



Felix

The Student Newspaper of Imperial College London

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with Professor
Stephen Curry

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Tackling student debts has become a key pledge for politicians trying to secure the youth vote // Quinn Dombrowski

Augar review: what does the future hold for tuition fees?

Joanna Wormald
Deputy Editor

Suggestions include lower fees and shorter courses.

Tuition fees could be cut to £6,500 per year as part of the latest government review into higher education. The government is also urging shorter degrees to keep overall costs down.

The year-long Augar review will examine whether or not the current funding situation provides

good value for money for students and taxpayers. The panel, chaired by Philip Augar, has also been charged with looking at the accessibility of further and higher education, incentivising competition across the sector, and how to provide students with “the skills that we need as a country”.

The universities minister, Sam Gyimah, has also called on universities to provide two-year “fast-track” degrees, which could charge £11,150 per year. Overall, this works out as £5,450 cheaper than a standard three year degree, as well as saving on a year

of accommodation and living costs. However, this plan would require a vote in parliament to lift the £9,250 fee cap. Lecturers are also reluctant to provide classes during the summer holidays, which would be necessary to avoid compromising on quality and content. As one university leader told the *Times*: “In the summer holidays academics write their books. They do not want to spend their summer vacations teaching undergraduates.”

Birkbeck, University of London is focusing on longer degrees, not shorter ones. Following “heartbreaking” increases

in students applying for hardship funds, the university intends to halve tuition fees for its four-year part-time courses. The plan to reduce fees from £7,000 to £3,500 is intended to increase support for part-time degrees, which are popular among mature students and those in work. The master of Birkbeck, David Latchman, believes the government would be able to subsidise the cuts at “no – or minimal – additional cost”.

As *Felix* has previously reported, any move to lower tuition fees would predominantly benefit wealthy students. Students

from poorer backgrounds are less likely to pay off the full amount of their student loans than their well-off peers. Lowering tuition fees would not – for most low-earning graduates – make any difference to the total amount repaid before the debt is written off. For graduates with salaries above the current £25,000 repayment threshold, however, the amount they pay back will reduce in line with tuition fees (interest rate changes notwithstanding). An analysis by *The Times* suggests that low-earning graduates would save an average of £1 each year.

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I concede defeat



Andy Djaba – Felix Editor

Producing this week's issue of *Felix* started off so well. So so well... It was looking like I might actually make it home in good time on a Thursday evening. Alas, I must concede defeat. After 22 years of trying, I will never beat my crippling procrastination. From what was looking like the earliest I'd ever get the paper done by a few short hours ago to me sat here frantically waffling once again so I can send the paper off to print only two hours after the "print deadline". They should have never told me the print deadline was not a firm one. That was the first mistake. As you can probably tell if you are unfortunate enough to still be reading this garbage, I don't really have anything to say. Once again.

This week's issue of *Felix* sees the birth of a new Sustainability Section. This section will be organised by the Environmental society and aims to provide news on the environment ("Going on in the world this week"), to give a platform for discussion and to popularise actions which members of the College community can take on sustainability. If

Im honest, I was sceptical about including the Sustainability Section. One question plagued my mind... is it sustainable? (Pardon the awful pun, it's late and I'm very tired). However, members of the Environmental Society have assured me that there is a demand for this amongst the student body and there will be no shortage of content in the coming weeks.

In a similar vein, this week we also reported on a student protest held by Divest Imperial demanding Imperial divests its £8.9m fossil fuel holdings. This protest was picked up

by the lovely journalists over at *The Guardian* and they did a wonderful job of highlighting just how amateurish my attempts at News articles are.

"One day, this editorial will be all pull quote and there's nothing any of you can do about it!"

In other news, Tuesday sees Imperial host its first joint event with *The Times*. As reported in last week's *Felix*, Imperial and *The Times* have launched a collaboration which sees staff and students receive a year-long free digital subscription to *The Times* and *Sunday Times*. Tuesday's launch event, "What the Hell is Going on?" promises to be a riveting affair, hosted by political satirist Matt Chorley. Universities minister, Sam Gyimah, will also be in attendance and there will be free food and drink. There are literally no downsides here, so come along!

I've run out of things to say now so all that's left to do is award Andy's section of the week. This week, it's the Music section! I might be slightly biased but I love to see my guys winning. Music has been awarded for putting up a valiant fight against the almost indomitable Arts section. Congratulations!



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NEWS

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Imperial students sound the alarm on fossil fuel investments

NEWS

Andy Djaba
Editor-in-Chief

Divest Imperial joins universities across the UK in protest as part of National Day of Action

Divest Imperial, an Imperial College Union-affiliated environmental campaign group, held an on-campus protest demanding Imperial divests from fossil fuels.

The protest, which took place on Tuesday 20th November, was part of the National Day of Action for Divestment. Targeting universities across the UK, including Oxford, Cambridge, Leeds, Aberdeen, Newcastle and UCL, which have a combined £600m in fossil fuels, students across the country came together to demand our institutions "act on the urgency of

the climate crisis" and to "call out universities that are behind the curve on climate action".

Jeff Clark, the President of Imperial College Environmental Society, told *Felix* the following:

"No environmental issue is more pressing than climate change. I am yet to hear a convincing argument in favour of continuing to fund the fossil fuel industry."

Divest Imperial has accused Imperial College of being "complicit in this crisis for too long" and is calling for Imperial to "fulfil its stated purpose - working to solve humanity's greatest challenges" by ending its "uncritical support for climate-wrecking companies". The campaigners wish to see "full divestment" of Imperial's £8.9m fossil fuel holdings.

This protest is just the latest in a campaign of student action which has spanned four years and shows no signs of abating. Members of Divest Imperial have promised to "keep protesting until Imperial College stands on

the right side of history, removes its funding from the fossil fuel industry and re-invests in our future".

"Imperial needs to take a long, hard look at itself... and decide if it is serving people or profit"

Despite over 1800 petition signatures, management at Imperial College London has previously refused to move its money, claiming that, "by working with fossil fuel companies, Imperial helps to solve climate change". Chris Wells, a campaigner at Divest Imperial, called Imperial out for what he feels is hypocrisy, stating: "As a PhD student at Imperial working on climate change, I find it obscenely hypocritical that my university is funding the industry most



Students occupied the Sheffield building, with chants of "no more coal, no more oil, keep that carbon in the soil" and "divest now" // *Divest Imperial*

responsible for the crisis."

In a statement provided to *Felix* on behalf of Divest Imperial, Imperial was accused of legitimising "climate denial, neo-colonialism and violence" by continuing to provide support (both financial and through research) to firms that "have blocked climate action for decades" as they "pursue

ever more extreme forms of extraction incompatible with the Paris Agreement goals".

When approached for comment, Naomi Pratt, a campaigner at Divest Imperial who recently gave an interview to *The Guardian* about universities' continued affiliation with fossil fuel companies, said the following:

"We're in a period of ecological collapse and global humanitarian crisis, perpetuated in part by companies whose logos adorn this campus. Imperial needs to take a long, hard look at itself and its strategic relationships, and decide if it is serving people or profit".

Universities minister urges more fast-track degrees

NEWS

(cont.)

Those on higher salaries could save £500 each year.

Some critics suggest any reduction in tuition fees will actively harm students from less affluent backgrounds.

If the decrease in universities' incomes from tuition fees is not covered by the Treasury (which would be forced to find an extra £3 billion each

year from an already over-stretched budget), caps on student numbers may be reintroduced. Grants for disadvantaged students may also be reduced, making higher education inaccessible for students from low-income backgrounds. As *Felix* wrote earlier this year, Imperial is one of the worst universities when it comes to recruiting students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, with just 63.5% of entrants in 2016/17 coming from

state schools.

These considerations are not likely to deter students. Recent years have seen countless politicians trying to win the student vote with promises about maintaining or improving the affordability of higher education. And – as cases of mental illness among young people rise – the prospect of graduating with £50,000 of debt exacts an incalculable cost in terms of student well-being and adds further strain to health and

social care services.

Still, the general feeling is that something must be done. If not lower tuition fees, then what?

One alternative would be the re-introduction of maintenance grants, rather than loans. Almost half of students struggled to pay their rent, and their mental health suffered as a result, according to a recent Save the Student survey. A third of respondents also believed that difficulties in meeting their living costs adversely affected their

studies. While a return to maintenance grants would put a drain on Treasury resources, the £500 million cost estimated by the Institute for Fiscal Studies is considerably less than the potential cost of lowering tuition fees.

Many universities would find ways to operate without a third of their tuition fee income. The first cost-cutting measure would likely be outreach schemes to disadvantaged communities, which universities are obligated to

fund with a proportion of their tuition fee income. This could be avoided if universities reined in excessive spending on senior staff, which has been well-documented by *Felix* and other media outlets following the scandal of vice-chancellors' salaries.

The Augar review is not due to report until early 2019 and much may change before then, but students should not bank on a reduction in tuition fees any time soon.

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?

THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES

"I can't promise to know what is happening in the madness that is British politics at the moment, but I can explain why no one else knows either."

Matt Chorley, The Times Red Box editor, in conversation with Sam Gyimah, Minister of State (Universities and Science)

Tuesday 27, November 5pm - 7pm
Sir Alexander Fleming, G13 with spillover into G34

In conversation with Professor Stephen Curry

NEWS

Andy Djaba
Editor-in-Chief

Felix sat down with Professor Stephen Curry, the Assistant Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, to reflect on Imperial's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

With the recent publication of Imperial's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and Imperial's launch of the Race Equality Charter survey, *Felix* sat down with Professor Stephen Curry, for an exclusive interview.

Felix: I wanted to get your take on the strategy for Equality Diversity and Inclusion. If you could give some background to it: where did it come from, the steps that have been taken to get it to the point that it's at now and to describe the point that it's at now?

Stephen: Well the point that it's at now is that it's just been published. Where did it come from? It apparently came from the creation of the position that I occupy. I wrote the strategy as Assisat Provost for EDI and that's a new position at the College. I started in October last year, so I've been in it just over a year. It had also been sparked

by the institutional culture review which happened a few years ago and was actually triggered by an incident that happened between the Men's and Women's rugby teams. Now, in the end, although what triggered it was an incident between student societites, actually the report focused largely on the culture within departments and the working environment for staff here. One of the things they noticed is the perception of many staff is that Imperial is a highly competitive working environment- that's kind of what you'd expect from an institute that's research intensive, that is world class, that operates in a globally competitive market. But there was a sense that... what was missing was an emphasis on collaboration, on empathy, on actually understanding the pressures that people work under and the sorts of behaviours that can lead to and engender.

I am really interested in the culture of science and how universities work and the value that they offer to society. They're supposed to be agents of social mobility and, in a ways, they're not really doing that nearly as well as they could and should be. I've spent a lot of time in the first few months talking to lots of different people at all parts of the university to get a sense of what are we doing well across this agenda and what are we not doing enough and that was the basis of starting then to write the strategy. The strategy was developed with lots of consultation with lots of different people and one other thing to appreciate is, coincident with the creation of this position, the way that the College oversees work on EDI



Stephen Curry, Imperial's Assistant Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion // Imperial College London

was changed and there are now two primary committees that oversee that. There's an EDI strategy group, which is chaired by the Provost. I sit on that but it also has the Faculty Deans and there's about a dozen people on it, all quite senior. That was deliberately kept a relatively small group so that it had focused discussion and executive authority.

In parallel with that, we set up an EDI Forum and that is deliberately a much more representative body and people from all over the College, different academic departments, different administrative departments, professors and students are on it. There's lots of representation around the table there. The forum I see as a representative group and a kind of listening post to basically pool information from ground level up. So the forum was very much involved in helping to draft it as well. I came up with a skeleton outline

in January, which was discussed at the strategy group and then it was developed and then it was discussed again at the forum and then it had another discussion at the strategy group in May and then a fully developed version was then presented to the Provost's board at the end of June for approval and then adoption.

Clearly, we want to be as inclusive as possible so that, whoever you are, if you apply here and you've got the wherewithal to study the courses or to do the research, then we want you. There's clear evidence that, if you bring people from other backgrounds and perspectives, that can help you generate a much more creative approach to how you research, how you teach and also helps to dictate what you research, what you teach. If we start asking different questions then people who don't normally look to Imperial as a place where they might

go might say, "actually the stuff they're interested in is the stuff I'm interested in" and so that becomes then a pull on them.

Over the summer it was refined and it was also discussed in the President's Executive groups. We got a version that's published. We've been rolling it out with announcements. Chi Onwurah came on the 11th and I deliberately invited Chi because she chairs an all party parliamentary group on diversity in STEM, which is newly created this year. She's also an alumna of this university. She was a woman at Imperial; she was a black woman at Imperial and she was the only person in the room of those characteristics for a lot of the time. Didn't have a very happy time at Imperial and is very clearly invested in this area and had said, basically, that a lot of Russell group universities simply aren't doing enough yet in terms of opening the

doors to underrepresented minorities. If you invite an MP, I kind of figured it's a good way to launch it and show that we are really interested in starting conversation about this and I would like to try and ramp up the number of events that are promoting prolonging this conversation and getting people involved in participating.

We now have a strategy. There are 7 major elements to it, the "We Will" statements detailed in the document. The document also then has an action plan and the action plan has owners who are distributed all across the College, all the way from the President to Heads of Department. Now this is just a piece of paper at the minute, and it was hard enough work to do that, let me tell you. But the hard bit starts now because the hard bit is delivery and that's where we need to focus now.

In a lot of places, Imperial has the right sentiment behind what they say but it almost comes across as they're paying lip service to it... in terms of actual things happening, there's very slow progress if any progress is made at all. How do you plan to implement the "We Will" statements?

Some of it is in the action plan. Some of it, to be frank, we haven't worked out exactly how we're going to do it but there are certain targets that we want to try and achieve so we have real action. I'm very aware that you can write a lot of fine words in a strategy and nice aspirations, and I agree that in this space, talking about EDI around the higher educational sector generally, not just in the UK but across the world, people have been talking about these issues for a long time. If you talk to women academics, they're incredibly frustrated; we know what the problems are to a large extent but we don't really see a big pace of change. One of the difficulties is there isn't a silver bullet that solves this. What we're dealing with is a society that has many structural inequalities built into it and we are a product of that society. Now, as a university, I would like to think that we were a space that actually challenged the norms of society and says, "we can do better", and start to lead the conversation in doing that. Oxford and Cambridge attract a lot of attention because everybody's heard of Oxford and Cambridge, so they get it in the neck in the press in terms of numbers of women, numbers of black students that they have, but our numbers, I'm afraid,

aren't really significantly different from theirs. We can be grateful for their existence because they take a lot of the heat, as it were. We have to be very clear-sighted and look at our numbers and see what it is that we're doing. On admissions for example, we know we have issues with attracting certain minority groups and there is, I would say, very much a renewed determination that we're going to have to change that.

"We have to recognise that it's not a matter of compromising standards"

We also know that the reality is, we are losing out on talent and that's the argument that I would always make about striving to increase diversity. We have lots of privately educated kids, lots of white male students, many of whom have had socio-economic advantages even if they didn't go to private school. But there are many communities where there are lots of bright kids but, for one reason or another, they simply don't look to Imperial as a place that they would go. They don't see other people who look like them here and that puts them off and we have work to do to counteract that. It's not College policy yet but, personally, I would like to move to a situation where we are doing a much better job of providing context sensitive offers to students. I think if you just think about "we will take people on the basis of their A level results because that's a good measure of how good they are", that's an incomplete measure of how good they

are. Your A level results is basically a result of your innate abilities multiplied by your social advantages or disadvantages. I think we have to recognise that it's not a matter of compromising on standards. Increasing diversity is not about saying "oh well, we let in a few minority students because it looks good". That's really not the position we're taking. The strategy makes it clear that there are groups of talented students out there that we've been neglecting and that we're not really open to and it's about recognising that, actually, they're every bit as good as the students that come here but we're not doing a good enough job of recognising the talents that they have. Now how we do that is a complicated process. Some of it will be our admissions processes, some of it will be about actually going out and doing outreach and showing people that you should be aspiring to Imperial College, you have got it in yourself. There's an issue with not enough girls doing physics for example and that's because they get the message early on, sometimes from their parents, sometimes from their teachers, that "girls don't do physics" and nonsense like that. But there are many other areas where people get that message and those are things that we have to fight against. So there has to be movement across broad fronts, which is why the problem is deep seated, the solutions are multidimensional and complex and I do hope that the strategy gives us a framework to be more coherent and more joined up in our approach. We are going to take various steps, we're not entirely sure that those are going to be the right steps to take. We will remain open to challenge and, if we get things wrong, then we will hold our hands up

and say "ok that doesn't seem to be working, we're going to try something else". There's an inherent problem in any large organisation that people don't know how it really works. That's a problem of communication and it's a problem that we need to tackle. People very readily get very cynical about "why is the university doing this?", "is this just so we can produce a nice, glossy brochure with a picture of a disabled person on the front of it or a black member of staff?", "is this just PR?". I very much hope it's not. I am determined as far as I am able to make sure that this is about real change. Very much the ethos of the strategy is that promoting EDI is the responsibility of everybody who comes to work or study here. It's everybody's responsibility from the President to the very last undergraduate who's come through our doors. It has to be about community, it has to be about the culture of the place. We know there are many issues we have to tackle. There will be endless arguments over this. We will not move fast enough for some people. We will be moving too fast for others that... don't really understand the different experiences that other people have. I think that is one of the issues in universities - they're dominated by white men. One of the things I want to do is to make sure those other voices are heard.

You mention that universities are dominated by white men. It's kind of funny that the person in charge of EDI is a white male.

You're right, it does feel slightly anomalous. We produced a leaflet to get members of staff to complete the Race Equality Charter survey and it

had my face on it! It is a bit odd and that is an issue but I think there's value, at least temporarily, in that you have somebody who is a white man, who is prepared to take these issues seriously and to speak to his colleagues about it. One of the important things I can do is to help enable other voices to be heard. I've been shocked to learn about the experience of other people. From women about how prevalent sexual harassment is in higher education. I have no experience of it whatsoever but I know, from talking to women, that it is a big, hidden issue.

Universities are communities, the word university means community of students and scholars and I think we have, to a degree, lost sight of that. Because of the way that government accountability is now enforced, universities have become more managerialist in a way and a bit more corporate, rather than a bit more communitarian and I am determined to try and push things in the other direction.

What does diversity mean to you specifically and what are your priorities?

Diversity is about recognising and valuing difference and the fact that people are different, bring different things to a university experience. It's also about us being to much more cognisant of the fact that people can be very different from us but have really fantastic things of value to offer us and experiences and perspectives and insights from their lived experience that bring real value to a university and clearly have every bit as much talent as anybody who conforms to the "norm" view. Inclusion is really an important part of that because it's not enough

that you are getting people in the door. You have to make sure that, when they are here, that they don't feel excluded in any sense, that they're not treated or subject to microaggressions of any sort. Things like that... degrade the day-to-day experience of people who are generally from underrepresented groups and that's a hard problem to crack. We are a product of a society that's fragmented in many ways.

Everybody has a limited set of experiences and actually one of the great purposes of university in the modern age in a big metropolitan centre like London ought to be to enable people to come together and we do that. There's a lot of good stuff happening, it's not all doom and gloom. Imperial is very international and that's one of the great things about, I would hope, being here as a student is that actually there is a good mix of different people. It's not the entire mix that we would like necessarily but there is that.

I have a slightly funny position here. I'm Assisat Provost but I don't have a big team under me. In a way, I kind of almost see myself as being appointed to a position as a professional campaigner within the university and my job is to campaign and persuade people that this is important, this is why we need to do it, there's real value here and to negotiate that. The thing I want to really achieve is to make sure anybody who's in a managerial position is really invested in this. I just want to make sure that everybody is talking about these issues and aware of them. Ultimately it will be seeing a change in number, I want to see more women academics in senior positions here, I was to see more BME staff in senior positions here, I want more BAME students to come here.

POLITICS

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It's been a slow week for American politics

Can Gritty squeeze out six columns of content off a week where nothing happened? Or is he condemned to discuss banal details and shoehorn in bits about Brexit to pad the column? Find out now, in the latest edition of the revolutionary new column that's got three people excited.

POLITICS

Gritty

Left Forum Chair

Grit went Brit this week. We've been so busy with the recent collapse of the UK government that US news seemed to have been swept well under the rug. This is fine by me - no news is good news as far as America is concerned. There's the odd morsel - Ivanka Trump's emails; Nancy Pelosi being the controversial Speaker of the House frontrunner; Ocasio-Cortez dunking on people on Twitter. Otherwise, the radar has been quiet. Well, hey, more time to watch Maybot run act_human.exe - it's impervious to satire because it couldn't get more ridiculous!

Alas, this is not (yet) a column about UK news. Fuck you! I'm gonna analyze the shit out of a big pile of nothing for half a page.

So, Ivanka's emails. Surprise! She's been using a private server for her government business. And yeah, obviously, she's in government strictly by way of nepotism, she has no qualifications, etc etc. That's not the funny bit.

The funny bit is that this is *exactly* what Trump was shouting "Lock her up!" about - Clinton's emails on a private server. Hypocrisy - who would've thought? And then she has the nerve to claim that she didn't know this was against policy. Fuck off. I say drag her in front of the House and make her



Never thought this would be relevant again - this is from 2011, the last time Pelosi was Speaker. // Pete Souza

testify for four hours. Now *that* would give me something to talk about. In the meantime, the Trumps are hypocrites and this should be a shocker to nobody.

If this, in fact, *was* a shocker to you, I would recommend a consult with a proctologist - they may be able to locate your head.

Okay, that's one done and dusted. Next up: Pelosi. Well, turns out there aren't any good challengers for the gavel. This is gonna play out exactly like I don't want. It's not the *worst* - she's a competent politician, and fairly liberal. I mean, she's occupied the post before. Chuck Schumer is objectively worse. And, to be fair to her, one of the reasons she's so poorly liked is because she's

not winning in districts that went for Trump; she's the boogeyman, the archetypical Limousine Liberal, come on high from the ivory tower to tell everyone to knock the racism off. What a *bother!*

Well, if Pelosi actually adopts leftist policies, instead of clinging to the neoliberal fantasies of yesteryear, she has a fighting chance of being decent, on a raw ideological level. She's also done the job before; we can be assured of her base competence.

