hereditary peers. Does this illustrate the dominance of the executive, and as such, were proposals properly scrutinised? If not how would you prevent that from occurring again?

LN: Well, to some extent they were, it depends on political will, but part of the problem is the government itself not fully appreciating the nature of constitutional change and that it should be subject to a somewhat different procedure than that for ordinary legislation. Getting the government to accept this is proving difficult, but what they've got to accept is that the constitution is bigger than the government. That is [to say that] government is the creature of the constitution and not the other way round. So they need to accept more that the Lords fulfil quite a good role, ultimately it's up to the Commons, but the Lords have been able to make a difference because of the scrutiny that is afforded, both when the legislation is going through, and through its committee work. The Constitution Committee in the House of Lords has been very influential in terms of the reports it has been producing on some of the

changes going through, and achieving some change and influencing the House on the stance it takes on them. Fixed Term Parliaments, a particular success in the last session on the Public Bodies Bill, which was changed quite dramatically in light of the work we did. So the Lords does quite a good job in that respect, but we are working hard to get the government to enhance, to look at the way it deals with constitutional measures and accept they are qualitatively distinctive and needs to be treated as such.

AM: I have a couple of questions from our readers. The first one I have is aside from how one would get your job, if you could draw up a constitution based on three principles, what would they be?

LN: I'm a bit wary of having a codified constitution and therefore ... it depends on principles. I can tell you about the basic tenets, in terms of form, but that would be to keep what we've got. Given the nature of our constitution, where we tend to go for what is known as positive constitutionalism, rather than like the States, which goes for negative constitutionalism. That is where there are certain principles, which take precedence, political principles that transcend all of the majority. We go somewhat towards the other end where the will of the majority will prevail, but tempered by Parliament and that's important. So, the three principles. One would retain the principle of Parliamentary Government, of government being chosen through the House of Commons and being answerable. That comes onto the second principle, which is accountability. To add to the core principle, accountability, which

the present system delivers because we have core accountability through elections to the House of Commons. Governments are chosen through elections to the House of Commons, and are answerable through elections to the House of Commons. That is fundamental. In this country, we know who is responsible for public policy, in a way that American citizens can't always identify who's responsible for American public policy. What if Congress overturns what the President wants? There's the question of accountability. So, Parliamentary Government, or if you like, Parliamentary Accountability. Now... choice as to what would come next in our... arrangement. Because one could go with the principle of maintaining a Union state, that'd possibly be one, where it is strengths from each part of the Union coming together, thus within a unitary state. So, I suppose those are the main ones, and an ancillary to core accountability of course, is maintaining the primacy of one legislature, having an elected chamber, which is necessary in democracy and sufficient.

AM: Another question was whether the omnipotence of the fifty per cent plus one majority is a weakness of British Democracy?

LN: No. There are all sorts of problems with supermajorities under our system, because they can be amended by legislation anyway, which would need an ordinary majority. No, I don't think there is a problem in our system, because there is core accountability, as I say, the government's elected through an elected House of Commons, and is answerable to the elected Commons. In other words, the government knows it can be turned out

at the next election, so even if it did just win with fifty per cent plus one, it knows it won't be normally able to engage in political musical chairs after the next election, as some systems can. It's that aspect which makes Government therefore responsive in between elections, which is another value to the system. So it's not, it tempers the arrogance of governments: if it ignores what the public think between elections, it's going to lose the next election. So it is tempered by that. So I think the way it comes together is, when you think about it, you have core accountability, you have effectiveness because the government can govern. It can deliver on the coherent programme of public policy, but it is also responsive between elections. It knows it wants to win the next election. And members of both Houses are more independent than they used to be – certainly the Commons – MPs [are] more willing to vote against their own side. So it tends to come together. You have accountability, effectiveness, responsiveness, in a way that few other systems have.

AM: Thank you for your time, Lord Norton.

LN: Thank you.

I want it
[Lords] to be
effective but
not elective

Guest talk:
Lord Norton

11th December at 7pm
Room G.01, RSM
Free for Imperial students
Brought to you by Conservative, Debating, and History societies.



Reporting back on an extraordinary

Phillip Rodriguez, an English teacher, writes about his summer spent in

Terelj is located 60km away from Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia. The national park has smooth sloping valleys that climb up to become rocky peaks. This past July, the rains were plentiful. Grass carpeted the landscape, though not the soft type you'd find in your lawn. Rather the blades grew in little clumps with wiry roots that ran deep into the dry earth. The hardy vegetation provided an abundance of food for the horses, cows, sheep and camels that seemed to have free roam of the park. In sharp contrast to the green underfoot, a deep blue sky spread overhead with clouds so high they hardly seemed to move.

A narrow strip of pothole riddled asphalt carved through the park and about 10km from the entrance the road passed alongside our campsite. We volunteers arrived first. Twelve Singaporeans, a Mongol cook, a social worker, two translators, and myself. We had a day's head start to prepare for the kids. When they came, the twenty-five little Mongolians shuffled out of their bus and made for the gers (tents). It took several minutes to get them settled down. Some fifteen minutes later, they were running amok exploring the camp. One boy hit another. Some tried to run off. The smaller children were crying. Our attempts to restore order amounted to nothing and the situation became more and more chaotic.

The children in the camp were not ordinary. They had been abandoned by their families, struck by misfortune, left to the vices of the street. The police had rounded the kids up and held them in a shelter. That was where we picked them up for the camp. In their world, authority and rules were lacking. We tried to keep them under control. We had to. How else could we manage the camp? The first day even-



tually drew to a close and we volunteers returned to our gers exhausted. It is an understatement to say we were shocked by the children's behaviour.

Day two: the situation got worse. The morning began with five of the boys disappearing from the camp. The group had hitched a passing car and returned to Ulan Bator. The police were brought in and they came down hard on the coordinators of the camp. It was several days until we heard from the police that they had made it back to the city, and in the time between, we were worried over their whereabouts. There was also concern that others might try to abandon camp. We took night shifts in the freezing Mongolian weather to ensure that children did not run away at night.

For classes, we broke the kids into two groups. I was in charge of teach-

ing English. The twelve or so kids sat at a table while I scrawled letters and numbers on a white board. They repeated words and made use of their workbooks. To reward them I gave out stickers that Stephanie had brought. The ones they loved were those of Winnie the Pooh and his friends, but the prospect of getting a sticker was not enough to keep them focused. Some refused to do anything, others wandered off, and those that did try were easily distracted. I mixed in a few games to maintain their attention. Explaining the rules and giving a demonstration on itself should not have been much work, but with these kids it took a great deal of effort. That was how it went with everything. The simplest of tasks demanded our utmost energy. For example, when we took a group photo, all we needed was for the children to sit down and remain still for ten seconds. However, as soon as one boy took his place another would jump up, scratch his head and pick his nose. Even with fourteen volunteers, we had to shout, point and pull to get them to do what we wanted.

Horseback riding was the highlight of the camp. One of our translators, the young and affable Bilguun, had the local nomads bring their horses to our camp. We rented fifteen of the animals for two hours. They were the small stocky variety known more for their stamina than their speed. I went with first group. Many of the children were natural-born horse riders. They smiled, they cheered, and they laughed as they rode round the Mongolian countryside for the first time in

their lives.

The great Genghis Khan has now been dead for over eight hundred years, but his legacy lives on in this country. Many of the boys bore his name, Chinggis, as pronounced in Mongolian. There was also a Temujin, the name the great Khan had before he became ruler. The other children in our camp had names that were harder to remember. There was Yataashk, Nemun, Babilguun, Sahnder, and so on. Since we failed to learn them right away we resorted to using nicknames. In the case of Sahnder, we called him 'Carry Me', because the boy went up to all of the volunteers and said those exact words while reaching up with his arms. And then there was 'Horny Boy' who had an affinity for the female volunteers and their womanly parts. Looking back, I might think it humorous that we called him that had I not known he had spent time on the streets hanging around prostitutes and pimps. It was that past that shaped him.

Sadly, the other children's pasts were no better. The boy Temujin had lost his father in a car accident. As a result, Temujin's family fell apart and his mother being unable to care for him, abandoned the boy. The siblings Pagma and Khan-tseg-rik, only four year olds, had been sent out by their aunt to beg for money. When the police caught them, the aunt refused to take them back. The authorities did what they could to place street children with relatives or in foster homes. I guess you could say the kids were broken, but if they were, they had grown resilient and strong



with time. I'd seen it a hundred times over. As much as they fought with each other, scraped up their legs and cried, they always bounced back with a smile.

In time, some of their good qualities surfaced. The 14 yr old boy Temujin was special in that he had a strong sense of propriety. Though he was a little fat and geeky, the other children did as he said. It was a respect that came from the care he openly gave. It could be something as simple as helping the others going to bed. The little ones needed that. They had no mother to tuck them in. No brother to lean on. The older children took on the roles of brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers. This was the world they came from.

The real darling of the camp was Tengis. He was a small boy with sandy brown hair, cherub cheeks and curious eyes. He certainly had cuteness in his favour, but it was his carefree, happy attitude that won us over. He was mostly smiles and giggles, even for no apparent reason. Incidentally, his birthday coincided with the camp. We celebrated in the kid's tent. Rather than a cake, Tengis received a chocolate pie with a single candle sticking out from the center. Sitting at the head of the table, he looked down and his brown eyes sparkled bright as the moment took hold in his heart. The tears came and we realized then it had likely



Primary experience in Mongolia

in Mongolia Summer Camp 2011



been the first birthday party anyone had thrown for him

In retrospect, I can now say that the children were all unique and special in their own way. I could write on and on about each of them. Like how we mistook the boy Chingu for a girl and did not realize our folly until one of us noticed he was peeing standing up. We simply assumed he was a girl because he had long hair, but young boys in Mongolia are like that. They get their first haircut at the age of four. Chingu got his a little earlier because we discovered he had head lice. As we cut off his locks with a pair of dull scissors, he beamed proudly, having entered the next symbolic stage of his young life. The other children who had lice reacted differently during their haircuts. They cried and pouted, and no amount of candy or comfort could appease them.

For a week, we spent roughly twelve hours a day with these children. The volunteers were sun burnt and sick from the weather, and our energy was exhausted. I admit I too was getting burnt out. I wanted to get back to the capital, have a hot shower, wash my clothes and drink myself in to a stupor. It would have to wait.

Our last full day at the camp was particularly rough. We had exhausted most of our ideas for activities and there was far too much free time for

the children to run around. Dinner was poor as we were finishing the last of our food.

After dinner, we had a final meeting with the kids. Stephanie had originally lied to the children that the camp would continue for several more days. She did it so they would not try running away, because the consensus was that none of them wanted to return to the shelter where they were often bullied by others and occasionally mistreated. When Stephanie admitted the truth the children seemed a little disappointed. She quickly shifted topic and handed out postcards to write on. These were meant as thank you letters to the many people who had given donations to make the camp possible. Next, the children wrote comments on a different slip of paper thanking the volunteers.

The first child to cry was Sahnder. He dropped his head, his shoulders shook, and he drew in short breaths. A volunteer walked up and held him from behind. Others soon shed their tears, and the whole tent became drowned in sniffles and sobs. Some children would sit in a corner and sob, while others would wail openly. Through their choked up voices, the children said things to us. We had to get one of our two interpreters to repeat their words in English. Temujin told me he did not want me to leave

him. He said he thought of me as a father. I looked at him and shook my head. I had my own life to get back to and told him as much. The words rang true for each volunteer. We could only give the children so much.

The following morning the bus came to take us back to the capital. We shuffled in, took our seats and the engine started up. The drive back took a little over an hour. Green, treeless swaths of land gave way to muddy earth studded with gers and shanty houses. Concrete soon filled in the edges of the road, and we came to a stop next to the welfare office near the city center. The children went in to another shuttle bus bound for their shelter while we were free to find our hostel. It was a short goodbye.

We had given a group of street kids the opportunity to enjoy things they would never have had the chance to enjoy. It was an experience, and how they choose to learn and identify with it will influence their young and impressionable lives. Perhaps that is only wishful thinking, but looking back I feel a strong fondness for the children and the times we shared. For both volunteers and children, it was a crazy, wild and unique series of events that unfolded in the hills of Mongolia. And beneath it all, there was the laughter, the smiles and the desire to do something good and meaningful.

For that much I am grateful.

Interested in volunteering for Mongolia Summer Camp 2013?
Contact David at weiyu.tan10@imperial.ac.uk

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

felix@imperial.ac.uk

Cinema help you go all night

And you thought you were done with staying up late sipping coffee staring at a screen? Except this time the screen's 33ft, and it hasn't got tomorrow's lab report minimized while reddit gently soothes your woes. Imperial Cinema brings you six of the latest releases, back-to-back, for your chance to catch up on the recent blockbusters. With the added challenge of trying to decipher the mind of Joss Whedon at 6am. Just before finishing for the holidays, Imperial Cinema gives you one last chance to prove your All-Nighter chops. After all, that's what all those sleepless nights at the Library were for, not for your degree that's for sure. So here's a guide to the All-Nighter, more valuable than having Bear Grylls with you to explore the North Pole.

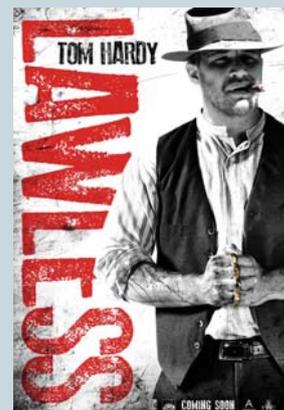


6.00pm

Looper

So you've turned up to the Union Concert Hall, found a seat or two to nestle in like a hibernating bear, only the coolest bear on the block has this winter entertainment setup. Kicking things off is the sci-fi action thriller *Looper*. Joseph Gordon-Levitt is a "looper", a hitman hired to kill those sent back from his future. It's best not to ask questions about the physics and just enjoy this rare smart sci-fi action film.

Rotten Tomatoes – 94%



3.30am

Lawless

After updating your Amazon wish list with all the *Madagascar* beanie babies, glad you brought your sleeping bag and PJs, it's time to grit your teeth for the 5th or "nap time" film.

Tom Hardy proves he doesn't sound like David Attenborough on steroids in this prohibition era movie. Based on the true story of the Bondurant Brothers, who get in too deep once the mob and the law come down on their bootlegging business.

Rotten Tomatoes – 68%



8.30pm

Skyfall

As the memories of Bruce Willis crawling through the vents in *Die Hard* come flooding back, you feel like you need another hit of action to take the edge off. Imperial Cinema gladly hands you what you need. Daniel Craig reprises his role as Mr Bond, which sees the franchise firmly ground Bond in the 21st century while also questioning whether espionage and exploding pens really fit in with the age of cyber terrorism.

Rotten Tomatoes - 92%



5.45am

The Cabin in the Woods

With a cup of instant coffee grounds, because to hell with water diluting your coffee, and a firm slap to the face, it's time for the final stretch. Not your standard horror fair, this genre bending film twists and turns like no other and only tries to unravel horror movie clichés.

Rotten Tomatoes - 91%



11.15pm

The Perks of Being a Wallflower

Time for a coffee and some food for your action come down. The shakes slowly fade as you ask for a coffee, shaken not stirred, and get called a twat. Time for some childhood reflection. Based on Stephen Chbosky's coming of age novel, this often clichéd subject feels sincere rather than sickly with angst. Emma Watson shows she's more than just a footnote in the Harry Potter universe, but a rising young star.

Rotten Tomatoes – 86%

The End

If you made it this far: congrats, you can now wear the title Trusted Idol Rector of Extended Days, or TIREd for short. It's time to step out of that nest you made, now resembling a hobo lair with Pot Noodles and cups of questionable liquid scattered about. Time for the SCR to fill you up to the brim with a fried breakfast before going to bed. Fair warning: attempting lectures in this state will only end badly, with you being escorted out of the building, raving about seeing unicorns frolic with jelly babies. Sleep deprivation will give you some crazy hallucinations but my god you will never sleep better.



1.30am

Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted

Now the true All-Nighter begins, it's all about pride, showing how hard you are at staying up late and ooooo talking animals. Third in the animation series, the *Madagascar* cast return with what manages to be a fresh animation that decides to do away with making sense and sticks to the absurdity of it all.

Rotten Tomatoes – 79%

Lineup:

6.00pm Looper
8:30pm Skyfall
11.15pm The Perks Of Being A Wallflower
1.30am Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted
3.30am Lawless
5.45am The Cabin In The Woods

Where:

Union concert hall, 2nd floor of the Union

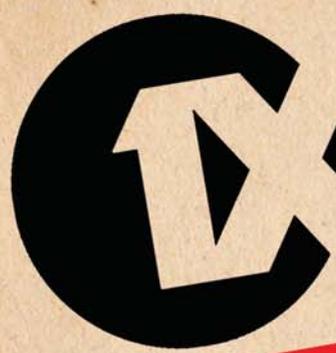
Tickets:

Tuesday 11th December.

Tickets:

For the whole night £10 online (£12 on the door)

All you can eat hot food and tea/coffee £5
Individual films £3 each on the door
Drinks available all night courtesy of the Union bar
tickets.imperialcinema.co.uk



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SARAH-JANE CRAWFORD

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6pm

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Books Editor: Maciej Matuszewski
books.felix@imperial.ac.uk

BOOKS

Looking Beyond Binary

Fiona Hartley explores a refreshingly different anthology

Speculative fiction, that hard-to-define genre that encompasses everything from science fiction to alternate histories, is all about the fantastical, the what-ifs. It is all about imagination. It's a genre that challenges the reality that we live in, dreaming of and exploring new ideas about society. Stories exploring gender-identity, therefore, are perfect for such a genre.

Beyond Binary is an anthology of seventeen stories, edited by Brit Mandelo, that have little in common aside from them all exploring how their characters define their gender identity. It's 256 pages of enjoyable thought-provoking fiction and wonderfully designed to boot.

When I first read a review of *Beyond Binary*, I did so as someone who knows very little about challenging gender identity. I am still that now, feeling that I'm somehow unqualified to tell you about genderqueer fiction when I am a cissexual woman and at ease being that way. I didn't know that I wanted to read something like this. But perusing that review, I suddenly discovered in myself the desire to read this thing beyond my realm of experience.

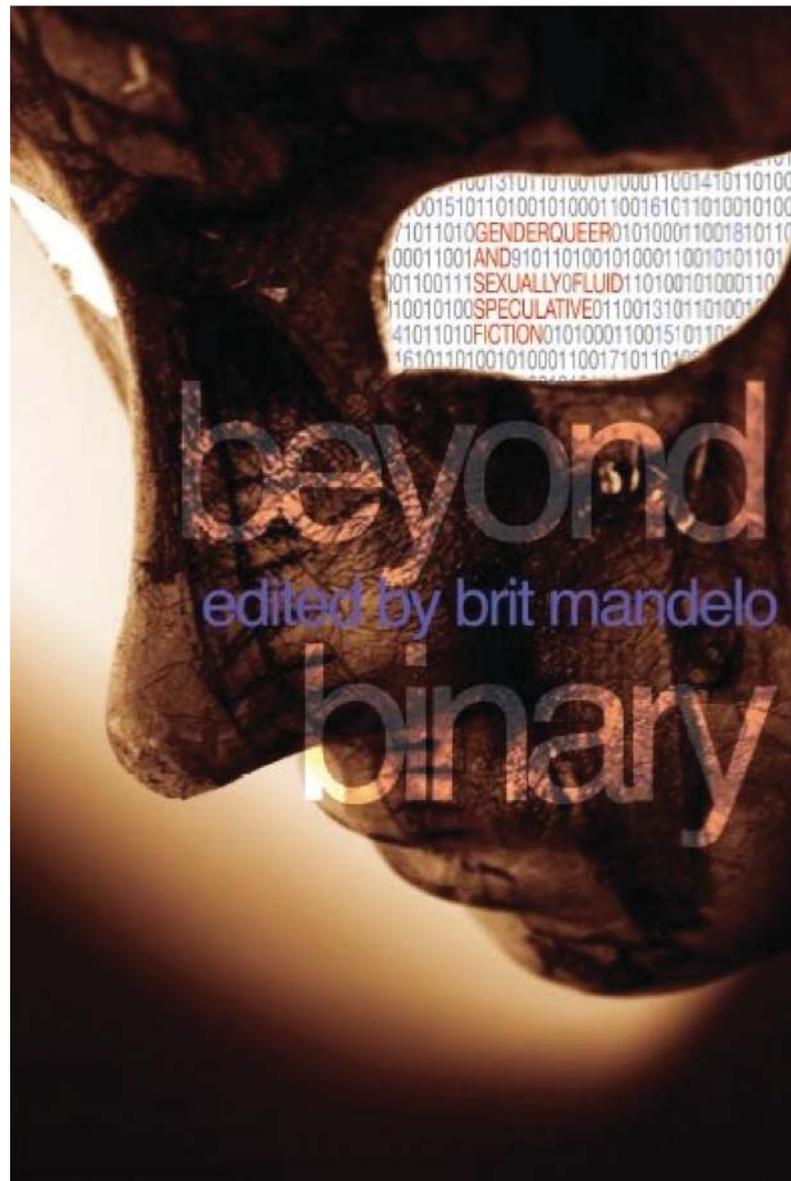
I'd never read a book like this one. I enjoyed the sci-fi, the fantasy, the stories in between, and I loved the fact that it was queer. Yes, I am biased, and perhaps that might make my opinion less valid. But *Beyond Binary* is just refreshingly different. Even now every story makes me think about the world

we live in, and those stories that I'm not as keen on still leave me with some interesting imagery or an absorbing concept.

This is a fascinating anthology, and important because it succeeds in breaking the heteronormative mould that permeates fiction. But it is in no way perfect, and that's not just because it's an anthology – meaning that the likelihood of one loving every single story is low. For a book that promises to go beyond the gender binary, there are very few genderqueer characters; not every story is as fantastical as I would have liked, although given the broad nature of the speculative genre I've come to the conclusion they all fit in somehow.

Take one of my favourites, 'Another Coming' by Sonya Taaffe. It's a fabulous little bisexual story about the parentage of an unwanted child conceived in a poly relationship. But that doesn't make it genderqueer. Richard Larson's 'The Ghost Party' is a menacing piece about a ghostly rave, but aside from the party its main character Charlee is basically dealing with her attraction to another girl – again, not particularly challenging to the gender binary, in my opinion anyway.

Since this is an anthology there's something for everyone. My favourites include Kelley Eskridge's novelette 'Eye of the Storm', which is so good that I will simply recommend you read it, regardless of whether you do that by buying this book or one of the author's other collections. Keyan Bowes explores the concept of par-



ents being able to choose the gender of their child and what might happen if their child disagrees with that choice in the story 'Spoiling Veena.' 'Sex with Ghosts' features an asexual narrator coming face-to-face with her doppelganger, who is a customised sexbot made by her sleazy boss for the pleasure of brothel clients.

Equally the nature of an anthology means you probably won't be a fan of every single story you read. For instance, I struggle with the Caribbean dialect in Nalo Hopkinson's 'Fisherman' and usually skip it, but most reviewers call it one of the best stories in the collection. I originally disliked 'Pirate Solutions' by Katherine Sparrow, which is about a group of computer hackers who drink special rum that turns them into pirates, or they re-inhabit their past lives as pirates because of the rum, or something. Somehow the tale has grown on me precisely because I don't understand it, so I read it fairly often, unable to get the imagery out of my head.

On reflection, this collection doesn't always live up to its title. But I think I could have done worse for an introduction to queer fiction. The stories are solid and enthralling. You might not know that you want to read this, just as I didn't. But I hope that I've encouraged you to think about stepping beyond the boundaries of what you normally read by telling you that this anthology exists. Try it. You might find *Beyond Binary* to be one of the most interesting things you've ever read.

Looking back at Pride and Prejudice

Rhys Davies

Writer

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen was first published in 1813. It hardly belongs on the latest bestsellers chart so why have I landed on this book, now? A few reasons. One, it's one of those classic books that you always promise yourself that you'll read (but never do). Indeed, I've put off reading this book for nearly two hundred years. Two, my girlfriend adores Austen and I wanted to know what all the fuss with this chick-lit is. So, in total, a milieu of self-improving and self-motivated reasons.

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of

a wife." Yes, yes, we all know how it goes. The book details the fortunes of the Bennet family of Longbourne, focusing on Elizabeth, the second eldest daughter. Through a burgeoning mutual attraction between her elder sister, Jane, and Mr Bingley, an eligible bachelor new to the neighbourhood, she is introduced to the aloof and proud Mr Darcy.

Finding him intolerable (and him finding her wilful and uncivil), she declares an immediate dislike of him. However, over time, as their social circles intersect and interact, they find that their feelings and impressions begin to change.

But we all knew that already, right? Admittedly, I was ignorant on a few of the details.

The writing is complex and irritating in places. If I submitted this as an English assignment, there would be red pen all across the page. Austen is guilty of double negatives, overly long sentences and speech unchained to characters. However, I can't tell if that is how people used to talk back then, how people of their class used to speak or a peccadillo of Austen herself. I sense the difference of two hundred years at work here.

However, despite my frustration at the over-complicated address, the book is still highly engaging. I don't know if I could call it pacy, as, for the majority, the characters rotate between a series of balls, dinners and travel. Life was hard back then, certainly!

If the previous few chapters have been spent on reactions to the last event or revelations, it's a fair bet that the next chapter will include a letter to further the plot.

This is chick-lit but it is exquisite chick-lit. In fact, it is archetypal chick-lit. The strong-willed female protagonist? Check. The handsome yet broody love interest? Check. The "Will they? Won't they?" question that hovers around for the best part of 300 pages? Check. Everything else is detail. If you're in any doubt, check out *Bridget Jones's Diary*.

But could someone please explain the point of Mary Bennet?

After this, I feel more tolerant of chick-lit but this could still have been helped a little more plain English. It's

a classic and part of the English canon for good reason. More than that, it's part of our popular culture and it is always so much more satisfying when you know why. It also helps to be a little bit more interesting at dinner parties.

As a fitting tribute to the 200th anniversary of the book, ICSM Drama will be performing a stage adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* next March. Auditions will be held next week. 12-5pm, Sunday 9th, 2-5pm, Wednesday 12th, 6-9pm, Tuesday 11th and Thursday 13th in the Glenister building, Charing Cross campus. Auditions on Monday 10th will be in the Sir Alexander Fleming building, room 121, 6-9pm. For more details, please contact as2708@ic.ac.uk.



Creepy and Curious at the Hunterian Museum

Arianna Sorba

Writer

At a loss for what to do this weekend? Unusually interested in the science of life? Then why not take a trip to the Hunterian Museum? Hidden away inside the Royal College of Surgeons in Holborn, it is the ultimate destination to explore all the gory details of animal biology, and satisfy any morbid curiosities about surgery, disease and the human body.

The Hunterian Museum has existed in some form since way back in 1799, and was originally made up of the enormous and creepy collection of the pioneering (that is, not medically trained) surgeon John Hunter. Now the exhibition comprises more than 3,500 different anatomical and pathological artefacts, from over 500 different species, from a 6 inch skeleton of a human foetus to an exceedingly long pig epididymis. Highlights include the 7ft 7 skeleton of 'Irish Giant' Charles Byrne (who rather upsettingly asked in his will to be buried at sea, specifically so that he wouldn't end up in a museum), and the bound foot bones of a Chinese concubine — gruesome enough to make any modern woman feel bad complaining about high heels. It's also worth looking out for the preserved human faces, complete with rosy cheeks,



eyelashes and smiling open mouths — if only so you can avoid them, if you're the squeamish type!

Meanwhile animals of all shapes and sizes are sliced up and preserved in formaldehyde, their jars covering the walls like some kind of scientific, overwhelming Damien Hirst exhibition. Pregnant rats and giant scorpions

The ultimate destination to explore all the gory details of animal biology

ons cosy up next to tiny tadpoles and unrecognisable prehistoric starfish, in a kind of fascinating, terrifying display of the intricacy and diversity of the animal world.

Even more fascinating are the famous 'Evelyn Tables', which, dating from around 1640, are thought to be the oldest anatomical preparations in Europe. On four wooden boards, the ridiculously complex and intricate patterns of nerves, veins and arteries that run through the human body have somehow been dissected, dyed and glued



Just your average Imperial student skull (except perhaps more cheerful)

down with complete biological accuracy, using techniques that modern surgeons still aren't sure of.

The museum also houses a small collection of unusual paintings from the 19th century, with subjects as diverse as Siamese twins and dwarf soldiers, representing British scientists' and artists' innate curiosity with the most remarkable and, at the time, most inexplicable of human ailments. Mean-

while upstairs, a terrifyingly detailed exhibition on different surgery techniques is captivating and disgusting in equal measures, with enough strange looking surgical instruments on display to make the stomach churn. The interactive parts, especially, are not for the faint-hearted, but are a must-see for anyone who's ever wanted to have a quick go at keyhole surgery!

Thanks to a £3 million refurbish-

ment a few years back the exhibition is beautifully presented, and it doesn't quite feel like you're exploring some creepy biologist's basement. So have a hearty meal, and go and visit — as long as you stay conscious, you won't regret it!

The Hunterian Museum, Lincoln's Inn Fields, open Tuesday-Saturday 10am-5pm.

Super-massive black hole baffles scientists

Arianna Sorba

Writer

Astronomers analysing data from the Hobby-Eberly Telescope in Texas have spotted an enormous black hole — but in a relatively miniscule galaxy.

