



# Felix

The Student Newspaper of Imperial College London



EDITORIAL

CONTENTS	
EDITORIAL	2
NEWS	3-4
POLITICS	5
COMMENT	6
SCIENCE	7
ARTS	8-9
MUSIC	10-11
BOOKS	13-15
FILM	19-21
TV	22
FOOD	23
TRAVEL	24-25
LIBERATION	26
PUZZLES	27
HANGMAN	28-29
C&S	30
SPORTS	31-32

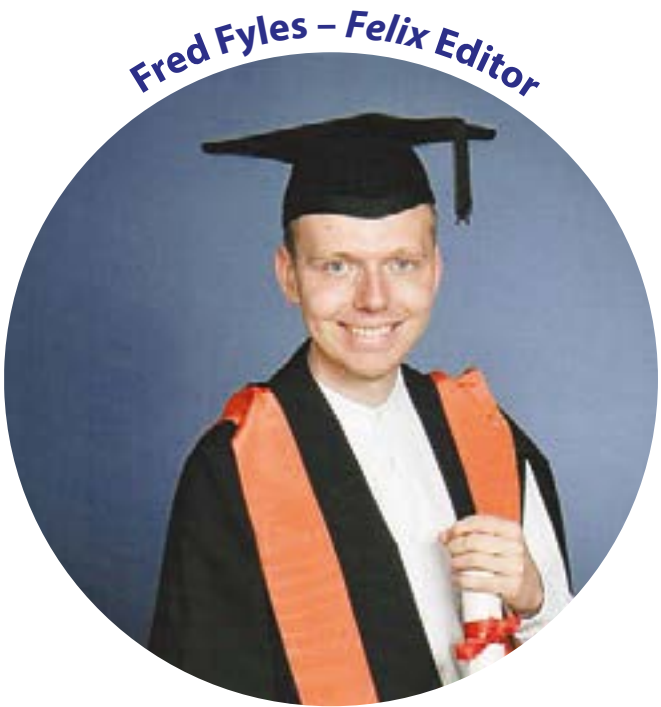
*Felix* Office  
Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road  
London, SW7 2BB  
  
Tel: 020 79548072  
Email: felix@ic.ac.uk  
  
felixonline.co.uk  
@feliximperial  
  
Printed by Illifee Print  
Cambridge, Winship Road,  
Cambridge  
  
Registered Newspaper  
ISSN 1040-0711  
  
Copyright (c) *Felix* 2017

Gowns and grandmas – it’s graduation time

Around this time last week, as we were about to send off the paper, the worst happened: the servers crashed. Ok, so maybe it’s not as bad as global poverty, or removal of the SCR breakfasts, but it’s still pretty bad. We just about managed to get the paper out, but we knew that this week would be difficult.

We’ve had to put together this issue on a single computer in the West Basement, and while I would love to say I worked myself to the bone getting this issue out, that simply isn’t the truth. Really, the paper is only in your hands right now because of the dedication of a wonderful team of writers and editors, who pulled out all the stops to make sure that things went smoothly this week. I can’t thank them enough.

But moving onto something more exciting: graduation! A time when the campus is deluged under a flood of black cloaks, anxious parents, and lots of selfies in front of the library cafe (after all, it’s probably fed you more



times that your mother has in the last few years).

I graduated for the first time from King’s – I know, I know. It was a pretty fun day, but I don’t think any of the pomp and circumstance compares to what happened before the ceremony: it was held at Barbican, which is located in central London, next to a series of water gardens. Since my graduation was early, we got there before the fountains were turned on, and as a result lots of people were hopping in

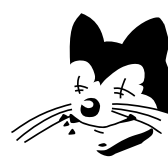
the basins to take photos in all their finery. The clock hit 10am, however, and lo and behold: the sound of shrieking echoed across the foyer as graduands were promptly drenched.

My mum had gone to the loo at that point, and she was gutted she missed out. In fact, she spent the remainder of the day talking about how pointless the whole day was, since I’d only been at King’s less than a year, and “you don’t really know anyone, do you?”

Thanks ma!

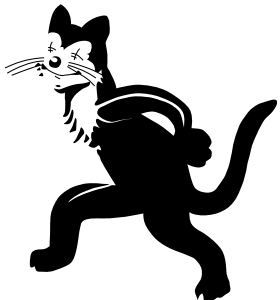
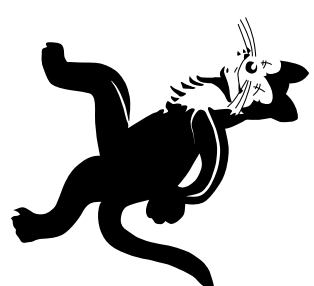
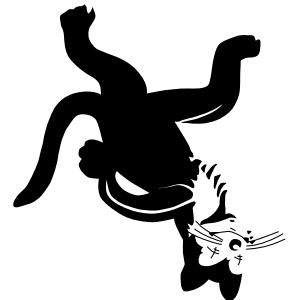
Enough about me. For the last few years I’ve always been off-campus on the day of graduation, and so I’ve missed the atmosphere. I’d always thought – judging from the pictures – that it would be crowded, hectic, and pretty awful, and it is. But there’s also a celebratory atmosphere that was lovely to see. From aunties in Kente cloth tearing up as they take photos of their beloved family, or confused parents being shepherded to Beit Quad, it’s lovely to see everyone come together and witness the world’s most expensive handshake.

We even got in on the action in the West Basement, taking photos of graduates with their families, until this was promptly shut down by the College, who claimed their preferred studio had a monopoly on photography that day. I checked though, and there were plenty of you guys posting fab selfies on the gram, so they can’t have complete control. Oh well. There’s always next year.



The *Felix* Team

- Editor-in-Chief**  
Fred Fyles
- Deputy Editor**  
Joanna Wormald
- News Editor**  
Joanna Wormald
- Politics Editors**  
Avi Banerjee  
Divyen Vanniasegaram
- Science Editors**  
Chris Richardson  
Henry Bennie
- Tech Editor**  
Tom Mrazek
- Comment Editors**  
Charlie Titmuss  
Alan Perfect
- Arts Editors**  
Indira Mallik  
JJ Cheng  
Adam Gellatly
- Books Editors**  
JJ Cheng  
Alice Peberdy
- Music Editors**  
Andy Djaba  
Adrian LaMoury  
Henry Eshbaugh
- TV Editor**  
Andrew Melville
- Film Editors**  
Michael Purdy  
Mikhail Demtchenko  
Mark Aduol  
Ashley Luckyram
- Food Editors**  
Andrada Balmez  
Alice Davage  
Chun Yuan Hii
- Travel Editor**  
Edita Pileckyte
- Puzzles Editor**  
Hamish Beck
- Sports Editor**  
Imraj Singh
- Head Photographer**  
Joe O’Connell-Danes
- Cover Photo**  
Temptress Photography
- Copy Editors**  
Ash Pattar  
Astrid Zong  
Selin Olenik  
Rhidian Thomas  
Ezgi Ozyilkan  
Alexander Adler



Get involved with *Felix*!

We’re looking for writers, photographers, illustrators, grammar nerds, and computer whizz-kids

If you’re interested, drop us a line on felix@ic.ac.uk



# NEWS

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Union launches survey of College's Campus Services

### NEWS

**Joanna Wormald**

Deputy Editor

*The survey comes following displeasure over changes to campus services carried out over the summer, including removal of SCR cooked breakfasts*

A survey of campus services has been launched by Imperial College Union following "significant changes" to Imperial's catering and dining facilities. The move comes more than two months after the College's Campus Services implemented changes without consulting staff or students.

The changes are largely cost-cutting measures. These include reducing menu options, portion sizes, and opening hours, in addition to replacing F-EAST in the Junior Common Room with Japanese outlet Tanpopo.

The Imperial College website claims that these

changes will benefit the wider community. It also makes note of how much investment in catering facilities costs, making a point to mention "these services operate at a loss" and are heavily subsidised. Despite this, Imperial's 2015-16 accounts reported an overall surplus income of £84.5 million.

The website adds that the changes should have a minimal impact on students and staff. However, as *Felix* reported this August, postgraduate students and staff were displeased when the Senior Common Room stopped serving breakfast. Since then, complaints have continued to come in, with one Imperial academic telling *Felix*: "I have received several complaints from our students: they usually only get one hour to eat between lectures and are not happy to spend their lunch break in a queue or finding a seat. They do not have time to eat and relax."

He added: "The other day I tried to get my lunch at 12.15, between two meetings, and I only had 30 minutes to eat. I usually grab a sandwich at the JCR but that was not an option because of



Will we ever see the return of cooked breakfasts? // ICU

the massive queues. I tried several other food outlets with no luck – there were long queues everywhere. I went to my meeting with an empty stomach and had lunch at 2pm." The College told *Felix* that they "aim to provide the best possible service and experience for our staff and student community."

The Union told *Felix* that they were conducting the Campus Services Feedback survey "to better understand the opinions of our members regarding the changes which occurred

over the summer to the Campus Services outlets, and to gain a deeper insight into the consumer habits across the Imperial community."

The Graduate Students' Union (GSU) has urged Imperial to listen to students' feedback and reconsider the changes. In a statement, the GSU told *Felix*: "These changes, although financially rational on the College's part, send the wrong message to our postgraduate community, especially considering how much we value equal

provision and opportunities for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Many students have approached us expressing a feeling of neglect."

In a statement from the Union, a representative said that "With a good response rate from our members and from College staff, we will be better placed to lobby College to adapt the services to better serve our members and challenge them when appropriate."

Launching the feedback survey is a step in the

right direction. Aside from gathering demographic information, it asks student which outlets they use and when, as well as when they would like to use the outlets. There are no mentions of other issues raised by staff and students – such as the changes to Ethos' opening hours – although a comment box is provided at the end of the survey.

The survey is available at: <http://www.imperial-collegeunion.org/CSFeed-back>.

## Pro-Kurdish protesters gather outside Iraqi Embassy

### NEWS

**Joanna Wormald**

Deputy Editor

*Last Monday protesters gathered outside the embassy in a pro-Kurdish protest*

Protesters gathered outside the Iraqi embassy on Queen's Gate earlier this week in reaction to Iraq's seizure of the city of Kirkuk from

Kurdish forces who had occupied it for the past three years.

Last Monday, 18th October, a group of demonstrators took to the speech, carrying Kurdish flags and chanting slogans like "long live Kurdistan, long live freedom." Police closed off a part of Queen's Gate in both directions, and maintained a heavy presence. Fire and ambulance services were also on the scene.

Footage posted on social media shows protesters throwing objects at the building and smashing

windows. Other scenes depict a number of demonstrators trying to break down the door to the embassy. One managed to enter the building and remove an Iraqi flag, which they threw to the ground and stamped on.

Protesters arrived at the embassy, which is located opposite the Blackett and Huxley buildings, shortly after 4pm. They remained in the area for over an hour before dispersing. Scotland Yard confirmed that two people had entered the building, but that nobody was arrested.

The protests and seizure of Kirkuk comes three weeks after Kurds voted for independence. Although Kirkuk lies outside the borders of the autonomous Kurdistan region, it has been home to more than one million Kurds since Iraqi forces abandoned the city in 2014 to fight Islamic State. The area is rich in oil, which it primarily exports to Turkey. Trade between Kurdistan and Turkey is worth more than £7.4 billion a year. Despite this, Turkish president Recep Tayyip



Protesters gather outside the embassy // Felix

Erdoğan has threatened to shut down business relations in an attempt to set aside the result of the referendum. Kurdish leader Masoud Barzani

has urged the international community for peace. He said: "We are committed to a dialogue process with Baghdad. Threats will solve nothing."



# NEWS

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Autumn Election sees record participation, but empty spaces on Wellbeing Representation Network

### NEWS

**Fred Fyles**  
Editor-in-Chief

*While the overall number of candidates have increased, some students have raised concerns over a failure to fill some Wellbeing Rep. Network positions*

Voting in Imperial College Union's Autumn Elections closes today, following a week of the polls being open.

The elections, which are run each year, see the student body electing candidates in a number of positions. The major positions being contested are those in the Academic Representation Network (ARN), the Graduate Students Union (GSU), and the Wellbeing Representation Network (WBRN) – a new Union structure, modelled on the ARN, responsible for facilitating wellbeing support for students. Fintan O'Connor, Deputy President (Welfare) speaking to *Felix*, said he hoped the

WBRN would “support a broader wellbeing strategy”.

Union Council Ordinary Members were also open to nominations, as well as a number of Constituent Union and Clubs, Society, and Project positions.

At the time of writing, 390 candidates had put themselves forward for roles in the Elections, up from 312 candidates in last year's elections – an increase of 25%. This increase can potentially be explained by the larger range and increased number of roles available. This increase in participation has been seen across all faculties: the Faculty of Medicine has fielded more

**“The number of candidates increased 25% from last year”**

than double the number of candidates from last year, from 33 candidates to 72.

The introduction of the WBRN seems to have had an effect on other areas, with a reduction in the number of students



The best part of any election is the results party... // ICU

running in the ARN. This year only 183 students have put themselves forward for undergraduate ARN, compared with 242 in last year's Autumn Elections. It seems likely that this is due to the increase in the number of representative positions in this election cycle. Overall, the number of candidates for ARN and WBRN combined is higher than those who ran for ARN last year.

Some students *Felix* spoke to expressed concerns about the number of candidates running for positions in the WBRN: while 52 positions within the network have

candidates in the election, there are 27 unfilled, including a number of Departmental Wellbeing Representatives. A couple of departments are notable for their lack of participants: Physics, for example, has nobody running for their Departmental Wellbeing Representative, or for their Year One, Two, and Four Wellbeing Representatives.

Of the positions with no candidates, a disproportionate number are those for third and fourth-year students.

Some of the most contested positions were the Union Council Ordinary

Members, with 49 students running for the 16 positions available, up from 16 candidates last year. Undergraduate positions were particularly popular, with 17 students running for the Engineering Ordinary Member (UG) roles, for example.

Other positions, however, had candidates running uncontested. Out of the 155 positions with candidates running, 69 of these had single candidates running unopposed.

Turnout is expected to be higher than last year's, which was 14.71%: at the time of writing, 21.15% of students had voted,

including 32% of undergraduate students.

In a statement to *Felix*, a Union representative said: “We're pleased to see a record number of candidates in the Autumn Elections, including three times as many Council candidates and a 20% increase in people interested in our Representation Networks than this time last year. Postgraduate participation has also improved, with twice as many Business School students running for roles than last year and more candidates for the Graduate Students' Union than in any point in its history. Thanks to our members, we are the most

**“Some expressed concern about the 27 unfilled Wellbeing Rep. Network roles”**

democratic students' union in the UK, an achievement we are proud of.”

Voting closes noon, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October.

## Student taken to hospital following post-sports night altercation

### NEWS

**Fred Fyles**  
Editor-in-Chief

*The incident occurred following a sports night at Reynolds Bar, with the victim needing to be taken to Accident and Emergency*

An Imperial student had to be taken to hospital last week, following an altercation after sports night.

*Felix* have heard reports than one Imperial student punched another in the jaw following sports night at Reynolds Bar, on Charing Cross campus. The event occurred in the small hours of Thursday

morning, the 12<sup>th</sup> October. Witnesses to the incident say that the attack was “unprovoked”.

The victim was taken to Accident and Emergency after contacting the police. After taking statements from witnesses, the police reportedly travelled to the assailant's house, possibly to take them into custody.

In a statement, an Imperial College Union representative told *Felix*:

“Imperial College Union takes the safety and wellbeing of its members extremely seriously.

**“Witnesses say the attack was unprovoked”**

Abusive or violent behaviour of any kind is entirely

unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We would always encourage anyone who has witnessed – or been the victim of – violent or abusive behaviour to report it to the police or a member of Union or College staff. We were very concerned to learn of allegations made against one of our members last week, and we have suspended the individual from any positions of

responsibility they hold pending investigation.”

Imperial College echoed this, telling *Felix* “The College considers any abusive or violent behaviour to be entirely unacceptable, and would always encourage members of the community to report such behaviour”.

It is unclear whether the victim will be pressing charges.

POLITICS

felix@imperial.ac.uk

# Austria’s far-right achieves a landslide win in parliamentary elections

POLITICS

Clemens Jakubec  
*Politics Writer*

Those on the left in Austria are left dissapointed as a right-wing coalition seems likely.

It was a long Sunday for those eagerly awaiting the outcome of Austria’s 26th parliamentary elections. When the results started to come in during early afternoon, the winner was clear: the right wing,

“The success of the right-wing ÖVP, who increased their vote share by 7.6%, comes as no surprise”

above all Sebastian Kurz and his conservative Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP) with

31.5% of the votes – 7.6% more than they received in the last elections. The social democratic party (SPÖ) under Christian Kern came second with 26.9%, just ahead of the right-wing nationalist freedom party (FPÖ), which got 26.0% (an increase of 5.5%). The neoliberal NEOS came fourth with 5.2%, followed by Liste Pilz with 4.4%. The Green Party came last with only 3.8% (down 8.7%).