As FiveThirtyEight points out, arguments about her legislative competency are overblown. It turns out - even back in the early Obama years - she never really had that much to do with Dem performance in the House. Standard polling

fare - incumbent president approval rating, economic performance, and the like - had more to do with electoral wins than Pelosi as a figure.

For a brief moment, she was challenged by Martha Fudge. Nobody can take a name like that seriously, though. She dropped out Tuesday after Pelosi offered her a position in Her House. Who would've seen a thing like that coming *in politics?*

Ah, whatever. We'll work with what we got. And we got someone great in Ocasio-Cortez - best Twitter feed in the House. And I guess a few gaffes. Who cares? I also love watching columnists mansplain how the economy works to her; she did a fucking degree in it, then went to work in

a bar, because that's what it's like to graduate from college nowadays. Sorry, boomers - if you fucked up the economy that badly, you don't get to be condescending about economics.

Here's a good one. Trump's been ducking an interview with Mueller for a year or so now, because obviously Trump will perjure himself the moment he opens his mouth. This is what Trump's lawyers know, what onlookers know, and what Mueller knows. Trump's legal team has been going back-and-forth with the investigational team; they eventually settled on written questions (because then Trump can do what his lawyers say). Well, *apparently*, the answers to Mueller's

questions were submitted last Tuesday, according to Trump. No news what the answers - or even the questions - were. Guess we'll just have to wait.

So, the probe creaks further on. No new news yet - besides the leaked Assange indictment - probably so the new House can sit, or at the very least, until Whitaker recuses himself from the probe or is otherwise incapacitated (DO YOU THINK THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE CALLED FOR POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN THIS COLUMN? THINK AGAIN, PAL.)

In summary, a boring week. Very little has happened.

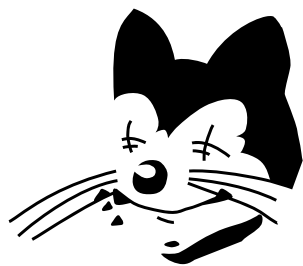
SURPRISE, BITCHES. You thought this was only going to be US news? Well, the Grit here is on it. Can't wait until Arlene Foster decides to pull the plug on May's life support. Can't believe they're stupid enough to not want funky new rules with interacting with the rest of the UK - they could've been the link between the EU and the UK, and made mad money in the process. Unfortunately, the party is run by chucklefucks.

Anyways, May is a dead woman walking. My money's on a dream scenario - that she tries to ram her deal through Parliament, resigns like Cameron did, and we're left with a new referendum or general election. No matter what, though, she's pretty fucked.

How's *that* for insightful analysis? This is just a gossip column now. Peace out, dudes.

COMMENT

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Homelessness: a harsh reality

Ambreen Muhammed, from the Imperial Muslim Volunteer Network is aiming to raise awareness of homelessness this winter

COMMENT

Ambreen Muhammed

Imperial Muslim Volunteer Network

The wind scratches your face, your mouth as dry as parchment, the bitter cold tormenting your every thought. Your bones moan in pain as you search frantically for shelter under a tree, behind a dustbin, in a cardboard box, anything that will get you through the night. This is just a simplified snapshot of the life of a homeless person. As Imperial students, we are blessed to not be in this position, but how often does it occur to us that this life could very easily

be ours?

As we enjoy the pleasures of this world and sit in our cushioned lives, we often don't think twice about the people who are suffering on our streets: the homeless man who we rush past on our way into the tube station, the woman whom we don't look twice at as we pop into the corner shop because we are "so hungry" or the child sitting next to the bin in hopes that someone will drop in a half-eaten sandwich. These are the people who need our help, the people who out of no fault of their own are living a reality that they can't escape. Yes, our time is spent worrying about how many lectures we have to catch up on and exams and lab reports, but can we just give a fraction of this time to think about them. Just a small percent-

age of your time to think about what we can do to help those who can't help themselves. Don't get me wrong, I get it. We don't always know how to help and honestly as students, we don't always have the finances to either. But the vision that I am proposing here is bigger than that. It is where we as students volunteer our time to the homeless and give them a small part of their humanity back.

The Imperial Muslim Volunteer Network (IMVN) has a vision to increase student participation in volunteering for the local community and on campus. To help with the issue of homelessness, we are running fortnightly Homeless Drives, giving you the chance to give food and drink to the homeless. In the run up to this, we are holding

our Homeless Panel on Tuesday 27th November in Huxley 340 at 6:15. This event is open to all and aims to explore the issue of homelessness and offer solutions to the growing epidemic on our streets. To find out more information on our inspiring panellists, search IMVN on Facebook and click going on the event page.

We really do hope to see you there because individually we may not be able to cure the problem of homelessness, but TOGETHER it is our duty to chip away at this epidemic for as long as we need to.

Event Poster // IMVN



Legitimate violence?

Comment editor **Charles Titmuss** makes the argument that by failing to stand up to violence, you only serve to legitimise it.

COMMENT

Charles Titmuss

Comment Editor

Violence, or the threat of violence has been one of the governing factors of human interaction for as long as humans have been in existence, from the earliest social groups right through to the foundation of the modern state. In the

modern day, violence and the threat of violence are the fundamental underpinnings of state administration, in ensuring that taxes are paid and laws are obeyed. Many people, mostly from a libertarian or anarchist perspective question the legitimacy of this violence, based on the idea that it has no moral legitimacy. I would not disagree with them, in that violence is fundamentally

immoral, however, given that it is so crucial to the underpinning of human society, the application of the threat of and actual violence must have some practical legitimacy. This short opinion piece aims to define this practical legitimacy.

I would argue that the practical legitimacy of violence is whatever the perpetrator of that violence is not brought to

account for. This varies based on the society in which the violence is committed, for example, in Russia and some Middle Eastern states, it is permissible to beat one's spouse and in the West it is highly unlikely that drone operators will be brought to account for the violence they conduct. Practically, their violence remains unpunished and therefore, by allowing the status quo to stand, that grants their actions legitimacy. This

can similarly be applied to those that take part in illegal civil disorder. As long as they remain unpunished their actions would be legitimate.

The implication of the practical legitimacy of violence is that it demonstrates the need to have the capacity to respond to violence acted against oneself or the state that one occupies in order to deny the violence legitimacy. It means that we must come face to face

with the idea that "might is right," is the way that the world has been run and will continue to be run for the foreseeable future. Anyone that does not believe that is living in a fantasy. If you ever wish to live in a world where that is not the case, then you will have to be prepared to fight for it.

SCIENCE

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Coffee? It's in your genes!

Can't crawl up to the lecture theatre before all that caffeine kicks in? Science writer Paula Rowinska explains why exactly we fell in love with a drink that all our natural instincts should flag as poisonous.

SCIENCE

Paula Rowinska

Science Writer

Bitter equals poisonous - at least according to our brain. There seems to exist only one exception from this evolutionary dislike for bitterness: coffee. Why many of us cannot even imagine a morning without a cup of espresso or latte, although its bitter taste should make our body issue a poison alert?

Researchers from the Northwestern Medicine and QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute in Australia discovered that, paradoxically, genetic sensitivity to bitter taste makes us even more likely to drink larger amounts of coffee.

"You'd expect that people who are particularly sensitive to the bitter taste of caffeine would drink less coffee," argues Dr. Marilyn Cornelis, the assistant professor of preventive medicine at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago and senior author of the study. "The opposite results of our study suggest coffee consumers acquire a taste or an ability to detect caffeine due to the learned positive reinforcement (i.e. stimulation) elicited by caffeine."

This means that people with high sensitivity to bitterness of caffeine form positive associations with coffee - and enjoy



Coffee is arguably essential to start the day//Flickr

"We were able to assess whether those that have a higher predisposition to tasting bitterness are more likely to prefer tea over coffee."

more cups a day than their friends without this genetic variant.

Researchers studied genes and daily coffee consumption of over 40,000 participants from the UK. "Using the genes related to our ability to taste bitterness, we were able to assess whether those that have a higher genetic predisposition to tasting bitterness are more likely to prefer tea over coffee," explained Jue Sheng Ong, the lead author of the paper, a PhD student in the Department of Genetics and Computational Biology at the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute in

Brisbane.

They found out that

"People with genes responsible for recognising the bitterness of tonic water or green vegetables tend to prefer tea over coffee."

people with genes responsible for recognising the bitterness of tonic water or green vegetables, for example Brussel sprouts, tend to prefer tea over coffee.

Interestingly, in comparison to people without such gene variants, they are also less likely to drink alcohol, in particular red wine. This result could potentially help improving treatments for alcohol addictions.

Ong admitted that they did not consider milk, cream, sugar or other additions often put into coffee cups. They focused on the general links between genes and coffee

consumption.

Taste remains one of our most secretive senses, but this study contributed to its understanding. And I will stop fighting my coffee addiction - what can I do, it's in my genes!



Juicy lemons growing on a lemon tree in sunny Italy // Phxere

When life gives you lemons - 12 options besides lemonade

If you think lemons are only helpful in tequila shots, then you need to take a second look - read this article to update your concepts about the therapeutic powers of lemons... after all, it's easy peasy lemon squeezy!

FOOD

Ambika Bharadwaj

Food Writer

We all know that the best uses for lemons are those we can devour: lemonade, lemon pie, and of course lemon meringue... yum! But have you thought of lemon as a health hack? Discover 12 more uses below.

1) Fever

Lemon juice aids in curing general sicknesses such as flus, colds and fevers. Lemons induce perspiration in the body, which helps to break fever. Thanks to its vitamin C content and antiseptic properties, it is perfect for resolving lost voices, tonsillitis, and all sorts of other respiratory ailments you might catch. Consume by drinking it in a glass of warm water with honey – basically like warm lemonade?

2) Sore Throat

The anti-bacterial properties of lemon are helpful in curing infections and soreness in the throat. You can simply imbibe lemon juice with water or drink lemon tea. Additionally, lemon raises our body's natural immune system. And don't forget lemon's high vitamin C content when you suffer from these illnesses!

3) Nerves & Troubled Sleep

At bedtime, it is ideal to drink a lemon flower infusion (if you can get your hands on some, that is). Put three of these in boiling water, let them sit a few minutes and you have your infusion, ready to calm your body and drift you away...

4) Relaxation

Lemon is a great aromatic agent that can relax your feet if you use it as a tool in a DIY spa. Add

lemon juice to lukewarm water and dip your feet in it. It will relax your muscles and will help you get rid of foot odour, as well as soothe tired soles and heal blisters.

5) Detoxification

Lemons are excellent cleansers for our bodies; they eliminate toxins, purify, and are undoubtedly one of the best health allies. Did you know that having a large glass of warm water mixed with lemon juice in the morning not only helps in weight loss but also helps your digestive tract and liver? This alkaline solution can be looked upon as an overall body detoxifier.

6) Cough

Heat a few teaspoons of honey and add the juice of one lemon in half a cup of hot water. Drink the mixture slowly and your cough will disappear. In addition, it is common to

use garlic cloves to aid the miraculous benefits of lemon - in this case, cut two in half and let them soak a few hours in lemon juice. The flavor (and your breath afterwards) will seem a bit strong, but eating these lemon-flavoured garlic cloves is an excellent and unconventional method for reducing coughs.

7) Immunity

Its nutritional composition composed of vitamins C, B, and E, and its many minerals, such as potassium, magnesium, calcium, and sulphur make lemons an incredible strengthener for our immune system. They raise our white blood cell count in the long term.

8) Dental Care

Surprising as it may seem with its acidity; lemon juice is good for maintaining dental health. If you are suffering from problematic gum

bleeding, apply lemon juice to get rid of it (it will sting, but for a good cause). Lemon juice can also provide relief from toothaches and solve the issue of bad breath.

9) pH Balance

To maintain and upgrade your health, it is necessary to keep the body's pH slightly alkaline, and what better option than lemons to do so? The alkalinity of lemons pushes our body to attain the required pH state, which resultantly aids in improved general health and reduces risk of certain diseases, such as cancer.

10) Nosebleeds

Nose bleeding is a common problem that occurs mainly in summer due to increased pressure on blood cells. However, lemons have shown to be an excellent remedy for stopping nosebleeds. You can dip a cotton ball in

lemon juice and apply it directly inside your nose – unpleasant as it may seem, it will stop your nosebleed!

11) Travel Sickness

If you tend to feel sick when travelling, lemon again comes to the rescue. Dilute lemon juice with water, and you have a superb solution for treating vomiting and travel sickness. Nibbling on a small wedge of lemon can also cure such disorders fast.

12) Insect Bites

This is an ancient remedy where lemon juice is applied on the affected area to cure insect stings and bites. Although the effects are not likely to be felt instantly, lemon is believed to suck out the poison, thereby curing itching and pain in the long term.

FILM

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Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Bad Storytelling

Film Editor Aidan Chan sat through the latest film in the Harry Potter franchise.

FILM

FANTASTIC BEASTS 2



Dir: David Yates.

Script: J.K. Rowling.

Starring: Eddie Redmayne, Kathrine Waterston, Ezra Miller, Zoë Kravitz, Johnny Depp *134 minutes*

Aidan Chan

Film Editor

I walked into the cinema with mild apprehension. I knew that the critical reception was particularly unfavorable, yet I had hoped that this would be a *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest* scenario, where the film would still be immensely fun to watch. After two hours of sitting and hoping for the best, I came out of the cinema, defeated. *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* (*Fantastic Beasts 2*), is a complete mess of a film. The Harry Potter franchise has finally lived long enough to see itself become the villain.

Fantastic Beasts 2 is directed by David Yates, and stars an ensemble cast of Eddie Redmayne, Katherine Waterston, Zoë Kravitz, Johnny Depp and many, many more. However, the bomb that destroys the film is J. K. Rowling's horrid screenplay. It is actually quite magical that a film can be so boring with around ten separate subplots progressing simultaneously on screen (I am not exaggerating; you can count them if you want). It is like watching *Game of Thrones*, but instead of ten hour seasons, you get a two hour film; And instead of interesting,

nuanced plotting, you get stories that go absolutely nowhere and are completely pointless.

The more separate plots a film has, the less time each plot gets. And in a film like *Fantastic Beasts 2*, each storyline is assigned roughly 12 to 13 minutes of screen-time. And so, instead of self-contained and fully-realised stories and character arcs, we get ten half-baked and lukewarm plots ranging from soapy melodrama, to misunderstandings that are more suitable in a 90s sitcom—each of which fails to allow any emotional attachment. At the end, I did not care about any of the characters or their struggles. Any tension presented felt manufactured, underdeveloped

“The actors might be the only redeeming factor of this film. They tries their best to make use of the very little screen-time they were assigned”

and inconsequential because the film had to rush off elsewhere to cater to another subplot. I did not care about Newt and Tina's forced romance, or Credence's quest to find his origin. Even when Hedwig's Theme blasted through the cinema speakers and the iconic Hogwarts castle appeared



Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald // IMDb

in the distance, I did not find an ounce of excitement within me, because I was so exhausted by the film.

Plot twists are one of the defining aspects of the Harry Potter series, and Rowling migrated this tradition to the *Fantastic Beasts* franchise. The “Credence is the Obscurial” twist is understandable in the first film. But in this one, the plot twists are verging on absurdity. I have heard many people praise the final twist of the film on social media, so I was relatively excited about whatever surprise that might be. However, that twist proves to be one of the most laughable and ridiculous moments of the entire film. These reveals worked in the *Harry Potter* films because there are carefully placed breadcrumbs that hint towards the twist. However, the twist in *Crimes of Grindelwald* are unearned and I have never rolled my eyes harder.

With the departure of

any coherent story structure, the nostalgic magic that is consistently present in the *Harry Potter* series also evaporated completely. The necessity of saying spells out loud continues to be entirely arbitrary. The whimsy and innovations of the previous instalments are gone,

“The Harry Potter franchise has finally lived long enough to see itself become the villain”

instead we get more secret elevators, more moving statues, more passageways disguised as walls, more random spells that do things Muggles can do equally well (like strapping people into a chair) -

basically nothing we have not seen before (the only novelty is a magical dust hologram PowerPoint thingy I guess). When a magic-denying Marvel flick felt more magical than a franchise built upon *Harry Potter*, you know something has gone wrong.

The actors might be the only redeeming factor of this film. They tried their best to make use of the very little screen-time they were assigned. Ezra Miller had moments of brilliance, Johnny Depp dominated each frame he was in and Jude Law is charismatic as a compassionate Albus Dumbledore. The moments that hint at the complicated relationship between Dumbledore and Grindelwald are genuinely affecting, but the flashes of sincerity are quickly replaced by more poorly presented stories. Other aspects of the film, including generic CGI battles, uninspired direction and abrupt tonal shifts (far too often does

the film randomly cut from a comedic moment to Grindelwald ominously declaring his evil plans) do nothing to save this film from being part of the “unnecessary sequel” gang.

The credits rolled and I looked at the list of talents involved in the film. From producer David Heyman (who produced many great films) to Steve Kloves (who penned all but one the screenplays for the original *Harry Potter* films), I find it rather strange that no one told Rowling that her screenplay was potentially problematic. Either that, or she just did not care. In a film without beasts or crimes, *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* is the quintessential filler episode. It is time for Rowling to let go of her ego and hire a real screenwriter to polish and untangle her unintelligible storylines, so that this franchise can reach the potential it is capable of.

GAMES

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Fallout 76- I want to love you

A game full of ambition and potential but whose execution falls short

Games

Connor Winzar

Games Editor

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Writer

Let me lay down my biases up front. I do love fallout; I've clocked an irresponsible number of hours in 4 and New Vegas over the last few years. I gel with the art direction, I like the setting and I love a good open world. I, however, also ardently defended Fallout 76 when it was announced. I saw the potential in a multiplayer only fallout and was eagerly anticipating re-entering the wasteland no matter what form that took. Finally, the game drops, and I find myself dumbstruck. I'm not angry. I'm just disappointed.

Fallout 76 is a frustrating game to discuss because I really want to like it, and there are times when I genuinely do. But there are some fundamental flaws with the game, and I worry they may not be fixable in post. Let's start by looking at the good though--I want to give credit where its due. The game is visually stunning; this is the best a creation engine has ever looked, and it pairs beautifully with the vibrant landscape of atomic West Virginia. The game has a warmer colour palette than previous games, making the landscape very inviting. It makes the experience of just walking around fun, but we'll come back to that. The great visual design carries over to the player customisation. More players means there needs to be visual diversity in items

(especially armour) in order for you to tell each other apart and express yourself. 76 manages to integrate all these new designs pretty seamlessly (I especially like some of the new power armours).

The standard combat mechanics are the best they've ever been in a modern Fallout, and this is good since the highlight of the game is encountering and fighting the large array of new and incredibly interesting monster-minibosses. In my time with the game, these encounters were all fun and unique enough to each leave a lasting impression. The design team clearly had a lot of fun with these things and it shows.

But you knew this part was coming from the title. The first and most obvious issue is the optimisation. I don't care how nice your car is, if you put a

“The standard combat mechanics are the best they've ever been in a modern Fallout”

broken engine in it it's not going to get us anywhere. There was a no-clip documentary released about 76's development which stated that the way the creation engine worked was not only not suited for multiplayer but was basically the diametric opposite of a multiplayer engine. And it shows, this



High quality graphics but low quality gameplay // Windows Central

game runs abysmally. But of course it does, they broke the engine so bad to force in multiplayer, it's honestly incredible it runs at all. This also means the game is buggier than ever, and the classic Bethesda bugs lose their charm in a multiplayer setting where you can't just idly reload a save when shit fucks up. I could list bugs all day, but one noteworthy one was an audio glitch that caused loud gunshots to go off behind me randomly. In a game with PVP, that is unacceptably bad.

But the problems extend past mere bugs and into design decisions. VATs just don't work now. Given bullet time simply can't work in multiplayer, VATs has been re-imagined as an auto-targeting system. This would have been the right decision had it worked; however, without the slow-motion the calculations are erratic, especially with the more frantic monsters, leaving you doomed to miss as a 90% hit rate suddenly

drops to 0% as a ghoul walks behind a coffee table.

Unfortunately, the greatest issues with the game are those made by choice. The world may be pretty but there just isn't much to do. Quest lines are effectively just following post-it notes

“I don't care how nice your car is, if you put a broken engine in it it's not going to get us anywhere”

from one place to another. The stories might be interestingly written, but without actual direct interactions with characters, they're not engaging, and there is no overarching narrative short of “you

must rebuild”. They stripped out the 2 core driving forces of the Fallout franchise, which you can only do if you replace them with equally engaging and substantial features. Player interaction is just not enough in its current form. I do think the idea of a huge map with limited players could have been the right way to do it, but the interactions aren't meaningful. PVP is really easy to avoid and even if you do die the lack of permadeath removes a lot of the bite and tension a survival game usually has. The survival mechanics themselves are serviceable, but they're not trying to innovate with them so they're not especially interesting. Very quickly most people will develop a live-and-let-live attitude, at which point other players barely factor in and you're left with a lukewarm survival game and a pretty but empty landscape to explore.

I really enjoyed my time with Fallout 76 for the first 6 hours or so.

Then, due to scheduling, my party had to disband. But I still wanted to play, so I kept on going and very quickly realised that the game wasn't fun, I was just doing something new with mates I had history with. Any game can be fun with friends so that's not a valid defence. I enjoyed aliens colonial marines, but that's only because my 3 mates and I bought it for £3 each so we could riff on it in multiplayer. Sure, it might be fun with a group of fallout enthusiast friends, but the game underneath is hollow and broken. If the base under the multiplayer isn't a well designed game, then the experience is going to have no longevity. I pray support for this game is good because I want it to one day be great, but at the time of writing it's just a disappointment. If you were on the fence, hold off for a couple of months and see if Bethesda make good on their claims of heavy patching.

