



Felix

The Student Newspaper of Imperial College London

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Johnson to move to Transport // Wikimedia

Jo Johnson out as universities minister in cabinet reshuffle

NEWS

Joanna Wormald

Deputy Editor

Johnson has been replaced by Sam Gyimah, amid controversy over the choice of Toby Young for the board of Office for Students

A new universities minister has been named in Theresa May's cabinet reshuffle. Former prisons minister Sam Gyimah takes over from Jo Johnson, who has been moved to the

Department for Transport (DfT). Johnson has faced pressure in recent weeks over the appointment of Toby Young to the board of the Office for Students (OfS), the body responsible for holding universities to account. Among those raising concerns, Imperial's assistant provost (equality, diversity and inclusion) Professor Stephen Curry, vice-provost (education) Professor Simone Buitendijk, and College Union President Alex Compton co-signed an open letter to Johnson, questioning Young's suitability for the role.

Young, a journalist and advocate for free schools, was criticised heavily for

his lack of experience and relevant qualifications. Further anger arose over comments Young had made on Twitter and in his columns, which were derogatory to women, disabled people, and working class students. Critics have claimed that these statements are inconsistent with the OfS' duty to "promote equality of opportunity in connection with access to and participation in higher education". Young subsequently deleted thousands of tweets from his account, describing his previous comments as "sophomoric and silly". Professor Curry's letter, however, notes that Young was already a "mature adult" when the tweets

were posted. The letter further states: "[Young's] attempt to characterise these [comments] as student behaviour shows that he is out of touch with the standards of conduct we would expect of our students at Imperial College."

The letter also criticised Young's articles on educational theory and 'progressive eugenics', calling them unscholarly and flawed.

Johnson claimed that Young's appointment would help to provide "the scrutiny and challenge to the [education] sector that students and taxpayers deserve" as Young is not a university insider. This seemed to indicate that the Department for Education

(DfE) was backtracking from its previous exaggerated claims that Young had held teaching posts at Harvard and Cambridge university. Young also distanced himself from these statements, acknowledging that while he had taught undergraduates at both universities, he had never held an academic post.

Johnson's defence of Young has been linked to his subsequent transfer to the DfT. Speaking to the BBC's Andrew Marr, Theresa May said she had not been aware of Young's past behaviour at the time of his appointment.

"Frankly I'm not at all impressed by those

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EDITORIAL

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New year, same office

I am not generally a superstitious person. I'll avoid walking under ladders, sure, although I think that's a pretty sensible move considering my clumsiness, and I'll say hello to magpies to avoid bad luck, but that's a hangover from my childhood. But one thing that I do feel merits special attention is the beginning of a new year.

I know it's just a random arbitrary date, marking our spinning hunk of rock making one whole revolution around a giant floating ball of burning gas, and there shouldn't really be any reason to be sentimental, or to make any special commitments: after all, we shouldn't be trying to be a nicer person or drink more water for just two weeks in January – we should be doing both all year round (doing one good deed a day is just as beneficial for a dewy complexion as downing two litres of mineral water, trust me).

But skincare aside, I do feel that there is something rather magical about hurtling headlong into a new year. It feels

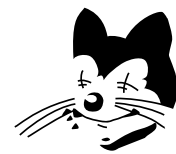
a bit like taking a dive in freezing water – exciting and slightly scary, as we consider what the next twelve months can bring. Above all, it can be a chance to reflect on what we've learnt over the previous twelve months, and bring some of those lessons into the year ahead. So this year, I fully embraced my superstitious side, and arranged a small meal for a handful of friends, where we ate

food to bring good luck and see in the new year: lentils to bring wealth, noodles to represent a long life, pomegranates to encourage abundance, and even a galette de rois to determine which of us would have the best year of all.

It was a lovely night, but what made it really special was sharing it with the people I love and care about. It is in these relationships that we find

solidarity. Community. Family. And taking time to think about how 2017 has treated me, I've come to realise how much my life has changed over the last twelve months. This time last year, I was planning on running to be *Felix* Editor (something I'd encourage anyone reading to do, please.), and not sure whether I'd be chosen for the role. Fast-forward twelve months, and I'm here, on a Thursday evening, writing these words, having just about got the hang of how all this works (maybe).

But, whether or not I've managed to perfect the art of the editorial yet, the biggest change 2017 brought was the new people I've met, and the connections I've made. I spent today in an office scented with toasted bagels, whose kettle was boiled at regular intervals, provided cups of tea and coffee for a wide range of people – postgraduates and undergraduates, biologists and physicists – all brought together by their love for the paper. There's nowhere else I'd rather be.



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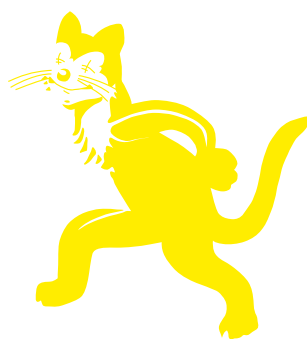
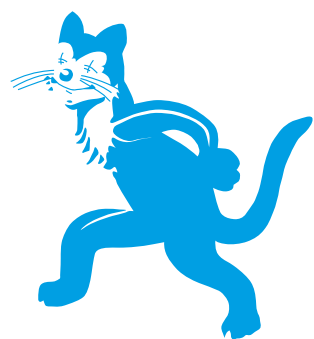
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NEWS

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Stella 4 returns to Union bars following three months absence

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Stella 4 had previously been replaced with Bud Light, which prompted an outcry among students

Imperial College Union has reverted the house lager to Stella 4, little over three months after replacing it with Bud Light.

The decision was announced by the Union on Monday, and follows a survey carried out at the end of last term asking members for their top preference for the house lager. In a statement, a Union spokesperson told *Felix*: “The survey showed that students wanted Stella 4

to be our house lager. We have listened to this and acted accordingly.”

While the lager has returned, however, the cost per pint will increase by 10p, to £2.80. Matt Blackett, Deputy President (Finance & Services), previously made a manifesto promise of “no above-inflation drink prices”.

“While Stella 4 has returned to the bars, the price has increased by 10p, to £2.80 a pint”

Students responded positively to the change.



Stella making its triumphant return to the Union taps // ICU

One student told *Felix*: “I don’t normally get lager when I’m in the Union, but I’m glad to see Stella back.” Another said: “I enjoy the taste of Stella 4 more.”

A Union spokesperson told *Felix*: “The Union

is always looking to improve services for students and listening to students’ views is critical to this.” They said the survey would “shape our thinking on the future primary supplier tender process, ensuring student

views lie at the heart of all the decisions we make.”

The initial removal of Stella 4 from the Union bars saw anger from students, who accused the Union of hypocrisy for not consulting their members on the change. A petition

to “replace Bud Light with an actual beer” was quickly set up, attracting nearly 300 signatures. The Union claimed the change to Bud Light would save students over £10,000 during the academic year.

Universities minister replaced shortly after defending Toby Young's appointment

NEWS

(cont.)

comments,” May said. “If he was to continue to use that sort of language and talk in that sort of way, he would no longer be in public office.”

Despite this, May seemed to accept Young’s apology for his previous statements and declined to sack him.

She was spared the humiliation of a U-turn as Young resigned just eight days after his appointment, claiming that his “ill-judged comments” had become “a distraction from its [the OfS’]

vital work of broadening access to higher education and defending academic freedom”.

An Imperial College Union spokesperson told *Felix*: “I am glad Toby Young has chosen to step down. His inappropriate and often offensive comments and arguments made him unsuitable for the position.”

They added: “He is not representative of students and the values of the higher education sector.”

Johnson was also removed from his post. In addition to Young’s appointment, Johnson had clashed with the prime

minister over tuition fees and the inclusion of overseas students in migration targets. Justine Greening also lost her position as education secretary and left the cabinet after refusing the job of work and pensions secretary. She is replaced by Damian Hinds, who was previously Minister for Employment

Who is Sam Gyimah?

An Oxford-educated former Goldman Sachs banker, Gyimah became the Conservative MP for East Sussex in 2010. He served as a government

whip and David Cameron’s parliamentary private secretary before being appointed prisons minister in July 2016. Gyimah presided over increased security measures for prison officers, a crackdown on prison contraband (including drugs, drones, and mobile phones), and an increase in the maximum jail sentence for stalking from five years to ten years.

What else is Toby Young up to?

An annual eugenics conference held at UCL has been linked to white supremacists and Nazis in an expose published by *London Student*. The London Conference on Intelligence (LCI) has been derided by academics as pseudoscience. Previous speakers include Toby Young, who resigned from the board of the Office for Students this week, and Richard Lynn, the president of the Ulster Institute of Social Research. Lynn funds the LCI and other far-right conferences via the Pioneer Fund, a listed hate group. UCL is investigating, and stated its commitment to combating racism and sexism.

NEWS

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New Year, New News: What happened over the break

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Here's what you missed over the holidays, from libraries to OBEs.

Central Library reopens

Levels 4 and 5 of Central Library reopened at the end of last term, following long-awaited improvement works.

The two floors had been closed since the beginning of summer to install cooling and ventilation systems. Student feedback had long suggested temperature control was a problem, with Library Services calling it “the single biggest source of complaint from the student body for several years”.

The changes were initially scheduled to be completed by the beginning of November. Students and staff highlighted the improvements in power accessibility, but some said the library was now “incredibly cold”.

Works will resume on

levels 2 and 3 in summer 2018. The total cost of the improvements is reported to be £11 million.

Imperial fined after death of lab researcher

Imperial College London was fined £70,000 last December, following the death of a lab researcher.

Damien Bowen, 32, asphyxiated on 23rd October, 2011 at St Stephens Centre Laboratory, which is owned by Chelsea and Westminster NHS Trust. Mr Bowen had been decanting liquid nitrogen alone in a non-ventilated

“Judge Michael Grieve QC said that the College 'accepted the risk assessment was insufficient' following Mr Bower's death”

room where the extraction system had been switched off.

Mr Bowen was employed by Chelsea and Westminster NHS Trust. Imperial College owned the liquid nitrogen used, and was undertaking work in the laboratory suite.

Judge Michael Grieve QC said the College “accepted that the risk assessment was insufficient”. A College representative offered condolences, and said “Imperial takes the safety of its community and those who work closely with it extremely seriously.”

Universities Minister announces fines for 'no-platforming'

Jo Johnson, former universities minister, announced plans on Boxing Day to fine higher education providers which fail to protect free speech.

Johnson singled out “safe spaces” and “no platforming” as “undermining the principal of free speech in our universities”, and set out plans for the new Office for Students (OfS) to ensure “a clear commitment to free speech” in universities. Speaking on BBC Radio

4's Today Programme, he clarified this would involve a range of sanctions, including fines.

Johnson neglected to single out individual universities which would come under fire from the OfS, which is due to receive legal powers in April.

However, Johnson was accused of misinterpreting the issue by a number of politicians and student organisations. Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, said the announcement was “another meaningless gimmick from a government that has run out of ideas”.

Johnson's announcement followed a number of high-profile debates on free speech at universities, centring on visiting speakers: two years ago, Cardiff University students launched a campaign to prevent Germaine Greer from speaking, citing “hateful views” on trans people. The talk went ahead under increased security.

New Year's Honours for five Imperial staff

Five staff members of Imperial were included

in this year's New Year Honours list, for their contributions to educational outreach, medical care, and scientific research.

Helen Sharman, Operations Manager for the Department of Chemistry, was made a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George, for her “services to Science and Technology Educational Outreach”. Dr Sharman was selected for the Project Juno space programme in 1991, making her the first Briton in space. She was awarded an OBE in 1992.

Professor Michele Dougherty (Department of Physics) and Professor Christl Donnelly (School of Public Health) were both given CBEs for their services to science. Professor Dougherty, who has just taken over as head of the Department of Physics, was the Principal Investigator for the magnetometer instrument on board the Cassini probe, which burned up in Saturn's atmosphere last year after its 13-year-long mission.

Professor Donnelly, Professor of Statistical Epidemiology at Imperial's School of Public Health, was awarded the

CBE for her services to epidemiology and control of infectious diseases. She has advised the government on bovine TB, and formed part of the World Health Organisation's Ebola Response Team.

Professor Michael Levin, Professor of Paediatrics and International Child Health in the Department of Medicine, was awarded a CBE for his services to medicine and research. His research group currently studies a number of life-threatening childhood infections, including meningococcal disease.

Finally, Professor Derek Bell, the Faculty of Medicine's first Professor of Acute Medicine, was awarded an OBE for his services to acute care. He was previously the inaugural President of the Society of Acute Medicine, and is currently President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh.

Professor James Stirling, Provost of Imperial, said: “I extend my warmest congratulations to all of Imperial's staff, alumni and friends recognised with New Year's Honours. This is a richly deserved recognition.”

Imperial-educated doctor claims university stress led to alcohol addiction

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Lauren Fowler, 25, avoided a prison sentence for drunk-driving this week. She claimed that she drank at university to "cope with the stress"

An Imperial-educated junior doctor this week avoided a prison sentence following two arrests for drink-driving.

Lauren Fowler, 25, who graduated from Imperial College London last year, said the stress of studying had left her addicted to alcohol. She appeared at Stockport Magistrates' Court this Monday after being arrested twice in the last year for driving under the influence. She was bailed following her first offence, during which she crashed her car in a busy pedestrian area. Less than two months following this, she was arrested again after drinking half a bottle of vodka and driving around a hotel car park.

In a statement read out in court it was claimed Fowler “drank at university to cope with the stress, and she didn't know who to go to for help with her addiction.” Fowler attended Imperial as a direct entry student, after studying in Cambridge for the first three years of her degree.

In a 2015 survey by the National Union of

Students, it was reported that 85% of students felt drinking was part of university culture, while 5% of students had driven whilst over the legal limit. The majority were not aware of any safe drinking campaigns at their university.

A College spokesperson said it “would not be appropriate” to comment on individual cases, but

said Imperial is “committed to promoting the health and well-being of its students, and offers any students with alcohol or substance misuse problems the opportunity to obtain support and be treated sensitively.”

Fowler will now face a disciplinary investigation from the General Medical Council.

NEWS

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St Mary's swimming pool to close by end of year

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

College are shutting the pool at the end of the academic year, citing the need for cost savings across Campus Services.

Imperial College London is set to close the swimming pool at St Mary's campus at the end of the academic year, citing a low number of College users.