The success of the ÖVP comes as no surprise. Kurz, who took over the ÖVP from Reinhold Mitterlehner in spring, used recent political instability to his advantage. With his radical revamp of the dusty, old ÖVP he attract-ed voters from both sides of the political spectrum and mobilised non-vot-ers. Two years after he began gaining popularity, 31-year-old Kurz is set to become the world’s youngest government leader. In his first public statement after the election he said he “has been given a great responsibility” and that he “wants to establish a new political style”.

Another winner was the FPÖ under Heinz Christian Strache. It is

the best result for the party since right-wing populist Jörg Haider led the party to second place in parliamentary elections in 1999, and the second best since 1945. With populist slogans like “Safe borders, safe homeland!” and “Austria deserves fairness!” the FPÖ was particularly successful in rural areas and won over the working class, which

“With slogans like ‘Austria deserves fairness!’ the FPÖ won over the working class, who usually vote for the social democrats”

typically votes for the social democrats.

Despite the Green Party’s successful start to the year, which saw former party leader Alexander Van der Bellen elected



ÖVP is a huge step closer to taking control of the Austrian government// Wikimedia

President, subsequent chaos and poor leadership repelled voters (see our coverage in *Felix* 1671). Members of the Green Party also blame their defeat on the loss of Peter Pilz. After being removed from the Green Party’s list of parliamentary candidates, Pilz ran for govern-ment with Liste Pilz, his newly formed party. Pilz told Austrian newspaper Profil: “The Green Party

have a new beginning and a phase of renewal ahead of them. They are entirely responsible for themselves.”

At the time of writing, with 3.9% of votes yet to be counted, the future of the Green Party is uncertain. If they fail to increase their vote share to 4% they will lose their place in parliament. The majority of people working for the Green Party on a federal level would be dismissed and the party would lose €8.2 million of funding. Green Party candidate Updike Lunacek said: “This is the worst crisis of the Green movement in Austria since its founding.”

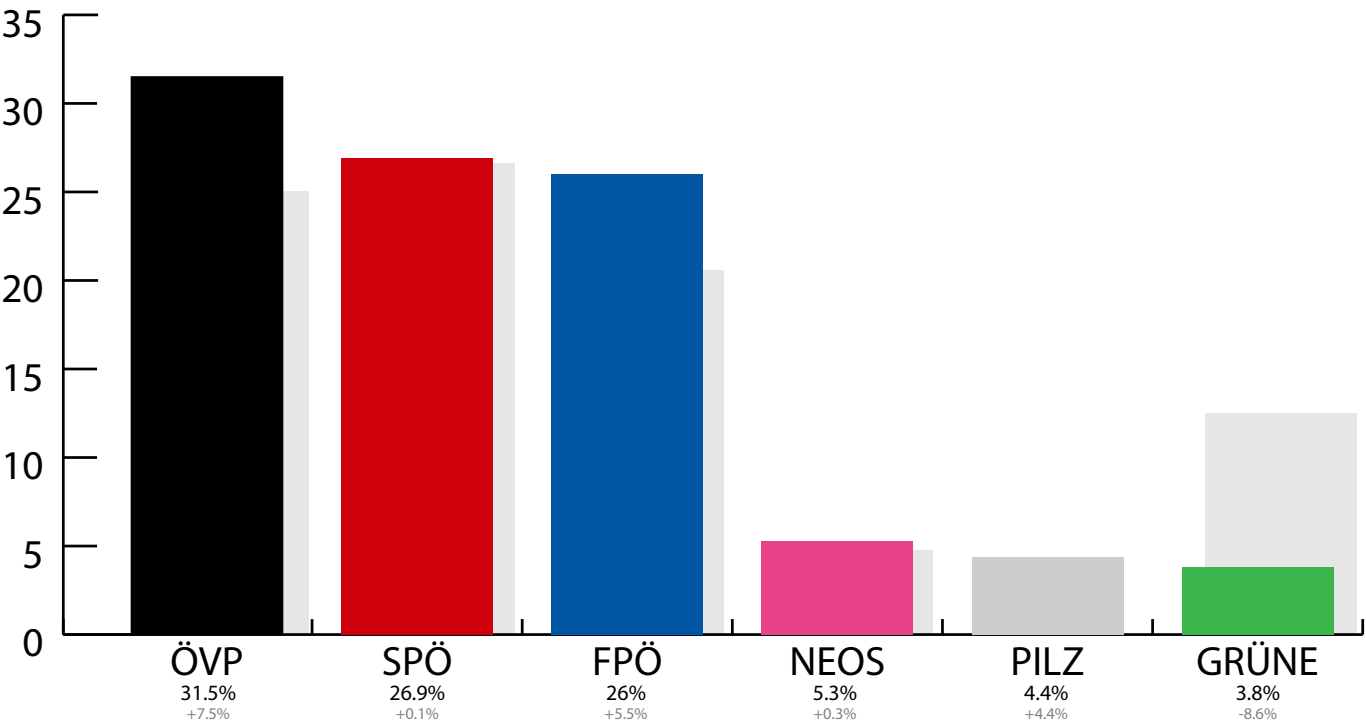
Who will form the next government is still an open question. Strache is hungry for power and wants to see his party in the government. The odds on a far-right coalition between the ÖVP and FPÖ are good. The parties became considerably closer on the campaign trail and frequently agree on policy.

The SPÖ, meanwhile, is split into two wings. One

favours a coalition with the FPÖ, while the other, led by influential mayor of Vienna Michael Häupl, is strictly against talks with the ÖVP. In any case it would be hard to justify another coalition between ÖVP and SPÖ, since this combination has been proven to be dysfunctional

“The future of the Green Party is uncertain: if they fail to reach 4% of the vote share they will lose their seats”

more than once and has been the main reason for early re-elections this year. At the moment all signs point to the nightmare of many people on the left in Austria: a right-wing coalition between ÖVP and FPÖ.



Yeah, Felix makes graphs now. Suck it FT! // Felix



## COMMENT

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



# It's time for students at Imperial to make their voices heard

*The Autumn Elections are just the beginning. Your representatives need you to get involved, and come to them with your views – otherwise nothing will change.*

## COMMENT

**Michael Edwards**  
RCSU President

Today marks the end of this year's Autumn Elections. For many of you this will have been your first Imperial College Union election, and it's been a brilliant one all round: many of our representative positions, in particular within the Royal College of Science Union (RCSU) departments, were heavily contested; our Council elections have been the most contested in 'living memory', attracting 49 candidates for 16 seats on the Union's top democratic decision-making board. Congratulations to those of you who have won positions, and thanks to all who took part in the process this time round.

But this isn't the end of your chance to have a say in what goes on at Imperial. Far from it – this is the beginning.

With the newly-elected representatives the Union can now turn its full attention into representing our views – the views of the students at College – at important College meetings, such as departmental and Faculty level staff-student committees and liaison groups. Rather than switching off after yet another election, this is the time where you should remain critically engaged.

Imperial students are known for being apathetic. In the past we haven't raised our heads when our courses are changed against our best interests, and we've accepted poor pastoral care and academic teaching. We see ourselves as customers of a rigidly



"All together now – 3, 2, 1, we love democracy!" // Imperial College Union

pre-defined educational product that is set in stone and cannot be changed: a stepping stone on the way

**"In the past, we haven't raised our heads when our courses are changed against our best interests, and have accepted poor pastoral care"**

to a cosy job in Canary Wharf or the Square Mile. It's something that has been forced on us by society by the increase in tuition fees and other government policy affecting universities. College, with its increasingly corporate attitude, certainly isn't helping.

We're seeing all parts of our community, staff, and students, calling out poorly-made decisions by opaque divisions in Sherfield. In meetings with senior departmental and Faculty staff, we often find ourselves on the same page with the people we represent your views to. They're just as confounded at the poor response and engagement as we are,

and are willing to make sweeping and positive changes. They just need to know what changes we want them to make.

Your Academic and Wellbeing representatives are the conduit between you and your Departmental staff, the people who you have chosen to be the trusted voices of your cohort. Their views and their complaints will be taken seriously, and anything they raise in an official forum will be considered and dealt with. However, they need to know about the issues and problems that you face in your course so that they can act. So I issue the following call to action.

We need a culture

change here at Imperial. We all need to become more active participants in our own learning, celebrating the best in educational practice and calling out poor practice that is in need of improve-

**"We need to remember that democracy isn't just voting now and then, and delegating all responsibility"**

ment. In the aftermath of this election season, make sure to find out who your Year and Department Representative are. Try and identify them, and introduce yourself to them. Whenever you have an issue with coursework or a lecture course, bring it up with them – it's likely that other people will have the same issue, and your rep is just waiting for enough evidence to act. Never assume that someone else will complain for you – always stand up and point out where something feels like it could be made better. It's not just on us though: academic staff need to see us as partners in our learning and the wider 'Imperial experience' rather than adversaries or whiny children. We know how best we learn, and by banding together and voicing what we think, we can effect change for the better.

We need to remember that democracy isn't just voting every now and then for our representatives and delegating all responsibility to them. Democracy is being able to continue having your own voice heard after you've left the polling booth. My goal for this year is to expand and broaden democracy within the Faculty of Natural Sciences by upholding this principle and ensuring you can continuously and effectively have your voice heard through your representatives, and I call upon the other Constituent Unions – and you, the student body – to join us in our endeavour to truly make Imperial College Union the most democratic Student's Union in the UK.



SCIENCE

science.felix@imperial.ac.uk

# Can graphic design save your life?

The question raised by Wellcome Collection’s latest exhibition probably isn’t one that is asked often enough.

SCIENCE

Meesha Patel  
Science Writer

Henry Bennie  
Science Editor

Wellcome Collection is one of the best museums in London: they hold large blockbuster exhibitions that dip into a small section of Henry Wellcome’s collection, easily one of the largest private collections that has ever existed.

Wellcome was interested in human health and medicine with his ultimate aim: to create a museum than spanned all of human civilization. Over his life he acquired a collection so large that later generations of staff took to describing its contents by the tonne. After his death in 1936 his collection was still

stored in vast warehouses, unseen and incomplete. It would take the Wellcome Trust until 2007 to open the museum to the public and display a fraction of Henry’s objects.

With an infinity of objects, the Collection’s exhibitions are usually incredibly dense, with normal visits lasting three or more hours. To regulars, the first thing you will notice is the sparseness of the space for *Can Graphic Design Save Your Life?*

The experience is swift and quick with visits peaking at around an hour, and sections centred around topics like persuasion, education, hospitalisation and contagion. Objects are given vast spaces, and this may be in part because almost all are printed: advertising posters, photos, pharmacy bags, stamps, a 17th Century lift-the-flap book.

Highlights include a

particularly fascinating display on Saatchi & Saatchi’s advertising campaign for Silk Cut cigarettes and an image of artist Stephen Doe painting symptoms of Ebola on a wall, to inform citizens during the height of the 2014 outbreak in Liberia.

“The exhibition can feel a bit like Wellcome-lite”

It would be interesting to ask the curators if they set out to persuade with their exhibit, or whether they assumed, like I did, that the answer to their question was yes. Normally, the Collection’s exhibitions really challenge your perceptions and present you with an



Johann Remmelin printed illustrations of the human body which feature hinged flaps that peel back to reveal layers of anatomy // Wellcome Collection

experience that allows for deeper exploration of what it means to be human. *Can Graphic Design Save Your Life?* feels like Wellcome-lite. It has good

content but doesn’t pack that signature emotive punch. But the key to great design is not noticing how well it works, have I been duped? I think not.

*Can Graphic Design Save Your Life? is on at Wellcome Collection until 14th January 2018.*

# New Antibiotic Resistance Tracking Project Announced

Globally renowned charity the Wellcome Trust have announced £2.4 million to track the spread of superbugs across the world.

SCIENCE

Henry Bennie  
Science Editor

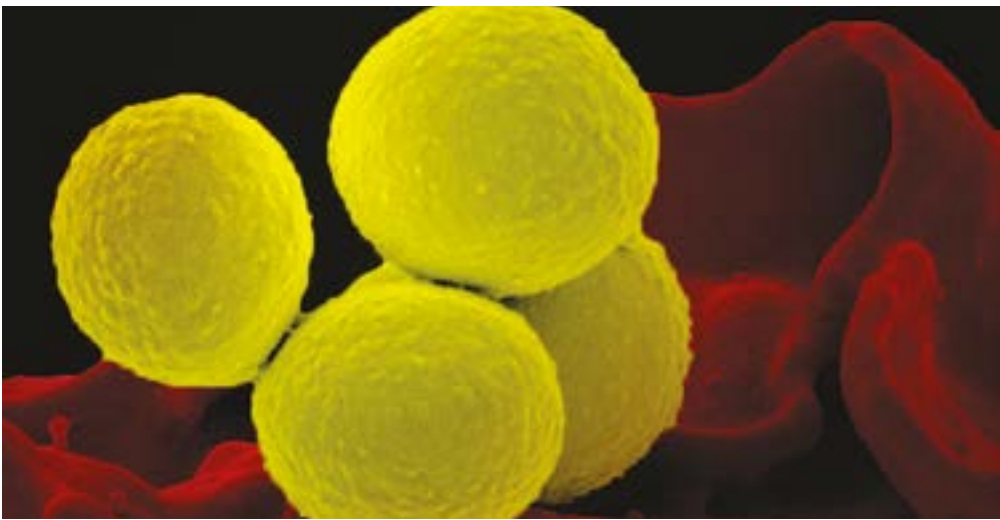
The Global Burden of Disease Antimicrobial Resistance project was announced at Wellcome’s Call to Action conference in Berlin last week. The conference gathered government ministers, scientists, and industry and civil society leaders together to discuss how to tackle this global health threat.

The rapid spread of superbugs poses a great risk to human health, in-

creasing length of hospital stays and mortality rates. Left unchecked, eventually routine surgical procedures such as

“Unchecked, eventually routine surgeries could prove life-threatening”

caesareans could prove life-threatening. Currently 700,000 people die each year from drug resistant



Superbugs may look pretty, but they’ll mess you up // Wikimedia

infections; however, predicted numbers show that this may rise to 10 million people a year by 2050. Dr Jeremy Farrar,

Director of the Wellcome Trust said: “We can stop the superbugs which could undermine the whole of modern medicine. But the

impact is now and the time to act is now.”

This project is the first of its kind to map the disease and deaths caused by drug

resistant infections to support further research. Scientists from the University of Oxford’s Big Data Institute, the Centre for Tropical Medicine, and The Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation, University of Washington, will collaborate on this research with additional funding provided by the UK government and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Additionally, Wellcome launched a new expert group – the Surveillance and Epidemiology of Drug Resistant Infections Consortium (SEDRIC) to enable better global data sharing strategies on drug resistant infections.



## ARTS

arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk

# A parable of Brexit, greed, and the making of modern Britain at the National Theatre

*Lyndsey Turner drags the legend of St. George and the Dragon into the modern era, having it take on a cuttngly-relevant message about the importance of solidarity.*

## ARTS

## ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON



**Where?** National Theatre

**When?** Until 2<sup>nd</sup> December

**How Much?** From £15

**Waleed El-Geresy**

*Arts Writer*

There is more death in that kind of life and more life in that kind of death. That is the message of Saint George in reference to a life lived under the rule of the despotic dragon. On the face of things these two characters should be at the heart of an epic tale of heroism versus evil, but Rory Mullarkey's play is not simply a classic heroic legend – it is a commentary on the people of England. The day of the hero is gone and we must all band together to overcome the new dragons of capitalist greed, bureaucracy, and indifference: a powerful and insightful message, although its delivery in this production had a subtlety more akin to that of George's great three-headed nemesis than the damsel in distress.

This tale at first takes on a very literal form. The dragon himself is a tyrannical ruler who can transform into the form of the three-headed, fire-breathing beast. However, we soon see the village evolve into a post-industrial revolution town and from a town it grows into a modern city akin to any in Britain today. So too grows the

dragon, progressively taking on a new, less tangible form in each of the three ages. Although the setting is described as an island 'much like our own', it is like our island in almost every way. The modern city is complete with pub brawls, hen parties, and microwave meals – a blatant indication that this is a message targeted towards the real Britain of the present day.

The message is clear: the burden of improving the world can no longer fall on just one person, and the solution is certainly not to be found in an outdated, historical figure. The elephant in the room – or should I say dragon – is Brexit. A proponent of change, the play is a damning indictment of the belief that our solutions lie

**"The play is a damning indictment of the belief that our solutions lie in going back to a simpler time"**

in going back to a simpler time, but it is also critical of those who fervently oppose this view – we can sometimes become so utterly caught up in what we think is right that it causes us to destroy the things we were trying to defend in the first place. Solidarity and a sense of community is the one constant that can pull us through.

Despite the message

being very relevant, the production itself was almost three hours in length, and combined with the fact that the storyline is designed to repeat itself three times, at times it made me feel as though we needed a dragon to set fire to the stage to spice the plot up a bit.

