



Felix

The Student Newspaper of Imperial College London

NEWS



Our final issue round-up of the year at Imperial

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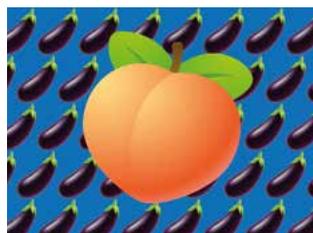
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Going electric: the history of musical side-steps

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Frida Kahlo at the V&A: from icon to caricature?

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EDITORIAL

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This is the end...

So here we are: the final issue. It's been a week of lasts: last time asking section editors how many pages they'll need; getting the last tube home after working late on the Sex Survey; and now this, my last ever editorial. Serving as Felix Editor over the past year has been an incredible privilege. To say I've enjoyed every minute of it would be untrue, but it has included moments that have been so rewarding they outweigh any minor inconveniences or frustrations.

To be coming to the end of this journey is bittersweet. But – in classic *Felix* style – this sense of melancholy is tempered by a mood of urgency and slight madness. You may notice that this week's Felix is slightly heavier than usual – given it was the last week, section editors and contributors pulled out all the stops, delivering to you a 64-page behemoth of an issue, the longest issue we've put out all year. We sincerely hope you enjoy it, and have enjoyed the previous 28 issues we've put out since September.

Felix has been many things to me during my time here at Imperial. I think, like most students, in all honesty, my introduction to university life was difficult. Moving

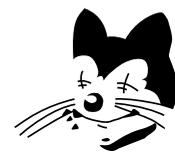
into student halls where you don't know anyone; becoming used to a class size of over 200; suddenly feeling like a very small minnow in an enormous ocean – they all took some getting used to. During the first couple of years, it was writing for *Felix* that gave me some sense of regularity – writing mainly for the Arts section, I would take a break from lectures, and head out to exhibitions all over this beautiful city. *Felix* gave me an escape.

It wasn't until my third year that I actually got involved with the editorial team, joining as an Arts Editor. It was a hugely exciting time for me – I can still remember meeting with the then-Editor Philippa for the first time, as she tried to put the freshers'

issue together without a working office. I also recall meeting with my fellow Arts Editor, Kamil, before term started, to talk about all our plans for the year; we went to the Tate Britain's exhibition of the late works of JMW Turner, and I promptly had a nose-bleed – perhaps from the sheer intensity of Turner's colours. Over that year Kamil and I would build up relationships with London galleries and theatres, pumping out an insane amount of content. It's a time I remember incredibly fondly, and the Arts section still holds a special place in my heart. The *Felix* Office became a refuge for me – I would look forward each Wednesday to spending my afternoons there, chatting with other editors, and putting

together pages. *Felix* gave me a home.

I went into this year thinking I was prepared for anything that could be thrown at me. With five years of experience, I thought I had a good grip on what the job would entail. But I soon came to realise that, no matter how much time I'd spent with *Felix*, nothing could have prepared me for the weekly rush to get the paper out. What completely blindsided me, however, wasn't the work or the writing: it was the people. We started the year with very few people remaining, and rapidly had to rebuild the editorial team. It was an experiment – I didn't know whether or not everything would work out. But it did. The new friendships I have made this year, and the previous ones that have deepened, have been the most valuable part of the whole experience. I know, now, that after the last issue has gone to print, and I have left this university, what I will remember most isn't the articles we published, or the change we helped enact, but the people I have met, and the experiences we have all had together. Words cannot express how grateful I am to everyone who has contributed to creating the paper this year. *Felix* has, now, given me a family.



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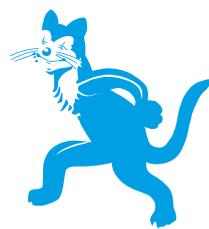
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Felix is recruiting!



We want you – yes, you! We're looking for writers, photographers, editors, illustrators, reporters, computer experts and grammar nerds to join our team. No experience needed – we'll teach you everything you need to know. If you're interested, send us an email on felix@ic.ac.uk

NEWS

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Death of Cardiff lecturer highlights teaching workload

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Dr Malcolm Anderson, who fell to his death, was struggling with workloads. Academics have compared the case to that of Professor Stefan Grimm at Imperial.

A lecturer at Cardiff University who fell to his death had been struggling with an increasing workload, an inquest heard last week.

Dr Malcolm Anderson, who was a lecturer in accounting at Cardiff University's Business School, as well as a personal tutor, fell to his death on the morning of the 19th February 2018. Coroner Andrew Barkley later recorded a verdict of suicide.

In a statement for the inquest into the death, his colleague Louis Vallis said Dr Anderson

was struggling to create timetables for university within his allocated time-frame, and would often do it in his own time. Mr Vallis said Dr Anderson had "complained to management a number of times about the allocation," but "received the same response year after year."

Mr Vallis also said Dr Anderson had been asked to mark 418 examination papers over a 20-day period.

According to *WalesOnline*, Dr Anderson left behind a note saying his workload had finally gotten to him. Police sources said there were emails on Dr Anderson's work computer referring to "work expectations not being manageable."

Dr Anderson's wife, Diane, with whom he had three daughters, described her husband as someone who "would always give the very best to everything that he did, but was silently struggling." She said his commute was an 120-mile round trip, and his workload meant he was unable to spend time

with family.

Cardiff University, who described Dr Anderson as "an excellent teacher with the rare ability to enthuse the large numbers of students who attended his lectures," said they would be reviewing the support available to staff.

The news led a number of academics to refer to the case of Stefan Grimm, a professor of toxicology at Imperial College London who took his own life in 2014. A posthumous email sent by Professor Grimm to staff within Imperial cited the pressure he was under to bring in more grant money, with an email from his line manager saying he was "struggling to fulfil the metrics of a Professorial post at Imperial College", since he was unable to bring in £200,000 per annum in a programme grant.

The coroner into Professor Grimm's case described the death as "needless."

Imperial completed an internal review of staff policies following Professor Grimm's



Dr Anderson was a lecturer at the Cardiff University's Business School // Flickr/Jeremy Segrott

death, although a College spokesperson told *Felix* at the time that "given the complex nature of suicide, it would be impossible to answer with certainty whether any action taken by the College could have resulted in a different outcome."

The case comes amid increasing concern over the workload of academic and support

staff in higher education institutions. Two studies, released earlier this year, highlighted what *Times Higher Education* described as "a crisis of overwork and poor mental health in academia." In one study, postgraduate students were found to be more than six times more likely to experience anxiety or depression than the general population.

If you have been affected by anything in this article, please consider speaking to your personal tutor; senior tutor; ICU Advice Centre, or the Imperial Counselling Service. You can also phone the Samaritans (116 123) or London Nightline (02076310101) for confidential emotional support.

UCU calls on withheld salaries to fund bursaries

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Imperial College UCU have written to the College asking for withheld salaries to be used to make up for bursary shortfall.

The Imperial College London branch of the Universities and College Union (UCU) has called on senior management to

make withheld salaries available to students who faced a cut in their student bursaries.

In an email sent to Louise Lindsay, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Change, earlier this week, Imperial College UCU said they had requested "on many occasions" that money deducted from the salaries of staff taking part in this year's industrial action go towards the Student Hardship Fund.

They went on to say they were told by College earlier this month this would not be possible and/

or difficult to administer. Last week the College told *Felix* withheld salaries had "been retained by the relevant academic departments to support their efforts to mitigate the impact of strikes."

Imperial College UCU said this response was "an unacceptable justification," and called for the money to be made available to students from the 2015/16 intake who had lost out on provision of bursaries.

Dr Michael McGarvey, President of Imperial College UCU, said the proposal "made it clear

to the management that we strongly believe that this money should only be used for the direct benefit of students and not retained by departments."

An analysis carried out by members of Imperial College Union last year found students starting in 2015 from qualifying middle-income brackets would receive substantially less bursary, as the College shifted to a new system. Union Council voted in favour of a motion to lobby the College to make additional funding available to affected students.

The Imperial Bursary provides support to Home undergraduate students with an annual household income of up to £60,000, on a sliding scale. It is available to students throughout their degree – not including repeat years – and may be revised each year.

Universities across the country have withheld salaries from academic and support staff who took part in the UCU strike earlier this year. The industrial action was organised in response to proposed changes to pensions, which UCU argued

would leave members £10,000 worse off each year.

Last week *Felix* revealed Russell Group universities have withheld £8 million in salaries, with further deductions expected in the near future. Imperial have withheld just under £280,000 from staff in March and April, with the number likely to increase in the future. A number of other universities have ring-fenced the withheld money for student support services.

NEWS

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The *Felix* News round-up: some highlights from a year

With the last paper of the academic year, Editor-in-Chief **Fred Fyles** and Deputy Editor **Joanna Wormald** check out some of the most important stories from the past academic year.

NEWS

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Joanna Wormald

Deputy Editor

SCR remove cooked breakfast as campus services are cut

At the end of July last year, the Senior Common Room served their last cooked breakfast to students and staff, as they made wide-ranging changes to campus services. As well as removing the cooked breakfast option, they increased prices across all outlets, reviewed portion sizes, and reduced opening hours of food outlets. The changes, which were made by Campus Services, a branch of the College, were made “where reinvestment can demonstrably be made to the wider benefit of the community, against a minimal impact on staff

and students.”

The changes, which students and staff were not consulted on, left a number very upset. One academic told *Felix* the changes were “outrageous”, while another said “it sounds like [when the College talk about] ‘reducing their cost’, it’s really coming out of our pocket.”

Around three months after the changes came into effect, Imperial College Union launched a survey, asking staff and students about campus services and opening hours. The Union has not reported on the results of the survey. – FF

Strikes hit Imperial amid pension dispute

More than 60 universities were disrupted by strikes as staff protested against proposed changes to their pensions which could have seen lecturers lose up to 60% of their

final pension pot. Fourteen days of escalating strike action took place over four weeks earlier this year. A further fourteen days of strikes planned to disrupt end-of-year exams were narrowly averted as the University and College Union, representing teaching and support staff, agreed to a deal which will maintain the current pension scheme until at least April 2019.

Students have been told exams will not include content missed as a result of the strikes. A class action lawsuit has been launched by legal firm Assersons on behalf of students seeking a refund of their tuition fees. The case involves more than 5,000 students, who could receive several hundred pounds each.

Last week, *Felix* revealed Imperial has so far withheld just under £280,000 from staff involved in the strike. Unlike other universities, Imperial has not



February saw strikes hit over 60 universities // Joseph O'Connell-Danes

ring-fenced this money for student support and services.

Universities, including Imperial, supported the switch to a defined contribution scheme (where pension value is linked to the stock market), claiming the current University Superannuation Scheme had a £7.5 billion deficit and was “not likely to be sustainable”. – JW

Union criticised over handling of sexual assault case

In first term, *Felix* reported on the case of an alumna, Helen, who had been sexually assaulted by a current student when returning to Imperial for an event. The assault took place on Union property. After reporting the case to the Union, the Union and College took seven months to reach a conclusion, during which time the accused had become president of a Union society.

During the investigation, Helen was passed between a number of staff members, and was repeatedly asked to provide statements about

what happened during the evening of the assault. She also went for periods of up to six weeks without any contact from the Union or College.

“Helen said the Union's handling of her sexual assault left her suicidal at times”

Helen, who has a severe, long-term mental health condition, requiring her to go to hospital each week for treatment, was left feeling suicidal at times: “I was consumed with the case,” she told *Felix*, “while nobody responsible for it seemed to care, or even acknowledge it. This made me feel my grip on reality was slipping.”

When the Union reached their final decision, they concluded “on balance of probabilities” Helen’s account was true,

and recommended having the perpetrator attend a consent workshop, as well as banning him from licensed Union premises. They did not recommend removing him as society president. – FF

Pay falling in real terms for Imperial staff

Wages are decreasing in real-terms for most Imperial staff while large sums are being spent on the salaries of senior staff and the College’s property portfolio.

Below-inflation pay rises have left staff facing average salary decreases of 1.1% each year since 2005, according to a pay claim published by the Joint Higher Education Trade Union. Despite this, College expenditure on wages increased by just over 3% in 2016/17 due to “an exceptional increase in very highly paid staff”.

At the same time, the unions criticised Imperial’s increasing capital expenditure. Referring to the £1.42 billion spent on property investments since 2011, the joint unions said: “Clearly, the



Imperial staff pay has been falling in real terms since 2015 // Imperial/Felix

NEWS

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of news around campus

College has chosen to devote its surplus to buildings rather than to staff.”

On top of this, a demanding work culture means Imperial staff work beyond government-set time limits and provide the equivalent of two days per week without pay.

The joint trade unions have set out a series of demands, including a 7.5% pay rise for staff. – JW

Imperial revealed to have large investments in tobacco and fossil fuels

An investigation by *Felix* into the endowment fund of Imperial revealed the College had significant direct and indirect investments in the tobacco, fossil fuel, and weapons industries.

In total, as of September 2017, the College was investing £3.5 million in the tobacco industry

– indirectly, through investment portfolios – nearly £9 million in the fossil fuel industry, and £3.1 million in the arms industry. A number

“The College was revealed to have £3.5 million indirectly invested in tobacco, through funds used since at least 2013”

of these investments were direct investments, including £1.5 million in Royal Dutch Shell, the 7th largest producer of oil and gas worldwide, who had previously been accused

of collaborating with the Nigerian government in the torture and execution of activists, as well as crimes against humanity.

Imperial also had £650,000 in Philip Morris, £400,000 in Imperial Brands, and over £370,000 indirectly invested in Reynolds American, some of the largest tobacco companies in the world. These investments were made through investment funds, some of which the College had been investing in since at least 2013. Imperial currently has 29 research groups working on cancer prevention, detection, and treatment.

Rhidian Thomas, Imperial College Union’s Ethics and Environment Officer, told *Felix*: “I’d like to congratulate Imperial on succeeding in bringing together a comprehensive selection of some of the most ethically dubious companies around, all in one portfolio. It’s

staggering that anyone in College thinks it appropriate for a university – a charity even – to give so much money to the arms and extraction industries. Even College’s commitment to avoid investing in tobacco seems paper-thin, now that it’s clear that it has millions invested in it through third-party funds; so much for ‘smoke-free Imperial’.” – FF

Debates continue over high pay and expenses among senior management

While the majority of Imperial employees are experiencing real-term pay cuts, senior staff are collectively pocketing more than their counterparts at any other Russell Group university.

In 2017, the College spent £5.6 million on the salaries of 20 ‘key management personnel’. This translates to an average pay packet of £280,000 each – an 8% rise on the previous year’s figures. 410 members of staff are paid more than £100,000.

Imperial president Alice Gast has the second highest salary of Russell Group vice-chancellors and is paid £433,000 (beaten only by the University of Birmingham’s David Eastwood, who takes home £439,000). On top of her salary, Professor Gast claimed nearly £44,000 in expenses – more than the median Imperial salary. The figure is also substantially greater than the average Russell Group vice-chancellor expenses claim, which is under £10,000. The majority of Professor Gast’s claims were for international travel, with the remainder split between taxis, gifts, and hospitality. – JW

Counselling Service struggling with in-

creased demand

As exam season kicked in, *Felix* revealed the huge pressures the College Counselling Service is being put under. The number of students registering for counselling has increased by over 80% since 2012/13, while the sessions on offer have been unable to keep up. The result is a waiting time which now stands at seven weeks on average, with some students reporting waiting up to 15 weeks.

The Counselling Service currently employs about seven full time equivalents to serve a student body of 18,000. Rosie Summerhayes, head of the Counselling Service, told *Felix* their budget had been frozen for the past two years, despite the College making nearly £120 million in surplus last year.

The increased wait times have had a knock-on impact on student-facing staff members, who are now having to spend more time than they usually would speaking to students who are finding things difficult. Professor Simone Buitendijk, Vice-Provost (Education), told *Felix*: “Our investment in student counselling will be increased significantly in the next financial year.” – FF

Teaching Excellence Framework undergoes significant changes

The Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) has undergone significant changes in its third year (not least its rebranding). Imperial still holds a Gold award but this is not directly comparable to the ratings issued in this year’s iteration of the

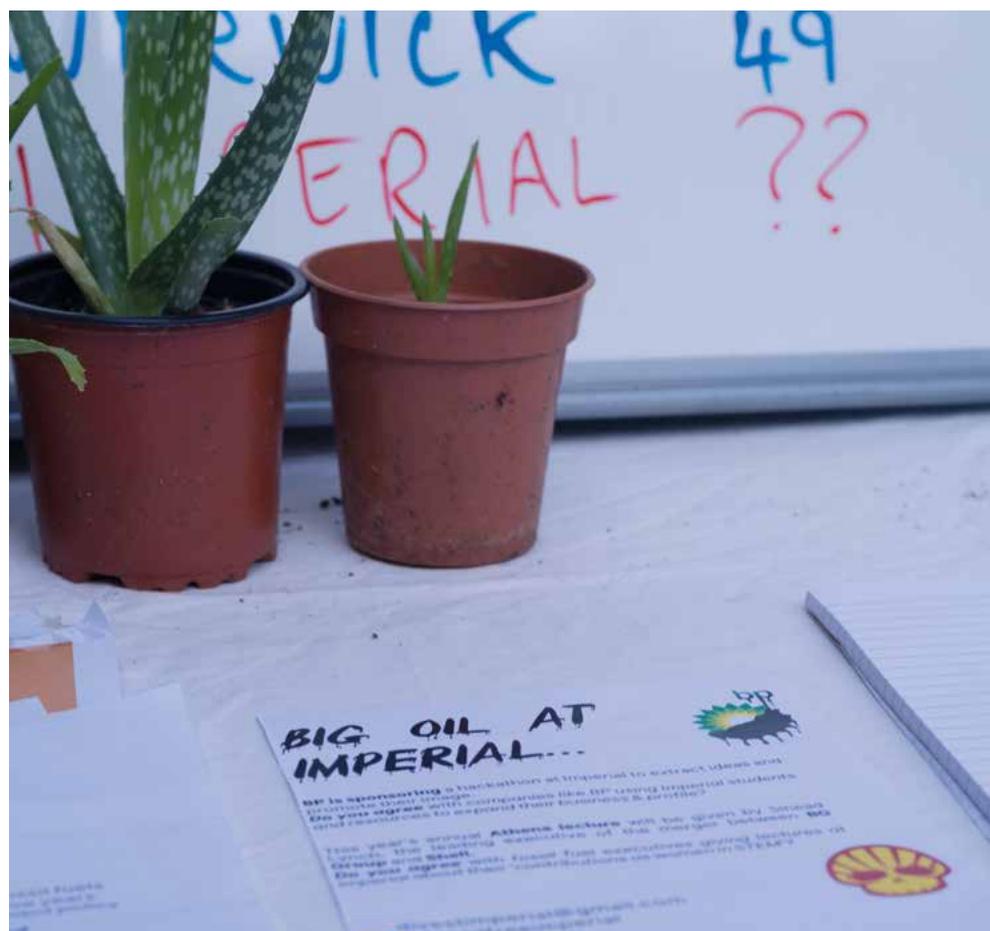
TEF.

Three new metrics have been introduced alongside the original student satisfaction (from National Student Survey data), number of students completing their course (rather than the number of students dropping out), and graduate outcomes six months after leaving university. These now form an “initial hypothesis” which assessors modify by considering supplementary metrics as part of a “holistic judgment”. To further complicate matters, a flag system has been introduced. The TEF is now simultaneously so complicated that assessors without a background in advanced data handling require extra training, yet “simple and easy for students to understand”.

Trials are also underway for subject-level ratings, which are designed to account for varying quality within universities. Documents released by the Department for Education state subject-level TEF awards will provide students with “more granular and informative information”.

While these changes help to allay some concerns raised by critics over the years, there are still worries that the TEF will be used to increase tuition fees.

Last year prime minister Theresa May announced fees would be frozen at current levels until 2019, putting the kibosh on plans for gold and silver-rated universities to be able to increase tuition fees in line with inflation. Since then, education secretary Damian Hinds has suggested universities charge different fees to reflect each subject’s value to society. Subject-level TEF awards may well facilitate this. – JW



Imperial tumbled down the ethical league tables, with *Felix* revealing millions of pounds invested in the fossil fuel industry // Tom Mrazek

POLITICS

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Changing times...

Politics writer Abhijay Sood thinks that the Imperial isn't the place it used to be, but there is still more to be done.

POLITICS

Abhijay Sood

Politics Writer

Imperial College isn't the place it used to be. The student body is becoming less inward focussed, less tolerant of poor decision making on the part of the university, and less dismissive of things beyond the four walls of their degrees. We have a way to go yet, but the culture at our university is starting to shift, and a look back over the last year suggests progress is being made.

Beginning with the elephant in the room: it's easy to overlook the fact that this year a strike at Imperial College actually achieved something, with university management at Imperial and across the country being forced to concede on proposed changes to staff pensions. Student involvement bolstered this, with students standing on the picket lines, and over a hundred attending events in solidarity at the start and end of the action.

Certain 'progressive' groups on campus, such as the Labour Society and IQ, enjoyed record high membership this year. Divest Imperial, the campaign to get College to take its money out of toxic investments in fossil fuel, and the Left Forum, a non-partisan political/campaign group, also enjoyed high engagement this year. Some of these groups are coming together to form a united 'Action at Imperial,' with the goal of making our university a slightly better place.

There are even positives



Imperial might look the same, but change is happening // Imperial College

"We must engage in representation liberation and a student newspaper to cover it all"

from within the Union, with strong showings from our Liberation Officers and student reps.

In spite of the surprise addition of the Wellbeing Representation Network this year, rep engagement across the university has been relatively high, with reps campaigning for better personal tutoring, a stronger counselling service, and agreeing with staff on how the curriculum review (in which all the content in every course is up for change) will take place. Meanwhile the liberation officers' work this year has included a campaign for gender neutral bathrooms, or-

ganising a talk by Akala, work on neurodivergence, improving accessibility in Ethos, and fighting to improve the College's bursary provision. Union Council, the Union's chief decision-making body, has also been largely well attended this year, and while the contentious and often tedious nature of these meetings can be off-putting, they are a vast improvement from the empty rooms and low attendance which plagued past years.

In all of these cases,

Felix itself played a significant role, thanks in large part to the editorial team. Liberation officers have had regular columns, giving them a platform to discuss the oft-overlooked but important issues faced by the groups they represent. During the UCU dispute, it was easier to find news in *Felix* than the national press. Lastly and perhaps most importantly, *Felix* has challenged both the Union and College this year. Regarding the former, *Felix* has detailed the poor handling of certain sensitive issues, and more generally has done a good job reporting on the decisions being made in our name and on our behalf in Beit. On the latter, articles have detailed the university's vast assets, the significant pay and Brobdingnagian expenses of senior university management, and inequality at Imperial.

All of this suggests that the mood at Imperial is shifting, but there's still more to be done. First of all, those of us who feel these improvements are important must work to ensure what we have isn't lost – that this year won't just have been a flash in the pan. That means we have to actively engage in representation, liberation, and a student newspaper to cover it all: supporting things from the sidelines isn't enough. More ambitiously, it means using this year as a foundation – channelling what we've achieved into productively challenging the university and refusing to accept at face value what we're told. Does a university who pays its "key management personnel" almost £300k each, with more than £100m in surplus need to

cut staff salaries (in real terms) or the SCR breakfast (in very real terms) to save money? Should these "KMPs" be foisting wide scale changes to the degree courses on reluctant academics? When one quarter of all the undergraduate students sign something, is it unreasonable to expect some kind of formal response? Is it acceptable that for years, some departments haven't had so much as a common room? Should the foremost British Science and Technology institute invest its money in arms, cigarettes, and fossil fuels? As students, we have a responsibility to ask these questions – we shouldn't just be spectators: there would be no university without us.

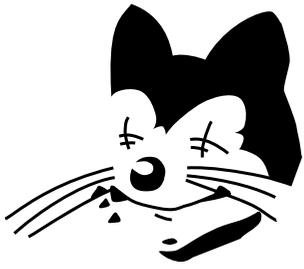
"When one quarter of all undergraduate students sign something, is it unreasonable to expect a formal response?"

Things will only change if people who care do something about it. It seems we're starting to, and I sincerely hope this trend continues in the next academic year.

If any of this resonates with you, and you want to know what you can do to help, feel free to drop me an email at abhijay.sood15@imperial.ac.uk

POLITICS

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In defence of the Syrian Democratic Forces

Politics Writer Juan Rubio Gorrochategui responds to an article earlier this year, which accused the Syrian Democratic Forces of war crimes and unethical acts.

POLITICS

**Juan Rubio
Gorrochategui**
Politics Writer

Several weeks ago, I wrote a comment piece for this paper that advocated Western support to the organization known as SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces), a group I described as: “an organization which has an ideology that combines libertarian socialism, gender equality, respect for ethnic minorities, secularism and green politics”. This article provoked the publication of a refutation piece several issues later, which accused me of spreading propaganda for a hateful terrorist organisation. As my ideology could not be further from that description, I would like to address the claims spouted in the response, if only to stop a mischaracterisation of my position by what seems an obvious attempt of whitewashing the atrocities of the Syrian government.

Four accusations are charged against the SDF. Each of them would be terrible on their own: the use of child female soldiers under the influence of drugs; dressing their militiamen as civilians; preventing civilians from leaving battle zones; and supporting attacks in Europe. The piece even compares them to ISIS, which, in my opinion, is an affirmation that can only be made from either ignorance or malice.

On child soldiers, the source provided is a YouTube video hosted by a channel owned by the Al-Hamza Division. This



Geology students are as satisfied as Sade // Wikimedia

is a Turkish-backed militia that forms part of the wide array of forces Turkey has been using in Rojava to wrestle control back from the SDF and its allies. If there were a group that would like to portray the SDF as a tyrannical force, it would be them, so we should consider the possibility the video provided has been staged, as has been the case of many footage pieces during the war. Nevertheless, there is indeed a report by Human Rights Watch that denounces the use of child soldiers by the YPG, the backbone of the SDF. While very concerning, the report also mentions these incidents are far from common in the YPG and admits a tenet policy of the organisation is refusing to use child soldiers. In addition, it should be noted that as recent as 2014, ISIS was engaging into a genocidal campaign against the Kurds, so, terrible as it is, some teenagers were forced to fight to save their lives. The cases reported happened under units that were not under the central

control of the YPG, and the organisation promised to investigate the matter, reiterating their commitment to universal human rights. They also ask for external support in their mission to maintain basic civil standards in both the war front and the areas where their control is tenuous. In this, the YPG have done more to tackle the problem of child soldiers in Syria than any of the other warring parties, which have also been accused of using underage individuals in their armies.

The second claim is that the SDF dresses their combatants with civilian clothes, which, as explained in the article, goes against Article 48 of the Geneva Conventions, blurring the line between civilians and soldiers. I have only been able to find a single instance of this happening – precisely in the video provided by the writer. I assume the SDF does not encourage its forces to use civilian clothes, but probably in the chaos of the war some units, or even individual

soldiers, have retorted to this tactic to escape the enemy’s fire. Not that it matters: according to Amnesty International, the Turkish army has indiscriminately fired at civilians fleeing Afrin, killing up to 17 children in just a single incident. Thus, it seems that sadly Article 48 is rendered moot by the cruelty of Erdogan.

The piece also claims the SDF have been blocking civilians from leaving Afrin. The spokesman for the UN Secretary General is the source for this claim, as it is shown in the video linked by the author. However, the very spokesman admits the UN has not been able to contact the local authorities of Afrin, which implies that their source of information is Turkey, as no other parties were fighting in the area. The story was only reported by organisms like the Anadolu Agency, the propaganda arm of the Turkish government. I would like to see more solid evidence.

Finally, it is claimed

the SDF advocate terrorist acts against civilians in Europe. According to the news that is taken as an evidence for this claim, a Kurdish group based in the diaspora, the Apoist Youth Initiative, called for violence against assets of the Turkish government, as well as the parties and organisations that, according to them, enable the violations of human rights carried out by the present Turkish government (i. e. most European governments). The group follows Abdullah Öcalan, the long-time jailed founder of the wide Kurdish leftist movement, but apart from both taking inspiration from him, no links have been found between the AYI and the SDF forces fighting in Syria. I want to state that I absolutely condemn the actions of this group against civilians and institutions of Turkish origin, that have no blame whatsoever for the foreign policy of their country. Nonetheless, Kurdish led groups are not the only ones increasing the tension among the diasporas. In Germany, an

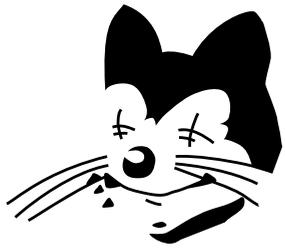
Erdogan-critical regional MP of the leftist party Die Linke was recently hit in the head and called a ‘traitor’ in Turkish by an unknown man. Across the Atlantic, supporters of Erdogan became infamous when they beat up protesters during the last visit of the Turkish dictator to Washington D.C.

“Comparing the SDF to ISIS can only come from either ignorance or malice”

Believing that we should not intervene militarily in Syria is a completely legitimate position, one I happen to hold. However, I will not accept falsehoods directed against the only group that is showing some commitment to democracy, tolerance of minorities, and feminism. While I agree past intervention in Libya and Iraq has been a colossal disaster, that does not mean we have to diplomatically support either the criminal Syrian government (which has been known to use gas against its own citizens) or the Islamist controlled opposition (whose record with human rights is shaky at best). That is why I believe the best-case scenario for Syria is a SDF-led government. Because being against Western imperialism does not mean blindly supporting the worst satraps of the Middle East.

COMMENT

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Abandoná a tu Diego Rivera

Following a break-up, one Comment Writer looks back on their unhealthy, emotionally-manipulative relationship, and advises others on what to do if they're in the same position.

COMMENT

Anonymous

Comment Writer

At the beginning of a relationship there is passion, not love. Love is built upon passion, but it doesn't necessarily exist after passion. Some people are mature and caring enough to be able to build the love, some are not: it is as simple as that. To love someone, you must love yourself first: you have to know yourself, to be sure of who you are and what you want in life. If you are not self-aware, self-conscious, there is no way you will be able to love someone.

“If you have a partner, they do not exist to clean up your mess: they don't have to deal with selfish behaviour”

By not knowing yourself or having your shit together you can easily drag those who care for you down with your mess: no one has to deal with your shit. If you have a partner, they do not exist to clean up your mess; they exist to support you and help you, but that does not mean that they have to deal with selfish behaviour on your part, with you saying “I am so



Frida Kahlo – Two Fridas (1939) // Flickr/cea +

sorry, I am like this with the people I love”. Let me tell you something: that is not love.

I was the one cleaning up the mess. I do not have the best background when it comes to relationships: I grew up in an environment of domestic violence, a totally abusive relationship. Research says I will now, when finding a partner, try to fix what was not fixed back then between my parents; living in that environment made me stronger but also made me much more tolerant to bullshit.

I did not respect myself in my first real relation-

ship. I realise now my first true love gives me more anger than good memories. It is not sad to realise that; in fact, it makes me grow, it makes me more aware, so I do not repeat the mistake.

I have got nothing to lose by writing this; in fact, it only makes me reflect more about what I did to myself. No, I do not blame myself. I have no right to blame myself. I lost myself because I gave everything I had. It would have been fine if that everything had been given to me – from me to me – but, surprise: it was not. You grow by making

mistakes, and I committed one of the biggest mistakes of my life so far: I gave myself away, completely, entirely. Months after, I found myself in pieces, from being trampled on numerous times. You would think I would realise what was going on, but I did not.