Most galaxies, such as our own Milky Way, are thought to have a super-massive black hole at their centre. Current theories suggest that the two grow in tandem, and so, across space, black hole masses are usually roughly proportional in size to their host galaxies.

But not so with this galaxy, NGC 1277. Where normally the central black hole has a mass of around one thousandth the mass of the host galaxy, NGC 1277 appears to be harbouring one with a relative mass of a whopping 14%. That works out at around 17



A dark secret lies within this innocent-looking galaxy

nature.com

billion times the mass of the Sun, and is big for any galaxy, let alone this tiny one!

A report in *Nature* explains how the team, led by Remco van den Bosch at the Max Planck Institute in Germany, calculated this mass by looking at the velocity dispersion of the stars moving

in the black hole's 'sphere of influence'. By chance the galaxy also appeared in some high-resolution images taken by the Hubble Space Telescope, and the combined data clearly showed that the inner stars were orbiting extremely fast — suggesting an extremely dense concentration of mass at the galaxy's

Current theories of black hole and galaxy evolution may need to be rewritten

centre.

Astronomers are at a loss as to how to explain how such an enormous

black hole ended up in this little galaxy, just a quarter the size of the Milky Way. Initially the team looked for signs that a larger galaxy somewhere close by was 'tidally stripping' NGC 1277, drawing out and eating away at its stars and gases. But NGC 1277's near-perfect flat, disc-like shape rules that out, and means it can't be a superposition of two different galaxies that the astronomers are looking at, either.

What's even weirder is that the same data also shows five possible other candidates apparently displaying the same odd phenomenon. This suggests NGC 1277 may not be just some astronomical fluke, but actually the beginnings of evidence that current theories of black hole and galaxy evolution need to be rewritten.

DOI: 10.1038/nature11592

Science Editors: Philip Kent,
Laurence Pope, Philippa Skett
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SCIENCE

Building a virtual brain

A step closer to an artificial human brain? **Pavitar Devgon** discusses

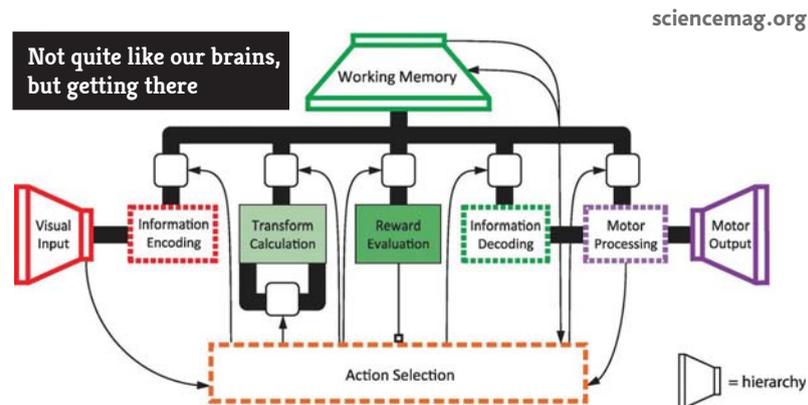
Intelligence has been a hot topic in robotics for decades – ever since we started creating computers and machines, we have wanted to imbue them with a similar level of learning and intelligence to our own. So we turned to the most intelligent machine we had – our brains. Researchers in this field have been simulating neuron maps in hopes of replicating the human abilities. Over time, they have been getting ever-more efficient at it; the Blue Brain Project was able to simulate 1 million neurons. The more recently created Cognitive Computation Project was able to simulate 1 billion neurons, the same amount as the average cat. However, an ambitious new project has been reported to simulate near the human scale of 100 billion neurons.

While previous experiments only sought to increase computational power by including more neurons, the team, including Chris Eliasmith, Terrence Stewart, Xuan Choo, *et al.*, also

A new project simulating 100 billion neurons

tried to answer the question of how a complex brain produces behaviour. The project included many anatomical and physical constraints to be as close to the real life neural data as possible.

A research paper, published on *sciencemag.org*, shows how the team's model responds to eight different tasks; nicknamed Spaun, the model is shown performing actions such as reading and writing a list, counting from a given number, and reading the position of a given number. The input



is given through a 28x28 image of a character and the output is the movement of an arm – essentially, Spaun writes the answer to whichever task he is trying to perform.

The figure above shows the functional architecture used to create Spaun. The bold lines are indications where the brain passes information between different elements of the cortex, whilst the thinner lines represent communication between the action selection

(equivalent to the basal ganglia) and the cortex. Communications between the different components of the model are analogous to how our neuron firing patterns in the brain transmit impulses.

The process of compression can also be seen in the model, where representational impulses are compressed from higher dimensional space (images taken from the visual input) to lower dimensional space (the standard 3D

map used to draw the output). By using compression fewer cells need to be used further down the line, so allowing the brain to be more efficient and functional with its manipulations of impulses.

This experiment is hoped to be the first step of further successful ventures, building on how neural pathways adapt to different tasks. Even though there are only five subsections in the main model, which deal with performing tasks, Spaun is able to map across them, choosing the best one suitable for the task. The purpose of the research is to build towards a proposal for a unified group of neural mechanisms able to perform any task, which embodies the choice inherent in our brains. As the research paper says, “Spaun’s main contribution lies in its breadth... Spaun’s uniqueness lies in its being a platform for exploring the robust flexibility of biological cognition.”

DOI: 10.1126/science.1225266

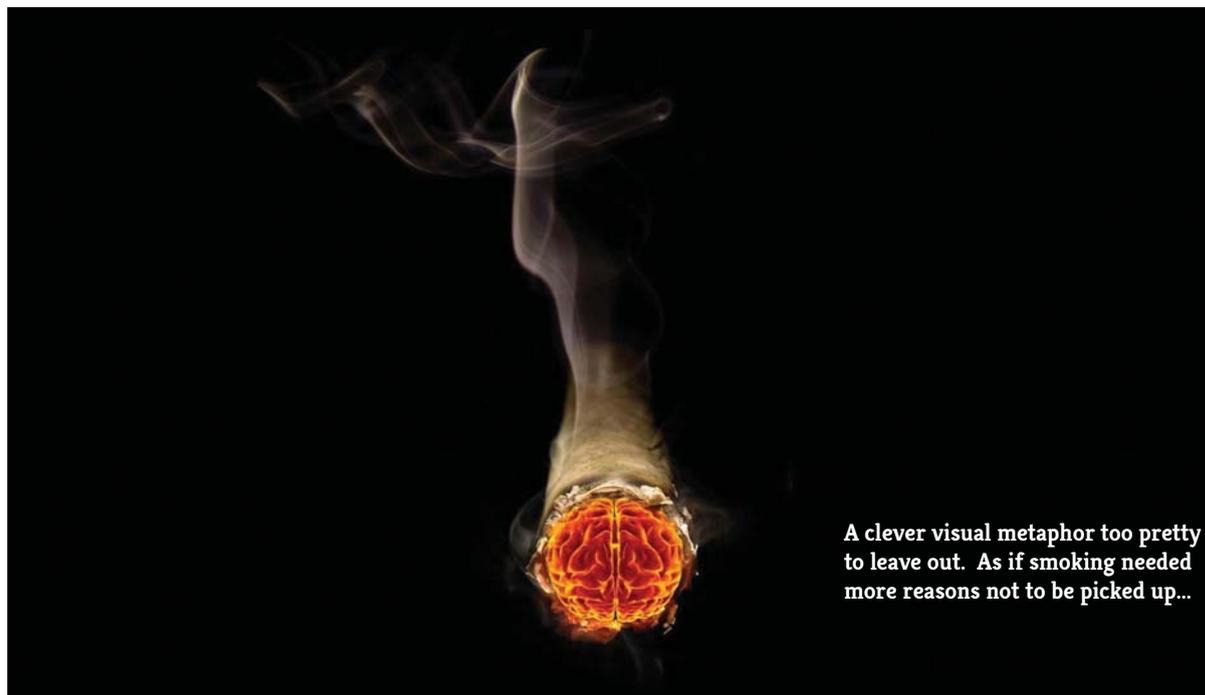
Don't let your heart rule your head

Sarah Byrne

Writer

Cognitive decline is often accepted as an inevitable part of aging. Even aside from specific conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, poor short term memory and impaired reasoning abilities can be among the problems that come with older age, and for many people they can be severe enough to interfere with daily activities and the ability to live independently. But there is mounting evidence that the risk of developing such problems is strongly correlated with common health and lifestyle issues.

Age and Aging journal recently published a large cohort study by researchers at Kings College London, looking specifically at the relationship between cardiovascular risk factors and cognitive decline. Such risk factors – including obesity, smoking, blood pressure and cholesterol levels – have often before been proposed as significant. It matters, because these factors are usually modifiable: if detected early enough, we may be able to do something about them and prevent the damage. However, until now, there were no large-scale, long-term population-based studies to confirm or disprove the hypotheses. It was this gap that the current study aimed to



A clever visual metaphor too pretty to leave out. As if smoking needed more reasons not to be picked up...

address.

The study analysed data mostly collected between 2004 and 2005, and many participants also took part in follow-up studies several years later. This allowed researchers to track the progress of physical health and cognitive variables over time. Health professionals use a standard set of tests to measure memory and ‘executive

function’, which involves verbal fluency, attention span and mental speed. These tests strangely resemble children’s games: how many animals can you name in one minute? How many of these ten words can you recall? Nonetheless they are widely accepted as reliable measures of cognitive functioning. In this study, the researchers used the results to calculate a cogni-

tive index for each participant, based on a composite of their scores in each study, and how those scores deviate from the average.

The results confirmed the suspicion that the same risk factors that predispose a person to have cardiovascular health problems – stroke and coronary heart disease – also put them at risk of impaired cognitive function.

Smoking emerged as a particular risk, being strongly and consistently associated with loss of memory and executive processing abilities at both the four year and eight year follow-up studies.

Interestingly, even borderline-high blood pressure appeared to be correlated with loss of memory function. In fact, this appeared to be a bigger risk factor than very high blood pressure: possibly because the borderline cases were less likely to have been considered worth treating with pressure-reducing antihypertensive drugs. This new finding points to a possible benefit of treating even the borderline cases. The good news is that the damage appears to take place slowly over several years, giving hope that early intervention may be able to successfully prevent it.

The researchers recommend using these findings in the design of future clinical trials to study attempts at preventative measures, eventually leading to population-based interventions. It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that there are many factors contributing to cognitive decline, and any successful intervention will have to take this into account and address the multiple causes.

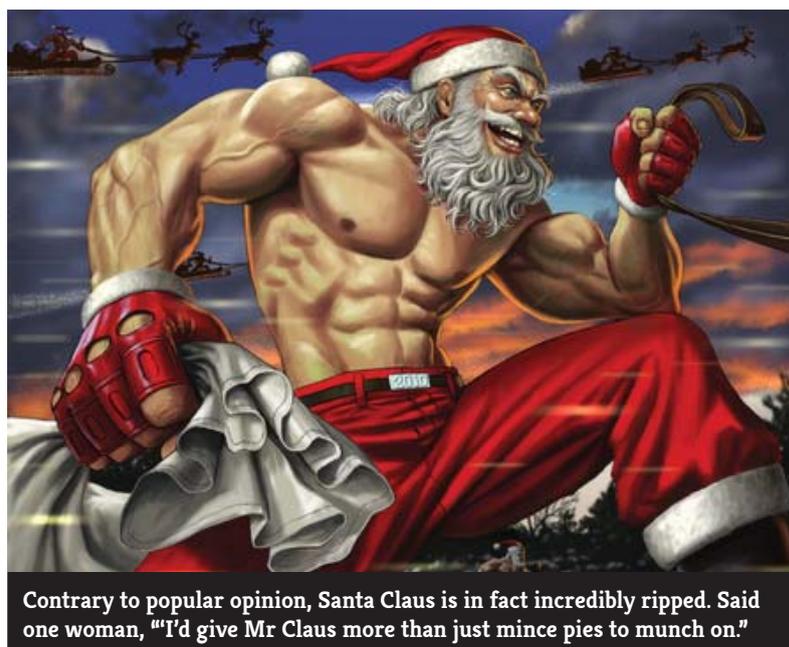
DOI: 10.1093/ageing/afs166

Have a very Merry Christmas and a fact-filled New Year!

Philippa Skett, signing off for Christmas with some festive facts

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas... isn't it? No doubt you are reading this already snuggled up warm in your knitted jumper complete with reindeer design, sipping mulled wine and getting positively drunk on the festive cheer. Of course you aren't; you are like any other Imperial student-walled up in the Library, slowly chew-

buy a real tree, as fake ones are made primarily out of polyvinyl chloride, non-renewable and a producer of carcinogens when synthesised. They may also contain lead and other additives that could lead to health impediments. Real trees can look worn and lose their needles very quickly, but studies show



Contrary to popular opinion, Santa Claus is in fact incredibly ripped. Said one woman, "I'd give Mr Claus more than just mince pies to munch on."

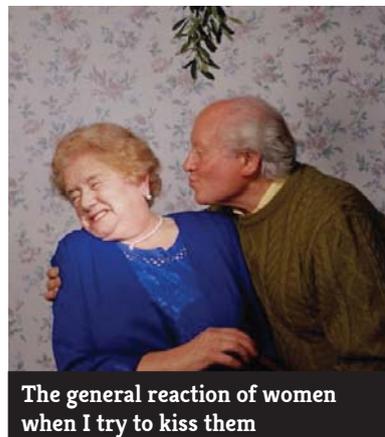
giving presents to English children alone. Santa is probably dead from obesity-related diseases. Sorry kids.

Even if Father Christmas did slim down over the year, reindeers still could not pull him through the sky. They are particularly unsuitable for flight because mammals are evolutionarily derived from earlier tetrapods; for reindeers to even have wings the development of another set of limbs, bringing their grand total to six, would have had to occur. Reindeer instead have four limbs developed into large circular hooves used to scrape snow from lichen and to spread out their weight, which are hardly aerodynamic. Also, on average, they weigh around 350kg and do not feature hollow bones, or a respiratory system based around four air sacs (as seen in birds) that acts a lot like bellows. Reindeer are destined to stay on the ground.

On a cheerier note, there is always the potential for theoretical physicists to fill in the gaps, with wormholes or space-time warping having the potential for Santa to deliver all the presents in the allotted amount of time. Something some of you could consider for Ph.D research? Lastly, you will also be pleased to know that the Met Office predicts that more than half of all Christmases recorded should turn out to be a "White Christmas," with 38 out of the last 52 years Christmas days seeing snow. So there is still hope yet for that traditional Christmas card scene for when we take a revision break sometime this holiday.



I can barely contain my overwhelming excitement.



The general reaction of women when I try to kiss them

ing your arm off. However, who said science can't be joyous? Spice up your Christmas dinner banter with some of these festive facts, or use them to tell that particularly annoying younger relative once and for all why there is (probably) no Santa.

First off, you need to go out and buy that perfect Christmas tree. It is environmentally better in the long term to

that if you maintain your living room at around a 90% humidity level, there is a fivefold increase in needle retention, as this reduces water loss and any xylem tension that causes the needles to drop off. You might want to give your Christmas party a tropical theme this year...

Still not a tree fan? Mistletoe may be the hemi-parasitic evergreen for you. *Viscum fraxini*, an aqueous extract from mistletoe species *Viscum album L.*, may have medical potential. *V. al-*

bum L. is known to produce proteins that target and kill rapidly dividing cells — those that can lead to cancer. The serum may also be used in the future to induce cell death of immunologically important natural killer cells, which could prove useful in treating autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis. However, don't go chewing these plants if your joints start to feel sore — ingesting *V. album L.* can cause stomach pain, diarrhoea and a low heart rate.

Speaking of ingestion, how many mince pies do you think Santa Claus really eats throughout his one night

of employment per year? Take Britain, with a population of 63.1 million. This includes 10,854,360 children. Removing those who won't be celebrating Christmas or were on the naughty list (based on the number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system) then leaves us with 10,240,466 children in total. With the average number of children per household being 1.8, and assuming in this waste-conscious time we only leave one mince pie per household, that is still 5,689,148 mince pies Santa needs to get through. That is 1,422,286,933 calories. Santa effectively puts on around 29,000 stone from

Waka waka waka? Pac-Man: The Sequel

Laurence Pope Science Editor

At one point it was just Mimas, one of Saturn's 62 moons, that looked like 80's gaming legend Pac-Man (below). Now Tethys, another Saturnian natural satellite, becomes the second.

The unusual pattern, recorded using NASA's *Cassini* probe's thermal imager, was first spotted on Mimas in 2010, with the warmer areas making up the Pac-Man shape. Recent observations, published in the journal *ICARUS*, reveal Tethys to

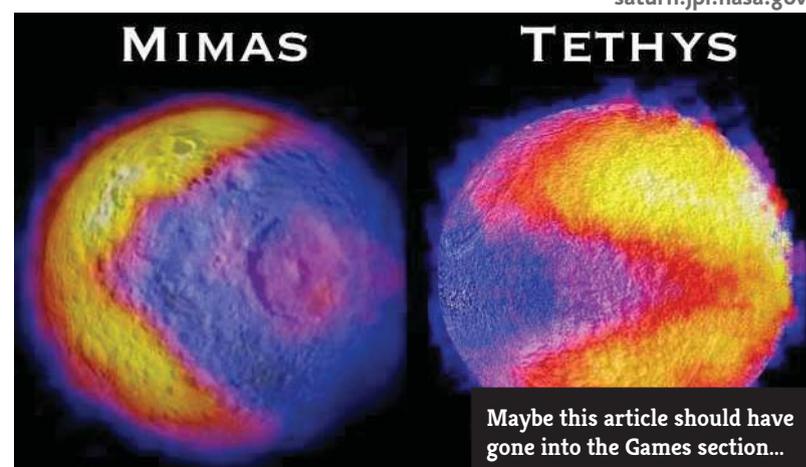
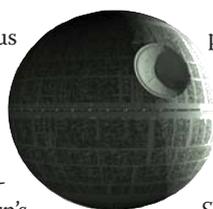
possess a similar anomalous heat pattern.

It has been theorized that the unusual pattern of both moons is formed due to the impact of high-energy electrons generated from Saturn's magnetosphere. Both moons are composed of water-ice, with Saturn-facing struck areas at lower latitudes converted to hard-packed ice, increasing its thermal conductivity. This causes the affected regions to heat more slowly during the day and cool more slowly at night, generating the anomalous heat

patterns. Electron bombardment patterns match up with the unexpected heat maps.

Mimas already has another claim to fame — from certain angles, it looks like the *Star Wars* Death Star. (left) The image is created due to Mimas' huge impact crater, Herschel, named after the moon's discoverer. The Herschel crater, almost a third of the diameter of Mimas and wider than Australia, also resembles one of the power pellets from the original Pac-Man.

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Maybe this article should have gone into the Games section...

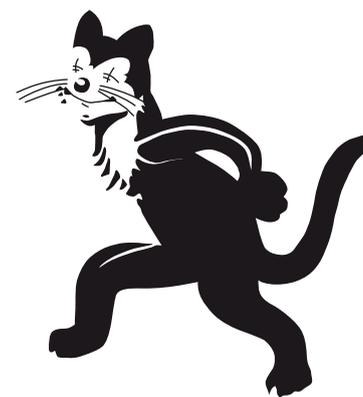
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FELIX



Getting in with the Crowd

Joanna Taylor underlines the benefits of crowd-sourced funding

Start-ups *have* to raise money, whatever the business there will be a need at some point. The biggest issue for most is how.

Traditional options are Business Angels – wealthy individuals who provide capital and advice in return for equity, and venture capitalists who generally provide higher sums of seed but with harsher conditions. But, obtaining investment is very hard for fledgling businesses as these sources rarely part with money without seeing a proof of concept. For many businesses it is extremely difficult to get to this stage without any financial backing in the first place. Bit of a vicious circle you might have noticed. Secondly, because the options are so limited, such groups hold a lot of control over small businesses; an early stage start up never holds much bargaining power and the more desperate for money it is the worse the terms of investment are. It is in this way entrepre-

neurs quickly lose ownership and hence morale in their businesses. Clearly, this type of funding is massively in favour of the already rich and successful. On the other side of the coin, this also means only wealthy people have the opportunities to invest money in start-ups. In both cases the regular people seem to be losing out (what a shocker).

So, already I have highlighted two problems for entrepreneurship: one, start-ups face a huge uphill struggle to get that initial investment, and two, the masses have no platform from which they can invest in new projects. Not a very optimistic view if you fancy your foot on the business ladder. Cue the solution: crowd-funding.

It's a pretty simple concept: lots of people each invest a small amount in a start-up, contributing to a big pot of overall capital. This means a company can obtain financing more easily and does not have to give a majority of equity to one person, the obvious appeal

being that owners can retain more control over their business. Investors also do not need to commit huge amounts into one project therefore opening up investment opportunities to the general public i.e. the Crowd; hence the concept is aptly known as crowd-funding.

In fact people can tactfully “hedge their bets” by investing smaller amounts in many start-ups in the hope that even if some do not follow through there will still be an overall return. This is analogous to the way a venture capital firm works, essentially avoiding putting all its eggs in one basket by investing in several companies, knowing that just a couple need to boom to ensure an overall profit; except where Mr V.C invests £100,000 a time, John Smith is able to invest £100. This is a very attractive option for individuals who do not want their savings to stagnate in a bank account.

The model of crowd-funding has propelled the formation of “middle-man”

companies who have seized the potential to design platforms from which this initiative is easily accessible for both start-ups and potential investors. Examples include Crowdcube, a UK leader, and AngelList and Prosper.com in America. A crowd-funding portal will typically allow start-ups to pitch their ideas and personalise their pages, which can then be searched for and viewed by individuals. An interesting new take on the world of social networking. Crowd-funding portals are innovating business financing even more by allowing companies to offer incentives other than equity, for example a new bar may offer free drinks to the investor if they put in a certain amount of capital. Rewards like this can also promote the start-up to a bigger audience and draw in supporters. There are even more obscure crowd-funding platforms such as those for public sector organisations like schools, or for artists, perhaps to raise money for a film production.

Another implication for crowd-funding is its ability to weed out start-ups that are likely to fail. If a start-up reaches its desired target is it more likely to succeed as a business concept? You could argue it is. In the case of traditional financing involving a small number of parties it is definitely plausible that those few investors have made a silly mistake, but when hundreds or even thousands of people have invested into a business it gives a sense of reassurance – surely that many people can't be really stupid?

Crowd-funding: bringing a host of strangers together in one innovative meeting place somewhere in the depths of “the web” where they can join forces to drive the success of the newest business generation, and potentially reap the rewards. Is this the ground-breaking future of business financing? In 2011 alone \$1.5bn was raised via online crowd-funding and I say why not put faith in the masses? We can't all get it wrong.

From Fine Art to the App Store

Ausrine Kersanskaite Writer

Just a short while ago, I was a Fine Art graduate slowly coming to realisation that conceptual art & me is not a good match. Back then, looking for a ‘real’ job, I accidentally stumbled across Songkick and got to be one of the lucky ones to become their intern. Starting out as a Data Warrior (don't ask), after just a few months I progressed to full-time project assistant role working with the hiring team. The office was smack dab in the middle of Silicon Roundabout, where the start-up scene is buzzing (and before Songkick, I didn't even know it existed).

I left Songkick to study full-time for my MSc at the Imperial College Business School last September – and what an intense year that was (anyone studying at Imperial is familiar with the pace)! Not wanting to lose touch with the incredible start-up roots I had planted, I led ICBS Innovation & Design club and sat on a committee of Entrepreneurs Interactive. Together, we arranged for loads of famous as well as up-and-coming start-ups to come and speak at Imperial.

Then, nearly as serendipitous as the YPlan app itself, I became an alpha tester for what looked to be the best last minute ticketing app on the horizon. As I met one of the co-founders, Rytis Vitkauskas, for the first time

during an early UX walk-through, I was enthralled not only by what they were trying to do – provide tickets for same night entertainment – but also by a really slick app design and awesome user journey (I've seen a few alpha versions of other apps before and could only wish that any of them were as finished as YPlan's one was). Even though I didn't pursue the artist path eventually, I do have an eye for beautiful design. Alpha finished in about a month and I found myself crushed that I couldn't access the app every morning as per my new ritual.

The other co-founder, Viktoras Jucikas, re-contacted me mid-summer announcing that they were taking off and on the hunt for interns. I found myself more than just interested and started as a part-timer (as I was still working on my final paper at this point), and following my last exam, got a full-time job offer (and couldn't be more excited). I've been with YPlan from the very first day (I mean the very first – where we actually got keys to our brand new office – at that time, a shared office space at TechHub). As the concept began to pick up steam, we quickly outgrew our offices moving to a much more suitable space in King's Cross. From 6 people on the very first day to 15-full time and 2 freelancers in just a few months, not to mention a phenomenal launch with impressive press mentions (*Wall Street Journal*,

Wired, *Guardian*, *Gigaom*, *The Mail*, *Shortlist*, and #1 New And Noteworthy as chosen by Apple, just to name a few), I'd say it's been some pretty awesome growth for a brand new start-up! We've just announced seed round investment of \$1.7m, our user base is growing, the events are being booked, and YPlan is standing next to other mobile commerce apps such as Hailo, Uber, Hotel Tonight, Airbnb and the likes. As smartphone users are growing (currently making up 50% of total mobile subscribers in the UK and nearing that in West Europe and the US), the time couldn't be better for the mobile commerce apps to start taking over the world.

To give you a bit of a background of YPlan – it's the world's first mobile-only ticket booking app that makes going out tonight easier than it ever was. Londoners can get inspired, pay in two taps, and go on the same night. UK ticketed entertainment is a \$5bn industry, utilised only at 50%, and currently only 2% of events are completely sold out, so YPlan solves a problem for venues and promoters. It also allows Londoners to be more spontaneous and book awesome stuff from a carefully curated list of events (think chess boxing, rickshaw racing, rooftop cinemas, art exhibition openings, ping-pong tournaments, cabaret, comedy, brewery tours, etc.) in some of the best venues you never knew

about. The simplistic design makes the experience a breeze and no need to print out tickets, just show the in-app-ticket on the door (oh, and it works with Apple's Passbook, too). Our team is awesome & has unrivalled experience from places like *Time Out*, *Toptable*, *GetTaxi*, *Airbnb*, *lasminute.com*, *Goldman Sachs*, and more... and I think I'm really lucky to be among them.

Now, if you're interested in start-ups and follow their game, you'd say – what do you need all those people for (and how can you afford that)? Where's all that lean start-up approach everyone's talking about? Well, YPlan's founders Rytis Vitkauskas (28, HBS graduate and former VC) and Viktoras Jucikas (31, former Executive Director at Goldman Sachs) were taking up a very lean approach while they were in ideation phase. In fact, you might have met Rytis already, and heard him talking about his journey into YPlan – in the past few months, well before the launch, he was invited to speak at Imperial College a number of times – as a keynote speaker of ICBS Entrepreneurs Club, leading the very first workshop (topic: ideation, how you can structure it, and how YPlan was the idea 51) at ICStartup (you can

read the full article here: <http://www.icstartup.com/news/what-did-we-get-first-workshop/>), and also participating at Silicon Valley comes to Imperial, where he was on a panel to ‘An Insider's Insight: Day 1 to Scale.’ Quite a few Imperial students were among a small community of early YPlan users who got access well before the launch and were trialling out the app while the YPlan team was fine-tuning.

Thing is, after graduating from my course, not many people got to start their own businesses or were able to start working at such an early stage start-up getting to see how things really happen. I remember sitting in IP (Intellectual Property) class thinking it was the most boring thing in the world – guess what one of my first tasks was at YPlan? Filing a trademark! And I got pretty excited about it, too.

The moral of the story is, a few years ago I was a Fine Arts graduate plagued with worry on how I was actually going to make it as an artist. A chain of very odd and fortuitous events led me to work at Songkick, then study at Imperial, and finally be one of the early members of YPlan team, and so I got fully immersed in the exciting start-up experience. I've learned that as long as you're not afraid to delve into the unknown and take challenges head on, start-up life is really the place to be.



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BUSINESS

Students Projects given Chance to Shine

Giri Kesavan shares highlights from Imperial's first ever CSR conference

Think social responsibility and you don't normally think of banks. Discovering social enterprise, learning business skills, pitching for sponsorship and inspiring volunteering were just some of the themes explored in the Imperial College Finance Society (ICFS) led Corporate Citizenship conference on Wednesday. A pilot event for the society and run in collaboration with Imperial Hub & The Student Led Projects symposium, the conference brought together senior business leaders from investment banks, start up social entrepreneurs and student projects – with a series of speeches, workshops and a sponsorship pitching session with £750 up for grabs.

Sponsorship isn't as simple as writing a document, emailing a firm and getting money for projects and societies. Students nationwide learned about the unique approaches and strategies used by ICFS in developing and maintaining extraordinarily close partnerships with over 33 firms – the key themes being professionalism without elitism, a small exec committee with tight sponsorship control, accountability and of course informality – when in doubt, make a cool YouTube video! Projects had the chance to hear from ICFS sponsors such as Nomura on why they support the society and the key takeaway message: If you want funding for a student-project – don't act like a student but act like a corporate!