Lyndsey Turner's production is speckled with humour throughout, keeping the mood at the right level. This is helped by the cast, notably Julian Bleach who plays the dragon, whose character and style reminded me of Count Olaf in the film adaptation of *A Series of Unfortunate Events*. Toeing the line between evil and hilarity, his persona was very satisfyingly reptilian. Despite the light-hearted mood, it is remarkable how effectively Luke Brady manages to change the atmosphere to one of sadness with his convincing portrayal of the Miller's Son – the pitiable victim of the dragon's fury. John Heffernan as Saint George paints a portrait of a confident character throughout, who is so set in his ways that he cannot understand why modern society can't be the way it used to be. His overly-patient sweetheart Elsa, played by Amaka Okafor, is strongest when torn away from the conventional role of the heroine, when in conflict with Henry (Richard Goulding) or her father Charles (Gawn Grainger). The young talent Ruell Guzman who plays 'boy' stands out for his assured performance.

The scenery and technical aspects of the performance were brilliant. This was especially true for all manner of things

relating to fire. Things were constantly spontaneously igniting, crackling or exploding all over the stage to the extent that I began to question whether there was indeed an actual dragon crouched behind the scenes. Despite the technical brilliance – and in part because of it – I felt slightly short changed watching the battle between George and the dragon. What we had all been expectantly awaiting turned out to be more of a radio commentary by the villagers of a supposedly

nail-biting fight in the invisible sky above us. Admittedly recreating a battle involving a three headed dragon may have been fairly technically challenging, but given the excellency of the other scenery I wouldn't put it past the crew to have pulled it off. The lack of a convincing battle scene was partially compensated for by the pyrotechnically heavy display of three dragon heads exploding as they crashed into the ground.

It would have been

better if the message hadn't been so obvious in its structured three-part delivery, but I thought that it was unique and very relevant. The characters are almost all referred to by job title rather than name, perhaps for a reason: in our everyday lives we ourselves see here the butcher, there the driver, and the town crier. Mullarkey is trying to tell us that these people do not represent us, they are us – each and every one of us must be prepared to be heroic in our own way.



Delivering the Bud Light petition to the Union // Johan Persson



## ARTS

arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Justine Mitchell and Sam Troughton in the intimate *Beginning* // Johan Persson

# Looking for love in the lonely city

*Exquisitely painful, wonderfully joyous: Beginning is an intimate portrayal of loneliness in the age of Tinder*

## ARTS

## BEGINNING



**Where?** National Theatre

**When?** Until 14<sup>TH</sup> November

**How Much?** From £15

**Indira Mallik**

*Arts Editor*

Olivia Laing in her exceptional book, *The Lonely City*, remarks, “So much of the pain of loneliness is about concealment. But... what’s so shameful about wanting?”. Loneliness, and the barriers we set up even as we try to forge new connections are at the centre of David Eldridge’s new play. In *Beginning*, we meet Laura and Danny at the end of a housewarming party. She

is a 38-year-old managing director who, despite professional success, is looking for a catalyst to settle down, and he is friend of a friend who stays behind after everyone has left despite his impulses to run. Both are hiding their fear of being alone, tipsy, and yearning; they dance around each other (sometimes literally), wanting very much to be seen, and at the same time, terrified of being exposed.

The beats of Eldridge’s narrative feel Tennessee Williams-esque: *A Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* for the Tinder-age. Only here, stifling ‘50s Mississippi repression has been replaced by an equally stifling English one in the present day. Laura, Maggie-like, is driven wild by a hunger to fill a life she considers a ‘shell’. Danny, who at 42 hasn’t seen his daughter in four years, is back living with his Mum after the break up of a marriage and seems a latter-day Brick Politt – struggling with

the idea he has let his life slip through his fingers. Just as Williams cut to the bone of mid-century America, Eldridge has a knack of finding just the right words: “I just can’t face another Sunday alone,” says Laura at one point in a desperate plea to stop Danny calling a

**“Beginning cloaks its vulnerable core in an armour of humour”**

cab. We get the sense that it really will be the final straw: Laura, for all her easy confidence is a single trigger from breaking point. In a single phrase Eldridge’s writing synthesises the particular brand of loneliness that so many are familiar with in the

age of social media – true connections feel out of reach even as they seem to be only a click away.

Much like the characters, the play cloaks its tender, vulnerable core in an armour of humour. *Beginning* is frequently painfully funny, ‘painful’ being the operative word. Several times during the play I wonder: “is it actually possible to die of secondhand embarrassment?”. As Laura and Danny go to ever increasing lengths to avoid confronting their desire for each other, sitting in the audience feels like having an out-of-body experience at every awkward date you’ve wanted to go well. It is difficult to watch and even more difficult to tear your eyes away.

The story unfolds over an hour and forty minutes in real time – a lot is revealed. Laura and Danny go from strangers who can’t take their eyes off each other to telling each other things they’ve

never told anyone else. Objectively, the two cover more emotional ground than someone might cover in years of therapy, yet for me none of it seemed too much. Polly Findlay’s direction is masterful, allowing the audience, and the characters, room to breathe in between the revelations.

Justine Mitchell and Sam Troughton deliver wonderfully nuanced performances, doing justice to Eldridge’s carefully crafted work. As the fragile thread of desire crystallises into a more lasting understanding between the couple, Troughton in particular does a wonderful job of peeling back the layers on Danny, who – once he manages to get his foot out of his mouth – transforms from a guy with one too many laddish quips to a kind, wounded man. Likewise, Mitchell is magnetic to watch as Laura, who at first seems to have her life figured out, but from whom we

see a different side when her confident facade begins to crumble as the play goes on. Both, we see, are broken in a way the other could fix. As the night wears on, we can’t help but want to push them together, urge them to sort things out, and wonder where will it end: a one night stand or parenthood and a life together?

What is remarkable about the play is how real it all seems. As Laura and Danny live out the night on Fly Davis’ richly detailed set, we could be peeking through the windows into the ungainly, fumbling beginnings of a real relationship. It takes a rare talent to craft and bring to life characters with such vividness, especially ones that linger in the mind like these ones do. After a long absence, this is a welcome return to the forefront of British theatre for David Eldridge. *Beginning* is magnificent – don’t miss it.



# MUSIC

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## J. Cole's *4 Your Eyez Only* tour: an accomplished performance from a phenomenal artist

### MUSIC

**Andy Djaba**  
Music Editor

J. Cole's *4 Your Eyez Only* tour touched down in London early this week, with the Dreamville front man selling out two nights at the O2 Arena. Cole was supported by his labelmates Ari Lennox, EARTHGANG (whose recent *Rags-EP* is worth a listen and whose *Robots* EP drops on Friday), and J.I.D. (who released his criminally-underrated debut album, *The Never Story*, earlier this year). After the performances of tracks like Ari's 'Backseat', Spillage Village's 'Can't Call It', and J.I.D.'s 'Never' from the supporting acts had sufficiently gassed the crowd, the time had come for the man himself to take the stage. The curtain dropped in dramatic fashion to reveal a striking backdrop of prison bars as J. Cole, donning an orange

prison jumpsuit, sauntered on stage. Cole surveyed the crowd before delivering passionate performances of 'For Whom the Bell Tolls' and 'Immortal'. Cole had the crowd hanging on his every word and you could almost hear the pain and emotion behind his voice in every bar, especially on deep album cuts like 'Ville Mentality'.

**"As suggested by the stage setup, and J. Cole's attire, the show reflected themes of police brutality"**

After Ari Lennox joined him on stage to provide the vocals for 'Change', Cole revisited some of his older material and had



J. Cole, laying down some truths about race relations in the USA today // Andy Djaba

the whole arena rocking for fan favourites like 'Nobody's Perfect', 'Can't Get Enough', and 'Power Trip'.

As suggested by the stage setup and J. Cole's attire, the show reflected the album's underlying themes of police brutality and America's criminal

justice system. During his performance of 'Neighbors', Cole discussed these issues at length, addressing the broader topic of race relations in America whilst the big screen showed CCTV footage of a SWAT team raiding his North Carolina studio following

complaints from his white neighbours. This was a more poignant moment but Cole raised the energy once again, ending his set with 'A Tale of 2 Citiez', 'G.O.M.D.', and 'No Role Modelz' amongst other hits from *2014 Forest Hills Drive*. For an artist that is seemingly becoming

increasingly reclusive, this show served as a reminder of why J. Cole has such a cult following. His music connects with the masses, and everyone in attendance was captivated from start to finish by his presence. Also, did you know he went platinum with no features?

## Slowdive prove to be worth the wait

### MUSIC

**Hannah Cudmore**  
Music Writer

It feels as fun, and as relevant playing together now as it did when we first started" said Slowdive's Neil Halstead about their much-anticipated single 'Star Roving' upon its release in January. This was the band's first new material in 22 years. Slowdive, a shoegaze band from Reading known for their dream-like sound and often poignantly sad lyrics, were dropped by their record label in 1995

after refusing to make a pop album. With the

**"The music felt reinvigorated – fans were treated to a concert they never imagined they'd see"**

music scene dominated by Britpop, Slowdive found themselves a source

of ridicule in the press, and quietly faded into obscurity.

But now, after experiencing a huge surge in popularity during their lengthy hiatus, they are back. With a new, self-titled record out earlier this year, they've gone on tour to crowds far bigger than they ever saw in the nineties. Opening their concert at Camden's famed Roundhouse with 'Slomo', the first song of the new album, it was immediately apparent that this was no half-baked reunion tour. This was not to be a night of rehashing old favourites for the super-fans; this was fresh,

new, and showed their huge progression as a band.

Other new songs such as 'Sugar for the Pill' and 'No Longer Making Time' were equally successful, flaunting their signature overwhelming-yet-ambient sounds arranged in refreshingly new ways. The kaleidoscopic light show behind the band was incredible, so absorbing that you often felt like the only one in the room.

Old tracks retained their magic. The whole crowd, who had been generally still and quiet up to this point in classic shoegaze fashion (a genre that Slowdive helped pioneer),

came alive in the chorus of 'When the Sun Hits'. Everyone sang in unison and the emotion in the room was palpable. This

**"Acoustic dirge 'Dagger' left many visibly moved to tears"**

was truer still of acoustic dirge 'Dagger', which left many visibly moved to tears. But perhaps most impressive was 'Golden Hair', a Syd Barrett cover

whose lyrics are based on a poem by James Joyce. The music was stripped bare as Rachel Goswell's ethereal voice held the entire crowd, before transforming into the epic frenzied instrumental for which Slowdive are known best.

In short, Slowdive have done exactly what they hoped to do. The music felt reinvigorated, and many fans were treated to a concert they never imagined they'd see. They have achieved what so many artists fail to do upon reunion – they weren't just as good as they were before, they were even better.



# MUSIC

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Chasing intercontinental friendships

### MUSIC

#### LOTTA SEA LICE



**Artist:** Courtney Barnett and Kurt Vile. **Label:** Matador/Marathon Artists/Milk!. **Top Tracks:** Let It Go; On Script. **For Fans Of:** The War on Drugs; Father John Misty. 45 minutes

**Adrian LaMoury**  
Music Editor

Historically, collaborative albums have generally been reserved for ageing legends. Lou Reed & Metallica. Jay Z & Kanye. Eno & Byrne. Eno & Fripp. Eno & Cale. But if you haven't got a string of successful glam albums and the invention of ambient music under your belt, these can be notoriously tricky. This, however

seems like such an obvious pairing that surely it couldn't go wrong: two laidback young rockers that have captured a generation with kooky attitudes and finessed guitar work, uniting to break new ground.

At first, it certainly feels more Kurt than Courtney. There's disappointingly little of the energy and rawness of Barnett's 2015's *Sometimes I Sit and Think, and Sometimes I Just Sit*. Feedback-driven, romping solos are swapped for an altogether slower, darker, fleshier sound. But it's not a full on Vile-esque reverie either; the pair hit a bizarre middle ground that's somehow a bit... Oasis. This is particularly notable on reworked old Barnett track 'Outta the Woodwork' and Jen Cloher (Barnett's wife) cover 'Fear is Like a Forest'.

The same is true lyrically. Both Barnett's

flooring wit and Vile's introspective musings are blunted and blended, and the result is neither one thing nor the other. Major themes include writer's block, touring agonies, and differing tastes in breakfast. Top stuff.

But this is what actually makes the album so appealing. The whole LP is a dialogue, a pally chatter, between two artists – actually, scrap that – two friends. Thoughts and feelings are thrown back and forth in the form of soothing riffs and monotone call and response. It's honest and intimate, cosy and wholesome. And as flies on the wall, we're invited to join the conversation. Though it may not be quite as large as the sum of their parts, both are hugely comfortable with what they're doing. They've very little to prove and they're having fun not proving it.



Jamming out over continental breakfasts // Matador



Guy Bourdin eat your heart out // Loma Vista

## Chameleon Queen out in the open

### MUSIC

#### MASSEDUCTION



**Artist:** St. Vincent. **Label:** Loma Vista. **Top Tracks:** Masseduction; Los Ageless; Happy Birthday, Johnny. **For Fans Of:** David Byrne; Kate Bush; Bon Iver. 41 minutes

**Adrian LaMoury**  
Music Editor

Writing a follow up to 2014's gargantuan, Grammy-winning, self-titled album was never going to be an easy task for Annie Clark, so perhaps that's why it took so long to do. Mind you, when you're being hailed as the modern day Ziggy Stardust, you want to make sure you get things right. St. Vincent's first major release in 3 years is an infallibly solid,

instantly catchy, art-pop classic – but it feels maybe a bit too familiar.

There's a distinctly poppy glaze on the first side, Clark's much loved screeching guitars swapped ever increasingly often in favour of crisp synths and punchy drum machines. It's fun and feel-good. Or at least at first glance. Lyrically, themes are dark and desolate; addiction, depression, and loss. Second track and pre-album single 'Pills', for example, is a satanic advertising jingle for a drug-dependent lifestyle, yet could be mistaken for an electrified nursery rhyme.

Five tracks in, however, things take a turn and emotions are laid bare. A brooding, sinister sound introduces 'Los Ageless', before breaking down into anguished cries of "How could anybody have you and lose you / and not lose their minds too?", and then, after a spiralling

instrumental, a chilling spoken word outro ("I try to write you a love song, but it comes out a lament") repeated over and over as a desperate mantra.

Standout track 'Happy Birthday, Johnny' comes in the form of a letter to an estranged friend or lover, who we can only assume to be the same as the previous album's 'Prince Johnny'. With sparse backing, Clark unsuccessfully tries to reminisce, instead lingering over his battles with substances, homelessness, and crime. And though she blames herself, she feels no longer able to help him.

The LP covers all bases, with no easily identifiable low points. It's rough and gnarly, it's sexy and assertive, it's coy and tender, it's... exactly what we'd expect from St. Vincent, but it's nothing especially new. She's certainly found her groove, but perhaps she's a bit too comfortable in it.

# Your Union events

Friday 13 October



**CSP**  
WEDNESDAY

**ACC**  
BAR NIGHT

**WEDNESDAY 25 OCTOBER**  
**FIVESIXEIGHT AND METRIC**  
**19:00 – 02:00**

£10 online  
£11 at the door (including drinks)  
£3 at the door (without drinks)

[imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on](https://imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on)





**h**

**PGI**  
FRIDAY

EVERY FRIDAY IN  
THE H-BAR  
16:00 - 23:00  
FREE ENTRY

TAKE A WELL-DESERVED BREAK FROM THE LAB-WORK AND RESEARCH TO SPEND THE NIGHT RELAXING WITH YOUR MATES AT THE H-BAR. START THE WEEKEND WITH TWO LUSCIOUS COCKTAILS FROM OUR BESPOKE COCKTAIL BAR AND SIT BACK ENJOY THE LAID BACK VIBE!

TWO SELECTED COCKTAILS FOR £7.00  
TWO BOUTIQUE BEERS FOR £6.00  
SIX SELECTED SHOTS FOR £13.00

[imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on](https://imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on)





**REYNOLDS**  
BAR

**QUIZ NIGHT**

Come and put your knowledge to the test and try our weekly quiz

Every Tuesday from 19:00

[imperialcollegeunion.org/food-drink](https://imperialcollegeunion.org/food-drink)



## Coming up in our bars



### Super Quiz

Every Tuesday  
20:00-22:00

### Cocktail Night

Every Tuesday  
18:00-23:00

### CSP Wednesday (ACC)

Wednesday 25 October  
19:00-02:00

### iPOP

This Friday  
20:00-02:00

**Find us on Facebook!**  
[fb.com/beitbars](https://fb.com/beitbars)



### Pub Quiz

Every Thursday  
19:30-23:00

### PGI Friday

Every Friday  
19:00-00:00

**Find us on Facebook!**  
[fb.com/hbarpub](https://fb.com/hbarpub)



### Quiz Night

Every Monday  
18:00-23:00

### Board Games & Film Night

Every Tuesday  
18:00-23:00

### Sports Night

Every Wednesday  
18:00 onwards

### Pizza Night

Every Thursday  
18:00-2:00

**Find us on Facebook!**  
[fb.com/reynoldsbarcx](https://fb.com/reynoldsbarcx)

Get exclusive offers, discounts and more on our bars' Facebook Pages.