GAMES

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Rough times ahead for E3? Sony announces that they won't be attending the 2019 convention

In what seems to be a bizarre decision by Sony executives the company is backing out of the major gaming convention E3 and their own convention 'Playstation Experience'

Games

Connor Winzar

Games Editor

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Writer

The Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) is a massive gaming convention aimed at showcasing upcoming content from major developers and publishers. With its initial start-up being in 1995, it has continued since with thriving attendance and popularity. Just the mention of E3 within the gaming community is enough to get gamers eagerly anticipating the potential announcements. So why on Earth is Sony not attending E3 2019? Could it be that Sony isn't able to afford E3, or is this just beginning of the nails that will soon be hammered into E3's coffin? Interested? Well, let's get right into it!

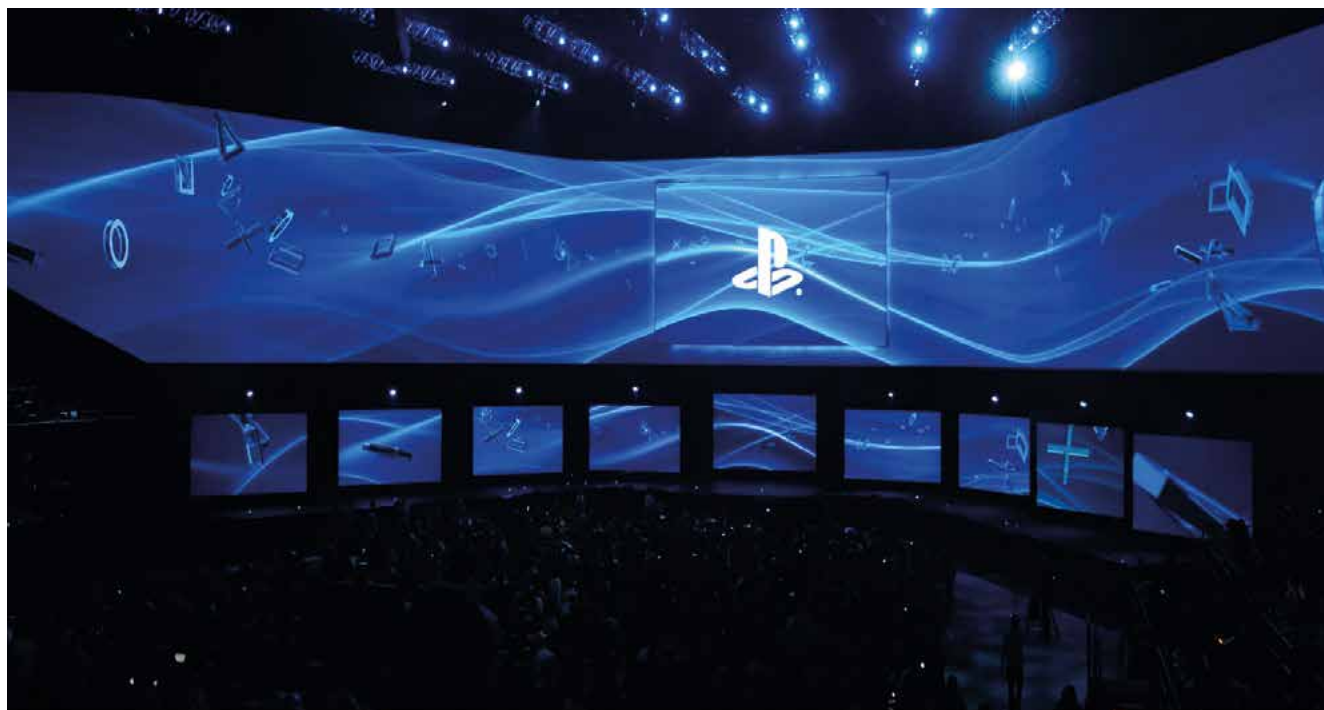
Why is Sony not attending? :

Let me start right off the bat by saying that Sony is by no means experiencing financial issues; in fact, the amount of PS4's they've sold is a whopping 2.5 times that of Microsoft's Xbox One. With a clear landslide victory in this generation's console wars, there's no chance that Sony is having money issues. So what could it be then? And why are fans concerned? Well, Sony seems to be going cold turkey on announcements and releases, not only

are they not attending E3 they've even cancelled their own convention, Playstation Experience (originally planned for this December), despite its four-year uninterrupted run. What could Sony possibly be thinking? I'm glad to inform you that Sony hasn't gone completely off the rails; however, they seem to be taking a new direction. Recent press announcements suggest the company is going for a different approach regarding both their PR tactics and interaction with their fanbase. An example of a past success they had in varying such tactics was the "Road to Greatness" campaign. The campaign entailed a semi-truck con-

"Sony is going for a different approach regarding both their PR tactics and interaction with their fanbase"

taining VR stations and PS4's setting up one-day showcases and tryouts, whilst being driven from one state to another across the US. The campaign has worked surprisingly well, with a large amount of support from the fanbase as well as a great amount of exposure to the wonders of VR; and all its



Sony 2018 E3 Conference // Spidersweb

motion sickness.

Sony may also be taking a tactical approach to this year and are simply reserving their IPs for the upcoming year; given the fact they've already announced this year's heavy hitters: Last of Us Part 2, Death Stranding and Ghosts of Tsushima. Business wise it would be nonsensical to suddenly mask over their other announcements with even more announcements, given how that would affect sales. There could also be the other depressing possibility that Sony has run out of IPs, and they just don't have anything for E3, which is a rather anticlimactic reason. Either way, E3 is quite the expensive and resource demanding convention, so it would be reasonable for Sony to make the cost-effective decision of not turning up to E3, given that they have their own convention in 2019 and pending news

of the PS5. There may be happy days for Sony, but that may not be the case for E3. In what seems to be a growing trend, more and more games developers are making their own conventions, with Microsoft, EA and Nintendo being examples of this. Which begs the question, should we be worried about E3?

Is this E3's curtain call? :

With so many different gaming conventions around, including Gamescon, PAX and Quakecon, how is it possible that E3 is still coping? Even looking at the attendance of the conventions E3 seems to be in the danger zone and not even in a good 'Archer' way. With Pax East having an attendance of 80,000+ people and Gamescon raking in the ticket money with 370,000 people, E3 just

doesn't seem to compare with only 69,000 people attending this year's convention. But that's the thing, this is E3's highest attendance yet! So how exactly has E3 stayed afloat for so long? The answer -- the legacy and digital domination that E3 holds. Ask any regular gamer which convention they watch to hear the announcements of new games and hands down they'll say E3. Gamescon may have the numbers, but it occupies a different market that's focused on providing people with the opportunity to actually play games that are soon to be released, as opposed to revealing games that are going to come out. They occupied such a market simply because E3 has set the gold standard as a platform for the revealing of big titles and IPs. With rising attendance it doesn't seem like E3 will be experiencing any hardship. Regardless

of having their own convention both Nintendo and Microsoft still show up to E3, because it's that potent as a platform for news coverage. Sony may be missing out but they are saving their top

"E3 has set the gold standard as a platform for the revealing of big titles and IPs"

shelf material for later as well as their money. Who knows what will happen to E3 in the coming years, but it's likely they'll stick around... as long as there isn't the improbable disaster that is everyone packing their bags and leaving.

MUSIC

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Riz Ahmed Is Synonymous With Brown Excellence

MUSIC

Asad Raja

Music Editor

If you're brown, woke (*shut the fuck up it's a meme to be woke*) or from London, and especially if you're all three, chances are you know Riz Ahmed to be a Desi messiah. Riz began his trajectory towards this status after appearing in 2010's *Four Lions*, a now cult classic comedy following the hilariously misguided path of a group of radicalised Muslim men. Though on its surface the film was a slapstick, brazen, satirical statement, there was certainly a layer of essential nuance and dissociative confusion exemplified especially in Riz's character. Indeed, this is a contradiction that Riz's career, be that acting, writing

or rapping (the man's a polymath, a brown Donald Glover of sorts) has always been rooted in exploring. In fact, it all became comically meta when he was beaten and interrogated about suspected terrorist motives upon returning to Luton airport from the Berlin Film Festival in 2006 where his film, *The Road To Guantanamo*, won an award. That film was about the real-life story of four brown friends from Birmingham who were illegally imprisoned and tortured in Guantanamo. You really can't make this shit up.

Trouble at airports is one of a lexicon of references that the perennial British Pakistani Muslim identity crisis is attached to. Riz's art, especially his music (which he creates under the name Riz MC) is unashamedly thorough and open in discussing

this world. It's more than relatable, and that's probably due to the alienation of seeing so few similar brown role models on a platform as large as his. It's for this reason, seeing him perform 'Shoes Off' ("My shoes off at the masjid, yo/ My shoes off at the airport") whilst surrounded by hundreds of brown faces last weekend was a real moment for me. That song is from 2016's *Cashmere* by Swet Shop Boys, a hip-hop duo that Riz is half of. Influenced by the hilariously nonchalant yet impassioned Heems (the other half of Swet Shop Boys and one third of the former Das Racist goofball trio), *Cashmere* was excitable, dreamy and decidedly Desi without compromising on realness. Best believe my favourite moment of the concert was yelling out the best line of the project



Check out Riz's new single, 'Mogambo' and watch out for his upcoming BBC show, 'Englistan' // *DIY Magazine*

in unison with Riz: "Zayn Malik's got more than eighty virgins on him/ There's more than one direction to get to paradise".

If you really want to get to know the fluidity and imposed restlessness of Riz's identity and that of his fans, you'd have to listen to his solo album,

Englistan, released the same year. The album dissects, narrates and muses on a range of issues: the diverse melting pot of Britishness, having to hide yourself from your traditional family, depression and anxiety, the government's economic shafting of the poor, psy-

chopathic honour killings and good old racist nationalism. Riz sees all, feeding off the plethora of cultures and perspectives he's been exposed to. Truly, he is proof that for all its complexities and neuroticism, growing brown in Britain can be a sociological education.

The music you didn't even know you needed

MUSIC

Guthrie Ruby

Music Writer

I'm mad, I'm riled up and it's all you guys' fault. Why am I angry? I'll tell you.

The Friday before last I was ecstatic because I was going to Fat Freddy's Drop at O2 Brixton. Talking to people from IC on the day and explaining what glory I was soon to witness I realised not a single goddamn person knew who Fat Freddy's Drop are... this is unacceptable! I'm sure there are students at IC who listen to the group but my plan to write a review of their performance probably would've meant nothing to the vast majority of readers. I'm not saying that Fat Freddy's Drop are

the best band ever or that they're revolutionaries. I'm simply stating that their music is *fan-fucking-tastic* and clearly more people should be listening. I'm here to convince you why.

Fat Freddy's Drop are a seven piece dub/reggae/soul/jazz/techno band from New Zealand. The group started coming together in the late 90s but didn't form a proper band until the early 00s. Their debut album *Based On A True Story*, released in 2005, was the highest selling album ever in New Zealand. It stayed on the top 40 charts for over two years. Since then, they've released three more studio albums, so don't worry, there's plenty to go around.

The band's mix of influences and styles combine into a truly unique sound

that you can't help but get swept away by. Each song has contagious energy and gorgeous melodies that anyone can enjoy. Dallas Tamaira (aka Joe Dukie) is the vocalist and has the sweetest caramel-like voice that has ever graced your ears, I just love it every time he starts singing. Chris Faiumu (aka DJ Fitchie) is both the bands percussionist and producer; he's exceptionally talented. The mixing of the tracks is always spot-on and he makes the percussion not just something in the background but one of the best parts of each song due to his perfect pitching and texture choices.

The rest of the band make up the instrumental profile: saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba, keyboard and guitar. Their first two albums

are polished versions of live performances they gave for FOUR YEARS before they gathered in the studio! The band is a well oiled machine that have been perfecting their craft and group chemistry over the decades.

I could go on for another half page but it's

probably better if you just listen yourself so here are my recommendations to get started. If you're looking for an album, listen to *Based On A True Story*. Want up-beat energetic songs? Listen to 'Roady', 'Pull the Catch', and 'Silver and Gold'. Feeling blue? Listen to

'Dark Days', 'Del Fuego', and '10 Feet Tall'. Only want smash hits? Listen to 'Ernie', 'Blackbird', and 'Wandering Eye'.

If even one person starts listening because of me I'll have done my job properly. Then maybe I can stop sulking and simmer down.



Fat Freddy's Drop looking like a goofy Oceans 11 cast // *Wikipedia*

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And guess what? We got free tickets. // BBC

Bangers, Bops, and Chunes

The three-day event BBC Music Introducing LIVE provided a stunning variety of talks, performances, and workshops, aimed at inspiring the next generation of musicians and producers.

MUSIC

Alex Mitcham

Jiangxuan Chen

Music Writers

Do you know what the BBC in BBC Music stands for? If you guessed ‘Bangers, Bops, and Chunes’... you’d be completely wrong, but I’d applaud your guess, as this is what BBC Music provides the British music scene with daily. There’s a huge spectrum of British musicians who now dominate the charts and are firmly supported by the BBC, allowing them to maintain their presence in the media. Interestingly, what people perhaps don’t know, is that many of the musicians we see may have risen to the heights they’re at today thanks to the help of the BBC launching them onto the scene via their dedicated BBC Music Introducing initiative. With the aim of bringing together all the supporters of Britain’s

unsigned musicians, artists can upload their music to the service in the hope that Introducing provides them with the exposure they desire to kickstart their career.

In the spirit of elevating the freshest faces in the game, BBC Music Introducing took over Tobacco Dock in East London to hold a three-day extravaganza of live music, industry sessions, and interactive workshops aimed at anyone looking for a career in the music industry: aspiring artists, potential producers, and dreaming DJs alike. We, on behalf of *Felix*, were lucky enough to attend one of the days, exploring the festival, and sampling the plethora of masterclasses that the event had to offer.

Imagine Willy Wonka’s Chocolate Factory, but instead of endless sweets and chocolate, we saw countless guitars and keyboards. Instead of rooms full of food-based exploration, we experimented with the newest technology that music had

to offer. Instead of oom-pa-loompas, we had some of the most well-informed names of the music industry, from employees at industry giants to the artists themselves.

My first taste of one of the masterclasses was the ‘Making it in Pop Music’ panel talk, a talk which aimed to nurture the creative direction of budding pop artists. While initially I was drawn in by an impressive panel which included Danny Jones from McFly, it quickly dawned on me that the advice being given would serve helpful for when I finally realise I should give up my maths degree and pursue my love of music.

Meanwhile, Jiangxuan’s reward for waiting in one of the longest queues for any event was a cramped spot on the floor for the ‘Art of Songwriting’ workshop, where the likes of Jake Gosling (Ed Sheeran, Shawn Mendes, One Direction), Kieran Shudall (Circa Waves) and James Gillespie (Rag & Bone Man) talked him

through the workflow involved in coming up with musical and lyrical content. A unifying theme was persistence – the majority of the speakers mentioned that it takes years of practice and endeavour before getting noticed. Tips to aspiring songwriters: always have a guitar plugged in and ready somewhere; keep recording yourself and don’t lose track of your ideas; a good demo always leaves room for imagination.

Ali Tant from Polydor Records, who works with a remarkable range of artists from Eminem to The 1975, insightfully commented, “the best popstars are the ones who aren’t ashamed of things that fail”, which seemed to resonate with the room. The room was jampacked full of eager faces and wide ears which appeared to absorb all the advice given by the knowledgeable speakers. This interest only seemed to heighten throughout the day as I attended more talks such as ‘Music & Tech: VR,

AI, Bots & Blockchain Explained’ which talked of a future of robot-led music and virtual reality concerts. In a later talk, we heard Afro-Swing giant Hardy Caprio talk of how he balanced his university work with making #1 records; inspirational to say the least.

Stephen Taverner, current manager of Mercury Prize winning groups Wolf Alice and alt-J (ΔΔΔΔΔΔ), brought about some insights on how these two bands dealt with success, reminiscing about the early days of a cash-strapped alt-J with low-quality instruments which their songwriting was distinctive enough to transcend, and Wolf Alice’s evolution in stage presence and musical confidence – Wolf Alice recently embarked on their first ever Asian tour, and Stephen was especially pleased at the large local fanbases the band has garnered.

A climatic end to the day brought the BBC Radio 1Xtra Takeover which treated us to a

handful of live acts. While my West-Midlands heart was slightly crushed on hearing the news that Lady Leshurr was too ill to perform; we were not left disappointed with energetic performances from the likes of: Geko, Shakka, Lotto Boyz, Donae’o, and Chronixx, among others. The highlight for me was a performance from Nao. I’d best describe her work as a tasteful blend of Mura Masa, Frank Ocean, and SZA, so I was excited to hear her perform songs from her new album Saturn.

It was clear to me that the event forms the musical foundation for not only the expertise, but also the inspiration, of the next generation’s musical talents. The best of which I’m sure were present over the three days. Many people exchanged their details and Instagram handles with me (e.g. @alexmitcham ahem) throughout the day so I hope to keep an eye on this flourishing talent in years to come.

MUSIC

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No money? No problem. On the art of living life as a

London is expensive, that much is undeniable. But this doesn't mean you have to miss out on the enormous wealth of its bustling music scene. Imperial alumna Sabina Nowakowska shares her wisdom on how to experience some fantastic live music on a tight student budget.

MUSIC

Sabina Nowakowska
Music Writer

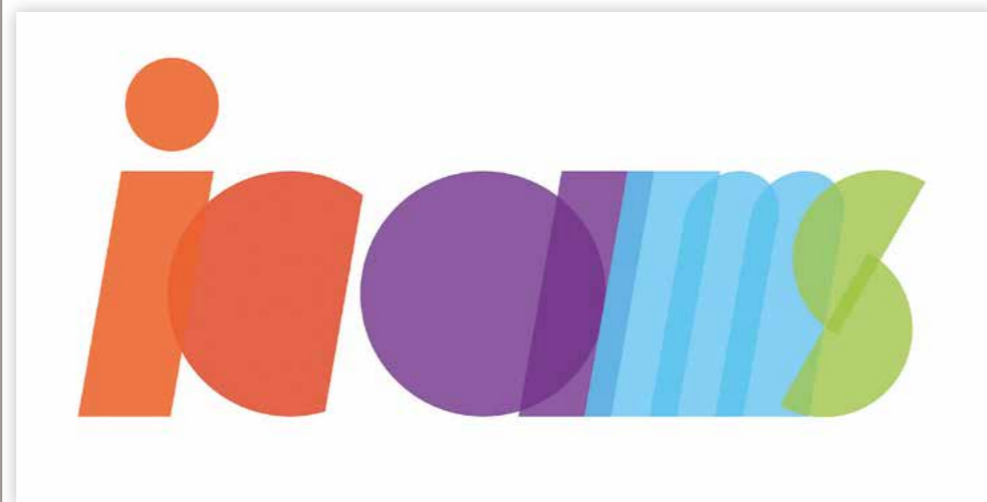
When I came to London four years ago, I was far more excited about the capital's rich music scene than I was about starting university. Naturally, I expected life in the big city to be more expensive than the Polish countryside. Little did I know, however, the size of the difference was far greater than I could have imagined. Having barely enough money to survive as an Imperial student I couldn't even think of buying expensive tickets to gigs. It felt kind of bittersweet – I was finally so close to all these iconic venues and my

favourite artists, yet they remained so out of reach. Nevertheless, I was keen to explore the new sonic landscape I found myself in. My growing interest in world music led me to realise that gigs of this kind were usually pretty cheap (if not free!) and the vibe is *always* great. You could get unbelievably high quality for low prices, so of course I started exploring options there. Like with everything else in life, the first step is all it takes to get the ball rolling and soon I learnt about numerous venues offering free gigs across various genres and ways to get discounts. Now, after 4 years of studies at Imperial College filled with hard work and intense research, I can say with confidence that I possess a wealth of knowledge about cheap

gigs in London, which I am generously deciding to share with you, dear poor student, in this article. Here are my tips on how to get the most out of London scene without spending a fortune.

Join Alternative Music Society

Start here. It's the best society at Imperial. (I'm not at all biased, I definitely didn't spend half of my time at Imperial being on the committee...). AMS sells subsidised tickets to gigs, but most importantly you'll meet cool people who share your passion for music and can help you stay updated about everything music. Also, watch out for the events organised by other societies. Jazz&Rock holds regular events where you can listen to Imperial's



Felix Music endorses this society // Alternative Music Society

very own student bands at the Union for free or for a couple of quid. We also have orchestras, choirs, acapella groups etc. who perform regularly, so if you want to experience the artistic side of Imperial and support your friends, go and explore what Beit venues have on offer.

Visit small venues

Enjoying live music from the comfort of a campus sounds like a nice option. It's easy to limit yourself to the Imperial bubble, but by all means try not to! Once you feel comfortable with your new home and have made new friends, get out of

South Ken and explore. There are plenty of pubs in London that host live rock/blues/jazz bands and don't always charge for entry (and if they do it's a very small fee), for example: The Old Blue Last, The Shacklewell Arms, The Blues Kitchen, Ain't Nothin But... the list goes on. Some record



Why not see it before graduation? Just in case...// Wikimedia

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penniless music-lover in London.



Alexa, show me photos of all the gigs I'm missing // Pexels

shops like Rough Trade also host gigs, especially on Record Store Days, though sometimes it means you have to buy something from them. If you fancy listening to some classical or chamber music, then visit London churches which often organise free concerts or visit our RCM neighbours.

Go to festivals

London hosts loads of festivals. During the summer plenty of open-air events happen all over the city and some have free entry, like the Walthamstow Garden Party and the Korean Festival in Trafalgar Square, so keep your eyes open for those. The currently ongoing London Jazz Festival has the whole lot of free shows in its programme. And let's not forget about the BBC Proms. The biggest classical music festival in the world that offers 75 concerts over two summer months happens just across the road. You can enter the grand auditorium of Royal Albert Hall for a mere £6 and be blessed with world-class performances. If classical

music is not your thing, don't worry, the festival also features Late Night Proms, which I can't recommend enough. Over the years I have seen the likes of Jarvis Cocker, Nils Frahm, Quincy Jones, Jacob Collier, Stormzy, Laura Mvula and Leo Pellegrino playing with an orchestra as part of this series. Watch out for the shows conducted by Jules Buckley, they are always pure gold!

