

Amateur Transplants
Jonny Pratt interviews Adam Kay,
author of the notorious "London
Underground" song **6**

iScience



Out Today:
Imperial's Science
Magazine

FELIX

"Keep the
 Cat Free"



06/12/13
 Issue 1563
 felixonline.co.uk

Imperial's
Charity Week
success -
£70,000 raised!

Harun Khan
Hazem El-Turk
 Reporters

Last Saturday, fundraising totals were announced for Charity Week 2013 (CW) at the annual round-off dinner, with Imperial College students raising a staggering £70,000 in one week.

In October, Imperial College was graced with the arrival of CW; a national, student-led initiative supported by Islamic Relief (one of the charities comprising the UK's Disaster Emergency Committee). It was hosted by Imperial's Islamic Society. CW is an annual campaign that focuses on creating unity between its volunteers. While doing so, it also raises money for orphans and needy children worldwide – independent of their race, gender, or religious affiliation.

This year it all began on Monday 28 October, with the autumn air being overpowered by the sweetness of baked goods, as our campus was dotted with charity stalls selling cakes and doughnuts. At sunset, the first charity event of the week kicked off – the much renowned "Battle of the Societies" quiz night (BOTS), an event in which over 20 societies competed in to win the coveted BOTS trophy (won by the AhlulBayt Society). Other events held during the week included a 'HYPE night' that consisted of people carrying out dares in return for sponsorships, an inter-uni football tournament that was won by our noisy neighbours King's College, a sponsored assault course/sky-diving, as well as tube and street collections across London.

The week drew to a close with an elegant reception at the flagship Charity Week Dinner, this year held in the grand Porchester Hall. The dinner

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World Shocked By Mandela Death



SOUTHAFRICA.NET

The late Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa and Nobel Peace Prize winner.

Rory Fenton
 Reporter

Nelson Mandela, the last great national liberator of the past century, died yesterday at his home in Johannesburg following a 12 year battle with prostate cancer. Loved around the world as a freedom fighter and peace maker, Mandela's death was announced by South African President Jacob Zuma as the loss of the nation's "greatest son".

Tributes and condolences came from around the world with American President Barack Obama calling Mandela, "a man who took history

in his hands and bent the arc of the moral universe towards justice".

Born in 1918, Nelson Mandela brought the African National Congress to victory in 1994 in South Africa's first multiracial elections, becoming its first ever black president. Eschewing the path trod by other African liberators such as Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, Mandela then stood down after just one term, becoming a global campaigner for peace and reconciliation. He also put great energy into the fight against the scourge of HIV/ AIDs in South Africa, a disease which in 2005 claimed the life of his son.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner became a champion and emblem of forgiveness after his 27 year imprisonment, much of it spent in

solitary confinement, for sabotage in opposing the white minority rule and racist laws of the country. Released following intense international pressure and boycotts, he sought peace rather than revenge and as president established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which gave victims of apartheid violence the opportunity to tell their stories to their abusers. After leaving office he worked for peace across Africa, including the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi.

Little was seen in public of the elder statesman since his "retirement from retirement" in 2004, when he stepped down from public life, telling his nation "thanks for being kind for an old man". A nation he now leaves in mourning, but proud.

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BOOKS

Black Chalk

Hannah Edmondson interviews author Christopher Yates about his latest book, Black Chalk



FILM

2013 Review

Film Editor John Park reviews the hits and misses of 2013



Holidays!

This is the last week! Next week there will be no last week! Keep an eye out on Facebook and on Felixonline.co.uk to read the articles we'll be releasing over the holidays! WE hope you have a fun break!

Student Travel Survey won.

Congrats to the lucky student who was awarded the £100 Amazon voucher for taking part in the College travel survey. Stay tuned to find out about College and cycling in the new year!

Editor's Addiction of the term...



LOLCAT OF THE WEEK: More from teh Lolcat editor



Union Committee Meetings

The next meeting of the **Union Council** will take place on December 10 and will include a discussion on student protests.