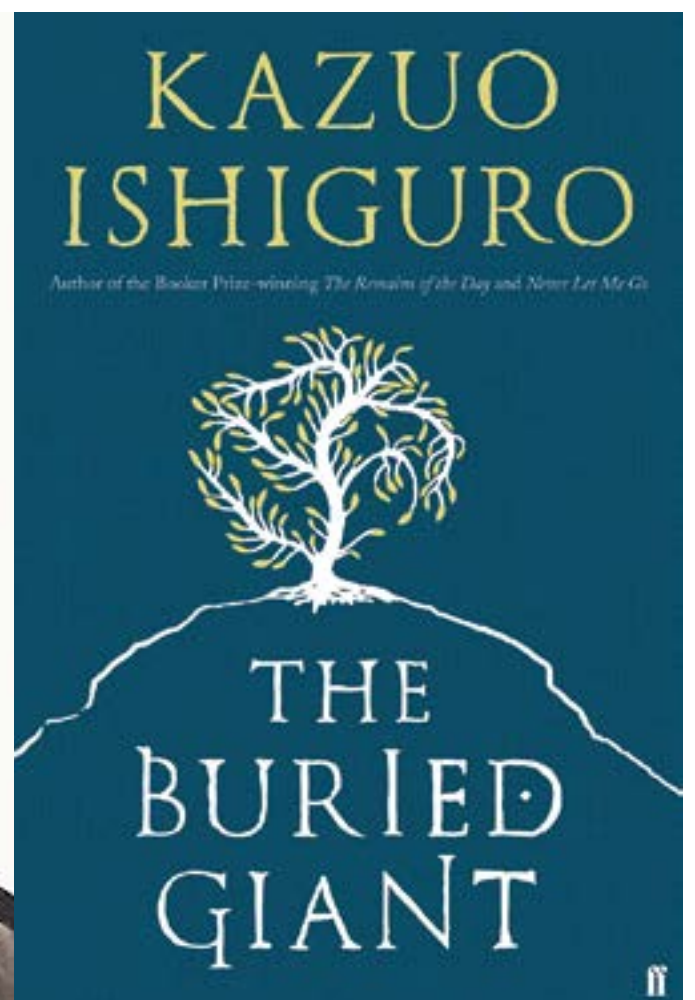
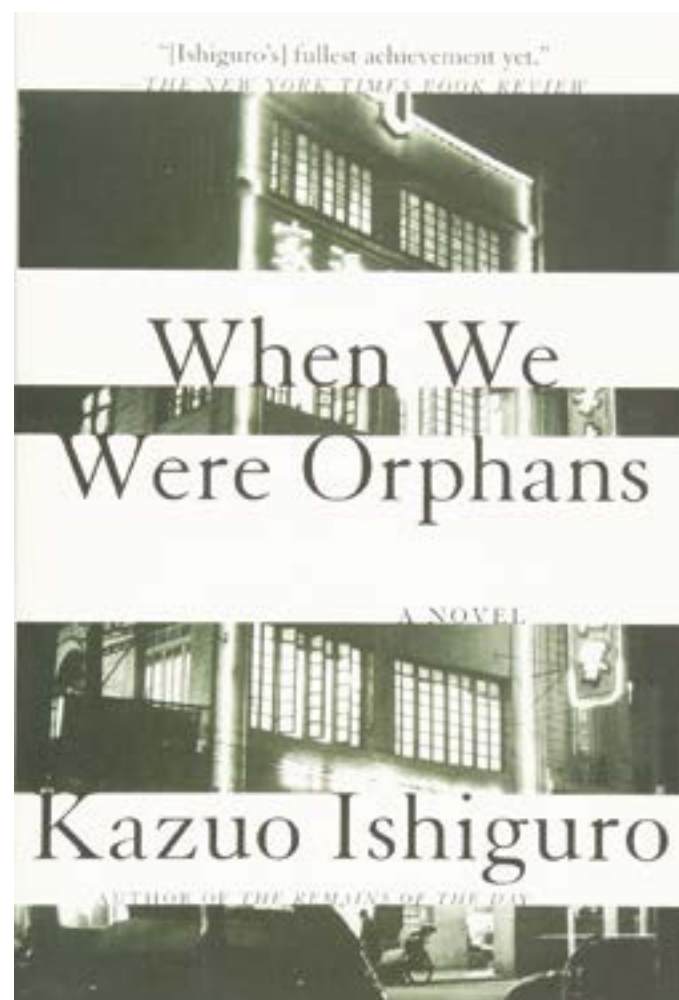
[imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on](https://imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on)





## BOOKS

books.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Kazuo Ishiguro's novels reveal themselves with a fluid simplicity, and a quiet grace // Vintage/Nobel Media/Faber and Faber

## On Kazuo Ishiguro

*Action, romance, mystery: The makings of a Nobel prize.*

### BOOKS

**Gracie Holt**  
Books Writer

There was a time when, as an adult, I did not read books. Then one evening, when I lay awake overthinking and analysing, I realised what this meant. If I continued at my current rate of reading 0.75 books a year on holiday, then I would likely die not having read 100 books. I was then suddenly aware of the pressure of acquainting myself with the literary world as soon as possible, and how daunting that prospect was.

In order to rectify the situation, I went to a local charity shop and bought the first book that caught my fancy. A fan of Benedict Cumberbatch and all things ‘detective-ey’, I decided on *When We*

*Were Orphans*, by Kazuo Ishiguro. Reading this story recovered my lost love of reading and ignited a new passion for writing. Published in 2000, it remained my favourite book even ten years later. It is well-deserved, and

**“Reading  
When We  
Were Orphans  
recovered my  
lost love of  
reading, and  
ignited a new  
passion for  
writing”**

of no surprise to me, that Ishiguro was this month awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Ishiguro presented me

with Christopher, an odd but loveable man that I still miss now. Christopher’s journey begins as a renowned London detective, modelled on the likes of Sherlock (but with social acceptance and without the illicit drug use, so not that much like Sherlock) who transforms into a brave crusader for justice, with the story’s climax happening on the front lines in war-torn Shanghai where he experiences death and pain to find the truth, while in the process risking his happily-ever-after. He travels in search of an answer to the mysterious and unexplained disappearance of his parents as a boy – the ultimate case of his career and the question his life had been building up to answer. The tension is high and the action is thrilling.

The will-they-won’t-they between Christopher and his lady-friend Sarah is tantalising. If you are

starting to get worried that Ishiguro is an action writer and not for you, I can assure you that he can write romance. Perhaps not in the sexually graphic way of Murakami, but he creates a depth in his characters’ relationships that is relatable and real. Ishiguro uses the ever-unreliable memory to reveal the events and truths behind a friendship or a romance.

As with relationships, memories greatly affect our lives. Memories are fascinating things, they remain with us whether we want it or not, and what we decide to remember and what we don’t at times feels out of our control. For example, I can remember the name of my mum’s school friend even though we have never met. However I cannot, under any circumstances, remember the password to my work email. It is not just Christopher’s story that is intensified by the

frustrations of a biased memory. In Ishiguro’s recent and, in my opinion, most beautiful book, *The Buried Giant*, he explores again the nature of how influential yet fragile our memories are, and the anxiety that comes with

**“Kazuo  
Ishiguro more  
than deserves  
his Nobel Prize  
in literature”**

losing them. It’s hard to tell whether emotions cloud memories, or the other way round. Dementia, a word I imagine many readers thought of as they read this historical Roman-inspired adventure, is in this book not the image of a diseased memory but transformed into a magical dragon, a demon to be

defeated, with heroes, knights, King Arthur: undoubtedly all the well-loved elements of fantasy.

Memory is not the only thing to change with time, and as his characters grow, so do their relationships. *The Buried Giant* presents an aged kind of love, a marriage that has been battered and bruised, until commitment is stronger than any flame which may have once been lit. In much of Ishiguro’s work, I see the tenderness of family and companionship.

If it isn’t clear, I think Ishiguro more than deserves his Nobel Prize, and if you haven’t read anything by him, then please do. Ishiguro’s characters are so real that we can see pieces of ourselves in them. He tells a story with such fluid simplicity, with only just enough detail but all of it crucial. His books are, if one thing, entertaining. He makes it look easy.



## BOOKS

books.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## An evening discussion with the Booker Prize nominees

*The six shortlisted authors sat down the night before the winner was revealed to read from their novels, answer questions from the audience, and give their thoughts on the future of literature.*

## BOOKS

**Jingjie Cheng**  
Books Editor

It was the night before the announcement of the 2017 Man Booker Prize winner, and it was the first time the shortlisted writers had all come together in the same space. In the Royal Festival Hall, where all six shortlisted writers sat next to each other on stage, the anticipation was palpable amid the celebratory atmosphere. There was a collective feeling of awe among the audience, of passion and sincerity emanating from stage, and a general sense of wonder at the power of words.

Three had flown in from America, one was born in Lahore. Two were here

to read from their debut novels. Two were from the UK – one English, one Scottish. One was doing her PhD and worked part-time in an independent

**“All of the shortlisted books harboured themes of displacement and loss, in time, space, and memory”**

bookshop. One was a well-known short story writer with his first novel.

All the books harboured themes of displacement and loss, whether in time, space, or memory. For the first time, the writers all met each other and stood in the dressing room, discussing their works before going on stage. Any could win the Man Booker this year.

Of course, we now know that George Saunders won the Man Booker 2017 with his first novel *Lincoln in the Bardo*, inspired by the story that Abraham Lincoln had gone to the grave of his favourite son in grief after he died, to somehow interact with his body. Drawing from the idea of the ‘bardo’ in Tibetan Buddhism as the intermediary space between life and death, Saunders’ story is narrated by a chorus of 166 ghosts that Lincoln and his son

encounter while there. Its interesting structure and narration was a constant point of discussion regarding the book, and was the result of Saunders’ attempt to give a more omniscient relaying of the story, rather than have either protagonist or the gravedigger narrate the story.

Indeed, throughout the readings and discussion of the evening the idea of ‘genre’ was apparent. One audience member asked during the Q&A: have we exhausted all genres – science fiction, fantasy, historical? If you (the authors) were to create an entirely new genre, what would it be? Fiona Mozley, author of *Elmet*, jumped in to reply. Of all the shortlisted works, she said, it seems that hers was the “least experimental of form”; however, she saw it as a study in genre. It is a Western with something else, she said – her novel has an archetypal masculine character, but in this case, undercut by his teenage daughter. Characters in her book have “bodies and behaviours

that are not quite real”, and hence carry elements of fantasy.

Saunders, in reply to the same question, noted that if one starts out with a mission to create something new, it was not going to happen. Original forms and genres come about when you have something to say, but are frustrated with the limitations of existing forms, he said. The unique form of *Lincoln in the Bardo* certainly seems to be an answer to the shortcomings of more conventional

**“Fiona Mozley, the author of *Elmet*, called her book a Western with something else”**

forms.

This year’s shortlist is an interesting mix – the novels on the list seem to be pushing the boundaries of fiction, being experimental with form, structure, and themes. Alison Flood of *The Guardian* analysed all the past winners of the Booker prize and concluded that the average winner was a privately-educated white English man in his late 40s who has written a book of less than 400 pages with a male protagonist, usually his seventh. This year’s shortlist consists of three women, two of whom are debut novelists (one American), a man of Pakistani origin, a book that is a whopping 880 pages (hardcover), and another American short-story-writer-turned-novelist. Both *4321* and *Lincoln in the Bardo* deal with historical events and real characters from history, while

*Exit West* and *Autumn* deal with very current issues of migration and belonging. In *History of Wolves* and *Elmet*, landscape and setting become important elements and are intricately related to characters and theme.

The authors took turns to read an extract from their book, and then chatted with the host about it, followed by a Q&A session open to the floor. When asked if his book was meant for the theatres, Saunders replied, “definitely”, and that they had already sold the movie rights. With the 166 different voices, the story certainly lends itself well to a dramatic interpretation. In fact, an audiobook is already out, with 166 unique individuals voicing the ghosts, including the likes of Ben Stiller and Julianne Moore, Saunders himself, and – when he ran out of people to ask – he even roped in his family members to voice the characters.

On the other hand, when asked about the possibility of a movie from *4321*, Auster laughed and said that his novel was “movie-proof”. *4321* follows four alternate lives of the same character, and the host had asked him which of the four lives would be a focus should a movie be made out of it. All four are equally important, Auster replied, and hence it would be impossible to make it into a film of less than three hours. Despite that, he added, it was “a very stripped-down book” – much to the audience’s amusement.

Emily Fridlund, like Saunders, started off as a short story writer and her *History of Wolves* started out as a short story. The difference between a short story and a novel, she said, was that one “had to stay interested in the character in a novel”. Somehow, the power of the voice



The shortlisted authors of the Man Booker Prize 2017: (from left) Fiona Mozley, Paul Auster, Emily Fridlund, Mohsin Hamid, George Saunders, Ali Smith. // Nils Jorgensen/Rex/Shutterstock



# BOOKS

books.felix@imperial.ac.uk

in *History of Wolves* intrigued her, and was so compelling that she could see herself expanding it into a full-length novel. Fridlund had researched ice, fishing, and almost every detail of the Minnesotan landscape that plays into her character's voice.

Similarly, the family in Fiona Mozley's *Elmet* is intimately connected with the Yorkshire landscape they have made their home, and her novel is a response to her generation's "frustrated relationship with land". A PhD student who works part-time in an independent bookshop, Mozley felt that her gener-

ation can "never be secure in our homes", because

**"Ali Smith's *Autumn* was an experiment in writing about issues so raw that things are still going on as the book reaches the bookshelf"**

of the fluctuating value of property, especially in cities like London. It is especially hard for young writers and artists to gain security, she felt, and that is going to impoverish this city.

The running theme of the shortlisted books was using art and storytelling as a response to current and historical issues. *Elmet* represented the voice of a young generation frustrated with the difficulties of settling down in a land that one can call one's own, with the security of a physical space to call home so out of reach. On the other

hand, Ali Smith's *Autumn* was an experiment in writing about issues so raw and current things are still going on as the book reaches the bookshelf. Dubbed the 'Brexit novel', *Autumn* tackles immigration, xenophobia, identity, and the backlash to the increasing movement of people and ideas. Mohsin Hadid's *Exit West* brings the harsh realities of forced migration into sharp focus by following individual people caught in the conflict – real people with concerns and relationships that are like our own, but, unlike us, have their values and

relationships challenged by their situation.

In times of difficulty,

**"Mohsin Hadid's *Exit West* brings the harsh realities of forced migration into sharp focus"**

the value of art and literature is often questioned, relegated to the realm of

frivolous pursuits with no practical value. This year's shortlist shows that anger and a desire for change can be channelled into creative works that bring issues into sharper focus and introduce different perspectives on the same situation. Literature is a political tool and a participant in the dialogue of current affairs, but veiled in the beauty of language. These books are a testament to the power of words and the value of imagination.

*This event was part of the London Literature Festival at London's Southbank Centre.*

## How a terrible beauty is born: Vahni Capildeo's poetry workshop on 'be-monstering'

*As part of the London Literature Festival, the Southbank Centre is running a series of workshops on writing, including this one on the idea of 'be-monstering' in poetry.*

### BOOKS

**Astrid Zong**  
Books Writer

**B**e-monster not thy feature," says Albany to Goneril; "proper deformity seems not in the fiend so horrid as in woman." In *King Lear*, what renders Goneril's ruthlessness particularly chilling is the juxtaposing presence of inhumanity – or, in Albany's Elizabethan conception, unfemininity – in someone so manifestly a human. The disconcerting quality of such incongruousness and its 'othering' effect are amongst the several ways of 'be-monstering' explored in the poetry workshop led by Vahni Capildeo last weekend, whose latest collection *Measures of Expatriation* won the Forward Prize for Best Collection in 2016.

One example we examined in the workshop was Francis Ponge's *Faune et Flore* (from *Le*

*Parti Pris des Choses*), in which the flora are likewise 'be-monstered' through estrangement: much of their characterisation draws on their lack of human qualities ("*Aucun geste, aucune pensée, peut-être aucun désir, aucune intention*" – 'no gesture, no thought, perhaps no desire, no intention'), whose 'otherness' is reinforced by the extensive use of anaphoric sentences beginning with "*ils*" (they). Indeed the word 'monster' itself – derived from the Latin *monere*, 'to warn' – etymologically referred to malformed creatures so strange and otherworldly in appearance that they came to be seen as portentous of divine 'warning'.

Estrangement on the level of language itself also comes into play here, for example in Ponge's neologistic use of "*ex-croissance*" (outgrowth). This, as is the case with any 'be-monstering' of the artistic medium itself, runs the risk of alienating the reader altogether.

An estranged lexicon could as much intensify as obscure meaning, and leave us puzzled with, to steal a phrase from Wilde, "the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass". Analogously we find in modern theatre the dilemmas associated with the use of *Verfremdungseffekts* – Bertoldt Brecht's method of distancing the audience from characters.

Equally if not more unsettling in *Faune* is the description of "*irrémédiable*", uncontrollable growth, which became the focus of our discussion of monstrosity in nature: starfish fissioning, zombies, cancer. In particular, the multiplication and replication of things in large numbers and the metamorphosis of single beings can seem particularly uncanny. This leads us naturally to the territory of 'be-monstering' through the exploitation of our inherent ambivalence towards identity and self-awareness.