The swimming pool, which is located in Paddington, will close its doors on the 16th July, 2018. In a statement online, the College said it was "not sustainable to continue running this facility given the costs of



Closure of the pool has been met with criticism from some // Imperial

required maintenance and the fact that only 15% of the pool's users are from the College community".

The move has prompted criticism from the pool's users, who told Felix that little information had

been passed on to them – a decision one staff member called "quite shocking and frankly offensive". One of the clinical lead doctors at St Mary's told Felix: "Colleagues are upset and angry. There are no

pools in the vicinity, and the location is convenient for most staff. The pool is very well-attended, with many non-staff users. It's an institution that has been around for a long time, and they have tried

to close it down before."

Felix has also been told that NHS staff who tried to protest against the closure were told "not to make trouble".

"One staff member told Felix that staff were 'upset and angry' over the closure of the pool"

The decision was made by Provost's Board as "part of the wider cost savings around Campus Services", which include removal of the Senior Common Room cooked

breakfasts, reduced outlet opening hours, and a reduction in catering options.

In a statement, an Imperial College School of Medicine Student Union (ICSMSU) representative told Felix: "ICSMSU regrets the closure of the St Mary's pool, and will work with College and Imperial College Union to ensure minimal disruption to the student experience."

The 20-meter swimming pool is open to students, Imperial staff, NHS staff, and members of the public. The College said the swimming pool at Ethos, on the South Kensington campus, would be "available for all College students and staff". At the beginning of this academic year, College announced plans to cut the out-of-term opening hours of Ethos by 18 hours a week.

Cashless trial extended

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

The trial of cashless payments, which started in December across four outlets, has been expanded to eight outlets, and will continue through January.

The cashless-only trial that occurred last December has been extended across Imperial-owned outlets.

The trial, which ran from 4th to 22nd of December, and covered four catering outlets, has been expanded into eight outlets, including the

Senior Common Room restaurant, Queen's Tower Rooms, and the College Café.

Justifying the trial, the College claims over 80% of catering transactions are already cashless. A College spokesperson told Felix: "the cashless trial has so far been received very positively, and for many customers has actually gone unnoticed... early indicative results clearly show that the use of a cashless payment method is quicker than using cash."

However, the trial has been met with criticism by students and staff. One postgraduate student they had stopped using College catering as a result. They told Felix: "I don't understand why Catering feel they need to push out the 20% of transactions paid

with legal tender." Felix has also heard reports of posters which had been put up around the Sheffield walkway last December, criticising the trial.

A College representative said the trial was put in place "as a result of feedback from students and staff expressing dissatisfaction with lengthy queue times in our outlets at peak times."

The College says the trial will continue "into January", but has not given a definitive end date. Following the end of the trial, an "evaluation will take place following the extended trial period and any subsequent permanent changes will be communicated in advance."

New Head of Physics appointed

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Professor Michele Dougherty took over as Head from the 1st January.

Professor Michele Dougherty is now in position as Head of the Department of Physics at Imperial.

Professor Dougherty, who joined the College in 1991, was made Professor of Space Physics in 2004. She was principal investigator for the magnetometer instrument used in the Cassini mission to Saturn,

which concluded last September after nearly 20 years.

Professor Dougherty will replace Dr Kenny Weir, who was acting Head of Department. The department that has faced a number of problems with student satisfaction: this year's national student survey marked Physics as one of the worst-performing departments in terms of satisfaction, with particular issues identified with feedback and marking. In the Complete University Guide, Imperial is ranked last for physics courses in terms of student satisfaction, while Imperial dropped to 30th in the UK in last year's Guardian rankings, which are

heavily weighted towards student experience.

Professor Dougherty has been recognised by the UK Science Council as one of the top 100 living scientists in the UK, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2012, after winning their Hughes Medal in 2008. She was made a CBE in this year's New Year Honours list. She said "I am very proud to be Head of the Physics Department – it is a great department with fantastic people and I look forward to working closely with them and the College."

Professor Dougherty is scheduled to be the Head of Department for the next five years.

COMMENT

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Solving our environmental problems without hindering reproductive rights

Some people argue that the environmental impact of the pill should be reflected in increased tax on users, but this would limit access for thousands of women across the country.

COMMENT

Lara Bailey

Comment Writer

I read a *Forbes* article by Tim Worstall recently, where he suggests that women using the contraceptive pill should pay £1105 (\$1500) in tax to due to its environmental impact. That's right: a bank-breaking one thousand pounds per woman. Such a tax would significantly limit access to the pill – I personally would not be able to afford it if I were charged that much. If we allow any form of contraception to be taxed, regardless of the size of the tax, then we make it acceptable to limit access to it. But we can solve our environmental issues without hindering the ability of people to control their own bodies.

The contraceptive pill contains the hormone ethinyl estradiol (EE2), which is not removed by the sewage system, and remains in wastewater. It can lead to intersex changes in fish, causing populations to decline or even collapse as males are eliminated. Mr Worstall bases his tax conclusions on a 2012 paper by Owen and Jobling in *Nature*. It states that the total cost for the UK to update the sewage system is more than £30bn, and the yearly running cost per plant would be £800,000. Since then, the EU has placed EE2, and other pharmaceuticals, under regulation. To meet the cost, options discussed were an increase in



The pill is a safe and accessible option for millions of women // CC

household bills or a tax on pharmaceutical companies. Big Pharma, whose profit margins outstrip those of banks, the media, and oil and gas, claimed they cannot pay the tax due to the cost of R&D.

“The pill is not the only chemical wrecking environmental havoc – antibiotics do too”

The EU and UK governments plan to upgrade the sewage system to remove a range of chemicals (not

only EE2), and, as far as I can tell from research, it is the tax-payer, not Big Pharma, paying.

Mr Worstall bases his argument on the principle of “polluter should pay”: if you use the pollutant then you ‘should’ be taxed for it. But he does not explore this argument fully. EE2 is not the only chemical wreaking environmental havoc that sewage systems do not remove: antibiotics are not removed by the sewage system, and studies show that this is contributing to antibiotic resistance as the antibiotics interact with bacteria associated with sewage treatment plants. Following his line of argument, we should also tax anyone who uses antibiotics.

Other chemicals not completely removed

include pesticides, herbicides, and household chemicals. Pesticides and herbicides impact the growth and reproduction of wildlife, and cause lowered disease resistance and death. Household chemicals – shampoo, detergent, toothpaste – have similar effects. Phosphates in detergent encourage the growth of toxic algae which reduces water oxygen levels, reducing aquatic diversity. Should we tax homeowners for using laundry detergent? We need to be fair if we tax anyone for the associated pollution of the chemicals they use. Otherwise, Mr Worstall seems to be suggesting that we single out women on the pill.

The environmental damage caused by EE2 and other chemicals

needs to be addressed. But we need to solve our environmental problems without hindering the reproductive rights of the 2.5 million women who use the pill every day in the UK, or the 100 million

“We must solve our problems without hindering the rights of the 2.5 million UK women who use the pill daily”

worldwide. Such a tax essentially removes the

choice of using a 99% effective, free from point of service, and mostly side-effect free method of contraception.

Mr Worstall states that women have other options: “...there are a number of alternative methods, various barriers, creams, sponges, IUDs, which do not carry this environmental cost...”

I am not convinced he knows much about female contraception. Choice of contraception is not a flippant decision, given that each option works differently, and women's bodies respond differently. There is no ‘one size fits all’ method, so it needs to be easy for people to choose the option that suits them.

Sponges fail 9%-24% of the time, depending on whether the woman has

COMMENT

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already given birth. Spermicide creams have to be used alongside another form of contraception, as alone they fail 30% of the time. A diaphragm (barrier), used with spermicide, has an effectiveness of 92-96% but carries a risk of bladder infection and toxic shock syndrome. A change of weight of only 3kg means a new diaphragm has to be fitted, and while some women may find it simple to place in and remove a sponge or diaphragm before and after sex, others would not. A tax on the pill would leave options which are less effective and more hassle – options which don't suit a busy lifestyle. Sorry Mr Worstall, I am quite busy working towards a career.

The IUD and implant are 99% effective and preferred if women are likely to forget the pill. However, given that they are invasive, there's a small risk of infection and the IUD can cause pain or bleeding. Furthermore,

the implant can't be used with certain medications or antibiotics. Condoms are 98% effective, and unlike other methods protect against STIs; but they are much less easy to access for free on the NHS, and in stores they can be expensive. While some women may experience side-effects from the pill,

“While some may experience side-effects, the pill is more accessible than many other forms of contraception”

it is less invasive, simpler to use, more effective, and more accessible than other forms.

But even these alterna-

tives can have an impact on the environment: latex condoms, for example, contain additives to prevent breakage, but this means they take a long time to break down. Some condoms are non-biodegradable, while the one biodegradable condom is made of natural lambskin, but does not protect from some STIs. Who should we tax for the environmental impact of condoms? Again, Mr Worstall has forgotten about his own ‘polluter should pay’ argument.

From another angle, it would also be unfair to only allow richer women to use the pill. We cannot ignore the fact that unintended pregnancy disproportionately impacts women in poorer communities. Limiting their access to contraception only makes it harder for them to control their lives and invest in their futures.

And, what does Mr Worstall think of the economic and social costs of unintended pregnan-

cy? The environmental impact of unintended extra humans? He doesn't consider any of this in his article. These are issues that should be considered before placing a tax on contraception.

Regardless of whether one or several contraceptive methods are taxed, taxing any form of contraception turns it into a political, social, and economic issue. Limiting access jeopardizes the health of women by reducing access to basic, preventative healthcare. Contraception reduces unintended pregnancy and abortion; it helps women control their own lives and invest in their futures; it helps couples plan families. It's not hard to guess that a tax on one of the main forms of contraception may influence numbers of unintended pregnancies.

Contraception saves governments across the world billions in healthcare costs. Women who cannot afford contracep-

tion, or to look after a baby, still have sex. An NHS report showed that between 2013 and 2020, unintended pregnancy and STIs will cost between £84.4-127 billion. Continued cuts could increase this by £8.3-10 billion. Improved access, compared to current access, would save £3.7-5

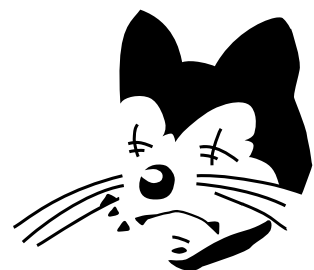
“Reducing access to the pill would increase healthcare costs overall – it's illogical”

billion. Unintended pregnancy is currently predicted to cost £5.2 billion over this period, and reducing access would increase this by £299 million. Its illogical to reduce access.

Taxing the users of the

contraceptive pill to pay for the sewage system upgrade is not an option. It makes sense to upgrade it so that it removes all harmful substances, to prevent other environmental issues, as well as feminisation of fish. Methods that remove EE2, antibiotics, and other substances have been tested. There needs to be a general tax for all upgrades, and either tax payers or relevant companies need to pay. The authors of the main study were concerned the decision would be made behind closed doors and that the government would not engage the public. I don't know about you, but this article was the first I had heard of it.

I strongly believe that my generation and the generations to come have the capacity, moral sense, and intelligence to solve our environmental problems, but without having to sacrifice what we believe in.



A New Year's Resolution to stamp out joy

Grumpy Bastard had an awful time this New Year's Eve, and wants to make sure everyone is as miserable as they are.

COMMENT

Grumpy Bastard

Comment Writer

W e l c o m e back to the first *Felix* of 2018. For those of you expecting anything radically different from the paper this year, prepare to be disappointed: it will continue to pump out the same trite leftist bullshit as last year as it has nearly every year since the degenerates took over the paper. In their defence however, it does appear that those of a more conservative persuasion

struggle to string anything longer than a sentence together and certainly not an eloquent article. I will spell it out for you: if you want your views represented in the paper then you have to write for it. Bitching on Imperial Secrets won't change that, you fucking lemon.

Moving on to the main topic of this week's venting of spleen: New Year, and why it can fuck off. New Year, or, as I prefer to know it, ‘the collective hangover from the Christmas, and the last excuse for freedom before the grinding drudgery of everyday life begins’, is widely celebrated all over

the world for some reason. Exactly what that reason

“I despise optimism in general, but especially the form that it takes at New Year”

is, I have yet to establish, but as far as I can tell, it seems to be that people are thrilled that orbital mechanics are staying

mostly the same. I just hope people are equally overjoyed when a giant space death ball obeys the very same laws and wipes out civilisation.

Like a prisoner dragging a ball and chain behind him, the New Year brings with it a flood of retrospective contemplation about your personal achievements and failures of the year behind you as well as a strange sense of optimism about the world being a better place simply because the number at the end of the date has incremented by one. I despise optimism in general, but especially the form that it takes at New Year's: the

resolutions. Resolutions, next to the American way of writing the date, are possibly the stupidest thing that human beings have come up with. On a serious note, what kind of perverse mind decided that the date should be written that way? If any other nation also copies this system, then you too are a bunch of stupid pricks.

I am unsure exactly what it is about resolutions that makes me so angry. It could be the insincerity of it, or the fact that everyone approaches them with the genuine belief that the future will be better than the past,

rather than acknowledge that it will be identical except with hangovers as a growing up present. For those of you yet to experience a hangover, it's like being hit on the head by the Hunchback of Notre Dame, while your body attempts to turn you inside out in the mistaken belief that this will help in any way. Imagine being completely immobilised and also staring at your own vomit on a plug socket for an entire day and throwing up every time you put something in your mouth. That is your future: a sad pile of puke next to your face. Happy New Year.

SCIENCE

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Does the future of organ transplant lie in bioprinting?

Developments in 3D printing may lead to a world where we're able to print new organs, but not everyone is convinced that this technology will solve current waiting times.

SCIENCE

Varshit Dusad

Science Writer

Nothing could be more painful for patients and their families than waiting for an organ to save their life. According to latest NHS figures, the average wait time for a kidney transplant is 944 days – despite a significant decrease from 1,153 days previously, two and a half years is a long time to wait. To make matters worse, during this period families suffer from heavy financial turmoil, with medical conditions leading to the potential loss of income. This can be disastrous if the patient-in-waiting is the primary earner of the family.