Join young people schemes

Some of the most prestigious London venues offer generous schemes for people between 16 and 25 (sometimes 30) years old. Young Barbican is a free membership scheme that gives large discounts on tickets to most events and you're never charged a booking fee. Sometimes they even have free events. So there you go – for very little money you can enjoy wonderful artists in one of the London's most famous venues – the Barbican Centre. I saw Tim Hecker there for only £5 in September. Another pearl of brutalist architecture –

Southbank Centre – also warmly welcomes young people to their buildings. They offer probably the widest range of free events and they always have a limited number of student tickets with 25% discount. Moreover, you can sign up for their "under 30 scheme". Every two weeks you will be sent an email with the promo code to get free or £10 tickets for selected events.

Going further east into more hipster parts of London, RichMix in Shoreditch offers a Mixer membership for a fiver. You can get free tickets to some of their shows, if you're quick enough. Although, don't expect any big names here. On the other hand, Get In members can get £5 tickets for some of the shows at Roundhouse.

(I'm focusing on music here, but these memberships give you discounts on other things too, such as cinema, exhibitions and theatre).

Download apps

You may want to download a few apps to

save some pennies. If you're a classical music geek, then get Student-Pulse and you will get access to classical music concerts across London for no more than a tenner. If you're planning on seeing big names and decide to spend those £60 on Arctic Monkeys, consider buying it through Dice if possible – you will at least save a couple quid on the booking fees. Dice's fees are much lower than other ticketing agencies and every now and then they put on sales, which means you can save even more money. And if the event is sold out and your last resort is a second-hand ticket – get it through Twickets – don't get ripped off by ViaGoGo scammers. Twickets is a reliable reselling platform supported by many artists allowing tickets to be sold only for face value or less.

Take part in competitions and random draws

"You never win these things" people say, but you often find they've actually never tried or gave up after one failure.

There are a lot of websites that try to organise your free time and promote cool things to do in London. They often have free tickets to shows to give away in competitions or promo codes for discounts. So keep an eye out for offers from TimeOut, London Calling, Mr Hyde etc. If you sign up to their newsletters you will stay updated about what's happening in London and know about free opportunities. The drawback is that your mailbox gets filled with useless shit as well. But it can be worth it – that's how I got to see Massive Attack for free at BST festival in Hyde Park. Follow your favourite artists on social media, they also post about free giveaways for their shows.

I also strongly recommend signing up for BBC audiences. They record concerts of all kinds (ranging from classical through jazz to rock), radio, and TV shows. They need to fill up their studios with an audience somehow and they do that through random draws. You just need to apply. I was lucky enough to be

in the audience for one of the episodes of Later... with Jools Holland (after about 2 years of applying though, so be persistent!).

Work or volunteer

Last, but not least, if you don't have money but do have time, a good option is to volunteer at festivals. It's not ideal, as sometimes you're not able to see your favourite acts, but you can at least watch some gigs as a reward for your work, and you get the chance to be close to the action and spend time in areas not accessible to regular customers. You can also try to get a job at one of the venues and get paid whilst also being able to catch a glimpse of what's happening on stage. This is basically what happened to my life after graduation.

That's it from me. Now, go and enjoy some live music, there really is no excuse not to!

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Nine Dutch Guys Bring the Heat to Blustery Camden

MUSIC

JUNGLE BY NIGHT



Support Artist: Project Karnak. **Venue:** The Jazz Cafe. **Date:** 16th November 2018. **Ticket Price:** £13.20.

Tobi Ampapa

Music Writer

Jungle By Night may not be a name on everyone's radar - but they more than should be. The nine-piece instrumental collective, hailing from Amsterdam, has a sound that lies somewhere in the middle of jazz, afrobeat (I'm talking your uncle's favourite Fela) and funk. The group has been steadily making a name for themselves since forming in 2009, playing everywhere from smaller

venues like the Duke of Cumberland in Whitstable to renowned festivals like Pinkpop, North Sea Jazz and Glastonbury. Having spent their down time between albums scoring the stage production of *The Jungle Book*, the boys descended on the sold out Jazz Cafe last Friday, to celebrate the launch of their 5th album, *Livingstone*, having previously teased only a handful of new tracks at their last London show in March.

Opening the show with an incredible solo from trumpeter Bo Floor, it seems apparent that with each album, their sound has become more refined and the multicultural influences are more readily heard. This album is undoubtedly more global and anthemic, with songs like "The Fog", and "Spectacles", parts 1 and 2, sounding like they



Jungle By Night is under no circumstances an act to be missed. // V2 Records

could be taken straight off a spy thriller soundtrack. Overall, this new album takes on a decidedly more dance vibe than its predecessor *The Traveller*.

That being said, the spirit of what makes a Jungle By Night show a Jungle By Night show was still there: with each member getting

their moment to shine with solos, dismantled trombones, djembe breakdowns, and more jumping than is probably advisable.

Whilst taking a quick breather to chat, trombonist Ko Zandvliet explained that they wanted to capture the essence and the heat of the previous Dutch

summer, even going so far as to record ambient bird sounds at the countryside house where the album was made, on songs such as "Hangmat". So if the plan was to make a hot album, a party album, a get-up-and-dance album, then judging by the crowd that night, they more than succeeded.

The band closed out the show with a new interpretation of their thundering classic "Attila," proving once again why they're worth seeing again and again. Go alone, go with a crew, either way you'll have a great time, because their infectious energy makes Jungle By Night an act not to be missed.

Marie Davidson pours out her soul

MUSIC

WORKING CLASS WOMAN



Artist: Marie Davidson. **Label:** Ninja Tune. **Top Tracks:** Work It; The Tunnel; The Psychologist. **For Fans Of:** Essaie Pas; La Fraîcheur; Helena Hauff. **43 minutes**

Lucille Calmon

Music Writer

While Marie Davidson's albums have always been personal, *Working Class Woman* leaves a different feeling. She said that it is "an album where I have started to work with my psyche, trying to access a level of my consciousness that I was not aware of before."

And indeed, it reads as her most personal and diverse album to date.

The album begins on what could first appear as its conclusion. Marie Davidson aligns, one after the other, remarks and questions that could be (and probably are) made by her fans. On a reasonably chaotic background she asks "so, frankly, is this album about taking risks?" and between lines that insist on the lack of humanity that some fans might have towards her, she repeats to herself "Who are you?". This seems to be what this album is about. It does involve taking risks but it is mostly a self reflective album where Marie takes us on a subconscious poppy dream.

Through the diverse track listing she alternates between more fun and

funky sounds like in 'So Right' (the type of song that you dance to at a house party and to which you don't pay much attention), and chaotic tracks where the lyrics barely make any sense anymore, and screechy electronic samples that make you want to curl up in ball like in 'The Tunnel'. This track features French and English in what appears to be disarticulated self reflections where she talks about 'The Tunnel', a distressing dark environment in which she needs to dig by herself to come out stronger. The power of this track lies in the strength of the lyrics that suddenly make sense again when she seems to gain back lucidity and says in French (translated) "I hadn't understood that I can't love if I don't love myself / love is not

a reward you get after having suffered / love is a gift". This spills out in between chaotic sentences that don't quite make sense (although her lyrics are so pictorial, one still needs to build their own interpretation) and these words stand out crystal clear and strike as a punch in the stomach.

But don't let me give you the wrong impression, both the strength and weakness of *Working Class Woman* is the mix of tracks that can be as fun as 'Work it' (a weird poppy song where she acclaims hard work and self love in a funny and frankly quite sexy fashion) and as deep as 'The Tunnel' or 'The Psychologist' (of which the topic remains left to interpretation). This makes a diverse record which does not feel especially heavy but is indeed a bit of an



She said "see you later, boi" // Ninja Tune

emotional rollercoaster. Marie Davidson offers us forty-three minutes in her head where we get to witness everything from uplifted and carefree to darker feelings. What she means isn't always

obvious but this freedom of interpretation is part of the game. And when she wants us to know something, she makes sure to say it straight.

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Kevin Parker, is that you? // Wikimedia

Courtney Barnett tells us how she really feels

Frenetic Australian singer-songwriter Courtney Barnett tears up Brixton as part of her Tell Me How You Really Feel tour. Striking a balance between tenacity and tenderness, her new material stikes a chord with audiences.

MUSIC

COURTNEY BARNETT



Support Artist: Rolling Blackouts Coastal Fever; Laura Jean. **Venue:** O2 Academy Brixton. **Date:** 14th November 2018. **Ticket Price:** £22 (Through Alternative Music Society).

Miles Gulliford

Music Writer

Courtney Barnett has been crafting witty, mid-paced indie gems for half a decade; on a mild Wednesday evening she treated Brixton to a well-deserved outing of her latest material.

After an all-Australian warm up roster, featuring the three-guitar jangle-juggernaut that is Rolling Blackouts Coastal Fever (think Interpol meets Cream), Courtney Barnett took to the stage in front of a mostly middle-aged crowd at the O2 Academy.

Barnett's latest album may brim with the same high-octane energy as 2015's *Sometimes I Sit and think...*, but as the oozing groove of 'Hopefulness' emerged from a cacophony of feedback; it became apparent that there was more to her work than a casual Spotify listen would suggest.

Barnett and her cohort were there not for the vain theatrics, but for the music. Each member

focused largely on their instrument, coaxing out the most that each song could give, while four-thousand heads bobbed along. The result was a powerful haze that simmered and bubbled beneath the cute melodies and tongue in cheek wordplay for which Barnett has made herself a name. In instrumental breaks the band's energy boiled over, wringing the most out of their simple arrangements.

Many crowd members were already mouthing along as Barnett crooned "take your broken heart / turn it into art...". Her band, feeding off the energy that filled the academy, remained effortlessly cool, while eliciting increasing excitement from its spectators. Roars,

whoops and whistles would erupt as Barnett stumbled her way across the stage, bent double over her guitar after delivering another unflinching verse. Her vocal performance was strong throughout the night, capturing the same character and power found on her studio cuts.

Midway through the set, opener Laura Jean returned to the stage to provide sax and vocals (uncannily similar to those of Courtney herself) for a cover of the Go-Betweens' 'Streets of your town'; another homage to the Milk! record label owner's Aussie roots. Barnett might have been better suited to cover one of her peers - Julien Baker, or long-time partner Jen Cloher perhaps - as it

became evident that the crowd was not particularly familiar with the track, and a lull ensued.

Passion from the crowd quickly returned as Barnett launched back into her own material. 'I'm not your mother, I'm not your bitch', the audience bellowed with relish, the raucous anti-snob anthem clearly a fan favourite.

'Nameless, Faceless' and its effortless handling of internet critics and gender politics in one fell swoop was another choice cut. Ms. Barnett's impossibly quotable lyrics, "Men are scared that women will laugh at them / women are scared that men will kill them" and "I could eat a bowl of alphabet soup / and spit out better words than you"

were certainly not lost on her adoring audience. Friends exchanged knowing grins at each lilted one-liner.

After a sublimely chosen setlist, parading the singer's most beloved tunes, the crunching riff of 'Pedestrian at Best' pushed Brixton into the beautiful chaos of dance. Nothing was left to be proved for Barnett and her band, they had managed to add something beyond words to what was already a set of very strong songs. Readers would be advised to catch Barnett and her crowd next time they pass through London.

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ARTS

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Gang signs and a Prayer

Erica Whyman updates Romeo and Juliet for the modern age.

ARTS



Where? The Barbican
When? 2nd Nov – 19th Jan
How Much? £10-59.50

Indira Mallik
Arts Writer

In their tracksuit hoodies and their Adidas creaks, their mesh crop tops and skinny black jeans, their baseball caps and performative, cocksure swagger, the teenagers of Erica Whyman's Verona would not look out place in a Stormzy video. In the new RSC production of *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare's Italian city has been built in modern day London's image. We don't have to suspend our disbelief too much; this story of streets where

a misjudged remark is answered by a flash of a knife is sadly not all that unfamiliar.

It's not just the wardrobe that Whyman has updated, but the narrative too. The programme calls it "queering the pitch"; in practice, genders are a bit more fluid, queer themes a little more explicit. Benvolio's love for Romeo is more overtly romantic than historical adaptations suggest, though even here it is painfully silent, burdened by layers of repression and heteronormativity. Charlotte Josephine plays Mercutio as a glittering loud-mouthed seventeen-year old girl constantly spoiling for a fight. Josephine is luminous in the role, filling the stage with tremendous energy and appropriately mercurial physicality. In first couple of acts

she is larger than life, brimming with bravado which quickly collapses in her dying moments. Josephine with poignancy shows Mercutio for who she really is – angry yes, but also impossibly young and scared.

The great strength of Whyman's adaptation is its ability to strip back the trappings of the Elizabethan English to reveal its principal characters as the children they are, only just blossoming into adulthood. Here, Romeo and Juliet, Benvolio and Mercutio, are kids full of their own importance, kids sure of their immortality, kids forced to grow up too fast in brutal, violent ways.

Senseless rage and pointless acts of retribution, not star-crossed love are at the heart of this production. The menacing glint of sharp blades is

ever-present. The stage has been constructed by designer Tom Piper as a brutalist concrete mausoleum, cold and vast. In the world of these teenagers, the pretty things – the strings of twinkling lights that descend in place of stars during the balcony scenes, or the huge lush wall of ferns that acts as a backdrop for the Friar's home – are fragile, acutely transient.

The smash bang of the electronica-inspired score punctuates this punchy adaptation, but for all its modern flourishes, the adaptation is still classically good. The passages that will for many in the audience be familiar, never feel trite. The hugely charismatic Barry Gill is excellent as Romeo, capturing both a rogueish impulsivity and flashes of loving sensitivity in his performance.



O Romeo, Romeo, stop pulling my hair // Topher McGrillis

Karen Fishwick as Juliet is equally good. The young actors are ably supported by a talented roster of castmates playing the older roles, with Isha Bennison as Nurse and Andrew French as the Friar standing out as scene-stealing performers.

There is diversity of gender, skin-tone, experience and accent in the

big speaking roles and while this is commendable, what is even better is that none of this is superfluous. Whyman's production without pretension or fanfare illuminates this play of passion and violence for our age. The result is a wonderful production but one that is rather more classical than it would first appear.

Walk Swiftly and With Purpose: a debut to remember

Simultaneously playful and insightful, this play offers a brilliantly realistic and nostalgic glimpse into the lives of four teenage girls as they navigate growing up in the 21st century.

ARTS



Where? Theatre 503
When? 13th-17th Nov
How Much? £10

Shivani Ganagadia
Arts Writer

Three Sisters' production company, brainchild of Siofra, Grainne, and Cara Dromgoole, immediately throws us into the world of a group of schoolgirls on the cusp of adulthood. Eve, Lana, Robbie, and Misha, despite the deep and powerful themes they explore together, ultimately

represent the unflinching devotion and love between friends, all the way through the chaotic teenage years that resonate with us all. They're hilariously relatable, albeit a bit pretentious, living sheltered lives in the comfort of an all-girls private school. We meet them at the exact moment they suddenly encounter real-life problems and have to learn to deal with them. No longer existing in their fantasies of what adulthood is, they realise it may not be all it's cracked up to be.

When I read that this is Siofra Dromgoole's first live play as a writer, I was surprised. Her inexperience is unnoticeable,

with a script that artfully combines witty repartee between the girls with serious and, at times, deeply unsettling scenes between Mr Hughes and Misha – teacher and student, as well as sudden intense monologues directed towards the audience by each character. This rapid switching between naturally flowing, light-hearted conversation and emotional, vulnerable soliloquies to the audience is a bold choice – done poorly it has the potential to derail the entire play – but somehow the transitions are effortless, in spite of the abrupt changes of tone, most likely thanks to the excellent direction of Imy Wyatt Corner. It elevates



Teenage turmoil: a resounding success // Three Sisters Productions

the play from simply being four somewhat privileged girls talking about typical teenage troubles, to something much more thought-provoking.

The extraordinary potential of the all-female crew behind this production is unprecedented; the way I see it, the sky is the limit considering the

resounding success of this play. I only wish it were longer than 50 minutes – with exceptional performances from rising stars with great chemistry, I could have easily continued watching the lives of these characters unfold for another hour.

Unfortunately, by the time of this article

publishing, the show will no longer be showing, but keep a watchful eye out for the next Three Sisters production – I can assure you it is not to be missed! Now, I only wish I could Walk Swiftly and With Purpose back to the theatre to see this show one more time.

ARTS

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Pinter Three: Love and longing

A masterpiece of loneliness, fragility and human connection.

ARTS



Where? Harold Pinter Theatre
When? Until 8th Dec
How Much? £15 for <30s

Claire Chan
Arts Editor

One way of looking at speech is to say that it is a constant stratagem to cover nakedness." This statement by Harold Pinter sums up excellently the motif that is characteristic of his work, and which makes his plays so powerful. In them, what is said is but a flimsy covering for the things that remain unsaid, revealing despite itself the raw nakedness of human emotion beneath. In Pinter Three, a collection of eleven of Pinter's

short plays touching on memory and loneliness, the "poverty within us" is picked out with brilliant clarity. Not explicitly, but obliquely – like the stark shadows cast by objects when a bright light is shone on them.

The evening opens to a phenomenal start with *Landscape*, a hard-hitting play which packs an emotional punch. Tamsin Grieg shines here as Beth, a woman lost in a romantic reverie of the past, using a lilting Irish accent that adds to the wistful nostalgia of the play. Keith Allen plays her foil as Beth's crude, down-to-earth husband. Ostensibly having a conversation, an unbridgeable gulf yawns between the two. Who are they really talking to? Each is utterly alone in their own recollections, and the darkness in the story encroaches slowly,

before we know it.

Grieg and Allen in *Landscape* bring out Pinter's masterful ability to alternate between comic and tragic. Something will be funny, and all of a sudden, without warning, a character will let something slip, and we see that it is actually intensely sad. Another standout example is the short sketch *Girls*, with Tom Edden as a professor relating a story about "girls who want to be spanked". Likewise with comedian Lee Evans' brilliant rendition of *Monologue*, which Evans came out of retirement to act in. Chatting animatedly to an empty chair, the protagonist of *Monologue* is trapped in old memories and confabulations. But with his jaunty demeanour and spring-loaded mannerisms, Evans brings tears to our eyes – whether from laughter or sadness

I'm not quite sure. We are swung from frank hilarity to aching sorrow in less than a heartbeat.

A great deal of what happens in a Pinter play happens between the lines, behind the scenes. What we see is merely the tip of the iceberg. Scratching the surface of loneliness. Whether it's a man having a conversation with an absent friend, or a professor inventing a fantasy about a girl he's seen once on the street. And yet there is tenderness to be found there, too. In *Night*, a man and a woman argue about the details of their first rendezvous – was it against railings, or on a bridge? Each has their own version of that magical first meeting, but in the end, it doesn't matter. Evans and Meera Syal bring this beautiful little piece to life with truly believable affection.



Tamsin Grieg in *Landscape* // Marc Brenner

Huge props to Jamie Lloyd for curating these eleven plays. Despite spanning almost fifty years of Pinter's work, they flow smoothly in this frankly astounding production. Soutra Gilmour's versatile revolving set, illuminated by a singular lightbulb, whirls

us seamlessly from one scene to the next. With this remarkable cast of actors, we see the shades of emotional subtlety in each piece, how the nature of memory is wholly subjective. This is Pinter at his finest.

Pinter Four: Not quite hitting the standard

Despite witty dialogue and some great performances, key weaknesses let down this staging of two Pinter one-act plays.

ARTS



Where? Harold Pinter Theatre
When? Till 8th Dec
How Much? £15 for <30s

Matteo Tabaro
Ned Summers

Arts Writers

If you had taken the advice that ended our five-star review of Pinter Two three weeks ago, you would have rushed to buy tickets to one of the shows in this series. Pinter Three, also reviewed in this issue, lives up to this but in Pinter Four we find that not all scripts are created equal and when

the balance of plot and dialogue are misjudged, both playing and directing becomes a minefield.

The first of the two plays, *Moonlight*, struggles to find its tone. It is fundamentally an exploration of death and family. Besides the haunting monologues from wide-eyed and moonlight-cloaked Bridget (Isis Hainsworth) that begin and end the play, the stage is centered around the bed of Andy (Robert Glenister) as he lies dying. The curtains remain half-open and the boxed set, complete with verbally-sparring married couple Andy and Bel (Brie Brennan), initially feels like a slightly dated multi camera sitcom. – complete with various

family members and affiliates crossing through the stage, all supposedly in different places or times.

There are some standout moments. Janie Dee delivers a number of fantastic speeches as Maria, ex-lover of both Andy and Bel, fully embracing the characteristic snappiness of Pinter's writings. Once up and running, most of the issues disappear. Glenister is captivating once Andy shifts from nonchalance and anger to crisis and collapse. The two brothers, Jake and Fred (Al Weaver and Dwane Walcott), who appear as cut-scenes, by halfway are dealing out lyrical and absurd dialog in perfect Pinteresque fashion. It's just a shame

that it doesn't begin so.

Night School, the second play, shifts the focus to the theme of deception in everyday life. Still filled with Pinter's wit, this play doesn't shine for its plot. Walter (Al Weaver), fresh out of prison, tries, exaggerating his crimes, to seduce Sally (Jessica Barden), a PE teacher, supposedly studying at night school but in fact working at a nightclub. Solto (Glenister again), a stingy and narcissistic ex-criminal, who fakes being a poor pensioner to evade taxes, enters the competition for Sally's hand. Within this bland frame Walter's two aunts uplift the mood with their peanut-gallery commentary, giving some

Pinteresque flavour to the whole situation.