With keynote presentations from Nomura and Ernst & Young, students witnessed first-hand the kind of CSR projects such firms fund – from

the Rainbow Trust to EY's extensive portfolio of social enterprises. The Rainbow Trust mentioned how they were successful in becoming the charity partner for Nomura and raising £500,000 in just a year – just through employee engagement and matched giving (where the firm matches any donation made by an employee to a charity). Following this, students had the exclusive chance to listen to the UK Head of Corporate Citizenship at Ernst & Young – who highlighted key projects in entrepreneurship, education & environment totalling £5.1 million of UK sponsorship in the past year.

The highlight of the speeches was undoubtedly John Grisby, a social entrepreneur who co-founded DNA Performance – an organisation aimed at finding and educating the next generation of business leaders for CSR style projects. In John's landmark speech – he touched on the issue of "self-awareness" – you might think you're a pro – but your sponsors may not! Reviewing, reflecting and adapting your team to drive sustained performance is key to securing long-term investment and sponsorship. It's as much about emotional intelligence as it is about having competitive and unique technical skills.

Sound words of advice indeed. Following the presentations, projects had the chance to network and prepare for their sponsorship pitches in workshops run by Stuart Arnott (Mindings) and Rhiannon Horsley (from our very own Imperial Hub) on writing business plans in a 9-fold concept as well as the critical attributes of emotion, conveying a story, succinctness and passion in pitches for sponsorship. With over 10 projects vying for £750 worth of sponsorship – these workshops gave them valuable feedback on their business plans and existing proposals – preparing them for the main event: The Sponsorship Pitching competition.

With £750 of ICFS Sponsorship up for grabs in a competition with 10 strong student-led projects from Imperial College, Loughborough University, UCL & Liverpool University – the high stakes pitching challenge was the highlight of the day. Judged by business representatives from Inside Buzz, John Grisby, Stuart Arnott and Rhiannon Horsley, projects had just three minutes to convey their ideas, hopes, dreams and ambitions to our panel – with immediate feedback. From societies to social enterprises, each pitch was unique and it was up to the judges to answer the critical question: Who should we invest in? Who has what it takes to stand up and do a pitch?



The Imperial College El Salvador project (working on critical construction projects overseas) left the judges impressed with their quick-fire ability to turn an engineering project into a viable social enterprise proposition – walking away with the top prize of £500. The Kenyan Orphan project – supporting health, welfare and education in Kenya – similarly impressed with their personal and passionate pitch; winning £250 of sponsorship. Many congratulations not only to the

winning projects but to all 10 who pitched on the day – they all received valuable feedback from sponsorship pitching veterans and no doubt this will help in the future!

Student Hubs' CEO Adam O'Boyle closed the conference with an eye-opening speech into the foundation and impact of Student Hubs – the umbrella organisation behind Imperial Hub this year. With numerous ways to get involved whatever your volunteering aspirations – projects learned

how they could take it to the next level with the opportunities from Imperial Hub. It was a fantastic end to a highly successful pilot event for the ICFS; the first event of this kind organised by any finance society in the country!

Educational. Inspirational. Motivational. Thanks to a fantastic effort by ICFS, Imperial Hub and the Student Led Projects Symposium – that's exactly what students felt of this pilot conference – see you next year where we'll go bigger and better!

Sponsorship isn't as simple as writing a document, emailing a firm and getting money for projects and societies

Stand out from the crowd



Write for Felix Business



A luxurious death

Alice Yang discusses whether fast fashion is killing luxury brands

Common knowledge to anyone who actually wants to embark upon a career in the near future, the world economy is dragging its feet along the ground and practically all global growth has been brought to a grinding halt. The unfortunate result from all of this, besides the lack of money each and every one of us is painfully aware of, is the negative commotion surrounding the luxury sector.

Investors around the globe have been worrying themselves to split-ends as to how much the slow down in emerging markets, especially China will effect the likes of Burberry and Hugo Boss, as well as PPR and LVMH – the corporate conglomerates that own high fashion favourites such as Louis Vuitton, Fendi, Givenchy, Marc Jacobs, Gucci, Yves Saint Laurent, Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga etc. And strangely enough, it seems that the answer the boards of directors have found themselves striving for is *design more, make more and sell more FASTER*. In other words, luxury seems to be taking a dive towards the world of fast fashion long trumpeted by the high street.

Take for example Hugo Boss: since appointing Claus-Dietrich Laurs as CEO of the company in 2008, the brand has doubled the number of yearly collections it produces to four, reduced their overall development times and poured €100m into an automated factory. From the figures, this seems to have worked well for the company, with a

year-on-year growth of 6% in its nine-month report this October, leading to a comfortable 12% share price rise this year. However, call me cynical, but does this not defeat the point of Hugo Boss being 'luxury'? Surely, the premium paid on an item of Hugo Boss clothing as opposed to say, Zara, should be mainly due to the exceptional quality of the garment, its prestige and regrettably, in part, its name label. But once rattled down to the basics, of a t-shirt for example, I hate to admit it but the improved quality of the fabric itself no longer justifies the price hike given that both Boss and Zara items are factory made.

Moving onto an even stranger complaint, Nina Ricci's recent additional collections also seem like a bad move away from their luxury high fashion roots. The design house now have not just the two standard spring/summer and autumn/winter collections, as well as the well popularised two pre-spring and pre-fall collections, but are now also hosting pre-pre-spring and pre-pre-fall collections. All in all, given that you trust my basic maths skills, that adds up to 6 collections of womenswear a year.

More explicitly put, in their attempt to attract more buyers with their diminishing price points per 'pre' added before the season, Nina Ricci seem to be heading down the road towards the fashion faux-pas land of A Little Bit Of

Something For Everyone, otherwise

known as Marks & Spencer. You see, the beloved British brand M&S fell upon its own arrow towards success when it stopped defining its customer base, and attempted to target everyone – in short, the company moved too quickly into unknown market territory, and is now sitting on a share price of just £3.79, down from £7.49 at its peak in 2007. And unfortunately Nina Ricci seems to be heading towards the same fate. Of course dedicated Ricci fans will still buy their girly dresses, but for those wanting something 'special', a bit of something that makes them feel above everyone else, which let's not even TRY and deny is why many splash out on high fashion, Nina Ricci will no longer be the design house of choice.

Once again, I state my case: the definition and success of luxury rests on prestige and unobtainability. Once this is dissipated, it will not be long before we see an erosion in sales, and consequently profits.

Whilst of course there is a chance that I may be proven horrendously wrong, but, the way I see it, the trend towards fast fashion may be spelling out the final demise of certain brands. These brands are such that they are inaccessible enough at the moment to be termed 'luxury', yet are not quite topping the stable mountains of high fashion.

On top of this, there is also the issue of designers themselves. Peter Copping, in taking on 6 lines a year for Nina Ricci, may not be adding too much to his work load, but what about Alexander Wang who at the young age of 28 will now be designing 32 collections a year?

I kid you not, fashion's favourite newbie, on being awarded the job of creative designer at Balenciaga, is now

faced with designing more lines per annum than years he's lived – four womenswear and two menswear for BOTH Alexander Wang and T by Alexander Wang; four womens and two mens lines for the bulk of his new job at Balenciaga; and 14 other lines (seven collections twice a year) making up the rest of the PPR-owned house. On top of that, there are also swim lines, lingerie, shoes, bags and jewellery to consider.

He may be young, and full of creative energy, but surely even Wang can't pump out 32 new full sets of designs a year for long. And who can blame him if he fails, after all none of the old fashion guard have ever successfully taken on so much. In fact some designers, on reaching such a level of success, decided to go their own way: Jean-Paul Gaultier famously chose his own brand over Hermès, and Alexander McQueen too decided that his own label was to win attention over Givenchy. Even the multi-tasking masters of creation seem to be finally

reaching the end of their creative ideas; Karl Lagerfeld's designs for Chanel, Fendi and even his own eponymous label have been getting somewhat boring despite his outlandish attempts to spice things up (see Chanel's SS13 hula-hoop bag), and even Marc Jacobs seems to be running out of ideas with polka-dots still not quite escaping his grasp (from Marc Jacobs AW11, to Marc Jacobs Dot Eau to Parfum and now alongside Louis Vuitton's collaboration with Yayoi Kusama).

It seems that the recent onset of panic from investors and CIOs pushing for profits and margins seem to have completely demolished the lessons learnt from John Galliano's fall from grace. But perhaps Wang and his fellow new generation designers will prove us wrong, and maybe, just maybe, this new world of fast fashion the high streets have been pioneering for so long might just turn out to be a success for luxury too. Whatever way the tides turn, the onset of the New Year looks like one to bring exciting new times a-plenty.



Out with the old and in with the new? Marc Jacobs, Alexander Wang, Karl Lagerfeld



Marc Jacobs, AW2011

Yayoi Kusama Louis Vuitton

The Hula Hoop Bag, Chanel SS2013.



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We went to the Gadget Show

Max Eggl and the Felix Tech team play around on some of the latest tech



From left to right: The best way to watch X-Factor; two men who take Movember way too seriously; A visual metaphor for most men's internet history; and a 3D printer model, Library computers won't connect

Last Friday three young whippersnappers (i.e. the Felix Tech team) made their way to the Gadget Show Live, in the ExCeL, hoping to see the newest tech on the market, as well as have some well-earned time off. Once we arrived there and got our shiny press passes sorted out, we decided to split up so that each of us would have a different view of what actually was going on in the tech world.

The two biggest areas of the exhibition were given over to Microsoft and Nintendo. This does fit with the conclusion that the companies who really need media attention to sell their product are going to try as hard as they can, at every opportunity that is available. Since I am not the Windows guy of the Tech team, and we had enough coverage of Windows 8 anyway, I decided to skip out on the Microsoft area. On the other hand I was quite intrigued by the Nintendo stand, due to the recent release of the Wii U. As I made my way over to the large almost playground like area, it seems others also had similar ideas. A larger than life Mario and Luigi were walking around the area, uttering the occasional "Mamma Mia!", and in general everything was packed. The attention to detail was great, and I did have a go on the Wii U for two games and managed to avoid the queue by waving my shiny press pass! (see page 42)

After I had my fill in Nintendo, I decided that other parts of the Gadget Show also needed my attention. I walked over to EA (which was a cube thing) and looked into that, but I quickly decided that this would not be worth my time, as several teen boys had staked their territory in front of the large *FIFA 13* station, and were hogging it like their was no tomorrow. Anyway I thought that I had seen too much gaming already and needed to find some real cutting-edge tech to write about.

So I wandered around in search of something absolutely stunning, but the majority of stands that I saw were

below par to be honest. There were some interesting things that caught my eye and I kept their locations in mind, however at that given moment I was more into browsing the whole area than looking at specific things. One of these was a portable projector, a little beamer thing that you attached to your phone and it would project what was on your screen onto the wall. The projection was a little faint, but it had to be kept in mind that it was quite bright in the hall. While I was playing with the beamer with my iPhone (apparently it is compatible with any OS), I had some interesting things in mind. This technology if marketed correctly could replace the need for televisions. The majority of users who have a smartphone have some kind of TV app on their device, be it Sky Go or BBC iPlayer. The only problem with watching any program on their phone is the relative small size of their screen. Yet with the mini projector, the area you are watching becomes roughly the same as the size of a medium sized TV.

After my rendezvous with the projector I continued my stroll among the stands. To my disappointment only the minority of things were truly revolutionary. The rest were either toys for teens or for older men, who will always remain children at heart. Examples of these were lego (lego at a tech show!?!), RC cars, RC helicopters

or battle robots (like the ones on *Robot Wars*). I actually had a try and totally dominated my opposition (well...not really). Anything that was not a toy or for wellness was an accessory for your smartphone. I would estimate about 60% of the stands at the Gadget Show were smartphone accessory related. Thus when I met up again with the tech team to relay what I had seen, I was actually quite disappointed. Luckily I had not paid the £30 entry price for the show, but I still felt somewhat ripped off. This exposition did not seem to want to display the newest tech, but rather advertise and sell the stuff it already had. These thoughts were echoed by the Tech writers, and we all felt rather cheated. However we decided to give it another try for you, dear reader, but this time, together so that we could brave the disappointment as one.

On my previous meandering I had encountered some rare interesting things, and therefore when neither Jason (Tech Editor, who should actually have been in charge) nor Yong Wen (the other Tech writer) put a viable point of interest forward, I took charge (sigh) and guided them to what I thought was interesting. First port of call was LG, and boy it did not disappoint. Not only did we get to see the world's first 84" Ultra HD TV, but then saw something that was the absolute highlight of the show. A TV that could show two different things at the same time. Like with a 3D TV, when part of the screen is polarised one way and another, the other way, it did this but with two totally different screens. Jason and I both had a go, playing a racing game (I naturally won) where we saw different things, like a split screen superimposed.

After this wonder, things were looking up, and the next place I lead to did not disappoint either, i.e. Stone paper. Yes, you read correctly, stone paper. Made from Limestone instead of trees, it has some beneficial properties compared to normal paper, and is environmentally friendly to boot! Writing on it was a bit strange, especially

about 60% of the stands at the Gadget Show were smartphone accessory related

under water, but its tear resistance and all round originality was very cool. Without further ado the tech team had bought a few booklets to test at home! Next we had a look at a bunch of wiggly ears that move according to your brainwaves. Although the actual use of these things eluded us, we still decided to have a look at these weird contraptions. As we were listening to the "sales person" giving us his pitch, Jason was wearing a pair of these pink cat ear things on his head. I watched with fascination when the ears gave a twitch every so often. After that rather funny episode we made our way to the 3D printer, where we watched a little stick man being created right in front of our eyes. Although 3D printers have been around for a while, this was the first time I had seen one and I thought it was quite amazing. The various models littering the table around the printer were very different, including model castles, balls and even a plastic chain that apparently could carry a grown man (although I wouldn't imagine for very long). Shortly after we visited a stand full of toilets, Yong Wen and me wanted to move on, but Jason was quite intrigued by these porcelain thrones. The special thing about these toilets is that they wipe your butt for you (actually as Yong Wen put it: "they

wash it gently with warm water, and then dry it with hot air").

After we had seen the most interesting things, it was not the turn of the somewhat pointless contraptions on which most people spend their hard earned money. We ridiculed the Christmas tree that sprayed styrofoam snow, and wondered at its use. We had a go at a vibrating plate that apparently qualified as a work out, maxing them out to the highest rpm they had and laughed at the effect the vibrations had on our voices. We also came across a bunch of designer 3-D glasses (yes the ones you get in the cinema, just designerised), which were actually quite fairly priced. Our last stop was the section of old arcade and computer games set up by the Computing History Museum. Although I was thrashed by Jason in the old fashioned tennis and football games, when the antes were upped it was my turn to exact revenge. Yong Wen on the other hand managed to spectacularly lose in an old version of *Super Mario*. Then we bid farewell to the Gadget Show, and these three young whippersnappers headed back home!

The Gadget Show is very consumer orientated, with the majority of stands trying to sell you something instead of show you something you haven't seen before. I, and the others for that matter, were disappointed as we had expected more awe-inspiring tech. Yet when we actually took the effort to look among the little stands that the crowd overlooked we were pleasantly surprised at all the original stuff that we got to see. The big companies just want to get rid of what they have, instead of introducing something new, as tried and tested is always better than going out on a limb. The little guys however have nothing to lose. They don't have any old tech to rely on, instead trying to create their own market and show it off to anybody who wants to see. All in all, I would have felt cheated if I would have had to pay £30 for the tickets, even though there was some nice stuff, however there wasn't enough to warrant such a relatively high price.

... attached to your phone and it projects what is on your screen onto the wall

Make your 3D TV more useful

Yong Wen Chua checks out LG's amazing new dual vision 3D TV



Modelling some designer glasses at the Gadget Show (see page on the left)

For 3D Cinema

Life of Pi
Rise of the Guardians
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey
Monsters University
Cirque Du Soleil: World of Gravity
The Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Beginning
Zombieland 2
The Croods
The Smurfs 2
Jack the Giant Killer
G.I. Joe: Retaliation
The Great Gatsby
Finding Nemo
Star Trek: Into Darkness
Rustam Pasha
Independence Day: Resurgence
Turbo
Pacific Rim
Pinocchio
Slasher
Jurassic Park IV
Thunder Run
My Peabody & Sherman
One Direction: Concert
Walking with Dinosaurs
Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters
Battle of the Year
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug



The dual screen

Consumer electronics manufacturers often like to proclaim that their products boast the highest numbers in a certain arbitrary unit that often make no sense to the consumers, or are simply immaterial. Cameras like to boast that they have the highest amount of pixels while computers used to tout their “gigahertz” as their selling point. It seems that this phenomena is almost absent in the realm of televisions.

When the rush to 1080p HD-TV ended, television manufacturers rushed to implement 3D imaging in their products, to the chagrin of some and the delight of others. It seems like you cannot sell a TV without having 3D in it nowadays. Whether consumers like 3D on their TV or not is irrelevant – 3D is here to stay. LG has, however, managed to make the 3D capabilities of their TV more useful by leveraging the technology behind the 3D TV itself to allow two images to be displayed simultaneously on the screen. Firstly, let's take a brief look at how 3D works on some of the TVs.

The human eye perceives depth in our vision through the slightly different images that our left and right eyes receive. 3D TVs takes advantage of this by making use of a technique known as stereoscopy to create an illusion of depth. This is why you can “see” images floating out or into the screens when you don those 3D glasses.

One of the ways to deliver different images to each eye is to polarise the light coming out of the screen. A light source will usually emit light in all the directions. A polarised light source

will only emit light in a certain plane. Some 3D TVs will display two different images in two different polarisations, usually at 45 and 135 degrees. The lens on each side of a pair of 3D glasses are polarised to only allow light polarised to a certain plane to go through. In this case, each side of the glasses will be able to deliver different images to the right and left eyes of the view, allowing the user's brain to be tricked into having a perception of depth.

... a very innovative and seemingly very simple application of the 3D... TV

LG makes use of this same technique to deliver two simultaneous images over one screen. Two different pairs of glasses are each attuned to different polarisation. Two users wearing the different pairs of glasses will thus see different images. This was demonstrated during the Live Gadget Show when two players could simultaneously play a racing game that would

usually be in the form of a split screen. In this case, the image for each player was blown up to take advantage of the whole screen. The LG representative said that this works for all game consoles without needing any special form of processing. The user would just have to hit a few buttons on the TV remote control to tell the TV how the game consoles splits the screen, either vertically or horizontally, and the TV will do the rest of the work.

This is a very innovative and seemingly very simple application of the 3D capabilities of the TV. There are, however, some kinks to be worked out first. While I was playing as one of the players, I could see the silhouette of the images for the other player. It was like there was a “ghost” image behind the one I'm seeing. My conjecture is that this was because my head was not properly aligned with the plane of polarisation of the image intended for me, resulting in this effect. As the image I saw was upsized from an original split screen image, the graphics appear stretched and look lower in quality.

Still, there is potential in making fuller use of the 3D capabilities of the TVs beyond just simply displaying 3D images. There could be the possibility of working with game console makers in the future to deliver higher fidelity images to two different players rather than using the current “hackish” method of expanding the split screen images. There could even be the possibility of screening two films at once on the same TV screen.

It is exciting to see companies like LG “think out of the box” by making use of technology meant for one

thing (in this case 3D) in a different fashion (to deliver two images simultaneously). With the ever competitive consumer electronics market, such in-

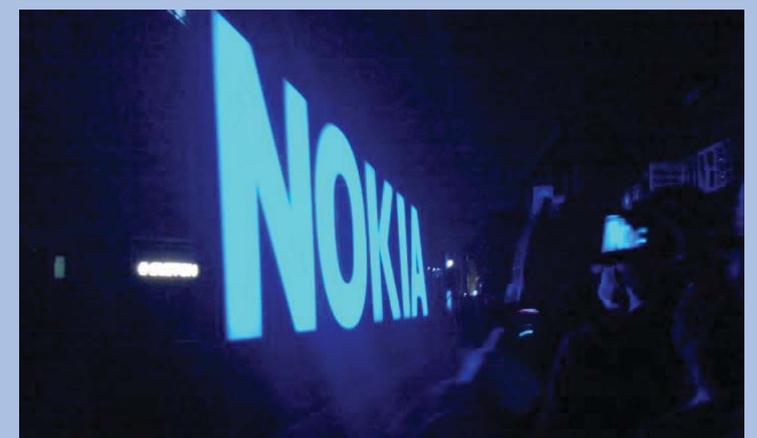
novative approaches can only be good for the consumers, until the patent lawyers start knocking on the doors of course.

Nokia & Deadmau5

Last week Nokia teamed up with Deadmau5, yet again, to put on an amazing light-themed event in London to launch their latest flagship phones. On event day it had been exactly 365 days since Nokia originally teamed up with the artist for the launch of the Nokia Lumia 800 at Millbank. This Editor went along to the unbelievable display of the world's most advanced LASER technology and banded on about, mostly, how great the phone was!

This time round, for the launch of the Nokia Lumia 820 and 920, Nokia closed off an entire street by London Bridge and the Shard, rigging everything from rubbish bins to window frames with lights. The result, another incredible light display while Deadmau5 played first on the roof, then cycling past the crowd and playing on a moving stage. This Editor, having his contacts, secured two of the 50 free public tickets and I can say with full certainty, the event did not disappoint.

You can watch the 4 minute highlights here: <http://goo.gl/OvINM>



Jason Parmar Technology Editor



Christmas Cheatsheet



Now that December is here, we're actually not bemoaning the fact that all the festive tunes in stores and Christmas delicacies are too much too soon. In fact, they're a rather welcome indication that holidays and the festive season are nigh, despite the fact most of us will have a bit to slog through in the last week before lessons are over. Which can only mean one thing – yummy Christmas dinners ahead!

Here we've provided a bumper guide to planning your own Christmas dinner – this is chiefly aimed at those who might not have made a full Christmas meal but would like to try their hand at it (international freshers who will be stuck in halls this holiday, I'm looking at you!). That said, however, we do hope that this guide will have some new tips and ideas for old hands to consider trying. All in all we at Food believe that preparing a hearty, impressive Christmas meal needn't be overtly taxing or pricey – you just need a tiny bit of forethought and prep. So go on – fire up your ovens, pour yourself a glass of mead, and cook away!

The Start-Up

You don't necessarily *need* to have a starter in your menu – but if you do, please. PLEASE K.I.S.S. (keep it simple, sexy) so you're not doing more work than you have to in the kitchen. After all, you'll be spending quite a bit of time in there prepping your other courses anyway! You should also keep it light enough (but still scrumptious) so that your guests won't be too stuffed. The point of a starter is just to get your guests' appetites (for the main) going anyway, not to feed them for the whole 12 days of Christmas.

What to serve, though? Popular and not-too-taxing options include a small helping of soup (feel free to look back at Issue 1531 for our guide to soups) – plus points to you if it's made with pumpkin; keeps the festive theme going! Canapés are just as acceptable

and classy – think cocktail sausages, salmon and cream cheese blinis, (mini) bruschetta, prawn cocktail shots or vegetable crudité (just a fancy way of saying raw veggie sticks like carrot and celery) with dipping sauces. In all essence they're not tricky to make, either; having it presented in such a... erm, "fun-size" manner just takes it to a whole new level.

If you really want to cheat and go the store-bought route for sauces and some of the cooked canapés, that's fine by us. Some supermarket options have been pretty fabby in terms of quality over the past few years – just be sure to check the ingredients label for any nasties that you're not particularly keen on, and follow instructions. We won't tell if you don't – well, unless you present us with a particularly limp set of crudité...

Carol's Banging Tomato and Basil Bruschetta

A simple healthy starter (we do need something to counteract the sinful other courses!) that doesn't skimp on the flavour. I've suggested plum tomatoes as their thicker skins make for easier peeling, plus they're less juicy and seedy (groan!) – but normal toms work just as well too. (Vegan Friendly)



Simply Recipes

6-7 ripe plum tomatoes
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp balsamic vinegar
6-8 fresh basil leaves, chopped (don't sub in dried – doesn't work the same!)
Salt and pepper to taste
1 baguette French bread, or similar crusty Italian bread
1/4 cup olive oil for brushing

Makes 24 small slices
Prep: 15 mins // Cook: 10 mins (max)

Preheat oven to 230°C, or as high as it will go. Lightly score a cross in the bottom of the tomatoes with a knife, and blanch for a minute in some freshly-boiled water right from the kettle/stove. Drain, dunk in cold water to stop them cooking, and remove the

skins. Dice up finely, removing the seeds and juice as you go. Put in bowl with minced garlic, extra virgin olive oil and vinegar. Mix well, add chopped basil plus salt and pepper to taste.

Slice baguette on a diagonal into roughly 1/2 inch thick slices. Brush one side of each slice with olive oil, and lay out on a baking tray oil side down. Toast on the top rack for 5-6 minutes until the bread starts turning golden brown. Remove and arrange olive oil side up. Top each slice with the tomato mixture just before serving – or let your guests DIY if you're that way inclined!

TRADITIONAL PROTIP – Purists who make bruschetta tend to toast the bread without oiling first, then rubbing a cut garlic clove on the top and drizzling with oil. Feel free to try!

Carol's "Not Yo Momma's" Lemon and Herb Crimbo Chicken

Lemon, rosemary and thyme may be an oft-rehashed flavour combination, but stuffing a boiled and pierced lemon into the cavity may not be something good ol' mum may have thought of. The hot steam from the lemon will permeate the bird, slightly cooking and flavouring its juices from within. Experiment with other herbs and seasonings!

1 large chicken (>2kg - note its weight!)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 large lemon, preferably unwaxed
1 whole garlic bulb, broken into cloves
Handful of fresh thyme
Olive oil/butter
Handful of fresh rosemary sprigs,
EXTRA: 8 rashers streaky bacon

Serves 4
Prep: 30 mins max // Cook: See chicken

Rub chicken all over and inside cavity with a decent amount of salt and black pepper (freshly ground please, no sneeze dust!) If possible do this ahead of time and leave in the fridge – maybe in the morning – so the seasoning has time to seep in prior to roasting.

Preheat oven to 190°C. Boil up your lemon and garlic – either do this when you're boiling water up to blanch tomatoes for bruschetta (recipe below left), or together with your potatoes if you tend to parboil them before roasting/mashing. Once this is nice and hot, remove lemon and garlic – they'll be slightly soft.

Take the chicken out of the fridge and pat down with kitchen paper. Rub



Budegens

all over with olive oil, or softened butter if you're feeling cheeky. Stab hot lemon carefully with a knife about 10 times – this will steam and sizzle. Put this in the cavity with the garlic cloves and thyme, then pop on your prepared roasting tray. Work out how long your total cooking time will be based on the weight of your bird (**see below**), making sure to baste a few times during roasting.

If you're using bacon, roast until 45 minutes of your total roasting time remains. Take out chicken pour off some

excess fat (save for gravy or to roast potatoes with), lay the bacon rashers over the breast and sprinkle rosemary. Roast until time is up and chicken is cooked. Otherwise, roast for full duration of the cooking time, draining excess fat halfway through if you need it.

Remove from oven, letting meat rest 15-30 minutes. Crumble bacon up if you used it, and remove garlic and lemon from cavity. Mash up garlic, spreading it all over the chicken. Carve at the table, and dig in!

Main Attraction

Tradition dictates that the usual meat for Christmas roasts is a nice plump turkey, complete with all the trimmings. Tradition can also be damned, though; it doesn't HAVE to be that way – we're risking the wrath of some purists by making this statement! The options you have at your disposal for roast meats are actually aplenty; if you include flavour combinations e.g. lemon and thyme vs citrus spice, you could cook one roast meat dish every night and have a meat marathon longer than the 1001 Arabian Nights. Beef, chicken, lamb, pork – they're all equally valid choices for roasts. Besides, some of us with smaller ovens and less time can't confidently fit a plump turkey into them as opposed to a chicken.

Vegetarian or (heavens!) vegan? No

need to despair – Yiango, one of our own Editors, is vegan herself; and there's nothing wrong with preferring your farmyard animals celebrating Christmas together around the table (as opposed to being served up). You or your vegan mate don't have to resort to purely picking at the sides, or the oft-served option of your mother's nut roast – good news for those with nut allergies!

Think lentil and mushroom shepherd's pie, baked risottos, or hearty vegetable pot pies. If you're preparing a separate option for a vegan mate, it's not that much extra work and the meal can stay just as social as long as you keep your sides vegan friendly (sub butter for olive spread, etc) – all you're just preparing is a separate main, as opposed to a full-blown

vegan meal.

As for omnivores, once you've picked your meat and seasoning of choice, it's just a matter of doing the prep along with working out how long to pop it in the oven for. We've prepared a handy-dandy time/temperature guide down there, though some people do like to kick-start the roast at a higher temperature for about 30 minutes so they get a crispy crust/skin on their meat. Whatever you do, though; make sure after you've cooked your meat that you let it rest for at least half an hour prior to carving – this gives it a chance to reabsorb its juices so it stays moist. Neglect that rule and you may just find Sophia or Carol charging at you with the turkey baster or a hot pair of tongs.

Roasting times and temperatures

Common sense dictates that the heavier/bigger your joint (or bird), the longer you'll have to cook it for. Below you'll find a guide to how hot your oven needs to be depending on your choice of meat, and how long it needs to be in there for. Remember that ovens can vary, though; what the dial says may not be the true temperature – so do conduct visual testing too!

BEEF: 180C, 25 mins per 450g + extra 25mins for medium rare. Common roasting cuts these times apply to include rib, sirloin, and eye of the rump.