However, long waiting times are not the only complication involved with an organ transplant. According to NHS statistics, there is a huge disparity in supply and demand, with just 2,456 organ donors compared to 6,388 patients requesting transplants in 2016/17. The situation becomes more complex as an organ transplant is, in and of itself, non-trivial: organ donations require immunocompatibility between donors and recipients, similar to blood transfusions, where criteria such as blood group and Rh status also need to be met. Moreover, the patients may fall victim to infections due to the immunosuppressants administered during transplantation. Alternatively, they might develop undiagnosed medical conditions such as HIV, Hepatitis B, or

cancer from the donors themselves. Currently, organ supply is filled with altruistic donations, but there is also a black market for organs; though illegal and unethical, this industry is very much present, especially in developing countries such as India, China, and Nepal.

Recent developments in medical science could tackle these issues with one example being additive manufacturing – commonly known as 3D printing – which may allow for bioprinting of organs! Through this process, an organ can be designed using a modelling software, and then printed with biomaterials such as polymers and hydrogels, in addition to the patient's own cells. 3D-printed organs, if successfully produced, could tackle

“While the use of 3D printing is ambitious, it could be a revolutionary change for healthcare”

the big three obstacles in organ transplants: patient wait time, financial and emotional distress, and immunological failure. Currently, 3D bioprinting has a significant presence in customized implants, prosthetics, and working models for simulating the effect of drug treatments outside the human body. While the use of 3D printing to eliminate the crushing deficit of organ

supply is ambitious, it could be a revolutionary change for the healthcare industry – extending people's lives, as well as their productivity.

Experts in this field, however, have issued caution against keeping hopes too high. Jennifer Lewis, a bioengineer at Harvard University, is positive about the developments but suggests that the complicated architecture of organs such as livers and kidneys means bioprinting is unlikely to be a plausible solution in the immediate future. Another expert in 3D bioprinting, Dr. Anthony Atala, director of the Wake Forest Institute for regenerative medicine, has a more positive outlook: he has successfully led a project to grow a human bladder using bioprinting and transplanted it to seven young patients suffering from spina bifida, a condition which can cause bladder problems. He has also set his eyes on bioprinting kidneys – one of the organs most commonly in demand. In a seminal TED talk in 2011, he displayed a kidney which had been printed on a machine earlier that day. But while the talk was a smashing success it also invited heavy criticism: the kidney was an artificial model and not functional, and he was accused of misleading the audience. According to Lewis, though the science is progressing in the right direction, it is still a long way from providing real assurances to patients in need.

At present, many scientists are debating the actual potential of 3D bioprinting however, with a number of companies



Many patients are currently facing a wait for organs // CC

trying to make it commercially viable. Cellink, a Swedish based company founded last year, develops new biomaterial as “ink” for 3D bioprinters. With customers in 25 countries across the world – including researchers at MIT, Harvard, and University College London – its success story explains the fact that they have enlisted for an Initial Public Offering (IPO), becoming a publicly traded company just ten months after being founded. It's a noteworthy achievement, which exemplifies the market potential of organ bio-printing. Organovo is a much older name in this field. They state their goal is “to build living human tissues that are proven to function like native tissues, with reproducible 3D tissues that accurately represent human biology”. While their current products revolve mostly around providing in vitro tissue models for drug testing, they are actively investing in developing artificial organs ready for

transplant. Furthermore, this field appears to be extremely lucrative, with a report suggesting that 3D printing has a potential of being an “\$8.9 billion industry, with \$1.9 billion (21%) projected to be spent on medical applications”.

Some critics, however, have their own opinions about the entire matter. While there are religious and ethical concerns over ‘man playing god’ by creating artificial tissues, there are also concerns about how this could create another divide between rich and poor. Furthermore, the caution raised by Jennifer Lewis against “false hope” remains: patients may currently be waiting years to get an organ, but these technologies may take another decade to develop and be approved.

Hope and uncertainty are two sides to the same coin. Though we would not witness the results of these efforts tomorrow, the day after tomorrow may be better

and brighter! The world of medicine has promised many cures in the past, but not all of them become successful, and despite being scientifically approved, it takes a long journey for any treatment to become an acceptable ‘cure’. The same goes for organ bio-printing: it is the

“While there are ethical concerns, others are worried about an economic divide”

interplay between technological innovation, social acceptance, religious beliefs, and legislative framework that will eventually shape the future of organ bioprinting in our daily lives.

SCIENCE

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Connect with conservation: oceanic ghostbusters

SCIENCE

Steve Allain

Science Writer

I am sure that many of you have been moved by the recent sequences in *Blue Planet II* highlighting the devastating effects that plastic is having in our oceans. Although the production team removed all the plastic they came across, this pales in comparison to the amount that actually ends up in our oceans each year. One of the most devastating pieces of plastic waste that enters our ocean ecosystems are ghost nets. These are fishing nets that have unfortunately been lost, or accidentally left in the ocean by fishermen. They drift through the ocean, or

stay anchored in place, where they entangle unsuspecting marine animals such as dolphins, sea turtles and sharks which drown when trapped.

This is where 'Net-Works' comes in: it is

"Fishing nets that have been lost can drift through the ocean, entangling unsuspecting marine life"

a unique partnership between Interface and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) which began in 2012. During this period, Interface were on the lookout for a source

of material that would benefit communities, as well as the environment. At the same time, ZSL was in process of developing a new model of community-based conservation. Coupled together, this cultivated in Net-Works, which seeks to empower people in coastal communities in the developing world by the collection and wholesale selling of lost or discarded nylon fishing nets. The primary focus is to remove the nets from the ocean, thereafter helping local communities raise money to increase their standard of living. The nets gathered are eventually recycled into yarn to make carpet tile, after entering the global supply chain.

Adding to the issue is the fact that we currently live in a throwaway culture, and unfortunately not everyone has the means to recycle their



Plastic is causing numerous problems for our ocean // Wikimedia

waste. Moreover, not all plastic can be recycled, so alternative uses for the waste has to be found. This can only occur through innovations and outside-the-box thinking, as demonstrated through Net-Works. You can help too by cutting down on the amount of plastic you

use, and doing more to recycle.

Since the start of the unlikely partnership, over 142 metric tons of waste nets have been removed from the oceans through Net-Works. Currently, the program only operates in Cameroon and the Philippines, but there are

ambitions to push things even further and scale up. This could very well be the starting point of the removal of billions of tons of plastic waste currently found in our oceans!

PHOENIX

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SCIENCE

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Learning to grow old gracefully: the inevitability of ageing

Some may hope that immortality is around the corner, but new research shows ageing may be here to stay.

SCIENCE

Sarah Wong
Science Writer

Ageing, or senescence, was considered an inescapable fate of living organisms in the past, where stories of immortality remained in the realm of science fiction. However, in recent years, scientists have developed compelling theories to propose a genetic basis to ageing, implying a means to either avoid or delay the process. Nonetheless, new scientific evidence shows that ageing is, in fact, inevitable!

Consider natural selection, a concept where individuals that are 'fitter' are more likely to reproduce. With more offspring, the genes that are responsible

for 'fitness' are selected and amplified over time.

"It was previously believed that by manipulating longevity genes slowing ageing was possible"

However, there is a shortfall in this selecting mechanism – genes that promote fitness in youth, but simultaneously have damaging effects at a later stage in life. In other words, Mother Nature stops selecting when the organism starts to produce

offspring. This 'selection shadow' for organisms that pass their reproductive age permits genes that contribute to late-stage deleterious effects to be passed on. These genes are termed 'longevity genes' and it was believed that, by manipulating these genes, slowing ageing was no longer an impossible task.

To understand these longevity genes, scientists have studied ageing in various organisms at a cellular level. It was postulated that 'garbage', like misfolded proteins, needs to be removed from a cell for normal function. Failure to do so results in cell malfunctioning and senescence. This is particularly enhanced in single-celled organisms, where there is intercellular competition between somatic cells: the more efficient the cell-garbage

removal processes are, the longer the cell lives.

Comparably, in a multicellular organism, similar to you and I, intercellular competition is also occurring. Since we need our cells to work with each other to serve a larger function (e.g. muscle cells work together to form a muscle tissue, which can contract and allow movement), removal of non-cooperative cells is an important task to maintain the organism's fitness. Thus, it is imperative to weed out non-functioning cells that do not work well together. Additionally, intercellular competition is constantly occurring, where cells which are unable to grow as well as their counterparts are eliminated, whilst highly functioning cells, with higher proliferative rate, are selected.

are still allowed to grow. Consider cancer cells that out-compete other cells in the region despite having zero benefits to the host organism. To eliminate cancer, the extent of intercellular competition must be reduced, and this eventually leads to the decline in cellular cooperation and the subsequent ageing process.

By studying fruit flies and worms, evidence that supports this notion was shown, where intercellular competition prevents accumulation of ageing cells at the expense of cancerous cell growth. Vice versa, a delay of intercellular competition causes a loss of functional cells, therefore cells don't cooperate as well as before. This evidence suggests that ageing is an inevitable part of living.

Nevertheless, this topic

"By studying fruit flies and worms, evidence suggested that ageing is an inevitable part of living"

is under ongoing investigation. By studying and comparing the degree of intercellular competition in different species, the process of ageing could be understood better, and perhaps, in the future, be delayed!

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Research indicates ageing is something we can't avoid forever // Flickr/Transformer18

"It was postulated that 'garbage', like misfolded proteins, needed to be removed from a cell for normal function"

However, intercellular competition is a two-edged blade. Although senesced cells are generally slow in growth, warranting their removal, cells with high proliferative capacity serving no particular function

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At Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust in West London we are interested in finding out the effects of hormones that control reproduction.

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ARTS

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The Twilight Zone – between fact and fiction

The Almeida Theatre take on an ambitious project, weaving eight episodes of the classic TV series into a cohesive work of theatre that dazzles and delights.

ARTS

THE TWILIGHT ZONE



Where? Almeida Theatre
When? Until 27th January
How Much? From £10

**Vaishnavi
Gnananathan**
Arts Writer

Between light and shadow, science and superstition, fear and knowledge is a dimension of imagination. An area we call the Twilight Zone.”

Amidst all the Christmas shows and pantomimes filling theatres in December, the Almeida Theatre takes on this brave adaptation of the early 1960s American sci-fi TV series. I’d never watched the original show, but being a fan of old sci-fi, I couldn’t pass up the opportunity to see how a cult show could translate from screen to stage. I have to admit, my expectations were high: the Almeida’s minimalist posters and cryptic descriptions had piqued my interest.

American playwright Anne Washburn adapts eight separate episodes of the 150-episode TV series but chooses to string them together as a whole. Different stories intertwine and intersect: a mysterious alien guest has crept into a diner in a snowstorm; a young girl gets whisked from her bedroom and trapped in between dimensions; astronauts just returned to Earth start to vanish one by one. These are just three of the eight episodes, and it already sounds like an eclectic mix of stories

that couldn’t possible form a cohesive whole. But, somehow, Washburn manages to achieve just that: she jumps between stories with ease – never in a way that seems confused or unintentional – to create something truly unique.

The real standout is the final story: a nuclear threat and everyone’s consequent race to save themselves bring to light racial tensions between neighbours in an otherwise idyllic suburb. A black couple, a white couple, and a Jewish immigrant break into a fierce fight over who has the most right to their friend’s nuclear bunker, one into which they are trying to force their way. It brings up ideas on what it is to be American, as each individual argues their superior claim, high-

“Somehow, director Anne Washburn manages to jump between stories with ease”

lighting the absurdity of nationalism and drawing not-so-subtle comparisons to the present day. Opinion might vary on whether this is timely and topical or an exploitation of a subject that, at present, seems ubiquitous in the media. Personally, it felt apt – the nuclear threat characterised the early 60s captures the essence of the time period of the show whilst being



Do you dare to go through... The Scary Door // Marc Brenner

undeniably relevant to the audience seeing it today.

There are obviously fond references to the original show that were, as a *Twilight Zone* novice, a little lost upon me, but this doesn’t really hamper enjoyment, and most of the references are enjoyable as jokes in their own right. One running gag across the stories features mysteriously appearing cigarettes, what I later learned to be a reference to the constant smoking in the original show. Knowledge of the original show does clearly make this funnier, but it’s played in such a way that it becomes a joke in its own right.

The stage is set up to look like an old TV set, complete with the CBS logo every time the curtain is down. The original show was in black and

white, and this production sticks to that aesthetic, with a black backdrop covered in white stars and a cast dressed primarily in black and white. I was a massive fan of the aesthetic and, especially, the 50s and 60s outfits of the cast. The staging of the play is part tribute and part parody, and – perhaps inevitably, considering its source material – often very, very weird. There are moments when actors in black jumpsuits and goggles carry cardboard images across the stage in an imitation of opening and closing credits – it sounds bizarre but it’s undeniable that it works. It manages to hit the right balance between genuine imitation and parody so that, with the appropriate suspension of disbelief, you can buy into it.

The cast is great: the actors play multiple roles across the different stories, and no single person really stands out. But this seems almost like a conscious effort that makes it feel more like a TV show with an ensemble cast rather than the heavy focus on a few leads that we more commonly see in theatre. There are obviously flaws, but honestly, they just add to the character of the performance. The uniform overacting from the cast captures the cheesy late 50s/early 60s vibe and makes you feel like you’re really watching television enacted before you – a show within a show in the best way.

I left the performance determined to start watching the original show, at least to see the eight episodes adapted,

but knowing, in the back of my guilty mind, that it was all too likely I would

“The acting really captures the cheesy vibe of late-50s/early-60s television”

end up binging all 150 episodes over my Christmas holiday. If the idea of all that time lost to TV doesn’t scare you, or if you’re already a die-hard fan of the TV series, this adaptation of *The Twilight Zone* is one not to be missed.

ARTS

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If you're not a fan of puppets, you should look away now... // Manuel Harlan

Pinocchio ends up a little wooden...

The National Theatre's production has great effects, and a cracking score, but a poor script and inconsistent acting mean it fails to ignite.

ARTS

PINOCCHIO



Where? National Theatre
When? Until 10th April
How Much? From £15

**Vaishnavi
Gnananathan**
Arts Writer

The National Theatre's winter production of *Pinocchio* is based on the 1940 Disney film, including songs from the original. Broadly following the original, it adds in some minor changes: Gepetto, the old and lonely puppet maker, longs for a child of his own even as he creates puppets for other children. He is visited by The Blue Fairy who commissions him to make a puppet boy from the tree she has brought with her, and, as Gepetto carves out the puppet, he comes

to life. Gepetto names the puppet boy Pinocchio and decides to raise him as his own; Pinocchio, like in the Disney film, is fascinated by the human children he sees playing and longs to be a 'real boy'.