The next meeting of the **Clubs, Societies and Projects Board** will be on December 12.

Sabb Hot Desk

Come to the Sherfield Building on December 6th to have a chat with the Felix Editor and the Deputy President (Welfare). Have any concerns, suggestions, or plain annoyances? Come along and have a cheeky natter!

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Editors: **Aemun Reza,**
Nida Mahmud,
Philippa Skett
news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

NEWS

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IMPERIAL COLLEGE CHARITY WEEK 2013

was attended by over 300 students, many with their families. Inspiring speeches were given throughout the dinner, with the guest speakers painting a vivid picture of the suffering taking place around the world. An enthralling auction soon followed, which saw beautiful canvases go for as much as £2,000 a piece, as well as intricately decorated cakes being sold for nearly £400! All in all it was a heart-warming sight seeing students uniting together under one roof for a noble cause, and more than £23,000 was raised on the night for orphans and needy children.

However, that was not the end of Charity Week, as the weekend saw the return of the now UK famous Smoky not Smudgy ladies pampering event. Bigger and better, this consisted of a massive bazaar, as well as two fashion shows. Hundreds of students from both Imperial and other universities attended, as well as famous bloggers who were invited as special guests.

Overall, Imperial College came third nationally, raising a monumental £69,697. To put this number into context, this is nearly half the total amount of money raised by Imperial students during the whole of last year (£147,684), through RAG, Medics RAG and CW 2012! With Charity Week celebrating its 10th year anniversary this year, a massive £2,993,176 has been raised to date, and this figure continues to grow rapidly each year.

As Charity Week 2013 draws to a close, volunteers now have the opportunity to vote for the projects that they would like the money raised to go towards. It is memories such as those formed in CW that help shape our students, sprouting and developing their ambition to grow both personally and on a societal level.

The Islamic Society commented on this achievement: "We would like to thank everyone who made Charity Week the success that it was this year, from the dozens of volunteers who took part, to the Union who were supportive throughout – this was truly a collective Imperial College effort and is a testament to what we students can achieve through dedication and uniting together for a common cause. We pray that our efforts go some way to fulfilling our obligation to serving humanity and helping those less fortunate than ourselves."

Charity Week 2014, we wait for you with much impatience.

UUK's report on gender segregated seating



Nida Mahmud
News Editor

Last week, Universities UUK, the UK's universities representative organisation issued guidance on helping universities manage external speakers.

They concluded that universities can segregate students during speaker events when required, as long as there is fair access to both genders.

The report states that, "assuming the side-by-side segregated seating arrangement is adopted, there does not appear to be any discrimination on gender grounds merely by imposing segregated seating. Both men and women are being treated equally, as they are both being segregated in the same way. Concerns to accommodate the wishes or beliefs of those opposed to segregation should not result in a religious group being prevented from

having a debate in accordance with its belief system."

Nicola Dandridge, the UUK chief executive said "These are issues that are arising all the time and these are really difficult issues. What emerged from our work on this particular issue is that there is no clearly defined right or wrong here as to whether to allow or outlaw segregation. It is going to very much depend on the facts of the case. External speakers play an important role in university life, not least in terms of encouraging students to think for themselves, challenge other people's views and develop their own opinions. Although most speakers are uncontroversial, some will express contentious, even inflammatory or offensive views. Universities have to balance their obligation to encourage free speech with their duties to ensure that the law is observed, the safety and security of staff, students and visitors secured, and good campus relations promoted. In practice, achieving this balance is not always easy."

ULU students protest in Senate House occupation

Nida Mahmud
News Editor

Over 100 protesters occupied the University of London (UoL's) headquarters on Wednesday 4 December. The protest took place to demonstrate against the UoL's "undemocratic and unaccountable" running.