Currently, I am slowly gluing the pieces back together. Sometimes, a piece falls and I have to pick it up again, without really knowing if it will stick properly this time. It is a constant fight, a constant fight to rediscover me. I want it to be clear: I do not need a

sticker saying “fragile”. If I were to be described that way, then the whole world would have to be described that way too.

Accepting yourself is the first step to take before entering any relationship. If you do, do not be with someone who does not accept themselves. I did this and found myself in a cycle, trying to make things better when there was really nothing I could do, because he was only fighting against himself. If you feel like leaving, just leave. If you feel like you are losing yourself, leave. If it feels like it is not right, it is because it is not right.

Leave. There is nothing to lose. If you stay, you will lose yourself. So, leave.

I have no shame to say I got out of it by being broken up with. That is okay. I still get to leave, I still get to grow, and I still get to realise all the shit that happened during the relationship: specially all the red flags that existed, I noticed, and I ignored.

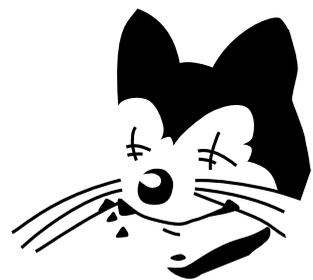
“If I were to be described as ‘fragile’ the whole world would have to be too”

I wrote this because I am sure I am not alone. I want to make people aware of my story, because I know this is happening to multiple people right now I feel if I had read something like this while still in the relationship things could have been different; I would have been able to raise my head up and leave earlier, or be able to make the red flags real, and not just thoughts to ignore.

Do not let yourselves go. Do not forget about yourselves. Do not lose yourselves. If the world has the right to take advantage of you, then you have the right to take advantage of the world. You have the right to think about yourself first. You have the right to not give a fuck. You have the right to be yourself. You should remain yourself. You have to remain yourself – at the end of the day, you have only got yourself.

COMMENT

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This year Union Council has been completely toxic – it's time for change

An anonymous student talks about how the machinations of various groups on the Council are bad for all of us and will eventually tear it apart.

COMMENT

Anonymous
Comment Writer

From a particular perspective, Imperial College Union is an organisation which has always been defined by negativity. After all, students wouldn't be motivated to make things better if they thought that things were already good enough. Usually, this negativity is channelled into productivity; the drive to improve things has been at the heart of virtually every positive change the Union has brought about at Imperial. Volunteers and sabbatical officers have always worked

together for the common good of Imperial's student body – even if they often disagreed on details or didn't get along particularly well.

“This year the atmosphere in the Union has grown completely toxic”

This year, however, something has changed. Whereas previously the atmosphere amongst senior Union officers has been fairly polite, if not exactly always friendly,

this year it has grown toxic. Personal animosity has been allowed to dictate the agenda; proposals are voted down purely because of who proposed them, without any consideration of their merit. Hard-working volunteers are sniped at and openly undermined in meetings, and partisan emails are sent to society mailing lists – one described Union Council members as “people who care very little about students, and are using their seat on Council just as a stepping stone to more senior Union positions.” Worse statements have been made in private.

This toxicity is not limited to one or two prominent individuals. Rather, two distinct

factions have emerged, which together account for virtually the entirety of the Union's senior officer cohort, from Constituent Union committees all the way up to the Officer

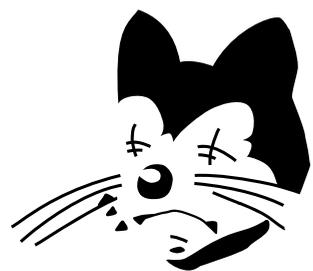
“The Union is doomed to failure in everything it does if its culture does not improve”

Trustees – who at times in the year have happily contributed to the ever-worsening atmosphere.

Every action and every proposal is viewed almost exclusively through the prism of which faction the individual is more closely associated with; no more does the Union's senior officer community accept – even begrudgingly – positive steps proposed by those they don't get along with personally. Instead, flimsy excuses are cobbled together to make sure that ‘they’ don't achieve anything. After all, isn't it best that nothing at all happens, just so long as ‘the other side’ don't get the credit...?

I have always, throughout my time holding volunteering roles, been particularly optimistic, despite the Union's negativity. I have always believed the Union could

achieve great things, if only we could work together, and have worked to try to bring about that unanimity and find common ground on difficult issues. However, the working atmosphere has been so bad in the Union this year I have several times seriously considered simply walking away. It may be that this year has been an aberration, a bad bunch of people incapable of working together. I sincerely hope so; the Union is doomed to failure in everything it does if its culture does not improve. Every single student with an elected role next year must do everything they can to make sure that it never gets this bad again; to fail to do so is to doom the Union.



Grumpy Bastard and the World Cup

Grumpy Bastard is looking forward to the World Cup. Because they hate themselves.

COMMENT

Grumpy Bastard
Comment Writer

Welcome to the end of the year. Whether it's your first, second, third, or even fourth year at this fine institution, I'm sure you have all arrived in the same manner: bedraggled, exhausted, and with the eyes of a survivor of an artillery barrage on the Western Front. For those of you still here beyond

four years, please contact the police, as you probably have an advanced and untreatable form of Stockholm Syndrome as well as chronic self-hate. If I'm honest, the self-hate never really goes, you just learn to hate everyone else until it feels normal.

I am really looking forward to the summer this year, mostly because of the World Cup. As an ashamed Englishperson, it really is wonderful to go through the same masochistic expectation that maybe this year, the boys in white will make it all the

way, only to eventually be defeated by some country that no one has even heard of, like Belgium. I think it's entirely in keeping with a people that loathes itself so completely as to vote the Tories into power that we care desperately about a sport that we have absolutely no hope of winning. It almost brings a patriotic tear to my eye.

Another wonderful aspect of the World Cup this year is the country in which it is held. Never before has an openly expansionist, homophobic regime landed itself with

such a propaganda coup. Come to think of it, I can think of one other regime, but I don't think that the Nazis had to bribe the Olympic officials anywhere near as much as Putin had to give to Sep Blatter and all of his friends. Something that could be very interesting could be when the rival nationalist “firms” come into contact with one another. Firms, in case you didn't know are groups of young en taht associate with different football clubs and occasionally meet to beat the shit out

of one another. I guess if I was from Manchester I'd want an early death too. As two nations with a history of violence and then making it the rest of the world's problem, I think it will be really nice to watch a proper confrontation between the pair of us. Let's just hope that the FSB stops threatening the Mafia bosses and firm leaders long enough for the true competition to take place. I mean it's not like they do it the rest of the time.

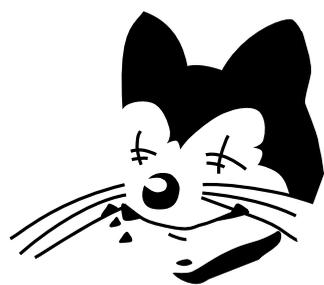
Overall, I can't say I have high expectations

of this summer's football related phenomena. I just expect to be greeted by the site of more England flags, a surge in the membership of the EDL and more obnoxious dickheads blowing Vuvuzelas in public. All I want is for them to shut up so that I can continue to worry about the implications of the Singapore conference in peace. That and shitting myself over exam results.

Grumpy Bastard would like to wish everyone the best for the summer, but is completely unable to. Goodbye dickheads.

COMMENT

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



GDPR is a good start, but it's up to us to protect our online privacy

GDPR might have started prompting change, but the current practices of internet giants needs we need to take our privacy seriously.

COMMENT

Artur Donaldson

Comment Writer

Even if you didn't read Kapilan's article in last week's *Felix* (*Felix* 1696), the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will not have escaped your attention thanks to the barrage of emails you will have received over the past few weeks.

GDPR could have a profound influence on the future of the World Wide Web. Just as the Kyoto Protocol showed nations can come together to take meaningful action for the future of the natural world, GDPR shows nations can come together for the future of the cybernetic world. For too long the World Wide Web, originally a decentralized means of freely sharing information, has become centralized and monopolized by a few key players. The risks are demonstrated by countless data breaches, the worst revealed this year being the Cambridge Analytica files and MyFitnessPal cases. We each need to realise what information is being collected about us, and to take action not just as a society, but as individuals. Legislation alone is not enough to ensure that our information is not used to do harm – We must break up monopolies, change business models from profit to non-profit, and redesign our technology so it is physically impossible for information to be



Cambridge Analytica is the highest-profile case of data harvesting // Flickr/thoughtcatalog

“The risks of data collection have been demonstrated by the countless breaches, including Cambridge Analytica”

disclosed.

From allegedly influencing the outcome of elections (as in the Cambridge Analytica case) to revealing the location of secret army bases in Afghanistan (Strava, November 2017) breaches of data or the plain incompetence of centralized services are having real impacts on our society, right now. In the former the personal conversations and information of 87 million Facebook users was breached by a rogue questionnaire app without consent. This

only emerged in March, three years after the event. In the latter, Strava released a map of every single route uploaded to their system – more than 3 trillion points. The map was sufficiently detailed to show routes uploaded by US soldiers in Afghanistan giving away sensitive information about the layout of military bases. Furthermore, the monopolization of global services by corporations tied to the laws of individual nations is harming competition and is inherently undemocratic.

Your Rights under GDPR

As stated on the EU commission's website under GDPR you have the right to:

1. information about the processing of your personal data;
2. obtain access to the personal data held about you;
3. ask for incorrect, inaccurate or incomplete personal data to be corrected;
4. request that personal data be erased when it's no longer needed or if processing it is unlawful;
5. object to the processing of your personal data for marketing purposes or on grounds relating to your particular situation;
6. request the restriction of the processing of your personal data in specific cases;
7. receive your personal data in a machine-readable format and send it to another controller ('data portability');
8. request that decisions based on automated processing concerning you or significantly affecting you and based on your personal data are made by natural persons, not only by computers. You also have the right in this case to express your point of view and to contest the decision.

Companies found to be in breach of GDPR are subject to a maximum fine of €20 million or 4% of global annual turn-over

COMMENT

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Now is the time to think about exactly why your data are so valuable and what privacy these companies really can afford you. In particular, consider what data are collected about you and where they are stored. What information is collected by your FitBit? Do you trust the government of a country in whose elections you cannot vote to have power over sensitive information about you – say, about your sexual orientation? This is where GDPR comes in. Under GDPR, you are granted several important rights. GDPR gives you the right to object to your personal data being processed for marketing purposes. Furthermore, it allows you to obtain access to these personal data and to have them erased when they are no longer needed. GDPR also gives some further rights and imposes heavy penalties on organizations for not complying or if their user’s data is breached (see left).

“GDPR cannot protect personal information from being collected, or guarantee it will not be compromised”

Organizations are taking GDPR seriously. That barrage of emails and popups may be annoying, but it is a sign that companies are concerned about not complying.

However, GDPR cannot protect personal information from being collected or guarantee it will not be compromised. Most websites on the World Wide Web today rely on personalized advertising in order to

provide a free service, and therefore people have no option but to accept the status quo to continue to use the Internet. How can we know when you toggle a button on a website your choice is taken into account? Do you know in what form information about you is stored?

Furthermore, many apps and websites continue to collect sensitive information even if the most stringent privacy settings are enabled. Many advertisers claim to offer the option to opt-out of personalized advertising, but they make it as difficult as possible to do this. There are exceptions. MakeUseOf, for instance has a very clear interface which lets you toggle off the collection of data. However, most users who are sufficiently concerned use an adblocker which denies revenue to the website. They do so because it physically prevents the transmission of sensitive information so it gives them peace of mind. As it stands today, the World Wide Web is designed so copious amounts of sensitive information are collected in a manner not possible two decades ago. We have not had time to get an intuition for what risks we are taking when we use the World Wide Web.

As long as personal information is collected and stored in form to which a single organization has physical access, there is always a risk that it will be abused, whether that be due to hacking, interference from the government of the country where the infrastructure is located, or for the sake of making a profit.

As Francis Bacon said, knowledge is power. Information is knowledge. Knowledge about how people behave gives power to influence future behaviour. Today the power of information collected by websites and apps is largely used to influence our shopping

habits through advertising. However, this power could be used to engineer society to various political ends. Legislation such as GDPR is like a soft measure against someone with access to data and a lack of moral compass crossing the Rubicon and turning the data against the users’ best interests. We should consider whether we need to redesign the World Wide Web to make it physically impossible for the data to be compromised.

“The power of information collected by websites could be used to engineer society to various political aims”

One solution is to treat services such as social media platforms as crucial infrastructure, and divide up their administration among independent organisations. This would come at the advantage of greater robustness as well as security, since there would no single point of attack. An example is the social media network Diaspora as a replacement for Facebook, in which you can establish your own “pod” which manages data.

The primary issue with this option is that of apathy amongst Internet users. Social media have an inherent tendency to monopolization, because their value is increased by each user who joins the network. This makes the GDPR’s requirement for data portability rather weak, since there is no equivalent service where you can pack up bags and go if you are unhappy.

Another option would

be to make a change in business model so as not to rely on personalized advertising, which would resolve the conflict in interests between the user and data holder. Large-scale voluntary collaborations such as Mozilla, Wikimedia, and the open-source instant messaging app Telegram demonstrate these are scalable and sustainable solutions. Alternatively, users could pay a monthly subscription fee for access to services like apps or websites, which would then be divided among the websites based on their usage. This idea already has immense traction – it is precisely what Spotify does for music and Netflix does for film.

Finally, new decentralized systems are currently being developed by the likes of MaidSAFE and InterPlanetary File System (IPFS) in which users contribute computing resources to the network (like BitTorrent) and are rewarded using a blockchain-based currency. Such systems would reward the content creators (i.e. the users) and those who contribute

data storage or computing resources to the network. With the costs to companies which base their business on surveillance for inevitable data breaches justly imposed by GDPR, this seems increasingly the more viable option.

“We need to take action, using our rights to make sure the World Wide Web does no further harm to society”

GDPR is a fine achievement of European politics. The combination of clear guidelines, robust implementation, and a genuine commitment is making already making a real change to the attitude people and organizations have about privacy. The centralization of the World Wide Web is an unneces-

sary risk to the health of our society, concentrating knowledge which could be used to influence peoples’ behaviour in the hands of a small number of organizations.

We need to take action, using our rights to make sure the World Wide Web does no further harm to society. As a society we need to rethink the business models behind the services we use, and redesign technology so as to ensure that our data cannot be breached in the first place by replacing our current centralized systems.

As an individual, take the opportunity now to find out what information services collect about you. With exams over, why not download your Facebook data and play around with it if you are so inclined?

Furthermore you do not have to agree to the terms and conditions if you are uncomfortable! Why not support efforts to make the web more open and try an alternative service such as DuckDuckGo instead of Google, or Telegram instead of WhatsApp. For more ideas on what you can do see below.

What you can do?

1. Take a moment to review your privacy options over the next few days in your apps. Get to know what information is collected about you and if you can disable it.
2. You don’t have to agree to the terms and conditions. Instead of Google, OneDrive, and WhatsApp why not try DuckDuckGo Search (<https://ddg.gg>), CryptPad (<https://cryptpad.fr/>), or Telegram (<https://telegram.org/>) which offer equivalent services for free but do not collect unnecessary amounts of personalized information. The website “PRISM Break” (<https://prism-break.org/en/all/>) has further suggestions.
3. Take part in making a better web. Are you are interested in the effects of technology on society? Would like to be involved in raising awareness? Do you have an interest in building a better Internet? If so, please contact artur.donaldson15@imperial.ac.uk.

SCIENCE

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Want to eat more healthily? Try putting on some ambient music

New research highlights the way what we listen to can influence what we eat, with relaxing music making us more likely to pick healthy options.

SCIENCE

Sarah Wong
Science Writer

When choosing our food, our conscious self is never in full control – I always let my cravings get the best of me. For instance, when I am sad I eat ice-cream; when I smell a pizza, I will instantly want to eat one. But have you ever considered how our hearing can impact on food choices?

In London, there are approximately 39,000 food service establishments. In order to compete with other restaurants, store managers will use different sensory cues to lure us into consuming their food. Bakeries, for example, pump out the smell of freshly baked bread to attract customers, while some stores play the UK top 40 to make themselves more appealing to a younger age group. This influence also extends to music and background noise, with both genre and volume having an impact on our appetite and food choice.

A study published in late April by Professor Dipayan Biswas and collaborators has demonstrated how music can influence our choice of eating either healthy or unhealthy food. Their hypothesis was based on previous findings in different studies: our perception of taste can be modified via ambient music; in a noisy environment our perception of sweetness and saltiness

decreases while the crunchiness of food is enriched. Other studies have shown emotional connection to background music can also affect how one evaluates wine. These examples go on, but no one has studied the effect of music on our choice of food until now.

“Higher music volume can elicit excitement, leading us to choose unhealthy food”

From these results, the researchers hypothesised that music can impact on our mood: higher music volume (e.g. club music) can elicit excitement, leading us to choose high energy and unhealthy food, since these fatty foods help reduce stress and high level of excitement. Vice versa, music that prompts us to relax may help us to make healthier food choices, as we gain better control of ourselves. This effect is demonstrated by mindfulness exercises that emotional eaters implement to help them lose weight, with a study finding that individuals who practice relaxation exercises have greater control in food consumption.

Testing this in the laboratory, supermarkets and cafes, results showed background music has an



Just imagine that nice muzak being pumped out // CC

effect on our emotional state, as reflected by heart rate. A more relaxed mind-state, as indicated by a lower heart rate, is linked to an increased preference for healthy food. In the experiments conducted in both supermarkets and cafes, low volumes of music and background noise correlate with increased sales of healthy food, regardless of the genre of music, implicating how subconscious cues can trigger consumption of food.

Translating this knowledge into real-life applications, perhaps restaurants that sell healthy food may want to have gentle, quiet music floating in the background, while fast food chains can turn up the volume to boost sales. Other business strategies could also be modified accordingly using the results of this study: when

designing menus for a stall in a noisy setting, such as a food market, they should focus more on selling unhealthy food, as consumers are more likely to purchase such items in this setting. Just imagine how likely you are to choose a burger over a salad in Borough Market!

This can even be extended to the design of the market or malls, as building walls can be designed to absorb sound to create a tranquil environment, or walls can even be put between sub-departments to allow different volumes or genres to be played in different areas.

As for us, if we want to purchase and consume healthy food, perhaps we can plug in our calming music when we are going for our grocery shop, so we won't 'accidentally' bring home the whole

snack aisle. Otherwise, we could choose to dine in places with a lower volume of background noise, therefore reducing subconscious cues to binge eat highly calorific food.

“The definition of ‘high volume’ used in the study is itself quite obscure and subjective”

Nonetheless, this study only demonstrated there is a correlation, with the cause of this underlying process yet to be understood. On top of that, we all have a preference for

an optimal music volume. For example, I turn my music up so loud that you can hear it through my earphones, and I find that ‘just right’. My roommate disagrees, as she thinks a silent environment more relaxing. Using this example, it is clear the definition of ‘high volume’ itself is quite obscure, and some individuals might find loud music more relaxing than quiet background noise. Furthermore, background noises – people chatting, glasses clinking, intercoms – cannot be controlled in real life situation such as in a supermarket or a café, rendering these findings limited to individual context. While these findings are not a universal rule to be followed at all costs, perhaps it is still a cheeky method into tricking ourselves to eat healthily!

SCIENCE

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Could platypus milk help beat antibiotic resistance?

SCIENCE

Marie Jones

Science Writer

In 2014, the World Health Organisation warned the international community of the threat of antibiotic resistance. Due to an excessive use of antibiotics – mostly fed to food-producing animals – bacteria are able to develop resistance, which they then transmit to the next generation of bugs, who can no longer be killed by available pharmaceuticals. As a result, diseases which have been treatable for years, thanks to Alexander Fleming's discovery, are once again responsible for many deaths – killing approximately 5000 people in the UK each year.

In this critical situation, hope arises from new



What are those? // Wikimedia

research being carried out on species which previously had no funding due to their insignificance. Australia's wildlife is one of the areas of interest. A protein in platypus milk was found to have antibacterial properties by a team of Australian scientists from Deakin University, Victoria, in 2010. A recent

paper published by Dr Janet Newman, from Australia's national science agency CSIRO, identifies the functional groups of this protein enabling it to combat superbugs.

As indicated by crystallisation, the molecule is unique, and presents no similarity with any other known protein. Conse-

quently, this constitutes a new field for researchers and scientist to explore! The monotreme lactation protein (MLP) includes a monomer of twelve helices, two short β -strands, and a deep fold which gives it the nickname "Shirley Temple," after the famous American child star with curly hair from the 1930s. This discovery reinforces Newman's belief that monotremes may be an unexploited source for identification of new proteins, with interesting properties such as antimicrobial activity. Dr Newman was not overly surprised by this as she states: "Platypus are such weird animals that it would make sense for them to have weird biochemistry".

Ornithorhynchus anatinus and echidnas are indeed the only

two mammals on earth which lay eggs. They are considered mammals because they feed their babies with milk similar to cows or humans. What could then explain their lactating proteins contain such antibiotic? Like no other mammals, the monotremes are unable to breastfeed their progeniture; instead they sweat milk, which is exposed to the outside environment and thus has the susceptibility of possibly becoming contaminated. This evolution of the platypus may be its defensive response for a safe and sterile delivery system of milk in order to protect the young from possible infection. The particular fold of the protein explains its "antibacterial properties against some of the nastier bugs you find in the environment but not against some bacteria

found in the guts of the young", Newman reports, after observing the molecule killing bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Enterococcus faecalis*.

Even though the platypus milk could lead to the creation of new antibiotic treatment against superbugs, drug discovery will take a long time before patients are offered new pharmaceuticals. Thus, it is still crucial to counter bacterial resistance to antibiotics by reducing the massive use of antibiotics worldwide. The promise of innovative antibiotics being developed against superbugs is a relief in the eventuality of a future 'post-antibiotics era,' but should not be taken for granted, as research is still required to understand the protein's interactions before it can be commercialised as a treatment.

Connect with Conservation: how we can all help

SCIENCE

Steve Allain

Science Writer

Over the past few months, I have been updating you all with a number of conservation stories, both optimistic, and less so. Now, to wrap things up, I thought it would be a good idea to give you all a few ideas on how you can make a few small changes to your daily routine to help save the planet. This does not have to be as drastic as going vegetarian, but can be very simple. I have listed a few ways below that I would like you to consider.

As we have all seen

in recent times, plastics are a big problem for the environment, and it is important that we reduce our consumption. To do this when visiting pubs and clubs, do not use straws unless the establishment has biodegradable or plastic alternatives. Likewise, when buying bottled drinks, try to avoid ones in plastic packaging, or make sure you recycle your bottles afterwards if you cannot. If you are similar to me and love a cup of tea or two on your daily commute, then please carry a reusable cup. Not only will you be saving the environment, but many coffee shops also offer discounts to those customers that do. All of these small changes do add up, and once you become aware of the

other alternatives you can use, you can significantly reduce the amount of single-use plastic you use and dispose of.

"It is important we all reduce our consumption of plastic"

Something else we can all do to help the natural world is get involved in one way or another. There are a number of groups all across the UK devoted to animals and plants of all kinds. All it takes is a quick Google search, so you will easily be able to find a group or two where



Reducing plastic use is important in safeguarding our oceans // Wikimedia

you can volunteer your time with your favourite animals! This has benefits on both sides: not only will you be directly contributing to conservation, but it can also help your

wellbeing. Studies have shown that people who spend time immersed in nature have a better mental wellbeing than those that do not. So, it's a win-win situation – best of luck

getting involved! You never know, you may discover a new passion that drives you to help safeguard a specific part of the natural world.

SCIENCE

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Why we struggle to live up to our ideals

SCIENCE

Maria Balaet

Science Writer

A recent study from Dr. Shai Davidai and Professor Thomas Gilovich at Cornell University shows our prominent regrets arise from ‘the ideal road not taken’ – our inability to fulfil our ideal-self aspirations. Additionally, results from six studies indicate 76% of people report not meeting their personally-imposed goals as the biggest regret in their lives.

The theory at the core of this research relies on the idea that a person’s sense of self depends on three attributes: the ideal self (their life aspirations), actual self (attributes that they possess), and ought self (who their obligations indicate they should be). The following example

could be used to frame this theory: a scientist aspires to become a successful academic (ideal self), considers themselves hardworking (actual self) and is expected to be productive by their peers, colleagues and public (ought self). It is not difficult to imagine how not being able to personally call themselves a ‘successful academic’ would constitute a regret more damaging than not being called ‘productive’ enough by others – since they are their own biggest critic.

The researchers proposed an explanation that has to do with our own set goals and resources needed to achieve them, rather than our subjective experience of self. Being “hardworking” or “productive” involves clear targets – a number of intense working hours daily, and a certain output. Poorly defined guidelines for achieving ideal-self

aspirations, meanwhile – such as being a “successful scientist”, a “good mentor”, or a “good parent” – pose harm for individuals, and implicitly for the society, since what it means to have one of these attributes is, at large, a subject to debate.

A connection worth further investigation is between regrets concerning the ideal-self and impostor syndrome, a condition that makes people doubt their accomplishments and consequently feel as if they were a fraud. While research on impostor syndrome is limited, recently individuals have taken to social media to voice to raise awareness about it – which has the potential to trigger increased scientific interest.

A recent study published in the *International Journal of Medical Education* found around a quarter of male and half of female US medical



Many can find it hard to live up to their ideal self // CC

students suffer from impostor syndrome, especially towards the end of medical school. The researchers highlighted one possible reason for such emotions would be feelings of anxiety about their ability to practice as a doctor upon graduation.

Another possible explanation, in light of the Cornell University research findings, may be

a discrepancy between our ought self and actual self, or the ideal self and actual self. Thus, an interesting research avenue would be to compare and contrast the ought self and the ideal self, as well as to investigate what happens in situations when the line is blurred between what one wishes for oneself and what others expect.

Research into behaviour

has the power to teach us a basic understanding of what being human entails, and, importantly, what we can do to improve society. By using this knowledge of what generates feelings of regret, we can improve communication about what people want to bring to the table, allowing them to build a thriving community at work, home, or outside.

Drop in cancer risk five years after quitting smoking

SCIENCE

Diego F. Nájera

Science Writer

A new analysis of the Framingham Heart Study, conducted by a team of researchers led by Hilary Tindle MD, MPH at the Vanderbilt University Medical Centre, has revealed encouraging findings for both current and former smokers.

Findings from the Study – which is supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, and examined the health records of nearly 9,000 people monitored over a number of decades –



Just say no, kids // CC

revealed individuals who stop smoking had within five years a 39.1% lower lung cancer risk relative to current smokers. The rate at which the risk of lung cancer reduces is faster than has been

previously reported, and highlights the benefits of smoking cessation. This risk continues to fall as the years since quitting increases, relative to current smokers.

“If you smoke, now

is a great time to quit,” said Professor Tindle, the William Anderson Spickard Jr., MD Professor of Medicine at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, and Director of the Vanderbilt

Center for Tobacco, Addiction and Lifestyle. Prof. Tindle further stated: “the fact that lung cancer risk drops relatively quickly after quitting smoking, compared to continuing smoking, gives new motivation.”

Nevertheless, it is worth stressing the risk of lung cancer remains elevated despite quitting relative to individuals who have never smoked. Co-researcher Matthew Freiberg, MD, MSc said: “While the importance of smoking cessation cannot be overstated, former heavy smokers need to realise that the risk of lung cancer remains elevated for decades after they smoke their last cigarette, underscoring the

importance of lung cancer screening”.

Biotechnological advancements have allowed for the use of effective tools such as lung cancer screening, which significantly contribute to a reduction in the risk of death caused by lung cancer. Its benefits, however, can be maximised considerably when partnered with successful quitting.

Currently, smoking causes 1.69 million deaths worldwide each year from lung cancer, and 87% of lung cancer deaths in the United States alone. Needless to say, it very much remains a public health matter with and action needed from governmental, private, and educational entities.

SCIENCE

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The dawning of the age of synthetic biology

Synthetic biology is one of the latest buzzwords in the STEM community, but what is it actually all about?

SCIENCE

Varshit Dusad

Science Writer

Would you like to have a vegan hamburger? Are you concerned with the deteriorating environment? Are you a biology geek eager to explain why biology is cool? The answer to such wide-ranging questions is synthetic biology.

What is synthetic biology? Formally, it is the interdisciplinary science of integrating engineering principles to biology to actively reimagine, reshape, and re-engineer living organisms and develop artificial biological systems.

In more simple words, it is changing perspectives about harnessing the potential of biology for practical use, borrowing from the field of engineering to

bring more rigor, standards, and benchmarks in communication to the fundamental principles of biology.

Philosophy of science, more than anything else, is driving the field of synthetic biology. It aims to correct longstanding deficits obstructing the progress of biology, namely that it is 'hard to replicate' and 'hard to predict'. The idea is to bridge this fundamental limitation in biology by complementing it with tools and principles of engineering which have developed over a few centuries to be able accurately predict and replicate results.

There are a number of enabling technologies which have made synthetic biology possible as well as different from its predecessors. These technologies include automated DNA sequencing, rapid DNA synthesis, efficient DNA assembly, stochastic

modeling of biological processes, and rigorous statistical inference.

“Synthetic biology aims to complement biology with tools and principles of engineering”

Some ardent critics of synthetic biology complain the enabling technologies of synthetic biology have been around for many years, and the new field is no more than a rebranded form of genetic engineering which provides no additional utility beyond marketing to investors and funding agencies. To their credit, they are partially right. All objects in the toolkit

of synthetic biology have been employed by its predecessors, but only partially. What makes this new prodigal child of biotechnology different is that it provides a unique interface, encompassing all the enabling technologies together to focus on a coherent purpose.

Synthetic biology has done more than just allow for scientific progress: it has succeeded in bringing together people from diverse backgrounds like biologists, engineers, mathematicians, computer scientists, policymakers, environmental activists, entrepreneurs, and investors. This has brought a cascading effect resulting into democratizing of biotechnology. Many 'Do it Yourself Biology' labs have started to crop up across the world, including London, where science enthusiasts are developing 'radioshack-like laboratories' taking on open problems. DIY biology enthusiasts have a more sophisticated term for it: 'Bio-Hackerspace'. The name is inspired by a hacking culture which began in silicon valley in the early 1980s where the enthusiasts would tinker with technology just to push its limits.

The growing hacker movement has raised concerns among public and policymakers alike. Given even field-tested GMOs are viewed with suspicion, the idea of an amateur trying to modify bacteria to make it glow in dark instead of a flashlight is unpalatable to many. These concerns have been acknowledged by many experts in the first 'Synthetic Biology 1.0' conference held at MIT, which discussed the risk, ethics, and intellectual property issues associated with this

new paradigm of biological engineering. However, this conference coincided with another event at MIT which has become the world's largest movement spearheading synthetic biology: International Genetic Engineering Machines competition or iGEM.

iGEM is hosted every year at MIT where teams across the world participate and present their project, built around synthetic biology to tackle any open problem in biology. iGEM is immensely popular, with the number of participating teams increasing every year. The first iteration of iGEM in 2004 saw only five teams, but as of 2017 more than 300 teams participated in this global competition.

Perhaps the biggest driver of iGEM's popularity is its emphasis on science communication: teams have to build an extensive wiki to present their work with proper documentation of project idea, workflow, results, and a lab notebook for all future teams to take guidance from. Moreover, every team has to do public outreach, which involves organizing workshops and media outreach, conducting surveys, and promoting themselves on social media. The track record of Imperial College has been very impressive in iGEM; the team won the grand prize in 2016 and came overall second in 2014, 2011 and 2006. In a disruptive field with no formal curriculum iGEM has been a successful endeavor in providing young students with a holistic education about synthetic biology.