PORK: 180C, 35 mins per 450g-500g + extra 35 minutes. Generally pork should be fully cooked, but if you want it medium, drop the times here to 30 mins per 450-500g + extra 30 minutes. Or just get a food probe and check

that the internal temperature of the joint is 75-80C (as opposed to 80-85 for well done pork.) To get crackling, score skin until the fat and rub in salt an hour prior to roasting. Roast initially at high heat (as high as your oven will allow) for 25 minutes, then follow times for pork done medium.

LAMB: Depends if you're rushed (quick roasting) or have time (slow roasting).

Quick roasting is done at 200C, 20-30mins per 450g + extra 20 mins. Slow roasting is done at 180C, 35 mins per 450g + extra 35 mins.

CHICKEN: 180C, 20 mins per 450g + extra 10-20 minutes. If you stuffed the cavity, expect to wait longer – NEVER OVERSTUFF. Juices run clear and thigh meat pulls away easily from the bone when cooked.

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FOOD

Yiango's Perfect Roast Potatoes

These are probably the easiest, quickest and most delicious roast potatoes ever – perfect for Christmas dinner! (Vegan friendly)



1kg Maris Piper Potatoes
1/3 cup olive oil
1/4 tsp dried rosemary
1 clove garlic
Salt and pepper to taste

Prep: 5-10 mins // Cook: 30 mins

Firstly preheat your oven at 200°C. Peel and wash the potatoes. Leave them as they are or cut them to any shape you want. Why not try wedges?

Chop the garlic and combine it with the olive oil, rosemary, garlic, salt and

pepper. Put the potatoes in a big bowl, add the oil mixture and using a spoon stir everything to make sure that all the potatoes are covered with the oil and herbs.

Put a sheet of parchment paper in a baking tray, place the potatoes on it and then cover with another sheet of paper. Fold over the edges a few times to create a pouch and staple so that everything is well sealed. Bake for about 30 minutes or until the potatoes turn golden brown. Serve on a hot plate to keep them warm and delicious!

Side Stories

Just as rice is the de facto carb present in Asian meals (and may be out of place as a side with a roast, while we're at it), spuds are the de facto form of carbohydrate you'd expect to accompany a Christmas roast (well, if you're doing a meat or nut roast for instance.) Mashed, boiled, sautéed – the world's your oyster. Additionally, they don't have to be normal white potatoes; Sophia's explored the possibility of sweet potato mash that takes on a bit of a Thanksgiving twist.

We have a few cardinal rules for the traditional favourite (roast potatoes) if you want them to rival Aunt Bessie's. You don't HAVE to parboil them, as Yiango's lovely recipe above will indicate – it saves you time and energy. But if you're looking to get the lovely, rough crust on the outside with the fluffy interior, then parboiling prior to roasting is definitely the way forward. Don't do it for too long – just enough for the outside to get slightly soft, so about

10 mins if you cut your spuds up into golfball-sized pieces.

When you're done, drain, cover the pan, and shake them around a bit to fluff up the exterior. Then coat in oil/fat of your choice; some toss them together in the roasting tin that contains the meat halfway through the roasting time, coating it in the oil that's drained off during the process. Cooking them both in the same tin does save you on the washing up!

Spuds may be well and all, but how about other veggies? Mother certainly would balk at the thought of you not getting your 5 a day, even if it is the festive season! Parsnips, carrots, squash, leek and the like roast beautifully (essentially, most root veg) – just make sure you lightly oil and season before you pop them into the oven.

Roasting isn't the only way to do them, though; boiling/steaming some broccoli, peas, corn etc. is perfectly acceptable if the rest of the meal is very rich and dense. Just be sure to not keep

Carol's Cheerful Mulled Wine

Feel free to serve any tippable or beverage of choice during your meal – but if you're after Christmas in a glass, mulled wine comes up tops along with eggnog. This drink would warm even the cockles of Scrooge's stony heart. (Vegan friendly)

1 unwaxed orange
Peel of 1 unwaxed lemon
150g caster sugar (don't use anything else, the flavour is too strong)
5 cloves
5 bruised cardomom pods
1 cinnamon stick
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
2 bottles red wine (go for something fruity and unoaked - and no need to break the bank!)

150ml ginger wine

Makes 12 servings

Peel and juice the orange. Add to a saucepan with lemon peel, sugar and spices, and add enough wine to just cover. Heat gently until the sugar dissolves, stirring occasionally, then bring to the boil and cook until you have a thick syrup. This helps to bring out the flavour of the spices through simmering, and prevents all the alcohol from the remaining wine boiling off.

Turn the heat down and add the rest of the wine into the saucepan with the ginger wine. Gently heat through, ladle up for your guests, and enjoy!

Sophia's Ho Ho Ho So Simple Sweet Potato Mash

Want something sweet, warming and that tastes great this Christmas? Um no – I'm not talking about that... I'm talking about a quick and scrumptious sweet potato mash, of course – a great side to beef or just about anything! (Vegan friendly)



2 medium sweet potatoes
2 medium carrots
1 garlic clove
2 teaspoons of maple syrup
1 tablespoon of olive oil
Sprinkle of fresh coriander
Salt and pepper

Serves 4

Prep + Cook: 25-30 mins max

Peel the carrots and sweet potatoes. Cut them into cubes of approximately

equal size. Boil for approximately 10-15 minutes – if your cubes are bigger, cook for longer. Keep checking to see if the carrots and sweet potatoes are done with a fork: if a fork slides into them with ease then they are done! Don't worry if the sweet potato is done before the carrots – it's all going to be mashed up in a mo.

Meanwhile, peel a garlic clove and crush with the back of a knife (this will release all the flavours) before cutting into small pieces. Add the olive oil to a

pan on medium heat, and when hot, add the chopped garlic. Once the garlic starts to soften add the maple syrup and turn off the heat.

Drain the carrots and sweet potatoes and place them back into the pan. Add the sauce from the frying pan. Now mash! Add salt and pepper to taste, and serve with a sprinkle of coriander on top.

SOPHIA'S TIPS:

* If you're in a rush, cut the carrots and potatoes up into smaller cubes. They'll cook quicker this way.

* Sweet potatoes can add moisture – if your mash is looking a bit too wet, leave it in the pan after mashing on low heat until some of the moisture evaporates. Keep stirring so it doesn't burn at the bottom, though.

* Why not make this recipe your own by adding a little extra something? You could dice a red chilli or 2 slices of bacon, fry until crispy and add on top.

them on the boil for ages; it's nice to have them still looking fresh and colourful with a bit of a bite/crunch still intact. As long as it doesn't taste raw, it's fine – and if you need a bit of extra help in keeping your boiled broccoli looking green, add a teensy bit of oil to the water you boil it in.

Just Desserts

Wahey, you're at the home stretch now! Our good ol' mate (read: British tradition) advocates fruity treats like dense Christmas fruitcake, mince pies, and the misleadingly-named Christmas plum pudding – yes, misleading because the Victorians thought it would be clever to use plums to refer to raisins back in

days of yore, so there aren't any actual plums in said pudding per se. Bah humbug.

On the other end of the spectrum, there are the non-fruity alternatives that come in all forms, just waiting to have a festive twist added to them. Crème brûlée maestro? Get adventurous and try infusing cinnamon, cardomom, brandy or whiskey in your cream before you add it to the eggs.

You're perfectly at liberty to go for lighter options for dessert – it depends what you've picked for the rest of your meal. If you're after fruit, you could also take a leaf out of the Asian books and opt to serve a fruit kebab platter – perhaps with dipping chocolate on the side for those

feeling a little more cheeky! Alternatively, keep portion sizes for rich desserts moderate and your guests won't feel overstuffed anytime soon. Try out Yiango's Celebration Cupcakes below for one such example.

All said and done, the last bit of advice we can offer is to be organised. Write lists and timetables down if they'll help with planning – the effort will all be worth it when the smiles and comments from your mates keep coming in. Even better: plan and prep a meal together with your mates!

Finally, we at Food wish you all the best with your meal preparations... as well as a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year. See you next term!

Yiango's Celebration Cupcakes with Chocolate Ganache

Sinful only in taste, not in portion size. (Vegan friendly)

1 1/4 cups flour
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
Pinch of salt
1/3 cup oil
3/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon almond extract
1/2 teaspoon strong vanilla extract
1 cup milk (preferably almond)
1 teaspoon white wine vinegar
Flaked almonds
1/4 cup chopped walnuts or hazelnuts

For the ganache:
1/4 cup milk (soy for vegans)
120 grams dark chocolate

Makes 12

Preheat the oven at 180°C. Line a cupcake pan with cupcake cases. In a cup mix the milk with the vinegar



and set aside for a few minutes. Then add the oil, sugar and extracts and stir.

In a bowl mix all the dry ingredients and then add the wet ingredients. Stir until the flour is just dissolved but be careful not to overmix. Fold in the almonds. Place the batter in the cupcake cases so that 2/3 of each case is full.

Bake in the oven for about 20 minutes or until they are golden brown.

To make the ganache boil the milk and then add the chocolate. Stir until all the chocolate has melted. Using a spatula cover the cupcakes with the ganache and then add some chopped walnuts on top for decoration.

Join us for an evening of A Cappella
music for Christmas
We'll sing until our voices are horse!





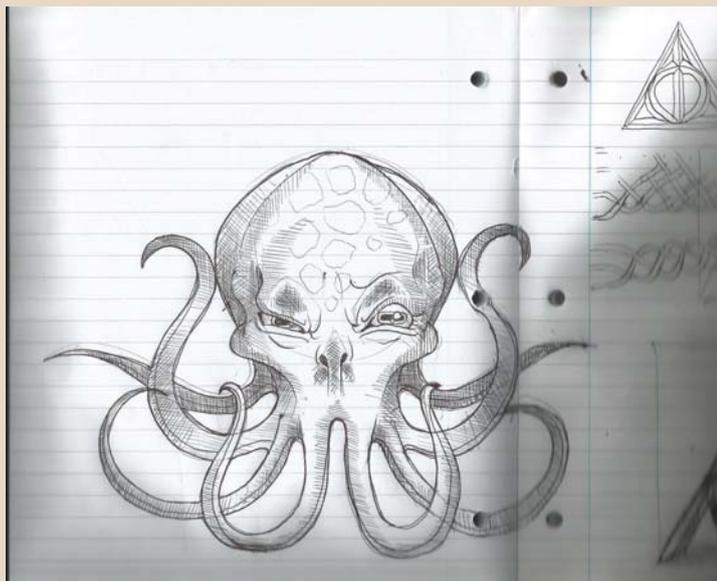
Sat 8th December at 8 in SAF; Tues 11th December at 7.30 in the Read Lecture Theatre

ARTS

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DOODLE OF THE WEEK



Why work? Instead, doodle all lecture long and then send us your drawings to arts.felix@ic.ac.uk. This evil octopus doodle is the brainchild of Umar Hossain.

TIRED OF LIFE?
Our Home for Christmas

Twelfth Night @ The Apollo, London – Nothing to do with fairies and sprites, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* is always a magical play. Mark Rylance, Stephen Fry and the all-male cast give a wonderfully delicate, utterly hilarious performance of a play in which every line has deep meaning. Now - February 13 2013.

The Young Van Dyck @ El Museo del Prado, Madrid – One of the largest single gatherings of Van Dyck's paintings and drawings, this exhibition shows work that the artists produced from the age of fifteen (1615-1621). Now - March 3.

Body Language @ Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris – With the human body in all its multidimensional glory as the subject, this exhibition presents a recollection of nudity in the photography of both well-known and lesser artists.

Calabash Club @ Calabash Club, Berlin – This venue doubles as a club, but, run by a Berlin arts collective, it also has a cinema, a theatre, and a gallery. Sure to have something suitably independent running!

George Wylie retrospective @ Mitchell Library, Glasgow – This exhibition, explores a back catalogue of work from a famed artist known for his humorous stunts. Includes some unseen works. Now – February 2.



Nobuyoshi Araki
at Body Language

A Grand-age



Emilie Beauchamp Writer

This autumn, a new theatre company has joined the ranks of the prestigious London scene: the Michael Grandage Company (MGC). Born from the union of two notoriety of the UK repertoire, artistic director Michael Grandage and executive producer James Bierman, this new troop has only just revealed its first 15-month season of five plays that will be nestled in the heart of the West End at the Noel Coward theatre.

There are a few things here that are worth saying about this new company and why this is an exciting development.

First, Michael Grandage has an award-winning track record from his previous position as artistic director at the Donmar Warehouse. To translate this into a comparable figure, Grandage is the theatre equivalent of, say, Christopher Nolan: he turns almost every production into an acclaimed, fresh, yet tasteful gem. Second, the season will feature a sensational mix of well-established celebrities including Judi Dench, Daniel Radcliffe and Jude Law, as much as new up-and-coming actors like Sam Swainsbury.

Third, in order to appeal to a wide mass of cosmopolites, MGC is offering no less than 100,000 tickets for £10 only across its season. That's 200 out of the 950 seats of the venue for a tenner for each performance. With such a renowned track record, why would MGC be taking such a cut? Primarily to send a clear message about what it wants to be known for: the new kid on the block whose every play will make it on your must-see list. Aiming to complement the seasons of the likes of the National Theatre, the Almeida and the Old Vic, MGC's policy opens the door to younger theatre-goers and students while still promising high quality productions.

Fourth, MGC will be performing for free across London schools and colleges, launching an education programme tagged 'MGC Future' to introduce young people to theatre. In the same spirit, for each play the company will seek to hire starting directors and designers as part of a training scheme, giving new stars the chance to shine. If the price tag alone did nothing to convince you, it must surely be good to support a company that does not perpetuate the uptight standards that theatres often seem to uphold.

Oh, and I almost forgot: the set five plays, starting this December, all promise to be captivating! I suggest jumping on one – if not all – of these opportunities within the next year:

Privates on Parade, on first, features Simon Russell Beale as drag-queen army Captain Dennis in Peter Nichols' comedy, which is set against the murderous backdrop of the Malaysian campaign at the end of the Second World War.

Peter and Alice, starting in March, and starring Judi Dench and Ben Whishaw, hypothesizes on the meeting between Alice Liddell Hargreaves and Peter Llewelyn Davies – the two children who inspired Carroll and Barrie to respectively write *Alice in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan*.

The final play of the (school) year, *The Cripple Of Inishmaan* begins in June. Have you ever wondered how Daniel Radcliffe would fare without a wand and a sizzling scar? Look no further. He will be taking on the lead role for this play: a young disabled man living on a remote island on the West Coast of Ireland set to become a movie star when a Hollywood production comes to shoot on an island nearby.

For more information on how to obtain one of those £10 tickets go to <http://www.michaelgrandagecompany.com>

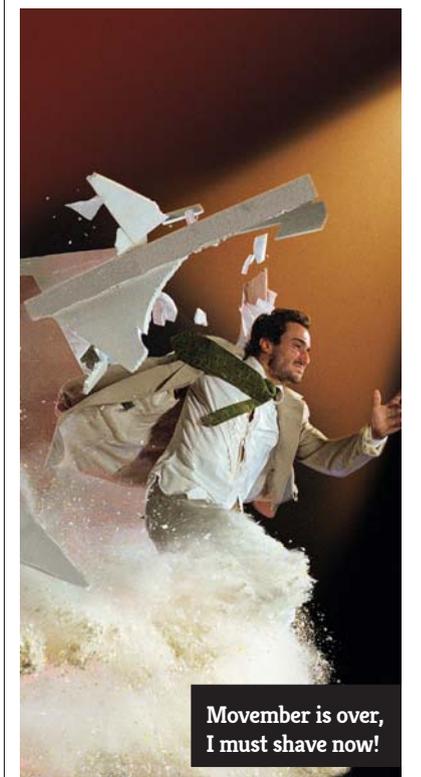
Breaking a fourth wall

Emilie Beauchamp Writer

If you are a fan of extraordinary theatrical experiences and still have room on your Christmas gift list, have a look at the world acclaimed show *Fuerzabruta* passing by London next January. This Argentine-born multi-sensory spectacle, translating literally into 'brute force', uses state-of-the-art visual effects to create scenes that will blow your mind. Think of a man bursting through a series of moving walls at running speed, or four performers frolicking under water in a basin suspended right on top of the audience... Top it up with a music playlist fit for your latest night out in the East, and you have got the winning mix for a show that, rightly so, has gathered praise around the globe for its innovation. The troop is coming back four years after its first tour of the UK, when it was named the biggest and best show at Edinburgh Fringe 2007, among others.

Tickets are not cheap – ranging between £30 and £40; but it's a gig scoring in the Cirque du Soleil category. With its cutting-edge moving aerial imagery technology, *Fuerzabruta* promises to be the show you will want to see in 2013. And who knows when it will be showing again at your doorstep?

Running for four weeks from December 27th at Camden's Roundhouse – <http://www.roundhouse.org.uk>.



November is over,
I must shave now!

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ARTS

Dealing with Trust issues

Catherine Ashmore

Fred Fyles

Writer

At what point does someone become a national treasure? This is the question Alan Bennett must have been asking himself when writing *People*, his latest play, which premiered at the National Theatre last month. Bennett, who has been working in the world of theatre for more than 50 years, is Britain's most well known playwright, and arguably one of the best. Responsible for *The History Boys* and *The Habit of Art*, Bennett has come to represent modern British drama; *People* continues in this tradition, centring around the idea of national institutions, class divides, and the death of the English country house.

People's plot centres around a large mansion, located near where Bennett grew up, in South Yorkshire. The house is unmanageable, expensive to run, and inhabited by a pair of old women, Dorothy and Iris (played by Frances de la Tour and Linda Bassett respectively), who are slowly atrophying in the large drawing room. Dorothy does not want to get rid of the house, but realises that it is inevitable if she is to survive. She has a number of options; a cinema company want to use it to shoot a pornographic film, there has been interest from a group of Japanese businessmen, and others wish to turn it into a golf course, but at the centre of the struggle there are two major players. There is a group of investors, dubbed 'The Concern', who want to move the building to

Devon, and the National Trust, who want to open it to the public. Both of these options would allow Dorothy to carry on living in the house, but she does not want the house to change. All she really wants is running water and privacy.

Frances de la Tour shines as Dorothy, portraying a woman who is trying to hold on to her dignity, but is completely powerless. Put under pressure by 'The Concern', 'The Trust', and her nagging sister, a deacon in the Church of England, Dorothy tries to hang on to her slowly crumbling house with all her might. When asked by Mr Lumsden, a representative of the Trust, whether she wants the house to progress or not, she simply replies that 'decay is a form of progress'. Much of the play is focussed on the idea of trying to hang on to the past, warning of a near-future where the stately home has simply become a pastiche of a bygone age.

In the work, Bennett delivers an acerbic attack upon UK institutions; the Church, and the middle classes get hit pretty heavily, but it is the National Trust that received the brunt of the criticism. It is portrayed as a multi-armed monster, grabbing at any buildings which may be in the public interest, and delivering a tacky, artificial representation of history. In one memorable scene Mr Lumsden talks about how the trust is planning on acquiring the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland and recreating the 'dirty protest' staged by IRA prisoners during the Troubles. This treatment of the past clearly



The pain of Gothic piles...

horrifies Bennett, who closes the play with the line 'let what is gone be gone, and not fetched back'. Bennett is describing a world where 'Britain is at a standstill', obsessed with the past, and unable to move forward. The Trust, for Bennett at least, also represents its target market: the middle classes, who are described as 'the shockable ones'. The idea of swathes of middle class parents wandering through the house brings

miserable to Dorothy.

While Bennett's witty attacks against institutions are convincing, one must take them with a pinch of salt; after all, Bennett himself is an institution of British theatre, and having lived in North London for the last few decades, he may have more in common with the middle class than he cares to admit. But *People* should not be taken too seriously; it is after all a comedy, and

a damn good one too. The set and lighting are excellent, as is to be expected from the National Theatre, and Nicholas Hynter's sublime direction helps elevate what would be a light comedy into a real work of art. While Bennett may be trying to escape becoming a national treasure, this work does not do him any favours; if anything it simply further entrenches his role as king of British theatre.

Minotaurs and major excursions

Meredith Thomas

Arts Editor

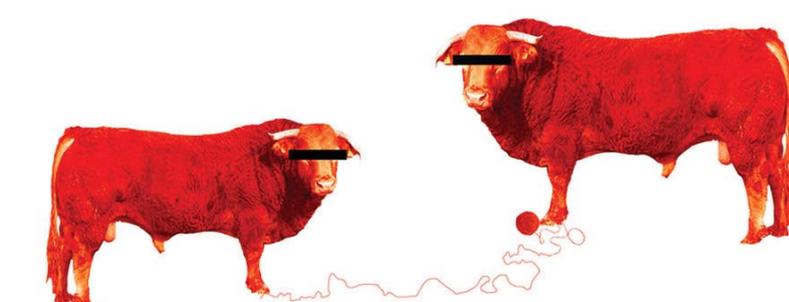
The Architect is Shunt's first production in three years and it was well worth the wait. Shunt is an unusual collective centred round an experimental theatre company. The group have had a presence around East London for years. Some readers might just remember the astonishing club they ran in the tunnels under London Bridge station of the same name. It was amazing folks; the only dance floor I have ever graced where one of the major dangers was drunk rickshaw drivers. The core work of Shunt however has always been theatre and so, as I traipsed my way into the wilds of Bermondsey to their new hideout in an abandoned biscuit factory, I was more than a little excited.

I am nervous about revealing too much about the show. So much of its effectiveness relied on surprise, misdirection and disorientation, done with such finesse that the audience are hardly aware. There is a fear that whatever I tell you would subtract from your enjoyment should you choose, and I recommend that you do, to get tickets. Nevertheless, I have a job to do so here goes.

The Architect was wilfully and consistently bizarre. The entire performance incorporated live music, installation, aerial performers, acting, comedy and a good amount of drinking, all from a cast of barely ten. I was shocked, terrified, bewildered and amused in turn due to an atmosphere and sense of spectacle that were perfectly engineered on an astonishing scale.

Audience participation normally fills me with dread. Too often it can seem contrived and actually serves as a barrier to an immersive experience. The the cast managed it perfectly. This was probably because, despite the scale of the venture, the set being several times the size of their last show *Money*, the entire enterprise retains a playful, amateurish feel.

I have mentioned the scale, and it is astounding. One of the inspirations for the show was Jorge Luis Borges' short story *The House of Asterion*, which is itself based upon the legend of the Minotaur. To reflect this, you enter the venue through a claustrophobic plywood labyrinth. The space is genuinely hard to navigate, filled with bizarre items. After some struggle you reach as door and passing through, find yourself, quite sud-



denly in the dining hall of a cruise ship (complete with bar) where much of the action takes place.

The true genius of the show is caught in glimpses amongst the madness and by picking apart the allegory in the narrative. Odd thematic motifs recur and interact with varying degrees of symbolic opacity. In addition to the a Minotaur myth, there are clear ref-

erences to the credit crunch and the European debt crisis as well as other classical sources. The show may be silly and occasionally obscene, but it is most certainly not unintelligent.

A large part of my brain will be dedicated to going over my own interpretations of the performance for some time to come. Do not go if you are afraid of the dark, or cows.



Models bring sexy back

Maya Kaushik interviews Anita from *Britain and Ireland's Next Top Model*

This summer, cycle 8 of *Britain and Ireland's Next Top Model* aired on Sky Living, featuring many exciting challenges and photo shoots, including a shoot with tarantulas, walking on CN tower, and posing with naked male models. During the series, twenty contestants were whittled down to one winner. Anita Kaushik was the contestant labelled as the dark horse of the competition, starting off weakly but improving rapidly every week, gaining approval from the judges, and finally reaching the final episode, coming third place. I spoke to Anita to find out her views on the competition, modelling and the fashion world.

Maya Kaushik: Hi Anita. How has it been for you, going from being relatively unknown to being viewed by many people from their living rooms every Monday night?

Anita Kaushik: Hi! It's been absolutely crazy, from just being a girl from Southampton that no one knows to getting recognised in Tesco's and on nights out and people wanting pictures! I love it though, shows how dedicated the fans of the show are and if it wasn't for them I'd have no support!

MK: How much contact have you had with the other BINTM contestants since the show?

AK: I still speak to most of the girls

from the show and still see the ones that live in and around London. Lisa and I still keep in contact Skyping regularly! I'm in the process of trying to persuade her to move to England!

MK: Who was your favourite and least favourite judge on the show and why?

AK: I think my favourite judge had to be Tyson. He was always really supportive of me and seemed to have my back right from the start even when the other judges might have not believed in me. I really liked Julien as well; he always put a smile on my face. I wouldn't say I disliked any of the judges because they all brought something different to the panel, but I think out of all of them I had the least support from Whitney. Not that she didn't like me, I just think she was indifferent as to whether I was in the competition or not.

MK: Would you say you have a particular fashion style, and what made you choose it?

AK: I wouldn't say I have a particular style but I like to think I keep up with fashion styles. I sometimes wish I was a bit more adventurous with trying out different styles but I will always make an effort because it makes me feel good when I think I look good!

MK: To any aspiring models out there, have you learnt any tips in modelling technique that could come in handy?

The dark horse of the competition



AK: The best piece of advice that Elle told one of the other girls was to always believe in yourself. If you went up to them in the elimination room looking defeated then the judges had really no reason to keep you in the competition. And if you say you don't like your picture, how can you expect anyone else to like it? So the best tip I can give is to always be confident, because in this industry it's better to be over-confident and for people to believe in you than to be under-con-

fidant and for people to not want to give you a chance.

MK: What would you say are the best and worst aspects of the modelling and fashion industries?

AK: The best thing is you never know where you're going to be and what you're going to be doing in the future. This industry is so different to anything else and I love the fact that now that I'm full time modelling, I never

know what my schedule is week to week so it never gets boring! I think the worst aspect is there is a lot of rejection. People who aren't sure of themselves and take criticism to heart shouldn't be in the industry because you will always face it. But then you just have to think, even Kate, Giselle and Adriana would have come across some kind of rejection in their life! And even though there is rejection, when you get jobs and people request you for jobs it's the best feeling!

My Top 5 Episodes of the Week

Lucia Podhorska Television Editor

The end of term is nearly here and with it my last Top 5 Episodes feature of the year. This week saw a return to the old favourites, making me realize that I really need to start watching some new shows.

Next term, look out for reviews on *Dexter*, *South Park*, *Fringe*, *Twin Peaks*, *Grey's Anatomy* and many more, as we can also look forward to the new season of *Game of Thrones*, *Girls* and *True Blood* on HBO. Have a great holiday, watch lots of TV and let everyone know what you liked or disliked!



Different is The New Normal

1. *The Big Bang Theory*, Season 6 Episode 9, "The Parking Space Escalation"

2. *The New Normal*, Season 1 Episode 10, "The XY Factor"

3. *How I Met Your Mother*, Season 8 Episode 9, "Lobster Crawl"

4. *The Vampire Diaries*, Season 4 Episode 7, "My Brother's Keeper"

5. *Grey's Anatomy*, Season 9 Episode 7, "I Was Made For Lovin You"

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TELEVISION

A *Glee*-ful Screamefest

Astrid Armgarth gives *American Horror Story: Asylum* a raving review

Lately, the horror genre has experienced a surge of interest with TV-series such as *The Walking Dead* and my personal favourite *American Horror Story*. The latter is truly a breath of fresh air in your weekly TV-schedule and the end of its second season is approaching fast! This show has received high appraisal by many TV – critics thanks to its high originality and accredited cast. Personally, I am mostly impressed by how it manages to transform gory, suspenseful and physiological horror into rather cheerful entertainment. But considering this show is brought to you by the co-creators of *Glee*, the gleeful twist is perhaps not too surprising after all. Don't worry though, this TV-series is completely free from happy tunes and annoying teenagers played by 28+ year old actors.

The first season sets off as a family of three moves into a wonderful chateau in sunny California. They were at least notified that the house has a murderous past but little did they know that it also has dozens of otherworldly dwellers... or that occupiers rarely make it out alive or out of this world. One episode at a time, the history of the house unravels and you begin to understand why this haunted building has become the major attraction of a murder bus

tour that passes by on a daily basis to revel in the unfortunate fates of past residents. The halls are crawling with both murder victims (a gay couple, nurses and creepy children) and murderers (a high-school shooter, a doctor and a dentist). Meanwhile, the family is on the brink of destruction, with serious neglect of their suicidal teenage daughter and a marriage cracking at the seams by adultery. As puzzle pieces slowly fall into place the viewers become increasingly attached to the living as well as the dead.

The second season brings on a new theme of horror that takes place in an insane asylum (Briarcliff) in the 1960s. This institution is run by iron fists of a nun (Sister Jude) that carries a past of alcoholism and tragedy. And as they say: bad habits die hard, and people from the ward seem to be dropping like flies. Many of these deaths are attributed to the asylum's experimental medic Dr. Arden who transforms these poor souls into deformed creatures. I should probably mention that he also used to serve as an SS officer back in the day. By his side is the glib and loyal Sister Mary Eunice who becomes possessed by the devil half-way through the season. In addition, one of the inmates has been committed on the basis of false murder accusations, while the real 'bloody face'



So much drama in the workplace...



killer is still on the loose. This nickname was picked up from his passion for carving off the faces of his victims to wear them as masks (or make pretty lamp-shades).

Yes, the second season does sound drastically wackier than the first (and I did not even mention the aliens). But regardless of its extreme oddities the amazing cast makes it virtually impossible to stop watching this show. Some actors are re-occurring in both seasons due to their phenomenal performances. The fact that they are portraying completely different roles in the two seasons strengthens the proof of their theatrical aptitude.