The protesters demanded 10 things, that included scraping plans to close the University of London Union (ULU), paying the London living wage to UoL staff, as well as improving the sick and holiday pay. They said that they would not leave until their demands were met. The protest was not organised by social media, instead it was organised by word of mouth.

50 police officers attended the UoL office to remove the demonstrators. Police arrested three protesters; two have now been released, however, one has been held for assaulting a police officer. The police said that they were there to stop the breach of peace.

The UoL Chief Operating Officer, Chris Cobb sent a letter to the protesters at 5pm on the evening cautioning them "if you do not leave the building peacefully within the next hour (by 6pm this evening) then I shall request our Security Staff to remove you, and to call upon the police for assistance if necessary."

The ULU commented: "Initial reports indicate that protesters were assaulted by both police and security: thrown to the ground, kicked and punched, and dragged to the ground by their hair.

This evening, the University of London colluded once again with police to evict occupiers, in a violent attempt to harass and silence dissent on campus. Their actions are a disgrace, and show their disregard for both the welfare of their students and their own university community. Occupations are a legitimate form of dissent. When our university exploits our staff, shuts down our student union, and are utterly unaccountable to the students and staff that give it life and make it function, students have no choice but to gain leverage in whatever way they can."

Campus Services: Bring yer buckets

Campus services takes steps in the right direction – Still silent.



LUKE GRANGER-BROWN

Sponsored Editorial

Student Discounts At Fresh Hairdressers 70m from South Kensington tube



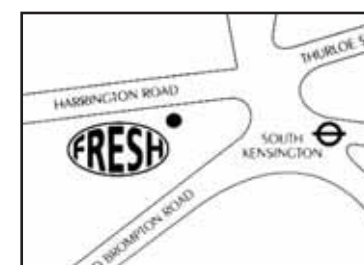
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RCSU Union Launches 2014 Science Challenge Competition and Questions



BENJAMIN LESTER/ THROUGHBENSLENS.CO.UK

Joseph Letts
 Editor-In-Chief

On Tuesday the RCSU (Royal College of Science Union) celebrated the introduction to the next RCSU Science Challenge Competition with a launch event in the Sir Alexander Fleming Building.

As well as prospective entrants from Imperial and several secondary schools the event also played host to an influential panel of judges and speakers, including Professor Fay Dowker, Professor of Theoretical Physics and former student of Stephen Hawking, Baroness Eliza Manningham-Buller DCB, Chair of Imperial College Council and Former Director General of MI5, and Pallab Ghosh, BBC News Science Correspondent and former Felix Editor.

The winners of the competition will be chosen separately from Imperial students and secondary school students. For the essay questions, the Imperial overall winner receives £1000 and a trip to CERN while each question winner received £400. For school essays, the overall winner wins £500 and a trip to CERN while the winners for each question receive £200. Instead, for the video question, the overall winner wins £1000 while the Imperial and School runner ups each receive £200.

At the launch event the audience were treated to short talks from each of the judges, who discussed the importance of communicating science to a wider audience and imparted several nuggets of wisdom to the captive audience.

The competition will be open to students from February 1 to March 3, 2014 and each entrant will be able to select a single question from the competition.