The UK has been very proactive about being an integral participant in the

emerging global synthetic biology scene, where the US has been the predominant player. In 2012, the UK Research Council unveiled a roadmap for future with the ambition of making the UK a leader in synthetic biology. Its key recommendation included investing in a network of multidisciplinary centers for synthetic biology and fostering a skilled and well-funded UK-wide synthetic biology community.

These recommendations led to forming of a multi-university initiative bringing together top five UK universities in synthetic biology – Imperial, Cambridge, Edinburgh, King's, and Newcastle – to "provide critical mass and bring synergy" in synthetic biology development. While King's focuses on the social and ethical implications of synthetic biology, the other four specialise in advanced research.

“The UK has been proactive about being an integral part of the new field”

Synthetic biology is not just an evolution of a new area of research but also a societal and technological movement strong enough to revolutionize how we as humans interact with each other and our environment. There is hope as well as concern over the change that might come, but all we can do is prepare for the changes.

The dawn of synthetic biology is here.



Synthetic biology is bringing together lots of different teams // CC

SCIENCE

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First new stereoisomer type in 50 years, claim chemists

SCIENCE

Juan Rubio Gorrochategui
Science Writer

Chemists at both Shanghai University and the University of Sydney have announced the discovery of the first new kind of molecular stereoisomer in half a century. For those who have never heard of this term, stereoisomers are molecules that share the same molecular formula (i.e. contain the same number of atoms of each element) as well as bond connections between species, but have different arrangements in the 3-D space. Previous known stereoisomers include enantiomers, which are pairs of molecules that are non superimposable mirror images of each

other (if you have trouble imagining this, think of your right and left hand; they are identical, but there is no physical way to superimpose them in a way that makes both of them identical to each other).

“The new family of stereoisomers has taken its name from *ákamptos* – Greek for ‘inflexible’”

The researchers discovered the new structure in a molecule called transoid (BF)₂O(B-F)-quinoxalinoporphyrin. When it is surrounded by

a porphyrin macrocyclic ring – a circular, rigid structure formed by sub-units of nitrogen, carbon and hydrogen known as pyrroles and also found in haemoglobin – the bond angle inversion caused by the bending of a trio of atoms in the molecule (a boron-oxygen-boron bridge) is fixed in space, as rotation is blocked by the ring itself. This would not happen if the molecule was outside the macrocycle, as the rotation of the bonds would produce a molecule that would be identical to its starting configuration.

The new family of stereoisomers has tentatively been named as Akamptisomers, taking its name from *ákamptos*, the Greek term for ‘inflexible’. The two possible isomer forms corresponding to the opposite orientations of the bond angle have been baptized as ‘parvo’



The breakthrough may bring benefits to medicinal chemistry // CC

and ‘amplo’, after the Latin words for small and large, respectively. According to the scientists who made this finding, the new group of isomers have potential to be useful in several fields such as medicinal chemistry, as they could be essential for the synthesis and characterization of the active

principles of future drugs. Other hypothetical applications of akamptisomers include their potential use in molecular computers. For these devices to work, it is essential that the molecules used can change between two different configurations. However, the chemists involved in the discovery admitted

that, while promising, it is very unlikely that akamptisomers will be soon making an appearance in commercially available molecular computers, as more research is needed regarding the stability and nature of this new family of isomers.

Imperial CDT Science festival: Science and Ethics

SCIENCE

Riccardo Moriconi
Science Writer

The synergy between Science and Ethics is pervasive in our society. Scientific advances and technological developments are shaping the future of our life, and society as a whole. Imperial will be holding their annual CDT Science Festival, which this year aims to explore and understand how scientific research integrates with ethical values by analysing emerging frontiers, their social impacts, and possible implications. We are glad to introduce students, researchers, and professionals from other

fields to a variety of debated topics with valuable insights from a pool of experts in the field. The discussions will provide a stimulating ground to address the curiosity and common concerns of the audience – since science and ethics are two faces of the same coin.

To better connect the audience with experts, a series of talks on sustainable innovation, climate science, artificial intelligence, genome editing, and quantum technologies will take place.

Would future advances in genome editing constitute the ultimate frontier for personalised healthcare? Could surgical interventions be fully replaced by a new generation of genetic pharmaceuticals, without compromising

our identity as species? How will we make complex decisions in more general critical scenarios with (un)clear conflicting goals? How can we possibly leverage technology whilst preserving our values? The questions are endless ...

At the CDT Science Festival, we want to offer the exciting opportunity to answer these open questions, understand the related implications, and argue about possible side-effects each research area projects into our own lives.

Talks and discussions will be accompanied by Pandemic, an interactive movie that allows visitors from the audience to experience a series of real-life ethical case questions.

Students and young

researchers are invited to submit posters for the one-day pop-up ‘Sustainable Innovation Exhibition’, to showcase the ethical implications of their scientific research.

Submissions are now open at <http://www.cdtfestival.co.uk/>.

A further competition will award the best poster addressing the following questions: what are the implications of our research? What are the values involved in the decision-making process? How can we steer our research and developments towards respecting and enhancing common values? How can we reduce disparity? And how can we improve justice, welfare, and equality in our society?

The proposed posters

Imperial College London

SCIENCE | ETHICS

9th July 2018

Queen's Tower Rooms, Imperial College London

Logos for partner organizations: LSM, EPSRC, ACM, etc.

What impact could our research have on the world? // CDT

should consider the impact of current innovations, and should suggest a constructive scientific progress sustainable for society. Rather than focusing on the technical and technological advance per se, we would emphasise the advantages and possible downsides

regarding their use in scenarios with conflicting goals.

Save the date: Monday July 9th 2018, for the CDT Science Festival and the associated exhibitions at: Imperial College London – Queen's Tower Rooms.

We look forward to welcoming you!

SCIENCE

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Cancer and the immune system – friend or foe?

SCIENCE

Roser Gonzalez
Science Writer

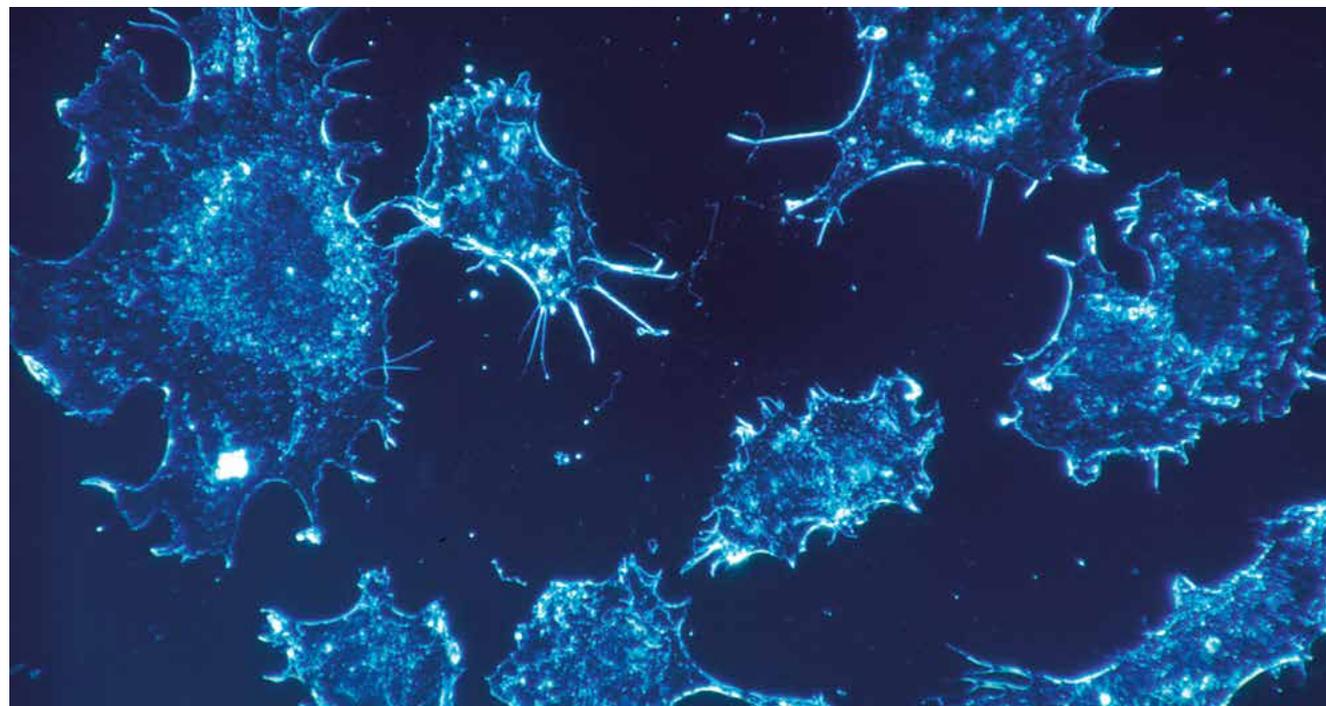
Why is cancer so difficult to beat, you might be wondering. The main problem with cancer is that it arises from our own cells. We are all unique and special, but so are our tumors, which makes it difficult to deal with them at a population level. Unfortunately, the same drug might not have the same effect on two different people, even though they might have the same kind of cancer. As we wait for personalised medicine to develop in the future, scientists are currently trying to enhance our natural and already personalised defence mechanisms: our immune system.

In general, people associate the immune system with the body's mechanism of defense against viral, fungal, and bacterial infections. But this is not all it does – it also fights back against cancer. There is plenty of evidence showing how important a role the immune system

plays in keeping cancer at bay. People with immunodeficiencies, for example, are known to be more prone to develop tumors.

“Strikingly, some cancers have been shown to create a micro-environment, using the immune system to their advantage”

So, why does cancer emerge in a person with a healthy immune system? Cancer is the result of the uncontrolled growth of as little as one of our own cells. Since these cells replicate quite fast, they often acquire mutations that can make them resistant to current medication or even the detection of the immune system itself. More strikingly, some cancers have been shown to create a microenvironment in which they use



Cancer cells dividing under the microscope // CC

some of the cells of the immune system to their advantage, providing them with more glucose (food) and oxygen to facilitate their growth. Apart from this comfort, cancer cells become invisible and thus protected from the rest of the immune system, which would otherwise eliminate them. More specifically, there are two families of cells belonging to the immune system that generally become cancer friendly: cancer associated-macrophages and regulatory

T cells.

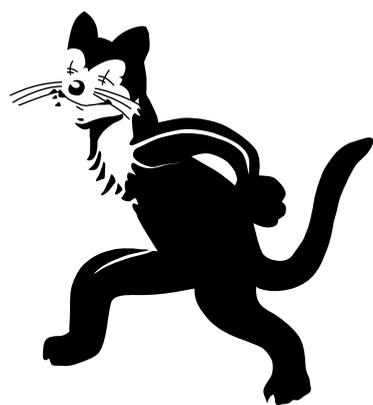
Cancer cells can therefore become reliant on these particular cell families for their survival. And so, researchers are currently working on ways to exploit this weakness. Individual disruption of the cancer-associated macrophages or the regulatory T cells has so far failed to provide any satisfactory results, the reason being that upon dysfunction in one of these cell families there is a tendency for the other to increase in terms of

number and functionality. There seems, in other words, to be a compensatory effect. With this in mind, researchers at the Babraham Institute employed a dual strategy in which they managed to disrupt both cell families simultaneously. In their recent publication, they show that in a colon cancer model in mice this treatment promotes the immune system rejection of the cancer. By the end of the study half of the mice were completely tumor free. Although

much more research needs to be done, the inhibitor of the T regulatory cells they used is already approved as a treatment for some cancers, so this new strategy could potentially be easily translated into the clinic.

Considering how complex cancer is as a disease, boosting our own immune system to battle it is a strategy that might serve to overcome current limitations when the medications we do have stop working.

Want to be involved in *Felix* next year?



We want you – yes, you! We're looking for writers, photographers, editors, illustrators, reporters, computer experts and grammar nerds to join our team. No experience needed – we'll teach you everything you need to know. If you're interested, send us an email on felix@ic.ac.uk

TECH

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What did we miss?

An entire three months of tech summarised in under a minute of speed-reading.



OnePlus 6's notch, iOS 12's new notifications, and the newly announced Fallout 76// *Android Authority, 9to5mac, and Microsoft*

TECH

Tom Mrazek
Tech Editor

The light blinded me as I climbed out of my cave. For many, time essentially stopped around March and didn't restart until their very last exam. I was one of those people, and until a few hours ago I was convinced that nothing happened in the world of tech for the past three months.

Holy crap was I wrong....

And so were you, probably. Here's an update on everything you've missed if you've just emerged from the darkest, gloomiest corners of the library.

In complete antithesis to all the math and thinking that's behind us we're going to do this in no particular order at all.

OnePlus 6 Event:

Let's turn this into a bit of an op-ed piece for a second – I'm no fan of notches. I like my bezels uniform and symmetrical. Despite my gripe with some aspects of the flagship's appearance, OnePlus has put together a respectable phone on paper with a price tag that yet again undercuts most competition. If it ain't broke don't try to fix it.

“OnePlus 6 verdict: if it ain't broke don't try to fix it”

Introduced alongside their phone was a pair of Bluetooth earbuds for just £69 – I for one welcome this as any competition to Apple's costly offering means a potential increase

in Bluetooth adoption and helps stifle any (righteous, for now but not for much longer I hope) criticism that customers shouldn't have to pick between an obsolete solution (the jack) and a subpar one (Bluetooth). Thankfully, OnePlus kept the headphone jack too.

Apple's WWDC:

Well, it's Apple we're talking about, so let me guess – they rendered a few old iPhones obsolete, added another camera on the back of the iPhone 8S, and introduced a couple more bugs into High Sierra?

All wrong – Apple surprised everyone by announcing iOS 12 would not only be supported by all the iPhones featuring iOS 11, but also aim to fix the countless bugs that turn your phone into a paperweight should it try to display the wrong character.

We didn't see the in-

roduction of any iPhones or MacBooks at the conference. Instead, Tim Cook and co. announced MacOS Mojave which brings a true dark mode but, more importantly, a complete revolution in how you use your desktop.

“Apple is pushing improvements in usability, not new features”

If you're anything like me, you treat your desktop the way you would a serial killer in your room – keep your distance, throw stuff at it, and most importantly don't make any direct eye contact. With Mojave, a feature known as sets will attempt to organize your desktop by file type while a new viewing mode for finder will make scrolling

through thousands of unwanted photos that much more fun.

If you ask me, I'm happy with the direction this year's WWDC has taken. Both Apple's mobile and desktop OS need not new features but rather improvements in usability and the ironing out of bugs. Microsoft, watch and learn.

E3???:

Oh right, E3 happened! Among the announcements was Naughty Dog's guarantee that many more tears will be shed by console gamers this year – *The Last of Us Part II* is upon us.

Bethesda's trailer for “*Skyrim* Very Special Edition” featuring a satirical introduction of *Skyrim* to a new platform – Amazon's Alexa. Poking fun at their inclination to try earn money off the *Skyrim* brand in any way possible, the protagonist in the trailer plays a

variation of *Dungeons and Dragons* with his Amazon Echo. I could complain about Bethesda for being, for the lack of a better term, woke, but I'm really just happy to see Keegan-Michael Key in a skit again.

“TL;DR: Evolution is the name of the game, not revolution.”

Of course, within the past three months, countless startups have brought about their innovations and hundreds of other companies unveiled their exciting products like Asus' laptop with a screen replacing the touchpad. Keeping tabs on the aforementioned trifecta of events should, however, spare you for some embarrassing ignorance in the next few days.

MUSIC

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God save the *Childqueen*

LA psychedelic-soul artist Kadhja Bonet returns with *Childqueen*, the follow-up to her breakthrough LP *The Visitor*, displaying her instrumental skills and syrupy vocals.

MUSIC CHILDQUEEN



Artist: Kadhja Bonet.
Label: Fat Possum **Top**
Tracks: Delphine; Another Time Lover; Mother Maybe.
For Fans Of: Moses Sumney; ESKA. 37 minutes

Fred Fyles
Editor-in-Chief

There is a double pleasure in discovering the music of LA psychedelic-soul artist Kadhja Bonet. There is, first of all, the joy to be found in the music: warm and inviting, completely drenched in a sticky sense of pleasant nostalgia, the songs seem to have been beamed to us directly from the 1970s. This sense of timelessness seems to place Bonet's work among the legion of record store oddities, which gathered dust in crates before being recognised as brilliant works – musicians like Linda Perhacs and Kim Jung Mi spring to mind, not due to sonic similarities, but more in the sense we are listening to something that was once lost, now found.

The second pleasure, therefore, is finding that – despite her '70s stylings – Bonet is very much a modern artist, who only put out her debut album a couple of years ago. Her 2016 LP, entitled *The Visitor*, was a well-curated collection of beautiful songs, with a clearly-defined sound – a curious mixture of soul, psychedelia, and funk. The name of the album was appropriate: Bonet seems in many ways like

some kind of visitation, someone plucked from another time and space, only touching down for a brief instance.

“Bonet seems in many ways like some kind of visitation from another time and space”

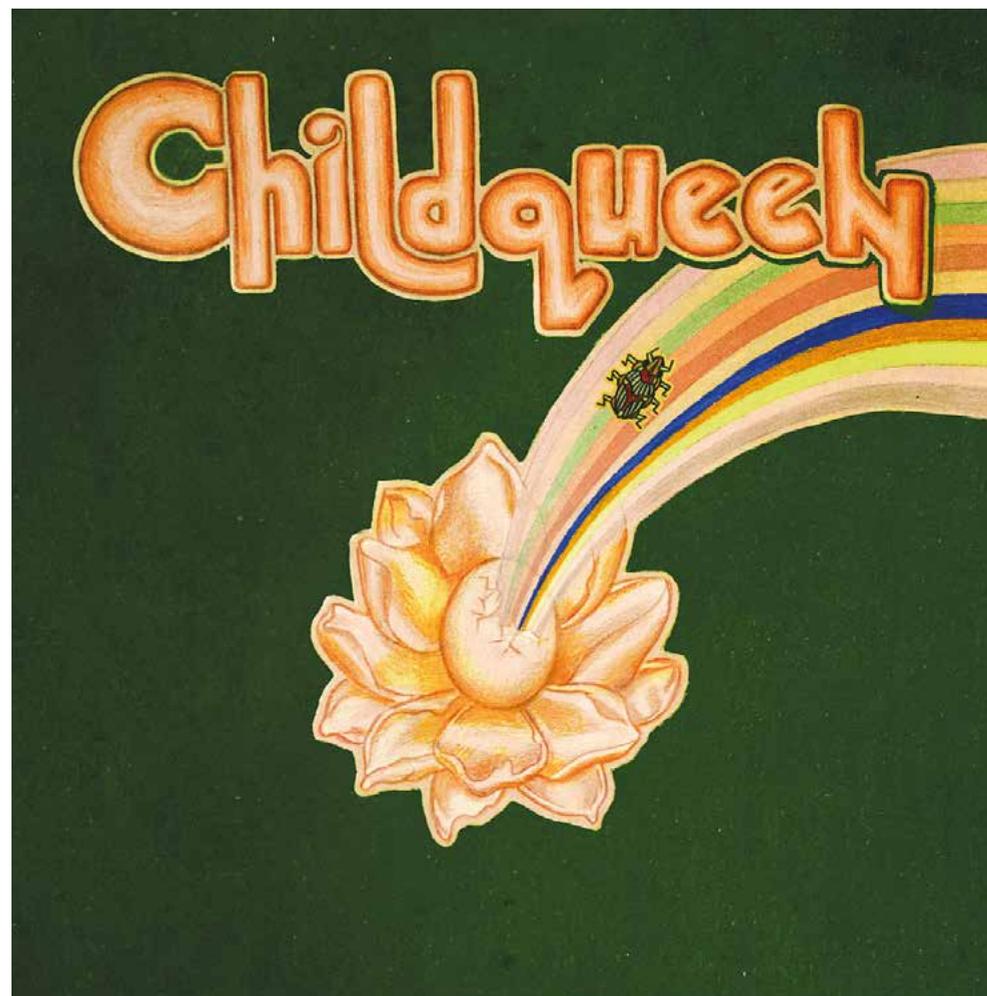
With *Childqueen*, her follow-up, Bonet continues to plunder from a vast array of sources, but develops her confidence, creating a sound that is excitingly entirely her own. The first few minutes of *Childqueen* sound similar to *The Visitor*: on opening track, ‘Procession’, she advises us that “every morning brings a chance to renew, chance to renew,” like some kind of spiritual advisor at dawn. A marching drum beat then starts up, the military atmosphere contrasting with the funky bass guitar line and fluttering flutes, which cut through the ethereal glittering synths enshrouding Bonet's vocals. The next track, ‘Childqueen’, starts off with swelling strings, before morphing into a laid-back soul track, which sounds like it could be played over the opening credits to a '60s psych-pop film.

From this point on, however, Bonet makes a subtle but noticeable departure from her sound on *The Visitor*: while in her first album the tracks seemed to be much

more free-floating, on *Childqueen* they are often anchored by a series of incredibly-funky bass riffs, giving the songs a lot more energy and presence. ‘Thoughts Around Tea’, for example, features rat-a-tat drums pierced by stabbing synth progressions, while a looping bassline runs underneath it all; Bonet's delivery is fluent and funky, as she lyrically contorts to fit around the pulsating beat. She pulls a similar trick on ‘Wings’, stretching her vocals around the music, elongating a phrase here and there to create a sense of relentless motion, hitting all the right intonations.

‘Mother Maybe’, one of the early singles released from the album, is probably as funky as Bonet gets: cymbal tapping is overlaid with wobbly bass guitar, while ray-gun synths and organ warbles flow underneath, to create a dense tapestry of sound. This intense weft and warp cuts out towards the end of the track, as Bonet launches into a series of incredible vocal runs, displaying her impressive voice.

And what a voice it is. Silky smooth, Bonet's vocals emanate an inner warmth; she manages to sound a little a little like any number of iconic soul vocalists – Dusty Springfield, Minnie Riperton, Roberta Flack – while remaining completely idiosyncratic. Often she'll layer her singing to create a form of cosmic harmony, but at times she'll leave herself completely exposed. The majority of her vocals are delivered in a sort of whisper-singing, as if she's speaking right into your ear; on



How do you like your eggs in the morning? // Fat Possum Records

occasion, however, she'll let rip, such as on the later sections of ‘Delphine’.

“Silky smooth, Bonet's vocals always emanate an inner warmth”

It's the track on this album that sees Bonet's vocals most up-front. The drums are barely-there, and the wonky bass, as thick as syrup, allows plenty of room for her to break through the dizziness, crafting a track that seems to drip with yearning.

On ‘Another Time Lover’ she shows us the excellent control she has

over her voice, producing a jelly-like vibrato that quivers before stealing into pure, clear notes; elsewhere, on ‘Joy’, she multiplies her voice until it resembles an angelic chorus. The album ends with the appropriately titled ‘...’, which culminates in a phenomenal series of vocal acrobatics, with Bonet inching up higher, and higher, and higher, before disappearing, transferred onto another astral plane most likely.

Bonet is a hugely exciting artist. A talented multi-instrumentalist – she played pretty much every instrument on the album – she came out of the gate with an instantly-recognisable style, confident in her ability to know exactly who she is.

While sampling from the classic toolbox of psychedelia, funk, and soul, Bonet's production will include samples of off-kilter weirdness – chirping birds, popping bubbles, a jazzy flute solo – that ensures it never settles into normalcy.

On social media, Bonet has admitted to struggles with funding; a European tour was cancelled last year, after she said she would be losing too much money, while her desire to produce music videos has been stymied by financial worries. It's clear that, as an artist, Bonet's vision is outstripping her resources. With the backing she so dearly deserves, who knows what heights she could scale.

MUSIC

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Kids See Ghosts is a return to form for Kanye West

Only a week after the release of *Ye*, Kanye is back, this time teaming up with Kid Cudi as *Kids See Ghosts*. While the previous album felt rushed, this newest output is a refined and thoughtful masterpiece.

MUSIC

KIDS SEE GHOSTS



Artist: Kids See Ghosts.
Label: G.O.O.D. Music; Def Jam. **Top Tracks:** 4th Dimension; Reborn; Cudi Montage. **For Fans Of:** WZRD; Raury; Lil Uzi; Gorillaz. 24 minutes

Asad Raja

Music Writer

This self-titled release marks the first collaboration project from hip hop's biggest contemporary influencers, Kid Cudi and Kanye West, who have dubbed themselves Kids See Ghosts. This moniker and album title, as well as the album art, which was the work of Takashi Murakami (who has previously worked with *Ye* on *Graduation*) is perfect for this project. Indeed, they truly encapsulate what we get from the album – something surreal, colourful, sonically captivating, psychedelic, child-like, magical; bitter-sweet in places and eerie in others.

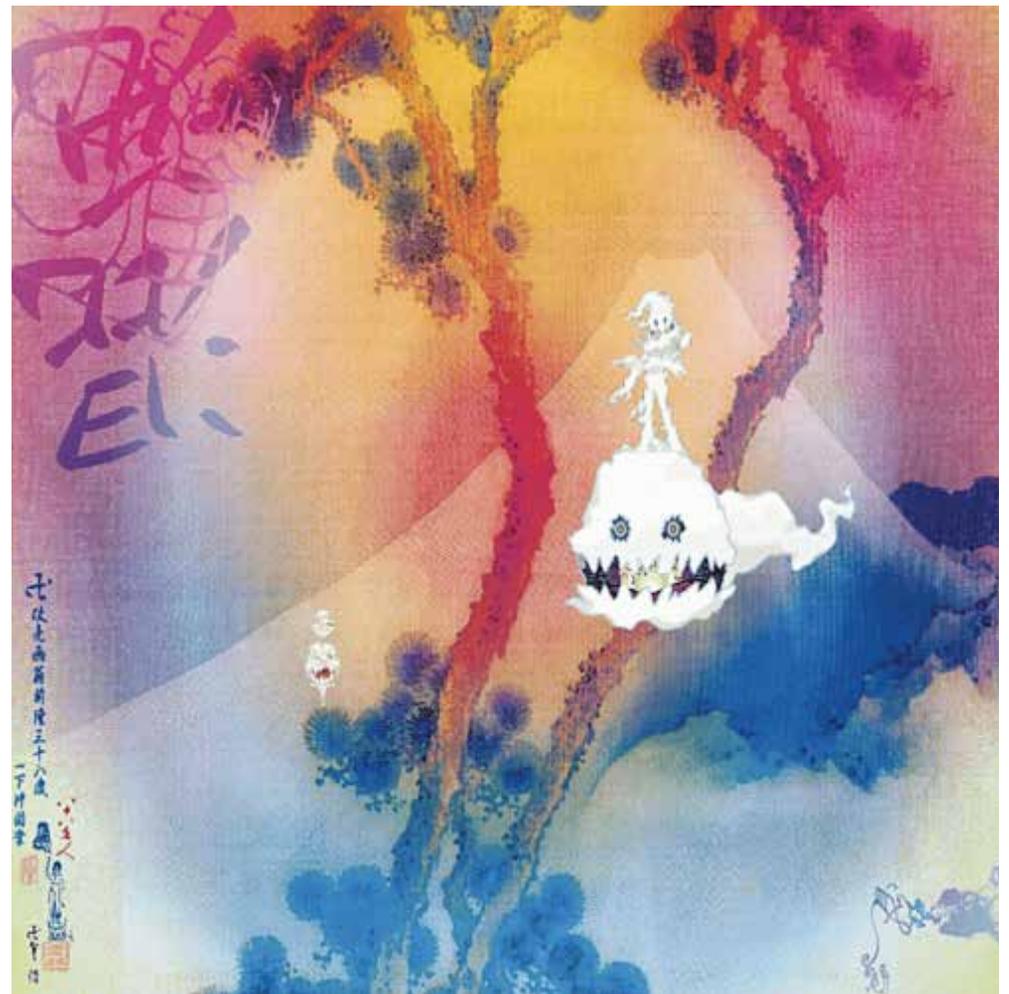
We are kept in this crazy *Super Smash Bros.* meets *Attack on Titan* world throughout the project with vocal and production moments that range from unavoidably explicit to subtle yet effective. Kanye delivers expressive machine gun imitations complimented by powerful drum pounding on 'Feel The Love'. Cudi delivers spiritual, delicate wailing on 'Reborn' (I should add, the signature Cudder moan is more palatable on this album than it has been in years). The pair deliver, with the help

of Ty Dolla Sign, gigantic and layered evaporating cries of "I feel freeee" on the aptly titled 'Freeee' (Ghost Town, Pt. 2). The production delivers easy to miss whizzing whistles and triumphant screams on 'Fire' and similarly subtle but pretty, high pitched string shivers on 'Kids See Ghosts'. We literally hear a childish evil cackle mid-way through '4th Dimension'. It is obvious that a lot of effort was put into maintaining the aesthetic of the album and it has certainly paid off.

In 2016, Kid Cudi and Kanye both went through a low point with their mental health, with Kid Cudi checking himself into rehab on account of depression and suicidal urges (as explained in the emotional statement he released at the time) and Kanye having to bring his Saint Pablo tour to an early close when he was hospitalised for psychosis. Mental health has always been a very prominent theme in Kid Cudi's music, and Kanye's albums from *808s and Heartbreaks* onward have each had a fair deal to say on the matter. *Ye*, released only a week before this one, honed in on that theme. However, where that album explored his mental health condition in a fairly rushed and often limited manner, *Kids See Ghosts* for the most part provides a more complete, focused and sincere account, coming closer to the standard set by Cudi's *Man on the Moon*. The project is nevertheless decidedly triumphant and optimistic when exploring such issues which is clear from the onset with Cudi's powerful and reverberat-

ing exclamation of "I can still feel the love" on 'Feel The Love' which the song builds around. Indeed, while it is probably Kanye who steered this project to stylistic and aesthetic excellence, it is Cudi who keeps the breakdown-conquering theme of the project potent and effective, and in this way the pair complement one another nicely. That is to say, where Kanye's bars and delivery are undeniably flashier and more impressive than Cudi's, Cudi generally delivers the more emotive moments with lines such as "I guess I'm just sick of running / All this time searching hard for something / I can hear the angels coming".

True, it is difficult not to wish for both the high-quality bars and thematic focus from both halves of *Kids See Ghosts*, just to make the album slightly more coherent. Even the first verse on the album, a Pusha T feature, though fiery and braggadocious, doesn't really have much to do with Cudi "feel(ing) the love". Similarly, Mos Def's spoken-word type thing at the end of 'Kids See Ghosts' about "civilization without society" (still not quite sure what that means) seems fairly random. However, when all the aspects of this album come together, it makes for near flawless songs. '4th Dimension' is one of these – a 30s Christmas song is sampled ingeniously as Kanye delivers a crude 'Hell Of A Life'-style verse about a chaotic hook up which he compares to a "new dimension". Cudi's verse is similarly dark and suggestive with a confident delivery but he brings his



Scary Monsters and Lil Peeps // G.O.O.D. Music/Def Jam

verse back down to earth with the lines "Tell the cougar get up off me, no, my soul ain't for sale / All the evils in the world, they keeping on me for real".

'Reborn' is a beautiful ballad of progression and self-improvement, my favourite song of the album. Cudi sings a heartfelt chorus of "I'm so – I'm so reborn, I'm movin' forward... / Ain't no stress on me Lord, I'm movin' forward" over a calming, angelic beat comprising of simple keys, progressive drums, glimmering synths, and the aforementioned remedial moans. Both Kanye and Kid Cudi deliver their most personal and intimate verses of the album. "I was off the meds, I was called insane / What a awesome thing, engulfed in shame / I want

all the rain, I want all the pain" Kanye raps, laying himself bare and admitting that the pain in his life has become numbing to the point of addictive (a sentiment particularly echoed on both parts of 'Ghost Town'). Cudi's verse is just as emotional, though he makes sure to remind us "peace is something that starts with me". The song ends with a gorgeous beat switch up as the chorus comes back in over soothing synths and close drums.