The top three cast members to keep an eye on include: Jessica Lange, Zachary Quinto aka *Heroes*' Sylar and Evan 'Kickass' Peters. Jessica Lange won an Emmy award for her outstand-

ing supporting role as the nosy next-door neighbour Constance in season one. Her portrayal of the drunkard Sister Jude this season is on par with her previous performance, so who knows what prizes await her? Zachary Quinto is constantly associated with psychopathic tendencies ever since his brilliant enactment of mass murderer Sylar on *Heroes*. But, impressively, he shows no signs of inclination towards evil in the first season, where he plays the role of the kind and slightly depressed, gay ghost Chad. In this season he portrays a psychologist, Dr. Threadson, who happens to have severe deep-rooted mummy issues. Evan Peters' performance in the first season is excellent as a high-school shooter (Tate) who falls in love with the suicidal daughter. He continues to do a good job in this season as the

wrongly accused asylum inmate Kit.

There are no other horror shows that can match the acting performances, depth of characters and intricate plots in *American Horror Story*. I cannot wait to unravel the remaining mysteries of season two. I heard rumours that Briarcliff gets an especially festive visit by a Santa dressed killer, so see the show to get in the Christmas spirit!

Interested in writing for

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Neurosis in conversation

Riaz Agahi talks to Scott Kelly about Neurosis and his solo work

One of the most influential bands out there, progressive sludge outfit **Neurosis** have left their mark on the metal scene and anyone who's seen their live performance. After seeing an impressive show of theirs at ATP, I was able to speak to **Scott Kelly** of Neurosis about Neurosis' decision to remove visuals from their live set, his solo project and the post metal scene.

RA: The most striking question I think is about the changes to your live set. What led you to think it was time for a change?

SK: It was a mutual thing and we just reached a point where we didn't feel inspired to have visuals anymore, and Josh really didn't feel like doing them anymore, he didn't want to be a projectionist. I think he wants to focus on his band.

We wanted to do something different, we wanted to take it back to where we were 20 years ago and just revisit the whole idea. I'm not sure whether we're gonna go back to doing visuals or

not, we'll see. We're just kind of starting at zero and seeing what it brings us and it actually was good to get out and do it.

RA: Do you feel that your solo project is a way of catharsis for another aspect of your personality?

SK: It is for sure. It's something that's kind of developed over the years as I've been working on it. For me, music or any kind of creative process is an act of submitting to whatever will become of the songs and you don't really try to guide them as much as you let them guide you. So I don't really question the lyrical content. I question more the melody and the sound of things. The acoustic music just tends to bring this whole other aspect of who I am and my experience to light.

RA: Was there any change of approach with *Honor Found In Decay*?

SK: Not really, we always look to let the music write itself. I think that we were focusing on our dynamics quite a lot on this record and trying to cre-

ate more extreme dynamics within our sound, just basically get better at what we do. The recording process itself was the same as we've had for the past 5 records with Steve Albini in his studio. Same time frame, same place, same engineer. That's remained the same and probably will for a while. That's something that really works for us.

RA: With Neurosis, you write lyrics that are primal yet inward looking and deep, what process do you go through writing them?

SK: It's pretty much open to your interpretation. We're definitely not sitting down with a message or a vision for what the lyrics should contain or what we should be imparting to people. We just trust the spirit of the whole thing, we just believe that the words that should be there will be there.

Typically, it starts off with a tone or melody of sorts where I'll hear the words or what they should sound like and then just decipher it and then I just go through that process a number of times until I feel it's at the point where they should be. That's basically it; it takes as long as it takes. I write words all the time but not in that way. Sometimes I'll just sit down and words will just come out of the pen and sometimes they work. But typically it's



He's way less intimidating on the phone

because I've heard this sound in my head of what the lyrics should sound like and the cadence and the rhythm and the melody.

RA: How do you view the post-metal/metalgaze that came as a result of you guys and to some extent **Isis**?

SK: Just like any other kind of music, some of it I like and most of it I don't like. Some bands do it very well and some of it's very emotionally honest and intense and most of it just weak. That's the way with most music or art or whatever. That's just my two cents on it.

RA: It seemed to me that many bands were somewhat imitating it without adding much

SK: Such is the way of the human being and who knows what these artists will grow up to be some day? Typically your first effort is not your best. If we were to be judged on the bands we were doing when we were kids people wouldn't give a shit whatsoever. My first band sounded like **Discharge** and my second band sounded like **D.R.I.** Not very inspiring to anyone. It took a lot of time and work and rethinking the process and happening to connect with the right guys at the right time in the right place. All sorts of things come into play.

Scott Kelly is currently touring Europe with his acoustic solo project.

AMS album of the week

Everything Everything had a lot to do to impress me with new album *Arc*, out January 2013. As an intrigued listener, I tried to get into them but found I really couldn't stand them whatsoever. After listening to *Arc*, I'm not quite sure where I stand.

Leading single 'Cough Cough' is a powerhouse of percussion and jittery synthesiser; the perfect song to reappear with after a two year hiatus. After listening to this album opener, I was beginning to doubt my initial cynicism. Next up is 'Kemosabe', which I found even more impressive in melody and structure. The song constantly changes its direction, getting better at each turn – so much so that I was even close to "liking" Everything Everything's Facebook page. And then something happens. *Arc* stops being as brilliant as the first two songs would suggest.

Next song 'Torso of the Week' is bizarre in a way that I feel Everything Everything does best, but not in a good way. Named after a column in *Heat* magazine, the song is uninteresting musically and tries too hard with its quirky lyrical content. 'Choice Mountain' starts off very promising with some lovely staccato guitars, all going to waste as the song ends up dragging on.

The back end of the album features the only other songs to tickle my fancy on *Arc*, with everything in between boring the shit out of me. 'Radiant' is a triumph of glittery guitars, while 'Don't Try' is as nice and catchy as you'd expect, without Everything Everything's trademark silliness.

Out of all the indie bands with an electronic leaning, I feel **Friendly Fires** and **Dutch Uncles** do a better job than Everything Everything- the former also with an album out in January. Judging by the success of the first single, I don't doubt that *Arc* will do very well in the charts. If you enjoyed their 2010 debut *Man Alive*, chances are you're not already irritated by Everything Everything so you'll probably enjoy *Arc* too.

Yasmin Malik



Competition Time!

Win tickets to see **Craig Charles** at the **Bloomsbury Lanes** on **15th December**.

To be in with a shout of seeing **Craig Charles** at the launch of his **Funk & Soul Club CD** as well as a copy of the release, answer this question:

From which north-west town does Craig hail?

Send us your answers by the **10 December 2012**



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MUSIC

Electro-Swing at KOKO

Sanchit Sharma

Writer

November 21st, was an important day for British fans of the electro-swing band **Caravan Palace**. They held their first ever concert in the UK – which took place not too far from Imperial College, in the Camden KOKO venue.

Caravan Palace started off in France with three members – Vial, Payen, and Delaporte – who were originally hired to produce a soundtrack for silent porn films. They formed a group and a year later met a music producer who booked them for a series of gigs. At this point, they decided that they needed more band members, and found the rest with MySpace.

Caravan Palace define themselves as an electro-swing band. The most common type of electro-swing band is a small group of two to four members; one of which is a singer and one laptop musician who deals with loops and pre-recorded sounds. Caravan Palace are different in that most of what they play is live – aside from the base two members, they have an additional five playing live instruments (violin, clarinet, guitar, bass, trombone and even a vibraphone), and feature a stronger jazz influence than some bands – certainly as compared to **Swingrowers** or **Bastardos Brothers** (who played at last years summer ball).

They toured France for about a year before recording for their first album, called Caravan Palace too, which was released near the end of 2008. They



reached #11 in the French album charts, and the success kept on coming. Their latest album, *Panic*, was released in the UK just two days before the concert – on the 19th November 2012. Whilst many people prefer the first album, this is still definitely worth listening to.

Upon my arrival at the concert there were few others there, although many people trying to buy spare tickets outside as it had been sold out for months. By the time the support band (Swingrowers) were on stage, the place was packed – there was barely space to move on the dance floor.

And after an enjoyable set by Swingrowers that did a good job of getting the crowd in the mood, we had to endure 15 minutes of waiting before Caravan Palace (bear in mind that at this point, myself and some others had been here for over 2 ½ hours) themselves came on – but when they did the excitement coming from the crowd was amazing.

We were treated to some great scat from Hugues Payen, the violinist, in addition to the amazing voice of Zoé Colotis and of course, I must mention the vibraphone solo that Paul-Marie Barbier treated us to early on. As it turned out, there wasn't nearly enough space on the

floor to dance properly, so a lot of people ended up moshing. That was quite unexpected, and at first I thought this wasn't justified for a swing concert. But when listening to swing as good as that from Caravan Palace, you really can't help but move to the beat in some way, and this was the simplest method available to most.

Unfortunately, there were problems with one song in particular, 'Je M'amuse', which has backing vocals but no lead singer. The band decided not to sing the backing vocals and instead had the audience sing it, but as this was played quite early on people were not so happy to join in. As a result, the song felt quite incomplete.

One other thing that caused some people problems, including the friend that I went with, was the overuse of strobe lighting, though it did make the dances look more impressive.

Overall, I have to say that the concert went by much too quickly. There was a mix of songs from both albums and the atmosphere was powerful indeed. By the end I was left wondering where the time had gone, but very glad I'd spent it there.

Oui Love

Lily Le

Writer

As part of the UK tour, the promotional platform for popular French music stopped off in a tiny room of a Dalston pub for their London date.

First up was **Yan Wagner**, a handsome young Frenchie with a recently released debut album; slightly reminiscent of acts such as **Jimmy Edgar**. Being solo, it was difficult to be animated while trying to press buttons, sing, and charm the crowd which probably accounted for some of the awkward and unsure dancing. Being the first up is never so easy. However, it probably can't be refuted that his whispers of "loovesick...all week" produced a tingly warm feeling deep, deep, deep down which may have also accounted for the awkward and unsure dancing. Although not an overly-impressive act, Wagner's set was nonetheless enjoyable.

Following were groove and funk-saturated **Jupiter**. Their joking around and crowd banter managed to get everyone excited and up for, again, awkward and unsure dancing – there seems to be a pattern re-emerging here. The highlight of the set was French beauty **Amélie** who pranced around in a pretty pink skirt and demonstrated how to dance without showing signs of awkwardness. Her vocals, accented by Parisian tones when crooning "I need a boogiemán", were equally as charming. However, there is only so much of French disco that one can take, and



sadly their set had to come to an end.

Juveniles finished off the evening with their electro-oriented indie-pop. Classifiable more along the lines of **Housse de Racket** and **Is Tropical**, these Kitsuné protégés were more for watching and less for dancing. Their set was slightly disappointing compared to the eagerness that Jupiter managed to rile up in the crowd, and they stuck out a little on the line up compared to their more electro-heavy predecessors of the night. Unless you are 15 or able to maintain love for all things indie-pop for more than five years, Juveniles may not be the band for everyone. However, their ending on most accessible track 'We Are Young' in which deep vocals are contrasted against synth (yes, we've all heard those **Joy Division** comparisons thank you) was the highlight of the set.

Get Katatonic with Dead End Kings

Jemma Pilcher

Writer

Whenever I am asked which my favourite **Katatonía** album is, my standard response is to stare pensively into the distance for a moment and then simply reply 'every Katatonía album'. And now their ninth studio album *Dead End Kings* has entered the equation... my answer remains the same.

Since their humble beginnings in 1991, Katatonía's music has constantly evolved, whilst maintaining a consistent, uncompromising quality and abiding faithful to their melancholy concept. This latest masterpiece of sumptuous, searching songs is certainly a far cry from their early doom/death days as a Swedish duo, taking the underground by storm. Yet, their darkness persists.

I was totally captivated by this album within the first couple of seconds of the opening track, 'The Parting'. The cellos add an air of vulnerability and solemnity, which perfectly complements Jonas Renkse's heartfelt and powerful, clean vocal style. Their

sound has developed into a distinct mixture of prog and melody, with a sophisticated hint of gothic keyboards and orchestration. The songs are definitely catchy and the overall execution is flawless, making this album very accessible, especially (I imagine) for new Katatonía listeners.

A constant feeling of emptiness and longing is exposed throughout the album. This desolation is gravitated by the eloquence of the lyrics; most notably in the exquisitely bleak song, 'The One You Are Looking For Is Not Here ft. Silje Wergeland'. The increased abstraction and surrealism of the lyrics is an obvious change in this album, focusing more on pure emotion and less on storytelling. Every song appears to simply linger, until it fades into its successor. By far the most sobering song on this album is 'Undo You'; written by the only other original band member, lead guitarist Anders Nyström. It harks back to their 1995 EP *For Funerals To Come*. This track portrays the popular theme, amongst Katatonía songs, of our inescapable doom; whether

or not we positively turn our lives around, and achieve all that we want to, and become happy...our death is still inevitable. (Cheerful stuff!)

"One of these days
Hours pass yet the night stays
When your spirit won't turn anew
The world shuts down with no
goodbye to undo you."

The album artwork is as beautiful and bleak as the music itself. Again, harking back to earlier days of *Brave Murder Day*, the image of the dead bird is used. This bad omen reiterates the foreboding sense presented in the songs. This surreal, rural meets urban, landscape perhaps depicts their *Dead End* as a physical place; an icy white scene that has become blackened with pollution and a backdrop that is reminiscent of the Alfred Hitchcock film.

This Monday, 10th December, Katatonía return to London as part of their highly anticipated European Tour. They will be performing alongside the French shoegazing, concept band **Alcest**, off the back of their exquisite third album *Les Voyages de L'Âme*,



Stereotypically metal cover

released earlier on this year, and **Ju-nius**, an art rock band from Boston. I definitely urge anyone who is partial to doom and gloom to attend, as this is a line up not to be missed!

Anders Nyström comments –
"We are very much looking forward to a tour that definitely stands out from the rest. Stare into November's darkness with us! Be with us at the

side of December's deathbed! Come meet us at the chosen dead ends of Europe..."

So, what should we expect next from the doom quintet? Will they ever return to the death days of old or continue to diverge down the prog route? Or perhaps they really have become stuck in a *Dead End*... I sincerely doubt it.

MUSIC

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Fear of Fiction Festival

Lily Le heads west, clinging to the festival dream

The only magazine to focus on Bristol's music scene threw a giant street party before winter started to settle in and thwart all endeavours of extending the festival season. Of course, Felix was invited. Set along Stokes Croft - which could be deemed a mini 'Hoxditch' of Bristol - bars, cafés, and cinemas showcased exciting up-and-coming artists.

DZ Deathrays, Motorcycle Showrooms

No, I don't know what DZ stands for, and frankly I don't really care. Watching the music video to 'The Mess Up' in which the two members consume a bottle of Jägermeister in three minutes, was enough to persuade me to go and catch them. Although not the biggest fan of any kind of remotely guitar-heavy music, the Deathrays' set was surprisingly very enjoyable. Full of energy, noise, sweat and crowdsurfing, it was a



DZ Deathrays

fun contrast to the previous bands' more conserved playlists. What was really enjoyable was that their aural tantrum was refined by a melodious, charming angle; and the singer stood in the middle of the dancefloor for a whole track (plenty of time for unavoidable touching).

Oliver Wilde, the Cube Cinema

Hidden amongst a housing estate, the Cube Cinema was a cute little venue well-suited to the cute little sounds of **Oliver Wilde**. A groovy (hate to use that word, but it was actually groovy) bass accompanied a drummer with a **Darwin Deez**-like Movember, violin player, and soft distorted vocals to recreate what music would sound like if it had been channelled through an aural Instagram app before being channelled through your ears. Their softened Britpop sound was a sweet way to start off the festival, but the repeated camera roll of a girl prancing up and down a green hill behind them got annoyingly laborious after a few songs.

Labyrinth Ear, Lakota

Labyrinth Ear was the

main attraction that drew us to the festival. Although they played in one of those annoying venues where it's so cold that you have to keep your coat on and it's too uncomfortable to drink anything except hot chocolate, this didn't at all ruin the experience of watching this interesting new two-piece. Kicking off with their most, understatedly, erotic



Labyrinth Ear

track and personal favourite 'Amber' was enough to turn a five person audience into a three-quarters full dance floor. Not even the extreme shyness of the endearing elfin-like singer who seemed to refuse to look at anything except the floor or her fellow band member could disturb the crowd's level of engagement. It is a shame that they have come onto the scene amongst a burst of male/female electronic acts of the moment, being overshadowed by artists such as **Crystal Castles**, **the XX**, and **Purity Ring**; it is understandable why they may be dismissed and tossed onto

the pile. However, even if the aesthetics of their sound are not obviously unique, the effect of their music is underrated and yet unparalleled by such acts as the above; demonstrated by their closing piece 'Humble Bones', which somehow manages to recreate that excited but intimidating feeling which drowns you around the people you fancy in a non-cheesy dance floor track.

TOY, Motorcycle Showrooms

TOY was definitely the least impressive band of all the ones we managed to catch at the festival. In this case their aural tantrum was not refined by anything except a very whiney and painful keyboard which seemed to be played by bashing the keys and then holding the chords for minutes on end. Whatever the singer was trying to get out of his mouth was not audible, and their lack of audience engagement was not at all endearing as was the case for Labyrinth Ear. Their just-yanked-out of the seventies look was not going for them. The whole thing was a shambles. Nevertheless, there was something charming about their set: probably the knowledge that their studio recordings are decent but were just

played in a very poor way. Many bands are the same, and many artists need to learn that playing unenthusiastically does not equate to being cool. They are a band that have potential, and whom I would see again in the hope that they would get their act together and actually play well.

Fear of Fiction festival is a new festival held in Bristol highlighting the best in new, undiscovered music. Organised by the labels, magazines and shops that make the Bristol music scene tick, there's no better way into the local scene.



Nothing says 'culture' like graffiti and decay

DIIV in The Garage

Padraic Calpin

Writer

Zachary Cole Smith is the guitarist for lo-fi surf rock outfit **Beach Fossils**, whose band-members are currently off pursuing their own side-projects. For Smith, his efforts have coalesced into **DIIV** (said 'Dive'), with the debut album *Oshin* coming out earlier this year.

From these names, you get no points for guessing that DIIV's music is still very much awash with that seaside sound, but the album also includes some more sophisticated guitar playing and elements of shoegaze and psychedelia. Described as "one part THC, two parts MDMA", *Oshin* was a gorgeous, dreamy debut record, a definite soundtrack to my summer.

Conversely, they decided to bring the tour to the UK as winter began to sink in around us, playing a smattering of headline dates and providing support

to the (vastly inferior) Vaccines. This quick dash around the country included one brief stop in London, a sell-out headline date at the Relentless Garage in Islington.

Support came in the form of **Aldous R.H.**, in fact another side-project fronted by Manchester native Alex Hewitt of **Egyptian Hip Hop** fame. A heady mix of psychedelic guitars and delay-soaked vocals, their sound swung from sounding like **Tame Impala** slowed down to getting lost in a droney cover of an **Arthur Russell** song that left the crowd somewhat disorientated. Though I'd been tipped about them before, their set was pleasantly surprising; it says a lot that they managed to pull quite a crowd away from the bars. Sadly, the same couldn't be said about the other support band

Parakeet, who fit with the slow-burning grunge/garage-rock revival that I can't really get into.

But if Aldous seemed to have drawn a good crowd, it was nothing compared to the turn-out for DIIV themselves; the venue was packed almost wall to wall and quickly became uncomfortably hot, and this wasn't helped by what happened once the band got on stage. After beginning with



Stereotype indie

the soothing melodies of album opener 'Druun', Smith and his bandmates suddenly launched into the next track 'Past Lives' in double time, thrashing

out the riffs in a way that was impressive but utterly unexpected. The front of the crowd went mad, but I was left bemused.

And they continued in this way for the rest of the show, playing every song at twice the tempo and throwing in solos and jams that warped the aesthetic completely. The tracks were familiar, and every now and then an oasis of calm seemed to form as a familiar melody took hold, only to be interrupted but an inexplicable flurry of notes. It was all frantic, more dude rock than shoegaze. Escaping to the back of the room for fear of melting and looking around at the crowd, it seemed I wasn't the only one who'd be caught off-guard; DIIV were technically brilliant, no doubt, but this wasn't what I'd expected to see.

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MUSIC

AMS Albums of the Year

Alt-J: *An Awesome Wave*

OK, I'm hardly thinking outside the box here. Δ (or Alt-J to those of you who aren't massive pricks) have already won the Mercury Prize for *An Awesome Wave* and the album's seen massive critical acclaim from all over. As such, it seems a bit of a cop out for me to call it my 'album of the year'. It's certainly losing me valuable hipster points, but I seriously can't think of anything I've enjoyed more this year. 2012 has not been a great year for innovation, and as such, this is the closest I've got to getting excited about anything.

That all sounds a bit harsh, and I suppose I'm being a bit unfair. This is a really good album. It's "arty" indie pop at its best. It's complex but it's not painfully so. It's catchy and intricate. It's like **Two Door Cinema Club** and **Wild Beasts** had a baby and then gave it a really stupid name. 'Tessellate', 'Breezblocks', 'Dissolve Me' and 'Fitzpleasure' alright. I'd get rid of the secret track, but that's because secret tracks are stupid and should all be permanently removed from existence. *An Awesome Wave* is not mindblowing. It won't change your life. It's just the best new album I've listened to this year, and isn't that just a little sad.

Stuart Masson



Purity Ring: *Shrines*

This decade brought internet "microgenres" of songs shared by friends on tumblr, covered in gaudy aesthetics as important as the sound itself, never meant for public consumption. Some were picked up by critics, given names that the artists rejected, gained some legitimacy. Witch-house, with its cult imagery and haunted, pitch-shifted vocals was the most prominent of these, coming into the public eye over 2011.

Doomed to fail almost as soon as it arose, most artists had unsearchable names made of cross, dagger and triangle symbols, releasing a single EP then disappearing into obscurity. The buzz died, an aborted aesthetic experiment which became a ghost like the sheets of so many witch-house album covers.

Of the few notable acts to rise from the scene, it's perhaps telling that the one furthest removed from the genre, **Purity Ring**, became the most successful. Releasing a few choice singles over the course of a year, they showcased witch-house production without the pretension: a typical male/female synth-pop duo in the vein of **The Knife** or **Crystal Castles**, but with throbbing bass synth swells, muted 808 kicks and eerie distorted backing vocals.

They brought this into a coherent work with their release of their debut, *Shrines*, in July: a continuation of their already-trademark sound, with the tracks all just variant enough, and the album just short enough, to keep things from getting boring.

The lyrics play on the sound - a jarring mix of romance and sheer body horror, from "cut open my sternum and pull / my little ribs around you" or "drill little holes into my eyelids / that I might see you when I sleep" all trilled in a poppy, almost cutsey voice. It's here that the witch-house image is most apparent, but the lead vocals cut above the mix with surprising clarity - *Shrines* is pop, of a sort, and signals the end of a dying subgenre while rising from its ashes.

Keir Little



Portico Quartet: *Portico Quartet*

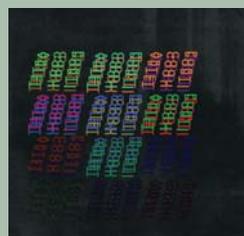
When many genres are thrown against one another, getting the right balance such that the beast will actually get off the ground is difficult enough, but to create an entirely new space, where each constituent idea is represented in just the right amount, verges on accidental - or magical.

Portico Quartet manage exactly this with a humble palette of instruments. On their debut album released in 2007, they played straight forward, cheerful jazz as a four piece (saxophone, double bass, drums and hang). Two albums later, their self-titled album released this January has its sound completely changed by adding synthesisers, electronic percussion, violin, and an assortment of loops and drones. The basic ideas of jazz are re-appropriated for creating dark instrumentals with progressive structures, experimental soundscapes starring Art Blakey style drum solos, and sparse ambient interludes constructing soft delicate moods.

The first single, 'Ruins', opens onto a double bass lead and simple electronic groove. What sets the tone is the hang, providing an ominous, bassy swell as the beat becomes more complex. The energy of the band rides up and down led by emotive saxophone lines, which, whilst jazzy in style, feel accurate and meaningful. The background ambience never gets busy enough to lose the interplay between band members, which is what has made their past work so successful. 'Steepleless' is another individual track worth mentioning, featuring Cornelia Dahlgren, a Swedish singer, who adds delicate vocals to a sparse, glitchy ballad.

Electronic music meeting jazz isn't exactly new. Portico Quartet, however, have managed to craft an album with the mood of *Kid A* whilst keeping core ideas from jazz intact. The overall result is an album that should entertain those up for a smooth, intelligent ride, or to just take them somewhere they feel they've never really been before.

Robin Thomas



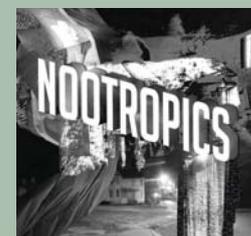
Lower Dens: *Nootropics*

It seems to me that very few people seem to be talking about **Lower Dens** at all. Surprising considering they toured with **Beach House** and **Deerhunter** following the release of their debut *Twin Hand Movement*, and that the follow-up *Nootropics* can sit securely as my album of the year.

Named for a hypothetical type of mind-enhancing drug without side-effects, *Nootropics* is a record concerned with humanity and it's future. But, if the subject matter sounds oppressive, the album is in fact incredibly immersive, enveloping you in folds of guitar and letting you get lost in its soundscapes. Resting somewhere between shoegaze, dream-pop and art-rock, each track is an exercise in precision, built around carefully layered melodies, drum-lines and keys. At times, such as on 'Propagation' or closing track 'In The End Is The Beginning', it sounds vast and cavernous, with Hunter's voice seemingly echoing into infinity. At other points, the sound is close and taut; tracks 'Brains' and 'Stem' are wrapped tightly around the rattle of the drums.

As I mentioned, *Nootropics* has a theme, of progress and uncertainty. But it's not forced upon you through blunt lyrics or sermonising. Rather, it seems to be conveyed by every aspect of the music. Elegant and involving, *Nootropics* is a phenomenal record.

Padraic Calpin



Killer Mike: *R.A.P. Music*

"Hardcore G shit, homie, I don't play around" are the words that mark the beginning of *R.A.P. Music* and there isn't a moment in the next 45 minutes that don't live up to this intensity. The greatest strength of this album is this energy that runs through it. The record was created almost entirely by Mike and producer ELP, with only a few guest appearances, and this is exactly how it feels. It oozes this passion of two guys making music they love for people who love music, a huge love letter to the last three decades of hip hop, while simultaneously providing the genre with another great, forward looking album. Music that celebrates the past like this would usually run dangerously close to being cheesy but it's how genuine Mike is that makes this work. "I've never really had a religious experience, in a religious place / Closest I've ever come to seeing or feeling God is listening to rap music" claims Mike on the title track. And when records are being made like this, it's not hard to see why. A record with such vitality is well worth a listen if you have the even the slightest interest in hip hop.

Adam Ravenscroft



Grimes: *Visions*

When talking about Claire Boucher, a.k.a. **Grimes**, it is difficult to make her not seem like some kind of hipster parody created by VICE magazine; a 24 year-old Canadian native who sports a variety of hair colours, released her first album *Geidi Primes* on cassette tape, and went without food or sleep for three weeks while creating her latest album *Visions* - a beguiling mix of dreamy synth-pop mixed with infectious beats and an incredibly high vocal range. So far, so kooky.

However, if you look past the ever so slightly hipper-than-thou image Grimes projects, you'll find that *Visions* is an absolutely incredible album, and completely deserves the top spot this year. Using a huge range of samples alongside layered and looping vocals, Grimes creates songs which manage to be both complex, and somehow also sparse. Standout tracks include 'Genesis', an incredibly catchy tune in which airy vocals float above a bouncy backing track, and 'Skin', in which Boucher's shrill, somewhat unnerving voice delivers intimate, confessional lyrics such as "You touch me once again and somehow it stings/because I know it is the end". Beautiful stuff. The video for 'Oblivion', another quality track which conjures up a hazy, dream-like atmosphere, manages to perfectly encapsulate the essence of *Visions*; Grimes sings in the audience of a packed stadium, moshes with a group of frat boys, and dances outside with skater kids. The pastel-hued video is wonderfully eccentric, and Grimes comes across as a completely joyful oddball - watch it and see for yourself.

One of the many unique facets of Grimes' personality is how much control she has over her artistic vision. In a recent interview with *Dazed and Confused* she described herself not as a musician, but as a "curator of stuff", something which comes across in her work; as well as providing vocals for the tracks, she produced the entire album, directed the music videos, and designed all the cover art. The last year has been unbelievable for Grimes, whose ascent from obscurity to hipster stardom doesn't seem to show any signs of slowing down; I look forward to what she does next with bated breath, and so should you.

Fred Fyles



FILM

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Santa Claus won't make you

The Christmas season is my favourite time of year, but if you're anything like me, all the grinchy people around can make

Katy Bettany

Film Editor

1 Sound of Music: Julie Andrews plays a nun turned governess for a bunch of super cute Austrian children and their super hot father (Christopher Plummer – just me?) Set against the backdrop of WW2, this charming family oriented film always gets me in the mood for the holidays.