The story boils down to Pinocchio's quest to find out what humanity really means, and, in doing so, to become human. This production plays with this concept in an interesting way: the human characters like Gepetto and Stromboli, a travelling circus owner who imprisons Pinocchio during his quest, are all portrayed by giant puppets, operated by actors, one of whom provides the voice. In contrast, Pinocchio, our puppet protagonist, is played traditionally by a single actor. This creates a great contrast and really brings out the essence of the story, highlighting the difference between man and puppet by flipping their portrayal. It's unfortunate that the production

doesn't fully commit to this idea: although The Blue Fairy is a puppet in her first appearance, in subsequent scenes she is played by a single actor, which somewhat ruins the effect established in the beginning scenes. Similarly, The Fox, a malicious being who seeks to trick Pinocchio, is also played by a single actor, and these scenes lack the effect created by the scenes with Gepetto and Pinocchio – you can't help but think that The Fox as a puppet may have been more menacing.

The plot deviates only slightly from the Disney film, but somehow manages to feel worn out and predictable. Perhaps it's because the basic story is one that we have seen told over and over again in other media, but the production fails to excite. Pinocchio leaves his father in search of meaning and adventure, only to realise that the true meaning of humanity lies

in his father's love. The script, by Dennis Kelly, adds nothing of substance to the bare bones of the tale – almost every line is predictable and many of the key moments fall flat. Young children will likely still enjoy it, but adults ac-

"The script, by Denis Kelly, adds nothing of substance to the bare bones of the tale"

companying them may be left waiting for it to end.

The quality of the acting is mixed. The actors charged with voicing the puppets do an impressive job of bringing the expressionless characters to life. Audrey Bisson is particularly good as Jiminy Cricket, the cricket appointed by The Blue

Fairy as Pinocchio's conscience and companion. She manages to convey emotion and real character through her voice alone, all whilst handling the character's puppet. Unfortunately, many of the other actors fall far short of Bisson's performance. Mark Hadfield's performance as Gepetto is by no means poor and, in an ordinary portrayal, may well have been quite engaging. However, his voice acting fails to bring the puppet Gepetto to life the way Bisson does for Jiminy. The 'non-puppet' actors – Joe Idris-Roberts as Pinocchio and David Langham as The Fox – are both rather weak; they deliver overexaggerated performances clearly aimed to appeal to a young child audience. However, it detracts from the story and only draws attention to the poor script.

There is still a lot to be said for this production, however. The effects are impressive and you can't

help but marvel at the technical genius behind it. Monstro, a giant whale, is impressively created on stage, and the moment where Pinocchio and Jiminy are swallowed by the whale is visually striking – one of the best of the performance. Martin Lowe's score is based on the songs from the film, but adapted to better suit this stage version. All of the musical performances are without fault, and really carry the entire production.

It's a real pity that the script and acting let down the many great aspects of this production. The use of giant puppets to portray human characters is such a fitting choice for this story and has real potential to be impressive, and there are certainly some standout moments. Ultimately though, it fails to create any real emotional impact and you're left feeling indifferent, even in the grand climax of Pinocchio's quest.

ARTS

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Blood and guts (and laughter) in ancient Rome

Titus Andronicus hits the Barbican stage with a bang, bringing severed limbs aplenty, but also reminding us of the similarities between past and present.



Titus brings law and order to Union Council // Helen Maybanks

ARTS TITUS ANDRONICUS



Where? Barbican
When? Until 19th January
How Much? From £10

Sandra Engardt
Arts Writer

Titus Andronicus, one of Shakespeare's Roman plays, has this fall reached the London stage at the Barbican. It is the story of the fictive Roman general Titus Andronicus, who returns to Rome after having entrapped Tamora, Queen of the Goths, and her three sons. The eldest son will soon be killed, and a series of revenges are set in motion. The play follows the struggle and strife for ultimate revenge between the emperor of Rome, the Goths, and the Andronicus family; a violent journey characterized by sorrow and a couple of beheadings.

The play starts subtly. Actors are crossing the stage. Their appearance, with their relaxed posture and casual clothing, make them easy to mistake as people working on the set. As the number of actors increases it becomes clear that this is a part of the play, and soon they are all dancing. The dance becomes a battle which sets the hostile atmosphere that will remain throughout the play's three hour run-time.

“The hostile atmosphere is established at the start, and continues for the three-hour runtime”

The first act feels long. Despite all the events – or maybe just because of them – I left the first act

wondering if this was not only the end of the act, but of the play itself. It is a well needed pause, and with some time to reflect over all the impressions from the first act, I re-entered the theatre curious, but also anxious, pondering what was to come. The second act was much more enjoyable. The intensity grew as the play progressed – interactions with the audience, more and more complicated revenges, and a severed limb here and there kept the audience more than awake.

There is a duality of emotions and how the actors portray their characters in *Titus Andronicus*. An example is Saturninus, the man who in the beginning is elected as the next emperor of Rome. With his political speeches and classy blue suits Saturninus resembles any modern day politician. The most powerful man of the country is, however, ridiculed almost throughout the whole play. The charismatic and secure man in

front of the camera's lens is, behind closed doors, just another insecure fool in Superman pyjamas. The contrast between the public and private way of acting among the characters is a recurring theme: all the characters, including Titus himself, act strangely from time to time, providing the audience with a great laugh, but also giving us opportunity to reflect on the acts of our own era's influential people.

The whole play is set in an environment that reminds us more of our own time than historical Rome: cameramen run around capturing political events, people in the crowd take selfies, and a “Deliveroma” man delivers messages. The familiar setting makes the play, with all its horror and brutality, more relatable for the audience, and allows us to compare and question the similarities and differences between our modern society and the play itself. There is a comfort in knowing

that, despite how terrible the political situation in the world might seem, we will never reach the same level of insanity as in *Titus Andronicus*. But if we dig deeper in our analysis we soon see how

“The play reminds us more of our own time than ancient Rome”

the number of similarities between the periods of time increase while the differences decrease. Is our society not also full of political power games, revenge, and horror? Do the most powerful leaders today not have ridiculous games that might lead to an even bigger bloodbath than in this play? Due to its modern day setting and immortal themes, *Titus Andronicus* gives us the opportunity to reflect over our modern day life while

keeping all the factors that makes it an enjoyable play.

The two things that stick in my memories of the play are brutality and, surprisingly, laughter. Laughter is a regular reaction from the audience, probably just as regular as the killing. *Titus Andronicus* is a truly entertaining play: the acting, the interaction with the audience, the small comments – it all adds up to a humour that is necessary in order to deal with all the death and unpleasant events of this play. Whether you want to analyse the political situation and acts of the characters in this play, or went purely just to have a good time, *Titus Andronicus* has something for you. Though I would not recommend it if you're not the biggest fan of blood, despite the fact that it's pretty morbid from time to time, it remains the funniest tragedy I have ever seen.



When you try and bring up Brexit with family over Christmas // Helen Maybanks

ARTS

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A winter of wonderful content: the art to watch out for this term

From a revival of a play by the writer of Moonlight, to a retrospective of Picasso's work in 1932, by the way of an operatic take on Gandhi's time in South Africa, these are the picks of the spring.

ARTS

Indira Mallik

Arts Editor

Christmas trees are being thrown out, commuters are once again heading grim-faced into the bowels of the Underground, and many of you will be revising for exams, or settling back into another term of lectures – there's no doubt about it, 2018 has officially begun.

Over in Victoria, *Hamilton* is getting into the swing of its run, with Lin-Manuel Miranda hoping to recreate in London the mania that gripped New York in 2016. Quite aside from *Hamilton*, there's plenty of shows and exhibitions to look forward to in London this term.

Rita, Sue, and Bob Too

After allegations of sexual misconduct arose about Max Stafford-Clark, one of the producers involved with *Rita, Sue and Bob Too*, a play that follows two teenage babysitters as they embark on a sexual relationship with their employer, The Royal Court cancelled its run. Following a public outcry over the theatre censorship, the decision was reversed. The play, which is semi-autobiographical, was written by Andrea Dunbar when she was just 19. Its portrayal of two girls on the cusp of adulthood is vivid and powerful. Far from being something that should



Detail from *Nude, Green Leaves and Bust* by Pablo Picasso. 1932 Private Collection // Succession Picasso/DACS 2017

be shelved in the era of #MeToo, it is a necessary staging.

At The Royal Court from 9th to 27th January. From £12.

The Brothers Size

Melding together Yoruba mythology and a searing portrayal of brotherly love, *The Brothers Size* is a revival of the debut play by writer Tarell Alvin McCraney who also wrote the Academy Award-winning *Moonlight*. When it was first staged at the Young Vic ten years ago it received widespread critical acclaim for its masterful mixing of ritual and reality in a story about two African-American brothers: Ogun who is sensible and the wilder Oshoosi who has just been released from prison.

At the Young Vic from 19th January to 14th February. From £10.

Satyagraha

The word *satyagraha*, is derived from Sanskrit and means “the strength of truth”. Mahatma Gandhi used the concept of *satyagraha* to guide his campaign of non-violent resistance to colonial rule in India which eventually led to India's independence in 1947. Philip Glass' operatic masterpiece tells the story of Gandhi's early years in South Africa where he first began to form the ideas of non-violent protest to bring about seismic political change. In doing so Glass provides commentary on the nature of war and politics in the world. As with *Akhnaten* and *Einstein on the Beach*, the other two operas in Glass' Portraits trilogy, Glass eschews conventional narrative, and *Satyagraha* weaves Gandhi's story into scenes from the Hindu epic *Mahabharata*. There is

no dialogue, instead the principles and chorus sing verses adapted from the *Bhagavad Gita*. Grand in scope and spectacular in its delivery, *Satyagraha* promises to be magnificent.

At the English National Opera from 1st to 27th February. From £12

All Too Human: Bacon, Freud, and a Century of Painting Life

No one exemplifies the legacy of British figurative art more than Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud, both of whom sought to capture vitality of their subjects in their portraits. Freud's almost sculptural use of paint inspired Jenny Saville's visceral depiction of the abundance of flesh. *All Too Human* will seek to draw out the threads linking Bacon, and Freud to contemporaries Frank Auerbach and Paula

Rego, as well as placing their paintings in context of those by the previous generation which included Walter Sickert and David Bomberg.

At Tate Britain from 28th February to 27th August. From £16.

Picnic at Hanging Rock

Playwright Tom Wright adapts Joan Lindsay's classic exploration of the clash between Victorian sensibilities and primal nature in Barbican's *Picnic at Hanging Rock* this February. Drawing on the psychological undertones of the original source material, director Matthew Lutton takes us through this dark tale: three schoolgirls and their teacher decide to head to a rural spot one day in 1900, and mysteriously vanish. They are never seen again. A haunting pick, which is not to be missed.

At Barbican from 21st February to 24th February. From £16

Picasso 1932

Picasso can be a dizzying artist to get to grips with, producing over 50,000 works in his lifetime, ranging from cubism to realism, clothwork to paintings. Luckily, the Tate Modern decide to narrow things down for us, picking only a single year in the artist's life: 1932. It was an exceptionally creative time for Picasso, and the works on offer explore his creative drive and personal struggles. Somewhat amazingly, it will be the Tate Modern's first solo Picasso exhibition, and is set to be a spring blockbuster.

At Tate Modern from 8th March - 9th September. From £20

Rewarding excellence in academic and support staff

STUDENT ACADEMIC CHOICE AWARDS

Nominations are now open for the annual Student Academic Choice Awards (SACAs). SACAs are an opportunity for students to recognise and reward excellence among teaching and support staff.

There are eight categories, from teaching to innovation to support, and each student can nominate as many staff members they think are worthy! Every nominee will receive a coveted SACAs mug.

You have until Sunday 11 February to submit your nominations. Just go to imperialcollegeunion.org/sacas now!

Logging volunteering hours



Get more out of your volunteering experience by logging your hours online through Imperial Plus. Imperial Plus provides an online record of all your volunteering and allows you to be recognised for your efforts. You earn a Volunteer Certificate when you log more than 25 hours.

Imperial Plus also provides training opportunities for volunteers. So take your learning one step further and complete the Skills Development Programme (SDP), aimed at equipping Imperial volunteers with the leadership skills they need to be successful in their roles and beyond. Places are limited – so sign up now at :

imperialcollegeunion.org/sdp

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the team at imperialplus@imperial.ac.uk.

Cashless pilot in College outlets extended and expanded



The cashless-only payment pilot service which ran from 4 to 22 December across four catering outlets on the South Kensington Campus has been extended into January and expanded into four further outlets: Fuel; Queen's Tower Rooms; SCR restaurant; Electrical Engineering Café; Business School Café; SCR Café; College Café; H-Bar Café.

On average, over 80% of all College catering transactions are already cashless. Imperial College aims to improve your experience by reducing queuing times and improving security.

During the pilot, you will be able to pay at these outlets using your Yoyo account, contactless cards, chip and pin cards (except American Express).

Survey on staff sexual misconduct in UK higher education



The groundbreaking national survey into staff sexual misconduct in UK HE, in partnership with the National Union of Students' Women's Campaign, is open now until midnight **15 January 2018**.

If you are a current UK higher education student, please fill out the survey here: imperialcollegeunion.org/smhesurvey

The survey is open to current and former students of all genders who may experienced sexual misconduct from HE staff while at a UK HE institution.

AFROGALA '18

— 03.02.18 —



Imperial College
African Caribbean Society

MUSIC

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

New year, new music

A smattering of the releases that we in the Felix office are excited for in 2018

MUSIC

Adrian LaMoury

Music Editor

2017 was a year of highs and lows for the music world. In a beige scene dominated by Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran, we were treated to rare glimpses of colour from the likes of LCD Soundsystem, Kendrick Lamar, and Arcade Fire. Some lived up to expectations, some exceeded them, and some sadly did neither (sorry not sorry). 2018 is sure to be another rollercoaster, so let's take a small look

at what's in store.