It would be amiss for me not to mention 'Cudi Montage', the last track on the album. A Kurt Cobain sample and a fast-paced Cudi flow guides the track forward as the beat builds for a grand chorus. The beat then strips back down to the sample for what

is surely Kanye's most conscious verse in a very long time. He raps about the cycle of violence seen in impoverished neighbourhoods in America and the routine loss of men to imprisonment in such environments. I wonder what his buddy Trump thinks. The song ends with a majestic outro as Mr. Hudson, Kid Cudi and Kanye's vocals blend together. "Lord shine your light on me, save me, please" Kanye implores.

I do hope Kid Cudi and Kanye West are "saved" from their spiritual and mental suffering. One thing that clearly needs no saving though is their ability to make music. Here's to hoping *Kids See Ghosts* is not a one-time stint.

MUSIC

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The times, they are a-changin': a precarious balance of alienation and progression

This article started life as a thinkpiece. It then became a listicle, before reverting back to thinkpiece. Whatever form it now takes, it's my final article of the year so you'd better bloody enjoy it.

MUSIC

Adrian LaMoury

Music Editor

The recent release of Arctic Monkeys' *Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino* divided fans. A far cry from the angst-laden and frenetic rock of the noughties, *TBH&C* brought with it a toned-down, lounge vibe, filled with nuances and subtleties rather foreign to their previously brash and unapologetically frank discography. While many embraced their new sound, a not insignificant subset heralded the swerve as a betrayal of their original fanbase.

Despite the widespread uproar, this change of musical direction pales in comparison to some of those taken by crucial artists throughout history. In each, a bold risk was taken – potentially alienating the very people whose support enabled them to take the leap in the first place. Inevitably, many flopped. Others, however, changed the musical landscape for good.

Dylan goes electric

In the early sixties, Bob Dylan was a figurehead of folk. Only acoustic guitar and harmonica accompanied his carefully crafted narratives and protest songs. He was pointed and political, often labelled the "spokesman of a generation". Not content to be confined to this niche, however, Dylan left fans aghast when his March 1965 album *Bringing It*

All Back Home included a side of songs, simultaneously the densest and shallowest of his canon, backed by an electric band. A few months later at Newport folk festival, he arrived on stage leather-clad and Stratocaster-adorned, and, with the snap of a snare, immediately launched into new hit 'Like A Rolling Stone'. "How does it feel?!" he sneered over the boos and jeers, with a swagger before unseen. It may have turned away a generation, but it also cemented his position in music history: he was a rockstar.

If ya say so, computer

If *OK Computer* chronicles humanity's struggle against machines, *Kid A* prophesies a dystopia within which the robots won. With one side of the Atlantic launching grunge and the other championing Britpop, the Radiohead of the mid-nineties was inevitably one of guitar driven belters and ballads. *Kid A* was a landmark of change.

"One of the most acclaimed rock bands of the era releasing a fully electronic album certainly shook things up a bit"



Dylan played guitar, jamming good with Weird and Gilly, and the spiders from Mars // Flickr/Paul Townsend

A full three years on from their previous release, it ushered in the new millennium with synthesisers and arpeggiators. Hooks were sparse, soundscapes bleak, and not a guitar in sight. Nowadays it doesn't seem all that revolutionary – they kinda made innovation and surprise their thing, and it's very easy to retrospectively say it was an obvious move – but back in 2000, one of the most acclaimed rock bands of the era releasing a fully electronic album certainly shook things up a bit. Swathes of adoring fans renounced them, but it resonated with many more, and the vibrations are still felt to this day.

The Chameleon King

As anybody who's been keeping up with *Felix Music* over the past

year will know, I can rarely go a full article without mentioning one Mr. David Robert Jones. But here (for once) it's not without good reason. Springing from whimsical psychedelic folk in the late sixties, Bowie hit the seventies like a riff-laden, skin-suited, glam-rock train, which chugged away for half a glitter-filled decade. The difference at this juncture, however, is that Bowie didn't alienate his fanbase. He didn't really have one to alienate. Not at this point at least.

By the end of 1969, he'd been dismissed as something of a one-hit wonder, his sole outing chiefly thanks to the BBC's inclusion of 'Space Oddity' in their coverage of the moon landing. He later found his break as the mullet-sporting Ziggy

Stardust, and the rest is history. Except it's not.

The persona of Ziggy was killed onstage in 1973, and by '75 Bowie had dropped glam rock altogether, switching to the blue-eyed soul sound of *Young Americans*. This was a drastic sidestep not only because of the change of timbre but also as it made him one of the first English pop artists to embrace a style that had until then largely resided within black America. Whether appropriative or appreciative is a different argument, but either way fans and critics were left torn and confused.

It wasn't to last though. His next album, *Station to Station*, saw him fuse funk with krautrock as the slicked-back, cocaine-addled Thin White Duke. From there he began to experiment with art rock,

electronic and ambient music, as part of his Berlin Trilogy with longtime friend and collaborator Brian Eno.

I won't bore you with all the details of his subsequent works, but let it suffice to say he hopped into new-romanticism, flirted with disco, sported some chart success (his 'Phil Collins Years'), tried his hand at world music, formed a boyband, hit up industrial, drum n bass, jazz, and much, much more. With each twist, some fans were lost and some gained; the net result wasn't always positive.

I think to an extent every artist is restless. No one wants to define or be defined by a sole look, genre, or rhetoric. But few illustrated that irrepressible agitation and hunger for change better than David Bowie.

MUSIC

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Man on *Blonde*: a masterpiece revisited

Music Writer **Ben Man** takes a look back at Frank Ocean's thoughtful, experimental, beautiful *Blonde*, nearly two years on from its release.

MUSIC

Ben Man
Music Writer

The artist known as Frank Ocean, born Christopher Breau, was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. He studied English at New Orleans University, writing music on the side, before Hurricane Katrina destroyed his studio and uprooted his life. Ocean made the decision to move to Los Angeles to fully pursue music, earning a song-writing deal, penning lyrics and melodies for other artists before joining up with the OFWGKTA (Odd Future) hip-hop/art collective and signing a contract with Def Jam records. He then released the highly acclaimed *Nostalgia, Ultra* mixtape in 2011, before working on other music including songs on Kanye West and Jay-Z's *Watch the Throne* and Beyoncé's *Beyoncé*. In the midst of Ocean's momentous rise to success, he released an open letter on his Tumblr account recounting his unrequited love for a male friend one summer when he was 19 years old. He released the Grammy-winning album *Channel Orange* in 2012, and then – after a four-year silence – Ocean released the visual album *Endless*, and the album *Blonde*.

I've been regularly listening to *Blonde* for the past 18 months. The album never gets stale: Ocean has packed so many ideas into 17 songs that each listen reveals another layer of musical and lyrical content. In terms of sound, the

atmospheric, sometimes ethereal *Blonde* contrasts to the cinematic, more accessible *Channel Orange*. The mood of the album is melancholy, reflective, and introspective.

“The album never gets stale: Ocean has packed in so many ideas that each listen reveals another layer of musical and lyrical content”

Previous reviews of *Channel Orange* said Ocean has pushed the boundaries of R&B, causing him to state his dislike for such a label, saying it's “inaccurate when you're making music inspired by so many different things”. Moving forward, *Blonde* completely transcends classification. A flowing channel of collaborators runs through the album, with Ocean melding them together to create a sound that fits his vision. The collaborators aren't given the spotlight, but are mostly used akin to session musicians: Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood provides swelling string arrangements on ‘Seigfried’, Beyoncé adds her backing vocals to a harmonic orchestra of voices at the end of ‘Pink + White’, Andre 3000 of Outkast spits a frantic verse on ‘Solo (Reprise)’, and—in a

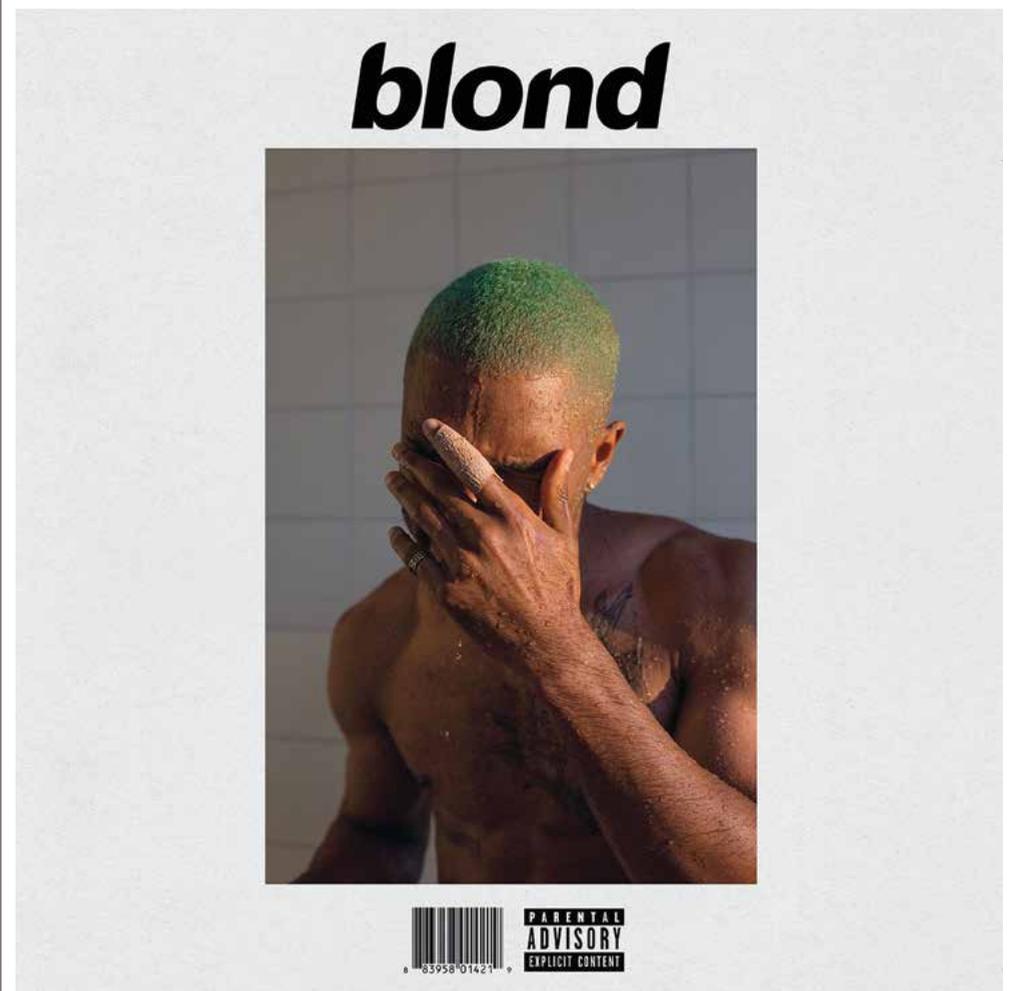
pleasant surprise – rapper Yung Lean's murmurs are used as vocal texture in ‘Godspeed’.

Each song on the album shifts and changes throughout the course of listening. Ocean changes his melodies with each song, leading to much less repetition than previous works, giving *Blonde* depth by refraining from forcing hooks and choruses on the listener. Ocean similarly treats his voice to an instrument, layering it in a swelling choir on ‘White Ferrari’, and applying changing effects to it in songs such as ‘Nikes’.

The changing melodies are compounded by fluid, continuously changing soundscapes. In ‘Nikes’, foggy synths, keyboards, and cinematic samples subtly blend into each other as they enter and exit the song, accompanied by a sparse, changing drum line.

The musicians on *Blonde* often separately provided parts on songs without ever hearing the final product, contributing to the ethereal mood of the album as ambient, disconnected lines slowly slide in and out of focus. Keyboardist Buddy Ross, who provided the backing track for ‘Facebook Story’ and ‘Be Yourself’, said “[Ocean] has this vision that no one else really is privy to. A lot of times you don't even know what you're working on. He just puts blinds on everybody and sends them off in their own space to just do whatever they want”.

Blonde is sonically bare in comparison to the bolder *Channel Orange*, with more subtle harmonies and a minimal range of instruments. Drum



Blondes really do have more fun // *Boys Don't Cry*

parts appear on under half the album. Ocean is often only accompanied by a single guitar or keyboard, serving to further emphasise the imagery of his lyrics, the melody, and the emotional tone of his voice.

Ocean's feelings are palpable through the tone of his voice alone – he alternates between tender and reflective in ‘Ivy’, offers solemn, emotional prayer on ‘Godspeed’, and gives a frenetic declaration backed by something approaching a choral summoning chant on ‘Pretty Sweet’.

He remains a powerful storyteller, able to invoke strong images and feelings through his lyrics. “Remember when I had that Lexus, no, our friendship don't go back

that far”, he wryly sings on ‘Futura Free’. On ‘Good Guy’, Ocean reminisces about meeting someone in New York from a dating app, reflecting “You text nothing like you look” and “here's where I realised you talk so much more than I do”. Standout imagery comes from the spoken word section on ‘Seigfried’, where Ocean says “Less morose and more present/Dwell on my gifts for a second/A moment, one solar flare we're consumed, so why not/spend this flammable paper on the film that's my life”.

One slight gripe comes with ‘Solo (Reprise)’, which is difficult to listen to casually, due to its dissonant sound and pace compared to the rest of the album. The standout

songs on the album can genuinely change with time as different things are taken from the album, but the transcendent moment when the drums start on ‘Pretty Sweet’ is a genuine highlight.

Ocean's commitment to his vision, ability to consistently break new ground, and refusal to compromise what he creates have produced a masterpiece. He is one of the best musicians of his generation. I've had more than a few dreams where I've met Frank Ocean and didn't really know what to say.

They say he lives in Notting Hill, about half an hour away from Imperial campus. It would probably be better for music's sake if we didn't disturb him.

MUSIC

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What do we talk about when we talk about music?



The father of Chicago blues – a giant on whose shoulders we stand // Muddy Waters

MUSIC

Henry Eshbaugh
Music Editor

What motivates the musician? Compulsive enjoyment of frissive frequencies rattling together in perfect harmony? Melodies meandering through modes and motifs, each refrain serving as a signifier, a stand-in for human speech – the connotations built by our musical traditions there to hint at some underlying meaning? Is it all just aesthetic in the solitary Platonic ideal, or is there a more symbolic *point*?

A major challenge in assessing music as a medium is the complicated interaction between the literary and the sonic. Plain-jane three-chord six-string ballads are just as capable of captivating us as the most lavishly-orchestrated instrumental

epics of classical music, or as the deft and dizzying medley of extended intervals and enchanting improvisation that constitute jazz. What's the equivalence? After all, this is the music section, and at the end of the day we all just shit out some rating outta five and go home.

“After all, this is the Music section, and at the end of the day we all just shit out some rating outta five and go home”

We need to talk about the way we interact with music. The meaning we find in it, and the way

we fall in love when it connects. Sure, there's aesthetic value to music – it can be pretty, can't it? But pretty isn't hook-y. We can enjoy a nice view, feel sated, and move on with our lives. Pretty doesn't compel us to interact, to come back and back again. The works we love always have a certain catharsis – a foothold to identifying with the song or album that transcends the 'simple' sound. Good music is more than just decoration. It includes an invitation to subsume the work into yourself.

This necessitates some kind of symbolic exchange. The aforementioned catharsis requires a conveying of attitude, emotion, intention, information. You don't find information in random noise, as any mathematician will tell you. Musicians cultivate vocabularies, identifying themselves with traditions spanning hundreds of years. Minor modes

sound sad. Going down a fifth sounds like coming home. There's that phrase you remember from the song on the radio when you realized you lost your teddy bear seventeen years ago, and now it sounds like loss. Nuance is conveyed in every aspect of performance – in picking dynamics, in harmony, in the way the band coheres.

Orthogonally, we have lyrics – perhaps the most direct means of communicating intent, but which themselves can dissolve into a wonderfully abstract sea of connotations and reverberant feeling. To an earlier point, this is why rusty strings and off-kilter strumming can sound so wonderful; sometimes they just fit a voice, and technicality gives way to the rawness of emotion otherwise conveyed. And in this movement, ballads and jazz fall on equal footing. Different traditions, different customs, to be sure, but the same

latent wish to be read into.

The Western music tradition is a fecund source of unspecific meaning. We interpret lines as sounding bright, dour, space-y, connections formed by years of listening, interacting, playing, writing, talking, thinking. Beauty truly is in the eye of the beholder; art is elevated by the process of interpretation as much as it is in its very creation – whether it be a ramble in a uni paper or a slick reharmon by a talented artist. It is the very attempt to interpret a piece of work's meaning that gives that work meaning, a sort of Deleuzo-Guattarian reterritorialization-recontextualization of intent that feeds back into a rich cultural dialogue and moves the music world forward.

And so, I beg of you – don't just listen to music. Talk about music. Think about music. Argue about music. *Participate* in music. There are few pleasures in life so rich.

“Don't just listen to music. Talk about music. Argue about music. Participate in music”

I'd like to close this piece off – and this year off – by thanking Adrian and Andy for an amazing job editing the section, Fred for being a legendary Editor-in-Chief, our contributors for their dedication and their wonderful opinions on all things sonic, the copy editors for their much-needed and little-appreciated work behind the scenes, and, generally, everyone at *Felix* for a fantastic fucking year.

Ah, and you, dear reader. Thank you.

FILM

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The cinema of Japanese master Hirokazu Kore-eda

Hirokazu Kore-eda won the Palme d'Or last month for his drama Shoplifters – it's a long-overdue recognition for the spiritual successor of Yasujiro Ozu.

FILM

Fred Fyles
Editor-in-Chief

This year's Cannes Film Festival, which closed last month, saw a timely focus on the issues of sexual harassment that have dominated the film industry press over the last year. The discussion reached a shocking conclusion when actor Asia Argento made a speech during the closing ceremony, accusing disgraced producer Harvey Weinstein of raping her at the festival back in 1997, when she was 21 years old. Argento called the festival his 'hunting ground'. Elsewhere, president of the jury Cate Blanchett – who is one of only four female presidents in the last 20 years – led 82 women in a protest up the set of red carpeted stairs. The

number represented the number of films made by women that had entered the festival during its 70 year history, compared to 1,645 made by men over the same time period.

Amid all these shocks, however, there was another surprise that had a happier tone: *Shoplifters*, the 13th film from Japanese director Hirokazu Kore-eda, took home the Palme d'Or, marking the culmination of a twenty year-long career in which Kore-eda has delivered some of the best-crafted dramas of modern cinema.

Beginning his career in television, Kore-eda worked as an assistant director for TV documentaries, before making the switch to film with a series of documentaries in the early 1990s. 1995 saw the release of his first feature film, *Maborosi*, which centred around a widow trying to make sense of the death of her

husband, who was hit by a train while out walking by the tracks. The late Roger Ebert gave the film his highest rating, saying "There isn't a shot in the movie that's not graceful and pleasing."

Kore-eda's real breakthrough came in 2004, with the release of *Nobody Knows*. Taking inspiration from the 1988 Sugamo child abandonment case, in which a media storm was created when a group of children were found living in a Tokyo apartment after being abandoned by their mother nine months earlier, *Nobody Knows* centres around four children who are left to fend for themselves. Lead actor Yuya Yagira became the youngest winner of the Cannes Best Actor Prize, for his portrayal of Akira, the eldest child who becomes the de facto head of the family.

From then on, Kore-eda released a film every



The cast of *Our Little Sister* // Sony Pictures Classics

couple of years, often to critical acclaim. Film critics have often pointed out the debt he owes to Yasujiro Ozu, one of the greatest film directors of the twentieth century. Like Ozu, Kore-eda's films often centre around the theme of the family, or of relationships, gently exploring how we relate to others in the world around us; that push-pull of intimacy and emotion that comes with living a life closely meshed with others. Kore-eda's camerawork also conveys a similar sense of stillness as Ozu; often filming from lower angles, Kore-eda will meticulously frame his shots, often interspersing them with what became known in Ozu's work as 'pillow shots' – short clips of the world around the characters, identifying a sense of time and place.

Since 2011, with the release of *I Wish*, Kore-eda has become more and more well-known to Western cinema-going audiences. Both *I Wish* and the follow-up *Like Father Like Son* deal with the theme of

the family, probing at our most basic relationships.

"Kore-eda's dramas explore the push-pull of intimacy and emotion"

It is his 2015 film, *Our Little Sister*, however, which remains by far my favourite Kore-eda film. It's one of those films that envelops you in a warm hug, one where you leave the cinema feeling a bit lighter and brighter about the world. Based off a manga series, *Our Little Sister* tells the story of three grown-up sisters, Sachi, Yoshino, and Chika, who live in Kamakura, a small city by the coast. Following the death of their father, from whom they are estranged, their half-sister Suzu from their father's second marriage comes to live with them, shaking up their everyday routine.

Taking place over a single year, *Our Little Sister* is a film about the gentle rhythms of life: we follow the sisters as they form a close bond, the seasons changing from winter to spring to summer; and as the seasons change, the food does too. *Our Little Sister* is a film in which cuisine plays a central part, bringing people together and reflecting the changing world around us – from making plum wine at the height of summer, to bonding over whitebait on toast. It's a work that revels in the magic of the minutiae of everyday life.

Shoplifters screened at Cannes to critical acclaim, with Peter Bradshaw of *The Guardian* calling it "a movie made up of delicate brushstrokes: details, moments, looks and smiles." With any luck, it will be out in UK cinemas later this year, providing us with another dose of humanistic cinema from the Japanese master. There has never been a better time to explore Kore-eda's extensive back catalogue, and discover his magic for yourself.



Shoplifters has been picked up by Magnolia Pictures for its release // Cannes Film Festival

GAMES

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E3 – The good, the bad, and the dull

With E3 finished for another year, Games Editor Saad Ahmed gives his verdict on what to look out for soon.

GAMES

Saad Ahmed

Games Editor

The thing gamers look forward to more than upcoming release dates or the Steam summer sales is E3 – the Electronic Entertainment Expo. A showcase of everything to get hyped about and enjoy for the future in the world of gaming. So, without further ado, here's our evaluation of the main conferences of E3.

EA – Decent

Right off the bat, EA made a course correction in light of the whole loot box fiasco from last year, which saw a wave of international criticism accusing them of encouraging gambling. They acknowledged their mistake, and promised to try and work better on it from now on. At least some people have learnt their lessons. They when on to showcase *Unravel 2* and *Anthem*, which were both really impressive, and talked about their future plans with upcoming *Star Wars* games: additions to the current *Battlefront 2* and a new game in the future. However, they kept mum about *Battlefield 5*'s economy, which, despite their assurances of saying they understood the problem with loot boxes, seemed a bit disingenuous. Highlights – *Unravel 2*, *Battlefield 5*, *Anthem*

Bethesda – Good

Fallout 76 was front and centre at Bethesda's conference; they went all out and provided lots of details, which was a blast to hear about. *Fallout 76*

would be the first online game in the *Fallout* series, with a map four times as large as that from the previous version, and the ability to launch nuclear missiles to boot. You can also own and wear your own *Fallout* helmet. Apart from this, they also showcased other games like *Wolfenstein*, a *Doom* sequel, and *Elder Scrolls VI*, all with release dates and ample information. Highlights – *Fallout 76*, *Elder Scrolls VI*, *Wolfenstein*

“Microsoft's conference was where all the good stuff was, making a change from last year”

Microsoft – Great

Ah, now this is where the good stuff was. Microsoft's conference was a complete change from last year's more disappointing blowout. Maybe it was due to the Xbox One's lacklustre performance but the tactic they went for was to focus on a wide variety of games. And boy did they deliver: all games were shown with trailers, release dates, and a fair bit of inside information about the games themselves. A number of Square Enix games were also showcased which was a nice treat. They also talked about their plans for the future, with a cloud gaming service, and about all the studios they've bought, and plan to buy. A really well done performance by Microsoft



Forza 4 and The Last of Us Part II were two games that made a big impression at E3 // Microsoft/Sony

all around, impressing us with their tenacity and honesty. Highlights – *Forza Horizon 4*, *Devil May Cry 5*, *Jump Force*, *Ori and the Will of the Wisps*

Square Enix – Poor

Man, talk about so much hype followed by so much disappointment. Many interesting things were expected here, from a new rumoured *Avengers* game to the next *Final Fantasy* game fans were eagerly waiting for. Instead, all we got were two short teasers for *The Quiet Man* and *Babylon's Fall*, which barely highlighted any gameplay or release dates. Square Enix basically shot themselves in the foot by giving a good majority of their upcoming stuff to Microsoft, meaning there was very little they could show themselves. It was them at their most complacent, and they really need to bring their

game next time round. Highlights – *Just Cause 4*, *Shadow of the Tomb Raider*, *Kingdom Hearts 3*

Ubisoft – Really Good

Long story short, Ubisoft's conference was solid and enjoyable – there's not a whole lot of bad things you can say about it. A number of games were highlighted where ship battles seem to be the new schtick for the future, and *Beyond Good and Evil 2* provided breathtaking visuals in just a trailer. Star Fox joining the Switch version of *Starlink* was a nice surprise and a good payoff of Ubisoft's relationship with Nintendo. Highlights – *Beyond Good and Evil 2*, *Assassin's Creed Odyssey*, *Skull and Bones*

Nintendo – Really Good

Last year, these were the guys who knocked it out

of the park in E3. Whether you think the same is true this year depends on how much you like *Smash*. The reason being that Nintendo's main focus was *Super Smash Bros. Ultimate* for the Switch. There were a lot of reveals, and much to like, such as all the characters from previous versions, some new ones, and touched up aesthetics. Apart from *Smash*, more games were highlighted to maintain momentum with the Switch like a new *Fire Emblem* and *Fortnite*! Sadly other franchises like *Pokémon* and *Animal Crossing* were barely touched upon and it seems the 3DS is all but forgotten now. Highlights – *Super Smash Bros. Ultimate*, *Fire Emblem: Three Houses*, *Super Mario Party*

Sony – OK

This is the second year in a row where Sony has failed to make

a huge impact at E3. The main focus was on four games which are hugely anticipated by fans, but were known about well in advance. It was essentially a compact hour of trailers and gameplay footage. It was nice, but truthfully only *Ghost of Tsushima* needed such a boost, as little had been shown of the game beforehand. In a strange move, Sony actually revealed several other games, but only to those watching the live stream of the event. With the last year being incredibly successful for Sony, it's possible they didn't feel they needed to give much and were probably saving their energy for (rumour has it) a PlayStation 5 down the line. Highlights – *Death Stranding*, *The Last of Us Part II*, *Spider-Man*, *Ghost of Tsushima*

FELIX SEX SURVEY

It's been a long time coming, but the *Felix* Sex Survey is finally here. Over the past few weeks, Imperial students, staff, and alumni filled out our giant questionnaire, divulging all sorts of personal details about their fantasies, desires, and experiences. This year an incredible 1,143 of you completed the survey, helping us build up a picture of how Imperial likes to get it on – from long distance relationships to sex work, STIs to masturbating, no stone was left unturned.

Want to find out which department is getting it on the most? Or what people feel is the optimum time to lose their virginity? Or whether or not couples who met at Imperial are happier than others? Look inside our eight-page pull-out to find out...

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Best sex songs?

Toto –Africa

Marvin Gaye –Let's Get It On

Silence

FKA Twigs – 'All of them'

Smash Mouth –All Star

Beyoncé –Rocket

Genuwine –Pony

Janelle Monáe – Make Me Feel

D'Angelo –Spanish Joint

'The entirety of Rumours by Fleetwood Mac'

Tame Impala – Let It Happen

Carly Rae Jepsen – E.MOTION

Spotify Playlist: Sensual – 'Basically Craig David on repeat'

Kanye West and Rick Ross – Devil in a New Dress

Childish Gambino –Redbone

Lauryn Hill – Doo Wop (That Thing)

WELCOME TO THE SEX SURVEY

1,143 people took our Sex Survey. Let's start with a breakdown of who they were...

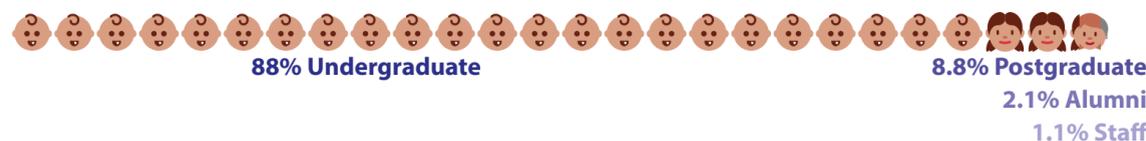
Gender Identity



Do you identify as the gender assigned to you at birth?



Age/Status



Sexuality



Let's take a closer look at those who didn't identify as heterosexual...

Of those who didn't:



How representative is our sample? In terms of gender identity, the proportions are roughly in line with the overall student split at Imperial. However, undergraduates are vastly over-represented within the results: in reality, undergraduates only make up around 55% of the student population. Postgraduates tend to be less engaged

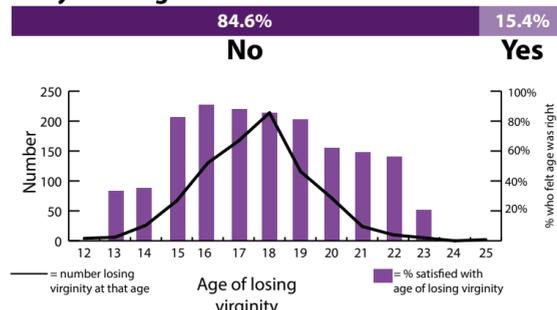
with student life at Imperial – as evidenced by election turnout – so perhaps they were less likely to take the Sex Survey; or perhaps undergraduates are just more comfortable with people poking around in their business...

Obtaining data on sexual identity is notoriously difficult. The most

recent governmental data, from 2016, reported 2% of the UK population identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. This was doubled in the 16-24 age group, but still falls well below the results of the Sex Survey, where over one in five respondents said they were something other than heterosexual.

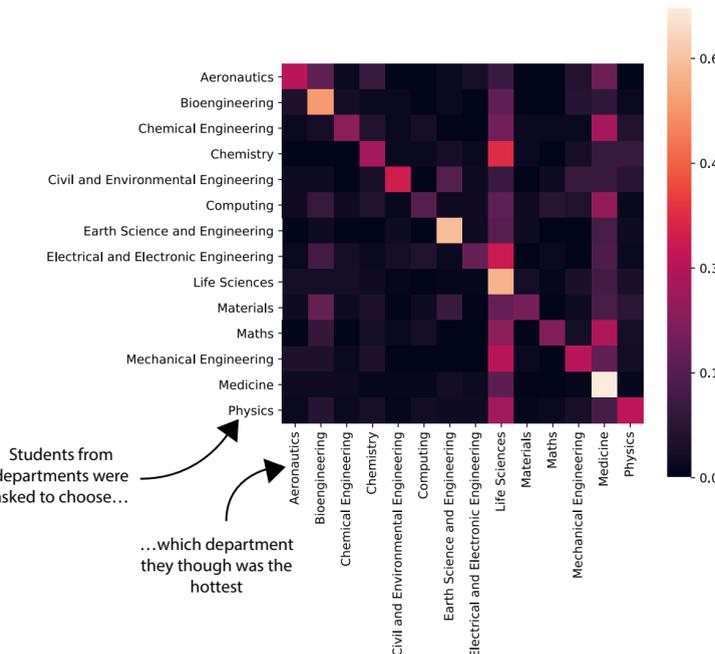
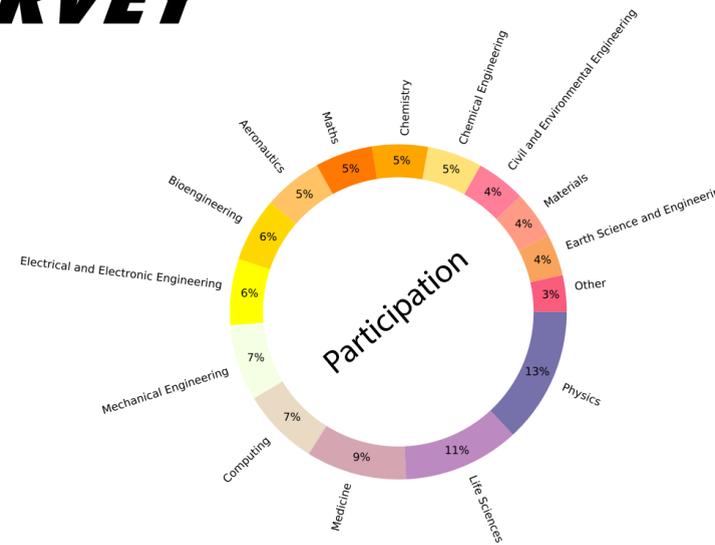


Are you a Virgin?