2 Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: The first in the franchise, revisit a time when the wizarding trio were young and cute. Harry faces the evil Voldemort for the first time, but the film is not as dark as the later films. Plus there's snow so it's vaguely festive.



3 Bridget Jones & Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason: Christmas just isn't Christmas without dear old Bridget. Renee Zellweger plays the hapless chain-smoking diarist perfectly; becoming the instant poster child for singletons everywhere. Hugh Grant, Colin Firth and Spanx make this a holiday must.



4 Happy Feet: this computer animated Academy Award winning musical film is visually incredible and features wintery scenery and adorable penguins. Penguins are supposed to sing to attract a mate, but Mumble has a terrible voice. His talent lies in tap dancing. A beautiful and touching film.



5 Hook: This reworking of the classic Peter Pan story is great family viewing, Robin Williams plays the grown up Pan brilliantly, and Dustin Hoffman is hilarious as the title villain. The themes of family and the importance of being young at heart are explored, and the ending is lovely.



6 Santa Claus: I was trying to keep overtly Christmassy films for later in December, but today is St Nicholas', a day for the Germans and Dutch to get into the festive spirit. Regardless of your nationality, enjoy this straightforward film full of reindeer, mischievous elves and plenty of Christmas cheer.



7 Moulin Rouge: Baz Luhrmann's masterpiece is one of my favourite films ever, and whilst not festive (except for its colour palette), has some amazing medleys and reworkings of classic songs. The direction is great: stylish, fantastical and theatrical – and Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor shine in the leading roles.



8 Fantasia: for those who have been paying attention, I hate this film, but the decision about whether or not to include it was vetoed by my co-Editors. These early Disney animations set to various works of classical music are widely thought to be charming and kitschy, and are a favourite for this time of year.



9 Edward Scissorhands: Set at Christmas-time, Johnny Depp plays an artificial man with scissors for hands. Uncommonly gentle, he has pity taken on him by a family, and falls in love with their eldest daughter Kim (Winona Ryder). Tragedy ensues, but the film remains heartwarming and magical.



10 The Holiday: Stuffed fuller than a turkey with national stereotypes, this rom-com set over Christmas and New Year is essential viewing. When Winslet and Diaz get bored of their LA/Cotswolds lives respectively, they house-swap for the holiday season. Funny and feel-good.



11 Polar Express: the hugely successful computer animation tells the story of a young boy aboard a powerful magical train on a journey to the North Pole to see Santa. This is a film about self discovery and faith. This is a visually stunning film, with voiceovers by Tom Hanks.



12 Elf: Will Ferrell stars as Buddy, a human brought up with the Elves at the North Pole travels to New York to meet his heartless birth father Walter. This is a goofy comedy with some touching themes. It is inevitably clichéd, but that's probably what you want in a light holiday film.



13 Lady and the Tramp: the list was looking a little Disney light, and this is about as Christmassy as Disney gets without being terrible. Adorable Lady falls in love with stray dog Tramp over a plate of spaghetti and meatballs. Ridiculously cute.



14 The Muppets Christmas Carol: the retelling of the classic Dickens tale, with the beloved Muppets cast. I was actually quite scared of this as a child. Scrooge, the ultimate grumpy old man, is taken on a trip in time by the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future in a bid to change his mean ways.



15 Miracle on 34th Street: An old man claiming to be Santa is institutionalised as insane, but a young lawyer decides to prove in court that he is the real deal. This is a warmhearted classic about the real meaning of Christmas, and a step away from commercialism.



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FILM

happy, but these films will...

...make it hard to get in the mood. We've come up with a film for every day of Advent – call it an early Christmas present...

16 Home Alone I and II: probably my favourite holiday films. Culkin plays Kevin, a super cute kid accidentally and continuously left home alone. Burglars try to break into the home, but he fights them off like a ninja. Hilariously funny.



17 Nativity! This is British comedy based around a primary school nativity play. Largely improvised and low budget, this film is warm, jolly and non-commercial, and the child actors are brilliant. Plus there are some really catchy songs!



18 The Grinch: everyone knows one, but Jim Carrey does it best in this fantasy film based on the famous Dr Seuss book. The inhabitants of Whoville are victims of the Grinch's Christmas stealing ways, but it takes the love of one small child to remind everyone what the season is really about.



19 Love Actually: Several love stories are interwoven in this hugely popular rom-com. *Love Actually* has a kick-ass cast, including Bill Nighy, Alan Rickman, Emma Thompson, Hugh Grant and Martine McCutcheon, a great soundtrack and happy-endings all round.



20 Father Christmas: this little known Raymond Briggs film is chronically underappreciated. This charming animation documents what Santa does with the parts of the year not spent gearing up for Christmas, and has some overlap with the more widely known *The Snowman*.



21 The National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation: another favourite of mine. Riotously funny, this slapstick comedy encompasses everything wonderful about the season: family arguments, mishaps, cooking disasters, but most importantly, community and good humour.



22 White Christmas: Bing Crosby and his fellow soldier and partner in a successful song and dance duo fall in love with a sister act, and team up to help the duo's ex-Army General save the failing Vermont Inn from closure. Plenty of comedy and some great musical numbers make this a perfect Christmas film.



25 It's a Wonderful Life: this is widely thought of as the most essential Christmas film ever made, and it isn't hard to see why. A frustrated businessman is visited by an angel, who shows him what life would be like if he had never been born. He sees that the people he loves would have been miserable or dead, and realises that his life has had a positive influence on the world. Not only a great Christmas film, but a great film in general, reminding the viewer that life is wonderful. Happy Christmas Everyone!



23 The Snowman: Another Raymond Briggs animation, this is a classic film that should be in everyone's essential viewing list. If this film doesn't pull at the heartstrings, then your heart must be made of ice too. A young boy makes a snowman, who takes him on a magical journey.



24 Nightmare Before Christmas: Tim Burton's stop-motion musical horror film is a credible alternative to all the festive schmaltz before the big day arrives. The ing of Halloweentown discovers Christmastown, and tries to usurp Santa.



FILM

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2012 Felix Film Awards



Best Actor:
Joaquin Phoenix
The Master

Wide-eyed, hunched over and completely disturbed and damaged to the very core, Phoenix is bang on in the middle of Paul Thomas Anderson's incredibly challenging, dense drama. His extremely volatile nature is a tour-de-force of a performance, one that grabs your attention from the get-go and holds on despite the difficult turns and developments Anderson often presents.



Best Actress:
Marion Cotillard
Rust and Bone

As a killer-whale trainer who goes through a horrific accident, Cotillard's nuanced, carefully measured performance is a thing of wonder as she fiercely dives into the complex persona of a double leg amputee faced with the many challenges of everyday life. Both inspirational and emotionally devastating, this is yet another showcase for this outstanding French actress who pushes the boundaries.



Best Supporting Actor:
Matthew McConaughey
Magic Mike

No-one does sleazy, greasy and sneaky as well as McConaughey can, which is why he is the perfect fit for his male strip club owner act. With his thick Southern accent, sly slinky moves, cheeky confidence and sly grin to top it all off, he is the comic highlight of the film, whilst also wisely never underplaying the "antagonist" aspect of his outstanding role that simply outclasses his many other co-stars.



Best Supporting Actress:
Helena Bonham Carter
Great Expectations

In a role that seems to have been written specifically for this English actress even before she was born, Carter excels in occupying the role of one of literature's most famous jilted brides, Miss Havisham. Adding enough kooky craziness in her creepy wedding dress whilst also revealing a subtle touch of stirring humanity, she is the most fun, but also tragic part of an otherwise dull and dry film.



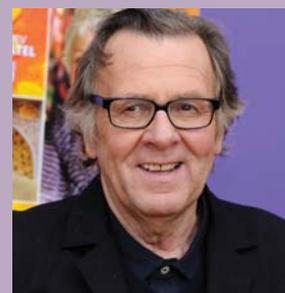
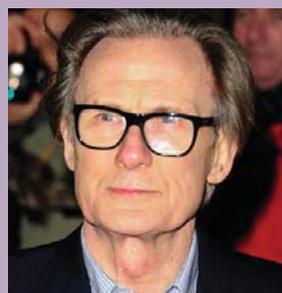
Best Director:
Gary Ross
The Hunger Games

Turning a popular franchise of novels aimed at teenagers, making it as potent and meaningful to the adults is a difficult task, but Ross was certainly up for the challenge. With his intimate, up-close, shaky camerawork injecting plenty of realism and suspense into the futuristic thriller, it's no wonder this became such an unexpected hit with a wide demographic. Shame he's not involved in the many sequels to come.



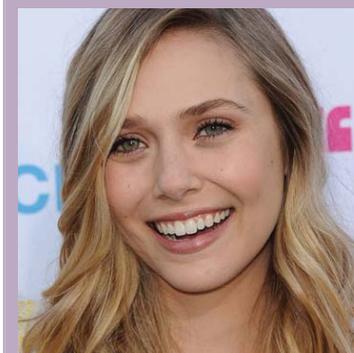
Rising Star of the Year:
Jeremy Irvine

He was hand-picked by Steven Spielberg to take part in his World War I epic *War Horse* and his success didn't end there: with lead starring roles in *Now is Good*, and *Great Expectations*, this young English talent appears to stand a good chance in making it big in this tough business, with Spielberg calling him the new Christian Bale. Up next is *The Railway Children*, where he will stand alongside Oscar winners Colin Firth and Nicole Kidman.



Ensemble of the Year:
The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Bill Nighy, Tom Wilkinson, Penelope Wilton, Celia Imrie, Ronald Pickup (and Dev Patel... sure, he can get in on this list) – a cast list doesn't read better than this. And despite the choppy direction and unsure narrative that prevented this from becoming a mediocre crowd-pleaser, the English legends help sell the story. It's no surprise to see this turned out to be the sleeper hit of this summer.



Rising Star of the Year:
Elizabeth Olsen

No longer having to live in her older twin sisters' shadow, Olsen has become a movie star in her own right. What started this off was her unforgettable debut performance in the brilliantly ambiguous *Martha Marcy May Marlene* and she has since followed that up with equally memorable supporting turns in *Silent House*, *Red Lights*, and *Liberal Arts*. She has also been cast in the Hollywood remake of South Korea's *Oldboy*.

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FILM

Top Fifteen Films of 2012



15) Brave

Pixar seems to strike gold with every film they produce and their 2012 effort is no exception to this rule. The tale of a young, red-head princess (voiced by the feisty Kelly Macdonald) is a charming, sweet treat full of action, comedy and heart.



14) Looper

An emotionally charged, intelligent sci-fi full of slick action and clever strands of narrative that all weave together, it uses the complex theme of time travel to its advantage. Joseph Gordon-Levitt also shows he can take charge as a competent leading man.



13) Killing Them Softly

Gangster films don't always require bullets and bodies to be compelling, as director Andrew Dominik proves here. With obvious parallels made to the world economy and politics, the cleverly written script is also given proper treatment by its superb cast.



12) Silver Linings Playbook

A romantic-comedy with an off-beat twist of mental illness, here is a bold but sensitive probe into characters who are far from perfect. With outstanding performances all-round, it builds up to a rousing, resounding feel-good finale.



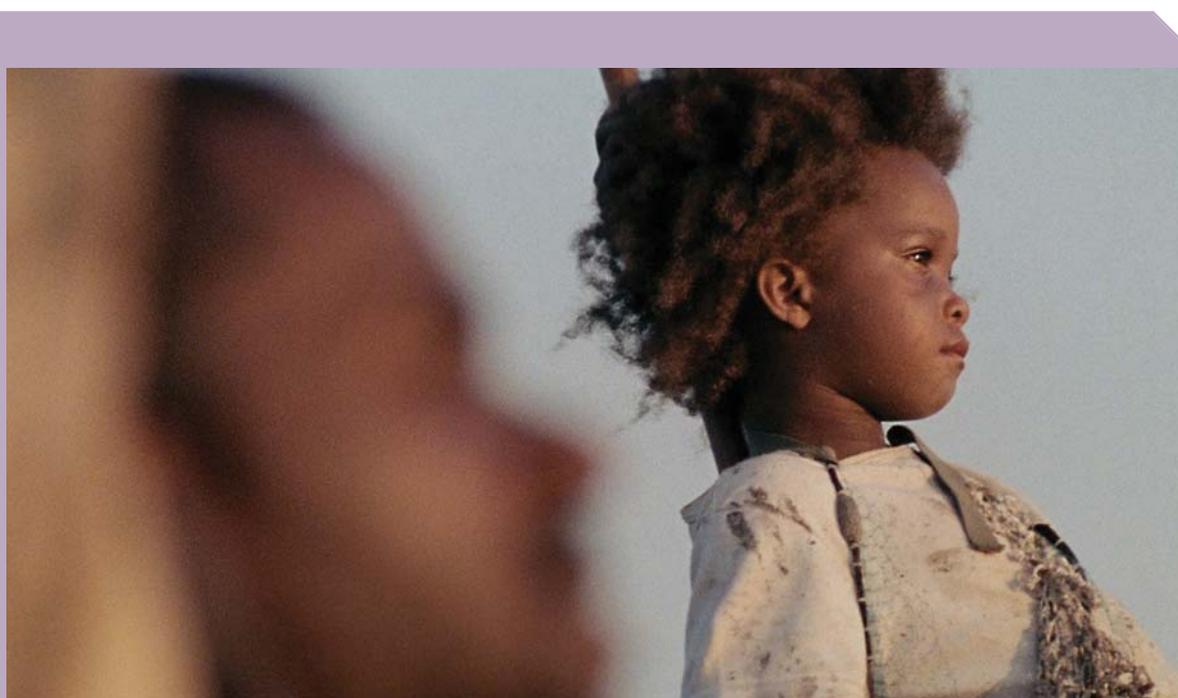
11) Life of Pi

Chances are, this is the most beautiful film you'll see this year, as Ang Lee has captured the unfilmable, adapting the best-selling novel of the same name. That the film doesn't have a lot to say doesn't matter; you'll be blown away regardless.



10) Moonrise Kingdom

Wes Anderson is at his best in which he explores the trials and tribulations of a couple of 10-year-olds who are on a quirky romantic adventure of a lifetime. It's a delightful journey looking at innocence, hope, love and perhaps giving life another shot.



1) Beasts of the Southern Wild

Yes, it's probably a film not many people have seen yet, but trust us when we say that this truly is the most spectacular piece of filmmaking of this year, which may come as a shock, as no big names are involved, and it's a feature film debut for a first-time director. And yet what Benh Zeitlin (director) manages here is to create a whole new different world for the audience to become a part of, a world so powerful, colourful, rich and touching that you would want to immerse yourself fully into and explore the unknown. Quvenzhané Wallis, only a five-year-old girl at the time of filming, gives a performance so tender and beautiful (I'M THE MAN!!!! I'M THE MAN!!!!) that she can stand alone at the film's centre and completely grab our attention. Heart-breaking at times but undeniably stirring even at an incredibly short length, you owe it to yourself to go see this movie.



9) Avengers Assemble

Without a doubt the biggest movie of 2012, it's not at all surprising that Joss Whedon's superhero ensemble smashed all sorts of box office records. Well constructed, finely detailed and above all, hugely entertaining, this is exactly what the summer needed.



8) Pitch Perfect

Glee without all the cheese and the repetitive "be yourself" vomit-inducing, corny messages, this is funnier and smarter than that show will ever be. Also featuring Rebel Wilson in a star-making turn. Best Supporting Actress Oscar? Why not?



7) Chronicle

With darker spins, less budget, and more honest perception into the corrupt side to power, here is the superhero film to beat in the future. Featuring three very different but relatable characters, it's an exciting addition to a predictable genre.



6) End of Watch

Handheld filming methods seem to be overdone these days, but under the right hands, it can turn even the more tiresome genre into one of the most exhilarating cinematic experiences. with utmost realism, fresh banter, and plenty of hardcore action.



5) Amour

Michael Haneke is an arthouse favourite, as his patient but invasive methods are hard to ignore. His latest is by no means a cheery affair, dealing with a slow death of a woman, but in its quiet, understated direction, there is plenty of beauty to be found.



4) The Hunt

A consistently haunting, morally reprehensible tale that couldn't have come out at a more appropriate time. It features a powerful performance from its lead, Mads Mikkelsen, as an innocent kindergarten teacher falsely accused of paedophilia.



3) Seven Psychopaths

The weirder, wackier and wilder it gets, the better. Martin McDonough's follow-up to his highly acclaimed *In Bruges*, is more hysterical, more bizarre, and even more watchable. Plus you get plenty of pure gold Christopher Walken moments.



2) Argo

Ben Affleck cleverly sustains nail-biting tension juggling a hostage situation, a secret CIA operation, Hollywood involvement, politics, intermittent yet effective comedy, all put together perfectly to produce his best directorial feature yet.

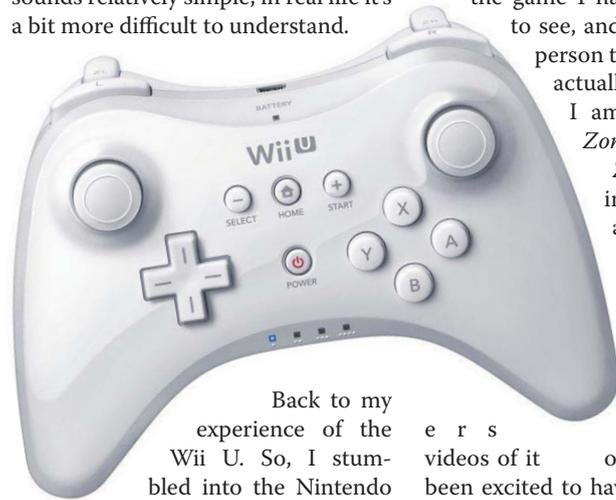


Wii wish U a merry Zmas

Max Ettl details his discoveries at the Gadget Show Live!

The Wii U was released about a week ago, with a lot of curiosity surrounding its release, and I had the chance, last Friday, to actually play it! A trip to the Gadget Show Live, with very plain press passes, allowed me to not only jump all the cues, but actually get a look and feel of the Wii U and its weird controller. I only managed to play a relatively short time, as well as only two games, but that was enough to get a good impression of what was going on.

So here's a quick overview of what the Wii U entails. The controller is quite a complex piece of equipment and is a step removed from the remotes and nunchuks of the Wii. It's a screen surrounded by various buttons, kinda like the bottom half of a DS, but larger. What Nintendo is trying to do is integrate a tablet into your gaming experience, so that the second screen enhances your playing capabilities, i.e. by being the platform for mini-games. Also if your brother, sister, girlfriend, boyfriend etc. want to interrupt your game time by using the TV screen for another purpose, the Wii U controller's screen can serve as your game screen. While, in theory, this concept sounds relatively simple, in real life it's a bit more difficult to understand.



Back to my experience of the Wii U. So, I stumbled into the Nintendo area, and was surrounded by various stations portraying a multitude of games. At this point, I was overcome with choice so I just picked the first station which was free. The game I had chosen was *Skylanders*. *Skylanders* was released quite recently, and has beaten all expectations to become one of the most popular games for young teens in 2012. It incorporates the use of actual physical toys, which are placed into the game using a portal and then are playable in-game. The Nintendo employee who had been playing the game solo at that point, invited me to play with him, placing a figure onto the portal. Sadly I can't remember at all what this figure looked like, as, at that moment, I

was still in a daze due to the copious amounts of people and games, and as such, unaware of all the little details. Then the controller was pushed into my hand and I commenced playing. The controller itself was a tad bit heavy, and unwieldy but it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. However when I started playing, the actual complexity of the controller struck me. I had no clue what to do. That was the first time ever that I had picked up a game, and had no clue how to play. Not even the Nintendo guy seemed to know what was going on. The game seemed to be a rail shooter, which are notoriously simple to use, and yet neither me nor the actual employee had an inkling of how to play. The graphics of the game seemed quite nice, but I could not really enjoy the game as I was trying to figure out how to actually play. Perhaps a tutorial would have helped, but the fact that you need to have a tutorial for the console, which is supposed to speak to the casual gamer, it worries me how many actual casual gamers will pick this up. Also the game itself didn't actually seem to use the touch screen that the controller had to offer, or maybe I just hadn't figured it out. After dying about 6 times, I decided I would go to the game I had actually wanted to see, and allow some other person to figure out how to actually play. The game I am talking about is *ZombiU*.

ZombiU has been in the works as long as the Wii U has, and it's Nintendo's attempt to reach the hardcore audience of gamers. Ever since I saw some trail-and-explanatory videos of it on YouTube, I had been excited to have a go at it. I was quite sure that since Nintendo was making this game just for the Wii U, that the full promise of its controller would be on full display. I am quite the zombie fan, having played *DayZ*, *Resident Evil* and many other games concerning this subject. Thus when I finally got to play, after seeing the previous player brutally mauled, I was raring to go! The guy in charge of this station actually seemed to know what to do, and explained the mechanics of the game quite well. So when I picked up the controller I felt ready to kick some rotting zombie's butt. Quite eerily, the game started with me waking up in a kindergarten (wonder how I got there...). I had a bloody cricket bat and a handgun with a few bullets to

spare. The setting and the feel of the game reminded me a lot of *DayZ*, and to be honest I actually was quite tense during the game. My objective was to find a way out of the kindergarten and survive. The screen of the controller had a kind of map on it, which slightly confused me, as I wasn't sure at which screen I should be looking, in the end deciding to glance down at the map every so often. This did irritate me somewhat, as I prefer all my game info to be within one concentrated area. So I made my way through the kindergarten with the occasional bloody handprint on the walls. When the first zombie lunged out from behind a corner, not only I jumped, but the little audience that had formed around me did as well. I did manage to kill the annoying bugger by smashing his head in (very graphic and bloody), but I must say that the tablet-controller did not seem anything special at that point, and I would have perhaps preferred something smaller in my hand. Also the looting of items was very confusing, because you had to look down onto the screen of the tablet, and swipe from the loot to your bag, confusing and, I thought, unnecessarily complicated. Even though *ZombiU* was turning out to be a great game, the messiness and difficulty of using the controller was starting to grate at my nerves. Then came a locked door. Apparently my character was an expert lock-picker, and thus a little mini-game came about where I had to pick the lock of the door using the controller. The mini-game was quite simple, however I did take a peak at the big screen, and was pleasantly surprised to see my character in 3rd person perspective actually trying to pick the lock. This is a very nice touch I think, because once you have zombies coming up to you and you see them out of the corner of your eye, the tension mounts and opening that door may not be that easy. Although this involves you dividing your attention between two different screens, it just makes the game experience much more realistic. In real life you would be freaking out! When I did finally die (killed by an annoying, special, disappearing zombie) accompanied by groans by the multitude of people now ogling my game, I was sad and relieved at the same time. Sad, because my character, who I had grown to like in my 15 minutes of playing, was dead, and relieved because the game was so goddam scary that I was glad it was over.

The Wii U has a LOT of potential. *ZombiU* is a class game that really did manage to make me flinch (and everyone around me) at some points. Its real-



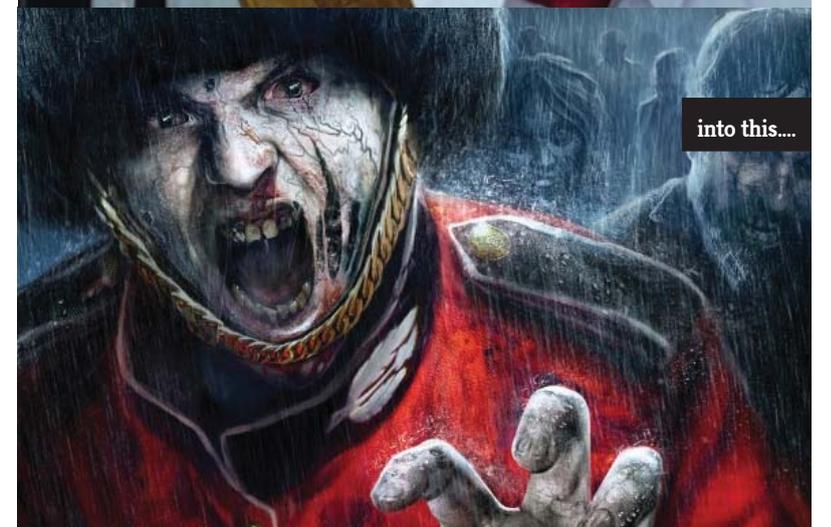
ism is great (as much as you can be realistic in a zombie game), and I enjoyed mutilating any zombie I came across. *ZombiU* was perfectly optimised for the Wii U, using all the features that the unique controller had to offer. *Skylanders*, on the other hand, and probably the majority of games, are created by game studios that do not understand all you can do with the Wii U. This is one of the biggest problems that Nintendo faces, for if they do not get the right support from the game makers i.e. games made with the Wii U in mind, nobody will buy this console, which would be a big shame.

Another big stumbling block that faces the Wii U is the complicated nature of the tablet-controller. The casual

gamer, the original audience of the Wii, will face great difficulties to really get the most out of their games without using the tutorial or manual. Even me, a relatively experienced gamer had a few problems, which sometimes caused frustration more than enjoyment. All in all, I really hope that the Wii U persists and actually achieves success. Nintendo is trying to push a whole new way of playing games, which I think could be the next big thing. I thoroughly enjoyed *ZombiU*, however with a price of £350 for game and console, I am a bit worried that not enough people will buy it, since for that amount of money, I know I wouldn't.



ZombiU - turning this:



into this...

Games Editor: Ross Webster
games.felix@imperial.ac.uk

GAMES

Good Guy Master Chief

(To the tune of Good King Wenceslas)

Good guy Master Chief woke up
On Forward Unto Dawn
When the Covenant turned up
War again begun.
Then they crashed on Requiem,
Killed Prometheans
When the Didact said to them:
“Slaughter all the humans!”

“Hey Cortana, stick with me,
Our future seems quite grim,
Yonder Didact, what is he?
We really need to kill him.”
“Chief, we’ve got the Infinity,
Crashing down around us
Lets go save Commander Lasky
Their lives rest on our success”

“Bring me tanks and DMRs,
Bring me shotguns hither
Thou and I will kick his ass
When we bear him thither.”
Page and monarch forth they went
Forth they went together
Through the rude wind’s wild lament
And the bitter weather.

“Chief, I’ve got some problems here
It’s my rampancy,
I’m eight years old, and I fear
I need to find Doc. Halsey.”
“Mark my words, my oldest friend
We’ll get you back to Earth
I promise that this tale won’t end
With any less than mirth.”

In to the slipstream dark, they flew
Where the Didact entered
Ahead of them they always knew
Humanity’s fate awaited
UNSC men, be sure
Wealth or SR owning
Ye who now will bless the poor
Will not be killed by spawn-camping



MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE FELIX GAMES TEAM!

COMMENT

Comment Editors: George Barnett,
Navid Nabijou, James Simpson
comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Democracy and the law

The EU's implementation of "equality" legislation is undermining national democracy, argues, **Christopher Kaye**



Christopher Kaye

Women are safer drivers. That is a fact backed up by overwhelming statistical evidence. By being male I pay more for my car insurance.

Surely, then, I should welcome the fact that, as of 21st December, 'gender discrimination' in the insurance industry is to be banned?

No, I don't welcome it at all. In part because it would be very hypocritical for me to criticise the self-styled 'equality' movement when it tries to censor Felix, only to then keep quiet on the rare occasions it benefits me. But there's a greater principle at stake here: democratic legitimacy.

On a concept as controversial as this, you would think that Parliament would've spent months debating such a bill; ping-ponging its way between Commons and Lords until finally, after many late evenings, the enacting scrawl 'Elizabeth R' turns the bill into an Act. But no. On this issue, none of that has happened.

You see, this ban on 'discrimination' is not something our elected MPs have decided to introduce. In fact, the UK Government is firmly against it. It

wasn't even the European Parliament (who, in theory at least, is vaguely accountable) who nodded it through. Instead it was the European Court of Justice who in March 2011 decided to amend European Directive 2004/113/EC because its provisions specifically allowing gender-sensitive pricing was "incompatible with the principle of equal treatment in EU law". That is despite the fact such a derogation was explicitly included in the original Directive!

Now, last time I checked, the ECJ was not elected by anyone. Call me old-fashioned, but I always assumed that it was a judiciary's job to uphold law; what the law actually says. Not what they think the law should say.

Because the UK is a member of the EU, we are obliged to implement EU Directives whether we like them or not. Our Government didn't like this amended Directive. Among other things, HM Treasury pointed out that female drivers would be effectively subsidising male drivers, also incentivising the purchase of higher risk cars by men.

In addition to motoring, life insurance will also become more expensive as fewer women (who have longer life



expectancies) can afford to buy it, thus increasing the risk-pool for the insurance company.

Despite their sensible opposition, the UK Government still ultimately bent over and took it. We will soon find out whether Parliament will also bend over and accept Votes for Prisoners too. Whatever your view on these issues, you have to ask: Where

is the scrutiny?

Personally I would be against such meddling regardless of who introduced it. But at least if it was our Government, I could use my vote to show them the error of their ways at the next election. Sadly, as long as EU law is supreme over national law, with Euro-judges making up laws on the spot, there's buggar all we can do.

Online

In response to "Pick-up artistry & arseholery", 30th November:

I believe this article is clear sexism against men, there is so much hate into it. I believe that when there is a problem it is always more than one's fault. So girls that fall from this "tricks" (as you suppose) should actually wake up as well. Maybe guys should create a Guys Society (there is a Feminist society) so that they fight against sexist articles like these one. (Feminist Society=Sexism Source). My point: The answer to sexism is not sexism!