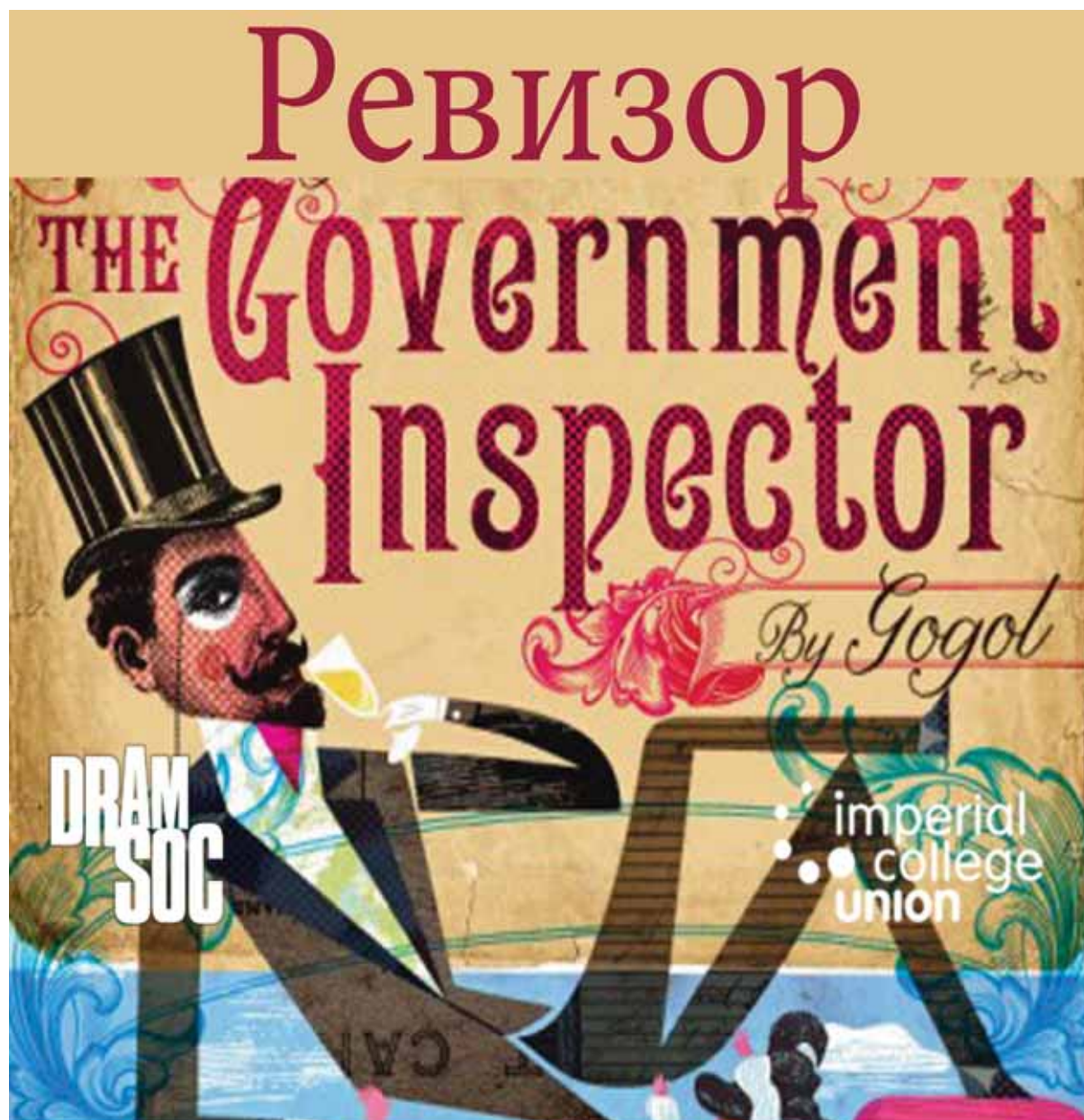
Questions:

“What does science tell us about the nature of time” — Prof. Fay Dowker (Essay: 800 words max)

“Write a letter to my five year old daughter, Charlotte, about how one or more areas of science, technology, engineering or medicine that fascinate you will have developed by the time she is at University and which subject you would encourage her to study and why” — Pallab Ghosh (Essay: 800 words max)

“How should we decide which species to prioritise for conservation?” — John Kudlick, Society of Biology (Essay: 800 words max)

“Explain a scientific concept in a 3-minute video-clip” — Dr. Jad Marrouche, Former RCSU President and current Imperial College research associate at CERN (Video: Answer via a video clip uploaded to YouTube with #RCSsciencechallenge).