The majority of students at Imperial have popped their cherry, although there is still a significant minority who have not.

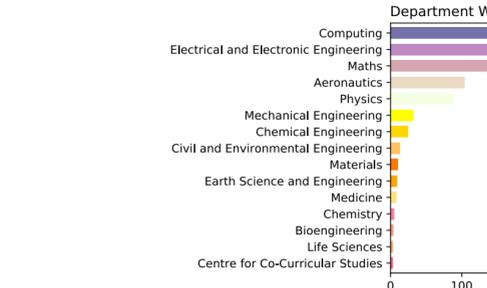
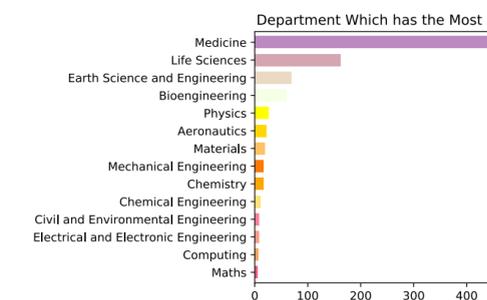
On average, people seemed satisfied with the age they lost their virginity: the 'ideal age' was 17.48, which was essentially equal to the average age respondents lost their virginity.



Students from departments were asked to choose...

...which department they thought was the hottest

For the second year running, Physics gets the participation medal – they were the department most represented in the respondents. The Departments of Life Sciences and Medicine followed close behind. At the Faculty level, however, the Faculty of Engineering came out top, with nearly half of respondents doing an engineering course.

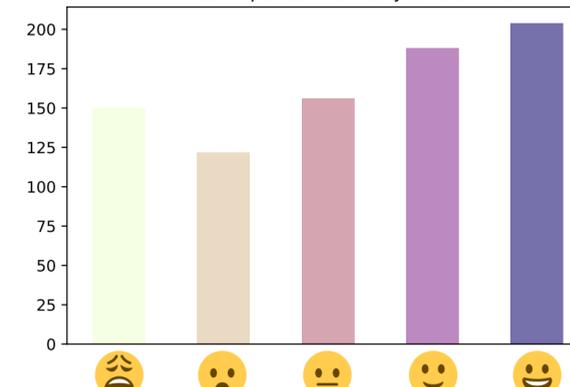


The Department of Life Sciences was judged to be the hottest department, followed by Medicine and Bioengineering. Looking at distribution of votes, however, a clear pattern emerges: students were highly likely to say the department to which they belonged was the hottest. This is particularly clear with the Departments of Medicine, Life Sciences, and Bioengineering. Students from the Department of Earth Science and Engineering were also likely to rate themselves as attractive, despite coming near the middle of the rankings as a whole.

While Life Sciences was the most attractive department, people thought Medicine was the department that had the most sex. Breaking the votes down by department, there is less of a clear pattern, although all departments generally thought Medicine had the most sex. This is with the exception of ESE, who – again – thought they themselves had the most sex.

In terms of the least sex, students felt Computing students were getting the least action; nobody felt this more strongly than Computing students themselves. Other departments which felt they should have more sex included Maths, Aeronautics, and EEE

How has Imperial Affected your Sex Life?



Somewhat surprisingly, when students were asked how Imperial had affected their sex life, the responses were pretty even across the board. On the whole, people generally thought Imperial had affected their sex life positively. However, this result is made less useful by the fact we didn't put in a baseline measure – whether students thought their sex life would be better at another university, for example.

It could be that – since the majority of people become sexually active around the time they are going to university – sex lives would inevitably improve once people arrived at university, irrespective of where they went. Nevertheless, there remained a significant proportion who felt Imperial had worsened their sex life.

Anything else?

'A sex survey at Imperial, really?!

'Doing this questionnaire led to me having sex – cheers Felix'

'How would you ever chat someone up in the Library?'

'The reality is I've never enjoyed getting blowjobs or handjobs'

'I'm horny now, thanks'

'It's shocking how nasty people are about trans and non-binary people still'

'This was extremely thorough'

'We should be more sexually liberal'

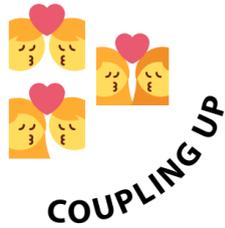
'Too much Googling of sex terminology...'

'Bit heteronormative as usual'

'Sex is healthy'

'Sex is really weird if you think about it'

'Sex'



COUPLING UP

Moving on to relationships: overall, more than half the respondents were in a relationship, with 54.3% having met their match. Heterosexual people were more likely to be in a relationship than non-heterosexual people: 55.4% of heterosexual respondents were in a relationship, while 50.8% of non-heterosexual respondents were in one.

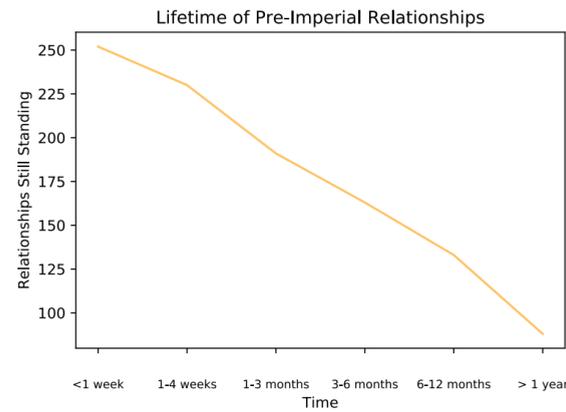
In terms of departments, Aeronautics students were the least likely to be in a relationship, with just under half the respondents being part of a couple. Materials students were the most likely to be in a relationship, with 62.5% of respondents having found a match.

Of these relationships, the majority had been going for over 6 months: 40.2% had been together for more than a year, with a further 24.6% together for 6-12 months. A small minority were in the very early stages of a relationship, with 5.1% of those in a relationship having got together only in the past month

Overall:



RELATIONSHIPS



It's a university trope that relationships carried over from secondary school tend to break up pretty quickly. With the Sex Survey, we decided to check out whether or not that was the case. Around 250 students carried over a relationship from their secondary school, and currently 34.8% of these are still going.

Looking at how long these relationships tended to last on average, we can see there is a steady decline over time, but this decline is at its sharpest over two time periods: within the first few months of university, and the period approaching the year anniversary.

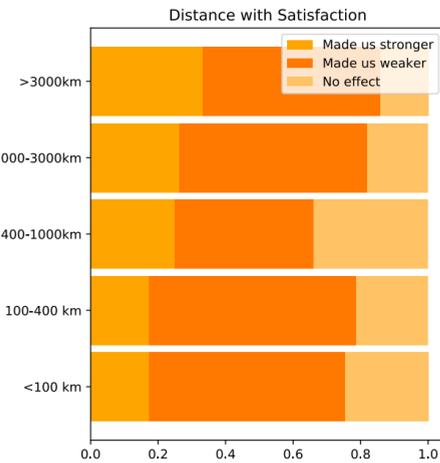
While at first glance it doesn't seem to conform with the idea students break up as soon as freshers' hits, we can see that after the one month mark the number of relationships begins to drop more dramatically. It could be this is because of post-freshers' regret, or guilt at what they might have gotten up to at the mingle...



With Imperial being such an international university, long distance relationships are common. Overall, out of those in relationships, 26.4% were in a long distance relationship – what that individual considered as 'long distance' was up to them.

The majority of these relationships were 100-400km, a distance that made up 29.4% of LDRs. As you may expect from a student body with a significant number of internationals, 27.6% of LDRs had a distance of over 3000km.

Overall, most respondents who had been in a long distance relationship said the distance had made them weaker as a couple. This was most significant at the 100-400km range, which, from London, would cover most places within England and Wales.



Interestingly, there was a positive correlation between distance and strength of relationship – the further away the individuals were away from each other, the more likely the respondent was to say their relationship had been strengthened. Those who had a distance of >3000km – which would essentially exclude much of Europe – were the most likely to say their relationship had been made stronger thanks to distance.



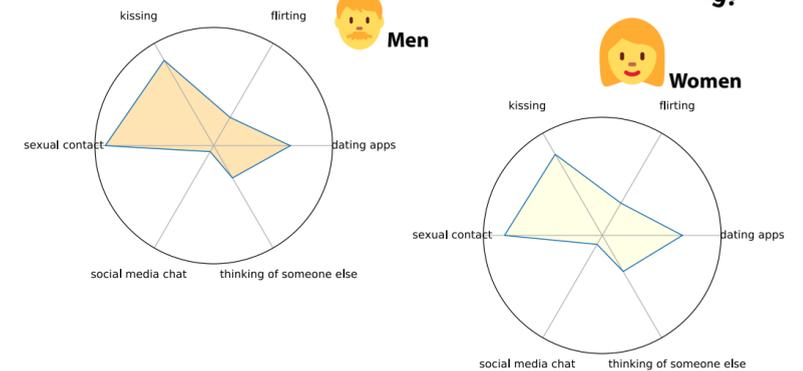
CHEATING

The number of respondents who cheated on their partner, or were cheated on by their partner, were roughly similar: 25.6% of respondents had been cheated on at least once, while 25.9% had cheated on their partner at least once. 10.5% of respondents had cheated on their partners more than once.

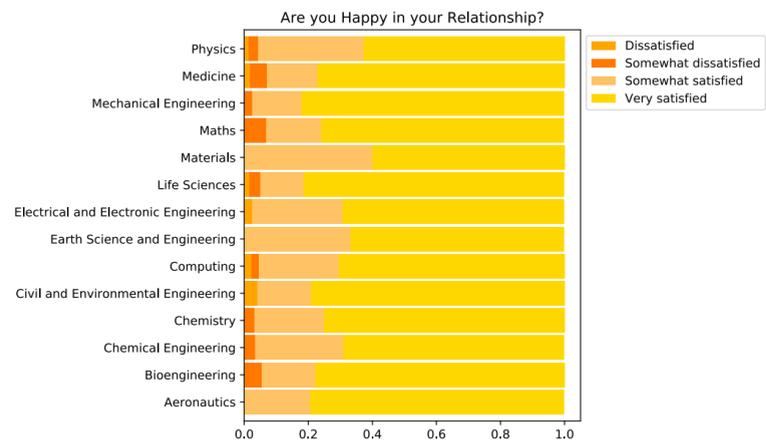
But what constitutes cheating, exactly? Men and women were found to have largely similar views on what constitutes cheating, although there were some slight differences. Both thought sexual contact and kissing were the most likely to be cheating, although men were slightly more secure in their belief it always counted as cheating.

Women, by contrast, were slightly more likely to count social media chat, thinking of other people, flirting with others, and chatting with people on dating apps as cheating.

Would you always consider the following cheating?



A key question a lot of people in relationships may ponder is: would I be happier with someone else? Not according to the results of our Survey. On average, over 70% of those in relationships said they were 'very satisfied' with their relationship, and a further 22% said they were 'somewhat satisfied'. A little over 1% of people in relationships said they were 'very dissatisfied' with their current partner.



The satisfaction levels would vary between departments: Mechanical Engineering, Life Sciences, and Aeronautics were the most likely to say they were very satisfied with their relationship, while no students from Earth Science and Engineering, Materials, or Aeronautics said they were dissatisfied. Students in Maths, Medicine, and Bioengineering were the most likely to say they were dissatisfied.

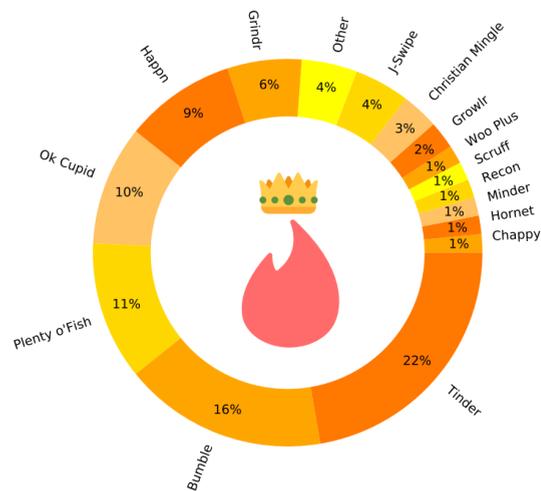
Those who met their partner at Imperial were also more likely to be very satisfied than those who met their partner elsewhere: out of the couples who met at Imperial, 74.9% were 'very satisfied', compared to only 67.3% for those who met outside the Imperial bubble.



APPS

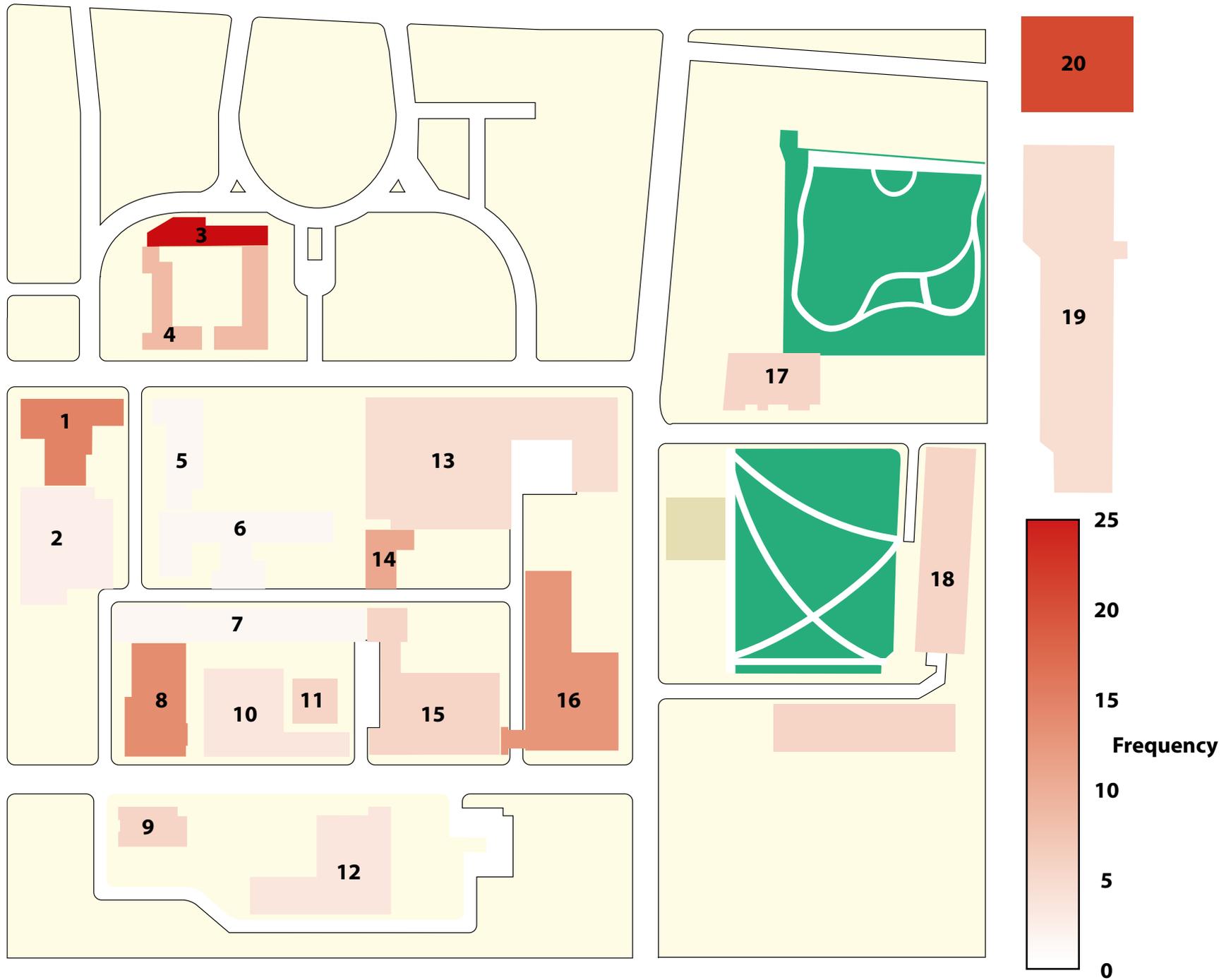
Dating apps are now ubiquitous in modern society, but which ones reign supreme? At Imperial, Tinder is king, with 22% of those using dating apps making use of Tinder. The next most popular was Bumble, where in straight matchings the woman is the one who makes first contact, with 16% of the market share. Plenty o'Fish and OK Cupid were the next most popular, while Grindr, which arguably first started the dating app trend, only has 6% of the share.

Those looking for love on the apps might have to look out, however. 49% of those using apps did so for easy or convenient sex, with a further 7% looking for 'lewd conversations'. 10% of users were looking for friends, while only 32% of those using the apps were looking for a real relationship.





LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION



- 1 **Blackett**
- 2 **Huxley**
- 3 **Union Building**
- 4 **Beit**
- 5 **Roderic Hill**
- 6 **ACEX**
- 7 **Sherfield**
- 8 **Library**
- 9 **Wolfson**
- 10 **Queen's Lawn**
- 11 **Queen's Tower**
- 12 **SAF**
- 13 **RSM**
- 14 **EEE**
- 15 **Skempton**
- 16 **CAGB**
- 17 **Ethos**
- 18 **Princes Gardens**
- 19 **Reynolds**
- 20 **'Toilet'**

We conclude the Sex Survey with a look at where people have been getting down and dirty on and around campus. The Union Building was far and away the most popular place for people to have sex, with a number of individuals reporting bumping uglies in Metric. At *Felix* we try and stay reasonably sex-positive, but even we've gotta admit that's nasty.

Blackett, Central Library, and City and Guilds Building were all popular places for people to have sex, with some individuals reporting getting it on in the Library group study rooms. It's a bit of a loose interpretation of what 'group study' means.

The only non-South Kensington place recorded was the Reynolds Building, which is located on the Charing Cross campus. It was a surprisingly unpopular venue, given students think medics are

the department who have the most sex.

This question also highlighted how vague some people could be in answering their questions – a vast number of people simply said they'd had sex in 'toilet' or 'bathroom', which others said they'd had sex in 'halls'. A note to those taking the survey next year – be a bit more specific with where these places are.

Oh, and to the person who had sex in the *Felix* Office – please tell me you cleaned up afterwards...

§

That concludes the Sex Survey for another year! We hope you've enjoyed reading, and look forward to seeing you in 2019!

Imperial College London



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.

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



THE IMPERIAL COLLEGE SWISS SOCIETY



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Back Row – Adrian LaMoury (Music Editor), Graham Davies (Darkroom Manager), Henry Eshbaugh (Music Editor), Frank Leggett (News Writer)

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ARTS

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Art on the Underground: contemporary tube maps,

Heather Phillipson's egg-based installation at Gloucester Road station is only the latest in a series of artistic interventions from Art on the Underground, which draws inspiration from the tube network's history of iconic designs, from architecture to typography.

ARTS

Fred Fyles
Editor-in-Chief

Regular users of Gloucester Road tube station may have noticed a rather surreal visitor cropping up last week. The disused rail platform, lying opposite the District and Circle line platforms, has been occupied by a dizzying array of eggs: eggs coming out of shower heads; eggs cracked open by nails; fried eggs lying flush against the floor of the platform, as dark and grimy as a used frying pan. It's the project of Heather Phillipson, a British artist who works across a wide range of

media, constructing dense tapestries of meaning that echo our hyperreal modern life, in which we are bombarded with visual information from all sides.

The installation, *my name is lettie eggsyrub*, takes up the entirety of the 80m platform, and will occupy the space for an entire year. Phillipson describes the project as "a subterranean disturbance, in which hyper-real, creaturely simulations and analogue counterparts dwarf passengers," and while commuters aren't known for being that aware of the world around them – London etiquette demands a rigorous refusal to focus anywhere except your feet/your phone/empty space – the sheer scale of Phillipson's

work makes it hard to ignore.

While the installation is new, the ethos behind it is not. Artists have been making use of Gloucester Road station since 2003, when Cindy Sherman erected ten giant self-portraits; Sherman's work plays with the question of gender and identity, with Sherman donning nausea-inducing prosthetics to abstract herself into other personalities. Before Phillipson's work was installed, the arches of the platform framed photographs by Trevor Paglen, looking out over a bucolic English landscape, whose horizon was punctured by squat geodesic domes housing US surveillance equipment.

All the projects that have made use of the



Mark Wallinger's *Labyrinth* installation // Jack Gordon

Gloucester Road platform have been organised by Art on the Underground, a branch of Transport for London (TfL) which uses the tube network as a vast gallery space. The programme was originally called Platform for Art, and was founded in 2000, acquiring its current name in 2007; it's headed up by a team of curators and producers, advised by a panel including those working in the arts and within TfL, as well as practicing artists.

Since its inception, the programme has allowed artists to create a number of significant works, and changed the way commuters and tourists experience the world's oldest metro system. One of the most recognisable and frequently-changing interventions is the cover of the tube map booklets, which can be picked up in the majority of station ticket areas. Since 2003, they have been inviting a rotating roster of artists to design the cover, drawing on a range of influences, most noticeably the design of the map itself. The result is a series of

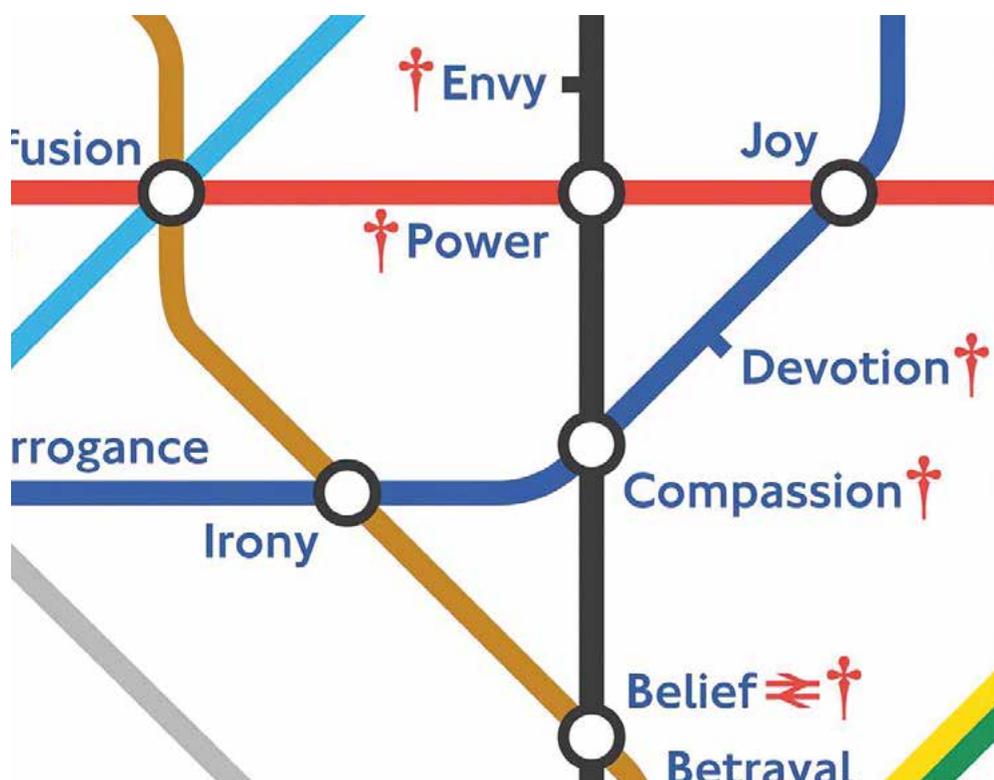
artworks that, when collected together, function as a miniature exhibition; Art on the Underground have commissioned some of the most influential artists working today, including Rachel Whiteread, Mona Hatoum, and Yayoi Kusama, who have all brought their artistic trademarks – use of negative space; textile handiwork; psychedelic dots – to the iconic map.

"Imran Qureshi's map cover draws on the beautiful floral patterns of Mughal miniatures"

I've got a couple of favourites from the series: firstly, Imran Qureshi's *All Time Would be Perpetual Spring*, which sees the Pakistani-born artist drawing delicate, beautiful floral patterns using the colours of underground tube lines.

Taking inspiration from and drawing on the same techniques Mughal artists used to produce exquisite miniatures, Qureshi said his work would help create "a completely new atmosphere and a positive energy," but it retains an unmistakable sense of violence. The individual segments of flora are surrounded by small splashes – the fly in the ointment that calls to mind spots of blood, and unsettles the gentle image.

American artist Barbara Kruger, whose work interrogates the meaning of words and language, turned her attention to the tube map cover back in 2010: her version takes a selection of the map around Charing Cross, where the station names have been replaced with totemic values. Waterloo becomes Vigilance; Holborn is renamed Joy; and Oxford Circus takes on Perfection. The result is a witty visual puzzle, that leads the viewer to make links between the different stations: you can take a journey from Joy to Devotion to Compassion, for example, while



Barbara Kruger's tube map cover // Art on the Underground

ARTS

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iconic designs, and giant eggs invaders...

Fame abuts too close to Pride for comfort. It is reminiscent of Simon Patterson's fantastic 1992 piece *The Great Bear*, which saw the tube lines become categories of person – philosophers, scientists, explorers – and the stations individuals through history.

Of course, all these works are themselves drawing upon an iconic piece of urban design: the tube map itself. It can be difficult to imagine the tube map looking like anything other than our current design, but from the foundation of the underground through to the 1930s, transit authorities made use of a geographically-accurate map, which resulted in a massive crush in the centre, tube lines wriggling over each other like vipers, while suburban lines stretched out into emptiness.

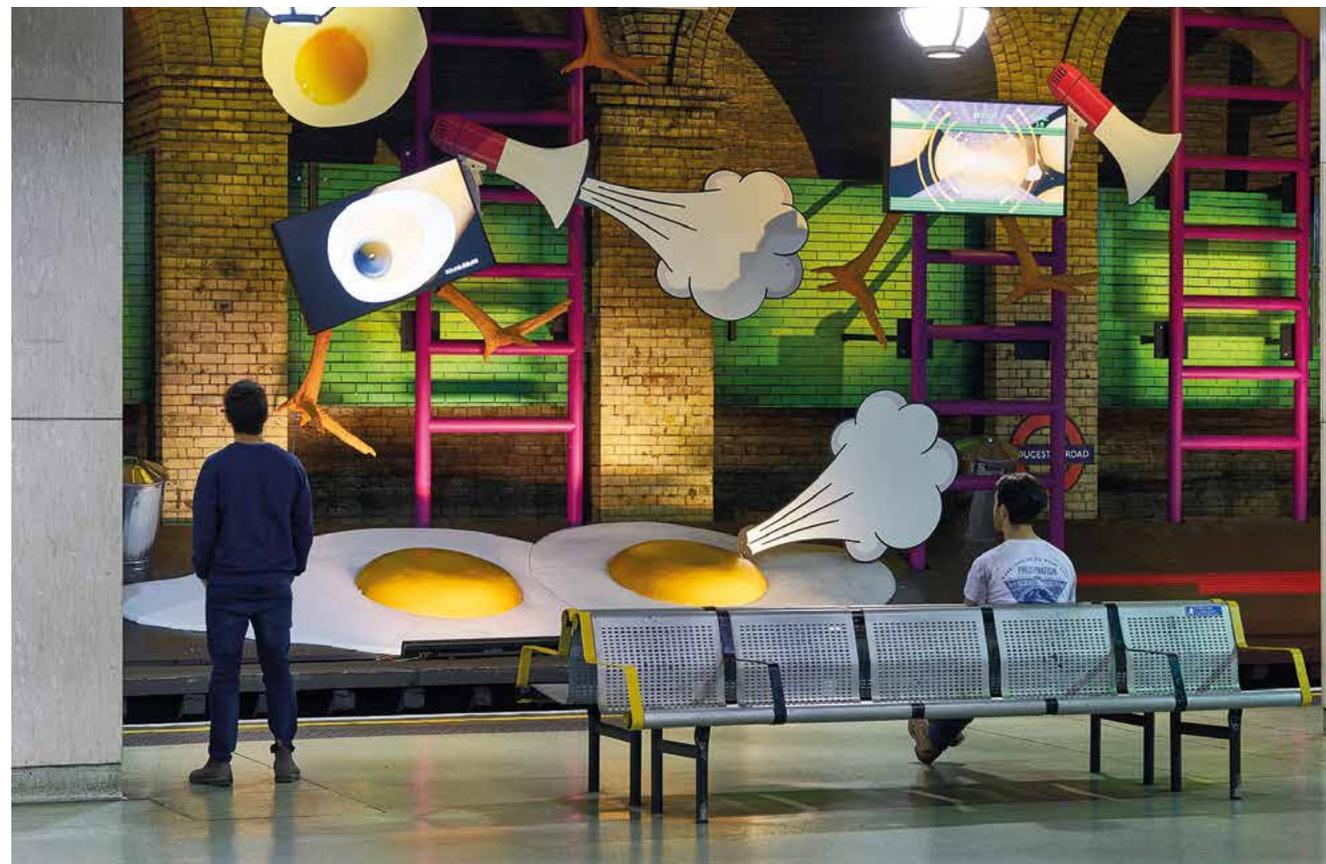
It wasn't until 1931 that things started to get cleaned up. Harry Beck, an engineering draftsman in the London Underground Signals Office, realised commuters didn't necessarily care about where the stations were in proximity to one another since they'd be travelling underground, losing their sense of direction – instead, they needed a simple topological map, which would tell them how to get from one station to another, and where they needed to change lines. Taking inspiration from electrical circuit diagrams, Beck spaced out the stations so they were equally distant apart, and used only 90 or 45 degree angles within the diagram. The first map, finished in 1931, has a strong resemblance to the modern map we know today – it was easy to read, the extra details had been removed, and the lines had an identifiable colour.

Originally rejected,

Beck returned to the drawing board, making small changes to the design, and submitting it again the next year; this time the authorities tentatively went for it, paying Beck £10 for the design, and producing a small run of maps, which were immediately popular among the general public. Over the next thirty years Beck produced maps for the London Underground, which gradually increased in complexity as more lines were added, until an uncredited design led Beck and his employers to fall out; Beck continued to produce maps in his own spare time, but none were produced, and he died in 1974, at the age of 72. It wasn't until 1997, more than two decades after his death, that his contribution was formally recognised on current maps. Hugely influential, the London Underground map is a work of art in its own right, one that has been emulated by underground networks across the world.