Fortunately the Jamie Lloyd Company succeeded in turning what could have been a forgettable experience, into an opportunity for experimentation with minimalist staging. Originally conceived for television, its script doesn't describe much of the setting. The director Ed Stambollouian undertakes this challenge with some interesting and risky stylistic decisions. On stage is the bare bones of what could be a room: a gargantuan cubic frame is at its centre, creating various layers where the action takes place. The brilliant Abbie Finn, always present in the background, plays on a drum

kit, beating the action, and giving a hysteric twist to the transitions between the scenes. Jon Clark's lighting design is magnificent, bringing into life the actors' actions, and perfectly marrying the drum's rhythms. Stambollouian successfully amalgamates contemporary and more traditional theatre, bringing some refreshing courage to the West End.

Pinter Four is definitely an enjoyable show. Maybe not as life-changing as others, but nonetheless the Jamie Lloyd Company doesn't fail to confirm itself as one of the most curious experiences now available on the market.

ARTS

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A Small Place and a Big Message

Prepare to be exposed to the hard truth of colonialism and cruelty.

ARTS



Where? The Gate Theatre
When? Till 1st Dec
How Much? £12 for <26s

Tesni Haddon-Mcmillan
Arts Writer

Once you enter the Gate Theatre, you are brought into a room lined with rows of chairs and scattered with seemingly out-of-place objects. Looking around, you see that there is no stage and you realise that the 'show' you believed you were coming to see is far closer to a private meeting. With no announcement, lights dim, music blares and the performance begins.

A Small Place is an involved two-person narrative of the 1988 essay of Jamaica Kincaid. The piece focuses on corruption, slavery and general human filth and throughout, the audience is made to feel responsible for it all. This confrontational performance is given by our narrators, Cherrelle Skeete and Nicola Alexis, who take turns to tell of the shame of tourism and the gross English occupancy of Antigua. Skeete's character appears to be the calmer of the two and although she acknowledges the horror of what is happening in Antigua, she is also in a state of denial and cautious positivity when the piece begins. It is Alexis, with her calculated and hard reason, who eventually works the pair into a rage and shows the audience the true hatred boiling in the hearts of these two women.

The intensity and intimacy of this work is incredible and stifling. The clever use of light and the discomfiting use of static and noise surrounds the audience. Better still are the narrators themselves who truly carry the performance. In both Skeete and Alexis, there is an urgency and raw emotion in face and voice. The pair directly entreat the audience and under their gaze, we are left feeling quite naked, particularly when Skeete is brought to the verge of tears speaking of the wrongs of slavery. It truly is an emotional and powerful experience.

As stated though, it is the actors that drive this piece and there were what I felt to be unnecessary and distracting additions to the work. The room is littered with mundane items; a projector is used to focus the audience on a particular image or to encourage us to imagine our own, books are used to represent knowledge and stress the importance of the old Antigua library. But these small props are where it should have been left. There was a screen in one corner of the room

placed on a bookshelf. At seemingly random points, the screen would turn on and show some image or film without audio. Most confusing was the inclusion of a scene from the classic Disney film, *Beauty and the Beast*. This clip was later distorted and played at an increased speed and in negative; perhaps it was actually a very brilliant reference, but it was definitely lost on me. The actors also quite literally weaved through the audience, handing members a string of red wool as they went. This appeared to be a means of representing the slave trade and the red blood linking us all. However, I found that I was more conscious of not tripping up one of the narrators than actually listening to what they had to say.

Putting this aside, *A Small Place* had some genuinely inspiring moments and its dark humour was an important, if not painful, reminder of our beastly history. The wonderful description of Antigua's beauty and the terrible account of tragedy will certainly stay with me for a long time.



Nicola Alexis as narrator // Helen Murray



Millennial anxiety // John Hunter

Super Duper Close Up

Anecdotes from an online life.

ARTS



Where? Sadlers Wells
When? 19th – 20th Oct
How Much? From £15

Amanda Hertzberg
Arts Writer

One moment screaming passionately, the next sitting in the audience eating popcorn, Jessica Latowicki's creative performance will feel like all of your anxieties embodied in front of you. Throw in a camera, some French skincare and a backdrop of a dark forest and you have *Super Duper Close Up*.

Covered in glittery props and drowned in the tunes of bubblegum pop a la Robyn, it is a one-woman play written and performed by Latowicki. Despite the glitzy set up, her 80 minute monologue is everything but sparkly and upbeat. She manages to perform the anxiety of a millennial career woman all in the span of one story, which she sidetracks from and returns to throughout the play. You could say it is a ramble, or a rant of sorts, but a fun one indeed. Latowicki's nihilistic comments will have the audience laughing from minute to minute, things like "I read the news at night just so that I can justify my nightmares and

insomnia". Through this pessimistic ramble, we get a glimpse into a very real person, and much of it is very relatable for a young adult in today's capitalistic reality. Latowicki is dressed in a shiny, green dress and is standing in the middle of the stage very determinedly. She has this angry Piper Chapman (*Orange Is The New Black*) energy about her. The whole setting is eerie (think Stanley Kubrick's two girls in *The Shining*).

Apart from a maybe unnecessarily dragged out dance scene towards the end, the whole play fits together seamlessly with all its agendas and media. The experimental integration of technology is brilliant. Latowicki criticises our use of technology today, our 'scrolling and scrolling' through social medias, at the same time as the play builds on the use of it. Large parts of the play are livestreamed on a screen as they are simultaneously taking place right in front of you. Sometimes you are unsure which one you should be looking at (I mean this in the best way possible), if you might miss something by just looking at the screen. The camera becomes a narrative in itself, choosing to zoom in very close, showing only selected parts of a particular scene. A lot of the play is centered

around this topic, about spending your life looking at screens, jiggling too many open tabs, ordering too many things online and posting too many things on your instagram for everyone to see.

Latowicki is easy to listen to, but can still make you feel uncomfortable with scenes of her panting and screaming, or even dancing in a very sexual manner, with the camera very close up to her. She is relatable but intimidating, satirical and scary. At the end of the show you feel like you almost know her as well as you know yourself.

Super Duper Close Up keeps you captivated from the beginning all the way through till the end. The mix of media in this play works together nicely. Latowicki is a storyteller who can really milk a concept for all it's worth. When the lights dim down at the end and everyone starts clapping, you'll think it's much too early for it to already be over, but also realise you just spent 80 minutes listening to one single dragged out story and a lot of millennial anxiety. If you want to spend a very intimate evening being entertained by various anecdotes depicted in experimental ways, definitely go over to Hackney Wick for Made In China's *Super Duper Close Up*, you won't regret it!

ARTS

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Simon Boccanegra

The stage at the Royal Opera House morphed into the streets and rich saloons of 14th century Genoa, for an evening of political games, action-packed scenes and high-quality music.

ARTS



Where? Royal Opera House
When? Until 10 December
How Much? Tickets nearly sold out

Maria Portela

Arts Writer

This season's first performance of *Simon Boccanegra* was dedicated to the memory of Montserrat Caballé, the famous opera singer in the bel canto tradition. If the melodic, legato lines of Verdi's arias are a meaningful tribute to this diva's style of singing, none of the cast could quite compare to her world-famous quality.

The opera is structured in a prologue and three acts and tells the story of a Genoese corsair who is elected Doge by the people. After twenty-five years, his long-lost illegitimate daughter is found, adopted by her unsuspecting actual granddad, and falls in love with the son of his greatest enemy. Nobleman and plebeians weave their way through the convoluted political scene of the city, rebel, envy, commit treachery and reconcile, up to a tragic finale. Care was taken to show the passing of time: singers returned from the 'twenty-five years later' interlude with visibly whiter hair.

For those who do not speak Italian, subtitles are provided. Still, it is hard to follow the action at times, particularly in duets or trios, as captions do not



Simon Boccanegra//Clive Barda

clearly mark the transition from one character's line to another's. And one can't suppress the feeling of some details being lost in translation, as often long lines are translated to only a few English words.

"...spectacular sword fights..."

The sets are enormous, with the same columns and tiled floor as a common element for every scene. Simple details were added from scene to scene: the Doge's personal belongings, a palace's front door, some scribbled Italian graffiti, or a lone bench in a colonnade. During the first act, a particularly empty stage proved too hard to fill for a lonely Hrachuhi Bassenz, singing Amelia Grimaldi. With the entrance of Carlos Álvarez, as Simon Boccanegra, the set regained energy and interest.

There are of course some brilliant moments. Francesco Meli as

Gabriele Adorno earned the audience applause with his solo aria, and Ferruccio Furlanetto as Jacopo Fiesto impressed with his consistently solid performance, always sounding clearly and louder than the orchestra.

The anonymous and often forgotten cast also deserves praise: every chorus moment brought life to the stage, bursts of action contrasting with operatic, frozen-in-time sections. Their off-stage lines had a dark, ghostly feeling that overall contributed to the intensity of the drama. Musically, the orchestra was beautiful and precise, supporting the scene without becoming the protagonist. In terms of collective performance, the full section in the council chambers is unforgettable, involving spectacular sword fights, incredible coordination, alternating arias, ensembles and choruses, in an exciting crescendo of dramatic tension and exhilarating music.

And Then There Were None like it

A warm invitation to a performance of, arguably, the most popular whodunit ever.

ARTS

Calum Drysdale

Arts Writer

What if I asked you what the most popular book ever written was? Off the top of your head. Think fast. Now you can feel smug if you thought the Bible, and even smugger if you got Shakespeare in second but what about third? Now we can quibble about figures but why don't you take my word for it or, if you saw the same Reddit post, Reddit's word for it. Published in November 1939, *And Then There Were None* is the story of a group of people who are lured to an island by an unknown host and are killed off one by one. You may have heard of it; it is the sort of book that you have heard about, perhaps due to its unfortunate, now unprintable, original name, or read parodies of. That is its legacy.

What makes the book so special is the way that it subverts tropes and genre harder than a WOC parliament. Most murder mysteries can be expected to have quota of one murderer with a potential feeble assistant and a superfluity of oh-so-innocent and going on virtuous souls all dedicated to the task of rooting out the one bad egg who is shown up at the end.

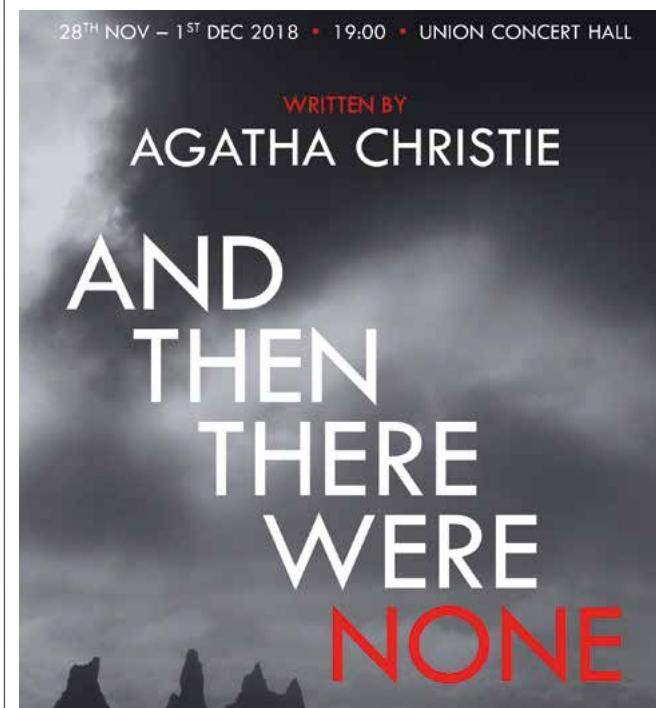
The Scooby-Doo reveal, while endlessly entertaining, has a long history, though it was previously associated with the church halls or market squares of Middle

England rather than a haunted fairground. *And Then There Were None* throws this formula out of the window by making every one of the characters murderers.

The idea, so ridiculous as to literally deserve ridicule, is made to work by Christie by cutting the whole plot off from the rest of the world on an island which gives the whole experience a claustrophobic and dream like quality. Fact and fiction blur together as everyone suspects everyone else of being the 'actual' murderer and people go just a lot mad. Again. Sound familiar or clichéd? That is because it is, now. How many films, books, plays, video games feature this device of a group of people trapped together and then people start dying? Maybe the words 'the black guy dies first' will jog your memory? And it all started here. Christie didn't even stop

there; her original plan was for the reader never to find out who killed the ten people on Soldier Island. Unfortunately, this was thought to be a bit too radical for the time, and probably still is nowadays to be honest.

Next week, Dramsoc will be putting on a performance of *And Then There Were None*, directed by Ansh Bhatnagar and Olivia Revans. "We hope to live up to the legacy of the book and give our audience both a night to remember and a satisfying conclusion to the mystery on Soldier Island. We would love you to come. The play will be running from Wednesday to Saturday, tickets, on the Union website or on the door, are only 7 pounds for IC students and we should be finished just in time for Sports night. We, the cast, hope to see you there!"



Directed by Olivia Revans & Ansh Bhatnagar//DramSoc

ARTS

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Hunting lions and building libraries... an interesting mix of hobbies // Flickr

I am Ashurbanipal, king of the world, king of Assyria

The British Museum presents a narrative of the life of Ashurbanipal, a ruthless ruler with a passion for writing.

ARTS



Where? British Museum
When? Until 24 February
How much? Adults £17,
 Students £14, 2 for 1 offer
 for students on Fridays

Catalina Costenco
Arts Writer

To many, the name Ashurbanipal, will sound unfamiliar or may bring back distant memories of history classes. Assyria, one of the greatest kingdoms in the world, was at its peak in 631BC, with lands extending from the modern day Cyprus to Iraq and Egypt. This expansion was only possible under the competent reign of Ashurbanipal, youngest son of Esarhaddon.

So how can a man reign over such a massive empire? Compared to his

predecessors, Ashurbanipal was more than just a ruthless ruler - although he certainly was that, fearlessly impaling lions and slaying his enemies, be they a neighbouring rebellious king or his own older brother. The King of the Neo-Assyrian Empire was renowned for his mind, of which he was proud, as you will notice on the stonework displayed at the exhibition, where Ashurbanipal is presented with a spear in his hand and - more significantly - a stylus behind his belt.

“His passion for writing led him to establish The Royal Library... holding over 30,000 tablets”

Ashurbanipal's passion for writing led him to establish The Royal Library, located in the capital of Assyria, Nineveh, holding over 30,000 tablets consisting of diverse texts from legal documents to literary compositions including the Epic of Gilgamesh. A vast number of these tablets are present at the exhibition due to an unfortunate (or fortunate) occurrence. During the fall of Nineveh, an event recorded in Greek history and described in the Bible, many of these tablets were baked in the great fire that burned down the city, thus preserving them to this day.

In this exhibition, the British Museum presents the life of Ashurbanipal through over 250 exhibits from museums all around the world. From stone carvings to jewels, statues, and tablets, some of which have not been shown to the public eye in the past 15 years. The exhibition

takes you slowly through the history of Assyria before, during and after the reign of its greatest King, Ashurbanipal.

“...wall reliefs presenting stories of lion hunts, wars, and the relaxed life inside the palace...”

The exhibits allow you to fully immerse yourself in the castle life of the capital Nineveh, with wall reliefs presenting stories of lion hunts, wars, and the relaxed life inside the palace walls. In case you are lost while trying to understand what is happening on the stone carvings, the museum

has cleverly placed projectors to light up bits and pieces of the artefact, with accompanying sound effects, while projecting a description of the events in the carving nearby, creating a cohesive story.

I am Ashurbanipal: king of the world, king of Assyria is more than just an exhibition portraying some long forgotten history. At the end of the exhibition you will also be presented with a surprise: a video message from the women who are partaking in the Iraq Emergency Heritage Management Training Scheme.

“empowering Iraqi women”

This scheme, developed by the British Museum, empowers Iraqi women by providing them necessary archaeological training in an attempt to preserve their heritage.

Most of the exhibits have come from Nineveh, Iraq, a historical site that has seen appalling destruction at the hand of the Islamic State in 2015. Currently the British museum team with the Iraqi Board of Antiquities and Heritage are rescuing the archaeological treasures from the affected sites.

Splendour and might, this exhibition presents the peak of a civilisation the history of which remains unknown to many. Be ready to transport yourself more than 2,000 in the past as the King has left many stories behind worthy to be passed down in time, so come and listen to them passing through the exhibition which resembles a well written narrative with picturesque and captivating artefacts.

ARTS

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Life in the Dark: a momentary escape from the hustle and bustle of London

An immersive experience that grabs your attention from the moment you enter to the moment you leave

ARTS



Where? Natural History Museum

When? until 24th Feb 2019

How Much? £12.50; £8.50 students

Shivani Gangadia

Arts Writer

Enter a subterranean pitch-black cave, or even the vast deep-sea of the ocean in this new Natural History Museum exhibition, which introduces us to the astonishing lives of the elusive animals that exist in these seemingly uninhabitable environments. Divided into three main parts entitled “Life at night”,

“Life in caves”, and “Life in the deep”, we are met with countless nocturnal animals, cave-dwellers, and deep-sea creatures. Of the array of animals covered in the exhibition, ranging from small fuzzy aye-ayes to live Mexican blind cave fish, some seem almost alien. The fact that only 5% of the world’s seas have been encountered by humans makes us wonder what else could be lying below in the depths of the ocean – you’ll leave this exhibition believing anything is possible after seeing what already exists, such as the preserved black seadevil and dumbo octopus on display.

In classic Natural History Museum style, the exhibition is extremely

family-friendly, and there is a clear emphasis on the interactive aspect, as we encounter soundscapes, scents, light installations, and free-to-touch furry taxidermy animals, making it compelling and accessible for children and adults alike. Somehow an ideal balance has been struck between visual stimulation and interactivity suitable for children, yet enough written information to allow adults to engage as well.

There’s a wonderful blend of modern interactive displays with some of the museum’s specimens from their plentiful collections. All your senses are engaged, and the dim, almost non-existent lighting heightens all your other senses and

removes you from the bustling world outside of the exhibition. The first room hits you with a cacophony of night-time forest sounds, whilst the final room immerses you in a mesmerising simulation of a bioluminescent deep-sea environment, with hundreds of oscillating lights on the ceiling. And all that’s in between is equally as engaging. There’s a chance to see yourself through the eyes of a cave boa via an infrared live camera of the room, or smelling stations where various handheld devices emit odours for you to guess, including eucalyptus, lemon, mango, wood sap, as well as the less enticing guano (bat excrement) and worms.



Magic in the dark // NHM Trustees

Adults may find their ticket prices a little steep at £12.50, but with children 16 and under going in completely free, I’d say it’s a decent deal for a family. Concessions

at £8.50 may also find the price on the expensive side, but if you fancy splurging a little and treating yourself, this is a great bet.

Courage Everywhere: And Others – Emotion-Packed to The Core

ARTS



Where? National Theatre

When? 15th – 18th Nov

How Much? £15; £10 students

Ozbil Dumenci

Arts Writer

Over the last week, the National Theatre has marked the 100th anniversary of (some) women in the UK getting the right to vote through a series of talks, rehearsed readings and screenings that reflect on suffrage and the fight for equality. And Others, aptly named to represent the women whose voices “have been

lost to history” despite fighting for suffrage, was a brilliant opener to such a remarkable event.

As a non-British male, going into the rehearsed reading of this new play, I first realised how little I knew about the subject matter, which did scare me. Although, I thought it was best to embrace my lack of knowledge on the subject matter, and to learn from what I was about to witness. And learn, I did.

The reading, which was directed and performed by D/deaf (some prefer it to be capitalised) and disabled women, focused on the D/deaf and disabled women who fought for suffrage 100 years ago and the challenges these women face now, was

immersive and touching. It was clear from the first moment how passionate the cast was to be a part of such a remarkable play. Despite the very specific subject matter, the reading was inclusive throughout. Being informed first hand the amount of difficulties these women face in their day to day lives, such as difficulties in voting and getting jobs as serious actresses gave the reading an extra emotional punch, as now the play was not just about women who lived 100 years ago, but women who live now amongst us.

Perhaps the most shocking part of the reading was how relevant it felt to the current world. Particularly, it was eye-opening to find out about the challenges disabled people

still face in voting. In fact, according to And Others, 17% of disabled people were turned away at polling stations in 2014, a number which astonished me. This was due to unquipped polling stations, and a lack of easy-read voting ballots, amongst other reasons.

Other current issues that the women touched upon included the gender pay-gap, LGBT rights, feminism, men’s roles in feminism and the #MeToo movement, with a not-so-subtle reference to the widely publicised sexual assault accusations towards the then-United States Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh by Dr Christine Ford.

Arguably the most significant running theme



A hundred years of the vote? // National Theatre

throughout the reading was the importance of learning from our past to avoid repeating some mistakes in the future. In times like these, it is of utmost importance to appreciate how far we’ve come in the last 100 years to establishing fair, equal communities, although it

is at least as vital to know how far there is to go.

As pointed out by an audience member during the Q&A following the performance, history is a narrative that we are writing right now. So, in a hundred years from now, what do you want the history books to read?

SUSTAINABILITY

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Grinding to a halt – China bans imports of waste

Last year the UK exported two-thirds of its plastic waste to China. In 2018 it banned imports. What will happen?