Wednesday 4th December - Saturday 7th December
 7.30pm, Union Concert Hall (2nd floor of the Union)

Online tickets: £5 for students,
 £7 for non-students

On the door tickets charged £1 more

Find DramSoc on Facebook or go to
 dramsoc.org for more information



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FEATURES

Opinion: h-bar – Revisiting the Holland Club

“Thomas Holland”
SAVE THE HOLLAND CLUB

The Holland Club was so popular because it was a unique facility within the College offering a traditional ‘local’ pub ambience for staff and postgraduates to relax and socialise in. The bar was carpeted and comfortably furnished, the lighting sympathetic, the atmosphere warm and friendly.

The new bar in no way “preserves the ethos of the Holland Club”, the original assurance made to staff and postgraduates by the college. Instead we have been provided with a prime example of corporate catering.

The h-bar is now identical to other college outlets and is little different to either the Students’ Union or Eastside: it has been likened by some to a motorway services; add some screaming kids and you could be in a McDonald’s. We struggle to think of a



FELIX

less welcoming place to enjoy a drink in the entire district. The idea that it is a ‘pub’ is contemptible.

The worst thing about the whole exercise is that it was totally preventable. The Holland Club Committee could have maintained a separate bar whilst making additional space for student meetings, meeting space being a primary reason given for making the changes.

The takeover was from the outset conducted in an underhand manner. Rumours and secretive visits to the

Holland Club by senior management who were apparently ‘casing the joint’ preceded any approach to the Holland Club Committee. A sudden need to serve evening meals in the MDH was contrived so that it could then be deemed unsatisfactory for that purpose. Staff representatives and the Bar Manager, Kevin Young, spent a lot of time trying to reach a mutually agreeable solution, but the college had already decided on the outcome and the plans. There was the usual sham consultation, something the college

specialises in: not one of the several hundred comments were taken on board.

The Holland Club was established in 1948 by a benevolent and far-sighted College Rector who realised that staff needed their own haven from the demands of work; a haven that became increasingly important as changes within the College developed an increasingly more pressurised working environment. Over time the social facility was extended to postgraduate students and in recent

years the Holland Club has fostered new friendships and networking, facilitated informal and sometimes very productive discussions about research work, and above all provided somewhere welcoming to relax and wind down after work.

Former Holland Club users will no doubt be divided between those able to accept the change and those who cannot, and those unable to adapt will no doubt be dismissed as whining. However it must be said that many users of the old club decline to use the new facility not out of rancour but because it is just so unpleasant. Commercial services claim much positive feedback though strangely the h-bar remains unlisted on their review page: a case of Emperors’ Clothes?

New staff and students will only know of the h-bar but, as with Southside, the name and reputation of the Holland Club will linger on for some time yet.

Sadly, the h-bar will above all remain a monument to the college’s contempt for its staff.

Science Challenge’s Original Aim Exposed

Jon Sanderson
Former RCSA President

Every year the RCSU issues the Science Challenge, which has evolved into an essay competition with very acceptable prizes. However the original motivation for the challenge was only known to a select few – now it can be revealed.

Some years ago a curious old RCS alumnus found he had insufficient life expectancy to exploit the ideas and inventions he had accumulated over the years. He decided to find a group of IC students to explore these ideas by issuing a challenge with a cash prize with the assistance of the RCSU, which had just been reformed. That original question proved too difficult and was shelved. However it is still on the table and even though the prize was claimed, a significant number of ideas remain to be shared with anyone willing to try.

This was that challenge :-

In order to encourage the reformed RCSU and to forge ties with the RCSA, it was suggested that there should be a competition based on the following proposal.

--ooOoo--

RCS Association Competition

During the foreseeable future an event will occur which will either kill most of humanity or make the planet’s surface uninhabitable. Once that happens it will be too late to take any useful action, consequently it would seem prudent to get ready now, while we are still alive.

The information needed to give our descendants a flying start on the way to a new civilisation will need to be in a long-lasting form and a format that will make sense to whoever is left of whatever ethnicity and language.