Arctic Monkeys

We don't really know much about this one yet, but bassist Nicholas O'Malley recently let slip in an interview that some recording has taken place. And it makes sense: *AM* was 5 years ago now and frontman Alex Turner and his new 70s hair have finally stopped touring with the Last Shadow Puppets.

Vampire Weekend

Another one that's been quiet since 2013. A new LP could be pretty

soon though, given it's supposedly been in the works since January 2016. Oh, and it might be called *Mitsubishi Macchiato*. Interesting. Watch this space.

Franz Ferdinand

This one is more certain. Out on February 9th, *Always Ascending* promises a new, dancier sound. And it's accompanied by a host of shows, including at Brixton's O2 Academy on February 24th. (Word on the street is that Alt. Music Soc are selling cheap tickets tomorrow, but you didn't hear it from me).

Grimes

Back in the summer Claire Boucher teased that she was hitting the studio every day, working on a follow up to 2015's *Art Angels*. Far from the sun-kissed twinkle pop of the last album though, she's promised "chill vibes, downtempo, synth-y shit." Well, I for one am excited.

Courtney Barnett

It was only three months ago that we had our most recent dose of this Australian chill-rock-er, when she teamed up with long-haired layabout Kurt Vile on *Lotta Sea*

Lice. But she's itching to go again, with a new solo album already close to completion, lacking only a title. Thinking of one is certainly a lot of pressure you've got *Sometimes I Sit and Think and Sometimes I Just Sit* to live up to.

Frank Ocean

"5 albums before 30" he declared in 2012. Well, as of October 28th, that ship has well and truly sailed. However, Ocean recently teased on Tumblr "Well I made the album before 30, I JUST AINT PUT THAT BITCH OUT!" and with his reputation of not releasing things

when he says he will and then suddenly dropping two albums at once with no warning, anything is possible.

David Byrne

A frequent collaborator with the likes of Brian Eno and St. Vincent, it's been 14 years since the Talking Heads frontman put out a solo album. Always one to buck the trend, the non-ironically named *American Utopia* is reportedly full of optimism and positivity. Well, we look forward to that ray of sunshine bursting through our blackout curtains in early March.

They've only gone and bloody done it

Sneaking it in on the final day of 2017, King Gizz complete their five albums in one year claim

MUSIC
GUMBOOT SOUP

Artist: King Gizzard and the Lizard Wizard. **Label:** Flightless. **Top Tracks:** Beginners Luck; The Great Chain of Being; All is Known. **For Fans Of:** Pond, Ty Segall. *44 minutes*

Henry Eshbaugh

Music Editor

As avid readers of the *Best Music Section On Earth™* might already be aware, The Gizz made a legendary attempt to stick five albums out last year (the fourth of which, *Polygodwanaland*, was reviewed herein). We awaited with baited breath to see whether Stu & Co would deliver

their fifth - as the new year approached, hope dimmed to despair. But our momentary lapse of faith was misplaced, as the band completed a hail-mary album release. "g'day [sic]," proclaimed The Gizz on December 30th, "our new album *Gumboot soup* [sic] is coming out tomorrow."

The album gets a lot of things right. First and foremost, a shoutout to the rhythm section that kept a tight groove pinned down throughout the 44 minute runtime; it sounds like they were balancing on a knife-edge. On top, there are splats of synths and nifty little flute bits sprinkled around all over the place, welcome additions to slower tracks that would have missed the enriching.

This album also suggests a technicality that wasn't present in earlier Gizz works.

The intonation is more delicate. The rhythms are more precise. The compositions are more layered, the band is tighter, and the effort, overall, comes off as much more mature. This album drives home, without a doubt, that King Gizz hasn't squandered its marathon recording effort this year, even if bits fell flat. The band is better off for having done it.

"It's like flat beer - there's nothing wrong with the taste, but it doesn't feel right."

And yet, there's a problem with this album, one that shows up on some tracks more than others.

It's like flat beer - there's nothing wrong with the taste, but it doesn't *feel* right. As technically good as the band feels (with respect to their previous work), the songs have lost their mojo, like Austin Powers in that one *Austin Powers* movie. There's no hectic sense of fun like on *Nonagon*, nor is there the tongue-in-cheek jokery that made *Paper Mache Dream Balloon* such a pleasure.

This leaves us in an unfortunate position. The band is writing some of their best material, but at the same time have lost the vital spark that made them so good in the first place. They've traded the irreverent energy for cold technicality, and that makes it kind of hard to jump on the hype train for this LP. Are they tired? Have they phoned it in? Is this *legitimately* their best effort?

To rehash a point that ran in a previous edition of *Your Favorite University Newspaper®*, these guys need some time off. It's summer in Australia - they should hit the beach, put their feet in the sand, and forget about recording

for six months. Maybe Buckethead can keep up this frenzied pace; nobody else can. And their fatigue shows. To me, King Gizz always sounded like B52s on crack. This album sounded like CHON with a hangover.



Sooooooooooooooooooooooop // Flightless

MUSIC

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No one ever really thought they were still making music together

Just before Christmas, Pharrell Williams and co. dropped their first full-length album since 2010. And with it, they bring a whole host of friends including the likes of Kendrick, Ed Sheeran, and Rihanna.

MUSIC

**NO ONE EVER
REALLY DIES**



Artist: N*E*R*D. **Label:** Columbia. **Top Tracks:** Lemon; Voilà; Don't Do It!; Deep Down Body Thurst. **For Fans Of:** Tyler, the Creator, Clipse. *51 minutes*

Suraj G

Music Writer

After the seminal *In Search Of...*, N*E*R*D's offerings throughout the noughties were but a string of disappointing releases. As the collective fell off everyone's radar, its most prominent member, Pharrell Williams, began his meteoric rise to stardom, though Chad Hugo and Williams would continue to produce together as The Neptunes. Meanwhile, Williams' work became synonymous with hit single after hit single, year after year. While he wasn't working on frivolous commercial albums like *Girl* and

"The album blends the hardest, most experimental shades of hip-hop with the ethos of pop music almost seamlessly"

"The production on this album is alive, booming and undeniably fierce"

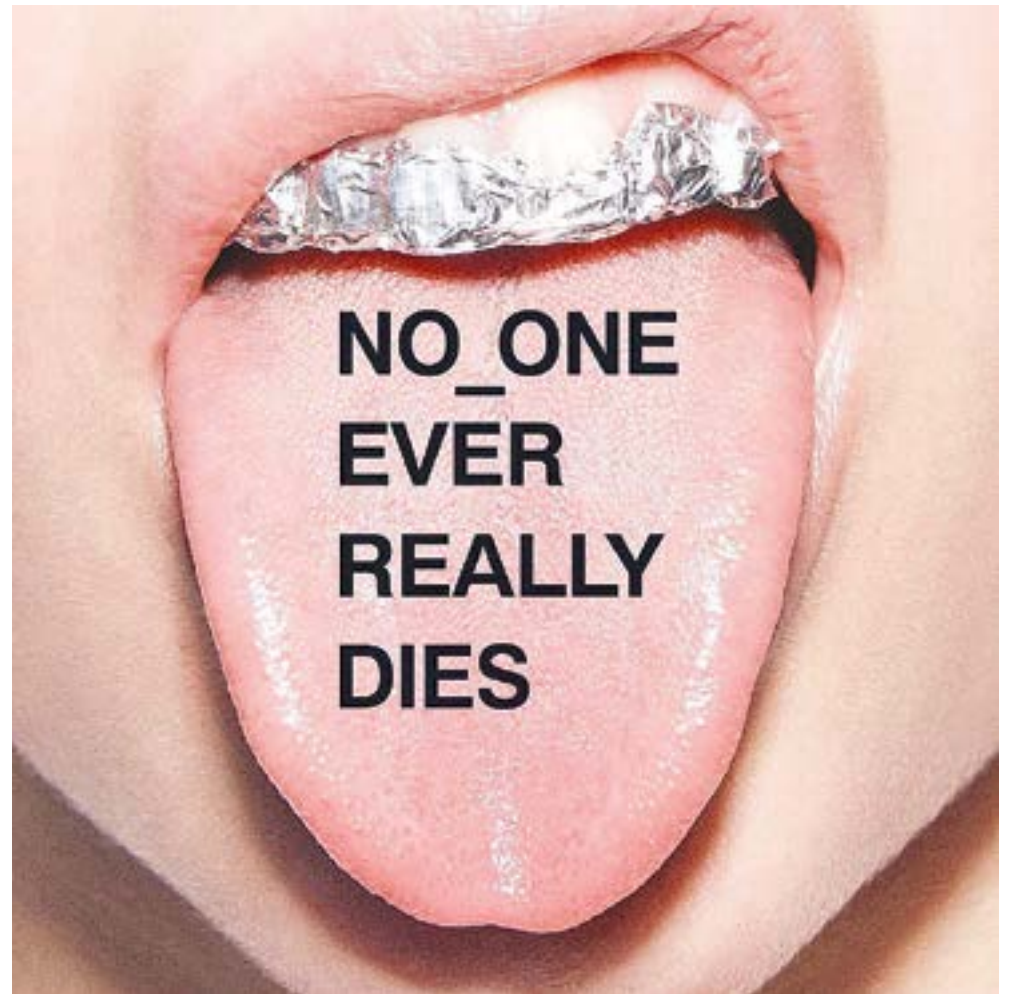
on film soundtracks such as *Despicable Me*, *Despicable Me 2*, and the nerve-wracking conclusion, *Despicable Me 3*, his more discreet production work absolutely took off. As Williams' and The Neptunes' resume of production credits grew, they presented some of the most off-kilter, original and creative production the hip-hop scene had ever encountered. They'd transformed what would otherwise be bland pop songs, into something dynamic and full of life. The duo had carved themselves a place in hip-hop's history after producing Clipse's monstrous *Hell Hath No Fury*, an absolutely electric piece of work.

Cut to 2017 and Williams is now a household name. First single 'Lemon' is released out of left-field with only sparse cryptic marketing. And not too long after, this album is announced.

NO ONE EVER REALLY DIES is striking from the get go. The album art is bizarre and strange, vulgar and yet memorable, with a woman donning a foil grill, shot in a style vaguely reminiscent of Terry Richardson. The

production on this album is alive, booming and undeniably fierce, exploring new ground effortlessly song by song. The album blends the hardest, most experimental shades of hip-hop with the ethos of pop music almost seamlessly. Energetic performances from a wide selection of guest vocalists, ranging from Gucci Mane to Ed Sheeran (who is surprisingly decent on this) to Kendrick with the highly varied production and beat switches, make for an engaging and addictive listen. The album starts off strong, with hard hitters like 'Lemon' and 'Voilà' leading the way, the latter featuring an insanely catchy hook with Gucci Mane. For the fifth track, we are gifted with 'Don't Do It!', featuring Kendrick, arguably the best song on this album. Pulsating with short guitar stabs, the track explores some dense lyrical ground

"Pulsating with short guitar stabs, the track explores dense lyrical ground regarding police brutality and racial unrest, a recurring theme on the album"



Tip of the tongue, teeth and the lips // Columbia

regarding police brutality and racial unrest, a recurring theme on the album.

Tracks 6 to 8 are a short lull. While there are attempts to explore new sounds and ideas, they sadly fail to pay off in this stretch. 'ESP' is generally dull, poorly structured and unable to be saved by production; the same goes for 'Lightning Fire Magic Prayer', and 'Rollin' 7's'. The diamond in the mud, however, is André 3000's brief but fiery verse.

Things pick up again afterwards, with 'Kites', featuring M.I.A., Kendrick, and some of the most hypnotic production on the record. The combination of M.I.A.'s woozy

delivery and Kendrick's razor sharp flow is a little jarring, but certainly makes a refreshing change from the stagnant previous few tracks. However, 'Secret Life of Tigers' is Williams at his most #woke, with lyrics turning from an accessory of the production to obnoxious and silly, making it hard to take the song seriously. This is all rather unfortunate as the song could have evidently been so much more. The album finishes with 'Lifting You' featuring Ed Sheeran, where he isn't absolutely dreadful. Things end on a relaxed and decidedly limp note, with lax production that sticks out in the album, and not in a

good way, for it was the more aggressive and edgy production that really set the earlier tracks apart.

Through several listens, it has become evident that we do indeed have a good album over here, but its inconsistencies stop it from being a truly great album. While most ideas are original and new, some are plagued by structural and lyrical issues, Williams often leaving much to be desired, especially given the difficult topics he tries to cover. Despite all this, the album is mostly enjoyable, and given some more time, I reckon this album will make its mark in the future as quintessential N*E*R*D.



Michelle Williams managing to act despite another bad wig #Justice4Michelle // Sony

Money can't buy you everything...

Ridley Scott's *All the Money in the World* tries to take on too much, and the result is a film that lacks focus.

FILM

ALL THE MONEY IN THE WORLD



Dir: Ridley Scott. **Script:** David Scarpa. **Starring:** Michelle Williams; Christopher Plummer; Mark Wahlberg. *133 minutes*

Fred Fyles
Editor-in-Chief

Any opinion of Ridley Scott's latest film, *All the Money in the World*, is going to be indelibly coloured by the situation surrounding its production. Scheduled to be released in the States at the end of last year, with Kevin Spacey in the lead, the film seemed doomed following the numerous sexual assault accusations against Spacey that had emerged. Instead of canning the project, however, Scott decided to reshoot Spacey's scenes, having Christopher Plummer play the tight-fisted billionaire

J.P. Getty instead. It was an audacious move, one that only the most dedicated director could pull off; Scott proves himself to be meticulously organised, or slightly insane, or perhaps both. The release date was only delayed by three days.

A momentous undertaking, perhaps, but it also makes it a difficult film to review – any positive aspects are bound to be taken out of proportion, while faults can be excused as a result of the extensive reshoots. Ultimately, however, the circumstances of the production will go down as the most interesting aspect of the film: *All the Money* is a technically-competent but stolid drama, which leaves little impression once the credits have rolled.

Taking as its source material *Painfully Rich: The Outrageous Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Heirs of J. Paul Getty* by John Pearson, who is no stranger to salubrious biographies, *All the Money*

centres on the kidnapping of J.P. Getty's grandson, Paul (Charlie Plummer), by Italian Mafiosi. After the initial kidnapping, we are treated to about thirty minutes of explanatory footage, which establishes how Getty became rich (oil), his parenting style (distant), and his spending habits (frugal). This section, which darts across countries and time zones with such speed it's dizzying, seems largely unnecessary, particularly when the film's runtime means it begins to drag during the second half.