SUSTAINABILITY

Sam Owens
Sustainability Writer

The UK has declared war on single-use plastic. Reusable coffee cups are everywhere, with Imperial's cafes charging those without one an extra 15p, and plastic bags and straws are looked upon with horror. The government is riding this wave of public opinion, having imposed a 5p levy on the former in 2015, and is in the process of implementing an outright ban on the latter, as well as a possible charge on plastic takeaway containers. But the newfound revulsion at these items is primarily because they are single-use; aren't we free to purchase all the recyclable plastic we want, so long as we do the honourable thing and put it in the appropriate bin – a win-win for the

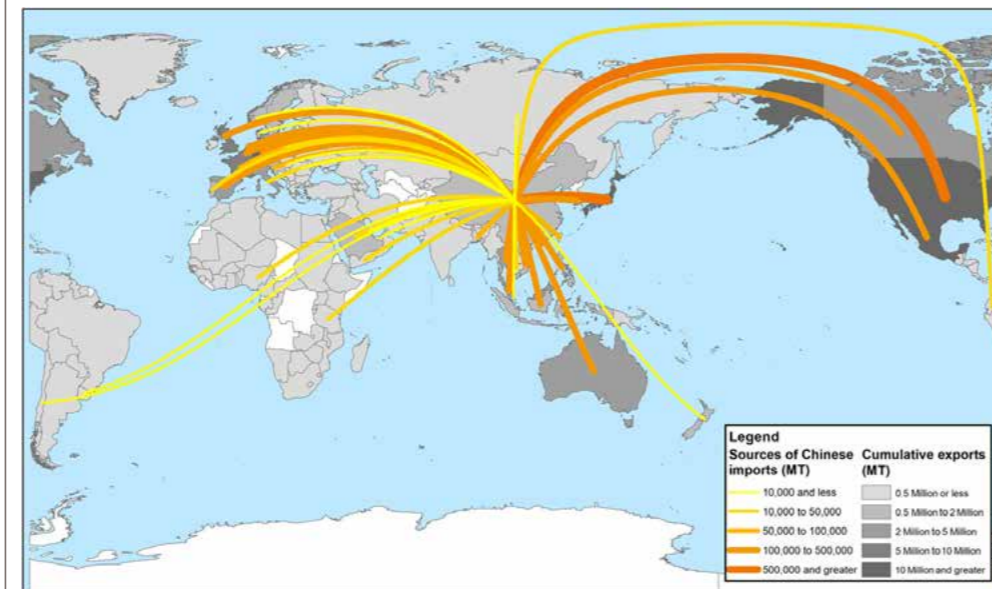
environment and our conscience? As of 2018, it turns out the answer is no.

Since 1992, China has imported 45% of all plastic waste intended for recycling for use in its manufacturing industry, taking two-thirds of the UK's waste since 2012, but in January 2018 it announced it will stop doing this by the end of the year. The consequences of this are enormous, as the non-exported waste may be diverted to landfill, making putting it in a recycling bin nothing but an empty gesture of goodwill with no positive environmental impact. China has also increased quality controls for other waste such as cardboard, which could cause local authorities to reduce their collection of certain types of waste due to the content of the bins failing to meet these standards, thereby becoming economically unviable.

The very fact that the

UK and many other countries such as Japan, Australia, and the US export the majority of their waste abroad may come as a surprise; few of us think about what happens to our plastic bottle or food packaging after we 'recycle' it. Apparently, the UK government doesn't either, as there appears to be no backup plan to deal with the restriction of the world's largest market for waste, despite prior warnings that such a situation may occur. Nevertheless, this is an opportunity for the UK to develop its recycling infrastructure by investing in reprocessing facilities, albeit on a much shorter timescale than the government might like.

It is also an opportunity to adopt an even more intolerant attitude towards plastic waste, even when it is bound for the recycling bin. Single-use food packaging makes up 89% of exported plastics, and while this



China used to import massive amounts of waste from around the globe // Science Advances

magical material has revolutionised our ability to store and transport food due to its low cost and physical and chemical properties, its use must be minimised. There has recently been an increase in popularity in some circles of shops offering products plastic-free, but there is a need for major retailers to step up and do

the same, as problems of this magnitude require a change of public behaviour only achievable if plastic-free packaging is commonplace and cheap. Retailers are highly receptive to public opinion, exercised through our spending habits, so we the consumers, armed with the knowledge that a large proportion of plastic

is now effectively non-recyclable, must make an effort to minimise our purchase of it. Exactly how to go about this is another story – make sure to check back over the following weeks to find out more!

How trashy is your period?

Menstrual cups – why you should care about periods even when you don't have one.

SUSTAINABILITY

Petchara Newson
Sustainability writer

Since the 5p carrier bag charge, the thought of throwing away a perfectly good plastic bag is enough to make most of us cringe. Now imagine unknowingly throwing away 80 plastic bags every month. That's how much plastic the average woman uses over her period if she throws away 20 disposables a month! I'm not trying to make women feel guilty; growing up, disposable

menstrual products were the only options I was told about. It was only a few years ago I stumbled across the idea of menstrual cups.

Menstrual cups are medical-grade silicone cups that you fold and insert into your vagina to collect menstrual blood, and which you then empty into the toilet twice a day. They're simple to maintain: wash with unscented soap between uses and boil between cycles.

Let's do a calculation (we're at Imperial, you gotta love the sums). The average woman

menstruates for 43 years of her life, and each year she has 13 periods. That's 559 periods – and if she uses 20 pads a period, that comes to 11,180 pads being thrown away in her lifetime! In the UK alone, 4.3 billion disposable menstrual products are thrown away every year. These products take 500 years to decompose, outlasting not only the woman who had her period but generations after her too. They should never be flushed down the toilet anyway, but flushed plastics still account for 8% of beach litter found in the UK and can clog

sewers and have detrimental effects on aquatic life. What's more, if we take into account that each tampon or pad costs about 13p per unit, a woman spends over £1400 on menstrual products throughout her life.

I've mainly been talking about pads, but tampons are just as bad. Tampons contain bleach which can leak into a woman, and the cotton fibers which can be left inside the vagina have been linked to cervical cancer. If left in for too long, they can even cause Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS). Menstrual cups

collect blood rather than absorb, so have never been associated with TSS, nor do they disrupt vaginal pH levels like pads and tampons. They can also hold up to 3 times more blood than a large tampon, and only need to be changed once every 12 hours. Women are able to exercise comfortably wearing a menstrual cup and can go to sleep without them leaking.

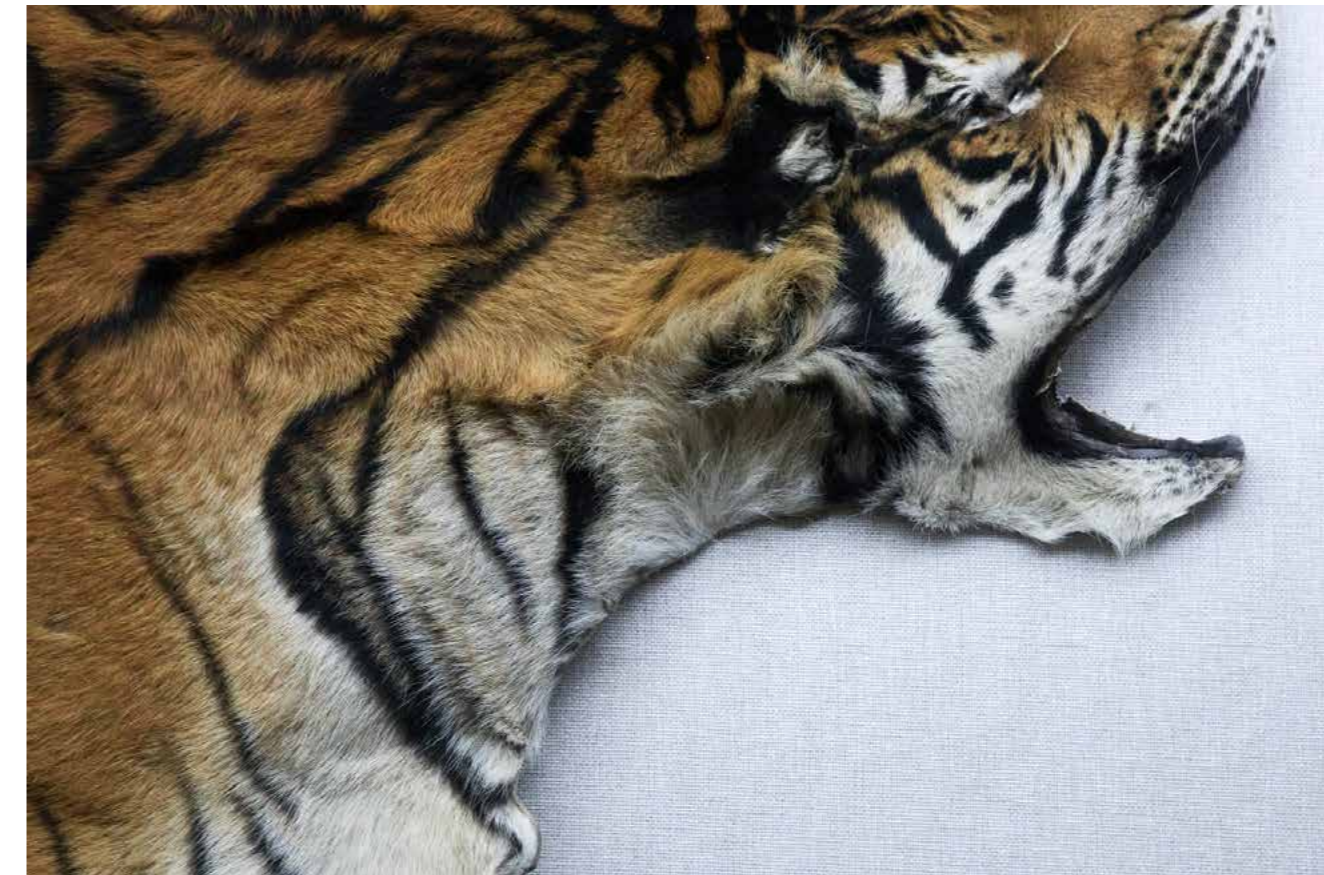
A menstrual cup is a one-off buy lasting you 10 years and is readily available in high-street stores such as Boots, and more recently Tesco, being the first UK supermarket to

stock menstrual cups. TOTM menstrual cups cost £20, have entirely biodegradable packaging, and are cruelty-free. When starting off, looking at a menstrual cup can be daunting, but YouTube has a wealth of tutorials for how to fold them and, like all new things, it takes a bit of practice to master.

Despite being invented in the 1930s, sadly it's only now menstrual cups are becoming common knowledge. Even if you're not a woman, you can still take part in the discussion about menstrual cups as the benefits to the environment help everyone.

SUSTAINABILITY

esoc@imperial.ac.uk



Does this get under your skin? // Celina Chien

Can a tiger change its stripes?

China postpones reversal of ban on trade of tiger and rhino products.

SUSTAINABILITY

Celina Chien
Sustainability Writer

China has postponed previous plans to lift the 25-year-old ban on the sale and use of rhinoceros horn and tiger bone for Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), following an international furore. This announcement comes two weeks after the State Council's decision in October to reverse the 1993 ban on the sale, import, export, and use of tiger and rhino products, in order to allow their use for "medical research or in healing" from farmed rhinos and tigers in government certified TCM hospitals. Environmental activists, conservation NGOs and experts criticised the Chinese government, saying the decision would have a "devastating impact" on

wild populations of the already endangered species.

State Council Executive Secretary-General Ding Xuedong did not give any reasons why the reversal has been postponed and did not refer to the global response. He said the "old ban remained in force", but did not specify if this

"Supporting tiger and rhino farms will stimulate demand for these products that will certainly exceed the supply that farms are able to generate"

would be temporary or permanent.

The announcement to allow the trade of farmed rhino and tiger parts for TCM indicates that the Chinese government values wildlife exclusively as products for human consumption, no matter how iconic or endangered. It contradicts President Xi Jinping's efforts to improve China's reputation on the environmental front and the country's total ban on the trade of elephant ivory in January 2018.

The lifting of the ban, if it proceeds, will directly support the barbaric tiger farming industry of China and South East Asia, and it comes soon after South Africa's recent legalisation of the domestic trade in rhino horn, supporting rhino farmers. Farming supporters say that availability of farmed tigers and rhinos for use

in TCM will alleviate the poaching pressure on wild populations, but conservationists argue that it will only inflame the global poaching and smuggling crisis that is already threatening to wipe out the <30,000 rhino and the <4,000 tigers left in the wild. Not only will this support the fourth most lucrative international criminal trade after drugs, weapons and human trafficking, it will also put the lives of countless conservationists and rangers at risk in the war on poaching.

Although much of the demand for tiger bone for TCM comes from China, Vietnam is also one of the largest consumers of tiger parts; tiger bone paste, a traditional medicine, is a uniquely Vietnamese product. While the Vietnamese trade in tiger parts is currently illegal, China's decision will certainly influence the South East Asian legal atmosphere concerning the commodification of tigers.

The latest development is only a delay in the possible ban reversal; environmental activists and conservationists must

Going on in the world this week

SUSTAINABILITY

Artur Donaldson
Sustainability Editor

Monday sees the beginning of the COP 24 conference in Katowice, Poland. Previous conferences include 2015's COP 21, in which 190 nations committed to limiting the rise in global temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

In other news, Felix sees the beginning of a new column on sustainability organized by the Environmental Society. The aims of this column are to provide news on the environment ("Going on in the world this week"), give a platform for discussion and to popularise actions which members of the college community (that's you) can take on sustainability.

wait anxiously for further updates from Beijing. In this age of ecocide and global biodiversity devastation, it is time to abandon the outdated and scientifically invalid practices in traditional medicines that are exploiting and driving the decline of endangered species.

The Chinese NGO WildAid captures the sentiment of many with their slogan "没有买卖没有杀害" ("When the buying stops, the killing can too").

"没有买卖没有杀害 – When the buying stops, the killing can too"

The latest development is only a delay in the possible ban reversal; environmental activists and conservationists must

Union Page



A very Union Holiday!

We have some exciting events planned, to help students come together and make great memories over the festive period. Metric will be open throughout the day from 29 November to 6 December, and will be transformed into a magical alpine ski resort, offering holiday themed food and drink, along with FiveSixEight and the Union Bar.

Other festivities include group ice skating at the National History Museum on 5 December, with a few surprises for those who join in. Come enjoy a whisky tasting on 10 December, a Christmas themed quiz on Thursday 13, Christmas Karaoke on Friday 14 in h Bar. We will end with the event of the term, Winter Carnival on the evening of the 14 December, in Beit Quad. Get your tickets now!

Visit imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on to book.



Feeling homesick?

It's such a busy time of year and sometimes we can feel a bit lonely or isolated. Even with all the amazing things London has to offer, we don't always feel like interacting with it all. Don't give yourself a hard time, you're not alone! Spend as much time around others as possible, surround yourself with home comforts, stay in touch with friends and family, and do your best to stay healthy.

If you're on campus this winter and you feel a bit homesick, the Union has prepared some activities and events to help you connect with others. However, if all you want is to chat to someone, the Advice Centre is here for you. We can help you talk through ideas and ways of coping with stress and missing home. Come have a chat!

Read more about us here: imperialcollegeunion.org/advice



Under Pressure

We understand that sometimes stress is unavoidable. The Under Pressure campaign aims to give students strategies for coping during periods of heightened stress. It offers help in understanding how to combat overwhelming stress, effectively manage time and learning how to have a healthy work-life balance.

From 3 to 7 December students can enjoy free massages, meditation and mindfulness sessions, arts and crafts, free smoothies and more!

Join us to take some time out from exams - rest, relax and refocus.

For more info visit:
imperialcollegeunion.org/under-pressure



Your Union Events

Friday 23 November

Make great memories

The Union Chalet

Metric | 29 November - 6 December

imperialcollegeunion.org



23 November, Friday

Common People
Beit Bars | 20:00 - 02:00

PGI Friday
h-bar | 19:00 - 23:00

Replay Friday
Reynolds | 19:00 - 00:00

29 November, Thursday

Pub Quiz
h-bar | 19:30 - 21:30

The Union Chalet Launch
Metric | From 18:00 onwards

27 November, Tuesday

Super Quiz
FiveSixEight | 20:00 - 22:00

The Quiz
Reynolds | 18:00 - 20:00

Jazz & Cocktails
Union Bar | 19:00 - 23:00

Make sure you don't miss this!

28 November, Wednesday

CSP Wednesday
Beit Bars | 19:00 - 02:00

30 November, Friday

Board Games
Metric | 15:00 - 17:00

Good Form
FiveSixEight & Metric | 20:00 - 02:00

PGI Friday
h-bar | 19:00 - 23:00

Ladies Hockey BOP
Reynolds | 19:00 - 00:00

[f](#) beitbars [f](#) hbarpub [f](#) reynoldsbarcx

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

felix.clubsandsocieties@imperial.ac.uk

Imperial College Model United Nations in Cambridge

Cyber-attacks and condom attacks

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Danel Medelbekova
Imperial College Model
United Nations Society
Secretary of Training

Following the success of ICMUN's five-man delegation in Oxford earlier in the year, we have sent a delegation almost twice that size to the Cambridge International Model United Nations conference, to once again act as representatives of different countries saving the world. To say that the weekend was full of surprises would be an understatement, and to say that the resolutions passed would at all reduce the chances of us dying in World War Three would be a blatant lie.

Our delegate in the Disarmament and International Security Committee was deeply shocked to witness Russia working alongside the USA to lead a unanimous condemnation of cyber-attacks. However, the future of humanity once again began to look grim when the session ended with the passing of a resolution

encouraging global rearmament with lethal killer robots, despite Canada's best efforts.

"To say that the weekend was full of surprises would be an understatement"

The Human Rights Council made leaps in dealing with the Rohingya refugee crisis, by some miracle managing to convince the delegation of Myanmar to give up their "not our territory, not our problem" attitude. Yet, things escalated when delegates began throwing condoms at the Chairs as the committee moved on to the topic of access to contraceptives.

The debate in the Economic and Financial Committee was equally heated, with the room politics being "straight out of the House of Cards" as terrorist financing was discussed (in addition to

the precise nature of the two Chairs' relationship). A different, slightly higher-profile relationship under scrutiny was President Macron's "unconventional love story", as the delegate of France got lightly roasted in the UN Women committee and the room was split in three by the discussion of the #MeToo movement.

"Things escalated when delegates began throwing condoms at the Chairs as the committee moved on to the topic of access to contraceptives"

On the brighter side, a number of resolutions that might postpone our certain doom were passed unanimously, including COP24's monster 40-clause resolution on combating marine pollution and UN Women's master plan for protecting women in conflict zones.

In addition, the vast majority of delegates in the UN Development Programme voted in favour of a resolution fighting corruption in development projects, with an interesting anti-corruption alliance forming between Ukraine,



Day 2, club night after the formal dinner: Happily ruling the world, though it's a bit of a blur // ICMUN

Burkina Faso and Turkey. Our delegate in the World Health Organisation witnessed the entire room (with the exception of DPRK) working together to eliminate medical black markets and safeguard electronic health records.

"Ultimately, ICMUN has fulfilled its sacred mission of proving that scientists can indeed do politics and contribute to the demolition of the world"

The ICMUN delegate in the Historical Crisis was relieved to see the prevention of World War Two, as Germany sold off its colonies over the course of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and emerged as the richest country in the world following World War One.

Ultimately, ICMUN

has fulfilled its sacred mission of proving that scientists can indeed do politics and contribute to the demolition of the world just as well as the humanities squad, having tons of fun in the process.



Day 3, after 2 days of debate and 2 nights of socials: Smiling through the sleep deprivation // ICMUN



Day 1, pre-debates and pre-socials: Refreshed and ready to rule the world // ICMUN

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

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Imperial's Space Society launches High-Altitude weather balloon

Payload sadly lost over Norfolk due to GPS failure

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Medad Newman
Imperial Space Society

On 3rd November, members of the Imperial College Society for the Exploration and Development of Space headed off to Elsworth, Cambridgeshire, to launch our payload on board a large weather balloon.

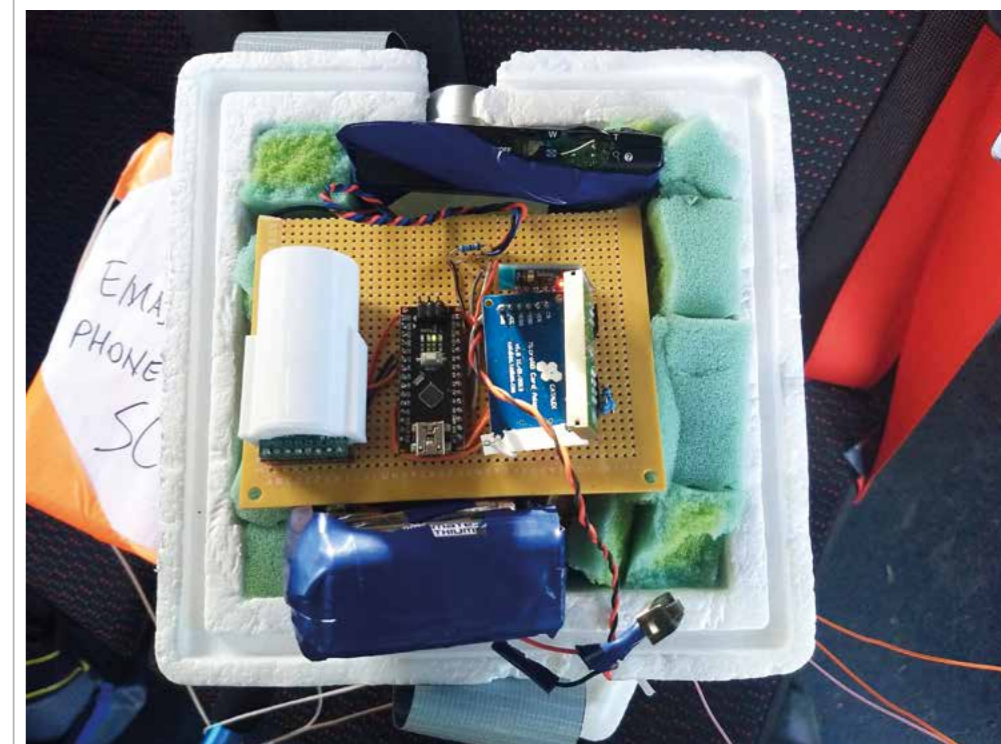
On board, we had 2 compact cameras as well as a flight computer, relaying telemetry on its location, altitude, temperature and pressure to our tracking station on the ground. All looked fine before launch with a healthy stream of telemetry received at our base station on the ground. With great anticipation for a High altitude balloon chase around the English countryside, we released the balloon.