To recall the etymology of 'monster', there is



Vahni Capildeo, winner of last year's Forward Prize in poetry // Southbank Centre

something self-referential about our tendency to view the strangeness perceived in others as a sinister reflection on our own prospects. Whilst the replication and metamorphosis of single beings and the numerosity of similar beings invoke our fear, both of a loss of identity and of the awareness of ourselves as distinct living beings, the capacity for shape-changing is further-

more reminiscent of our deformability, vulnerability and, as Capildeo noted, edibility: it is, to quote Wilde again, Caliban's rage upon seeing his reflection. Not least for this reason does an animal's eating of another animal often 'be-monster' them in our eyes. A more extreme example is our horror of cannibalism, widely regarded as the epitome of monstrosity, symbolic

both of our effaceability and of our capacity for self-effacement, and hence of a double loss of identity.

If Freud is right about the universality of primary narcissism, then, it would not perhaps 'be-monster' this article to end with Tiresias' cryptic comment on Narcissus: that he will live long, "si se non noverit" ('if he does not learn to know himself').



# IMPERIAL SNOWSPORTS VS TIGNES 2017

**15-23 DECEMBER**

- 1 MOUNTAIN RANGE
- 6 DAYS OF POWDER
- 6 NIGHTS OF MADNESS
- 30% FIRST TIME SHIERS
- 240 OF IMPERIAL'S FINEST HAVING THE BEST WEEK OF THEIR LIVES
- GRAB YOUR PLACE NOW WITH A £100 DEPOSIT!!

[HTTPS://BOOKING.NUCOTRAVEL.COM/](https://booking.nucotravel.com/)





## Autumn Elections



## Conversation Project

Whether you're a chatter box or just like talking to new people over a cup of tea then the Conversation Project could be just the thing for you!

This volunteering project pairs you up with overseas students and researchers who are looking to improve their spoken English through informal conversational English, we just ask for the minimum of one hour a week! Your sessions can be doing anything from walking round a museum to chatting over lunch, it's up to you!

New members of the College sometimes have difficulty conversing in English and you will play an essential role in helping them to improve their conversational English and feel part of the Imperial community.

If you're interested then please apply through the ICU Website at:  
[www.imperialcollegeunion.org/volunteering/opportunities/conversation-project](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/volunteering/opportunities/conversation-project)



## A.C.T Now



**A.C.T. Now** is the Unions student enterprise programme, providing support for budding student social entrepreneurs, and helping many more to develop and demonstrate entrepreneurial skills. Explore what we can offer you and check out our autumn term programme at

[www.imperialcollegeunion.org/act-now](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/act-now)

ACT Now workshops and events are free and open to all to attend.

## what's on

Don't forget to keep an eye on our page to keep yourself updated with all the stuff that's happening! We have amazing things coming up. Have a look on our website, here:

[imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on)

## advice centre

INDEPENDENT  
CONFIDENTIAL  
IMPARTIAL

### We're here to help

We offer academic and non academic advice. We are confidential, impartial and independent from the College.

Get in touch

[advice@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:advice@imperial.ac.uk)

020 7594 8060

[imperialcollegeunion.org/advice](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/advice)

# FILM

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Fear and loathing and great acting // British Film Institute

## An operatic nightmare of psychological trauma

### FILM

#### YOU WERE NEVER REALLY HERE



**Dir:** Lynne Ramsay. **Script:** Lynne Ramsay. **Starring:** Joaquin Phoenix, Ekaterina Samsonov, Judith Roberts, John Doman. 85 minutes

**Ashley Luckyrām**  
Film Editor

An unprecedented level of discussion was prompted when the line-up was announced for the Cannes Film Festival in the spring. The new golden age of television had continued its juggernaut-like procession, penetrating the exclusive La Croisette for the very first time, as past Palme d'Or winners David Lynch and Jane Campion were invited to premiere new seasons of their shows *Twin Peaks* and *Top of the Lake* respectively. Streaming giant Netflix also continued its meteoric rise, with two films being accepted into the main competition, albeit with a warning from festival director Thierry Frémaux

that they would not be allowed back in the future unless they guaranteed theatrical releases in France. There was excitement at the big name auteurs set to compete for the Palme, with the likes of Michael Haneke, Todd Haynes, Sofia Coppola, Andrey Zvyagintsev, Yorgos Lanthimos, Noah Baumbach, Bong Joon-Ho, Michel Hazanavicius, Ruben Ostlund, and Hong Sang-Soo competing for perhaps the most prestigious prize in cinema alongside the Academy Award.

Amidst all the fanfare, perhaps the most anticipated news was that Scottish writer-director Lynne Ramsay was to make her return to the silver screen in partnership with no less than the great Joaquin Phoenix. The film would also see her reuniting with Radiohead guitarist Johnny Greenwood, who's scores have been enthralling us for the past decade ever since the legendary Paul Thomas Anderson asked him to do the music for his masterpiece *There Will Be Blood*. *You Were Never Really Here*, titled *A Beautiful Day* in France, went to the French Riviera

unfinished. It was the last film in competition to be shown, and editor Joe Bini only completed his cut a matter of hours before it was due to be screened. Ramsay stunned the world with *Ratcatcher*, *Morven Caller* and *We Need to Talk About Kevin* in the past, and she delivered again, receiving a seven minute standing ovation. She went on to share the festival's Best Screenplay prize with Yorgos Lanthimos and Efthymis Filippou for *The Killing of a Scared Deer*, with Phoenix adding to his already bulging trophy cabinet with a win for Best Actor.

### "Ramsay and her crew elevate the film above cliché"

When London Film Festival director Clare Stewart invited Ramsay onto the stage to present her film at its UK premiere on Saturday, one would never imagine that this pint-sized jovial Scottish woman, cracking jokes left, right, and centre, would be capable of producing such a dark,

expressionistic neo-noir thriller as *You Were Never Really Here*. The film follows ex-war veteran and FBI agent turned gun-for-hire Joe (Phoenix). In the very first scene we join him completing a job, and almost immediately after that visit him at his house mid-suicide attempt – the first of many efforts – as he fights to repress the demons of his past. He is interrupted by a shout from his ailing mother (Judith Roberts), who he lives with and cares for diligently.

Joe is contacted by Senator Albert Votto (Alex Mannette) to find his missing teenage daughter, and hurt those who took her from him. He locates her fairly quickly in a seedy brothel, but as he attempts to return her to her father, his rescue mission is suddenly derailed, unleashing a maelstrom of violence involving corrupt power and vile fantasy, taking him deeper and deeper into the hallucinatory darkness. It would be wrong to divulge any of the details of the plot, and also extremely difficult, as Ramsay creates a swirling, operatic nightmare.

This is ostensibly a film with elements of action,

thriller, noir, drama, and even horror and comedy. From the logline, this could easily be cliché, and yet Ramsay and her cast and crew elevate it to much more. Though the action elements are superbly visceral, Ramsay is more concerned with the psyche of her leading man, choosing to delve into trouble that torments him, without ever revealing too much.

Likewise, Joe Bini's razor sharp editing aids with this beacon of visual story-telling, only ever allowing us a foot in the door without opening up, continually rejecting the opportunity of exploitation or glamorisation of violence by cutting away from the action rather than to it. Greenwood's eerie score is for the most part a driving, electrical symphony, but he balances this delicately, switching it up for a majestic underwater scene at a lake.

As with her previous films, Ramsay renounces the spoken word for startling images, always choosing to show rather than tell, and even then only showing glimpses; clues to a mystery we will never solve, questions with no answers. Joaquin

Phoenix proves himself to be among the greatest actors in the world. Since his return from a self-imposed break to launch a rap career (which turned out to be a hoax), he has embarked on one of the hottest runs any actor has experienced in cinematic history, comparable, for example, to Jack Nicholson in the early 1970s. He is able to communicate so much in a look or a shift in body position, and it is hard to imagine anyone else in this role. The scary thing is that this would be career-defining role for almost any other actor working today – and yet Phoenix can do this half-asleep. Stewart introduced Phoenix as the man who makes this film, and while this film is a lesson in how having top draw artists such as Ramsay and Greenwood collaborating can give birth to such incredible work, without Phoenix this could all break down to cliché and pretension. When asked to comment on the film, all he said was "thank you all for coming and enjoy the film". Wise words.

*You Were Never Really Here* will be released in UK cinemas on February 23rd 2018.



# FILM

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Felix Film's Summer 2017 cinema round-up: how we

*Resident film fanatic Mark Abdul crunches the box office numbers for this summer's releases, showing you the stories behind the data. The era of the August blockbuster seems to be on the wane, as audiences are swapping explosion-heavy thrillers for more independent, culturally-aware films, such as Jordan Peele's hugely successful Get Out*

### FILM

#### Mark Aduol

Film Editor

Depending on who you are, the summer movie season was either a blessing or a disaster.

For film studio executives, it was unquestionably dismal. There was little comfort in watching each new release miss its box office targets. On Labour Day Weekend – the long summer weekend in the United States where film studios often expect major ticket sales – the U.S. box office had its worst performance in 17 years: the top twelve films grossed a combined \$51.5 million and you have to go back to 2000, when the top twelve grossed \$47 million, to find a worse performance. No doubt some film studio executives have already begun questioning their tentative summer 2018 releases, wondering whether some of those big budget productions might need a few re-writes, lest they suffer the same fate as some of this year's box office flops.

On the other side of the aisle however, film critics and casual moviegoers were spoilt for choice by the variety of films on offer. *Wonder Woman*, *Spider-Man: Homecoming* and *Guardians of Galaxy Vol. 2* rounded out the annual instalment of superhero flicks, while lower budget productions like *Get Out*, *Atomic Blonde* and *Girls Trip* offered



Atomic Blonde (left), Baby Driver (right) // Universal/Sony Pictures

audiences something other than the avalanche of family-friendly crowd-pleasers that have traditionally dominated the summer movie season.

In summers past, almost all high budget productions – those with budgets exceeding \$100 million – were usually viewed as guaranteed successes by major film studios. Instead of acquiring an army of screenwriters and producers that could marshal a film towards Academy Award glory, studios focused their financial firepower on developing special effects bonanzas that would capture the attention of

audiences worldwide; because as lovely as an Oscar nomination may be, it matters little if you don't have enough money to run your film studio in the first place.

Consequently, major film studios like Universal, Warner Bros., and 20th Century Fox, all developed appetites for producing high-budget blockbusters. Just consider the case of the *Transformers* franchise: the first four films were all box office hits; released over the 7-year period from 2007 to 2014, each film managed to gross over \$700 million worldwide, and the third and fourth instalments in particular

succeeded in cracking the \$1 billion mark. By the end of 2014, all four films occupied top-ten slots in Paramount Pictures' list of its highest-grossing films worldwide. Given such runaway success, the executives at Paramount were in no rush to drop the *Transformers* franchise any time soon.

Fast-forward to 2017 and we have our fifth instalment in the series, *Transformers: The Last Knight*. Despite being armed with a budget of \$217 million and marketing spending likely exceeding \$100 million, the film has "only" managed to gross \$605.4 million in the four

months since its release. To understand why this is bad, you first have to understand the difference between ticket sales in the North American market (where all major Hollywood film studios are headquartered) and ticket sales in foreign markets.

When a movie ticket for a wide release film is sold – say for around \$10 – that revenue is split between several entities. If sold in the North American market, around \$4 may go to the

not an isolated incident, it mirrors a general trend over the summer 2017 movie season.

*Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales* suffered the lowest North American gross and the second-lowest worldwide gross out of any film in the series, pulling in \$794 million worldwide against a \$230 million budget, with roughly 78% of that revenue coming from foreign markets – the highest such percentage in the series 14-year history.

Universal's reboot of *The Mummy* didn't fare much better: the film grossed \$80.1 million in North America and \$329 million in other territories for a worldwide total of \$409.1 million, against a combined production and advertising budget of around \$345 million. And of course, due to the thinner profits from foreign markets, Universal will likely lose in excess of \$75 million from their investment in this film.

It doesn't end there: the co-produced Warner Bros. and Legendary Pictures epic, *Kong: Skull Island*, grossed \$168 million in North America and \$398.6 million in foreign markets for a worldwide total of \$566.6 million. Made on a production budget of \$185 million and fuelled by a \$136 million marketing campaign, this franchise reboot needed to make at least \$450-500 million worldwide for Warner Bros. and Legendary Pictures to break even.

What does this string of box office failures tell us? Well, for starters, audienc-

### "Studios focused their financial firepower on developing special effects bonanzas"

theatre showcasing the film and the remaining \$6 to the film studio that produced it, but if sold in a foreign market, the film studio may only get \$2, since the studio will typically have to rely on several intermediaries to distribute its films in international markets. So, when the latest *Transformers* instalment grosses \$130.2 million in North America and \$475.2 million internationally, compared to its predecessor's \$245.4 million North American and \$858.6 million international gross, then the film is rightly viewed as a box office disappointment.

And the underperformance of *Transformers: The Last Knight* is



# FILM

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## fell out of love with the Hollywood blockbuster

es around the world may be suffering from blockbuster fatigue. The summer of 2017 has been something of a graveyard for sequels, reboots and franchises, and film studios will have to reconsider how they approach audiences, both domestic and foreign, if they wish to revive the spectacle of the summer movie season. Studio executives could probably learn a few lessons by paying attention to some of the lower budget films that managed to exceed box office expectations this summer.

Without a doubt, the most successful low-budget production of the year will be Jordan Peele's *Get Out*. The film, which finds horror in casual racism, has attracted unanimous praise ever since its mid-March release. Critics have lavished it with rave reviews and some have even penned it for a Best Picture nomination as Hollywood gears up for Oscar season. And that's not all: against a \$4.5 million budget, the film has pulled in a whopping \$253.1 million worldwide, meaning that it will probably be the most profitable film of the year.

So, how exactly did this film – a directorial debut for Peele and starring a semi-notable cast – wind up as one of the bona fide hits of 2017?

For that, we have to turn to its two-pronged

elements – a culturally relevant racial commentary mounted against a backdrop of satirical horror. On the other hand, stellar reviews, roughly 200 pre-release screenings and over 6 million trailer views on YouTube, all worked in tandem to cultivate favourable word-of-mouth and propel the film to a \$33.4 million opening weekend. The film's buzz continued well after release and on its second weekend, its ticket sales had dropped only 15.4% relative to its opening weekend – significant, because horror films generally post second-weekend drops of at least 60%.

*Get Out*'s success is even more surprising because it was released in February – one of the so-called “dump months” where audiences are smaller and theatres in North America typically expect much fewer ticket sales. To simply say that *Get Out* “defies expectations” is a lazy statement, because the film does so much more than that. It is a film that has attracted tons of ticket sales and critical praise, while seemingly defying every Hollywood rule about how movies attract tons of ticket sales and critical praise. *Get Out*'s unique pattern of success was mirrored throughout the summer by other low-budget releases such as *Atomic Blonde*, *Girls Trip* and *Baby Driver* – films that didn't have a war chest to spend on advertising, but still managed to draw large audiences into theatres by relying on strong reviews and social media buzz.

*Atomic Blonde*, the neon-lit 80s spy thriller directed by David Leitch (*John Wick*), garnered favourable reviews and pulled in a respectable \$95.7 million worldwide against a budget of \$30 million, even while opening only one week after Christopher Nolan's



Dunkirk (left), Spiderman: Homecoming (right)

war epic, *Dunkirk*. *Girls Trip*, another sleeper hit, became the first comedy in 2017 to gross over \$100 million in the North American market, and so far has topped out at \$136.3 million worldwide. It's worth noting that while *Girls Trip* has made over 84% of its revenue domestically (in the North American market), other sleeper hits like *Baby Driver* (\$226.3 million worldwide gross; \$34 million budget) and *Split* (\$278 million worldwide gross; \$9 million budget) have been able to generate almost equal amounts of domestic and foreign revenue.

*Girls Trip*'s concentrated popularity in the U.S. is not unusual, since its storyline seems heavily geared towards that market; a phenomenon

also mirrored by the success of *Dunkirk* in the U.K. While *Dunkirk* has managed to pull in \$522.9 million worldwide, \$73.7 million of that has come from the combined U.K. and Ireland market – this is notable, given that the combined U.K. and Ireland market generally contributes less than 10% to the worldwide revenues of most Hollywood blockbusters. *Dunkirk*'s popularity in the U.K. has made it the second-highest grossing film at the 2017 U.K. box office, missing out on first place to Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, which is currently the highest-grossing film of the year at the global box office.

The success of low-budget films like *Get Out* and *Atomic Blonde*, as well as market-specific

targets like *Girls Trip* and *Dunkirk*, lends credence to the claim that the average moviegoer is beginning to care more about novel and unique cinematic experiences, opposed to the latest Marvel superhero instalment, Paramount Pictures sequel, or Warner Bros. remake.

I could say more about the creeping threat of streaming platforms, the curious success of animated movies, or the money-making machine that is Marvel Studios, but in doing so, I would probably stretch this article by a couple thousand words – a bit excessive given that we're already in 2-page territory here. Nonetheless, these topics are indeed important and they provide some unique insights into where the film and TV industries are

headed over the next few years. I will be exploring them in future editions of *Felix*, so stay tuned to read about it. As for now, it seems safe to say that with the 2017 summer movie season, we witnessed a juxtaposition of fortunes. Audiences were treated to both high-budget blockbusters and low-budget novelties, and will undoubtedly be hoping for similarly varied offerings next year; film studios on the other hand, will likely be revisiting their assumptions about what kinds of movies make money. The ground is shifting beneath their feet and a fog is obscuring their vision, so they will need to find their bearings quickly or risk extinction at the hands of a future box office blunder.