We are asking you to propose a terminal

disaster, be it asteroid impact, super volcano or total global warming, and then propose a way to preserve the most suitable group of people and a method of supplying them with survival data, which you will define, in an indestructible way.

Clearly I and a few members of the RCSA, would like to be included but this may not be acceptable to everyone else. Our chances of living for 100 or more years to see some new habitat are really doubtful.

So who would be there and where would it be – on the surface – below ground – above the atmosphere? But please, not in space! This planet is home for some time to come.

What language would the information be in? How will it be presented and where are we to put it? All these questions and more present themselves.

If you’re clever enough to be here how will you survive?

A small prize is offered to the group that provides the most practical solution and an even smaller prize for the most amusing answer.

What would be left – and has someone done this before? If so, where is it?

--ooOoo--

In the event the students opted for a far more immediate and practical challenge and decided to throw it open to the whole college. This became the Imperial College Science Challenge and on 20/2/06 appeared in Broadsheet as :-

How will science allow a long-term, self-contained settlement on Mars to become a reality?

In order to attract as much interest as possible there were significant prizes offered and free drinks at the prize giving ceremony. It worked well with many competitors from across the College taking part. Five of the best entries were chosen for the judges to evaluate and the turnout for the final presentations in the Sir Alexander Fleming lecture theatre was impressive.

Summer Finance Internship

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Interview: Adam Kay, Musical Comedy

Jonny Pratt
Reporter

This week Felix interviews Adam Kay, the frontman of Amateur Transplants and an ex-Imperial Medical student. If you're not sure who that is, look up the London Underground song on YouTube and send us a letter of thanks.

Q: Hi Adam, I think to start I have to ask the obvious question, why would anyone put themselves through Imperial Medical School for 6 years and then decide to sing smutty songs for a living?

Well, I think you sort of decide what you're doing at University when you choose your GCSEs, particularly for medicine 'cause you know you have to kind of do sciences. I didn't quite know what I wanted to do when I was 16 and the idea of being a doctor was a thing people did, so I did it and I guess I knew when I was studying that it wasn't 100% suited to me but I ploughed on because I was halfway there and then I worked as a doctor for a bit but whilst I was working as a doctor I was also performing and doing various other things so that when I eventually had my full epiphany that I couldn't do that forever I was able to jump ship. But you don't want your hospitals full of doctors who don't particularly give a shit about being a doctor, it's generally a good thing that that cohort notice and try something else.

Q: How did you get through the app process then, did you have to lie on your personal statement?

No, I mean medicine's a lot harder to get into now than it was. The sort of approach was they wanted someone who had good predicted grades who seemed just a nice chap; either did music, or played rugby or did drama or the school magazine, whatever it was. I'd done music and things and they decided I was the right sort of fit. But whilst I was at Imperial something changed and it became quite an academic medical school so I definitely wouldn't get in now. But I think I was relatively honest on my personal statement; certainly the facts were there, whether I egged it up a bit with how much I loved being a doctor. I probably did, but it was probably factually accurate.

Q: Are there any particular memories you have of Imperial College?

Umm, I don't think there's any sort of individual stories. No there actually are, I keep thinking of individual stories but I literally can't tell you

because the people involved are now consultant physicians and surgeons around the country and I'd hate for their careers to end as a result of this interview.

Q: Any non specific stories then?

I'm sure medical students haven't changed in the slightest, a lot of drinking, nudity and the occasional arrests.

Q: Did you see the Daily Mail article about the Reynolds? How does that compare?