"We are planning on designing a tracker and balloon for a mission to CIRCUM-NAVIGATE the world"



Filling up our massive weather balloon with helium // Sena Harayama

However, as soon as we let off the balloon, we realised that the GPS had lost lock and lost track of the position of the balloon. However, the transmitter was sending back pressure and temperature data over radio. We hoped that we could home in on the signal by using our directional antenna to pick the location of the payload. Using data from the NOAA weather service, we expected the payload to descend on the parachute and land near a



The flight computer all packed away in a polystyrene box // Sena Harayama

village called Reepham in Norfolk.

Undaunted by the loss of GPS data, we headed off in our van towards Norfolk. As long as the payload was in the air, we could pick up telemetry due to the clear line of sight. After around 1 hour of flight, we knew the balloon had burst and started descending because the pressure readings started to rise, indicating that it was falling

towards the ground. The payload's descent was slowed by a parachute that deployed as soon as the balloon burst. Based on the pressure readings, the highest altitude transmitted was 28.5 km, three times higher than any commercial Jet would fly.

After the landing, we could not get any signal from the payload due to land features blocking the radio signals. Our hopes were slightly lifted when

we managed to pick up extremely faint signals from the payload near the village of Reepham. However, by then it had become dark and we had to give up on our quest to find the payload.

Our post mortem analysis of the launch concluded that either the antenna for the GPS was accidentally shielded by a battery pack or spurious interference from the cameras may have caused the GPS to loose lock.

We hope to do better next time. We have several exciting new plans for future missions. We are planning on designing a tracker and balloon for a mission to CIRCUMNAVIGATE the world. We are always on the lookout for more people to join our team. Send an email to pproject leader, Medad Newman at mnr3317@ic.ac.uk for more information.

Many thanks to the Imperial College Robotics Society for maintaining the lab for the development of our payload.

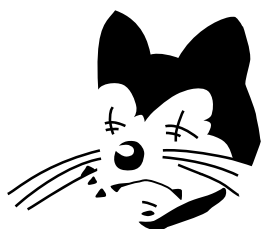
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?

THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES

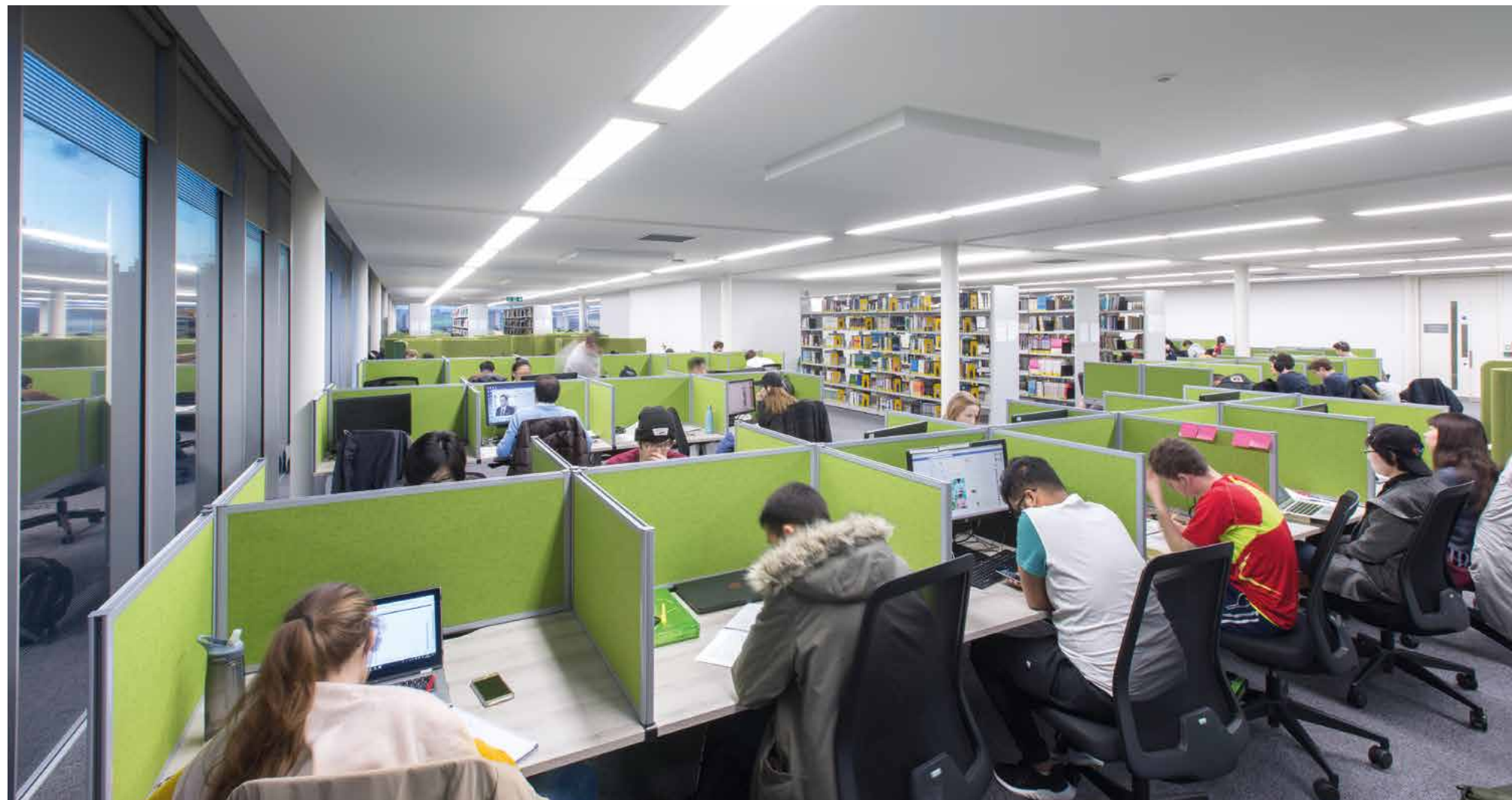
"I can't promise to know what is happening in the madness that is British politics at the moment, but I can explain why no one else knows either."

Matt Chorley, The Times Red Box editor, in conversation with Sam Gyimah, Minister of State (Universities and Science)

Tuesday 27, November 5pm - 7pm
Sir Alexander Fleming, G13 with spillover into G34



Hangman



They're practically bursting under all the pressure...// Imperial College London

Students shit selves as library toilets out of order

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

Library-goers found themselves in a rather sticky situation when Security pulled the plug on toilets on all floors.

Bathrooms across all levels were found to be out of order, creating long queues for the few available stalls and leaving tens of hard-working students in visible discomfort.

Eyewitnesses described the scenes as

“unbelievable”. Melissa Gardeleau, a second year Medical Biosciences student, said, “the queues were longer than for Metric on a Friday night! Actually, that might not be a great point of reference for anyone, but still it was mad long.”

Available toilets were found to have incredibly low water supply, and library staff were called in to operate an emergency one-in-one-out policy, with Red Bull being offered to wash their hands with.

The situation was further complicated by many of the individuals involved experiencing symptoms of violent diarrhoea whilst waiting for toilets to be available.

“Shit literally hit the fan,” said Jimmy Bean, a final year Mechanical Engineering undergraduate. “Like seriously. It was raining sweetcorn everywhere.”

“It was unbelievable; the queues were longer than Metric on a Friday night!”

Library staff were less than pleased with the events of the day. “We just got this place looking half decent!” said Sybil Freccature, senior librarian.

“If all these sad children just went home at night instead of trying to get all their shit done here, we wouldn’t be in this damn situation!”

The cases were linked to alleged changes in the library café’s offerings. Several of the affected individuals were found to have consumed fried foods from the counter. Further investigation found that the oil used originated from a Shell oilfield in Guatemala and was given to the College as assurance to gain backdoor access into careers

events with students.

It was later uncovered that the call to shut of the water supply, in fact, came from the Faculty Building.

Sources from within the cube say that President of Imperial College, Jalice Fast, wanted to take a

“If all these sad children [didn’t try] to get shit done here, we wouldn’t be in this situation!”

bubble bath in the Ethos swimming pool. “She had a long day,” said Erica Muzungu, Prof Fast’s PA, “she had to walk up a single flight of stairs today to get to her meeting. She deserved a break!”

Alessandro Buy, Deputy President (Renumeration), expressed his frustration at the incident. “For fuck’s sake, this place is already a shithole, and now we’ve got actual turds in the library that aren’t medics? What the hell is that extra £250 on our home fees going to??”

The office of Prof Fast did not respond to NegaFelix’s call for comment, rather directing us to an 0780 number costing £4.50 a minute. The pre-recorded voice message was quoted as saying, “we’re sorry we can’t take your call right now, but please leave a message and we’ll get back to you when we actually give a shit.”

HANGMAN

negafelix@imperial.ac.uk

Help me Felicity, I'm sad and alone.

HANGMAN

Felicity Felissy

Agony Aunt

Dear Felicity,

Like many at Imperial, I'm a single man looking to find a mate. It's cuffing season and my wrists are bare. How do I attract someone to spend these lonely, long, dark evenings with? I used to fill them writing into Imperial College Secrets, but even that's gone now. I'm a catch but these wretched females keep rejecting me. All my friends are coupled up. I need a companion and I am so sick of being a third wheel. All I need in my life is some symmetry.

Yours,
L. N. Lee

Hi Lee!

I say lower your standards. Put yourself out there! Did you know our centrefolds used to be used as dating ads? Maybe if you write a letter to the editor he'll do you a solid. It's a bit old fashioned, yes, but some old fashioned attitudes are exactly what we need sometimes. You need some 20th Century tactics to go with that 20th Century entitlement you've got.

Perhaps some new hobbies will assist you in your quest for courtship. Have you considered

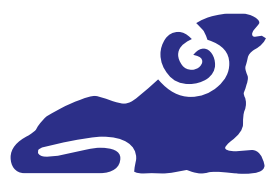
taking up a horizons course? Women love someone they think they can have a conversation with. They'll talk over you regardless, but it's important to front. Think of it like that programming language on your CV that you've never actually coded in. Bullshit your way through the assessment centre and deal the rest of the problem when you get to it.

If all else fails, go to sports night and shout as loudly as you can for someone to go for a coffee. When you inevitably fail, you know you'll



be in good company with the rest of the building. We're all alone, so we're

Cuffing season
all in this together.
Big luv,
Felicity xoxo



ARIES

This week your heating breaks down and your room is freezing. Good thing you took great notes in first year; it makes such great kindling.



TAURUS

This week you and your friends go down to the ice rink at the NHM. Perfect; you get to ice-skate and bowl people over - a real 2-for-1 deal!



GEMINI

This week, the stars are all out of alignment for you.
Oh wait, you just didn't calibrate your telescope.



CANCER

This week, nature calls at the most awkward of times. Unfortunately, you're in RSM and who knows where the damn women's toilets are. The men's can't be THAT bad, could they?



LEO

This week you discover that Silwood is a real place that exists.
You thought it was just what Alice Gast called her off-shore bank account.



VIRGO

This week you have your first Skype interview. Exciting! Shame you decide to do it in the library, the couple going at it in the background isn't really helping your chances of employment.



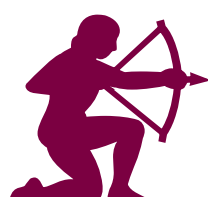
LIBRA

This week, you feel like a million pounds. All those cheeky Nando's were bound to catch up with your waistline eventually.



SCORPIO

This week you write your lab report last minute. Again. Imagine going into debt to submit low quality work when you could be Felix Editor and get paid to do the same thing?



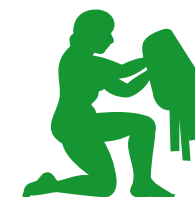
SAGITTARIUS

This week you kick a rock at a pidgeon trying to shoo it away from you.
All his mandem gang up on you and shit on your pasta.



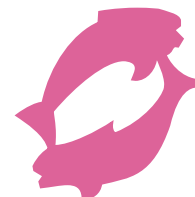
CAPRICORN

This week it's your first shift at the Union bar and you're confused. At no point in the interview did anyone mention mouse-catching was going to be a necessary skill.



AQUARIUS

This week you protest against the sale of continental breakfast at the Union.
Brexit means Brexit; none of that croissant bullshit!



PISCES

This week, you get into a fight with a Student Activities Coordinator over room bookings.
Literally.
Chairs are broken and infographics are torn up.

INVESTMENT

icu.investmentsociety@imperial.ac.uk



Tech sell-off leads to market slump

INVESTMENT

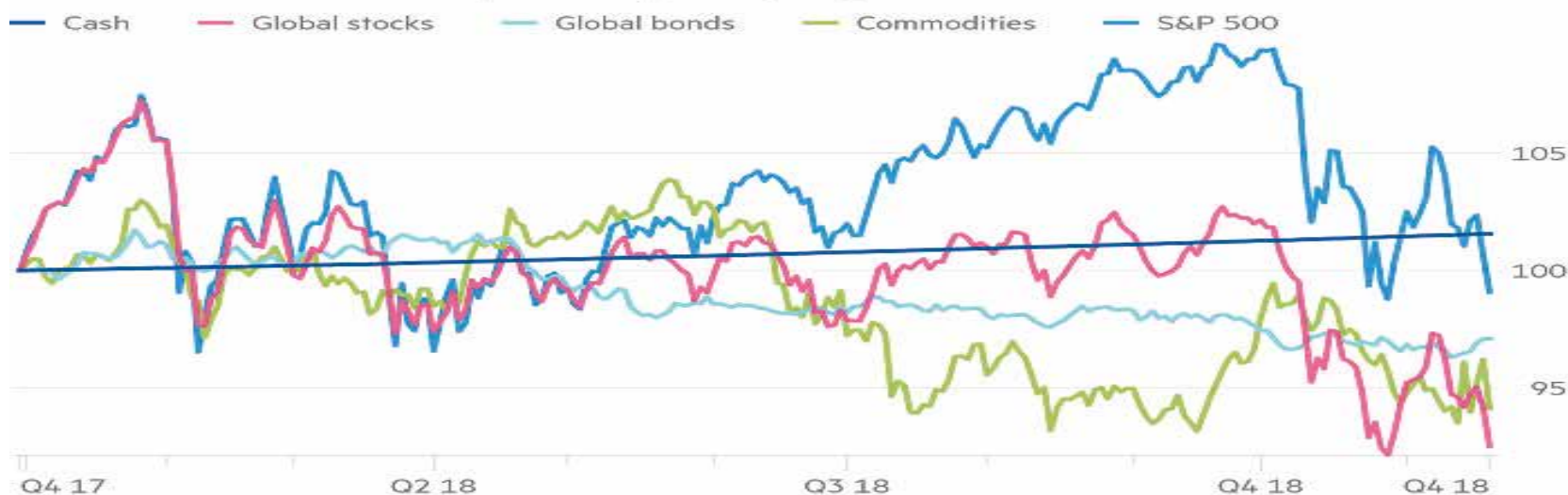
Tom Alston

*Investment Editor
ICIS Editor in Chief*

Turbulence in the global financial markets, particularly in the technology sector, saw equity sell offs, oil prices tumble, and dollar swings this week as concerns over the global economy intensified as investors fear growing trade tensions and weak corporate earnings. FAANG stocks, which had previously powered the recent post crisis bull run, had more than \$1 trillion wiped off their market cap leaving the tech heavy NASDAQ benchmark heading for its worst quarterly loss since the turmoil that ensued after the Lehman's collapse in 2008. Goldman Sachs cut its price target on Apple's stock for a third time this month from \$209 to \$182, citing deteriorating Chinese demand and a stronger dollar. Goldman analyst Rod Hall said, "The market now points to Apple being at the limit of their price premium for the iPhone... when pricing power is lost, consumer technology companies tend to lose margins or market share or both". Consequently, Apple stocks have fallen 24% since the early October high, shedding \$265 billion of market value; more the market cap of Pfizer, Wells Fargo and Chevron. This swan dive reverberated through the global markets, with the FTSE All-World index declining 1.7% on Tuesday and the Cboe Global Markets Vix equity volatility climbing well above its long-term average. It also had an unexpected effect on the fixed income market, with US treasury prices edging

Cash is King

Returns of short-term Treasury bills thumps everything. Normalised as of the start of 2018



Source: Bloomberg © FT

higher towards the 3% level. Rising US interest rates have tripped up the global economy this year, with a large share of the bond universe losing money in 2018. Although issuance has remained strong, the Bloomberg Barclays Multiverse has lost \$1.34 trillion of its market capitalisation this year. This is most likely due to central banks paring back monetary stimulus, stopping programmes such as quantitative easing and rising interest rates. Still parallel declines in both bonds and equities are rare since stocks do better when growth is robust and fixed income markets thrive in poor economic conditions. For example, in the 2008 financial crisis when the global equity market shrank by more than \$18 trillion, the bond market survived as investors were desperate for the relative safety it offers. These new market conditions have been coined by investors as the unfamiliar "Land of Oz". Jim Smigiel, head of portfolio strategies at SEI Investments says "It is a new regime. The entropy, the uncertainty, feels more acute right now". One major worry in this Land

of Oz, is how highly rated bonds are beginning to fail to provide their usual safety, making portfolio protection and hedging techniques much harder. Interestingly, the greatest example that the market entering a new regime is how the "buy the dip" technique (the dominant motto of the post crisis environment) is no longer providing returns. According to Morgan Stanley, buying the S&P 500 after a week when returns were negative had been a profitable strategy since 2002, but recently "BTD" traders have been caught out saying "While 2018 is clearly not a year of recession, the market is speaking loudly that bad news is coming". Although few think a recession is coming as early as next year, Scott Miner, chief investment officer at Guggenheim Partners, says he is beginning to jog -albeit not run- towards exiting the market saying, "The bottom line is that a recession is coming, and it is imperative to prepare now for the period leading up to the downturn". It is no surprise then that the Federal Reserve has been increasing rates and shrinking its balance

sheet, lifting three-month Treasury bills- the Fed's way of increasing its cash reserves.

On a lighter note, some investors note that the recent volatility has been healthy, finally shaking markets out of the dangerous inactivity the Goldilocks post crisis environment, where weak growth kept inflation at bay and money was pumping out of central banks. Additionally, an uncorrelated market provides potential for large alpha return for hedge funds. Although the stock market correction over the past two months has hurt

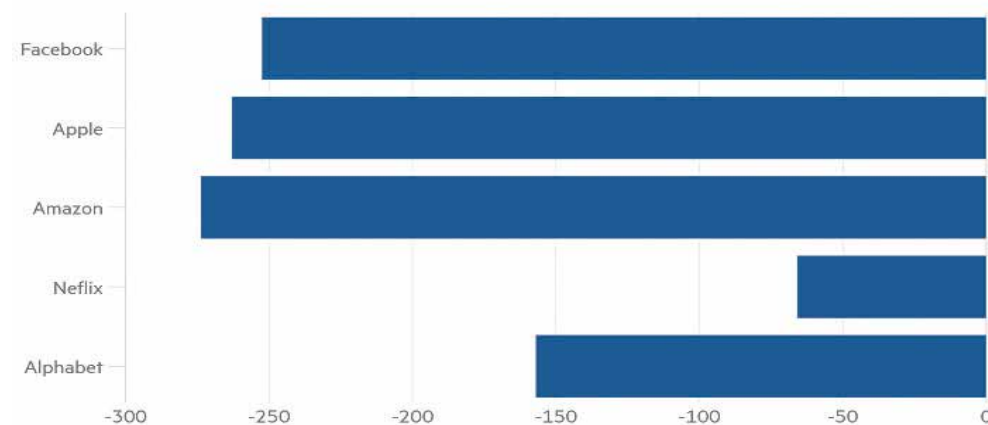
a lot of investors, a small group of bearish hedge funds managers their time has arrived. Crispin Odey, founding partner at Odey Asset Management, has made gains of about 50% this year and 7% this month, making it one of the top performing hedge funds this year. His view is that downwards market momentum is very difficult to halt when it is coupled with expensive equity valuations, "the only way it's been halted has been lower interest rates, and that's not an option".

"Odey Asset Management has made gains of about 50% this year and 7% this month, making it one of the top performing hedge funds this year"

Returns of short-term treasury bills // *Financial Times*

Faangs shed \$1tn in market value

Change in market cap since 52-week closing high (\$bn)

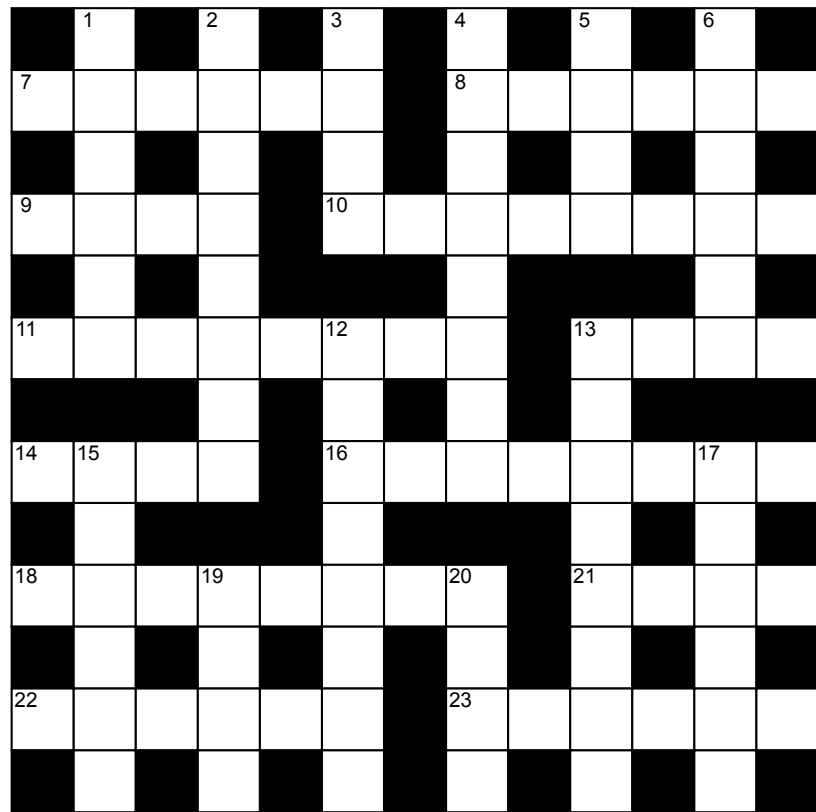


Source: Bloomberg, Adam Samson / FT © FT

FAANGs have had a hard week // *Financial Times*

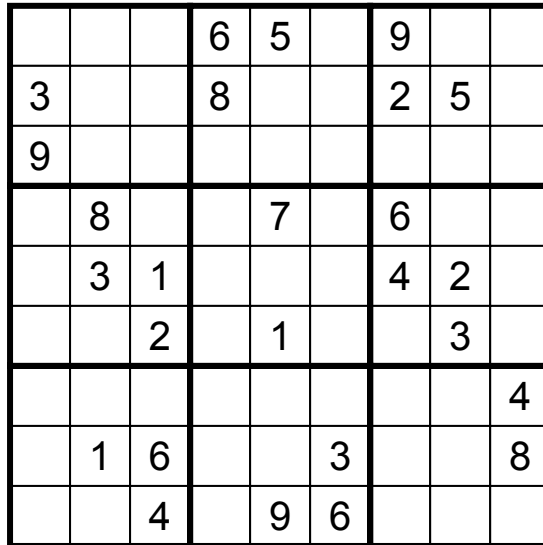
PUZZLES

fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk



SUDOKU

Fill all the boxes with a number between 1 and 9. A number can only appear once in a row/column, and only once in each sub-box.