**“Audiences around the world may be suffering blockbuster fatigue”**

marketing campaign. On the one hand, Universal Studios' advertising placements focused on the film's unique thematic



# TELEVISION

tv.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## *Black Mirror* – What is it good for?

*As the real world gets progressively more insane, Andrew Melville asks whether we still need dystopian sci-fi.*

TV

**Andrew Melville**  
TV Editor

While no Imperial Student will be a stranger to technology, I imagine not all share *Black Mirror*'s pessimistic view of tech as an existential threat. Despite creator Charlie Brooker claiming that his show is more warning than fear-mongering, the show focuses on how technology exacerbates the flaws in human nature. Rather than taking the Wachowskian approach to dystopia that was popular at the turn of the century and have technology enslave humans, *Black Mirror* shows us what happens when technology liberates us to be the worst versions of ourselves; it takes plausible ideas based in our own reality and extends those to what could happen soon if we don't sit up and take notice. But as we enter a surreal age of misinformation, where TV stars rule countries and automation slides ever closer to reality, is a dismal forecast the best way to inspire a healthier discussion about technology and its place in our future?

Some might argue that *Black Mirror*'s bedtime stories aren't necessary in today's political climate. The show does have a long history of seeming to predict notable news stories: David Cameron's pig fracas could have inspired the central plotline in *The National Anthem*, China's proposed social rating system is a direct rip of *Nosedive*, and many might find the election of an oddly-coloured, populist television star in *The Waldo Moment* vaguely reminiscent of President Trump's surprise election win late

last year. These bizarre coincidences are less indicative of Brooker's ability to read the future, however, than they are of an increasingly surreal politico-technological landscape. Research shows that we enjoy horror and thrillers as it allows us to experience these emotions in a controlled environment, and probably also explains my love of crying at *Marley and Me*. But as that controlled environment starts to look more and more like what we see on our screens, these films and shows become more than just a cathartic release of emotion. It's as if that girl from *The Ring* has just crawled out of the television, except she's an iPhone with facial recognition software.

*Black Mirror* can only get as scary as Charlie Brooker can imagine, but reality is not bound by one man's imagination, and technology seems primed

***"Black Mirror can only be as scary as Charlie Brooker's imagination, but reality is not bound"***

to make any episode look quite cosy in comparison. Just this year we've seen how misinformation can take control of electoral processes (I know it's not just me that has an old aunt or weird cousin that shared some bullshit about Corbyn). Meme culture promotes opinion over fact, as being in on what is effectively a glorified inside joke is more appealing than engaging in discussion. Rightly or wrongly, the Momentum/



"Did you see that new *Black Mirror* episode? Oh shit, it's just real life" // Facebook

Moggmentum movements have already played a huge part in June's general election, increasing the youth vote by 20% this summer. The part that the internet and memes have played is not to be understated.

This phenomenon of confirmation culture is not even restricted to followers of political candidates. Trump's oft repeated "Fake News" is not only emblematic of the problem, but also the reason many are distrustful of news that don't serve to confirm what they already believe. Thousands see this disregard for traditional news media to be refreshing: a welcome break from the boring bureaucracy of politics. Expensively produced execution and recruitment videos on *IsisTV* (Channel 608) also serve to make politics and war more exciting, bringing the horrors of the battlefield more in line with what we've come to expect, except without James Bond saving the day. Far from encouraging productive debate, platforms like Twitter and Facebook only

serve to amplify what we are already comfortable in believing and keep our echo chambers sound-proof. News stories are shared a thousand times before someone looks at the sources. Is it any wonder we turn to TV for nice, simple problems to solve like swarms of killer bees?

Brooker isn't alone in his mistrust in humanity's obsession with the advancement of technology. *Black Mirror* is just the latest dystopian sci-fi, counting classics like *1984*, *The Matrix*, and *Blade Runner* as its ancestors. In many of these early dystopias, humans eventually win out against tech, and return to a harmonious world, but *Black Mirror* does not afford us this reassurance, choosing to emphasise the control devices can and will have if our usage of them goes unchecked. Like its predecessors, the show focuses on how the way humans use technology is bad, rather than technology being inherently awful. This suggests that dystopian horror is not a given, as long as we use

tech for good, rather than compounding the worst parts of human nature.

Not all sci-fi landscapes set in the near future imagine it as a haunted house of devices. The most positive vision of our future in recent memory is Spike Jonze's *Her*. Sure, the neon lights and high-rise buildings are present as we've come to expect, but *Her* gives us a bright walk through what life could look like. This optimism is reflected in the films colour palette: bright blues and deep reds mirror the setting, where technology allows people to pursue artistic endeavours. Wide open cityscapes are a welcome contrast to the cramped alien worlds that usually occupy our screens. This future could be ours in the next 20 years, provided that we are able to strike the right balance with automation.

The right approach to a world increasingly dominated by and dependant on our computers is somewhere between these two extremes. Dating your operating system is no better advice than giving

up tech for good. We must be aware of the dangers that automation, virtual reality, and AI pose to our happiness, and take appropriate action to ensure that when these technologies do take over (and I believe they will) we are ready for them. My prognosis is a return to the excitement for technological ad-

***"We must take appropriate action to ensure that when these technologies do take over we are ready"***

vancement popular in the 1950s, with a healthy dose of scepticism of human self-regulation.

*Black Mirror* is available on Netflix and with any malevolent consciousness that may or may not be taking your job.



FOOD

food.felix@imperial.ac.uk

# An introduction to the art of cooking

*It's about time you started learning how to look after and cook for yourselves, and where better to start than soup!*  
*Let our soup recipe sooth your freshers' flu and mid-term blues.*

FOOD

**Andrada Balmez**  
*Food Editor*

Writing Food is so difficult when you don't have anyone suggesting "maybe you want to write about that?", or when you just don't feel inspired to write about their suggestions. So, while I struggled with finding a topic for this page, I realised that I did not say "Hi!" to you this year. So, here I am! So good to see you again this year! Oh, you missed me? That's so nice of you. Of course, I missed you too. But we don't want to talk about me too much straight from the beginning, do we? I mean, I think you are here to enjoy your first term back at uni.



Will your soup look this good? Probably not, but oh well // Andrada Balmez

Yey – very enthusiastic ‘yey’ – just so it’s clear I am not sarcastic here. So, for all of you returning, it’s nice to be back, isn’t it? So many friends you haven’t seen over the summer! So many exotic souvenirs and gifts brought from... exotic places. You

get me. But you’re also back to: oh, shit, I have to cook again (finally, after spending your first weeks eating instant noodles)! Yes, you’ve cooked over the summer too (unless you went home and your mommy did it for you, you lucky bastard), but

now you don’t really have the time you need to try and fail at one recipe three times. For the ones here for the first time, welcome to the freak show! It’s time you actually read this section – I know you ignored it the first weeks because

you thought you don’t need food advice. But I also know you haven’t boiled an egg in your life, and maybe you don’t even know how to use a microwave. If that’s the case, please ask for help before you blow anything up. Yes, your journey will be slow and painful, but in the end you will manage to actually gain weight, rather than die of starvation. Trust me on this one. No matter the case, I know you all miss something, especially now that all the Freshers’ week excitement is gone; maybe you miss your warm cosy bed or your soft teddy bear, even if you don’t admit it; maybe you miss food that actually tastes of things; maybe you miss your mom’s pyrogy (I might have a weakness for these, you see) or your father’s instant noodles.

Damn, maybe you miss your cactus. No matter how much you protest, you miss something. Here’s how to cure this feeling, in a faster, cheaper way than taking a train/plane/boat/magic carpet back home: soup! Yes, you’ve heard me right. Soup is just magic enough to help cure things – from fresher’s flu to loneliness. Soup is definitely not the most popular food among students, but it’s nice and *not* that complicated. You might actually make a tasty one on your first try. And it’s quick enough that you can still go to all the parties/society meeting/dance classes you planned. Oh, look at me talking so much. You’ll get used to that too. Eventually. Let’s cut the suspense and jump straight into the recipe, shall we?

## BEEF RAMEN



As you’ve probably imagined already, this is more of a ramen than an English (or, rather, European) soup, but it’s still very nice and definitely tastes great.

You will need...

- 5-6 cups of water (very basic, but just in case you expected it to materialise in your pot)
- Stock cube (preferably beef) – or replace it and the equivalent water with 3 cups of beef stock
  - 1 tbsp olive oil
  - Dash of chilli powder
  - 2-3 slices of ginger
  - 2-3 tbsp soy sauce
- 3-4 garlic cloves
- 300g ramen noodles
- 300g diced beef (or any meat you want)
- 1 big carrot
- ½ parsley root
- 4 asparagus spears
- 1 egg, hard boiled
- Sliced green spring onions

1. Bring the noodles to a boil in plain water, with no added salt.
2. While that’s cooking, cut the carrot and the parsley root in fine sticks and boil them for up to 5 minutes.
3. Try to multitask and fry the diced beef with the soy sauce, olive oil, and 1 finely chopped garlic clove.
4. In a separate stockpot, place the remaining garlic cloves, soy sauce, and olive oil. Add the slices of ginger, chilli powder, and the beef stock (or the water with the stock cube). Bring to the boil, then reduce to simmer for 5 minutes.
5. In a soup bowl, arrange the noodles. On top of it arrange the beef and the veggies, along with half a boiled egg. Add the stock in the bowl and finally sprinkle with spring onions on top.
6. Now you can call your mom and tell her you’ve made the best soup in the world (or acknowledge that you are a failure who cannot even make a simple soup).



# TRAVEL

travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## California on a budget: *Felix* Travel's guide to making

*The USA can be an exciting place to explore, but travelling around can quickly eat into your coffers. Travel Editor Edita Pileckyte uses her experiences in California to offer some advice on exploring the Golden State.*

### TRAVEL

**Edita Pileckyte**

*Travel Editor*

After a draining year at Imperial, and quite possibly an internship-packed summer, most of us crave a vacation, preferably outside London. While coming back home is often enjoyable, going somewhere completely new can be even more appealing. One of the most popular travel destinations is the United States, which has so much to offer for tourists, from majestic busy cities to fascinating

natural wonders. If you've never visited the US, you might have heard it's very large, but make no mistake – it's actually even bigger than you think! I spent 2 weeks in California, with a short detour to Las Vegas, and it still wasn't enough. To fully explore the magnificence of even a small part of the country requires a lot of time and – you've guessed it – money! The good news is that nowadays it's more than possible to travel on a budget, so here are some tips based on my first-hand experience.

### ACCOMMODATION

While it's possible to

find an affordable Airbnb or hostel, it's even better to crash on someone's couch for free, which leaves you more money for actual travelling. If you don't know anyone you could stay with, don't stress – you can always opt for Couchsurfing, a website offering free accommodation for travellers all around the world. Yes, it does sound dodgy at first, but it's completely legit and has helped many young travellers, including myself. Surprisingly, the place I stayed at in Los Angeles happened to be very fancy, comfortable, and arguably better than any hostel. Our host even gave us a lift to and from



Palm trees in balmy Malibu // Edita Pileckyte

the closest underground station every day as well as sharing his food with us.

That being said, this doesn't happen all the time – we were just extremely lucky. However, although most homes don't resemble hotels, Couchsurfing is still a good way to not only save money but also meet the locals. For instance, the place we stayed at in Vegas

there was an interesting and important part of our travelling experience.

Nonetheless, if you opt for Couchsurfing, there are several important things to remember: check the references from previous guests to make sure your potential host is trustworthy and their home is suitable for you; always be careful, especially if travelling alone; as trivial as it sounds, be polite and respectful – some travellers feel that they can do whatever they please, like come back drunk at 3am, leave a complete mess after their visit, or not even bother interacting with their host; though the hosts don't expect any money for your stay, a good thank you gift could be cooking them a meal, sending a postcard from your home country, or even just spending some time chatting and getting to know them; start sending requests early – you'll likely get rejected a lot since the best places are also the most popular ones, so don't leave it to the last minute; and finally ask your friends to leave references for you about their experience staying at your place – this will complete your profile and

hosts will be more likely to trust you.

### TRANSPORT WITHIN CITIES

You may have heard already that the best way of getting around the US is by car. Unfortunately, we didn't have one and ended up getting around by public transport and Uber. To our surprise, we didn't experience many problems with the infamous LA traffic: going places did take quite a bit of time but no more than you'd expect from such a large city. The underground system in LA isn't as popular as in London: the trains run every 20 minutes only and don't serve the whole city. But it also has some perks – it's not as crowded as the Tube and costs just under \$2 one way.

In contrast, Vegas doesn't have an underground system as it's a much smaller city in the middle of a desert. But you can get around by buses (\$8 for 24h) or Uber (around \$23 for 25min ride). If you're travelling on a budget, you'll most definitely live far away from the Strip – the main street with expensive hotels – where all the



Parched trees litter the desert in Death Valley // Edita Pileckyte

**“Couchsurfing is completely legit, and has helped many young travellers, including myself”**

wasn't nearly as fancy or tidy as our LA accommodation, but we were still given comfortable sofas with clean bedding and towels, and our host also shared his food with us and picked us up from the bus station. Plus, getting to know him and other couchsurfers who stayed



# TRAVEL

travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## the most of the Golden State with limited funds



Natural beauty is only enhanced by saving lots of dough! // Edita Pileckyte

activities take place. So Ubering to and from the Strip every day is the most convenient option but it'll cost you a fortune. The good news is – one day is enough to look around Vegas, so a couple of taxi rides should be affordable. Otherwise, if you opt for a rental car, there are a few hotels that offer free parking even for non-guests.

**“If you want to make the most out of the West Coast in a single trip, opt for a rental car”**

Finally, our last stop, San Francisco, was one hell of an expensive city, the second priciest area in the States after Manhattan, according to the locals. We happened to stay in Albany, a city separated from SF by Berkeley and Oakland, and spent at least an hour on the (very fast!) train every day to reach the SF centre. One-way tickets range from \$5 to \$10, which naturally drained

our bank accounts quite a bit, though I'd say it's still cheaper than renting an Airbnb in SF (unless you're lucky enough to find something on Couchsurfing). However, travelling outside the bay area for the scenic views of Yosemite National Park or Big Sur is next to impossible without a car: you'd spend the whole day on public transport, which is expensive and requires at least 3 transfers!

So if you want to make the most of the West Coast in a single trip, opt for a rental car. It's usually cheaper as well, especially if you travel in a group and share the expenses. If you can't drive, public transport is a good-enough option to explore the cities, though it won't allow you to sightsee much outside of them.

### TRANSPORT OUTSIDE CITIES

To reiterate, renting a car is probably the best option, which will allow you to explore the wonderful West Coast in your own time. For example, you could drive from LA to SF along the scenic State Route 1, making stops at mesmerizing

beaches to enjoy sunshine and the ocean, and reach a golden state of mind. You can pick up and return the car in different cities, which makes things even easier. You can also travel by Megabus – if you book your tickets well in advance, you can get a bargain for \$1 one way. Alternatively, you can choose a domestic flight, which usually are (relatively) affordable and quick.

Moreover, a trip to California would not be complete without visiting the national parks, such as Death Valley, Yosemite, or Grand Canyon. Of course, as you may have guessed, they are quite far away from the main cities (2-4h drive). So if you decide to travel such a distance, it's best to spend at least two days there so you can hike and explore the places at your own pace. Plus, park entrance fees (\$20-30 for 7 days) are charged per vehicle so splitting the cost between a group of travellers offers a very affordable trip. Alternatively, you can book 1-day bus tours but they are quite pricey (e.g. around \$200 per person for Death Valley) and don't give you enough time to explore

the area. Having said that, travelling with a guide is probably safer since they take you to tourist-friendly places and you don't have to worry about things like cars breaking down or getting lost. So if you opt to drive by yourself, find out the safest way to travel around and be prepared,

**“In-N-Out Burger is based in California, so as well as being affordable, it's an integral part of your West Coast experience”**

e.g. take plenty of water and wear appropriate clothes.

Finally, the most expensive part of long-distance trips is usually flight tickets but luckily there are a few budget airlines offering transfer between the US and Europe for as little as \$400 both ways. They don't provide meals and allow limited baggage, but are still a good way to save money. For instance, Norwegian Airlines offer direct flights, 2 hand luggage pieces, and an on-board entertainment system with films and TV shows. Another affordable option is WOW Airlines, though they don't offer direct flights or in-flight entertainment, so be sure to bring a book on board!

### FOOD

If you're travelling on a budget, you'll probably

go for food from grocery stores rather than restaurants. However, the cheapest food might be full of sugar and preservatives, so if you want something healthier, you can shop at Trader Joe's, which sells organic products and is a cheaper version of Whole Foods. The famous Target also offers reasonable prices but anything from 7-eleven will cost you an arm and a leg. If you get hungry while sightseeing, there's a McDonalds or Subway literally on every corner. A bit more expensive but still affordable option is In-N-Out Burger, a chain based in California only and thus an integral part of your West Coast experience. Their food is delicious, and you can order something from their secret online menu if you want to dine like a local!