The tube map is just one example of the unified vision of the London Underground network, which branched into all areas of art and design. This unique aspect of the transport network can be traced back to Frank Pick, who started as publicity officer for the Underground Electric Railways Company of London (UERL), a precursor of the London Underground, before becoming its managing director.

Pick introduced a number of key design elements that would become emblematic of the tube, including the iconic roundel – the red ring struck through with a blue bar – which he had Edward Johnston develop from the previous clunky design of a solid red circle in 1913. Pick also



You can't make an omelette... //GG Archard

commissioned Johnston to develop a signature font for the UERL to use, giving them a clear brand identity. The result, Johnston, was instantly revolutionary: one of the first humanist sans-serif typefaces, it would later go on to inspire other designers, such as Eric Gill and Frederic Goudy, and can be seen as a precursor to fonts such as Tahoma or Calibri.

Pick's influence didn't just extend to visual design, however – he was also commissioned architect Charles Holden to design a number of underground stations, many of which remain iconic to this day. While other transit systems, such as Paris' Métro, were largely built within a compressed time frame, the London Underground was completed over a number of decades, as new generations and shifting demographics demanded more lines to be opened; the result is a panoply of station design, where a single train journey could

take you from Italinante, to art deco, to high-tech.

In total 71 stations have buildings which are listed, while a number of others have entrances or exits within other listed buildings.

Holden's designs, many of which are themselves listed, are among the most iconic – although Leslie Green's beautiful oxblood tile-clad designs (see Gloucester Road station) come a close second. Holden's work comes in two main flavours: the first can be seen in the 1926 extension to the Northern Line, with huge plate glass murals featuring the Roundel embedded within a Portland stone facade, and a long awning over the entranceway; the second is found in the later Piccadilly Line extension, with stations made of a series of interlocking shapes – spheres, cylinders, cuboids – that would extend horizontally and vertically. Of these, perhaps the most impressive is Southgate station: circular in its

design, it seems to have crashed down on the North London suburb like a UFO, an allusion aided by the Tesla-coil-esque statue planted on top.

“The vision of the London Underground network branched into all areas of art and design”

At the centre of Pick's mission was a desire to bring good design to the average citizen, a project that Art on the Underground keeps up to this day. The variety of the tube network was celebrated in 2013, during its 150th anniversary, with *Labyrinth*, an installation by Mark Wallinger, which takes the form of 270 unique black and white maze tiles, with one installed at

each station. In July 2016, less than a month after the Brexit vote, Art on the Underground launched their *#LondonIsOpen* series, which invited artists to create works celebrating diversity and inclusion showing how London would remain a global city, regardless of the political climate.

Some may balk at a public institution making a political point in such a way, but the history of the London Underground network shows it has always been a quietly radical force. Anything that brings art down from the gallery space, and into the realm of people's lives, allowing it to become part of their everyday environment, is in itself political. And so, if you happen to go through Gloucester Road station within the next year, make sure to check out Heather Phillipson's eggs, and think about how it's just another step in one of the largest public art projects to have ever existed.

ARTS

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Felix recommends: top picks for a summer of culture

As the days grow longer, the cultural offerings in the capital tend to dry up, with people electing to head outdoors rather than sit in the theatre. Rejoice, culture lovers – Felix is on hand with some of the top recommendations for a summer of art and culture.



Serpentine Pavilion 2018, designed by Frida Escobedo // Iwan Baan

ARTS

Fred Fyles
Editor-in-Chief

There's a strange paradox within the London cultural scene: as soon as summer hits, with the days growing longer, and the evenings stretching out before us to the horizon, theatres and galleries begin to close shop, using the summer months to prepare their new seasons. It's unfortunate, since July through to September is the period when most of us have more time to go out and explore the city – although, as student loans begin to dry up, this lack

of shows and exhibitions might be a blessing in disguise. Never fear – *Felix* are here, to give you recommendations on all the best cultural things to do this summer, without breaking the bank:

Globe Summer Season

Midsummer is when Shakespeare's Globe really comes into its own. With the top of the theatre open to the elements, the months through from April to October are the only time the Globe can rely on weather clement enough to run performances. Even then, the notoriously temperamental British climate means you'll always be taking a

bit of a risk when going to see something. It's all part of the charm of going to the Globe, which is a quintessentially summery London activity. As usual, groundling tickets – for standing in the yard – are only £5 for most performances, making the Globe one of the most accessible theatres in the UK.

This year's season has some classics from Shakespeare's repertoire – *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Love's Labour's Lost* – but the team are also putting on a series of talks and workshops exploring how Shakespeare continues to be relevant to the modern day. Discussions, performances, and events will look at race within Shakespeare, as well as the idea

of censorship in the world of theatre. New work by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm, Jude Christian, and Matt Hartley will also be performed, while events completely unrelated to Shakespeare – such as the Alternative Miss World competition – will be held in the famous venue.

The Globe's Summer Season runs through to October.

Serpentine Pavilion

The Serpentine Pavilion, which pops up for a few months in front of the Hyde Park gallery, has become a London summer institution. As Instagram and social media have exploded,

the Pavilion has become, more than ever, the place to be seen to be. This year, in its 18th iteration, the commission has gone to Frida Escobedo, a Mexican architect, who will hopefully create a space that feels more intimate and reflective. At 39, Escobedo is the youngest architect to create a pavilion, and has drawn her inspiration from a number of sources: the pavilion itself will be constructed out of cheaply-produced Mexican roof tiles, overlaid in a lattice structure; one courtyard within the space is angled to line up with the Greenwich Meridian, meaning visitors will get to experience a play of light as it reflects off pools

of water and the ceiling, changing subtly throughout the day. El Lissitzky's 'Proun' artworks, which interrogate ideas of space and perspective, have also been a key reference point, with Escobedo hoping to create a "space of discovering" within the Pavilion.

While visiting the pavilion, you can also check out the exhibition of Christo and Jean-Claude's massive sculptural interventions within the urban landscape – previous projects included wrapping the Reichstag in fabric – on display in the main gallery.

The Serpentine Pavilion runs from 15th June to 7th October.

ARTS

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Young Vic – Fun Home

Cartoonist Alison Bechdel may be most famous for the cinematic test that bears her name – does a film have two female characters, who talk to each other about something other than a man? – but her graphic novel *Fun Home*, released in 2006, is one of the best memoirs to come out in the noughties. It tells the story of Bechdel's childhood in Pennsylvania, and the tyrannical rule of her father, a high school English teacher and funeral director. Bechdel explores not only her own burgeoning sexuality, but also that of her father, who was in the closet throughout his life. Through a recursive structure, Bechdel traces the events leading up to her father's death, filtered through a rich, literary layer of allusion and reference.

This summer sees the musical version of the graphic novel, which won five Tony awards, including Best Musical, coming to London's Young Vic. When it opened in Broadway in 2015, it was critically-acclaimed, with *The New York Times* calling its score a 'masterpiece'. It's sure to be one of the hottest tickets of the

summer, so make sure to get in early for a chance to see it.

Fun Home runs 18th June to 1st September. Tickets from £10.

Barbican – Dorothea Lange/Vanessa Winship Double Bill

The Barbican Gallery follow on from their sterling group photography exhibition *Unseen Worlds*, which looked at those on the fringes of society, with a photographic double bill. Dorothea Lange is best known for her iconic photograph *Migrant Mother*, which came to be representative of the Great Depression in the USA, as well as her work for the Farm Security Administration (FSA) documenting the plight of sharecroppers. She later went on to cover the internment of Japanese-Americans during the Second World War – a shameful chapter of American history. To both settings, Lange brought her remarkable humanistic eye, showing the individuals behind the mass tragedies.

Her work is paired with Vanessa Winship, the critically-renowned British portrait photographer,

whose black and white photographs share the same arresting empathy as Lange's work. Winner of numerous awards, she works primarily in Eastern Europe, turning her lens onto a range of individuals as she conveys the fragility of both the landscape and the individual.

National Theatre – The Lehman Trilogy

Lehman Brothers is a name that, instantaneously, conjures up the ghost of the 2008 financial crash, whose effects are still being felt around the world today. The images of the office workers, carrying out their cardboard boxes on the morning of September 15th, 2008, have become iconic representations of the modern era. This summer, the National Theatre takes on the story of the bank, and how it came to exist, in their production of *The Lehman Trilogy*, Stefano Massini's sprawling, epic production. Coming in at nearly four hours long, and told in three parts over the course of an evening, Sam Mendes – director of *Skyfall* and *American Beauty* – will be responsible for ensuring it doesn't



Bettrys Jones and Jack Laskey in *As You Like It* at the Globe // Tristram Kenton

run away from us. He will be directing a stellar cast, including Simon Russell Beale, while set designer Es Devlin (*The Nether*, *Chimerica*) is to bring a grand sense of scale to the production.

The Lehman Trilogy is on at the National Theatre 4th July to 22nd September. Tickets limited.

White Cube – Memory Palace

London is absolutely filled with independent commercial galleries, which often do individual or group shows of some of the most interesting contemporary artists working today. All too often, however, people avoid them, for fear they'll stick out like a sore thumb. The White Cube galleries have managed to establish themselves as a sort of halfway house between the tucked away, appointment-only commercial galleries and the major blockbuster venues like the Tate or Royal Academy.

This summer sees them putting on one of their largest group shows in recent memory, split between their two London galleries in Bermondsey and St. James's. *Memory*

Palace promises to be an exhibition that will "inspire reflection on the forms and themes of memory." It features over forty artists, including the who's who of contemporary art: Eddie Peake, Antony Gormley, Cerith Wyn Evans – the list goes on. The exhibition also promises to be a highly-international affair, with exhibited artists ranging from Mona Hatoum, whose evocative installations challenge our visions of the world, to He Xiangyu, who explores the contradictions inherent in modern industrial society.

Memory Palace is on at the White Cube Bermondsey and Mason's Yard 11th July to 2nd September. Free admission

Tate Modern – Christian Marclay: The Clock

Sometimes, the idea for a work of art is so brilliantly simplistic, you wonder why it hasn't been thought of before. This was surely the reaction to Christian Marclay's installation piece *The Clock*, which debuted at the White Cube in London back in 2010, and returns to the UK for the first time in seven years.

The Clock is a 24-hour video, running on a loop, in which Marclay has compiled a wide range of film and TV scenes featuring clocks, timepieces, or references to the time. The film tells the correct time – so if you visit it at 2.30pm, the scenes will be showing clocks at that exact minute. At once simplistic and complex, the piece took over three years to create, and won the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale when it was exhibited.

Previous iterations of *The Clock* have seen lengthy queues, but – with the Tate Modern showing it through until January – there will be a long time for Londoners to catch it. Within the shots, Marclay builds up his own sense of rhythm, grouping similar shots together to manipulate the audience's emotions, creating feelings of tension, drama, and tenderness. Once a month, the Tate Modern will stay open all night, giving cinephiles and art-lovers alike the chance to see the piece in all its glory.

The Clock is on 14th September 2018 to 20th January 2019. Admission free.



Zubin Varla in rehearsals for *Fun Home* // Marc Brenner

ARTS

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PLEASE DON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT ART...

...show it to me – with over a thousand paintings, sculptures, photographs, prints, and more at the Royal Academy's 250th Summer Exhibition.

ARTS
SUMMER EXHIBITION

Where? Royal Academy
When? Until 19th August
How Much? £18 (£16 without donation)

Nicolas Baird
Arts Writer

Now open for its 250th consecutive year, the Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts still fills its walls in the Salon-style of the late 18th century. Each room is crammed from floor-to-ceiling with art – a smörgåsbord of sizes, styles, and materials. Walking from room to room feels like falling down a rabbit hole.

I had almost adjusted to the neon blue walls of the entrance room when a painting of a baby bird appeared in front of me, demanding in block letters: “PLEASE DON’T TALK TO ME ABOUT ART”. Nearby, a couple debated whether the price of a painting was fair. The man turned to the woman and said in a stage whisper, “If you’d bought one of her paintings a decade ago, you could’ve had it for only five thousand pounds.” She quickly replied, “Well, you might be able to say that about anyone here ten years from now!”

The exhibition always features several famous and up-and-coming artists from the UK and abroad, but the joy of the show is its open submission process. Any artist can submit work, and more than 4,000 pieces are chosen for the final round

of decisions. Curators give no special treatment to artists with name recognition or gallery representation. The result is a show that crowds the gallery walls like a tube station during bank holiday: bustling, hot, colourful, breathtaking.

Deeper into the exhibition, I found a small square portrait of a dog posing by Vermeer’s *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. Stuck on the wall next to it was an orange dot sticker that meant it had been sold. Nearly every piece in the exhibition – from the most expensive sculpture to the cheapest print – is for sale. Those interested can buy an official Summer Exhibition List of Works for reference (“only £3.50, over by the reception desk”). The booklet is over 200 pages long and contains only the name, artist, material, and price of each work.

“It’s show that crowds the gallery walls like a tube station during bank holiday: bustling, hot, colourful, breathtaking”

On opening day, more than half of the exhibition’s 1,351 works showed off at least one dot. The Royal Academy invites buyers from past years to preview the exhibition in the weeks leading up to the grand opening, so a concentrated burst of



Michael Landy RA, *Closing Down Sale*, Mixed media and audio // Michael Landy

serious buying happens during this exclusive “shopping period”. When a piece can be produced and sold in multiples – like prints and photographs – more than one dot can be put up. Tucked away in a corner of a top floor gallery hung a framed US dollar bill with the word “TRASH” printed on it in violent orange. It already had 83 dots.

For a show whose subtitle is ‘Art Made Now’, the RA’s Summer Exhibition showcases surprisingly few new media and digital works. With the exception of a handful of videos and a moderate selection of sculptures and architectural models, most of the work on display is two-dimensional – paintings, prints, photographs, drawings, mixed media. Maybe the subtitle should

read ‘For Sale: Art Made Now’. Even so, the show feels fresh and exciting – a snapshot of the contemporary art world’s easily packable, transportable, sellable side.

“The show is a snapshot of the contemporary art world’s easily packable, sellable side”

From abstract geometry to portraits, still life to landscapes, text to textures, each room jams together a mix of

references, inventions, jokes, egos, beauty, and quiet moments. A lonely twig looks down from just below the ceiling. A large flattened bust of the Queen smiles warmly. The whole thing seems like a mess.

Yet it talks to itself. A print of a mountain in one of the later galleries reminded me of a tiny painting of a house I had seen high up in the entrance room. Retracing my steps through several galleries, I noticed more pieces – sculptures, photographs, a video – that had a family resemblance. Colours call to colours across galleries. A robin’s egg blue sounds out first in paint, then echoes back in ink and cloth and metal from four different rooms.

I wandered back (for the third? The fourth time?) through a gallery

filled with to-scale architectural models. Each was delicately constructed, with tiny human figures frozen inside. Around them, giants drifted by: gallery visitors moving from room to room. I thought of the bustle outside, of Oxford Street and Piccadilly Circus. How many people were walking through London right then? I imagined the city shrunken down to the size of a dollhouse. Tiny people walk through each carefully constructed model building and some of them look up in rooms filled with microscopic paintings. I suddenly zoomed back to reality as a woman popped out of a tunnel built into the display in front of me. “Wow”, she said breathlessly. “Welcome to wonderland!”

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Lessons in Love and Violence: a big name production fails to deliver

George Benjamin's conduction of his new opera on King Edward II hits the correct notes musically and presents a stellar cast, but the plot leaves a sense of disappointment at what could have been a brilliant spectacle.

ARTS

LESSONS IN LOVE AND VIOLENCE



Where? Royal Opera House
When? Ended 26th May

João Baptista

Arts Writer

Why is it so hard to write about operas? The Royal Opera House's *Lessons of Love and Violence* left me with the feeling there was something brilliant going on. You could feel it in the sudden pauses, changes of motion, sharp minors, and dark bursts of music. And strangely, an odd feeling still haunts me.

The plot is all there. You have a King who has a lover, a wife who still loves and wants to rescue him, commoners who starve and die, and an adviser who can separate love and politics. Love and politics – an intense conflict between the two different concepts that rarely enter into our lives, but fight it out in people who owe us guidance.

The King – referred to as only this throughout the show – falls in love with Gaveston, one of the nobles he praises and provides for, even at the expense of his people. This reckless behaviour worries advisor Mortimer, who advises him to stop this relationship, and ends up exiled from the palace – it's a decision which sets a train of consequences, ending up tearing his family apart. A traditional



Barbara Hannigan as Isabel, Stéphane Degout as King and Gyula Orendt as Gaveston in *Lessons in Love and Violence* // Stephen Cumiskey

“The opera starts in a traditional manner, but is let down thanks to a poor libretto”

start for a usual opera seria, if it were not for the poor libretto following this call to action. This is not to blame the composer, or actors' performances; in opera, music should be a tool to enhance the spectacle, transforming a regular play into a message that sinks in and leaves us with

good memories long after leaving the theatre. Above all, it should serve the play, but the play should not rely on it to keep the show alive.

In an attempt to modernise the old tale of Edward II, who died from love and failed miserably in his role as monarch, the adaptation fell short and delivered a classic tale in a confusing way. A conflict of modern staging and historical plotting clashes in an unpleasant way for the viewer. The reality of the scenes simply do not match the main themes approached. This clash is more distinctly seen in the second scene when Mortimer brings poor commoners to the palace to confront the queen, Isabel, with the problems

they face. This is one of my favourite scenes from the play, and yet it still feels like something is off with the plot, which forgot to modernise the characters' dilemmas to the modern staging.

In addition to this, the script lacks the essential flow in verse that is sorely needed in a play of this expense and production. This is not entirely to blame to the writer alone, but more generally, to the communication between composition and lyrics.

Not everything is a disappointment. The music underlying the play shows moments of hidden brilliance, with mystical moments conducted with no powerful notes or usual use of noise and easy emotional chords.

The performances should be acknowledged too, with a brilliant turn from Barbara Hannigan as Isabel, who made herself heard in the vast space, displaying her soprano nuances. Peter Hoare, as Mortimer, and Gyula Orendt, as Gaveston, had voices which matched their perfectionist stage performances, with their smooth and distinctive voices able to occupy physical space.

In the end, *Lessons in Love and Violence* was undone by a terrible problem when adapting old pieces into modern styles: a self-absorbed ambition to keep the best of both worlds, without changing anything that actually brings something new. An old story, with

a new adaptation, but still same core. A sort of intellectual effort to keep the old art alive with new pieces that will inevitably fail every time they ignore the need to make real changes in what is being presented. History lectures and background story should not be an exercise for the viewer, but something that everyone is able to understand. Hard-to-grasp dialogue, confusing topics, and undelivered lessons result in an unfinished product from the artists, not to be confused with elevated culture.

“The opera is undone by trying to keep the best of both worlds: the modern and the classical”

With all that said, I do not think operas fail the average arts-enthusiast. They can be enjoyable and funny, with philanthropists financing productions ensuring the art is continually elevated regardless of cultural shifts. *Lessons in Love and Violence* missed a bigger point than that. It failed to create a package of musical melody and theatrical drama that line up in only the best master-pieced of human talent.

ARTS

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Art anyone?

Summer can be a great time to educate yourself about art history, using all the resources London has to offer. Arts Writer Maria Zagorulko takes you through some key movements to look out for.

ARTS

Maria Zagorulko

Arts Writer

The number of art styles is enormous, if not infinite. With exams over, it might be time to undertake some cultural education and explore at least a few. The following chronological guide explains the most profound and impactful art streams found in London's numerous galleries.

Gothic

The characteristic style of the 12th-15th century features metaphorical representations of medieval reality. The Gothic style is famous for its portraits with straight, distinct lines and simplistic background themes. Most Gothic paintings tend to represent

historical or religious figures and events in two dimensions with a blue-black colour scheme. At times, Gothic art lacks happiness and placidity, which links back to distress within European society during that period.

Where to see the style in London: Palace of Westminster, Robert Lewis Roumieu building at 33-35 Eastcheap (both Gothic Revival)

Renaissance

As the time went by, religious and mythological motives continued to captivate the minds of European artists of the 14th-16th century. They started to explore colour and shape through images of Christ and Madonna in natural settings. One can distinguish Renaissance paintings by the dominance of light and a largely romanticised colour palette, loved and

cherished by Raphael, Titian, and Michelangelo – pioneers of this art movement.

Where to see the style in London: Bacchus and Ariadne – Titian; Saint Catherine of Alexandria – Raphael; both at the National Gallery

Baroque

This extravagant art stream began to dominate art workshops during 17th-18th centuries. The exact translation of *barocco* is 'a pearl of non-ideal form'. Society of that period saw excellence in exaggerated luxury of textures, forms and colours. Baroque paintings have an extremely dynamic character, over-filled with emotions and light. Artists of that time like Caravaggio, Rubens, and Velásquez represented the world through hyperbolic, large-scale shapes showing the magnificence

of nature using generous brush strokes and colours like red, lead tin yellow, and beige.

Where to see the style in London: Samson and Delilah – Peter Paul Rubens; The Toilet of Venus – Diego Velásquez; both at the National Gallery

Classicism

The art world of the 17th-18th century soon shifted from the pompous baroque towards more realistic styles like Classicism. Architects, sculptors, and artists drew their attention to rational harmony between colour and form, striving to make their pieces immaculate. They saw beauty in linearity, symmetry, and a restrained colour palette full of undertones. If you walk into a gallery and see a piece looking like it was made by an A* student, then you are

probably standing in front of a beautiful example of Classicism. Some 'A* students' of that art era were: Nicolas Poussin, Charles le Brun, and Karl Bryullov.

Where to see the style in London: A Bacchalian Revel before a Term – Nicolas Poussin at the National Gallery; Regency Classicism section at V&A

Realism

Realism as an art movement stems from the 19th century, resulting in its collection being the largest in the world. A characteristic property of the movement was the reflection of critical social and economic issues where the artist often conveys their opinion, giving an appraisal on the topic. Hence in the spotlight are often scenes from life of the working class both in towns and the countryside. This led to the use of dark, earthy palettes.

Where to see the style in London: The execution of Maximilian – Edouard Manet; Still Life with Apples and a Pomegranate – Gustave Courbet; both at the National Gallery

Impressionism

Born in 1860s France, Impressionism was considered a complete contrast to Realism. Instead of expressing all details of the surrounding world, as done by Realists, Impressionists like Degas, Renoir, and Monet were keen to embody the real world through generating emotion within the observer. This was achieved by using soft

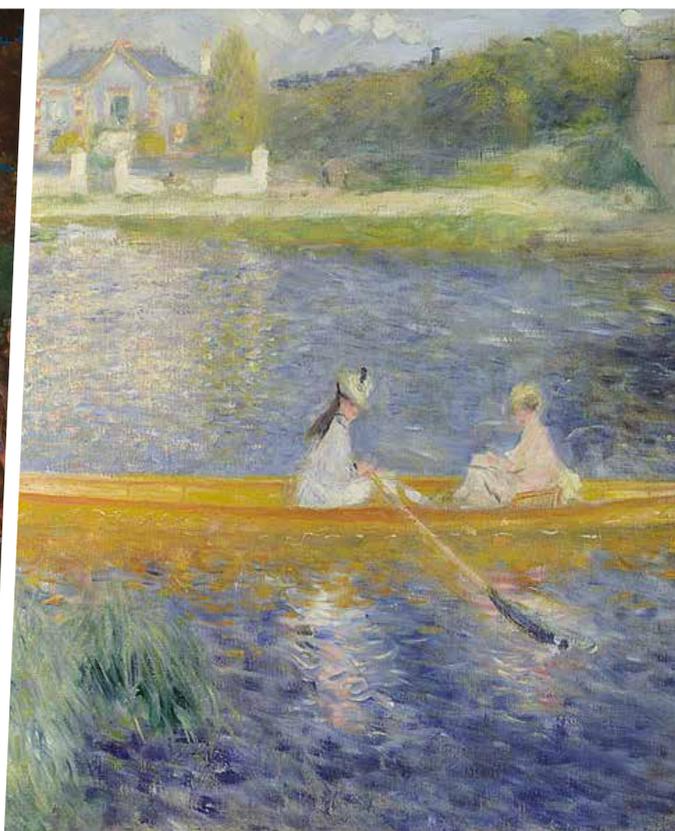
yet visible brush strokes that gave a feeling of tenderness and calmness. This dreamy art style captures the effects of light by manipulating palettes that include pure, intense colours like blue, white, and red. To enjoy Impressionist pieces, one simply needs to find the most romantic and hazy art section in the gallery.

Where to see the style in London: Water-Lilies – Claude Monet at the Tate Modern; The Skiff – Pierre-Auguste Renoir at the National Gallery

Modern

Significant historical events in 20th century promoted a rapid change of values in society causing art workshops to produce pieces that displayed a unique aura. Artists moved on from usual eclecticism and began to explore dreams, symbolism, and subjective experiences. The characteristic modernist approach is full of floral ornaments, asymmetrical forms, and complex decorations. A modern colour palette included all parts of the colour spectrum and was used by famous modernists such as Paul Gauguin, Gustav Klimt, and Edvard Munch. As time went by, the Modern style diverged into Cubism, Fauvism, Futurism, and Surrealism which appealed to wider audiences and are considered separate art movements within themselves.

Where to see the style in London: Faa Iheihe – Paul Gauguin at the National Gallery; Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up exhibition at V&A



From Titian to Renoir – spot the difference //CC

ARTS

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Frida Kahlo: making an icon into a caricature?

A new exhibition at the V&A promises to reveal an intimate side to the artist. While her self-portraits and photographs prove revealing, Arts Writer Simran Kukran argues that the exhibition as a whole leaves a lot to be desired.

ARTS

**FRIDA KAHLO:
MAKING HERSELF UP**


Where? The V&A
When? 16th June – 4th
November
How Much? £15; £13
students

Simran Kukran
Arts Writer

Frida Kahlo's is a feminist icon. Her eyebrows, jewellery, and clothes are distinctly recognisable through her self-portraits, and Kahlo is revered for challenging gender norms and rejecting colonial influences as a proud Mexican communist. This is the first time the artwork, medication, clothing, and other personal belongings have been displayed outside of her home on the outskirts of Mexico City, now known as the Museum of Frida Kahlo. At the time of her death, Kahlo instructed her husband to seal off her bathroom. Only in 2004 were its contents revealed.

Most of the contents of this exhibition were found in this way. The V&A exhibition was curated in partnership with the Museum and Frida Kahlo Foundation. It has been advertised as "intimate", seeking to sensitively display another side of the artist, but crosses the line into blunt and invasive. The focus does not seem to be on Kahlo's artwork, but instead on her clothing and belongings.

The exhibition addresses Kahlo's entire life. In the first room



Frida Kahlo with Olmec figurine, 1939 // Nickolas Muray Photo Archives

"It is striking to see actual photographs of Kahlo alongside her self-portraits"

there are photographs of Kahlo as a young girl, followed by her earliest works. It is striking to see actual photographs of Kahlo alongside her self-portraits. Although clearly recognisable, in her self-portraits her features look stronger – harsh and more masculine, with prominent facial hair. In photographs her face shape is softer

and, while the unibrow is strong, facial hair is barely visible. Aside from being beautiful works in their own right, the photographs contextualise the artworks aiding interpretation. The balance is skewed, however, and it feels the powerful artwork that should be taking centre stage is stuck in the background.

Kahlo suffered from polio as a child, and a traffic accident at 18 left her disabled with chronic pain. Although she aspired to be a doctor, she never fully recovered and did not return to education. She began painting while bedridden. The details of her health issues were kept private, but her pain and disability was explored regularly in her artwork,

most famously in *The Broken Column* (1944). There is only a small photo of the work visible, but Kahlo's prosthetic leg sits in a large mirrored case in the middle of a dimly lit room with eerie music playing. This feels sensationalist, almost perverse. It is as if her pain is being fetishized. Her orthopaedic corsets are also on display. The fact that Kahlo decorated, almost graffitied, these means their display as works of art is less uncomfortable. Particularly moving is a foetus painted onto the corset following a termination for health reasons. Her medication is displayed alongside letters appealing for doctor's appointments. While her disability was

an important part of Kahlo's identity, it was explored in her own terms in her artwork; to force this level of exposure seems insensitive.

Kahlo was a proud communist and Mexican patriot, even changing her birthyear of 1907 to 1910, that of the Mexican Revolution. Her passion was reflected in her clothing; she wore pre-colonial traditional Mexican dress to make an empowered statement. There are photos of her family members wearing similar clothing, and she was proud of her matriarchal heritage. The clothing has been beautifully restored and displayed. Captions proudly highlight the fact the clothing's cigarette burns and mending after

wear and tear mean it was well loved – "her wardrobe was not staged but a second skin" – but is this really so surprising? Kahlo is an icon, yes – but she is not just a character for a Halloween costume. Is it so shocking her clothes were worn and lived-in?

Kahlo's makeup is also displayed, with some kohl used to darken her distinctive eyebrows still in its original packaging. The curator notes Kahlo "constructed" her identity through her belongings but, however beautiful, they do not give nearly a fraction of the insight her expressive paintings do.

Perhaps her clothing and belongings have a different feel displayed in her Mexico City home, but something in the V&A feels uncomfortable and doesn't sit quite right. Leaving the exhibition continues in this vein – giftshop tote bags and fridge magnets are decorated with her image, and you can purchase floral headdresses inspired by her look. There is also Mexican hot sauce on the shelves. It is unclear what the purpose of this is, but whatever the purpose, it does not seem to have been achieved. Out in the garden there is a very Instagrammable wire sculpture topped with flowers, with a hashtag competition to win a frozen margarita. The exhibition sought to reveal Kahlo's identity in an intimate way, but the result is more like caricature. While the style of delivery is not special, the exhibition is worth going to see for Kahlo's extraordinary paintings alone.

ARTS

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Thomas Cole – Will we lose our Eden?

In the first UK exhibition dedicated to the great American landscape artist, Arts Writer Helen Money-Kyrle is awestruck at the grandness Cole's paintings and poignancy of environmental message.

ARTS

**THOMAS COLE: EDEN
TO EMPIRE**


Where? National Gallery
When? Until 7th October
How Much? £10 Monday
– Friday; £12 Saturday and
Sunday

Helen Monry-Kyrle
Arts Writer

Born in 1801 during the height of the Industrial Revolution, Thomas Cole was to become one of the greatest landscape painters in American history. Having grown up in Lancashire, England, he moved to America with his family at the age of seventeen, determined to become a painter. Still well-known in America, he was highly popular at the time, and his awe-inspiring depictions of the American wilderness have continued to influence succeeding generations of artists and the public alike.

Entering the exhibition, I can see why his early works were, and still are, so admired. Dramatic and romantic, Cole's *View of the Round-Top in the Catskill Mountain* places us on the top of a mountain as we look on towards another mountain, the wild and untouched landscape stretching far into the distance. Close to us, a couple of windswept and gnarly trees add to the sense of depth of the painting, making the mountain and distant river feel far away, as wispy clouds make us realise how high up we must be. We are left in awe of this huge mountain; a

formidable work of nature that feels more permanent than anything humans could build.

Having established himself as an artist in America, Cole traveled to England and Italy (1829-1831), where he saw much art which inspired him and met with a number of influential artists, including JMW Turner. Cole was a fan of Turner's early work, evidenced by his borrowing of the dramatic clouds in Turner's *Snow Storm* for his greatest work *The Course of Empire*. Being largely self-taught up to this point, he studied fine arts in Italy, and experimented with new techniques such as that of oil sketches, which he took with him back to America and shared with other artists, in what was to be later dubbed the Hudson River School movement.