- **Anonymous**

Anonymous, I'm sorry, but no: it's really not, and I agree with you entirely that sexism shouldn't be fought with further sexism. Despite what you may think, feminism fights against sexism towards men too, and we don't condone articles like this. That said, I don't think this is anywhere near as problematic as PUAs themselves who literally believe in manipulating women into sex.

- **Keir Little**

I got stalked by a fat girl back at school and she didn't leave me alone till I stomped on a Frube and it went all over her. If you can't understand that the guy at the union wearing a stupid hat who claims to be in IBD at Goldman and a adult film star is lying you deserve what's coming your way. Seriously who cares?. With all the articles about female right recently in Felix I think it'd be better managed by Rupert Murdoch.

- **Annoyed Penguin**

This article is awesome. Some nerdy loser tried this on me in the

union once. He was so confident, until he asked to read my palm and I realised what was going on. The second I said "OMG you are NOT just trying the game on me?!" His face dropped and his entire confidence-act vanished completely. I'm not even angry at the guys whose self-esteem is so low that they feel their only way of getting women to sleep with them is by insulting them and lying. I just have one piece of advice for guys who think there is any value in this: The ultimate path to being alone forever is building all your social interaction "skills" with women on lies and manipulations, so I suggest you think about what's more important to you in the long run.

I also personally think that this kind of behaviour completely objectifies women, and that is an insult to every single girl, especially within Imperial. We all have brains, that's why we're here...

- **Anonymous II**

Annoyed Penguin, well, you're clearly a charmer. Here's why it matters: Imperial has a terrible reputation for sexism. This is so well known now that it's now known by other universities around London. This is not to say that other universities don't have their own problems with sexism (they do), but at IC it is blatant. It prevents women from doing what they want or need. It's embarrassing and limits the university's outlook. You are also affected by it and it sways opinions about whether people should go there for undergraduate and postgraduate study.

- **Old Boy IC Graduate**

Imperial only has a terrible reputation for sexism because no-one will shut the fuck up about it. I seriously can't be the only one who opens comment, sees the sexism article of the week (because there is -always- one) and goes "Oh for FUCK'S sake..."

- **Park Jae-sang**

In response to "Clubs with Wordpress sites need to upgrade or be hacked... intense", 30th November:

It's too easy to hide behind the whole 'OMG USE SSL' thing, just because one of the Ss stands for "secure". Most browsers won't warn about iframes or cross-domain AJAX requests, particularly if the user has ticked the "don't warn me again" box. It's no substitute for writing secure code, and I would have thought that Wordpress, as an open source community-reviewed project, would be far more resilient to attack than some contributed code by Imperial students. I have seen code written by the current Union President and ex-Sysadmin that has made me feel physically sick. I say you force everyone to use PDO prepared statements.

- **Careful**

I'm not using SSL as some form of silver bullet that will magically solve all these issues, it's part of a number of things I am doing. Don't worry! I'm not going to sit in my chair and relax now! An added benefit of mandating SSL will hopefully be realised once I get the necessary approval from the powers that be, but you'll hopefully find out about that one soon.

- **Philip Kent**

In response to "Sexism and science", 23rd November:

Warning: word "sexism" detected! Brace for impact of 9000-megaton rage bomb

- **Anonymous**

Comment Editors: George Barnett,
 Navid Nabijou, James Simpson
 comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

COMMENT

Putting the 'Bang' in Bangladesh: an alternative way to spend Spring

Jonathan Kingsley is on a mission to help Bangladesh's rural poor



Jonathan Kingsley

“see my entire body (and head) transformed into something smooth and bare”

For many, life has been normal so far; most have attended school, the lucky progressing onto university, the majority then graduating. However, I realised the next 10 years of my (professional) life could creep up on me as quickly as the last 16 years, during which time I was being unwittingly conveyor-belted along an education system and churned out into real life. I felt like doing something different, just for a while.

'Normal' life in the UK is considered to be one of privilege and opportunity. But this isn't how the global picture looks. How often do stop to wonder why, let alone do anything about it? While deciding my next step after university, I chose to defer my job and volunteer. In reading this I hope you consider doing the same.

On 22 January 2013 I will begin a 3-month volunteering placement in Bangladesh. I will be living as the locals do, collaborating with other overseas volunteers, local communities and organisations to address problems faced by severely impoverished communities in Bangladesh. The focus is on groups who are otherwise excluded from social and economic growth and who are less resilient to economic and environmental shocks. (See end for more details.)

Statistics surrounding poverty are inaccessible and emotions can easily be rationalised with our busy schedules and daily commitments. But poverty should never have become an acceptable thing to live with.

Involving local women is a cornerstone of Bangladesh's development policy



While I'm aware many of us already volunteer in this country and donate to charity when we can, many of us think we're unable to reach those in distant countries, because we lack the capital and the time. However, with the help of donations and government grants, VSO empowers 18-25 year olds, such as us fresh graduate meat, to lend our hands and brains for good in some of the most impoverished destinations on Earth.

Bangladesh, for example, suffers from widespread childhood malnutrition, and has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the world. There is also a high incidence of pre-

ventable diseases, due to the lack of access to and information about sanitation, hygiene, nutrition and sexual health.

The opportunity to address these issues first hand requires a bit of commitment on my own soil before I leave; I am required to fundraise a minimum of £800. This not only raises awareness for the scheme so that others are encouraged to get involved in fighting against poverty, but it facilitates young people like us to take part.

So for those looking to do something memorable before knuckling down to a job for the rest of your life, consider volunteering your young,

imaginative minds to VSO. And when that time comes, you'll be in my shoes recruiting the attention and generosity of your peers to act against poverty.

But for now, you can make a difference from the comfort of your Library desk, your lecture theatre or your bedroom. Lend your support by visiting the page below to donate. Otherwise, keep your nostrils dilated for the scent of a bake sale next week on campus and buy some delicious cakes. To keep track of the various fundraising events I'll be doing.

To find out more about VSO and to donate, visit:

www.justgiving.com/kingsley-does-vso

Letters



Sir,

I was deeply moved by Philippa Skett's article the other week. Having occasionally perused the Feminist Society Facebook page, I cannot help but be impressed by the quality of the writing and the depth of the critical analysis. However, I worry that some great scientific brains are not so much honing their critical thinking on the subject of feminism as becoming completely immersed by it. I for one have now been drawn in, and have wasted an entire evening having opinions! This is not a bad thing in and of itself, but I feel that feminism is now becoming too dominant in Imperial's society. Becky Lane's admirable efforts to get people talking about sexist

discrimination are just one example of this. We are all intelligent people who wish to share our opinions. But chasing after every misunderstanding and misconception means that again and again we must reiterate these arguments. Perhaps we should all vote on a feminism policy and then leave it and get back to the library. And if the (male-dominated) vote concludes that sexism is a good thing, then at least we'll know for sure that we have a problem!

Anonymous, via email

Sir,

With all these articles on the topic of sexism being published recently, I can't help but think that it's the Feminist society that is causing most of the problem. For starters, why is it even called the Feminist Soci-

ety? Even though they claim that the term is gender-neutral, surely they must realise that the vast majority of people do not perceive it to be so? Why not, for the avoidance of doubt, call it the Gender Equality Society?

Last year's Felix Sexism Survey showed that 10.14% of the sample of 631 students answered 'yes' to the question 'Is Imperial Sexist?'. To put that in perspective, that's a smaller percentage of people than those who would currently vote for the Liberal Democrats, according to a recent YouGov poll.

To me, it feels like this so-called "Feminist Society" are using the premise of gender equality to front a moral crusade against the rest of us, presumably because they bear some kind of perfunctory, puerile grudge against society.

Maybe if their members wasted less time on Facebook and Twitter searching for examples of sex discrimination and taking

turns to see who can denounce it using the greatest number of nebulous bien-pensant neologisms like "cis-privilege" (so that any casual reader must resort to Wikipedia before they can fully fathom the profundity of the critique), they may fare better in their degree studies, personal relationships, and life in general.

Thanks to FemSoc, Imperial now has a reputation for sexism which, according to a Felix survey, it does not deserve. They have become the crux of the problem which they sought to resolve. It's time for them to stop.

Anonymous, via website

Sir,

Upon recently reading a London-wide student paper I realised that, when it comes to student politics and activ-

ism, Imperial displays the epitome of apathy. I can't think of anyone I know who has attended any of the student protests of late and no one really seems to care about what the sabbaticals do.

I propose a small change that should make Union politics at Imperial instantly more divisive and interesting. I believe that officers and candidates should be filtered into two different political parties in order to help students identify with them and make the election process all the more embittered.

These parties don't necessarily have to follow the traditional parliamentary left/right ideologies. There could instead be the anti-sexism and pro-sexism parties, or even the for and against Chris Kaye parties. I hope that this subtle change in how we elect sabbaticals will engage Imperial students more with the running of our union.

A cradle-to-grave Tory

CHURCH

everynation.co.uk



SUNDAYS
ACTIVITY SPACE 1
STUDENT UNION

Free café – 5:30
LIVE BAND





Coffee Break Boss: Matt Colvin
felix@imperial.ac.uk

COFFEE BREAK



It's Christmas

Coffee Break Boss 

I'm writing this through a cascade of uncontrollable tears – alas, tis the season of the last issue of the year. That's right folks, like an slowly advancing army of overweight men in red and white, Christmas is interminably trudging on towards us and we'll have to take a bit of a break.

But this is only the beginning! Remember, if you've also wanted to be involved with Felix in some fashion, all it takes is an email to felix@imperial.ac.uk.

Anyway, I'm off to my Christmas job, namely being a pundit for the hundreds of documentaries that are currently being produced to tie in with the Duchess of Cambridge's pregnancy. Easiest job ever, all you have to say is that the baby's going to have a "traditional name, but potentially with a bit of a twist for a middle name". Here's hoping for something classic for that middle name, like Garfield, or something along those lines. Rolling in dollar. Merry Giftmas.

GENERIC CHEAP CUT-OUT CHRISTMAS CRACKER SPECIAL



We sure know how to treat you properly here, that's why we're offering you a Christmas miracle of a chance to look after your overdraft by cutting out your own cracker above. Imagine that crisp tear of paper over Christmas lunch!

HOT!

INEVITABLE POST-CHRISTMAS SALES

INEVITABLE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

THE DISCOGRAPHY OF LETHAL BIZZLE

FINDING LOOSE CHANGE

A DISTRESSING LACK OF MARQUEES ON THE QUEEN'S LAWN

THE FINAL CHAPTER OF THE TIMELESS SAGA ED MILIBAND HOLDS...



...THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

HUNT FOR THE ROYAL BABY NAME

Guess the name of the baby of the century and win precisely nothing!

SNOW WATCH



AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRINT, THERE WAS NOW SNOW ON THE QUEEN'S LAWN

Imperial Lovestruck



Sorry, but last week's vague reference to *Love Actually* literally made me write in with the intent of getting something off my chest. It's an awful awful film and I hate it. That guy who stalks Keira Knightley – yikes. And yet by the end when they're all happy in the airport and that horrible song just repeats itself, I'm broken by it. I'm grinning from ear to ear. More often than not I wake up the next morning seriously regretting the viewing habits of the past. I'm sorry to put such a downer on things but it's *Lovestruck* and Christmas related. – *Love Actually Hater harangued in Huxley*



LOVE ACTUALLY

INTERVIEWS

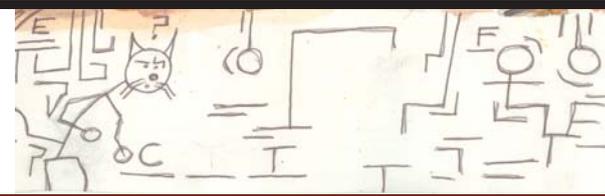
BLUE SOCKS

NOT!

Awwwwwww, warms the heart, doesn't it? If you have any tales of romance or, alternatively, completely unrelated tangents to embark upon, email felix@imperial.ac.uk and the dubious limelight could be yours!

HANGMAN

hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk



twitter



willyoujoinmymiliband?

Omg they've taught dogs how to drive!!!



OBAMARAMATYME2012

Old news. My wife has been driving for years lol.



Shellybams

Well you'll be sleeping on the couch tonight.



OBAMARAMATYME2012

DAMMIT.



willyoujoinmymiliband?

Check the toaster. That's where Justin always hides my xbox games.



OBAMARAMATYME2012

Yeah, but that's because you're scared of the toaster.



Cameron_DA_Maneron!!!

Check her vagina. That's where I've been hiding my penis...In Shelly's vagina...I fucked Shelly lol.



OBAMARAMATYME2012

lol

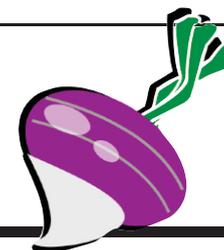


SammyCammy

No Obie, try the other side. That's where I've been hiding David's xbox controller :)

the turnip

Hangman's Finest College News Source



Imperial's Finest News Source Makes Triumphant Return

by Hugh Moor

Imperial's Finest News Source Makes Triumphant Return

After a two-week hiatus, The Turnip, Imperial College's foremost source of news, has made a stunning return, eyewitnesses confirm. The award-winning news bulletin famed for its fluid-writing and piercing journalism returns as the author arrived back in the country after rumouredly broking peace in the Middle East. "Thank God he's back, circulations been down,

we've been swamped with hate mail and morale has been at an all-time low" Felix Editor, Tim Arbabzadah, was overheard saying before adding "we've just not been able to produce the same quality of article without the confidence that, if it all backfires, we have the solid, dependable Turnip to fall back on". Whilst rumours that the rest of Felix is to be replaced with articles from enigmatic journalist Hugh Moor appear unfounded, it has become clear that Mr Arbabzadah will be replacing the front page, comments and features sections in the near future.

In related news, is the radioactively reanimated Arafat out of control? The resurrected former President of the Palestinian National Authority, brought back to life by a crazed Bobby Pickett, emerged from his 'final' resting place last week and surged towards Tel-Aviv, sources confirmed. Thus far, Israel's famous Iron Dome Arafat Defence System has been unable to intercept the former president and he continues his relentless march for revenge.

Elsewhere, other important stuff maybe happened, but, to be fair, they probably don't matter.

THINK THAT YOU ARE FUNNY? WRITE FOR HANGMAN kthnxbai felix@imperial.ac.uk

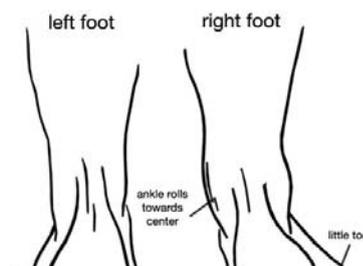
FAIL TODAY

Hangman's Sidebar of shame

Royal baby reportedly to be named Royal Baby as Duke and Duchess get "postmodern" a friend of someone that once talked to Kate says



REVEALED: The exact and precise progression (to the nearest mm) of the Royal Baby's feet Using the latest, cutting edge technology, developed by NASA and CERN, we investigate the big issue.



Pop star James Blunt is spotted walking out of restaurant "full"... OH, who are we all kidding: IT'S THE ROYAL BABY AGAIN!



Merry Christmas from Hangman!

Now, write for us.

hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk

HANGMAN



TOOL OF THE WEEK

That's definitely the only way that he's stacked

Got a photo of someone being a waste of a student loan? Get permission, then just send it to us at: felix@imperial.ac.uk

THE NEWS WITHOUT THE NEWS



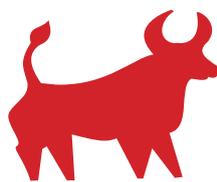
Pete Doherty in trouble after sniffer dogs are drafted in to help police

CHRISTMASSCOPIES – Festive feel to horoscopes



ARIES

This week you have a delicious Christmas dinner with your housemates, and even manage not to burn anything. However, you eat so much that you fall into a food coma. When you wake up 3 days later, you have grown sprouts from your ears and can only communicate through strange clucking noises.



TAURUS

This week you run into your crush underneath some mistletoe. This is the opportunity you've been waiting for! You go for it and enjoy a passionate embrace, and god it feels good! You tenderly step back to check this is real, but it's actually your supervisor standing disgusted in front of you.



GEMINI

This week an angel comes down from heaven to tell you that you're expecting a royal baby. However, you have such severe morning sickness that you throw it up prematurely. Giving birth out of your mouth knocks all your teeth out, so you are stuck with dentures for the rest of your life. Congratulations!



CANCER

This week you receive an early Christmas present from your significant other half. You open it, trembling in anticipation. The gift is some expensive underwear, but it's five sizes too big... They mumble something about it being meant for 'the other one'; I think there's something they might not be telling you...



LEO

This week you buy a festive themed wank sock, also known as a stocking. You diligently add 'presents' to it daily until Christmas day and give it to your chosen recipient. They ask for a clue as to what could be inside; you respond that it's a lucky dip... They aren't exactly grateful.



VIRGO

This week you embark on a long journey to your birthplace on a donkey. But you get lonely along the way and decide to get friendly with it. While you're relieving your loneliness, it kicks you in the face and runs off, leaving you stranded in the barren wilderness of TFL zone 9.



LIBRA

This week Santa comes to visit! You can't believe he's actually real and hasten to offer him a mince pie and mulled wine. Turns out he's really a burglar and steals your MacBook, iPhone, TV, AND toastie maker. The only present he leaves is a shit on your carpet. Happy Christmas!



SCORPIO

This week you have 100 coursework deadlines tomorrow and have only completed one of them so far. You're even worse off than Jay-Z because you don't have any bitches either. You won't make a good scientist or a good gangsta; you should probably practise flipping burgers.



SAGITTARIUS

This week you are so cold that you consume a large amount of anti-freeze to keep your blood from freezing. As your insides slowly dissolve and you burn from inside out, you reflect that at least it is the faster and warmer way to die. In hindsight though, you probably should have just turned the heating on.



CAPRICORN

This week Venus is in its 4th house and Mars is bright, which means that you're going to be savaged by a stray wolf and get rejected from all your job applications. At least you can blame the stars for the fact that you are still unemployed, and use it as an excuse to go travelling until the economic climate improves i.e. indefinitely.



AQUARIUS

This week you go carol singing for charity and shat by accident. Every note you sing makes the acute squelchy sensation in your pants more uncomfortable and shaking your collecting tin agitates the warm goo, making it trickle down your trouser leg. Eventually it leaks into your shoe and you call it a day, having collected about 20p.



PISCES

This week, you have to choose between moisturising with gravy or eating 100 leftover brussel sprouts for breakfast until Christmas. On the one hand, gravy could be quite beneficial to your skin being nutrient-rich, while sprouts make you fart. On the other hand, it would be cold and slimy, and sprouts are healthy too. What's it going to be?

PUZZLES

Puzzles Commanders:
Sotirios Karamitsos,
Louisa Byrne
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Christmas Wordsearch

K S U A L C A T N A S S N C S Y N R O J
 N Z U V E G E T A B L E S H T A O U D B
 S T O C K I N G D C E S L O A D T D E L
 G E G S R C S F A R B A E C B G R O C I
 N L I P L R I A S A R L I O L N A L E T
 I U F E P A L M H N U E G L E I I F M Z
 K Y T C A C E I E B S C H A P X N P B E
 T S S I N K N L R E S N S T A O S R E N
 U T N A T E T Y B R E E H E T B N E R F
 R H O L O R N T E R L W E C O W E S Z R
 T G I S M S I I T Y S R P O L P H E P A
 L I T S I I G V H E P A H I L O H N M N
 E L A T M N H I L N R E E N E T C T I K
 D Y R U E T T T E M O Y R S S A N S N I
 O R O F S H T A H I U W D Y E T E L C N
 V I C F T E E N E H T E S O V O R L E C
 E A E I E A M G M C S N B T E E F E P E
 S F D N E I O R E I N D E E R S X B I N
 Y U F G W R C L I F F R I C H A R D E S
 D R A T S U C H R I S T M A S Y V I S E

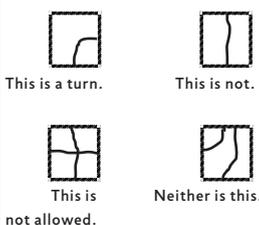
bells
 fairylights
 santaclaus
 bethlehem
 family
 sellotape
 blitzen
 Frankincense
 shepherds
 boxingday
 frenchhens
 silentnight
 brusselsprouts
 gifts
 sleigh
 chimney
 intheair
 specials
 chocolatecoins

ivy
 stable
 christmas
 kings
 stocking
 CliffRichard
 mincepies
 stuffing
 comet
 nativity
 sweets
 crackers
 newyear
 toys
 cranberry
 notrains
 turtledoves
 custard
 pantomimes

vegetables
 dasher
 potatoes
 wencelas
 december
 presents
 yule
 decorations
 reindeer
 eve
 rudolf

Ophis

Fill the cells with a continuous line that enters and exits at the shown points, does not pass through a cell twice and passes through all white boxes. The numbers show you how many times the "snake" turns in a given row or column, and the arrows show you where it enters and leaves the grid. It's just like a nonogram, except it's not.



Suko

Okay guys, I swear this is the last new puzzle for quite a while, and I'm totally not putting it here to fill space or anything. The idea is to fill the squares with digits from 1-9 (using each one only once) so that the numbers in the circles are equal to the sum of the four surrounding squares and that each coloured set of squares sums to the corresponding number.

Slitherlink

Just... one... more... Draw a single closed loop by joining the dots (no diagonals!) so that the numbered squares are surrounded by the corresponding number of lines.

Hashi

Connect all the islands with bridges so that you can get from any island to any other one. There are restrictions, though: the bridges have to be either vertical or horizontal and they must not intersect. You can have up to two bridges between any two islands and, last but not least, each island must have exactly as many bridges as the number on it states.

FUCWIT League Table

TEAMS	
TTBumbles	29
Epiphenomenal Imbroglii	28
Sexy Beasts	3
INDIVIDUALS	
Yufan Zhao	58
Wael Aljeshi	28
M-Soup	16
Jake Humphrey	12
Gordon Wu	8
Tan Wei Jie	3
Jason Parmar	2
Cosmin Badea	1

Send answers to puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk.

Knights and ~~Knights~~

During the insanity epidemic, insane knights were admitted to the island's insane asylum, populated by doctors and inmates (all of which are knights). Knights are honest, so sane knights tell the truth, but insane knights believe false statements, so they honestly lie!

Inspector Craig visited the asylum once. He was greeted by the head doctor. "We've lined up all the patients and the doctors in a 99-person line. They will be happy to answer any questions." Craig walked up to the first man in line and asked him, "Who is insane here?" "I believe he is sane!" he said, pointing at the head doctor. Craig went on to the second man in line and asked the same question. "I believe that I believe that the man in front of me is off his gourd!" he exclaimed. Craig continued with the third man, asking the same question. "Why, I believe that I believe that I believe that the man in front of me is just a bit mad."

The investigation continued in the same vein, as each man accused the man in front of him of being insane, but adding another "I believe that" in front, resulting in some rather long statements. In addition to that, the penultimate man also claimed that the man behind him was insane. Craig thought for a bit. He asked the head, "Who is a doctor and who is a patient here?" "Oh", the doctor replied, "the man you asked first is a patient, and the second man was a doctor, and it just alternated from there." Just then, Craig realised something horrible.

What?

IC Football get hot and sweaty in Brighton

Spencer Bennett Tour Secretary

Airborne rangers began to assemble in our illustrious union from 1PM on Friday 16th November. An impromptu Nando's wade left our stomachs full of chicken, our appetites whetted for the weekend ahead and our dreamy ex-club captain alone. As the tourists arrived and the first beers of the weekend were consumed there was one notable absentee: an extremely late drop out by Dale, citing commitments to his biological studies, left the congregation delighted. The pengest of tour shirts were distributed and the most entertaining of journeys began. It is rare that the two worlds of public transport and ICUAFC's first sport collide but when they do carnage is certain to ensue: Train Box was met with bewilderment by commuters, awkward smiles by young mothers and delight by the present airborne rangers. A bout of silent box and a lullaby of Bohemian Rhapsody, led by Watkin's soothing tones, sent the baby to sleep whilst an origami swan was presented meaning public relations were maintained and Rochester will never again pass a CRB check. By our arrival in Brighton whistles had been whetted and mini tour had well and truly began. The bus to the hostel involved a rousing rendition of airborne ranger whilst a failed Klinsmann attempt by Stillwell left onlookers wincing.

Our first night in the beautiful city began with matchbox pairs leading to widespread animosity between freshers and old boys. An exception to this was the pairing of Murphy and Watkin who struck up a certain romance (in the library). Pints of the dirtiest variety were consumed. Murphy, thinking this punishment was not enough, decided to provide his own natural punishment (in the Library). The disappearance of this pint remains one of the many weekend's mysteries. Then, dancing shoes were donned and the group headed out to one of Brighton's premier venues where highlights included knee slides and Wright's frank confessions to a member of the opposite sex. Bennett and Dabbagh decided it was their lucky night and headed out into the night to win big. The casino's security guards had other ideas. After a civilised exchange of views, one particularly frustrated bouncer took it upon himself to violently throw Dabbagh from the roof of the tallest building in Brighton (although on further inspection of the sight of the crime it became clear that the fall had been wildly exaggerated). The absence of Schon at the hostel set minds racing about the potential for providing shoulders to cry on leading to his re-appearance being greeted with mixed emotions.

The Saturday of the weekend saw



If football had given us a higher res pic we could've zoomed in. You still couldn't see his penis though... Ohhh burn

ICUAFC's big game against Brighton and Hove Medical School. Peacock gave room 15 a treat and they were scarred by the view. From the afternoon's forced pints the group headed to the game. Thanks to Bennett's exceptional knowledge of his hometown and ability to fend off multiple questions with ease we arrived at the venue promptly and with Bennett's house still unfound. 36 man headers and Volleys, a patented Smithy warm-up and shouts of "TK Maxx" left the squad raring to go. The game started as a cagey affair with Beasley's work rate being questioned and Bizzell failing to hit any barn doors with his trusty banjo. The game changed with the introduction of Cann. Refusing to rest on past tour successes Cann brought a breath of fresh air to proceedings and he undoubtedly had some involvement in ICs first goal which Maizonnier finished with aplomb after a swift breakaway and through ball from Murphy (from the Library). Cue delight amongst the 25 subs/backroom staff/fans. Stillwell's introduction only tightened Cann's grip on the game and IC reached half time with a comfortable 1-0 lead. Wholesale changes at half-time led to IC losing their flow slightly despite Stillwell's tireless efforts and well-timed challenges in midfield. As the pressure on the IC goal mounted the medics made it count as their striker evaded the attentions of Wright and fired his shot through the legs of the otherwise outstanding Mason in goal. The disgust of Bennett as he left the pitch epitomised the frustration of the team. Cue another round of substitutions from Milo "the tinker man"

McGrath. The second coming of Murphy (to the Library) swung the game back into ICs favour and, with a relatively small amount of time remaining, IC made the decisive breakthrough. Butt played a trademark outside of the foot pass wide to Maizonnier whose deep cross from the right was met at the back post by a marauding Jarvis who volleyed home impeccably. Celebrations resembling a game of FIFA (other football simulators are available (but are shit)) left no doubt over which team had put the most preparation into the game. The final whistle sounded and IC were victorious. Man of the match was awarded to Mason for his tireless standing and saving whilst McGrath's insightful tactics, most notably the pioneering 3-3-1-3 formation, were deservedly praised.

However, as we headed out Mason's mind must still have been on his fine performance as his box play was atrocious much to Bennett's disgust. Meanwhile, Murphy and Watkin exchanged wedding vows over Jaeger bombs (in the Library), the captain player relationship between Stillwell and Lawson completely broke down with a moist outcome and Wright reacted violently to all the fun (fortunately medical professionals were on hand). ICUAFC showed their creative side by producing a work of art. Notable contributors included Maizonnier, Murphy and Butt who eloquently named their creation "cubicle three". Searle was determined to make the most of the night, after some crafty watch work allowed him free entry, and set about repelling the female population of Brighton with a ma-

neuvre that became known as "The crab". Tensions between two of the party's ethnic minorities rose leading to an exchange of bodily fluids whilst Adelowo had a night to forget ending up being assaulted by his own bed after making some bold and slightly disturbing claims. As eyes became bleary and thoughts turned to bed a late night breakfast wade was clearly in order. Whilst Dabbagh marvelled

at the burger and chips sneaked onto his plate, Ogunbiyi's love of Chicken drew the attentions of the door staff. Fortunately, before the riot van was called, the bouncer settled the argument by sharing Ogunbiyi's love of the meat and silencing Cann. Meanwhile, Murphy had decided the hostel was too far away and sought alternative accommodation with a sea view (in the Library) and Stillwell and McGrath attempted to fake the death of Watkin. Friends and family of Watkin were said to be convinced by a text stating "I am dead" much to Watkin's amusement. A late night episode of George Bizzell's story time was the perfect end to an eventful evening.

On Sunday morning the airborne rangers were woken by shouts of "come in, it's open!" and the Sun streaming in through the windows of the hostel whilst a heated debate over the age old question of sitting or standing erupted in room 105. There was just time for a stroll along the sea-front and a trip to Brighton's famous pier where plastic horses amused for hours, Dabbagh was successful on the teddy picker and Lambe and Bennett duelled on an air hockey table: it was a cagey affair with neither player really dominating the early stages with the turning point being an extraordinary triple wall bounce goal to which Bennett had no reply. Before we knew it we had left the sea air behind us and returned to London with new Facebook friends, relationships in tatters and some sights we may never be able to forget.