Once we get back into the meat of the film, we manage to fall into a steady rhythm. The beating heart of the plot is Paul's mother, Gail Harris (Michelle Williams), who married into the Getty family before divorcing her husband after he becomes addicted to drugs. She's fighting a battle on three sides: trying to convince her son's kidnappers that she doesn't have the money they're after, whilst simul-

taneously dealing with the Italian police and her ex-father-in-law. She's facing an uphill struggle to have Getty pay the ransom fund: he refuses to hand over the money, initially because he is convinced by his advisor Fletcher Chase (Mark Wahlberg) that the kidnapping has been staged. Even when it all turns out to be gruesomely true, he balks at giving away any more than the maximum tax-deductible amount.

Any concerns that Plummer's rapid addition may come across in his acting are unfounded: he inhabits the juicy role of Getty with aplomb, savouring his lines like luxurious morsels, and managing to captivate in all his scenes. He portrays Getty as a ruthless tyrant, resplendent in his moral iniquity, allowing us to largely (but not completely) banish Spacey's spectre from the screen. He is matched by Williams, who – despite being burdened with an unfortunate wig – delivers

her lines with a Katharine Hepburn-esque gravitas. She shows the horrific situation Gail is put in pitch-perfectly, moving from outrage to sorrow over the span of a couple of lines. Wahlberg, on the other hand, seems slightly miscast: his Chase lacks the high drama of his co-leads' characters, and he is never able to lose himself within his role entirely.

With his usual eye for visual style, Scott is brilliant at portraying the franticism of Rome during the 1960s and '70s, all paparazzi on vespas, wide lapels, and classic cars. Scott moves his camera through interior locations with grace, ensuring that the audience takes in every aspect of the space, often framed with shafts of soft light filtering in. *All the Money in the World* is an incredibly textural film, a facet reflected in Janty Yates' beautiful costume design, which Scott highlights throughout.

Where *All the Money in the World* really falls down, however, is when

it is deciding what sort of film it wants to be. While the first thirty minutes resemble a family drama, for the remainder Scott seems to veer between thriller, romance, and procedural drama. It's not helped by the creative liberties Scott took with the source material, tacking on extra sequences which come across as redundant, adding little other than bolstering an already-long runtime. Scott switches lanes frequently, never leaving us with enough time to enjoy the action playing out in front of us. The film leaves us with more questions than answers, mainly about why such a film needed to be made, or what sort of point it's making. While there are the beginnings of several great films in *All the Money*, the leads simply trail out. Scott should have learnt some lessons from Getty himself: if you try and have everything, you'll just end up with nothing at all.

FILM

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Coming to a screen near you soon...

Felix Film takes you through our top tips for this term's film releases, as we plunge into awards season

FILM

Fred Fyles
Editor-in-Chief

For some people, January may bring thoughts of new year's resolutions, gym sessions, and anxiously awaiting the sun to return. For cinephiles, however, it marks the true beginning of awards season: the Oscar nominations will be announced at the end of this month, and before those are given out we have the BAFTAs to look forward to, as well as the fallout from last week's Golden Globes awards. We get our films a little bit later than in the States, which means that from January studios will start putting out their big hitters. Here are five of our favourites:

Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri

Frances McDormand is garnering high levels of Oscar buzz for her leading role in Martin McDonagh's *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*, a dark comedy set in a small town in the American Midwest. She plays Mildred Hayes, a tough-as-nails mother whose daughter was raped and murdered seven months previously, on a lone stretch of road. Her killer still hasn't been found, so Hayes erects three billboards, calling out the local police force for their inaction. With support from Woody Harrelson, Sam Rockwell, and Lucas Hedges, *Three Billboards* takes on heavy topics, like sexual violence, police brutality, and institutional racism – it's been picking up steam on the awards circuit,



despite some critics questioning McDonagh's treatment of sensitive subjects.

Released 12th January

"Frances McDormand is garnering Oscar buzz for her role in *Three Billboards*"

Last Flag Flying

Director Richard Linklater has been on a roll for the last few years, picking up critical claim for *Before Midnight*'s realistic treatment of monogamy, *Boyhood*'s

emotional clout and ambitious scope, and the frat-boy hijinks of *Everybody Wants Some!!* He returns later this month with *Last Flag Flying*, a spiritual sequel to the 1973 film *The Last Detail*. *Last Flag Flying* asks heavy questions about the role America has played in the middle east over the last two decades: taking place in the winter of 2003, we follow "Doc" (Steve Carell), who makes a trip cross-country to bury his son, who was killed in Iraq. He enlists two old friends, Sal (Bryan Cranston) and Richard (Laurence Fishburne), with whom he served in Vietnam. On the surface a gentle buddy comedy, Linklater draws links between the America of the 70s with its more modern iteration, suggesting that some things never



Top picks for this term // A24; Fox; Sony Picture Classics; Fox

really change.

Released 26th January

Loveless

Russian director Andrey Zvyagintsev broke through into the mainstream last year with *Leviathan* – a tragic retelling of the biblical story of Job, this portentous tragedy, of epic proportions, set out to expose the corruption that lies at the heart of modern Russia. He follows this up with *Loveless*, which again serves as a critique of Russian life. Taking as its starting point a child who goes missing, *Loveless* explores topics as wide-ranging as class divisions, married life, and the callousness of an overstretched police force. With a painterly eye, Zvyagintsev takes us through a series of beau-

tifully-composed scenes, which nevertheless retain a sense of existential dread.

Released 9th February

The Shape of Water

Sally Hawkins is one of the most unique British actors working today. Coming to public consciousness with her leading role in Mike Leigh's *Happy-Go-Lucky* back in 2008, she returns to the spotlight this award season as the centrepiece of Guillermo del Toro's fantasy drama *The Shape of Water*. Set during the height of the Cold War, the same year as the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The Shape of Water* sees Hawkins play Elisa, a mute janitor who works at a top secret government facility. She falls in love with an amphibian

creature the government has captured, in a story of forbidden passion, with Michael Shannon taking on the antagonist role as Colonel Strickland, who is in charge of the facility. Michael Stuhlbarg continues his sterling support work as one of the lab's scientists, while Octavia Spencer stars as one of Elisa's colleagues. Del Toro is back where he's most comfortable: a richly-textured world of fantasy and drama, where real life and the magical coincide with ease and grace. It's definitely one to watch.

Released 14th February

Lady Bird

It's been a while coming. Over the last decade, Greta Gerwig has shown herself to be one of the most exciting actors and screenwriters of her generation. From early features in mumblecore films, through to collaborating with partner Noah Baumbach in *Frances Ha* and *Mistress America*, two of the best comedies to come out of America in recent years. Now, with *Lady Bird*, she has shown what she can do when given the freedom to write and direct. Starring Saoirse Ronan as Christine "Lady Bird" McPherson, *Lady Bird* is a coming-of-age drama indirectly inspired by Gerwig's own experiences growing up. It arrives on our shores trailing behind it a stream of fervent critical acclaim, as well as box office clout – the insightful screenplay, in particular, has been highlighted as emotionally rich and multifaceted, taking the audience through the an uncannily-familiar adolescent experience.

Released 16th February

BOOKS

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Strong contenders for 2017 T. S. Eliot Prize for poetry

Books Editor **Jingjie Cheng** looks at this year's T.S. Eliot Prize shortlist, whose winner is announced on Monday

BOOKS

Jingjie Cheng

Books Editor

The T. S. Eliot Prize, awarded by the Poetry Book Society, is arguably one of the most prestigious poetry prizes in the world. Awarded every year to a poetry collection in English first published in the UK or Ireland, it has seen many household names winning in the past, including Ted Hughes, Carol Ann Duffy, Seamus Heaney, and Derek Walcott.

The Poetry Book Society started the prize in 1993, on their 40th anniversary, in honour of its founding poet T.S. Eliot. Since then, along with the Forward Prize in poetry, it has become one of the two most important literary prizes in the UK dedicated solely to poetry. This year, to mark the 25th anniversary of the prize, the prize money has been increased to £25,000.

The shortlist is announced every October, and 2017's was selected

out of 154 entries, by judges Bill Herbert, James Lasdun, and Helen Mort. As per tradition, shortlisted poets will participate in a reading at the Royal Festival Hall this Sunday.

As poet Sandeep Parmar noted in his article in *The Guardian*, while this year's shortlist is definitely deserving, there is a glaring lack of BAME poets, especially since 2017 has seen a significant amount of work from BAME poets published, including Kayo Chingonyi, Richard Georges, André Naffis-Sahely, and Nick Makoha, among others.

The only minority poet on the shortlist, however, has always been one of my favourite poets, and I'm glad that he has made the list: Ocean Vuong is a Vietnamese-American poet whose poetry has always sounded like music to me. His work often combines the balladic nature of his grandmother's stories and folk songs with his keen grasp of the English language. Born on a rice farm outside Saigon, he arrived in the US at the age of two after his family

spent a year in a refugee camp in the Philippines. His collection *Night Sky with Exit Wounds* explores themes of home, loss, and family, opening with 'Telemachus', a poem about the relationship between the narrator and his father, which is at once both intimate and distant, personal and anonymous. The title itself, 'Telemachus', suggests the fraught homecoming of Odysseus to his son. Indeed, classical references dot the collection, often in order to deepen themes and reveal the paradoxes behind complex emotions.

The collection that struck me most was Jacqueline Saphra's *All My Mad Mothers*, which explores love, sex, and family through themes related to motherhood. Her poems are bold and energetic, words that bound along, extravagantly painting a picture of what a mother is, in all her multitudes. The title poem, 'All My Mad Mothers', describes the narrator's mother 'trying to catch the sun', 'sucking fruit flies through a straw', 'barely spoke between her



Robert Minhinnick was nominated for his timely collection // Flickr/Mooganic

bruises', and finally, 'hard to grasp', trying 'to ease her way into this world. Or out of it.' The mother is at once imaginary and very real. This is not a standard collection of poetry appreciating motherhood or elevating mother-daughter relationships. Instead, this is a collection that paints motherhood in all its gritty detail: the abuse, the disappointment, the monotony, but also the inevitable celebration of love.

As for the collection that seems the most timely, Robert Minhinnick's *Diary of the Last Man* tackles the current major issues facing the world. He starts by meditating on the environmental apocalypse, then moves on to the horrors of war in the Middle East. Interestingly, in the same collection he also offers translations from Welsh, Arabic, and Turkish. Throughout the collection, there is a sense of urgency – that time is running out for humanity and there are too many terrible things that are allowed to happen. There is a running theme of loneliness and uncertainty – 'Perhaps/I am the last man'. It is an unforgiving

collection, blunt about the atrocities of the world, but among this the kindness that remains becomes even more poignant.

It is a strong shortlist this year with very current themes, and it will be in-

teresting to see who wins. Regardless of the winner, the shortlist shows that poetry is still relevant in expressing the human condition in all its forms, from politics and family to displacement and loss.

This year's shortlist:

Tara Bergin – *The Tragic Death of Eleanor Marx* (Carcanet)

Caroline Bird – *In these Days of Prohibition* (Carcanet)

Douglas Dunn – *The Noise of a Fly* (Faber & Faber)

Leontia Flynn – *The Radio* (Cape Poetry)

Roddy Lumsden – *So Glad I'm Me* (Bloodaxe)

Michael Symmons Roberts – *Mancunia* (Cape Poetry)

Robert Minhinnick – *Diary of the Last Man* (Carcanet)

James Sheard – *The Abandoned Settlements* (Cape Poetry)

Jacqueline Saphra – *All My Mad Mothers* (Nine Arches Press)

Ocean Vuong – *Night Sky with Exit Wounds* (Cape Poetry)



Jacqueline Saphra's collection explored the nature of motherhood // Jacqueline Saphra

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Friday 12 January



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Free before 21:30, £2.00 entry after
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h GSU

PGI FRIDAY

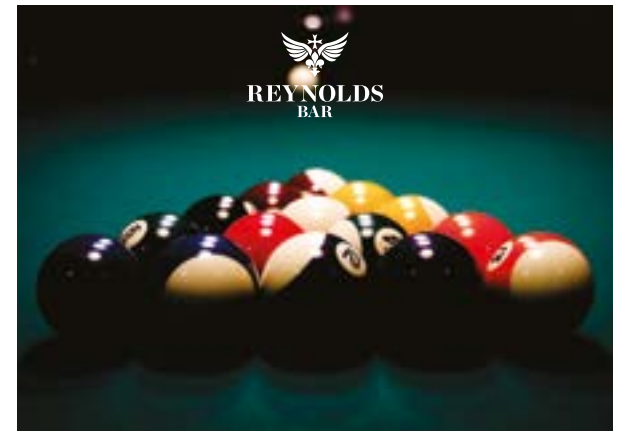
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20:00-22:00

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CSP Wednesday

Every Wednesday
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VK Ipop

19 January
20:00-02:00

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Wednesday 13 December
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Every Thursday
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PGI Friday

Every Friday
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Every Tuesday
18:30-23:00

Sports Night

Every Wednesday
18:00 onwards

Cocktail Night

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TELEVISION

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BBC's *Blue Planet II* – A natural masterpiece showing

The return of Blue Planet to our screens was a landmark event, not only for television, but for our relationship to the natural world as a whole. Through the course of seven episodes, David Attenborough's intrepid team took us through the splendour of the oceans, and what we're doing to them.

TELEVISION

BLUE PLANET II



Ratan Gor
TV Writer

The BBC's nature documentary series *Blue Planet II* comes 16 years after the original ground-breaking programme came to our television screens. Narrated by none other than Sir David Attenborough, scored by the Academy Award winning composer Hans Zimmer, and using the latest in camera technology, such as suction-cupped cameras mounted to the backs of killer-whales, *Blue Planet II* chronicles the untold stories of our

ocean's creatures like never before.

To reveal the lives of these sub-aquatic animals over seven episodes, the *Blue Planet II* teams spent five years researching and filming for the series. This amounted to 125 expeditions in 39 countries and over 6,000 hours of footage: a testament to the BBC teams' tenacity and ingenuity.