“Entering the exhibition, I can see why Cole's early works are still so admired”

As the exhibition transports us chronologically through his life and work, so too we see pieces by those that inspired him. I was particularly taken by *Hadleigh Castle* by Constable, which caught my attention just as it caught that of the young Cole. The ruined castle is set in a rugged, coastal landscape; the dark colours used for the scenery contrasting with an almost obsessive array of white highlights



The Course of Empire: The Consummation of Empire, Thomas Cole 1835–6 // Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York / Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions

across the entire scene, giving the castle a mystical, haunting feel. The painting shows the decline of what was once a great manmade structure, with nature reclaiming the crumbling building for itself. This rise and fall is one that resonated with Cole, forming a running theme through much of his work.

His greatest series, *The Course of an Empire*, depicts the rise and fall of a civilisation, with each scene set in the same imaginary location with its distinctive mountain peak. As time passes we see humans tame the land, later building a grand empire, before greed causes the destruction of the city in a cruel war. Finally, we watch as nature reclaims the landscape for herself, leaving us with a last, peaceful image of just civilisation's remnants left behind. With

probable influences from an imperial London and his visits to ancient ruins in Italy, Cole's series was met with critical success and is truly stunning.

“Cole watched the landscapes he loved tamed to make way for railroads, factories, and farmland”

His work celebrates his love of the natural world, but having lived through the industrial revolution, Cole watched as the landscapes he so loved were tamed to make way for railroads, factories, and farmland. One of his

most iconic paintings, *The Oxbow*, contrasts the wilderness and farmed land, whilst *River in the Catskills* is thought to be the first landscape painting to depict a railroad. Having spent much of his career painting the wild landscapes around the Hudson River, Cole opposed the destruction of the American wilderness, in particular rejecting the government's expansionist plans under President Andrew Jackson.

Sadly, though Cole's techniques and style went on to inspire a next generation of artists, his response to society's responsibility to the environment were largely lost. Increasingly, artists championed industrialisation through their work, such as in Durand's *Progress* (1853), commissioned by a railroad executive. However, given the recent tumultuous changes made

to environmental policies in America, there was a poignant relevance to his work that I had not expected.

As I walked out onto Trafalgar Square, I felt an unexpected camaraderie with Cole. He too visited the National Gallery, when it was just five years old, and would have wandered around the same rooms. His appreciation for the beauty of nature, and his warnings of the cost of unchecked environmental policies on the natural world have gained new relevance as we become increasingly aware of the effects of climate change, and our impact on the planet. Popular then, and popular now – his work will continue to be appreciated in years to come.

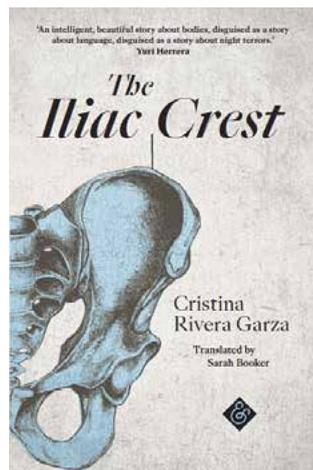
Exhibition organised by the National Gallery, London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

BOOKS

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The Iliac Crest – An unsettling tale of disappearance and mystery

This surreal novel from Mexican author Cristina Rivera Garza explores the nature of boundaries, in a haunted tale that sticks in the imagination.



BOOKS

THE ILIAC CREST

by Cristina Rivera Garza

And Other Stories. 136 pp.

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

In literature, disappearance tends to be a primarily active phenomenon, with individuals making the choice to leave their family and friends behind. While it is not necessarily a consensual act – ‘disappear’ implies people are left behind, who are often searching for the missing individual – the person who disappears generally does so of their own accord; from Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl* through to Alice Munro’s brilliant trio of short stories in her *Runaway* collection, literature is peppered with these tales of voluntary flight.

But then there is the phenomenon of disappearance as a passive phenomenon, which takes on a greater sense of darkness: the individual does not ‘disappear’, but rather they ‘are disappeared’. Implicit within this act is the notion of

violence, of power, of horror. Mexican author Cristina Rivera Garza expertly mines this deep seam of the uncanny in her short novel *The Iliac Crest*, first published in Spanish in 2002, and now arriving in English with a translation by Sarah Booker. Drawing on the boundaries between existence and absence, gender lines, and the fluid nature of borders, Rivera Garza has weaved a darkly-unsettling tale, which – though short – leaves a lasting impact on the reader.

“Rivera Garza has weaved a darkly-unsettling tale, which leaves a lasting impact on the reader”

The book centres on an unnamed narrator, living in a home by the sea, who works at a hospital for the dying, which he describes as “nothing more than a cemetery with open tombs.” One rainy night he receives a visit from two women: one is a figure from his past, struck down by a fever, while the other is Mexican author Amparo Dávilla, known for her gothic works which dwell on the fantastic and sinister. This Dávilla has been ‘disappeared’ – the real-life Dávilla is alive and well – which Rivera Garza describes as a form of physical contagion

sweeping the unnamed country: “mechanisms triggering the disease vary quite a bit – a greater or lesser degree of violence, more or less isolation, a little or a lot of silence – but the common element among all of them is contact.”

This idea of being disappeared has a long history, particularly in Latin and Southern America, where regimes like Pinochet’s would regularly liquidate political opponents. While at the time of writing Rivera Garza was undoubtedly referencing the widely-publicised femicides occurring in Ciudad Juárez, today they evoke most strongly incidents like the 2014 Iguala mass kidnapping, during which 43 students were disappeared.

The disappeared Dávilla nurses the other woman back to health, and the two begin conspiring together in an unknown language, leaving the narrator helpless – “I could do nothing before their language. I could not infiltrate it.” They ask him to search the hospital’s records for a mysterious patient from the past, which could help them identify a lost manuscript of Dávilla’s.

Rivera Garza evokes a sense of Kafkaesque nightmare in the hospital sequences, while also reminding me of the cool, clear horror of Shirley Jackson’s best work.

What sets Rivera Garza’s novel apart from other books which deal with similar moods of isolation and fear is the way she explores the idea of boundaries. The



Crosses marking the site where the corpses of eight women were found in Ciudad Juárez in 1996 // Wikimedia

book takes place in an uncertain geography – references are made to a ‘North City’ and a ‘South City’, between which the hospital seems to be located, abutting a wide open sea. The narrator describes it as “the end of the world...this threshold where one state ended and the next was unable to begin.” The terrain of the earth is not the only uncertain aspect; the terrain of the body, and of gender, also proves to be malleable, with Rivera Garza exploring ambiguities in identity skillfully, although certain linguistic differences between Spanish and English limit this exploration somewhat. Those who are disappeared live “with one foot in the grave and the other on terrain that held only a remote resemblance to life”, existing in some kind of ethereal

plane.

Rivera Garza also powerfully writes about the force language, and its creation, can have. Faced

“Not only the terrain of the earth, but the terrain of the body also proves malleable”

with his interlocutors’ unfamiliar speech, the narrator ends up feeling “as if I were inside a parenthesis in a sentence written in an unknown language.” The manuscript of Dávilla’s must be found otherwise her “young followers won’t

have the means to describe their own experiences on this earth.” The word, for Rivera Garza, is both a liberation and a form of power, which can both lift up and oppress.

Late in the novel, the narrator speaks of how staff at the hospital describe dying individuals as ‘patients’: “We dealt with people to whom we hadn’t yet found a sufficiently technical or neutral way to describe, without the weight of conscience, the underlying truth about our position: we were not doctors, but more or less efficient guardians of death.” This sense of horror lurking behind language infiltrates *The Iliac Crest*; it pervades deep into the bones of Rivera Garza’s words, settling deep into the very marrow of the novel.

BOOKS

books.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Felix recommends – reading for summer days

Jingjie Cheng and Fred Fyles take you through their books for the perfect summer day, as well as brand-new titles for you to check out over the break!



Mrs Dalloway by Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf's most well-known work crackles with a vibrant energy and zest. Set on a 'Wednesday in mid-June', it remains one of the best portrayals of London in the early summer, full of the vibrant optimism that characterises long days in the city. Taking place over the course of a single day, *Mrs Dalloway* is propelled along with a fierce internal motion, taking on a vast range of viewpoints and ideas.

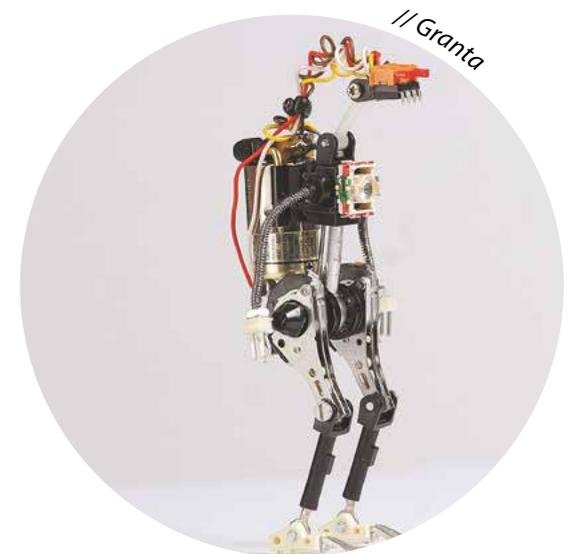
Woolf's prose is a vivid stream of consciousness that skips from character to character, like a vast

bird swooping through London, creating an incredibly sense of lightness. At the same time, Woolf explores a number of significant themes, such as the nature of temporal reality and the treatment of mental illness (something Woolf herself had experience of), as well as a radically daring look at sexuality and sapphism. 20th June is 'Dalloway Day', and I recommend setting it aside to read this brilliant novel, ideally in the garden, with a gentle breeze blowing through the pages. – FF

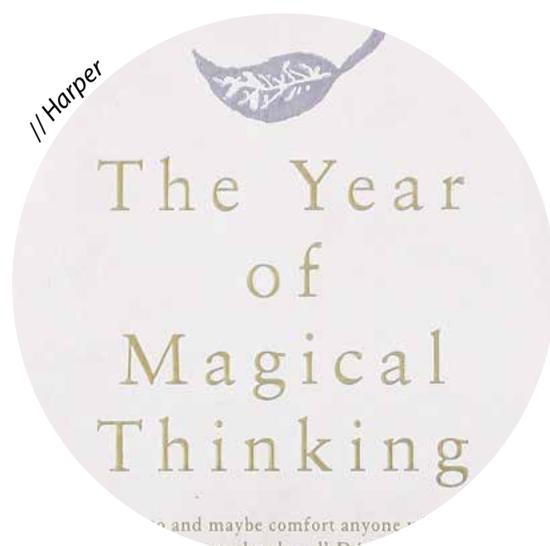
To be a Machine by Mark O'Connell

Often find that when summer rolls along, and we, as students, get to take a break, it is a good time to think about where we are going. These ruminations inevitably lead to thoughts surrounding mortality, the transience of life, and its fragility. Perhaps, while we contemplate these ideas, it is worth checking out Mark O'Connell's candid but thorough exploration of the transhumanism movement. Winner of this year's Wellcome Book Prize, *To Be a Machine* is the first full-length book on the topic. Transhumanism is science fiction come true – an attempt to use technology to fundamentally alter the human

condition, to transform humans into something completely different. Or rather, to improve humans in various aspects to make us better than the flesh-and-bones animals that we are. These ideas range from isolated body enhancements to people who believe that technology can help us solve the problem of death. O'Connell writes about the movement's philosophical and scientific roots, key players, and possible futures. Amid the optimism is, of course, the question of ethics, and to some, these ideas should remain in the realm of dystopian films. Pick up this book over summer and decide for yourself! – JC



The Year of Magical Thinking, by Joan Didion



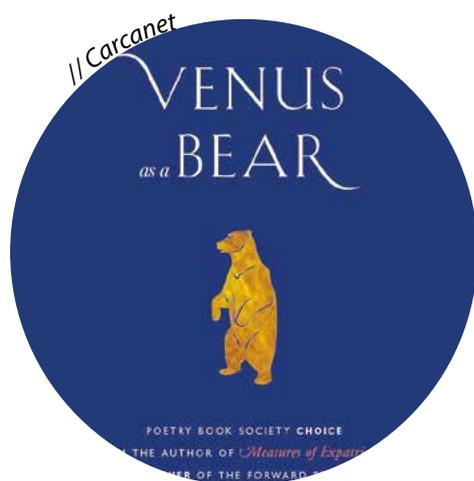
Yes, I am aware a book about deep loss and a journey through grief might not be the first thing that comes to mind when you think of what you might want to take with you on the beach, but hear me out. *The Year of Magical Thinking* is Joan Didion's account of the year following the death of her husband, the novelist John Gregory Dunne, who died suddenly in 2003: "Life changes fast. Life changes in the instant. You sit down to dinner and life as you know it ends."

Over the course of the year, Didion explores her reaction to grief, and continually replays the

events of her husband's death. It's an incredibly moving portrayal of the extreme loneliness of grief, as well as a brilliant tribute to the life she and Dunne built together. Didion's prose style is instantly recognisable – she occupies a certain middle distance, cool and detached, located halfway between the investigative reporter and the unreliable narrator. While her earlier essay work might be more evocative of the Californian dispatches for which she is known, *The Year of Magical Thinking* has a sense of weightlessness that I always associated with long summer evenings, when time blurs into nothingness. – FF

BOOKS

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Venus as a Bear by Vahni Capildeo

Winner of the 2016 Forward Prize for Poetry, the prolific Trinidadian-British poet Vahni Capildeo published her eighth poetry collection earlier this year. *Venus as a Bear* is about objects and the natural world, putting them at the centre and delicately describing how humans and humanity revolve around objects. From waiting for lambing at a friend's farm, to a tour with poets around the Ashmolean Museum in

Oxford, to criss-crossing the British Isles, Capildeo draws on the life of the non-human world, and explores our affinities with things. Many of the poems in this collection are short, exploring objects of different times, places and origins. Capildeo does not shy away from Romantic anthropomorphism, because stripping objects of our human projections is so difficult. Capildeo embraces it instead – with love, sensitivity, and wit. -JC

Crudo by Olivia Laing

Over the course of three works of non-fiction, Olivia Laing has established herself as one of the most important writers working today, describing individuals ranging from Virginia Woolf to Andy Warhol with a sense of beauty and wonderful pathos. It is difficult, for me, to think of a more generous writer than Laing, who always treats her subjects with the respect and attention they deserve. This summer sees the release of *Crudo*,

her debut novel. Set over the horrific summer of 2017, when Trump was (and is) edging us all towards nuclear war, Britain was (and is) trapped under the weight of Brexit, and the world seemed to be ending all around us, *Crudo* shows us life through the eyes of Kathy, a writer about to take her first steps into her forties. It's released in bookstores on 28th June, and I've already marked it down in my diary – so should you. -FF



Last Stories by William Trevor

Few recent writers can claim to have as much influence on the short story form as the late Irish writer William Trevor, who died in 2016. Published posthumously, his aptly titled final collection *Last Stories* is in stark defiance of Martin Amis' worry that a writer in old age will naturally go slack. *The New York Times* described Trevor's last collection as 'seemingly quiet but ultimately volcanic', full of stories that are simply told but cut deep. Known for his

impersonal, precise writing, Trevor has been called as a virtuoso of the short story. Most notably, his opening sentences are spare and mundane, yet one can see the magnetic draw of something like "Yes?" Olivia says on the answering system when the doorbell rings in the middle of 'The Return of the Thin Man'. Limited by their brevity, a good short story describes complex relationships and situations in snapshots. For Trevor, they can be described in one sentence. - JC

The Waterfront Journals by David Wojnarowicz

In an era of Amazon drones and book-sellers closing up shop, it's up to independent publishers to keep us alive. Peninsula Press is one such an imprint. Established little over six months ago, it's already put out three essay books, and this summer will publish *The Waterfront Journals*, a collection of short fictions by the late artist David Wojnarowicz. If Wojnarowicz's memoir *Close to the Knives* is anything to go by,

The Waterfront Journals should be a collection that fizzles with energy and exuberance, one that explores the underbelly of American life by giving voice to those living in its shadows. Taking on hustlers and addicts, hoboes and runaways, *The Waterfront Journals* are expected to provide a much-needed portrayal of America in the latter half of the 20th century. - FF

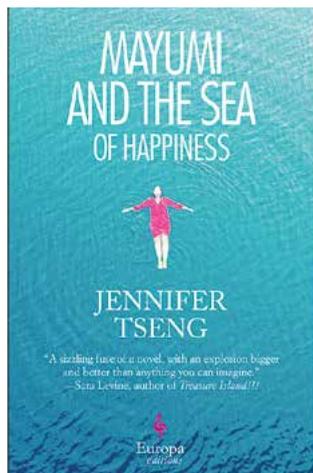


BOOKS

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Jennifer Tseng brings a freshness to well-worn tropes in this engaging debut

Mayumi and the Sea of Happiness benefits from a lyrical writing style, and a twist on the near-exhausted story of forbidden love.



BOOKS

MAYUMI AND THE SEA OF HAPPINESS

by Jennifer Tseng

Europa Editions. 272 pp.

Bayan Al-Bulushi

Books Writer

Mayumi and the Sea of Happiness, the new novel from Jennifer Tseng, follows Mayumi, a forty-one-year-old librarian, married with a child, who begins an affair with an unnamed seventeen-year-old boy who she meets in the library. Despite being aware of the potential consequences of her decision, Mayumi cannot ignore this encounter, and her obsession with the boy grows. She asks him to meet her at the waterfall, a secluded area in the woods, and their affair begins. She asks him several times if he would like to change his mind, offering him – and herself – an exit, but he is adamant.

Tseng's writing is poetic, using the symbolism of the island the two inhabit to describe Mayumi's feelings

towards her lover. Mayumi does not shy away from deconstructing this relationship in her endeavours to come to terms with this incomprehensible attraction; is it his youth, her stagnant marriage, or the boy himself?

“Tseng’s writing is poetic, using the symbolism of the island the two inhabit to describe Mayumi’s feelings”

From the very beginning of their acquaintance, one gets a Freudian sense to this relationship: Mayumi feels proud of his legible handwriting as he fills the registration form for his library card like a mother would for her child. “And why did I, even then, feel a twinge of pride at that?” Painfully conscious of the “power differential” in their relationship, with her being older and more experienced meaning she often makes the first move, Mayumi offers him many chances to leave before it is too late. As the relationship develops, however, it seems the roles are shifting and he is acting paternal towards her; as he helps her climb up to the loft, he in control while she is looking up to him for instructions like a child. “I looked up at him

the way children glance at their parents before undertaking some new challenge, and, without missing a beat, he winked at me fatherlike.”

The novel is broken down into four main parts, following the four seasons. The affair begins in the winter, with the long nights offering some refuge to their secret. As the start of summer grows nearer, however, Mayumi is anxious about what the future holds; he will soon graduate and start thinking of a life beyond the small island. He has his whole life ahead of him, and she knows she can't hold him back. In fact, she is excited to witness his journey of growth even if it means

she is not a part of it. In that sense, her maternal instincts overpower her selfish desires as a lover.

“The novel takes on unexplored territories in the well-known plot of forbidden love”

I thoroughly enjoyed this novel. I did not expect it to take on unexplored territories to

the well-known plot of forbidden love. Mayumi's friendship with the boy's mother added another dimension to the story. His mother clearly plays a dominant role in his life, and through their interactions, Mayumi can glean more about him than he is willing to share. On the other hand, Mayumi is tormented by her guilt of “corrupting” the woman's son, while maintaining a convincing façade when in her company.

Mayumi never once mentions her lover's name; the reason for this is gleaned towards the final pages. In that respect, it is similar to Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*, in which the protagonist is

never named: if a character's most basic form of identity is not known, it makes the reader question their very existence. At times, the implications of the parental nature of the relationship were too heavy-handed; the novel would have benefited from a more subtle portrayal of the evolution of the relationship and hence the role of the ‘parent’, trusting in the reader's ability to make these connections on their own. Nevertheless, Tseng's lyrical writing style, interesting take, and twist on a nearly-exhausted plot in this debut novel already has me waiting impatiently for her next work.



Jennifer Tsang's novel takes place off the coast of New England // Flickr/Jonathan Miske

TRAVEL

travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk

What you need to do before you leave Imperial

University is over before you know it, they say. I'm sure some students would disagree. Nevertheless, Alice Davage and Fred Fyles are here with some things to make sure to do before gaining your freedom...

TRAVEL

Alice Davage

Food Editor

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Watch a premiere

Ever noticed those bright spotlights encircling the night sky over campus? No, they are not signalling an alien invasion. The police are not scouring campus for a wanted criminal either. Although, both of these things would certainly liven up exam season. They are in fact a sign that a movie premiere or other glamorous event is being held at the Royal Albert Hall! Take a break from studying and immerse yourself in a scene of glitz and glamour. That red carpet may be a pain for those of you heading to Beit – a whole two minutes will be added to your journey as you walk around the damn thing – but embrace the

opportunity to escape from the often mundane life of an Imperial student. For the best view sneak into the lecture theatres facing Prince Consort Road in the aeronautics building. Alternatively, befriend residents of Beit Hall and use a bedroom on the south or east sides as a temporary viewing platform. – AD

Avoid Exhibition Road Mormons

We've all been there. You've had a long day of lectures, where you didn't understand a single thing, and all you want to do is head home to collapse into bed. Then you see two young men with freshly pressed shirts, megawatt grins, and side partings so sharp they could slice your fingers. They make a beeline towards you, but you hurriedly dash across the street, narrowly avoiding the taxis streaming past. You breathe a sigh of relief, then see two young

women in floor-length skirts wafting towards you. It's too late. You're trapped. And now you need to awkwardly excuse about why you don't want to go the church with the strangely-muscular Jesus opposite Imperial. If you've not tried to get through the Mormon Gauntlet that is Exhibition Road, have you even attended Imperial? – FF

End a night at the Slug

It's incredible how quickly plans for 'a quiet pint at the Union' can transform to an incredibly messy night ending up at The Slug @ Fulham, West London's premier nightspot. Their Facebook page says they "always have an awesome time so come on down and enjoy it with us". Luckily, after half a dozen pints from 568, everything seems awesome, so you'll probably enjoy the sweaty confines of the Slug, until the inevitable



Abandon hope all ye who enter here // Thomas Angus

feelings of shame/nausea/regret that accompany the next morning. It may have been described as the "worst bar ever" on TripAdvisor, but the Slug holds a special place in Imperial students' hearts. Make sure to visit before you leave. – FF

Take part in a Felix Centrefold

For a short amount of time after arriving at Imperial, I presumed having a tasteful picture of semi-naked students in your university paper was a pretty normal thing. They said everything would be different at university, so I presumed this was just one of those things – like learning how to do laundry, or crying in the toilets 24-hours before a deadline – that all students get to experience. Reader, I was wrong. It wasn't until speaking to friends from other universities that I realised how odd

the Centrefold actually is. Forget curly fries or crushing pressure – what really makes Imperial unique is the number of times naked photos of members of Cheese Soc have been posted around campus. – FF

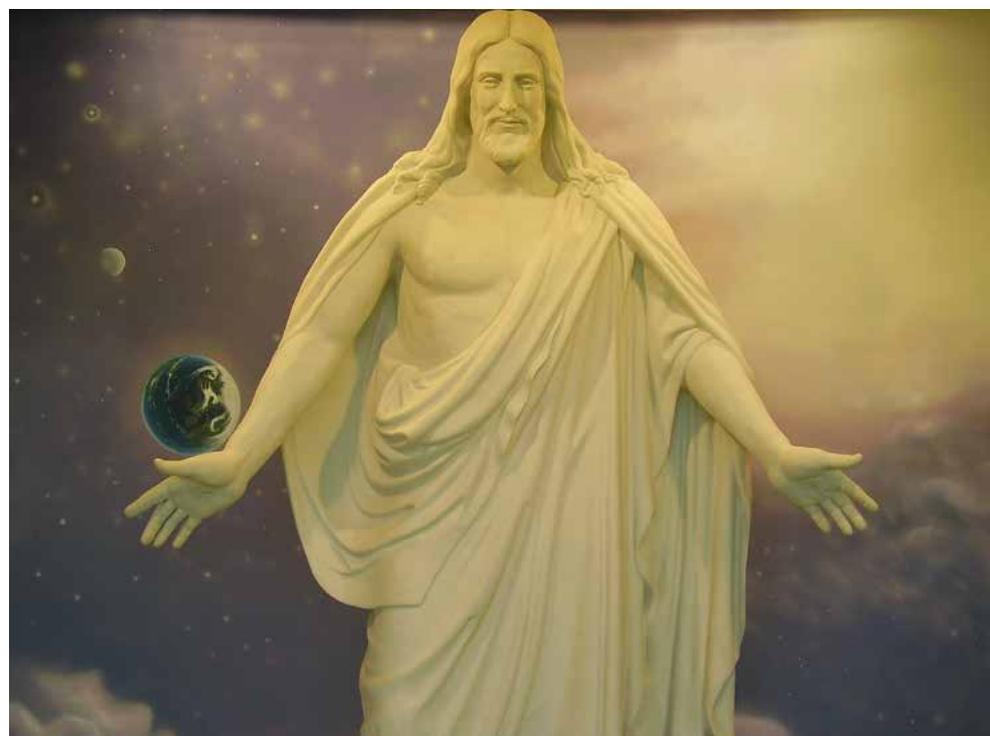
Library all-nighter

The dreaded all-nighter. You spent the first two years of your degree judging the crazy people who live like hermits in the 24/7 sweatbox we call Central Library. Then final year hits. Severe procrastination and sheer terror has left you with two untouched lab reports due the following day. You enter the library hoping to be leaving triumphantly in a matter of hours. It gets to midnight and you still haven't deciphered your lab protocol, which may as well be written in ancient hieroglyphics. It is at this point that you realise it's an all-nighter

or failure. You are one of us now. – AD

Post-exam pints and curly fries

Finishing your final exams at Oxbridge might involve being doused in whipped cream and Lambrini (if anyone ever tried that shit with me I swear I would cut them), but at Imperial it's a more sedate affair. The most common sound you'll hear after leaving your last exam isn't shrieks of delight, but the question 'Union?' Heading to 568 for a few pints and orders of curly fries, that Imperial staple, is what most of us will truly associate with true freedom. Whether of not that evening ends with an early night or a messy one (see above for Slug-related information) is up to the individual. Regardless, Stella 4 has never tasted sweeter. – FF



Check out the Mormons' disquietingly-muscular Jesus // Flickr/Matthew Bembridge

TRAVEL

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Scusi, we're going to Italy: a trip to Verona & Venice

In preparation for the summer break, Felix Travel continues on the topic of short trips in Europe you simply can't miss. Read on to find out why you should visit the tourist-beloved Italian gems Verona and Venice.

TRAVEL

Edita Pileckyte
Travel Editor

Italy is a perfect choice for your summer vacation since it has everything – from big famous cities to quiet lesser-known villages and beach towns. You can pop in for a quick weekend getaway or spend a few weeks touring all around the country, whatever floats your boat. It's also easy to score affordable flight tickets (although mostly during the off season), and the warm Mediterranean climate will not disappoint. Last year, I went on a three-day trip to Verona and Venice, two of the most popular Italian cities loved by couples and solo travellers alike, and rightly so.

“Torre dei Lamberti is a tower that overlooks the whole city of Verona, unravelling a sea of cute red-roof houses surrounded by mountains. It truly looks spectacular and is worth the heavy climb!”

Verona

Most of us know Verona as the hometown of Romeo and Juliet, protagonists of the tragic love story by Shakespeare. Naturally, one of the main attractions there is Juliet's balcony at the Casa di Giulietta (Juliet's house). You can pay to go up there but you can also admire it from the outside at no cost. The nearby souvenir shop sells love padlocks, and there's a wall you can leave a message on. There's also Romeo's house, but it's simply private property with nothing touristy.

For €5 you can climb up the Torre dei Lamberti, a tower that overlooks the whole city, unravelling a sea of cute red-roof houses surrounded by mountains. It truly looks spectacular and is worth the heavy



Castelvecchio Bridge in Verona, one of, but not the only, prides of the city // Edita Pileckyte



Colour-popping houses in Burano Island: every photo is a postcard! // Edita Pileckyte

climb! If you want to see the panorama for free, you can opt for climbing a hill instead.

Another famous attraction is Castelvecchio, a medieval castle (now museum), and a bridge of the same name. They both offer amazing views of the Adige River, with the city and mountains in the distance. There's also a coliseum in the city – not as majestic as the one in Rome but still very beautiful.

Overall, less than a day was enough to see the main objects in the city so I set off to Venice in the late afternoon and visited Padua on the way. This city has several beautiful churches and cathedrals but since I arrived quite late, I just had a lovely walk around and treated myself to some Italian food.

Venice

Let me start this off by saying that Venice is really expensive so if you're not keen on spending too much, you should plan your visit well. The city centre with all the canals and tourist attractions is in the island that you can easily reach by bus or train from mainland Venice, where accommodation is much cheaper. The restaurant prices are obviously very high, and the service charge is mandatory everywhere but there's a McDonald's and a couple of grocery stores on the island. Public bathrooms are all paid, except one cheeky loo at the top of a supermarket near the Rialto Bridge. This supermarket also has a free viewpoint if you want to see the mesmerising panorama of the city.

“The best way to experience Venice is to wander around on its narrow streets, without any plan really, and see where it takes you”

OK, now on to the exciting part! The best way to experience Venice is to wander around on its narrow streets, without any plan really, and see where it takes you. You can easily take a random turn that will instantly lead you away from the

TRAVEL

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packed touristy places to a quiet living area. There are many dead-ends but it's practically impossible to get lost. You can also follow the canals, the Venetian version of streets – there are no cars, just private boats, public ferries (water-buses), and gondolas roaming the waters. Just be prepared to

encounter huge crowds of people, especially if you travel in summer.

While exploring, don't forget to visit the main attractions too – the Rialto Bridge and St Mark's Basilica. The entry to the Basilica is free but the queues are long, and be prepared to pay if you want to visit its museum,

treasury, or the Bell Tower.

Gondola rides officially cost €80 for 40min but it's for the whole boat that fits six people, so you can split the cost. The gondoliers might raise the price though – you can try to bargain. You can also purchase tour tickets online and find the best

value-for-money option.

Otherwise, you can get a 24-hour public transport pass for €20, including unlimited water bus and land bus trips (land buses in the mainland). You can use water busses (not to be confused with expensive water taxis used for personal hire) to visit the neighbouring islands, like

Murano, famous for its glass-making industry, where you can attend a glass-making demonstration.

Situated a bit further out, Burano Island is full of brightly-coloured houses that together with blue canals and colourful boats create a picturesque view. Get those Instagram

filters ready! Finally, you can visit the beach in Lido Island. These boat rides let you savour the views of the blue sea all around but they are quite long (60 minutes or more) so maybe don't risk it if you have a flight to catch.

Flying First Class: is it worth the hype?