‘Siri, play the Fresh Prince of Bel-Air theme’ // Edita Pileckyte



# LIBERATION

icu-bme@imperial.ac.uk

## Working to create a truly global university

*Last week's Race Disparity Report revealed how BME students are being let down by a culture of racism – and it's time Imperial addressed this.*

### LIBERATION

**Chimdi Igwe**

*BME Liberation Officer*

**J**ust last week, the government released its sixty-odd page Race Disparity Report, commissioned by the Prime Minister Theresa May early on in her tenure. The main takeaway, as the report's name handily notes, was the general trend of disparity between minority experiences across the board: from education and housing to employment and health.

The 'shock' revelation that that Britain could be institutionally racist would likely fail the plagiarism test on Turnitin. This is no novel conclusion here – in fact, this isn't even the first report this decade to say this (we do live in the centre of the former Empire).

One part of the report notes that some ethnic minority students outperform their white counterparts in attainment levels in compulsory education (GCSEs). Interestingly, this doesn't necessarily translate to further education – studies of UK universities imply an attainment gap in terms of university performance across the UK with respect to ethnicity. On top of this, curricula often lack an inclusive approach – the recent changes to the Oxford history course come to mind.

Here at Imperial, though, raising these kinds of concerns can often be tricky: as a STEM university, excuses like 'race has no place in science' and 'we don't do that humanities b\*\*\*\*s\*\*\*\*' are



Can we make Imperial a uni for the many, not the few? // Imperial/Layton Thompson

very much used in order to avoid conversations that are necessary for the College to improve.

One of the more fashionable excuses is the inability to see race ('I don't see colour'), usually done in an attempt at appeasement. This, though well-meaning, can be the worst thing to do – refusing to notice or acknowledge a person's race and ethnicity is in effect wilfully erasing part of their identity.

This ability to completely ignore race in a situation is in itself something that can only be afforded to people for whom race has no impact on their way of life – for many, their life experiences are defined by not just their cultural background, but the awareness of being 'other' in their home community. Sadly, wilful ignorance of

this sort is why we often describe racism in the UK as being institutional; it arises from apathy as opposed to action.

The College's mission statement and vision incorporate the notion of being not just a world-class university, but a global one. But how can we claim to be such an institution when the uni-

**"How can we claim to be a global institution when the university isn't reflective of the globe?"**

versity isn't reflective of the globe?

This is not implying that Imperial must suddenly and abruptly change its admissions policies to ensure equal representation of 'the races' according to global standards (that borders on positive discrimination, which by the way is illegal in the UK), but we do need to reconsider how we are perceived, how we engage prospective students, and how we facilitate current students' experiences in striving for this excellence.

For information on what's happening at the Union over Black History Month, check out <http://bit.ly/2gn5tQ4>. If you have any suggestions you'd like to see, hit Chimdi up at [icu\\_bme@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:icu_bme@imperial.ac.uk)

## Here's what I'm up to at the moment!

### LIBERATION

**Chimdi Igwe**

*BME Liberation Officer*



**I**t's rather tricky to run for a position that isn't well defined – earlier this year, while campaigning for the role of BME Officer, more often than not I'd have to explain what the whole acronym meant (for those of you who still don't know, that's Black and Minority Ethnic); even then I'd have to try to explain what this role is meant to be.

Now, the observant amongst you smart Imperial students might have noticed that the general campus flavour is somewhat comparable to Becky's 'roast chicken'. That isn't at all reflective of global excellence, and, as such, the views of students from ethnic minorities can often be overshadowed.

As a Liberation Officer, my primary role is to ensure those underrepresented at Imperial are heard equally; that their concerns are put to the Union as equally as those from any other part of the world – whether it be dealing with poorly named events (side-eye to slave auctions) or occasionally switching the music up in Metric.

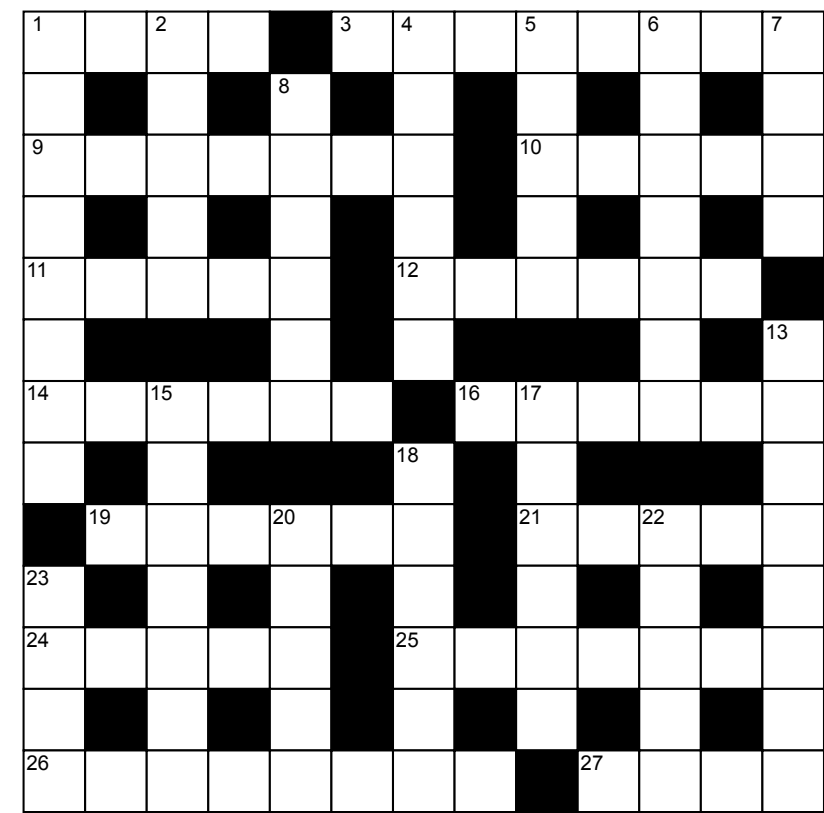
First on the agenda: Black History Month. Seeing as 2017 marks 30 years of its establishment, I, along with the African Caribbean Society (ACS), Imperial As One (the staff BME network), and the Union, have been planning numerous events on campus.

Every Wednesday this month the QTR and SCR have prepared a dish inspired by black cultures around the world (you've still got a week to try them out – get you some spice in your life); we've hosted the award-winning rapper and activist Akala speaking here at Imperial; and yesterday ACS hosted another talk on the history of pre-slave trade Africa. There's also the College Black History Lecture to look forward to next Friday.

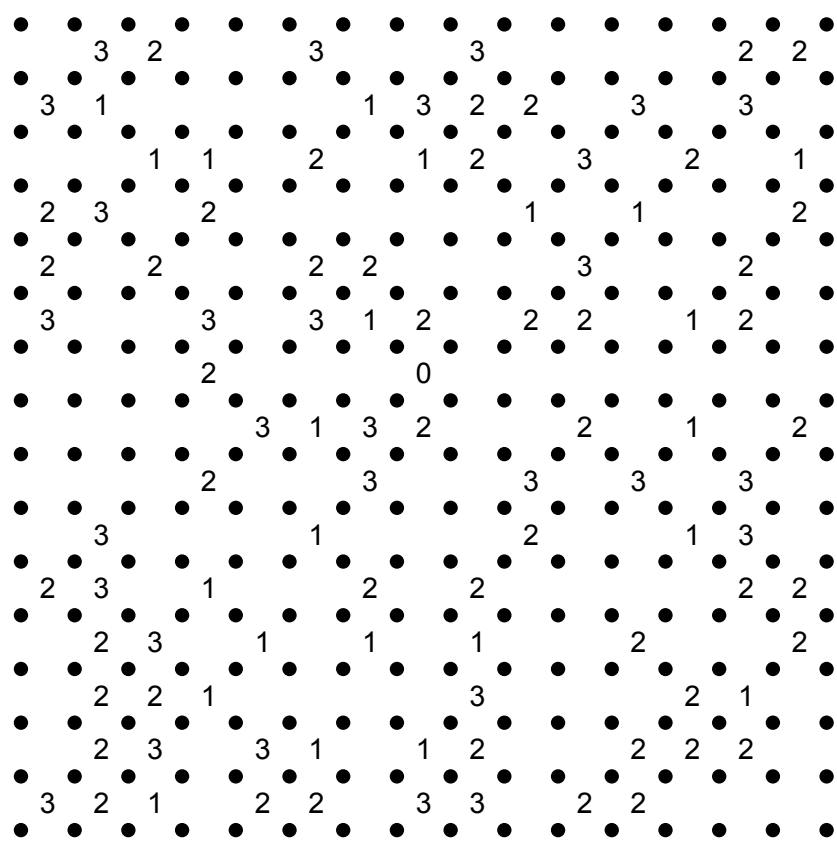
Of course, my focus up till now has around black students, but that's not the totality of my liberation zone: each culture here at Imperial is unique and deserves to be showcased and celebrated – it's my aim to facilitate that.

PUZZLES

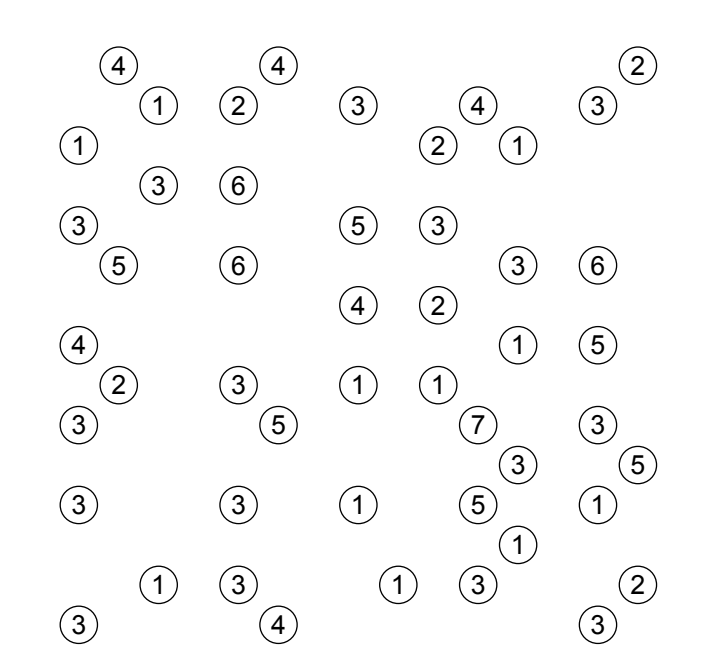
fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk



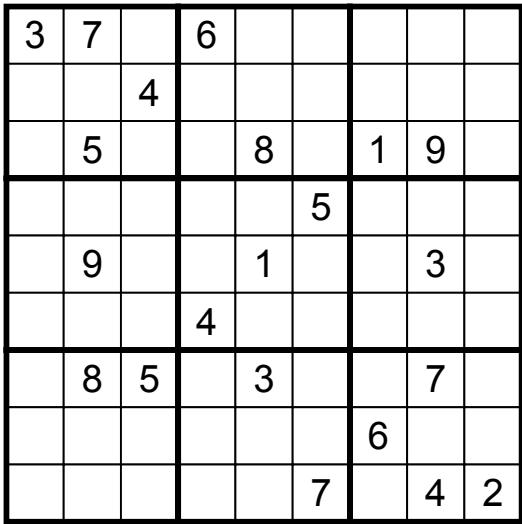
- Across**  
1. Low quality pizza (4)  
3. Small freshwater turtle (8)  
9. "fold paper" (7)  
10. Implicitly understood (5)  
11. Pungent (5)  
12. European city (6)  
14. Make possible (6)  
16. May to June (6)  
19. Skit (6)  
21. Happen again (5)  
24. Go on all fours (5)  
25. Witty remark (7)  
26. Imperil (8)  
27. Sacred (4)
- Down**  
1. Deceitful (3-5)  
2. Before posterior (5)  
4. Mystery (6)  
5. Assessed (5)  
6. *Tosca* composer (7)  
7. Bill (4)  
8. Less than a shoe (6)  
13. Game (3,5)  
15. Ungainly (7)  
17. Pincered insect (6)  
18. Smelly REA club (6)  
20. Hooked claw (5)  
22. Freight (5)  
23. Imperial area (4)



**Slitherlink**  
Connect adjacent points to form a single, non-crossing loop where the numbers indicate how many sides of the cell are closed.



**Bridges**  
Connect all of the circles with single or double bridges. Bridges may only run vertically or horizontally, and may not pass over a circle.



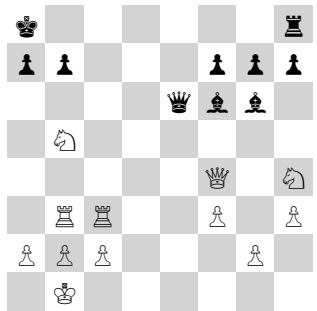
**Nonogram**  
Fill in neighbouring cells in each row/column to make blocks. Each block is separated by one or more empty cells. The numbers indicate the ordered lengths of the blocks to appear in that row/column.

**Chess**  
White to move first. Forced checkmate in four moves.

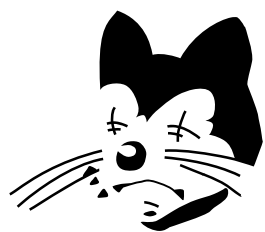
FUCWIT		
1	Nonogram of Ketamine	63
2	Anti-Gravity Acorns	46
3	Special Agent Dale Cooper	38
4	The House Elves	32
5	HOTRIG	29
6	Luncheon Pals	28
7	TioUdin	26
7	Whale and Male	26
9	Stephen Hawking's School of Dance	25
10	Puzzle Snuggle Cuddle Couple	24
11	Q	22
12	The Harambe Memorial Team Name	19
13	Konmai	16
14	Gave up initially - somewhat inapt with snatch. (6)	15
14	Sports Night is Moist Night	15
14	The Indoor Sundial	15
17	The Drama Llamas	14
18	I am Miriam	11

Send a picture of your solutions and teamname to [fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk) before midday Wednesday to get a spot on the leaderboard!

Points Available	
Crossword	4
Slitherlink	4
Bridges	3
Sudoku	2
Nonogram	2
Chess	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>







# Hangman



Students paying £50 were able to graduate in the RAH, rather than the Sherfield sub-basement // Imperial/Thomas Angus

## ‘No-Deal’ Brexit leads to an austerity graduation

HANGMAN

NegaFelix  
Editor-in-Chief

*With a ‘No Deal’ Brexit on the horizon, Imperial have had to cut down on this year’s graduation expenditure*

The looming potential of a ‘No-Deal’ Brexit has meant that Imperial College has cut back on graduation expenditure this year. A report published last week by Sussex University claimed that leaving the EU without a trade deal would dramatically increase the cost of living in the UK. Experts also believe higher education funding could be particularly vulnerable

post-Brexit. As a result, the College last week announced their changes to graduation, which they described on their website as “a bold step forward for cash-strapped higher education institutions, while also giving students a person-

**“The College described the move as ‘a bold step forward for cash-strapped higher education institutions”**

alised graduation user experience”  
Traditionally taking

place in the Royal Albert Hall, this year the venue was only open to those who has purchased an optional “Pomp & Circumstance Upgrade”, priced at £50 a head. Those who opted to not buy the upgrade had to collect their degree from the Sherfield sub-basement instead. For those graduating in the Royal Albert Hall – which was standing-only in order to generate more ticket sales – the ceremony remained largely the same, bar a change to the handshake protocol. While in previous years students would shake the hand of an Imperial luminary, this year the option was only available to those who pre-booked the handshake add-on, which cost £16.95. Degrees were handed out on a first-come, first-serve basis, with queues stretching past the Albert Memorial as students tried to get the best spot.

“I actually worked really hard in my last year,” one student told Felix, “and I was supposed to get a first in biochemistry, but I slept through my alarm and turned up late, so now I’ve got a 2:2 in maths instead.” Felix spoke to James and Nicola Garside, who were at Imperial to see their son graduate: “we don’t come down to London often, so we thought we’d make a full day of it. We purchased the ‘Diamond Level Exclusive Graduation Pack’, which we were told would include ‘luxury canapes and wine’. When we arrived for the reception, we got a choice between a glass of lambrini or a half-pint of Bud Light, and some carrot sticks.” Photography rights are another area where the College were able to recoup their funding. As part of their deal with

Tempress Photography, the company were given full rights over all photos taken on Imperial property, including those taken on personal devices. Any patrons caught taking selfies or posing with their family outside the Business School would be liable to pay an on-the-spot fine of £30; alternatively, they could pay £25 and have the images turned into commemorative key-chains.

**“Degrees were handed out on a first-come, first-served basis, leading to lengthy queues”**

The changes to graduation day are part of a wider set of austerity measures being pursued by the College, which also include removal of the SCR breakfasts, replacing 70% of course modules with YouTube-based lectures, and swapping Wednesday afternoon time off with mandatory “Mine Bitcoin for Imperial!” sessions. Felix got in contact with Mike Hammerson, Vice Provost (Graduation), who said “the potential of Brexit has made things financially difficult for the College this year. However, we really wanted to make sure that our graduands had a celebratory day to look forward to. After all, graduation is really about celebrating students’ hard work, spending time with friends and family, and making a fuckton of dosh.”