Attenborough's narration is colourful and heart-warming, with the camera-work nothing short of a visual marvel. Hans Zimmer's mastery of music is the perfect accompaniment to the visuals, as though each note was composed, bespoke, for each frame. This all culminates into a treat for the eyes, ears, and soul.

The nature documentary series has received a

reception akin to that of a Hollywood blockbuster: the first episode was the most streamed program on BBC iPlayer in 2017, with over 4.2 million views to date. Discoveries previously unknown to science, events never before captured on camera, and a vivid message about our own impact on the oceans that may well change the way people and governments think about the seas: these are a few of the achievements of *Blue Planet II* thus far.

Episode one: *One Ocean – Clever fish*

In the first episode, we meet a remarkable little fish that challenges our understanding of fish intelligence. The tusk fish is named after the six chaotic teeth it uses to grip onto hard-shelled clams.

It takes a single clam to a special coral, where it then proceeds to whack it against a protruding, anvil-like rock. After more than fifty hits, the determined fish eventually breaks through to the meat, claiming its reward.

That fish can have the ability to use tools was a remarkable discovery for the filming team. In the final episode, we learn that this particular fish was given the name Percy, the persistent. We meet Alex, the cameraman who had been diving in these waters since he was five and had filmed Percy. He describes the utter devastation caused by the coral bleaching events that took place during the time of filming: Percy's coral kitchen, once vibrant and colourful, turns a skeletal white, creating a lump at the back of our throats.

Episode two: *The Deep – Sinking into the darkness of an alien world*

The second episode takes us to a place we know less about than the surface of the moon: our deep oceans. We voyage to deep sea brine lakes, where an eel spasms out of control as it is poisoned by the harsh conditions, and to the Mariana Trench, deep enough to swallow Mount Everest and where life on Earth may have begun.

The sequence following a 30-tonne whale carcass sinking from the surface to the sea floor was the most memorable. The whale creates a culinary bonanza for the creatures of the deep. The

audience's jaws drop as six-gill sharks come from far and wide, eventually covering the body of the whale, ravenously tearing off chunks of flesh to satiate their appetites that have developed after nearly a year of fasting. Crabs and other scavengers clear the carcass leaving nothing but bone after 3 months. This bone is eventually consumed as well, finishing off the circular recycling process.

Episode three: *Coral Reefs – Chaos in coral cathedrals*

"Blue Planet II is a testament to the tenacity and ingenuity of the BBC teams"

Coral occupies less than one-tenth of one percent of the ocean floor, yet is home to a quarter of all marine species. We saw scenes of octopus teaming up with grouper, using signals to communicate with each other to catch a meal, as well as cuttlefish mesmerising their prey with their iridescent glow before dispatching it.

The most unforgettable moment comes when, on one of the most remote and pristine reefs in the world, huge grouper come together in their thousands to spawn. The thrilling sequence shows the animals racing towards each other to fertilise eggs that would produce

the next generation. In the mating commotion, however, sharks took advantage of the distracted fish, and picked off lovers one-by-one.

Episode four: *Big Bang – Nowhere to hide*

Detailing the desert-like vastness of the open ocean, this episode's most remarkable story was one once confined to the legend of 'the boiling sea'.

In a remote corner of the Pacific Ocean, we witness a feast of gargantuan proportions. Amongst the hundreds of diners were spinner dolphins, aptly named for their spontaneous aerial pirouettes they do mid-swim; tuna who trail-blazed a way to the action at 40 miles an hour; mobula rays with two-meter wingspans and gaping wide mouths; and sail-fish, amongst the fastest fish in the sea. They swarmed around a massive shoal of tiny lantern fish who had nowhere to hide.

Debunking the myth, the aerial camera shot shows the sea frothing like boiling water in the middle of the otherwise featureless ocean from the commotion caused by the feeding frenzy. The onslaught lasted less than 15 minutes but decimated the shoal of fish, leaving behind nothing but silvery scales, falling like snow into the ocean's depths.

A fisherman's tale, it's easy to imagine how sea-men of the past, who witnessed this event, may have mistaken the sea to be boiling as bubbles



Blue Planet II will be an inspiration for many artists // Callum Richie (IG: @_crill)

TELEVISION

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the beauty and fragility of our oceans

rose around their boats suddenly in an otherwise featureless blueness.

Episode five: Green Seas – Most life lives where it's green, not blue

A common octopus off the coast of South Africa stole the show in this episode, dazzling scientists in the process. Living in kelp forests, with over 100 species of shark who have octopus on their menu, it must make a living hiding in nooks and crannies and ambushing unsuspecting crabs. A pyjama shark however, named for its skin, which looks like striped PJs, squeezes into the octopus' hiding crevice and in a flurry of movement catches it in its jaws. It all seems over but the clever mollusc sticks its tentacles into the shark's gills, choking it, and so forcing it to let go.

Its name perhaps doesn't do this remarkably clever animal justice. The octopus, now in the open, attaches shells and debris to the suckers of its tentacles, protecting itself in armour and hiding in plain sight, thus confusing the shark, allowing it to

“Stunning drone footage captures sequences in crystal-clear waters, leaving us mesmerised”

eventually escape and live another day.

A notable contender for the most memorable scene was that of sea otters. These sea-dwelling fur

balls were once hunted to the brink of extinction for their coats, but have now made a recovery thanks to remarkable conservation efforts. We are treated to cuteness that would rival any YouTube cat video as a mother preens and conditions its tiny pup's coat to fluff it up, allowing it to float in the sea! The sea otter's recovery had secondary effects, maintaining the health of kelp forests which play an important part in trapping carbon dioxide, countering climate change.

Episode six: Coasts – Animals run the gauntlet from land to sea

We follow a group of bachelor Galapagos sea lions hunting tuna. The 60-kilogram fish would be much too fast for the marine mammals in an open-sea race and so, to catch their prey, the sea lions employ their wit and cunning: they drive a few tuna into a shallow, rocky cove by the coast where there is a greater chance for them to land a catch.

Initially, one male attempts this alone to no avail, as the slick tuna give him the slip. He then comes back with reinforcements. Multiple sea lions, with a strategy to rival an NFL side, all take up their roles for the hunt. Some drive the tuna into the coves whilst others wait at the entrance to prevent their escape.

The stunning drone footage captures the sequence in the crystal-clear waters and leaves the audience mesmerised, waiting with bated breath to see whether the band of brothers are triumphant. They are, and at the end you see the efforts and time that went into producing the seven minute scene.

Episode seven: Our Blue Planet – The problems that we create and only we can solve

The final episode sheds light on the extent to which humans are degrading the seas and threatening the existence of the creatures who dwell within them, which have delighted us over the previous episodes. Throughout the series, there were hints at the extent to which humanity was degrading our blue planet, but in the finale this inconvenient reality is laid bare. The viewer is forced to pause for introspection because, in reality, there is no planet II. Although casting a sombre tone, its overall message is one of hope, as we meet the incredible people dedicating their lives to safeguarding the seas and its wonders.

We meet Len, from Trinidad and Tobago, who was met with resistance, aggression, and threats to his safety when he first started protecting his island's leatherback sea turtles after realising there was an imminent risk of extinction if nothing was done to protect them. These giants, weighing nearly half a tonne, came to the shores to lay their ping-pong-ball-sized eggs, during which time they were defenceless and were commonly killed for their meat.

Poachers who once hunted them, however, now play an integral part in their conservation. Children are taught about their natural heritage in school, and the local economy is also benefiting, as tourist flock to catch a glimpse of these ocean behemoths. Len and his team's tireless efforts now mean that the beaches of Trinidad and Tobago are home to the



Blue Planet II reminded us of what we stand to lose if we continue polluting //BBC

best populations of leatherbacks in the world!

Perhaps the most pertinent message put to us all relates to our infatuation with plastics, especially those of the 'disposable' and the 'convenient' type. Eight million tonnes of the stuff find its way into our oceans each year, wreaking havoc on marine life in even the remotest

“Attenborough provided a rejuvenation for the human spirit”

corners of the globe. Broken down plastic and industrial effluent produce a toxic soup which enters the food-chain, killing creatures like the dolphins, whales, and seabirds we came to adore. The macabre scene of a pilot whale carrying her dead calf in episode

four after its milk had been laced with environmental plastic molecules was a troubling reminder of our need to reassess our relationship with plastic.

The episode and series as a whole gave us a number of bitter pills to swallow. David Attenborough, however, is perhaps the only person able to make a nation, and maybe planet, take it.

§

Of all the stars in the show, the most remarkable was one of our own: Sir David Attenborough. He held our attention and awe throughout each episode, and in the finale, like a benevolent grandparent, he held our hand whilst gently delivering the message that we had to be more careful and take care of the world we live in. It had to be him though. Were it anyone else, we would have no doubt snatched away our hand like an infant throwing a tantrum. His oratory

genius, authentic delivery, and ability to remove any scientific distance from the audience, left us with a sense of optimism and encouragement, rather than one of sorrow and despair.

Sir David provided a rejuvenation for the human spirit. At the age of 91, he still displays the fascination and curiosity of a child, still marvelling at the creatures he has spent his life documenting. However, he also provides us all with sage wisdom. In his final monologue, he states: “Never before have we had such an awareness of what we are doing to the planet and never before have we had the power to do something about that. Surely, we have a responsibility to care for our blue planet. The future of humanity and indeed all life on Earth now depends on us”.

Rather than being complicit in its destruction, maybe we can now be part of the ocean's salvation?

TRAVEL

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Sick of London? Three of England's gems for a quick weekend getaway

Travelling abroad is always enticing but did you know that England also boasts plenty of promising destinations? Daniel Corredera Nadal tells Felix all about some of the best places for partying, sightseeing, and relaxation.

TRAVEL

Daniel Corredera Nadal
Travel Writer

Who doesn't like to travel? It's exciting, adventurous, and a great way to discover new cultures. But sometimes, due to time or price constraints, that's not an option. In that case, why not take a holiday in our own motherland, the United Kingdom? It has many fantastic travel options that we tend to overlook, so today I'm here to show you some of England's hidden treasures.

Bristol

Bristol is one of those cities anyone will tell you is inherently cool. And, long story short, they're not wrong. I go there at least once a year, and I know I can always expect some relaxing,

fun, hipster vibes, which is a nice change from the posh hustle and bustle in South Ken. It's ideal for a weekend escape from the city, leaving on a Friday afternoon and coming back on Sunday, well-rested and ready for more Imperial deadlines. But how do you fill that magical weekend?

Let's start with Gloucester Street, one of the coolest, hippest streets I've been to. Reminiscent of London's Shoreditch but much cheaper, it's filled with independent restaurants and thrift stores, where you can get the cheapest and jazziest clothes. My personal favourite is the Cats Protection store, where all sales go to aiding cat welfare (I bought an acid washed denim shirt and helped animals all in one – you can't ask for more). There's also a giant warehouse/thrift store at the end of the street, which is perfect for old records and discarded mannequin parts if that's what you're



Clifton Suspension Bridge is a must for your travel bucket list // Pixabay

into.

For lunch, St. Nicholas Market is just five minutes away and offers a wide variety of food stalls, ranging from sausages to Korean food. Admittedly, some of them are not the cheapest, but if you live

in London you're used to it. Portions are quite large though, so if you're smart and can control your appetite, you might have dinner sorted too.

As a student, you're probably also wondering about Bristol's nightlife, and – #spoileralert – it doesn't disappoint. Start with some cocktails at Flipside, with their 2-for-1 days, secret garden, and pun-tastic drinks ("Gin ne sais quoi" is genius). Or if you're feeling fancy, Her Majesty's Secret Service is a cocktail bar whose entrance is disguised within a red telephone booth. That says it all. Once you're feeling 'happy', there are plenty of clubs you can check out: SWX is a student-favourite, which boasts three different music rooms and spacious dance floors, so you can get as crazy with your dance

moves as you want.

This brings me to my favourite topic: sleep. In terms of accommodation, they do have fancy hotels, like the Marriott and Hilton, and I'm sure there are many Airbnb's available. But I recommend getting a friend who studies at Bristol University and will let you sleep

"Situated in the middle of a valley, the Clifton Suspension Bridge is an image taken straight out of a travel brochure"

in their house for free. Plus, they'll know the ins and outs of the city and can take you to cool places.

If you do go to Bristol, you *must* visit the Clifton Suspension Bridge. It's the Bristolians' proud badge of honour, and deservedly so. Situated in the middle of a valley, this giant bridge is an image taken straight out of a travel brochure, which will leave you wide-eyed in wonder. There's a beautiful hill right beside it which proves a nice hike and provides a spectacular view of the bridge. You can walk across the bridge during the day and enjoy the view of the river and the valley, or go there at night when it's beautifully illuminated and you can see all the lights from the city below (peaceful af).

But Bristol's charm does not lie only in these great locations. The city



Are these real houses or is Bristol just a giant Monopoly board? // Pixabay

TRAVEL

travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk

itself is an attraction. Just walk around its streets, browse some shops, and enjoy its casual atmosphere. Everyone there seems happy and light, which is very contagious. Stop at any of its great cafes, like the Boston Tea Company, and enjoy a hot drink and a delicious scone (or your sweet treat of choice).

In short, go to Bristol for a fun, carefree weekend, filled with fun and denim jackets.

Surrey

Surrey, and its main city Guildford, are great for a short day trip and pretending you're from the rich part of England. It's super easy to get there: you can take a train from Waterloo for less than £8 and be there in half an hour. It's the perfect distance: it doesn't take ages to travel there but still feels far enough that your worries won't matter.

I recommend getting there around midday, since there's no rush. The station is right next to the main city area, so you can literally get off the train and straight into the city. There are three main streets, all lined with any shop you can think of, so be ready to browse some clothes or books and comment on how bad inflation is getting. It's also very easy to find a

nice place to eat, although it might be hard to decide since they all look so good. I went to this lovely pub in the town centre with great pigeon decorations and nice vegan burgers – what more do you want?

If you have the time and are not fed up of universities, go have a look at the University of Surrey. It has a completely different vibe from Imperial (people are not running around stressed out of their minds and crippled by the weight of their deadlines), which is interesting to see. They even have a park on campus with a beautiful lake and benches to sit on and think about life. Here's some Surrey inside knowledge and a possible spoiler alert: the lake is actually fake, built based on a CivEng students' project. You won't be able to tell from how realistic and peaceful it seems. Oh, and the ducks are just as nice as in Hyde Park.