*Most of us travel by plane at least once a year but have you ever wondered what it's like to fly First Class? Travel Writer **Noppasit Pongsak** shares his first-hand experience as a First Class customer of Thai Airways and discusses whether it's really worth the money.*

TRAVEL

Noppasit Pongsak

Travel Writer

Back in 2016, when the rest of my family were on holiday in Hong Kong (where I refused to go as I needed to revise for my January exams), my mother said I needed to take some rest by taking some time off as I was working too hard. So I decided to book a last minute flight with Thai Airways to join them there. However, there were no seats left anywhere except for First Class because it was the Christmas Holidays, and

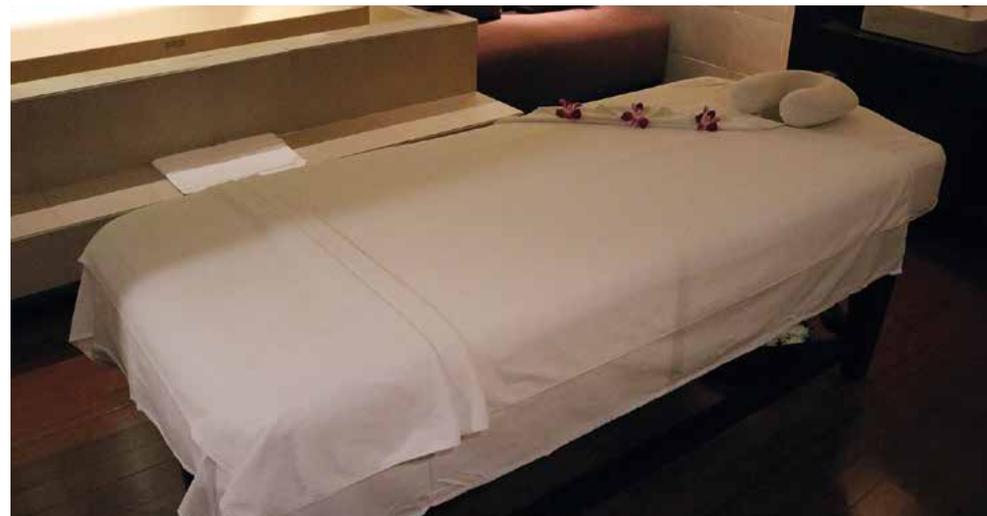
so I had no choice – and that's how this trip happened.

On-Ground Experience

When I got off my car at Bangkok Airport, there was a porter who came to take care of my luggage. We proceeded to walk to the check-in counter which looked like the ones you see in hotels. After that, I met a lady who escorted me to the fast track, which included security and immigration checks. I spent less than five minutes there which is considered unbelievably quick.

Then I visited the Royal Orchid Spa, available exclusively to First and

Business Class passengers, where I got a complimentary back massage for one hour. After I got refreshed at the Spa, I headed to the First Class lounge. There I found a dining area, where I sat down and ordered from the a-la-carte menu, just like in restaurants (except that it was free here). Later I went to the bar, which had a wide selection of drinks, and ordered my favourite "fruit punch". The lounge was certainly an excellent place to relax, and the only thing I didn't like was the lack of international newspapers, such as *Wall Street Journal* or the *Financial Times*.



The Royal Orchid Spa, one of the perks of Thai Airways First Class // Noppasit Pongsak

On Board Experience

Before boarding my plane, I met another member of the airline's staff who escorted me to the gate and helped me to carry my hand luggage. I then found my way to my seat, located on the upper deck. It was a typical modern first class seat, equipped with a large entertainment screen: you can find this kind of design on most inter-continental airlines. A glass of Dom-Pérignon champagne was served prior to take off, and after the flight had departed, I went to check out the lavatory – it was much larger than the ones in Economy or Business Class. There was also a built-in powder table for

ladies located inside.

Before the breakfast service commenced, I had received a menu with about four choices of main course. However, it was also possible to have pre-booked the meal before but it was too late for me. My breakfast consisted of three parts: assorted fruit, cereal, and "lobster rice porridge" which I chose for the main, and unfortunately it tasted awful. After the meal service had finished, I reclined my seat to the fully-flat position and took about an hour-long nap. It was a comfortable journey, partly because the weather on the way to Hong Kong was very nice. We arrived to our destination slightly earlier than expected.

Again, with the advantages of the First Class, it only took me about 15 minutes to get from the plane door to the taxi.

So overall, was it worth flying First Class with Thai Airways for under three hours? I would say no, especially if you're not using any mileage redemption to reduce the high cost (it cost me around THB 36700 or £860 for an online-discounted return ticket between Bangkok and Hong Kong). The meal quality was the major drawback, and the airline needs to put more effort in this matter. On the other hand, their ground service was remarkable and is probably what attracts most flyers.



Fancy looking, yet not so delicious breakfast served on board // Noppasit Pongsak

STUDENT SUPPORT



Student Support Strategy Consultation

The Union and the College have been working together on a student support strategy, and to ensure that it reflects our membership, we are now asking for your feedback on it. The strategy outlines how the College will support its students at every level of decision making - with a specific focus on wellbeing, which has been identified as an overlooked area.

Now that the groundwork has been laid, your feedback is vital to the structural integrity of the strategy, to ensure that it works for everyone.

We're running a survey, as well as stalls between 18 and 26 June at different points on campus. You can also provide feedback directly to Fintan O'Connor, Deputy President (Welfare), who has worked on this alongside our Union president, Chippy Compton.

If you'd like to read more: imperialcollegeunion.org/support-strategy



World Cup fever spreads to our bars

FiveSixEight was jam-packed with students watching the first game of the FIFA World Cup on our big screens yesterday, and - something that should bring joy to the ears of all football fanatics (unlike those dreaded vuvuzelas - remember them?) - we're showing every single game of the tournament. Special beers imported from selected participating countries will be on offer, as well as some food deals.

h-bar will be showing all Monday - Friday games throughout Summer, with themed burgers for each of the 32 countries - that's a lot of toppings!

Reynolds Bar will be open Monday - Friday until June 30. On offer is an incredible 2 pizzas and four drinks deal, enough to keep yourself and a mate sustained for all 90 minutes of the action.



Union Brand Survey

The Union would like feedback on your perception and experience of the brand. We'll be doing consultations on the logo, and other aspects of our visual identity, as well as seek to better understand members' experiences of the Union.

The research will form part of a larger effort to refine our brand so members can feel clear on what we offer, and improve their connection to the Union and each other.

To start, take our survey at imperialcollegeunion.org/brand-survey



Summer Ball ticket information and more

If you've bought a Summer Ball ticket and are planning to attend, or plan to transfer your ticket to someone else, take note of the following dates:

- 18 June: ticket transfer instructions emailed
- 19 June: transfer day for tickets
- 20 June: age checks/refund those under 18
- 21 June: e-tickets emailed

Alongside your e-ticket email, you'll receive all the information you need to know about the Ball - as well the full programme.



We'll be on social media all evening! Find our special Summer Ball filter on Snapchat, and when tagging on social, use #icuSummerBall - we'd love to see some pictures of you in your finery (or costume!) - and we may share or retweet.

Use the Snapchat filter!

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

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ISRAEL TECH TRIP: LEARNING ABOUT CULTURE AND TECH

Often featured in the news for its continuing conflict, Israel is a country most people probably associate with conflict. However, a little known fact is that the country also houses the highest concentration of start-ups tech companies per capita. Given the country's young history, Israel is firmly cemented in the world of modern technology. Needless to say, our expectations were high when we were given the opportunity to visit Israel as part of the Israeli Society Tech Trip.

Since its inception in April 2017, the Israeli Society Tech Trip has grown exponentially: as well as taking 55 students this year, it has also begun expanding operations to other universities. To describe the trip itinerary as jam-packed would be an under-statement, visiting ten companies in five days in three major cities. The first day started off the back of a 4am arrival into Tel Aviv-Yafo airport. Then heading to Jaffa, the Old City, situated a few kilometers south of Tel Aviv, where we soaked up the rich and vibrant atmosphere, before hitting the hay at

3am the next day.

Amongst the array of world-renowned companies visited on the trip, Checkpoint stood out the most. Checkpoint delivers pioneering cyber-security services, and their talk detailed the current landscape of cyber-security. We were treated that evening to dinner by some local residents who used the EatWith app (<https://www.eatwith.com/>), which allows local residents to open up their homes for dinner (for a group of 55 in this case!), with some live music through the night.

The tech highlight of day two was our visit to local start-ups, Carbyne, and healthy.io. The former delivers video capabilities to emergency calls for first responders, while the latter optimises chronic disease management using AI. Whilst the technology piqued our interest, lunch for that day was what stole the show – a food tour of Carmel Market, tasting the local delicacies such as sabich and malabi. Sabich is a pita filled with aubergine, eggs, and tahini, whereas malabi is a rose-flavored pudding similar to a blancmange. To bring the day to a close, we were honoured by a talk given by Bennie Schneider, a serial entrepreneur who

gave some useful tips about starting out in the tech industry having sold his startups, P-Cube and Pentacom, to Cisco.

Day three started with a trip to Tel Aviv University to learn more about the higher institutional scene in Israel, before heading out to a Kibbutz, a communal homestead rooted in agricultural practices, in the middle of the Negev. This kibbutz served as the HQ for Netafim – an irrigation manufacturer who managed to cultivate farmland in the desert conditions of the Negev. Then to learn more about life as an Israeli student, we were hosted for dinner by students at Beersheba University.

To change pace, the next morning started with a jaunt down to the Dead Sea to relax and recover from what had already been an action-packed three days. After a monumental climb back up to normal altitude, we began the more cultural aspect of the trip, starting in Jerusalem. Here, we toured the city, visiting sites such as the Holy Sepulchre and the Western Wall. After soaking in the atmosphere of the city, we were treated to an inspirational talk by Fiona Darmon, COO at Jerusalem Venture Partners, a venture capitalist firm



Day Three: View from the hotel in Beersheba // Josh Sebastian and Harvinder Power

investing in a diverse background of companies. We then headed to the market, turned from a bustling food market turn into a bar, just as busy as it

had been in the day.

Our final day in Israel started at Yad Vashem, Israel's memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, where we were walked through exhibits detailing the atrocities of the Holocaust. Next on the agenda was a visit to the Weizmann Institute, a higher educational research centre, where we learnt more about the opportunities available to continue academia in Israel after university. MobileEye was the final tech visit of the trip, and perhaps one of the most entertaining. We learnt more about how self-driving can be achieved, and how MobileEye, a startup, had been bought by Intel for \$15.3bn. We were able to discuss the technology behind the system they had been developing, and the ethics of self-driving

vehicles, given the recent news about Tesla and Uber accidents involving self-driving vehicles.

The experience as a whole was truly eye-opening, giving us an inside look into the history and future of a young country. We were able to appreciate both the cultural and tech aspects of Israel, in a unique way – a way which involved us getting approximately no sleep for six days, but was worth it nonetheless.

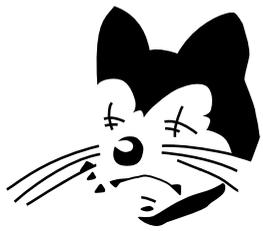
Thanks to the Israeli Society Committee for organising such a memory-forging, experiential trip, and we look forward to seeing it grow in the future along with the friendships we made!

See it live: bit.ly/tech-tripvlog

– Harvinder Power
and Shubhangi Sharma



We came as strangers, we left as friends // Josh Sebastian and Harvinder Power



Hangman



Students have been unable to cope without Central Library // Twitter/Imperial

Record numbers of students diagnosed with Stockholm Syndrome post-exams

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

The Imperial College Health Centre are reporting record numbers of students returning to the Union and Library post-exams.

Imperial College Health Centre (ICHC) are reporting record numbers of students being diagnosed with 'Stockholm Syndrome' following the summer examination period.

In an email from ICHC sent to College management, which was leaked to *Hangman*, ICHC staff cite

their "extreme concern" at the number of students experiencing "atypical post traumatic stress disorder symptoms, similar to those seen in patients experiencing 'Stockholm Syndrome'."

The letter then goes on to detail the behaviour of concern, which includes: an inability to stay away from Central Library, despite having finished all their exams; students coming in to campus the week after their vivas to wander around and stare into space; and numerous students ordering cheeseburgers and curly fries from 568, despite the fact that's all they survived off during revision season.

Hangman spoke to Dr Elizabeth Bennett, a psychiatrist specialising in extreme stress, about

the students' behaviour: "what we're seeing at Imperial isn't a new thing.

"Students were found wandering around campus aimlessly post-exams"

There have been a number of cases within psychiatric literature which show victims of emotional and physical abuse bonding with their captors, even going so far as to develop complete dependence on them. It typically only

happens in periods of extreme stress, or situations where the individual literally thinks they could die any minute."

A number of students who were reporting similar symptoms spoke to *Hangman* about their experiences. Johnny Pritchard, a final-year physics student, was sitting in Beit Quad when we spoke to him about his post-exam experience: "well, I'd just finished my last exam, and couldn't wait to get out of here forever. We had a pretty wild weekend, but then when Monday rolled round I found myself getting up at 7.30 and heading straight to Central Library. I didn't realise what I was doing until I'd been studying quantum theory for two hours, but

even then I felt I couldn't leave campus."

Another student, who spoke to *Hangman* on the condition of anonymity, spoke about how her life had unravelled after handing in her final project: "it's strange – I thought once I'd had my hand-in I'd feel a lot better about everything, but I've become so used to feeling like a piece of shit who doesn't know anything and is constantly under immense pressure. The day after I was sitting at home, but felt this compulsion to come back onto campus and spend 72 hours without showering. It's become all I know."

Hangman spoke to Owen Yarmouth, Vice Provost (Rehabilitation Services), who is responsible for ensuring students

are able to adjust to a regular life post-exams: "At the College, we realise it can be difficult for some students to rejoin normal society. That's why so many just end up going straight into a PhD – it's a route that utilizes their ability to withstand extreme pressure every hour of every day. For those who don't want to go into academia, the Counselling Service has set up a specialist programme, aimed at helping students develop coping mechanisms for a life without huge amounts of stress. We are delighted to say we've expanded our Counselling Service to address the demand. We expect to work our way through this cohort by the end of 2020."

HANGMAN

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Memeperial ‘Best Boi Competition’ ends with violence on campus

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

The tournament had to be called off after Materials students set fire to the Physics undergraduate common room.

A ‘Best Boi Tournament’ organised by Memeperial has led to riots on campus, after arguments over cheating escalated. The tournament,

which aimed to establish ‘the greatest course at Imperial’, had to be shut down earlier this week, after a contest between Physics and Materials led to an outbreak of extreme violence and campaigns of voter intimidation.

Hangman believes the dispute originally began when students from the Department of Physics were accused of using of automatic bots to increase their vote count. Physics students then retaliated with verbal attacks in the Facebook comment thread below the poll, which soon spilled over into real-life violence,

with fights breaking out all over campus. Earlier this week, the College declared a state of emergency, as Materials students set fire to the Physics undergraduate common room. No students were hurt, although the microwaves did not survive the blaze.

Speaking to Hangman, Larry Paget, an academic representative for the Department of Physics, said things had gotten “out of hand”: “At the end of the day, this is just a stupid online competition, which doesn’t really matter. Memeperial should really just call it in Physics’

favour – who even knows what Materials students do anyway?!”

Oscar Gilmore, undergraduate representative for the Department of Materials, disputed Paget’s claim. “What do we do?” he told Hangman, “What don’t we do!? Physics are just jealous they’re stuck in dusty labs all day. Everything the light touches is ours.”

Hangman spoke to William Raycock, Vice Provost (Riot Prediction), who said the disturbances were “not unexpected”.

“Every year something along these lines happens,” he told



What even goes on in this building? // Christian Richters

Hangman, “as students work out all their pent-up aggression post-exams. I was here to remember the Great Library Cafe Debacle of 2012, so these

small pockets of violence aren’t going to worry me. We just need to wait until they tire themselves out and fuck off back home for the summer.”



ARIES

This week you’re the Felix Editor, and you’ve put your back out after carrying these massive issues all around campus. You’re welcome Imperial.



TAURUS

This week you’re responsible for analysing the results of the Sex Survey. You’re so traumatised you’re unable to look anyone on campus in the eyes again.



GEMINI

This week you’re the cover photographer, and your enquiries into how to get on top of a tall building at Imperial lead to an emergency meeting with your personal tutor.



CANCER

This week you get hammered at the Union Bar and put all your student loan into Bitcoin. What could possibly go wrong?!



LEO

This week you find yourself with so much time post-exams. You could learn a language! Or take a pottery course! You start an Instagram page photoshopping Trump’s head onto babies’ bodies instead.



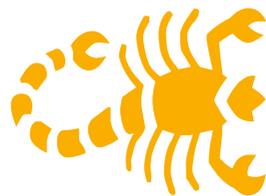
VIRGO

This week you read the Met Office has predicted super hot temperatures this summer. Perfect for staying inside and avoiding everyone you know!



LIBRA

This week your post-exam high is punctured when you get your preliminary final project mark back. You spend the next two hours trying to work out whether it’s still possible for you to scrape a 2:2.



SCORPIO

This week you can’t believe Trump says Trudeau stabbed them in the back, and yet remains completely silent about the Fusion price rise. SAD!



SAGITTARIUS

This week you book your train ticket home for the summer. Can’t wait to completely regress into a small child for the next three months!



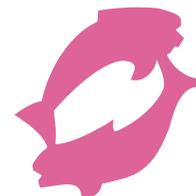
CAPRICORN

This week you’re disappointed your answers in the Sex Survey were discounted for being ‘so tragic it’s clearly a joke’.



AQUARIUS

This week you and approximately 5,000 other Imperial students take advantage of the nice weather and pile onto the patch of grass in Beit Quad. Seriously, just go to Hyde Park.

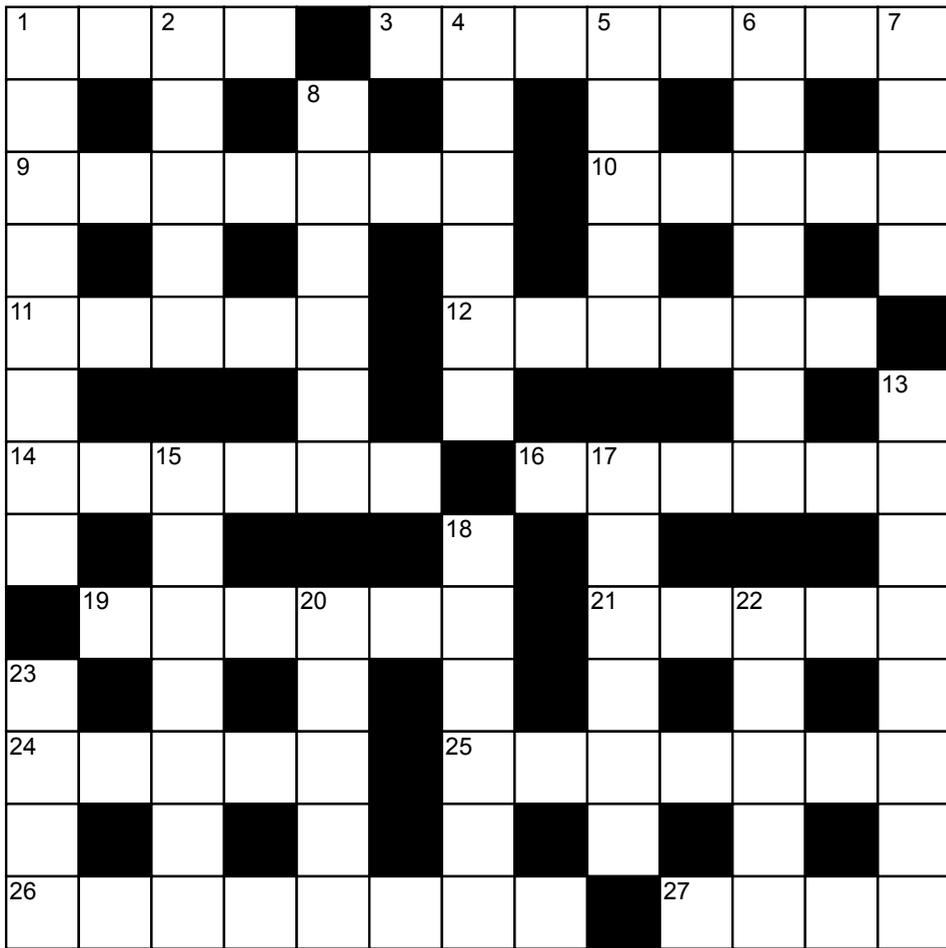


PISCES

This week you’re the Horoscopes Writer, and you’ve resorted to pulling the same jokes about cryptocurrency and exams. It’s been a long fucking year.

PUZZLES

fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk

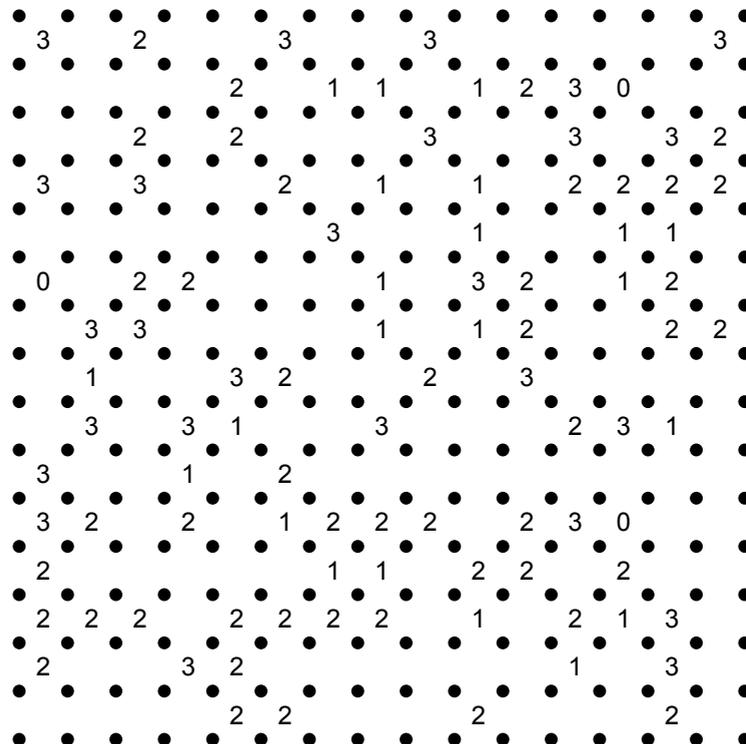
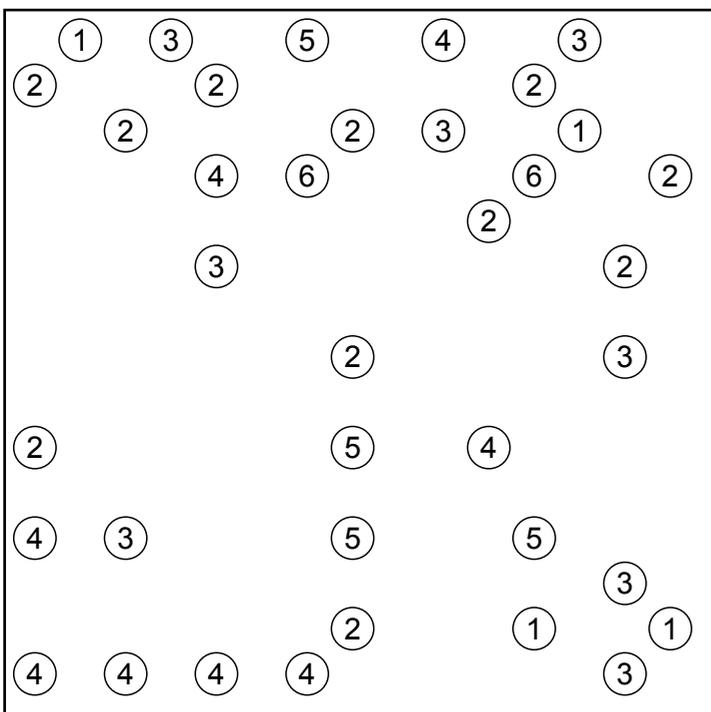


Across

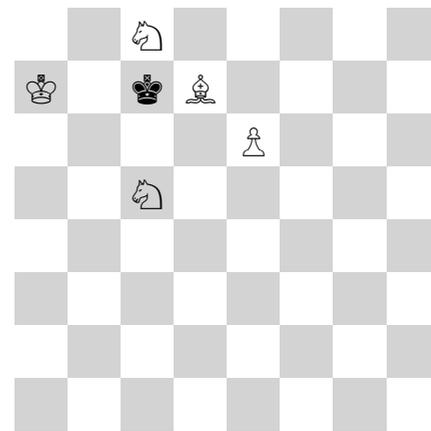
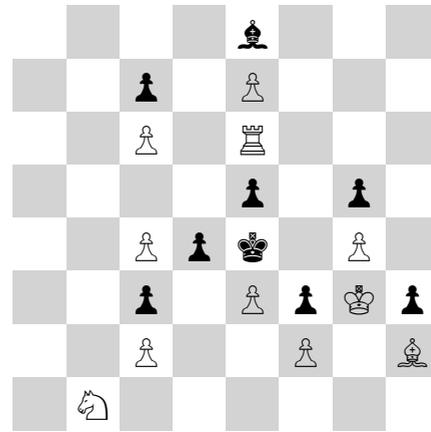
- 1. In addition (4)
- 3. Selective stress (8)
- 9. Lacking support (7)
- 10. Once more (5)
- 11. Living boundary (5)
- 12. Philosophical boundary (6)
- 14. Have a spat (6)
- 16. Attack (6)
- 19. Earthly shiver (6)
- 21. Grab power (5)
- 24. Fix (loose ends) (3, 2)
- 25. Aerial predator (7)
- 26. Up to now (8)
- 27. European mountain range (4)

Down

- 1. Coastal city (3, 5)
- 2. Respectable (5)
- 4. Not large (6)
- 5. Hampstead, for example (5)
- 6. Welsh metropolis (7)
- 7. Departed (4)
- 8. Toe the line (6)
- 13. Inside shoe (8)
- 15. Alter to improve (7)
- 17. Clearly knowing best (6)
- 18. Early tie (6)
- 20. Scientific/mathematical language (5)
- 22. Repeat order (5)
- 23. Releive a niggle (4)



White to move first in both problems.
Forced checkmate in three (top) and four (bottom) moves



FUCWIT

1	Nonogram of Ketamine	369
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3	Puzzle Snuggle Cuddle Couple	340
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5	OK	283
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30	Kitchen 76	20
31	Bring Back Stella	7
31	RBS Investment Wank	7
33	BlackCock Ass Management	4
33	CreditPisse	4
33	Goldman Jachs Off	4

Solutions



R	E	D	U	C	E	D		C	U	B	I	T		
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S	T	E	I	N				I	R	K	S	O	M	E

Your Union events

Friday 15 June

the Summer Ball 2018

23 June 2018 | 19:00 - 05:00
Imperial College Main Campus

JAMES HYPE

BLONDE GOLDIEROCKS

GEMMA CAIRNEY

BATTLE OF THE BANDS 2018 WINNER - TALK TO FRANKIE
FREE FUNFAIR RIDES • FREE PHOTO BOOTH
FIREWORKS DISPLAY • H-BAR SILENT DISCO
AMAZING PERFORMANCES FROM STUDENT GROUPS
GREAT VALUE FOOD & DRINK • AND MUCH MORE

Coming up in our bars



Super Quiz

Every Tuesday
20:00 - 22:00

Cocktail Night

Every Tuesday
18:00 - 23:00

Summer Ball - Roaring 20s

Saturday 23 June
19:00 - 05:00

FIFA World Cup

14 June - 15 July

Find us on Facebook

fb.com/beitbars



Cocktail Club

Every Tuesday
19:30 - 23:00

Pub Quiz

Every Thursday
19:30 - 23:00

Summer Ball - Roaring 20s

Saturday 23 June
19:00 - 05:00

FIFA World Cup

14 June - 15 July

Find us on Facebook

fb.com/hbarpub



Free Pool

Every Day
17:00-23:00

Pub Quiz

Every Tuesday
18:30-23:00

Cocktail Night

Every Friday
17:30 onwards

FIFA World Cup

14 June - 15 July

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

imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on



SPORTS

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WTF is Ultimate Frisbee?

Felix sport's guide to the flying disc toting, epic catch making, self-officiating American sport.

SPORTS

Imraj Singh

Sports Editor

Ultimate Frisbee, also known by cool kids as just 'Ultimate', is a relatively new sport, having only been developed in the late 1960s by a few students in New Jersey. Since its inception, the sport has exploded in popularity; from flinging cookie tin lids in a play-ground to being recognized by International Olympic Committee in less than 60 years! With that in mind, I got in contact with Imperial's very own club, the disc Doctors (dD), to find out what the hype was about.

I arrived a little early and gradually met the team as they trickled in, gathering around a tree close to the old Hyde Park football fields. It was late February, and a stiff cold breeze blew, but it didn't seem to affect the others, who were bright eyed and bushy tailed. There was a very friendly atmosphere, with teammates feeling comfortable in one-another's presence; what I sensed was a team that were close-knit and at the tail end of the season. Although I was a newbie I felt very much welcomed and I was not treated as an outsider.

Warm ups consisted of throwing the frisbee a moderate distance to one another, while a veteran player took me under his wing to show me the ropes. I must admit that going into the session I assumed that I would be good at throwing, being of moderate arm strength and possessing enough co-ordination for most sports. What I forgot to factor in

is that those sports used balls not frisbees, and I slowly realized that with frisbees there must be a more delicate touch. Instead of a ball that is propelled and hindered by the air, a well-thrown frisbee glides on it. The trajectory of the frisbee is very sensitive to release, wrist action, and angle than any ball. Once you see an Ultimate veteran throw a frisbee you acquire a respect for the skill needed; it's nothing like how you throw them on a warm summer's day at the beach.

During the warm ups I

"It's nothing like how you throw a frisbee on a warm summer's day at the beach"

was taught the two most basic throws: backhand and forehand throws. Backhand is the one you – the reader – are probably most familiar with: it's like back hand slapping the air with the frisbee, whilst the forehand is like slicing precisely, with a lot of flick of the wrist, as you throw. I was also taught what I'd like to call the crocodile technique for catching the frisbee. Once thrown to me I slapped my hands over the frisbee sandwiching it like the jaws of a crocodile (there must be an actual name for that technique). Feeling more confident and with more players arriving we moved onto a drill.

The drill consisted of a few passes and then a long pass down field



disc Doctors sporting their yellow shirts: a reference to ducks, which are their club mascot // disc Doctors

to someone who was running. With my newly acquired confidence the initial passes were alright, but on the longer pass I messed up. Then the next time I messed up again, and again, and again. The captain noticed what I was doing, having played American football for such a long time I was not throwing the frisbee level, and when throwing a high powered long pass; as a result, the slightest failure in technique was amplified. I tried to correct the long pass technique, but to no avail; with more practice I think I eventually would've got it.

For the final part of the session we played a match. Instead of the usual seven-a-side which is standard, we played five-a-side due to lack of players. It is at that point I came to grips with the basics of the sport.

Ultimate feels to me like an amalgamation of many sports. The aim of the game is to get someone to catch the frisbee in the end zone, which has similarities to American Football. You can't run when you're in possession of the frisbee and you must throw it within a specific time frame – that's like netball. I say it's an amalgamation, but it's got a little extra and feels a lot different when actually playing it. Yes, it involves the oddly shaped frisbee, but that isn't the X factor. What I would consider the X factor is the *ethos* attached to the game. This may seem outlandish but through my time with the club there seemed to be a nurturing of what is coined the 'spirit of the game'. In Ultimate there are no external referees – it is self-officiating, with that a silent pledge

to respect each other, adhere to the rules, and to play fundamentally for the joy of the game. There weren't any sour feelings

"The X factor of Ultimate is the ethos attached to the sport – the spirit of the game"

when someone scored, only appreciation. I was coached on the field too, and my teammates tried to put me in a position to score to ensure I enjoyed my time. There was an understanding to enjoy the game, with healthy competition too.

The club is doing very well, with a tour at the beginning of each academic year; different tiers; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd teams; indoor and outdoor teams; mixed, men and ladies teams; and a social scene too. They compete on a national stage, with many of the players playing outside of the club in the best non-University teams in the UK. Training sessions are usually Wednesdays and Saturdays, with games on Sundays. In the first term, players can get a true taste of Ultimate, with tournaments catered for beginners. Further into the season the club competes in national competitions and the club have done very well in the past. If you are interested in swinging and spinning some discs get in touch at: ultimate@imperial.ac.uk



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— Keep the cat free —