It's not a very pleasant environment, if you're a rugby playing drinking boy it's very fun to do all these drinking games, but if you're not that, if you don't fit into that mould it's a very scary environment – there's a lot of pressure on to drink and I think in all honesty it wouldn't do any harm for everyone to take a bit of a look at themselves and think "am I happy that this is happening in a university?"; particularly people who have to have some degree of probity who are training to be doctors. I'm sure at Imperial it was all painted as "oh they're being such killjoys and this is just tradition and fun". But you know I wasn't one of the rugby guys and I often did think I was being forced into drinking more than I would. Otherwise I was going to be picked on as an outsider. I think there's the diversity for fun and the diversity for drinking without that. It can be a horrid environment so I don't think there's any harm in someone noticing.

Q: How would you advertise yourself to Imperial students who know of you only from the London Underground song?

I ruin all their favourite songs. I haven't quite shaken my science roots so there's probably no nerdier smutty piano based comedian. I'm playing a Christmas show that is literally the opposite of any other West End pantomime sort of thing; it's just sort of horrendous, swearing, blasphemy, with vague scientific undertones.

Q: Have you ever had a song that's too offensive or is it anything goes?

No I have to self-censor but you self-censor for a number of reasons, you write something and take a step back and think "is it funny? Is it clever? Is it offensive?" And offensive is something I have to think about a lot because if you go and see a comedian the idea is that you leave happier than when you went because if you don't then you've absolutely failed as a comedian, so a lot of what I do is near to the knuckle but I try quite hard to make sure people aren't going to be actually upset by what happens. Hopefully I



IDIL SUKAN/DRAW HQ

achieve it because they don't seem to walk out or call the police or write articles however stressful it was.

Q: What do you see in a news story that makes you want to sing about it?

Probably half the time it comes from a topic I want to explore and half the time it comes from a song I've heard on the radio and I've realised I can change one of the words to bum and stretch that out to three minutes. I think what I do is quite broad; I don't stick to one particular topic. I think if I have a song people would like to hear I write it. I think there's also a big attrition rate, probably a quarter of the songs I write ever hear the light of day on stage. Though when I'm playing in a week or so the theme is very much Christmas, then again it is nearly Christmas.

Q: So do you have a favourite song in particular to perform? Or one that gets the best audience reaction?

I don't know, I mean often it's one of the more recent songs I've written. I enjoy playing those just because the London Underground song I must have played 300 billion times.

Nearly as much as it's been seen on YouTube.

Yeah, I am grateful for that song, but if I was told I never had to play it again I wouldn't say no. But I mostly enjoy songs which are fairly new to me because I'm still hearing the punchlines for the third or fourth time. I wrote a version of the John Lewis ad and played that at a gig a few days ago and that was enjoyable because it was so new to me.

Q: Have you ever thought about writing a song about Imperial in particular?

No, I mean you've got to look at how big an audience is. If I have a specific gig at the association of whateverers I will write often some material for that occasion, but the occasion hasn't arisen for me to perform at Imperial.

Q: So we have to book you to get our own song?

Exactly, you have to fucking pay me! I'm not a charity! I'm not sure what I would say about it, but I think that overall it was an enjoyable experience.

Q: Did you ever read Felix when you were here? And what were your thoughts?

I did, the Editor was called Will Dugdale and it was very good actually, it was a useful resource and it had really good cryptic crosswords. I don't know if you still have them, but it taught me how to do them which I started doing in my first year and I still do every day.

That's useful life skills being taught at Imperial

Probably the thing at Imperial that's had the most impact on my life, but certainly not anything in the degree I did, just learning how to complete the cryptic crossword.

Q: Do you have an opinion on the new 24 hour tube hours and lack of ticket officers, is there going to be a revision to the song?

There will definitely be a revision to the song. It's never nice when people

lose their jobs but on the other hand I'm yet to see a smile from a London Underground worker so I can't be so sad that they're all going to be replaced with robots. Inevitably there will be strikes so my song will get a bit more airplay. But my overall feeling about the 24 hour opening is at the moment half the tubes are closed during the day at the weekend, so can we sort out the days first and then move on to the night? They seem to be running before they can walk. I live on the District Line, I can't use it any weekend. So it's all well and good telling me I can use it at night, but I think we all know full well that's not true. Also can you imagine the stench? A river of vomit running through the centre of the night tube? It'll be worse than the buses, and if it's running 24 hours how do you clean it? Or will there be this constant smell of sick 24 hours a day?