Do you want to take a casual stroll around a quaint little town on a sunny day, or at least as sunny as England allows? Then Surrey is perfect for you (you'll thank me later).

Newcastle upon Tyne

A bit (a lot) farther away than the other two options, Newcastle compensates for the long travelling distance with



Newcastle will welcome you with its mesmerizing architecture and vibrant nightlife // Pixabay

beautiful scenery and fresh air (which is ironic because it used to be the UK's industrial centre). Since it's so far away, you should probably compare train and plane tickets to see which is cheaper for your preferred date. In my case, I bought train tickets about a month in advance and spent around £80 (which is slightly expensive but sometimes you need to treat yo' self).

Once you're there, get ready to enjoy the city's open spaces and impressive architecture. And I

mean *impressive*. Every single building is excellently conserved, and some look like Gringotts Wizarding Bank itself. Speaking of architecture, they are also particularly proud of their bridges, of which there are seven: some of them are true architectural feats spanning the River Tyne. They're similar to the Thames' multiple bridges, each different and special in its

“Every single building is excellently conserved, and some look like Gringotts Wizarding Bank itself”

own right.

One of the best things about Newcastle is its nightlife. There are a bunch of clubs: Tiger Tiger, Illegitimate, and my personal favourite Soho Rooms, which is free

entry. Friday nights are filled with uni students, so there's a great atmosphere and plenty of people to dance with. There are also plenty of food places open late at night right next to the clubs if you're feeling hungry at 4am after partying.

For a chill hangover day, why not walk around the main street, filled with shops and restaurants which are fun to browse. I went in December so I'm biased, but the light decorations and the Christmas market made it very jolly and inviting. Five minutes away is the beautiful Sunday market, which has dozens of little stands selling very interesting objects. I particularly remember a shop selling wooden plaques, each fashioned after a different dog breed. Its privileged position right next to the river bed makes it a splendid place for a walk. It's also right next to the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, a beautiful modern art museum for the artists amongst you. It has some very interesting exhibitions, quite similar to the Tate Modern but far less crowded. And for the

Instagram aficionados, it has a fifth floor viewing area where you can see the entire city beneath you, with the river and its many bridges on the side. I obviously took several pictures.

“One of the best things about Newcastle is its nightlife”

Final word of advice: it's freezing. They don't have London's warming and protective smog, so bring a good coat. But on the upside, it also means the chance of snow is very high, so you might be lucky enough (as I was) to see snow carpeting the city.

Have I convinced you to spend your next weekend in the UK rather than travelling abroad? I sure hope so, I didn't write this article for nothing, and the UK's tourism office wants its money's worth.



Surrey is for the ones craving a quieter weekend break // Daniel Corredera Nadal



Student Support Fund

If you suddenly find yourself in **financial difficulties** or experience an unexpected change in circumstances, you may be eligible to apply for **emergency financial help** through the Student Support Fund.

**CONTACT THE STUDENT
FINANCIAL SUPPORT TEAM
TO FIND OUT MORE:**

+44 (0)20 7594 9014

Student Hub, Level 3,
Sherfield Building

www.imperial.ac.uk/fees-and-funding

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

felix.clubsandsocieties@imperial.ac.uk

IC NEUROSCIENCE SOCIETY – MEETING OF THE MINDS 2018

Imperial College Neuroscience Society will be holding their annual conference on the 27th of January, 2018, in the Sir Alexander Fleming Building (South Kensington Campus). There are several exciting talks and workshops planned, covering wide-ranging topics, from neuropsychiatry and advances in cognitive neuroscience, to live brain dissections and clinical neuroscience! As ever, food and refreshments will be provided throughout the day.

We are proud to welcome a variety of renowned speakers who are experts in their fields, and will provide an engaging and enlightening experience. This year, we have included TWO live brain dissection workshops with Professor Steve Gentleman, who will also explain the use of the Parkinson Brain Bank at Imperial College London.

We have more speakers than ever before joining our symposia, with several keynote talks. These speakers include Dr.

Edward Wild, a specialist in neuro-genetics, as well as Dr. Bianca Jupp, who has an interest in the neurobiology of addiction. Speakers will discuss not only the clinical aspects of neuroscience – as will be seen in Dr. Lim's talk on neuro-inflammation – but also technological and scientific advances in neuroscience as will be demonstrated by Prof. Sven Bestmann's talk on models for non-invasive brain stimulation in health and disease. Specialist talks will cover areas such as paediatric neuroscience, discussed by Dr. Lucinda Carr, as well as various aspects of cognitive neuroscience presented by Dr. Qadeer Arshad and Dr. Parashkev Nachev!

Visit our Facebook page for further speaker details, and the list of speaker announcement closer to the event date!

There will be an informal careers event after the talk which many of the speaker will attend, giving you the opportunity to meet some of the speakers and discuss their work further!

We are also now accepting abstract submissions! Don't miss a chance to present your



The first round of London League saw many swimmers compete for the first time and a bronze medal overall // ICWSP

research to peers, as well as the speakers attending the event. We will be awarding certificates for the best posters with the help of our expert judges. Hope to see you all there!

Don't miss out on Meeting of the Minds 2018 – get your tickets NOW:

<http://bit.ly/2mnUVUh>

To find out more visit: <http://bit.ly/2Fmo7mD>

IC SWIMMING AND WATER POLO DIVES INTO THE NEW YEAR

The Swimming and Water Polo Club is looking forward to a crucial term, with both the Men's and Women's Water Polo teams keen to secure some wins after difficult spells last term. The Men's team has its first challenge of the New Year on Saturday as they

face the University of the West of England at home. The match promises to be a physical one, but the team will have to make their superior speed and skill count against the brute force of UWE. The Women's team will have to wait longer to kick-start their 2018, as they play Exeter at home on 27th January. They will be keen to exact their revenge after losing the away fixture dramatically, in a game which saw Maria Medeiros heroically play the second half with what later turned out to be a dislocated shoulder.

The Swimming team is gearing up to host teams from across London in the next round of the London Swimming League at Ethos on the afternoon of Saturday 3rd February. The previous round at UCL saw fantastic IC participation, with many swimmers entering their first ever swimming competition. It also saw, rather predictably, UCL forget to bring along diving blocks, adding that little bit extra to everybody's times. Feel free to come along to support at Ethos, or join at the after party in Metric where drink tokens will be just £2.50.

Before then, anyone

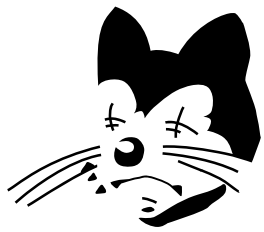
struggling to lose those festive pounds is welcome to try any of the range of activities we offer. If you'd like to swim, come to the pool in Ethos on Wednesdays 2.00pm to 3.30pm, where you can expect a coached, fitness-based session in a friendly group. For the extra keen, land training is on just before this at 1.00pm on the first floor of the Union Building. This intense workout consists of a variety of bodyweight exercises and is run by the charismatic and undeniably charming Andrew Duckworth. If you're up for trying something new, water polo might just be for you. Great fun and a real whole body workout, our sessions are structured by our coach Adam (Last year's Sport Imperial Coach of the Year) or one of our experienced players. They take place on Monday's and Friday's from 8.45pm to 10.00pm, also in Ethos. To find out more about what we have to offer, you can find us on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or our website.

Come along, you might just love it!

by Tobias Dawson



Come along to IC Neuroscience's annual conference at the end of this month to hear all about new neuro developments! // IC Neuro Soc



Hangman



Students/inmates in their new 'isolation pods' // Thomas Angus/Imperial

Universities given same legal status as prisons in cabinet shake-up

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

Imperial has already begun making changes to services, reducing food options, scrapping extracurriculars, and infringing on human rights.

Theresa May this week combined several cabinet roles, meaning universities will legally have the same status as prisons.

In a bold move, the former Prisons Minister, Sam Johnson, will now become 'Minister

for Large, Faceless Institutions (Prisons and Universities)', as part of May's recent cabinet shake-up. New legislation will come into force at the end of the academic year, meaning higher education institutions will officially have the same legal status as correctional facilities.

In a statement issued by the government, Johnson said that he was "well prepared" for the role, citing his experience as Prisons Minister, a position he has held since 2013: "over the past four years, I have had a great deal of experience managing large numbers of very unhappy people who are unable to mingle with civil society, and are forced into close proximity with one another under duress. This makes me perfectly suited to taking

on the unique challenge of our university system."

While the new legislation will not come into effect until July, Imperial this week began immediately making changes

"The QTR is now only offering the options 'prison loaf' and 'prison loaf (vegan)'"

in anticipation: "For the past century Imperial has been a world-renowned centre for sector-leading research," a College

representative told *Felix*, "but moving forward we need to ensure that we remain a key player in the burgeoning prison-university-industrial complex."

A number of changes have already been noticed around campus: food options have been dramatically reduced across Imperial-run outlets, with students using the QTR now being offered the option of "prison loaf" and "prison loaf (vegan)". *Felix* have heard rumours that Fusion leftovers are used to make the loaf, but the College refused to confirm or deny this. One PhD student we spoke to seemed unaffected by the changes, telling us "ever since they removed cooked breakfasts from the SCR all food is like mere ash in my mouth."

Further changes to the student experience are expected to be coming soon. *Felix* spoke to Michael Mitchell, the newly-appointed Vice Provost (Solitary Confinement),

"College have said that students will work harder, now they are not distracted by human rights"

who said the College was in discussions with Sport Imperial about shutting down Ethos and

converting Queen's Lawn into an exercise yard. Mitchell believed that students would welcome the change, citing the establishment of a police state at Imperial last term (as reported in *Hangman* Issue 10).

Mitchell said: "by reducing available extracurricular activities, difficult decisions about what to eat, and distracting thoughts about human liberties, our students will be better equipped to focus on their studies."

The College is currently trialling periods of incarceration for students: last week saw a 72-hour lock-in occurring in Central Library, during which students were not allowed to leave, and were forced to sleep at their desks. Nobody noticed.

HANGMAN

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Students sue Imperial for making ‘new year, new me’ impossible

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

Scheduling January exams has meant students are finding it impossible to start 2018 with positivity.

A collective of Imperial students are launching a class action legal case against the College for “sabotaging our New Year’s Resolutions”.
The group, which

numbers around 30 undergraduate students from a range of departments, have accused the College of “gross negligence” in failing to create an environment where they can follow their 2018 mantra of ‘new year, new me’.

Josh Pilkinton, a third-year physics student, outlined the main grievances the group has with the College: “I was all ready to come back into the new year with a healthy outlook on life,” Pilkinton told *Felix*, “I know I said this last year, and the year before that, but 2018 was going to be my year. I was going to actually be on

top of my workload, and get to bed at a reasonable time, but now College has made it impossible.”

“For starters, they’re going to be getting rid of the swimming pool in Paddington. I haven’t been swimming for the last five years (unless you count that incident on the AMS tour to Budapest when I fell into the Danube), but I had really good intentions to do more exercise this year, and now they’ve been crushed before I could put them into action. I tried to go to Ethos last week, but it’s even more packed than usual – if I wanted

to spend hours tightly packed in with a bunch of sweaty strangers I’d just get on the Central Line.”

Other students taking legal action complained about the number of January exams they had. “My new year’s resolution was to be more positive”, one biology student told *Felix*, “but with the exam stress I’ve spent the last week being an absolutely awful person. I’m hateful, full of vitriol, and yesterday I pushed an old lady down the stairs, just to feel something.”

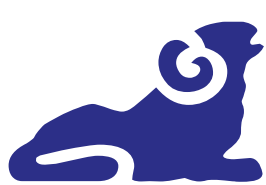
College is not the only group facing criticism: the Union’s decision to



Stella 4 has fucked dry January // ICU

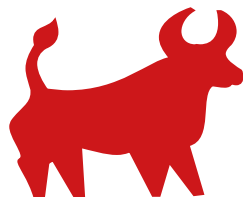
reinstate Stella 4 has also come under fire from the group. “The only thing getting me through dry January was the idea that all I’d have to drink was

the watery piss they call Bud Light,” Caleb Golithly, a chemistry fresher, told *Felix*, “but now Stella is back, my commitment to sobriety is fucked.”



ARIES

This week you’re the *Felix* Editor, and you make a triumphant return to the office. Your team are mostly just upset they can’t use it as a private study space anymore.



TAURUS

This week you’re the cabinet reshuffle, and you’re really just a huge disappointment for everyone involved. You’re bad and you should feel bad.



GEMINI

This week you’re hyped about the return of Stella 4 to the Union bars. Mainly because it gives you an excuse to use the word ‘Stellabration’ in conversation.



CANCER

This week your new year’s resolution to be a better person goes out the window when you realise you’re fundamentally a human piece of garbage.



LEO

This week you have to put into practice convoluted lies about what you were doing on New Year’s Eve. We know you were at home alone, crying over your fluid dynamics coursework. Just admit it.



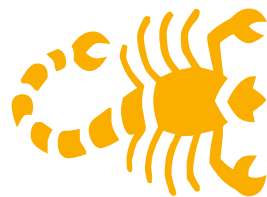
VIRGO

This week you return to your student flat after three weeks away, only to find your housemates have changed the locks. Great joke guys, but you can let me in now. Guys... GUYS?!



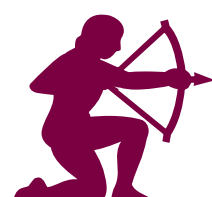
LIBRA

This week you decide to emulate Toby Young, and bring his trademark “caustic wit” to your coursemates. You have no friends.



SCORPIO

This week you *really* misinterpret the cashless paying system. College Cafe don’t accept cheques apparently.



SAGITTARIUS

This week your new year diet goes off the rails when you keep buying discounted brandy butter to spread on your toast.



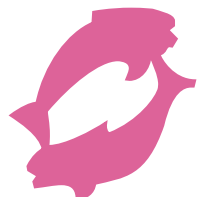
CAPRICORN

This week you thought for a hot second that it might be nice to come back to Imperial after the break. Oh, we’ve got news for you.



AQUARIUS

This week you’re 2017, and, quite frankly, you’re upset about how many people seem to have forgotten about you so quickly. You weren’t that bad.



PISCES

This week you’re celebrating the return of Central Library. Finally you’ve got somewhere to watch your YouTube Vine compilations in peace.