HANGMAN

negafelix@imperial.ac.uk

# Government report reveals Britian “still pretty racist”

HANGMAN

---

NegaFelix

Editor-in-Chief

---

The findings provoked cries of disbelief from most, who thought racism had finished last century.

A new governmental report was released last week, which made the shocking revelation that people in Britain are still pretty racist. The “race disparity audit”, ordered by Theresa May, began to release its data last week, which reveal those from Black

and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds were more likely to be stopped and searched by the police, and less likely to own homes or be employed. The news was a shock for many across the country, who thought

“Becky from Shropshire told Felix ‘I thought racism stopped when we abolished slavery’”

that racism ended the day London elected Sadiq Khan as Mayor. Becky, a second year Materials student from Shropshire, told Felix: “I was just so surprised. I thought that we had left racism behind in the 19th Century, when we abolished slavery, but I guess it’s still an issue. I don’t know what I can do about it though, like, I’m not at all racist – I even volunteered in Africa last summer.” We spoke to Garth Jerwell, Vice Provost (Love Imperial, Hate Racism), who said: “We strongly disagree with the conclusions of the report. Here at Imperial, we have defeated racism completely: the only colour we care



‘You touch my hair one more fucking time’ // Flickr/William Murphy

about here is the colour of your money.” Felix spoke to Chimdi Achebe, BME Liberation Officer at Imperial; when we asked whether he

was surprised that racism turned out to still be a problem he said “oh my God, I am so done with you people. They don’t pay me to deal with this

shit.” He abruptly left the room, and has been unavailable for comment since.

ARIES

This week you’re at your graduation, and the person behind you won’t stop chatting through the whole ceremony. Shut the fuck up, we’re all bored.

TAURUS

This week you go to sports night and get punched in the face. Turns out people are *really* upset you swapped Stella with Bud Light.

GEMINI

This week you’re Alice Gast, and people keep asking to shake your hand in the Royal Albert Hall. Not sure why, but they seem nice enough.

CANCER

This week you decide to venture into the JCR to grab a bite to eat at rush hour. You’re never seen again.

LEO

This week you think the sky turning sepia is a sign of the end of the world, so you decide to tell your housemate about your undying love for him. It’s a bit awkward now.

VIRGO

This week you’re a sports club, and graduation means you can’t do your usual Wednesday night activity: hogging space at 568’s bar. THEY DON’T EVEN GO HERE ANY MORE.

LIBRA

This week you get caught up in a protest, and end up smashing an embassy window. You thought it was about the College taking away the SCR breakfast, but turns out not. Whoops.

SCORPIO

This week you are the *Felix* Editor, and the servers are down. You’ve got to move to the Union offices to complete the paper. Nobody will talk to you, but at least you get to use their ball pit.

SAGITTARIUS

This week you are the student voice, and you’re raised louder than ever! The screaming never stops.

CAPRICORN

This week, you’re Vice Provost (Immortality), and you’re glad the plans to turn the library into a cryogenic facility are going well. Death shall not touch you.

AQUARIUS

This week, a two-hour discussion about chore rotas causes the first of many rifts between your housemates. Don’t worry, only 46 weeks left on the contract.

PISCES

This week you are RON, and you’re finally enjoying your time in the limelight. It won’t last.



CLUBS & SOCIETIES

felix.clubsandsocieties@imperial.ac.uk



Huffing and puffing in the Hofbräuhaus // IC Wind Band

IC WIND BAND

This summer, Imperial College Wind Band travelled to Munich, a city filled to the brim with culture, beauty, and beer houses. It was the perfect destination for the most sociable musical ensemble on campus. And boy, did it go well!

Our first gig was at the famous Hofbräuhaus, the largest beer hall in Munich. It has a rich and varied history, having served Mozart, Louis Armstrong, and John F. Kennedy. Hopefully we made the former proud, as we performed a two-hour set in the glorious afternoon sun. Music included *Sedona* by Reinke, *Moment* from Morricone and – our favourite – the

theme from *The Incredibles*. The crowds really enjoyed the entertainment and, a Wind Band first, we were even paid – with food and steins of beer. This was truly a night to remember!

Our second gig was at Schusterhäusl Biergarten, on the outskirts of Munich. Our performance was superb (if we do say so ourselves) and well received by the local audience as we played into the night. For some of the band members this was an emotional experience as it would be their last time playing with us as students. We wish them all the best for their future endeavours and hope they will keep in touch!

During our week away, we found the time to enjoy

the sights (and sounds) of the city. We swam at lakes across the area, played volleyball, ate our fill of ice cream, and drank beer whenever the chance arose (which was often, by the way). There were some hilarious moments on tour... but I guess you'll need to turn up on Tuesdays at 6pm to find out more!

This was certainly an unforgettable week in Wind Band history. Next stop: November's Weekend Away in Oxford!

*Report written by Kathryn Jaitly, Max Moyle and Amy Tall.*

§

IC POKER SOCIETY

On the 12th of October the Poker Society held

its freshers tournament, the first of many events to come, with a focus on introducing the game to newcomers and providing a healthy environment for players to showcase their skills. In total, prize money of £600 was distributed to around a quarter of the players that took part with Steve Basher, an Imperial mathematics graduate, taking home the first-place prize of £120. The head count for the night was around 120, making the society's inaugural event as a tremendous success. The society aims to hold tournaments of comparable manner every Thursday and new members are always welcome whether it's an enjoyable night or competition that they're in search for.

IC SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING CLUB

Synchronised swimming is a sport where athletes must coordinate their moves with the music, often performing underwater figures. ICU Synchro is an incredibly fun and welcoming club where you can keep fit, join a team, and have fun while swimming different routines. It's an exciting sport, a full body workout, and we welcome staff & students of all genders and abilities! In previous years our beginners have swum at international competitions with the team, within just a few months of starting! With past competitions in Barcelona, Brussels, Bordeaux and Paris, you never

know where synchro will take you. If this sounds interesting, why not try your first synchro session free? Give it a go any Wednesday of term from 8:30-10pm in Ethos pool.

It's also a social sport, and we love hanging out as a team. On the 2nd November we are heading to Oxygen Freejumping Acton for a trampolining social, with free pizza (find out more on Facebook @ICsynchro)! Our biggest social is an upcoming trip to Brighton, free for new members! On Sunday the 12th of November we will train with the Brighton Dolphin Swimming Club then head for a delicious brunch together before exploring the wonderful city. Don't miss out: contact [syncswim@ic.ac.uk](mailto:syncswim@ic.ac.uk)



Enjoying some lovely seaside weather with IC Synchro // Amira Magdy

YOUR WEEK AHEAD	MONDAY 23 <sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER	TUESDAY 24 <sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER	WEDNESDAY 25 <sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER	THURSDAY 26 <sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER	FRIDAY 27 <sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER
	ADVANCED BELLY DANCE CLASS	SEMINAR: OXITEC & DREW HAMMOND	ACS: THE GREAT DEBATE	IMPERIAL COLLEGE SPEAKERS MEETING	MAHJONG NIGHT
	<div>IC Belly Dancing Society</div> <div>18.30-19.30</div> <div>Meeting Rooms 1&amp;2, Union</div> <div>On Mondays the Belly Dancing Society host advanced classes – drop-in for £7 if you want to try! For their full timetable, email <a href="mailto:bellydancing@imperial.ac.uk">bellydancing@imperial.ac.uk</a>!</div>	<div>Synthetic Biology Society</div> <div>18.00, RSM 2.28</div> <div>A fascinating talk on gene drives and self limiting genes for population control, presented by Imperial's Drew Hammond and Oxitec's R+D head Zoe Barnes – <b>free beer and pizza!</b></div>	<div>IC African Caribbean Society</div> <div>18.00-20.30, Huxley 145</div> <div>ICACS will be hosting the Great Debate Tour – a discussion on things from BME representation &amp; the root causes of Grenfell, to music and political participation – come along and join the debates!</div>	<div>IC Speakers Club</div> <div>18.15-20.15, SAF 121</div> <div>Imperial College Speakers Toastmasters club helps students improve their public speaking and communication skills! Our meeting will showcase both prepared speeches and impromptu speaking.</div>	<div>IC Mahjong Society</div> <div>18.00-20.00, EEE Building 403a</div> <div>Come play Mahjong with the society! We teach new players how to play and run an open club night for more experienced players.</div>



SPORTS

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

# Rugby season kicks off against Reading University

SPORTS

Marin Tuleu

7's Captain

13

Imperial Rugby Mens 1st

36

Reading Rugby Mens 1st

First game back for Imperial's finest, first big challenge of the season as they took on last year's league winners: Reading. Last year's outing against this team is remembered as a sore loss to a side that was superior in every way. This week, Imperial was keen to avoid a similar situation and prove to the league that a fresh Imperial side was here to compete.

With the return of many players from injuries, notably Club Captain Toby "the sling" Simpson,

our first team looked more than ready to do exactly that. Fortress Harlington was blessed with its ideal playing conditions: slight drizzle and 20 mph winds for the boys. First half with the wind in their faces, Imperial conceded a quick try within 5 minutes of play after sloppy handling and defence. However, the boys quickly regained their cool and worked their way up to field, putting pressure on the Reading defence to finally force a penalty in front of the posts, perfectly converted by small wave surfer James Field. On the ensuing restart however, the 6ft6 Toby tower tumbled onto his spare shoulder and was ruled out of the game. Quick substitution and sloppy hands ensued, eventually leading to another silly try from sneaky Reading. During this time, crystal expert Ali Zed was subjected to a

nice knee to the face and was consequently escorted to the bench, leaving Imperial without two of its main starters. However, in similar fashion to the previous time, Imperial gained terrain and once again converted a well-earned penalty right on half time.

With the wind in their backs, the second half looked more promising for the boys. Quick attacks and good play gave the upper hand to Imperial at the start of the half but they struggled to cash in. A potential breakthrough almost occurred when resident gimp Marin Tuleu flew through the air to catch a high ball in the opposing 22. Upon an almost perfect reception, the man decides to drop the ball in front of him as he approached the try line. What could have caused this? Pressure? Marital problems? The mystery



Gloomy weather for rugby // IC Rugby

remains intact, and Marin remains dick of the day. Luckily, solid big boy carries by every fresher's idol Ben Jones gave Imperial a chance to put more points on the board after an unfortunate try by Reading. Despite strong winds, Toby "so much better than Allingham" Daniels hit his line out perfectly and the ensuing

maul made it past the try line for 5 points (converted by surf soc).

Although the comeback looked promising, Reading eventually ran away with the win, scoring 2 tries in quick succession and bringing the game to a close. Final score : 36-13. Despite the loss, a very promising start to the season for an inexperi-

enced squad, still learning to find each other. Notable performances included Ben Jones' demon carries, Oli Wangchai's quick pace and Michael "Nice smile" Radigan's side line intimidation tactics. *In Sylvia...*

To keep up to date with Imperial Rugby, follow us on Instagram: @IC\_rugby

# All we do is win win win: a story of Imperial Lacrosse

SPORTS

Charlotte Morphet

Ladies 1st Team Captain

24

Imperial Womens 1st XII

3

Kent Womens 1st XII

This season the Women's 1st Lacrosse team is sprinkled full of freshers and determined to have a year of winning and #goalsgoalsgoals. And boy did we flourish in their first match against Kent.

With a gargantuan score of 24-3, we couldn't have succeeded more in showing them who's boss. With goals left, right and centre from seniors and freshers alike, we challenged ourselves to practise our settled play

and focussed on playing smart lacrosse.

Charlotte Morphet was our top goal scorer with 9 goals, although our top assister was Arianna Guppy. 3 members of our team had a huge 100% shot success rate including final year medic Lexi Wiesentanner. We even kept our cool when the other team complained

**"It was worth the trek to Kent, even if we were late to sports night"**

about our 'pushing' (we were just stronger), and for the fact that we were giving them bruises... it's lacrosse after all. In the final quarter we decided



The joy that winning can bring // IC Lacrosse

to test ourselves even further by enforcing a no checking (tackling) rule for ourselves, which was a trial of self-control against the weaker team. MoM went to fresher Florence Wade Smith for some mega lax skills. Overall the match was worth the trek to Kent, even if we did arrive late to sports night.

SPORTS

Greg Poyser

Mens 1st Team Captain

11

Imperial Mens 1st XII

8

Kent Mens 1st XII

To your ordinary man, it would seem like your average Wednesday but for the 1's, it was much more. Time for pretending to lift weights at preseason was over.

We made the miserable 2 hour journey and had a rushed warm-up due to traffic. With a small squad, this was far from ideal.

**"Cometh the hour, cometh the men. A thrilling final quarter showed our true potential, and we won 11-8"**

We found ourselves 2-1 down after the first quarter but bounced back with a strong second quarter in both attack and defence and we went into half-time 4-3 up. The curse of the third quarter loomed large as the rain started. A quick flurry of goals from Kent due to foolish penalties found us losing our lead and it was 7-7 going into the 4th. However, cometh the hour, cometh the men. A thrilling final quarter showed our true potential and we won 11-8.

Debutant Big Ben (Lakey) and Little Ben (Reed) caused Kent trouble all day with 5 and 4 goals respectively. The insatiable Georg Wachter grabbed his first goal, and Sully 'Pingsman' Mughal also bagged. The hero of the day was Tom 'The Wall' Palmer with his first match in goal, who was simply sublime.



## SPORTS

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Imperial College Yacht Club take to the seas in Greece

*ICYC channel their inner Jasons, and pilot their yacht around the Ionian islands, taking in some famous Greek hospitality along the way*

## SPORTS

**Alex Eckl**  
Cruising Officer

**W**e flew into Preveza on the Ionian Coast excited for a week of sailing. EY Sailing, based in Lefkada, offered us an excellent deal for cruising the Ionian islands and were amazing hosts, showing us beautiful spots as we sailed between islands, enabling us to enjoy Greek hospitality to its fullest.

We were met by Costas at the airport. He took us to an air-conditioned minibus and, after a short transfer, we pulled up right next to our boat, Lito, a Bavaria 44 cruiser (44-foot long). Perfect for enjoying the Mediterranean and island hopping, it had plenty of space for all eight of us.

Elias, our skipper and co-owner of EY sailing, greeted us on the comfortable yacht.

Having set ourselves up in our cabins we joined Elias on deck and had a relaxed but thorough briefing on the important parts of boat living. This not only featured sailing aspects of the yacht and safety, but also free-diving and spear-fishing, something that EY also focus on. Elias made us feel completely at home and continued to tell us about the Ionian islands, Greek food, and island lifestyle. It made such a difference

**“It made such a difference to have a local skipper who was passionate about sailing and the water”**

to have a local skipper who was passionate about



When you want to work on your tan, but you're Fitzpatrick skin type I // ICYC

sailing and water activities, who offered such amazing local knowledge and sincere hospitality.

Moored up stern to, right by the town, we ventured into Lefkada for our first dinner, eating at a reasonably priced restaurant, considered one of the best in the area. Octopus,

squid, mussels, and local fish were washed down by Greek wine before we headed back to the yacht for our first night aboard.

After a good night's sleep and a Greek coffee the next morning, we could sense that we had a great week lined up. When we got to unfurl the sails the yacht was surprisingly agile and light for its size. Lito was a joy to sail and easy for even our less experienced crew to handle.

Throughout the week we stopped off at other islands – Kastos, Ithaca, and Kefalonia. Kastos was a tiny island of only 40 residents during the summer and fewer in the winter when the facilities close. We went ashore and enjoyed a drink in at a table alongside an old windmill and then went swimming from a rocky beach nearby.

At Ithaca we had several stops. A larger island than Kastos but still only just over 3000 inhabitants. Again great food, refreshing swimming but also an archaeological museum with ancient Greek items that have been found on the island. Naturally, touring

the Greek Islands with a local free-diver led us to some absolutely beautiful swimming locations, both under and above the water. The icing on the cake was watching Elias go down and spear our dinner which he prepared on board (later in the trip we took another catch to a restaurant who cooked it for us).

**“We visited a secret location I can't even reveal in this article – one that has to be seen to be appreciated”**

Kefalonia was another stop, a much larger Ionian island with a population in excess of 30,000. We took the opportunity to visit a well known tourist site, the beautiful lake of Melissani Cave on Kefalonia – a water-filled cave with a collapsed roof

open to the sky. Another incredible location was what Elias knows as Crack End, almost unknown to others visiting the islands, and a secret location that I can't even reveal in this article – one that has to be seen to be appreciated!

Throughout the week we split our time between these island outings and boat living. Diving in from the deck into crystal clear water, swinging from the halyard, “hydro-massage” (being pulled along behind the boat), and swimming to beautiful locations only accessible from the sea were all truly exhilarating.

Our friends at EY sailing gave us an unforgettable experience out on the Ionian Sea, and we're certain to be returning next year. Feel free to email ICYC, and ask us any questions about the Greek tour, China Cup Regatta, the EDHEC Regatta in France, and weekend trips we run regularly down in the Solent. We also hope to bring in some educational courses to let our members learn about sailing before even hitting the water or to gain the qualifications they're looking for.



The yacht was the one taking the photo // ICYC