FUCWIT

1	CHZYN0.1InMy<3	115
2	HoneybunnySnugglepuff	107
3	Maxiane	106
4	Luncheon Pals	104
5	Yeet Infection	103
6	DQ	101
6	BudgetGreg&13Whales	101
8	Lunar Lunacy	96
9	S.B.S.	88
10	KBLB	79
11	Sudok-urself	68
11	Computer Magic	68
13	Cat Ladies	65
14	Lilmonix3	54
33	Freakamathics	13

Send your solutions to fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk before Wednesday midday to take part in the leaderboard!

Points available

Crossword	6
Minesweeper	4
Sudoku	3
Nonogram	4
Total	17

CROSSWORD

Across

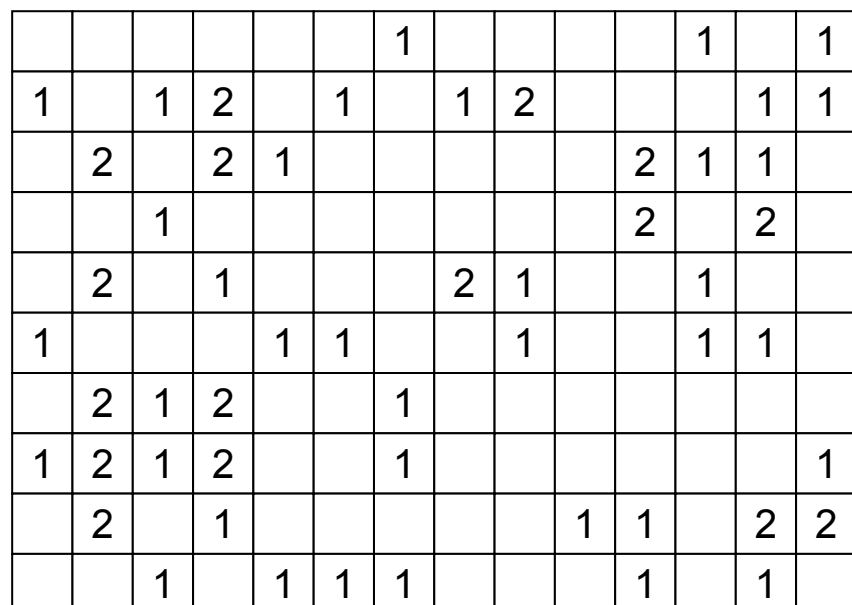
7. Soap and air (6)
8. It must be so (6)
9. Protective layer around your flesh (4)
10. Most people can't afford to buy a house without one (8)
11. Egypt has many (8)
13. Off-road vehicle (4)
14. The menu option after "File" (4)
16. So cute (8)
18. Sub-atomic particle with no charge (8)
21. Ratios defined by bookmakers (4)
22. Approximately four and a half litres (6)
23. Magical card that opens any door... on the underground. (6)

Down

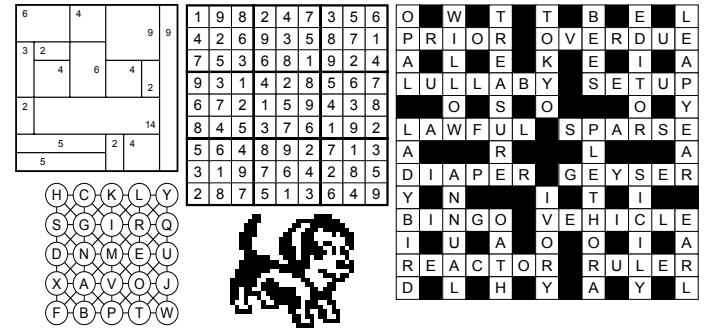
1. Thanksgiving meal highlight (6)
2. Plentiful (8)
3. Sowing line (4)
4. A shot of coffee (8)
5. Show off (4)
6. It killed a lot of people in the 14th century (6)
12. They live in a boot (8)
13. Envy (8)
15. Musical entertainer (3.3.)
17. It has many many steps (6)
19. Not short (4)
20. A mini bassoon (4)

MINESWEEPER

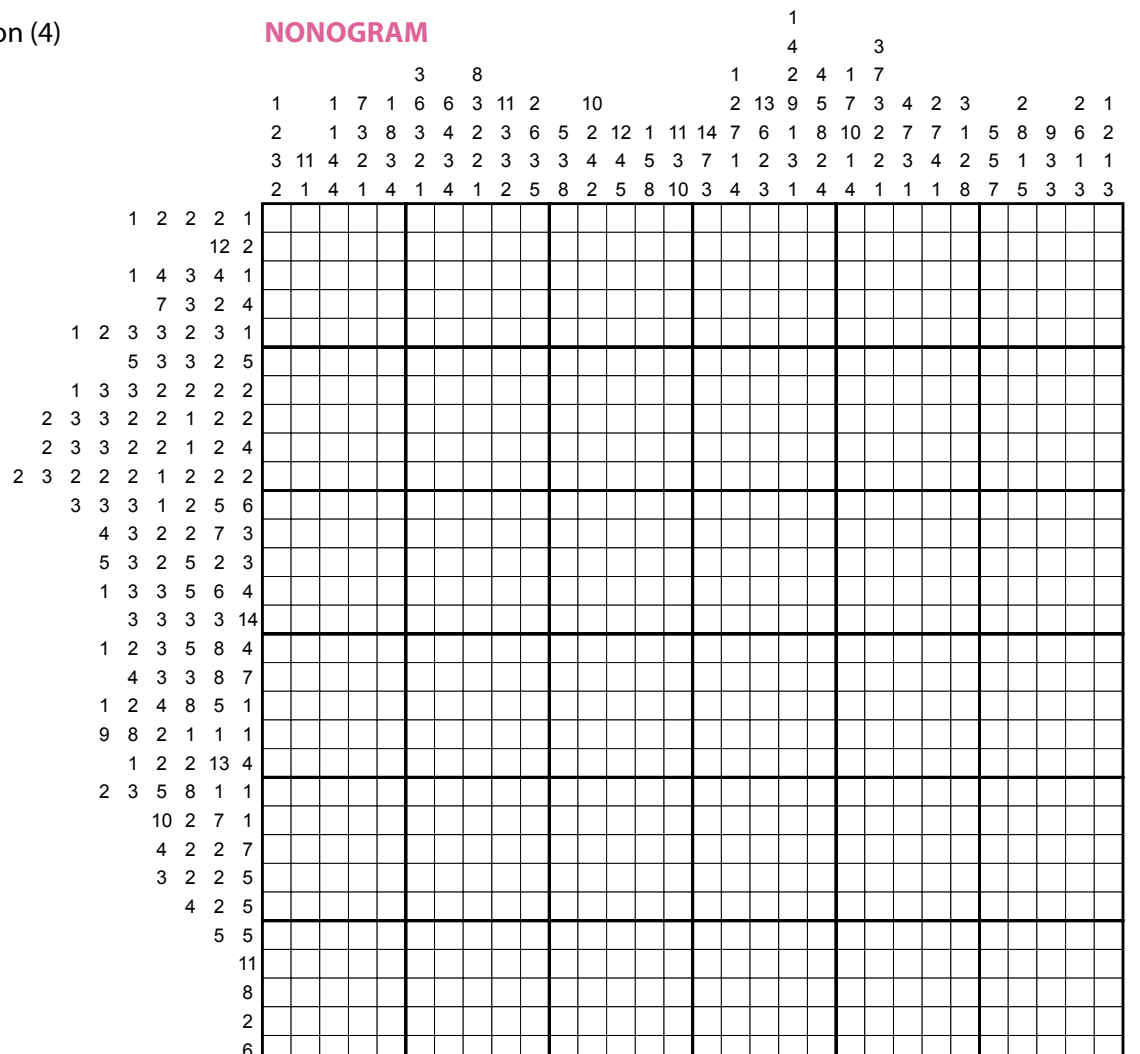
The number in a cell represents the number of mines adjacent to that square (up/down, left/right, diagonal). Find and mark all of the mines to clear the board.



Last week's solutions



NONOGRAM



SPORTS

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IC Triathlon take on the Hillingdon Duathlon

With the incentive of a mug, sixteen Imperial students head to the Hillingdon duathlon and gain a podium spot

SPORTS

Mark Pollock

IC Triathlon Treasurer

The Hillingdon Duathlon is one of the favourite events in the Triathlon calendar, not only is it a nearby, beginner-friendly, closed circuit duathlon – but you also get a mug for entering. Win win. The race consists of 2-mile run, 10-mile bike and then another 1-mile run. The men's race was an hour earlier than the women's, so the 10-strong male contingent had an inhumane 5:30am alarm. With the weather looking dreadful for the whole morning, moral was understandably low as we met cold, wet and tired at 6:10am. After an uneventful journey we made it to the race track at Hillingdon. Undeterred by the extremely expensive bikes we saw on arrival, we racked our own and registered.

The race and predicted downpour started bang on time at 8am and the men set off to run two laps of the track. The field was strong and Hillingdon Triathletes – on their home turf – wanted to prove themselves against the Imperial team. Setting off at a storming pace was no deterrent for Matt Ryan as he showed us the quality in army fitness training. Onto the bike and Matt's lead became short lived as competition arrived in the form of 'rocket' Romain. Romain has the aerodynamic footprint of a paper plane, and combined with the wattage cottage that his legs are, he won 2nd place. Luke Whiting, an exceptional all-rounder was also up in the top 5. The seemingly endless

headwind on the back straight was loudly chastised by everyone, after all, everyone knows shouting at the wind makes you go faster. The most difficult part of the race was not in battling the headwind as it turned out but in counting to 10. Honourable mentions go to Daniel Boulby and Wim Van Der Schoot who both decided that 10 laps were not enough and did 11 instead. The race for the win came down to a sprint finish, with Romain coming a commendable 2nd place by only a second. 6 of the top 15 were Imperial athletes, with 5th place going to Luke Whiting, 6th to Matt Ryan, 8th to Angus Phillips, 9th to Mark Pollock and 15th to Cedric Ormond. It was also great to see so many giving duathlons a go for the first time, well done to Alex Luisi, Daniel Boulby and Shravan Nageswaren.

"3 out of the top 4 female duathletes were Imperial"

The girls arrived significantly better rested and dryer than the boys for their 9am start. Imperial had a strong representation in the women's race with about 20% of the field. Spoiler alert: 3 out of the top 4 were Imperial. Almost sounds like an academic league table. With Freya Espir leading the run and being first into transition, hopes were high that she would take the win. Closely following in her wake were Minty Martin and Marion Artigaut. The



Sixteen strong group of Imperial Duathletes // IC Triathlon

recovering Imperial men's team were playing their role and providing enthusiastic support and live intelligence to the women as they went into the bike. About 10 laps later Freya was off the bike, I say about 10 because she actually did 11, yet still came 3rd. Kudos. Minty (who did do 10 laps)

came in for 2nd place and Marion in 4th. Lois Baker, Emma Claxton, Esme Hotson Moore and Mari Funabashi all had strong races.

The organisers found it very funny how STEM students could not count to 10, but we set our reputation straight by assuring them that UCL would

only do worse.

Flapjacks, cakes, gossip and race stories were then shared between the victorious Imperial team. Whilst we were recovering a few of the faster duathletes got to stand on the podium and claim their rewards from the Hillingdon champagne cupboard.

Following the women's race was 'the main event', 'what we woke up for' or 'the cutest thing since Charlie bit my finger' – the under 8's duathlon. This draft-legal, stabilisers-illegal duathlon was well worth staying for. The Spiderman trisuits and dinosaur helmets were too much for some, who decided there and then to adopt.

As the weather had decidedly improved, we chose to do even more exercise and cycle back home. Back in Hammersmith, we enjoyed a compulsory microwave meal (courtesy of The William Morris). A couple of soggy sausages and watered-down maple syrup was just what the group of

damp duathletes needed. After dabbling in daytime drinking, we then realised that we were at Imperial and we had more work than time, so we made our ways back home to relish in a hot shower.

Despite the inclement weather, another successful outing for 16 of Imperial's triathletes and

"We chose to do even more exercise and cycle back home"

good preparation for next weekend for the biggest and best duathlon of the year: BUCS Duathlon. BUCS marks the end of the duathlon season for the year, but do not despair as come the new year we'll be competing in aquathons (swimming and running) building up to triathlons around Spring.



'Rocket' Romain strutin' on the podium // IC Triathlon

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Imperial Sailing takes on the Wet Dream

Imperial White team members introduced the freshers in Imperial Red to team racing competition events; winning the races is not a substitute for winning the social...

SPORTS

Anita Plumley

Sailing member

On Friday 26th October, most of the 2nd and 3rd Imperial sailing teams met at Victoria Coach Station to make our way to compete at the Wet Dream in Reading. Stragglers were forced to take the train, which ultimately proved to be much faster (but less fun) than the coach. We entertained ourselves on the coach with food, food and more food. Aidan, however, was under the impression that it would be a sesh bus - sending us a message requesting us to be binned by the time we got to the house.

After almost missing our stop, we realised we had not been dropped in the town centre, but somewhere by the side of the M4, meaning we had to then take two buses followed by a 15 minute

walk to our host's house. No sooner had we put our bags down and dibsed the sofas, we all walked to Co-op to buy some bevs so we could catch up with the pub crawl that had been planned for the night, which was already on its penultimate pub! Whilst in the pubs, older members of the teams caught up with friends from other unis, and freshers frequently got caught out by the radical

"After the pubs we all went to the club to cut some shapes"

drinking rules of Reading ("no acceptance"??). After the pubs we all went to the club to cut some shapes - not before Callum decided stealing a mini traffic cone would be a good idea. We also managed to leave poor

Callum at the club when we were dragged unwillingly from the dancefloor left in order to actually get some (4 hours) sleep. On arriving at our host's house, we realised she was still out and so we learnt of a new entrance to the house - namely, the skylight to our room. This apparently became Olly's preferred method of entering the house as he repeated it the following night.

Despite lack of sleep and with everyone safe home (albeit some much later than others), Saturday was a good start to the weekend with Imperial White winning five out of our six races. Against Cardiff blue, Imperial Red managed a take out at Mark 3 to get 2,3,4 only to hit each other on the reach and lose 2,5,6. However, they then went on to beat KNOBS on the final beat after their having a comfortable lead with stable position for the whole race. After a long day of sailing, we



Imperial White starting the race in a perfect 1,2,3 combination // Knights Sailing

went home for a quick nap and then started pre-ing for the eagerly awaited curry social. Our teams' costume theme for the night was The Nightmare Before Christmas, and almost none of us stuck to it strictly apart from some questionably drawn face paint. Shoutout to Toby actually putting some effort in, coming as "Sandy Claus" and dressing in a morphsuit in such cold conditions (lows of 1°C!). Callum also deserves a mention for not being drunk, "just really extroverted" when he was asked to leave by the manager, to which he replied by shouting in French.

Sunday, was a different story for our success rate - whilst nursing hangovers and battling with lack of sleep, Imperial White lost three of our four races. Gabriel and Calvin, competing as part of the Old Waynfletes & Friends team, managed to beat Imperial White a total of three times thanks

to various complications with restarts, postponements and broken boats! Due to increasing wind strength, the course kept on getting bigger and bigger which didn't help with the punctuality of changeovers and made it even easier for us to accidentally sail into the race whilst waiting for our start. The story didn't get any better for Imperial Red either, with an umpire getting in the way of Eddie when his rudder wasn't working properly in the middle of one of their races. Overall, Imperial White came 7th and Imperial Red 14th out of 18 teams, having beaten a fair few teams that we wanted to.

Even after the sailing was done, our troubles did not end there: on our way home, due to delays in the coach timetable, we were faced with the possibility of waiting for an hour and a half in the cold for our ride home! Luckily, the coach arrived after a wait of around 45 minutes,

which we survived with the help of 6Terry's Chocolate Orange and huddling in a parking payment booth. We arrived back in London safe and sound, and altogether content with our performance over the weekend.

Many thanks to the

"Overall, Imperial White came 7th and Imperial Red 14th out of 18 teams, having beaten a fair few teams that we wanted to."

University of Reading Sailing Club for organising a great event, and also a big thank you goes out to Toby (Imperial White Team Captain) for being a shuttle service for us!



The event was wet, definitely not dreamy // Knights Sailing

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ICXC regain Bannister Cup in final LXCL of 2018

Cross Country's medics shine to ensure it's coming home!

SPORTS

Aymeric Regnier
HPR Organiser

Fergus Johnson
ICXCAC Club Captain

Last Wednesday, 14th November, just two weeks after Mitcham Common's sunny race, London's sturdy athletes took out their spikes once more to compete in this term's (and 2018's) final LUCA Cross-Country League race, the much-anticipated Wimbledon Common.

With laps being longer than average at 4.7km, the women's race consisted of just one lap while the men had to go around the course twice. As the hour grew near, the teams gathered by the Windmill Tea Rooms to prepare for

the start of the race.

As usual, the race began with a stampede as 216 runners stormed off at 15:15 in the afternoon and made their way to the woods.

The course is well-known for its technical terrain and has been known to turn many ankles over the years.

This year the days preceding the race had been suitably wet, making the course even more technical than it otherwise would have been.

The wide start-line soon narrowed to an early bottleneck, where ICXCAC star Niki managed to trip newbie PhDaniel who fell with a thud before somehow making it back to his feet without being trampled.

The route then took the runners along the path for a long straight before turning into mud. Several

undulations and puddles later, the course led downwards before a long climb back towards the start to complete the lap.

Very quickly the runners started to reach the finish line as after 18:16, Imperial's Katie Olding came in first in the women's race, followed very closely by a St Mary's athlete who spoiled an Imperial clean-sweep as Alex Mundell and Georgia Curry came third and fourth place in 18:25 and 18:39 respectively. Chloe Baker rounded off the team for Imperial, with a stunning 9th on her ICXCAC debut.

On the day, Imperial's A team came in first with 587 points, St Mary's A team came in a close second with 581 points, King's A team in third with 537 points and UCL's A team in fourth with 525 points.



Dan outruns Niki to avoid being tripped again // Geoff Lowe

This allowed Imperial's Women's A to build on their commanding lead in the league, with the team now on 1741 points – increasing their lead by 62 points to 91 ahead of UCL

“For some reason the scores are inverted in the Bannister Cup”

A's 1650 with two races to go next term.

In the men's race, St Mary's athletes dominated the field, taking 9 of the top 12 places, but fortunately, Imperial runners Niki “Tripper” Faulkner and debutant Dan “Tripped” Mulryan broke the St Mary's perfect finish as they placed fifth and third respectively in 31:21 and 31:15.

It takes more than one fall to keep Dan from the medals!

On the day, SMU placed 1st and 2nd with their A and B teams, with Imperial Men's A coming in third – their best finish

in the league this season – gaining 36 points on UCL.

Overall, Imperial Men's A remain in 4th, some 75 points adrift of St Mary's in 3rd and a commanding 131 point ahead of Reading in 5th.

Wimbledon Common has always been host to the annual University of London XC Championships and Bannister Cup – two championships with a separate scoring system from the overall league. Imperial are ineligible for the UL Champs since voting for “Ixit” by leaving the University of London in 2006.

Imperial remained eligible for the Bannister Cup, however, named after late-famous former-student of St Mary's Hospital which was incorporated into ICSM in 1997. The Cup sees the scores of the first three men and two women who study medicine, biomedical science, or any other vaguely medical field forming a team.

With former-captain Alex Mundell rallying the medic troops, Imperial managed to regain the trophy from Barts who reluctantly handed

over the trophy for the medal ceremony before hastily requesting it back as it “belongs in their museum”.

The so-called “ICSM A” team topped the table with just 22 points with Barts on 28 (for some reason the scores are inverted in the Bannister Cup).

Meanwhile in the Mike Baggs Trophy, which scores points to both men's and women's teams, Imperial remain top with a narrow 2-point lead over St Mary's, who themselves are just 1-point ahead of UCL.

It really is all to play for with 2 races left in the league!

In the individual standings, the women's podium saw a reshuffling as Imperial's Kate Olding overtook teammate Georgia Curry, inverting the order of the Imperial duo atop the leaderboard with 446 and 445 points respectively.

The London XC League continues in January, with the final two races taking place at Alexandra Palace and Wormwood Scrubs.



IC runners pose with Barts' museum piece // ICXCAC