CHRISTMAS
SYNCHRONISED
SWIMMING

TASTER SESSION
+ SHOW

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Wed 12th Dec
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Come learn synchro and watch our show!
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www.union.ic.ac.uk/rcc/synchroswimming

Sport Editors: Oli Benton,
Margot Pikovsky, Sorcha Cotter
sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

SPORT

The bigger they are; Kings get smashed

Jonnie Clowes

Hockey Honary Secretary

Many of you may have read the article written by the Hockey Club Captain last week referencing the email written to the Imperial 2s captain by the KCL 1s captain. The email undoubtedly showed unsportsmanlike behaviour on the part of the KCL captain but also gave the 2s even more motivation to go out there and show KCL exactly what they are made of.

The task ahead of the 2s was undoubtedly a daunting one. KCL 1s are 3 BUCs leagues above them, pushing for the LUSL Premier Division title and were coming off the back of a 4-0 victory over IC 1s, but therein lies the beauty of the cup. The chance for the underdogs to shine, pull off that great upset, win against all the odds and, above all else, enjoy playing the sport they love on a grand stage. Each and every player in the 2s team knew what the game meant. Win, and they had pulled off the biggest cup upset of the year so far, lose, and they could hold their heads up high and say they gave it their all.

The pre-match warm up was unfortunately non-existent due to a frozen pitch and late location change but the rousing pre-match speech delivered by injured captain Jimmy S was all the warm up the boys needed. With keeper Sifter still putting on his helmet and gloves, the umpires started the game. Instantly KCL 1s were on the attack and looking to put the game to bed early. Barely having adjusted his helmet, Sifter was called into action after some slack defending with a smart save at his



near post. If the 2s didn't know they were in for a tough match beforehand, they did now.

Undaunted by their slow start, the 2s got to work at what they do best. Simple yet effective passing moves began to unlock the KCL defence. Every player on the pitch was happy to receive the ball under pressure knowing that a teammate was there to receive the next pass. The 2s fluid style of play soon gave them their first opportunity. A quick free hit taken by B. Tablet at the back gave Fresher Alex space to run at the KCL defence. After skinning two players he pulled the ball back for the on rushing Tinkerbell, again playing in his unique position of creative centre back. A square ball found the ever reliable Strap-On on the left flank who delivered a peach of a ball into the KCL

circle met by Fresher Tim, running at full pace, for a first time shot that was tipped over the cross bar.

With the KCL defence looking rattled, IC pushed on. Strikers Brickney and Fresher Jay-Zed were full of running upfront giving the KCL defenders a torrid time tracking them. Cummy B was creative as the attacking midfielder knowing that Old Man Mikey was behind him to mop up any loose ball that should come his way. However the KCL team still looked dangerous going forward and the IC defence had to be on their toes. What happened next was definitely not in the KCL script.

IC centre back, Soggy, decided he had had enough of marking his man (which he doesn't like doing at the best of times) and stepped in front to cut out a dangerous through ball. He played a

peach of a pass out wide to Meat Spin who played a deft one-two with Y.Bag before winning a penalty corner. Cummy B received the ball at the top of the circle, drew two defenders before playing an under arm pass to Fresher Tim who smashed the ball home into the far corner of the goal. The IC players went mad celebrating and, still buzzing from their moment of glory, nearly allowed KCL to hit straight back.

Poor defending allowed the KCL striker a free shot from less than 6 yards. Goalie, Sifter, rushed out to smother the initial shot before jumping back to his feet and diving right to keep out the rebound. Two further rebounds followed with the first being blocked by the keepers out stretched stick and the latter beaten away by his outstretched hand. The ball eventually found its way to a KCL player no more than 3 yards from an open goal only for him to inexplicably play the ball millimetres wide of the post. This was the shock to the system that IC needed and they stepped up their game to see off the rest of the half with no major scares.

At the start of the second half, KCL came out with a renewed vigour. They pushed forwards looking for the equaliser and no more than 5 minutes into the second half they nearly had it. Slick play down the right hand side saw a cross whipped in leaving an unmarked player to slot the ball home. However, IC protested that the ball had come off the player's foot but with the umpire unsighted he was unable to make a call. Then followed a display of sportsmanship not previously shown by KCL; when questioned by the umpire, the KCL striker admitted that he had

kicked the ball in. That was the second let off for IC and they were determined that they wouldn't need a third.

Hitting KCL on the counter attack from a short corner that was magnificently blocked by Soggy, IC won a short corner of their own. The corner routine broke down but the ball eventually found its way to Y.Bag who played a dangerous ball in that was deflected in by a KCL defender. Not wanting to sit on their two goal lead, IC grew in confidence and began to push KCL deeper and deeper into their own half. Several chances fell to IC players with Strap-On one of many players guilty of poor finishing.

KCL had put 3 past the IC 1s in the last 10 minutes of the game the previous week and so IC knew the threat that they still posed. KCL decided to have one last roll of the dice and pushed men forwards. A rocket of a ball was played straight through the heart of the IC defence only for the IC keeper to once again be on hand to make a double save. KCL's frustration began to tell and, after numerous offences, they went down to ten men after a player was sent off for repeated stick tackles. This spelt the end of any threat they still posed to the IC clean sheet.

At the final whistle the IC players were elated at avenging the IC 1s loss; the KCL team were shell shocked by their 2-0 defeat. The biggest cup upset of the year so far had just occurred, I say so far as IC 2s face UCL 1s in the quarter finals next term. So to echo the words of the ICHC Club Captain, whether it be in the league or the cup, just remember, the bigger they are, the harder they fall.

ICHC Womens 1s win against all odds

Sorcha Cotter

Sports Editor

On the very cold afternoon on Wednesday the 5th December we went out to face a team that had not only beaten but really thrashed us at the beginning of the season 7-0. It was not an exciting prospect with a captain Gigi having now become captain hook and only able to watch from the side-lines after breaking her hand a few weeks ago. We have also been struggling through a few injuries and were depleted due to the usual end of term deadlines. But we set out with nothing to lose; at least we looked better than the mottled purple of Portsmouth!

The game started tentatively from both teams with the possession fairly even and staying around the centre of the pitch. With some screaming from the side-line we push on running hard

at Portsmouth and forcing them to make some bad tackles giving us some possession in our attacking third, but to no avail. We had some good passes around the back from Celia, Kirsty, Emma and Maria who were able to get the ball down the side-lines allowing Jules, Kirsten and Anna some close break-aways in our attack. We earned an early short-corner but it seems that the naked boys running around the pitch were a distraction to our usual scoring duo and we narrowly missed the goal. Finally we broke their defence with 5 minutes to go of the first half giving Sorcha a one-on-one opportunity against the keeper. Their keeper appeared stunned and didn't move as Sorcha carefully slotted the ball past her giving the team a miraculous boast as we were unexpectedly ahead! Unfortunately we hadn't been able to impress the crowd of Men's 3s who had decided moments earlier to

head for showers.

At half-time we knew that Portsmouth would come out attacking, but with our pirate spirits we took to the pitch ready to defend all flanks. Almost immediately they were on the attack but one of their players literally 'hit-the-deck' and we had to wait for the injury to be sorted. The second half was a very tough affair but some tight marking of their central midfield by Hazman and fresher Bryony and fresher Hayley took their main strengths out of the game. Some insane interceptions from Celia led to a give-and-go run all the way down the pitch with Sorcha supporting and our resident peg-leg (Celia) almost scoring a fantastic goal from her sweeper position! Needless to say we needed her in defence and she really battled though pain to hold of defending unit together for the rest of the game. We were undoubtedly on the



back foot with a relentless attack from the Portsmouth girls. The voices on the side-lines were getting higher and higher as 3 successive goal lines saves were made by Emma and Bryony. Thanks to our very own Will Turner-goalkeeper Purcy was saving us all with her continuous clearances, preventing our ship from sinking!

Our defence managed to hold out until the final whistle when we real-

ised that we had won! The entire team played amazingly and all the girls should be so proud of the achievement. This was one of the best team performances we've had this year and just shows the distance we have come over the past few months! There were some very merry pirates celebrating in the union later. Hopefully we can carry this spirit into next term with the return of our captain.

SPORT

Sport Editors: Oli Benton,
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Netball girls on a roll

Felix Sport gets the lowdown on netball's continued success

Toni Semmence Sports Writer

ICUNC have had a fantastic start to the season especially in the BUCS leagues, with the 1sts currently 2nd in their league and with promotion still very much in their grasps.

The 2nds are still joint top and promotion could easily come down to the last game of the season against

QM 2nds. IC 3rds are currently holding a strong mid-table position and with some strong play in the return fixtures, promotion is still on the cards. In the new LUSL league IC have 5 teams competing for the first time. The 1sts are currently mid-table in the premier division, but are the only IC team left in the LUSL cup. The 2nds and 3rds share the same league alongside some very tough

competition such as UCL 3rds, both teams are in comfortable positions. The 4ths and 5ths also share the same league and are again in comfortable positions in the league. Unfortunately ICUNC have yet to find a sponsor this year, and who wouldn't want to sponsor 60 beautiful, intelligent ladies like ourselves. Watch this space for news on our upcoming Netball Funday; it's going to be wild!



Reach! Climb every mountain!
Reach! Reach for the moon!

IC 1s vs LSE 3s

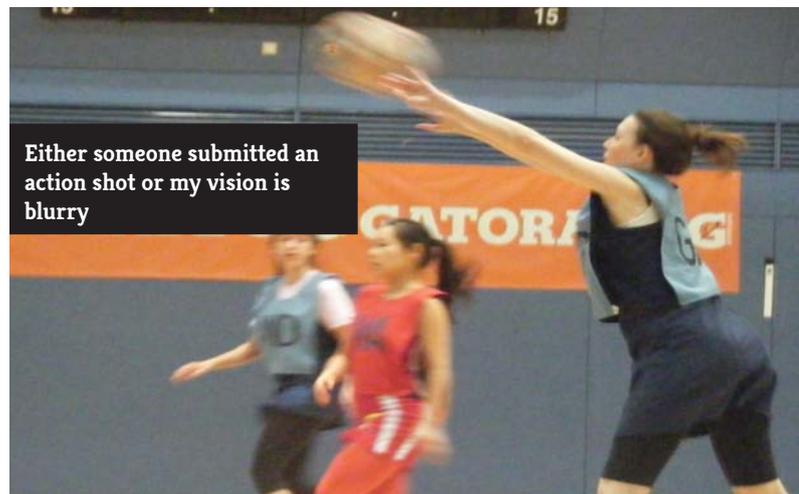
Last Monday IC 1sts played in their second LUSL cup match of the season against LSE 3rds in Ethos. With a few key players missing Nancy Edge and Amelia Al-Qazzaz stepped up to the plate having their first team debuts. With the centre court being completely re-modelled no one was quite sure how the team would perform and this showed in a shaky first quarter. The passing was slow and inaccurate with many mistakes

being made by both teams but IC managed to gain a small advantage.

In the second quarter with some amazing interceptions by Verity Roberts and Sophie Andrew in defence the game flowed a little more and IC started to pull ahead. Tereze Gaile and Amelia Al-Qazzaz were steadily bringing the ball from defence to attack and IC was on a roll finishing the quarter well ahead.

In the third quarter the team really did start to shine. Nancy Edge provided some perfect passes into the circle and Tamar Loach was on fire (as usual) never missing a shot!

The final quarter was almost a formality; the play dipped in quality as the win became inevitable and some very silly mistakes were made. The target of 80 wasn't quite reached but everyone was pleased with a final score of IC 70, LSE 23. The 1sts next LUSL cup match is against Royal Holloway 1sts in January, which promises to be a slightly more challenging game. The IC 1sts are flying the flag for imperial as they are the last IC (non-medic) netball team in a cup this season so make sure you come and support them if you get a chance.



Either someone submitted an action shot or my vision is blurry

IC 2s vs RHUL 3s

On Monday IC 2nds took on RHUL 3rds away, and it truly was away. A tube, two trains and a 12 minute walk later we arrived. Funny that this was a LUSL game for London Universities and we were playing in Kent somewhere, needless to say we were very unimpressed. With freezing cold temperatures and only 7 players, we weren't exactly excited about the next hour.

The first quarter started out slowly with the cold clearly taking its toll on everyone's brain function, neither IC nor RHUL had anything much to shout about. We started to pull away capitalising on RHUL mistakes, thanks to some fantastic interceptions from, smallest player on the team, Emily

Rolfe. It was clear that our new "fling a limb" tactic was working, with IC arms flailing everywhere we were making it difficult for RHUL to string together any significant number of passes.

The second quarter started off well with about 5 goals in a row from IC, impressive cross-court dives from Rebecca Tyne ensured that no loose ball went to waste. RHUL 3rds were slow to pick up on our pattern of play and centres repeatedly went from Abi, to Beverley, to Emily, to Harriet to goal. At this point the umpires decided to become extra strict on our team and we were called up for some very dubious "ball control!" However, a lack of keeping up with the new rules also worked in our favour with RHUL's GD being blown up for marking off court. The end of the second quarter and we were pulling further away.

IC 3s vs KCL 3s

The day started off eventually, with snow delaying all trains to Egham. When we arrived with 7 players, already at a disadvantage, crossing our fingers there would be no other incidents, two of our players were told they couldn't play because of piercings that needed to be taken out. According to said players these piercings were 'impossible' to take out. 'You need pliers' 'you can push it through my ear' 'someone just pull it out' 'there's blood! After multiple attempts we managed, as a team, to remove all earrings and play commenced as the clock struck 3, with the Sun blinding players eyes even in the freezing conditions.

The first quarter started off eventually with some strong interceptions from new player Kirstin and some good shooting from Izzie. The score at the end of the quarter didn't reflect the level of competition with them leading 13-8. In the second quarter, the slippy

court and an over zealous shooter got the best of Laura, and she went tumbling slamming her knee into the cement, which could be heard from the other side of the court. Play stopped and she was carried by 6 people, including both umpires, off the court. She managed to bandage herself up (what do medics need 6 years for?) and play continued with only 6 players. Two goals were scored in quick succession, showing RHUL that we were a force to be reckoned with. That quarter ended with RHUL 21-14.

Laura had managed to create a bandage strong enough to hold what was left of her knee together and hobbled on court. Despite her injuries she managed some fantastic interceptions, causing players and umpires to applaud her courage and determination. The fourth quarter opened with a swift interception from Kate, leading to a goal for IC. The game ended as the last of the sun disappeared behind the trees, with a disappointing loss for IC, but ready and full of fury to take on Brunel 6s next Wednesday.

The 3rd quarter came and we all started to relax a bit, the game wasn't very intense and we were ahead by enough. Catherine Burrows employed a new "pencil jumping" technique that was hugely effective against their goal shooter, and she was almost cut out of the game. Great shooting from both Beverly Tsang and Harriet Rungay ensured that every opportunity was taken, although we did have some fancy footwork from Harriet who seemed to think we were doing some dancing.

It was the final quarter and RHUL had just been promised Nando's by their coach if they managed to get it back and win, unfortunately no one was offering to take IC out for dinner for being consistently awesome. Sloppy play and agitation from RHUL meant that goal attack was blown up for contacting Toni Semmence a lot, but no amount of bruises were going to make IC back down now. If we weren't getting Nando's no one would be v Domineering play in the centre court from Abigail Johnston Hume ensured that our lead only increased. Unfortunately the final score is currently unknown because as soon as the final whistle blew IC were off court, grabbing our stuff and sprinting to the train station so we didn't have to wait half an hour for the next train. A rash shout by Toni stating she "knew which carriage to get on so we have to walk less at Wimbledon" ended up being a 100% wrong and IC 2nds were forced to walk the entire length of the platform.



Semmence's cyborg ankle makes another appearance

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SPORT

Bowled over by Tenpin

Ka Hin Chan

Secretary

Having already achieved impressive 13.5-2.5 and 9-7 victories over Southampton and last year runners-up Portsmouth, Imperial Tenpin Bowling has had a promising start to the year. Portsmouth and Southampton, having suffered their defeat on Sunday 11th November in Newbury, must now wait to find out who can enter the BUTBA Cup finals, while IC had automatically qualified. With the strong support of the best bowlers in London, Matt Miller and Mike Quarry, the Imperial team is getting well-prepared as we make our way to our first ever tournament finals, which will be against Sheffield, Loughborough and

the winner from the group stage.

'It has been a historical moment for the Imperial team to enter the finals for the very first time.' Team Captain Kelvin Wong said, 'Every member of my team has put their full effort into bowling. I have a lot of faith in them to once again be outstanding in the finals.'

In the same month, Imperial Trios hosted the first Order of Merit tournament organised by Imperial, Romford, North-East London. Three teams were sent from Imperial, bringing together both students and alumni bowlers, and IC came away with some incredible performances. Much congratulations to one of our teams, Xin Yan Goh, Gabriel Lim, and Gavin Lai, who were placed first runner-up in the stu-

dent handicap division! More spectacularly, Xin Yan Goh and Gabriel Lim won the female and male high handicap games. It was also astonishing to witness two 300-perfect games being bowled by other members of the team that day.

With experience comes confidence; we know the road ahead and are ready to face even stronger opponents and pressure. We look forward to the BUCS Championship this coming February in hopes of achieving even better results than last year: most stunningly our women's team won second. If you are interested in supporting us, drop us an email at tenpin@imperial.ac.uk or join our Facebook group, Imperial College Tenpin Bowling Soc 2012-13.



Savvy Stickwork Spells Victory for Lacrosse

Hannah Tullett

2nd Team VC

Wednesday 4th December brought the Ladies 1st Lacrosse team a brilliant win following a 16-4 score finish against the University of Reading.

Braving sub-zero degree weather, the ladies first lacrosse team trekked to Reading for their final match of the term. The bright sunshine was deceptive: it did nothing but produce glare on the pitch. Layering and sunglasses were key in equal measure.

The match kicked off with fresher Lexi Wisentaner in centre. Her first draw went straight to teammate Oli Morley, who ran it down the pitch towards the Reading goal. In rapid succession, the first three goals were scored by Liv Sinclair, Captain Lizzie Allen and Oli Morley, with shots on goal by Cat Hedley and Lexi. Very soon though it was the turn of Imperial's defensive side to be put to the test and by the end of the quarter Reading had equalised: the score standing at 3-3.

For the 2nd quarter, Imperial tightened up its defence. Players Abi Muruges-Warren and Bex Singh double-teamed their Reading player to regain possession of the ball. Lexi transported the ball down the pitch, barging past many a defender, and after some settle play around the fan, Imo Simmonds scored goal number four. Hannah Brooks and Lydia Uden doubled dangerous number 10, releasing the ball for Rachel Castola to recover and pass to goalie Gaby Prager for the clear. Bex took the ball up the wing and by half-time, a further two goals by Oli Morley had brought the score up to 6-3.



Huddling close in half-time the Imperial side reviewed their situation. Defence had not conceded a goal in the previous quarter, and the double-team technique was deemed effective. On the attacking side, in addition to six successful goals, several failed shots on goal had been made. Captain Lizzie Allen stressed the importance of making decisive cuts through the fan, and that the final pass before shooting be safe and

easily converted.

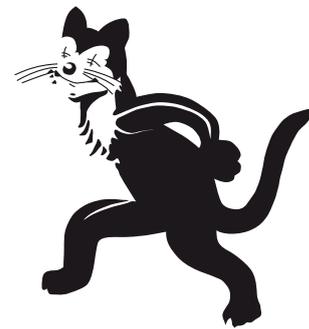
Seconds after the whistle had been blown in the third quarter, Imo Simmonds scored her second goal of the match. Shortly after however, Reading gained and held possession, working the fan around goalkeeper Gaby Prager. Our goalkeeper and defenders withstood the pressure, and when the ball finally turned back over to Imperial, Abi Muruges-Warren rapidly took the 8th goal. Moments

later, some impressive team-play gave Imperial the edge: Imo took the ball behind the Reading goal, Lydia Uden made a cut in front, and scored off a quick-sticks pass. Clearly under pressure, the Reading side made a foul stick swipe to Imo's head. Knees bent and eyes focused on the goal, Imo took the free ball at the head of the fan. The ball hit its mark in the back of the net and a whistle promptly signalled the quarter.

Fourth and final quarter and Imperial acknowledged that Reading were feeling the pressure. Stick checks were becoming dodgy, but our policy was to keep our play clean. Defender Shosh Krasner-Macleod in regaining ball possession took a swipe to the face, but undeterred, she played on, leading to Abi scoring goals 14 and 15. Playing up from the Imperial lacrosse 2's, Hannah Tullett stuck close to her Reading player and again, no goals were conceded during this final quarter. Imo scored three goals and Oli one in the last quarter, producing an impressive final score of 16-4.

Wednesday was not the first time Imperial had met Reading, and it was admitted that their side had improved immensely. It took an equalised first quarter to prompt the Imperial side to really up their game and make use of some stunning tactics. This result in the final match of term was a testament to the hard work of Captain Lizzie Allen and Vice Imo Simmonds, and the invaluable team work the Imperial ladies have used to take them up to second place in the league. The team look ahead to next term, to continue and expand upon their efforts, and where a hoped-for victory against Royal Holloway will take them to the top.

Man-of-the-match, awarded both by Reading and Imperial, went to Imo Simmonds. Dick-of-the-day was also awarded to the Vice Captain, when it was noted in a moment of heated match play that she had managed to hit herself in the head with her own stick. Three shots later, it is needless to say that she was a fair bit woozy on that long minibus ride home...



ICU Dance salsa to success

Alex Mason

Sports Writer

As the Imperial Dance team celebrate another success at Nottingham's Varsity 2012, there's no better time to learn

This is a little daunting for most people. It was most apparent to me when I attended a wedding recently in which the groom was unable to lead his wife in a slow waltz. We seem to be approaching a situation in which the traditional, refined and tasteful style of impressing the punters with a quirky Quickstep, winning their hearts with an impassioned Argentine Tango, or setting the floor on fire with an energising Jive, have long been forgotten in the realm of the younger generations. Instead, many such functions these days are more oriented towards entertaining a rowdy bunch of party-seekers after a rave and a whiskey rather than a whisk and chassé. Have we just become lazy?

In times past, ballroom dancing was social dancing for the privileged; the lower classes were left with folk dancing. The modern waltz is derived from the Renaissance dance the Volta; it arrived in England in around 1812, and was met with great opposition due to the impropriety of the closed hold. In the early 20th Century there was a movement towards dances where couples moved independently, and many newly invented dances arose with the growing popularity of Jazz. Many of the well-known Latin dances originated in African and Central American regions but in 1910, a diverse assemblage of professional ballet teachers and musicians came together and standardised the curriculum used today. In modern competitions dancers are assessed on poise, frame and posture, musicality and expression, timing, body alignment and shape, floor craft, foot and leg action, and presentation. It is the product of dedication and a great deal of sometimes – in fact, often – pain-



I see you baby, shaking that ass...

ful training and conditioning. But it is surely worthwhile for the impression, the glamour, excitement and unpredictability. Ballroom, Latin and social dancing are a beautiful spectacle, but in modern times they seem not to enjoy the same popularity and appreciation they used to be met with in the younger generations. Despite this, in the UK there are currently around 30,000 people regularly competing at local, national or international level, from amateur to professional, of which around 14,000 of these are in the university circle. Of course, these figures have greatly proliferated since around 2004 with the advent of Strictly Come Dancing. Competition between universities has been manifest in the UK for over 40 years. In the 1960's, a dance teacher from the society at the University of Manchester thought it would be better if his students were able to compete against those from other universities, in the knowledge that many other universities in the UK also had teams. In this way, the modern inter-university competition was formed as it exists today,

and is still gaining momentum, as one of the most successful and recognised competition series in any discipline undertaken by university students.

The ICU Dance Society is historically the largest and one of the most prestigious and well-endowed societies at Imperial, currently with over 200 members competing regularly or just dancing for leisure. It is also one of the most active. Those new to Ballroom and Latin dancing can join the beginners' team, which enters five competitions throughout the year, including three regional events, and the Southern University and Inter-Varsity Dance Competitions (SUDA and IVDA), the latter taking place at the magnificent and prestigious Blackpool Winter Gardens Ballroom, an internationally renowned venue which has held everything from political conferences to pop concerts. ICU Dance has a reputation for producing top quality dancers, many of whom go on to dance professionally, and coach new, up-coming talent. One such example is Arman Sahovic, who with his partner Maria Naumchenko won the national championships in ballroom twice and in Latin once, and ranked in the top 100 according to the Blackpool rankings (the most famous in the world). The outstanding level of talent, performance and activity within ICU Dance also attracts the very best in external professional coaching, with internationally reputed teachers such as Elena Plescenco, who was eight times Portuguese National champion, and is currently ranked in the top 48 in Latin, and Snow Draper, who reached the semi-final of the Blackpool championships in ballroom and was ranked in the top 10 in the world. With this level

of instruction and coaching, it is unsurprising that this year's team captain won every competition she entered at intermediate level in the 2011-12 season, and this year is competing in the Ex-Student advanced level category; or that a former Imperial beginners' couple, Natasha and Stefano reached the top 24 in the Blackpool ballroom rankings; or indeed that historically the Imperial beginners team has been the most successful at the competitions since the 1990's, with three couples qualifying for the Latin final and two for the ballroom final at this year's Nottingham Varsity Ball competition on 24th November. On average a beginners' team couple from Imperial will win at least three of the five competitions entered every three years. Continued success is promoted beyond university as well, with the Imperial College Dance Alumni Association (ICDAA).

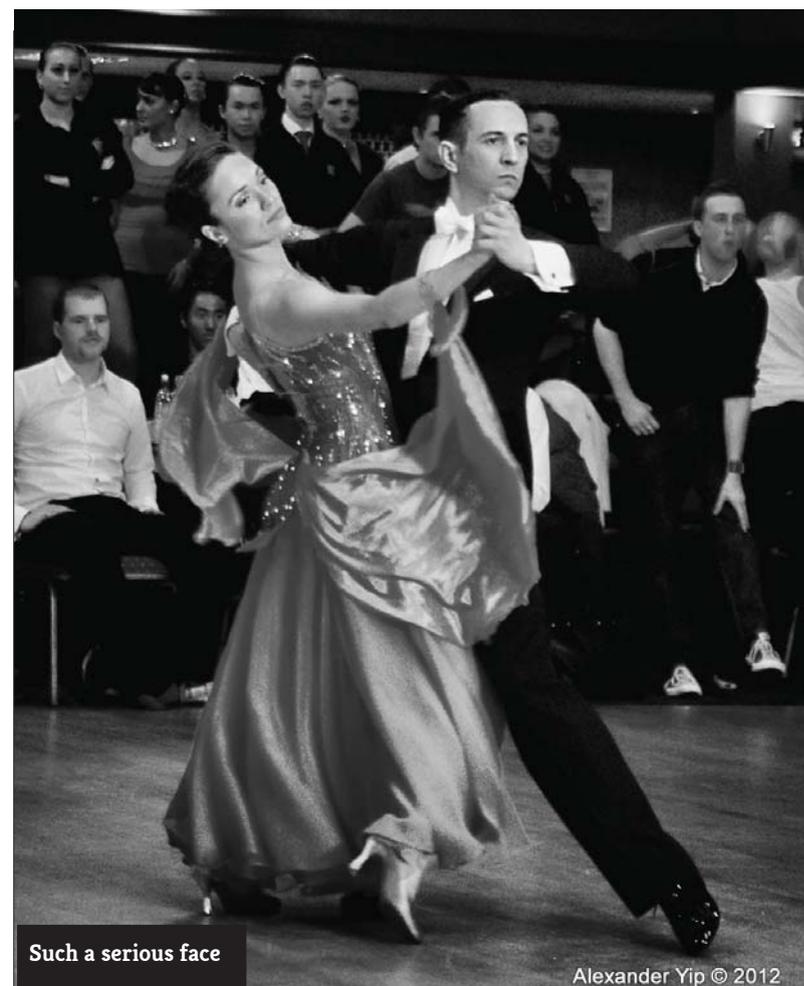
Dance Society is not only about Ballroom and Latin however. Dancers are coached in social dancers such as Salsa, Swing and Argentine Tango, regularly perform in major showcases including Mega Maalal and East Meets West, and even participate in classic external

events such as Céilidh at Burns Night. Laith, the Salsa instructor, was twice the British National Salsa champion in the period 2004-06. There are also enchanting socials including the Winter Ball and Spring Ball in which there are live bands and top professional performer demonstrations. The annual "Imperial Come Dancing" competition is hosted – in which professors and senior Union staff from across Imperial team up with couples from the ICU Dance team, and are taught how to dance, and a host of other mind-blowingly glamorous black tie events all accompanied by dedicated semi-professional photographers to capture those key moments, take place throughout the calendar.

As a university team, overall Imperial averages around third in the national competitions, only to Oxford and Cambridge. No other institution comes close; but is it not time to prove to Oxbridge that we are better than they? So, instead of just watching a bunch of blundering inelegant thrill-seekers on Strictly and pretending to be impressed because your parents are watching, isn't it time to dust off the shiny black shoes, fasten the cufflinks and blitz that dance floor?



Watch out goatee man! The girl in red is going to pounce!



Such a serious face

Alexander Yip © 2012