Q: Finally, what would you say to anyone at Imperial thinking maybe they want to go into something a bit more creative?

Finish your degree, you've always got the option to go back and do it later. It's always good to have a vocation, but on the other hand it's a fucking awful job. Why anyone would go back I don't know. It's such a long degree – everyone thinks about quitting at some point. But I'm pleased that I stuck it out because if for any instance variety and gigging dries up at some point I can always grit my teeth and work as a locum again or something.

The Amateur Transplants Christmas Show hits London on Friday the 13th of December at the Bloomsbury Theatre, with student tickets costing £16. Check it out for the funniest, swariest night you can get to on the tube.



 @feliximperial

 FelixImperial

FEATURES

An Opening into the PG Open Day

Shiladitya Ghosh
Undercover Prospective
Postgraduate Student

One cold Wednesday afternoon earlier this week, your fantastic Features editor designed to trespass and snoop around formally check out and report the annual Postgraduate Open Day happening at the South Kensington Campus. It was much less of a hassle than expected, as I had turned up with Joe Letts' name card

relative abundance of sweets on offer atop their tables and the spread of pamphlets and other assorted paper what-have-you-nots (that are great for grabbing and walking away with when you don't want to talk to the other party anymore, handily enough.) The awesome Physics department even managed to magic up a floating shark to supposedly earmark their location (the link between the two was beyond me.)

While lapping the Hall a number of times that would impress Avogadro, and trying not to look the part of a dodgy creeper taking pictures of people repeatedly, I managed to

the working world and felt becoming a Doctoral candidate was in order to spice up her life, put it bluntly: "Imperial is one of the best places to do a PhD in Meteorology ... especially as it is twinned and closely linked with



Female Population Represent?

SHILADITYA GHOSH/FELIX

the NHM next door" – who'd have thought our neighbours would be luring students in for us?

Thomas, a 3rd year IC Physicist, and Federico, a 1st year PG student in the High Energy Particle Physics



From one Physicist to another

SHILADITYA GHOSH/FELIX

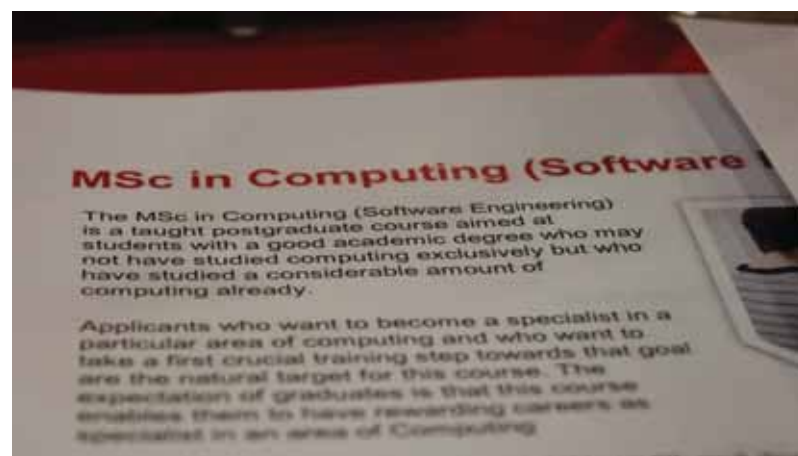
(HEPP) focus group decided they wanted to answer my questions together. They agreed that carrying on and doing a PG degree commanded great recognition and respect even in today's hyper-competitive world, and it was enthusiastically noted to be a great way to avoid having to get a job. Plus, it was a perk to remain at the largest Physics department in the UK!

Ryan, an Accountancy graduate from Birkbeck (UOL), claimed he was drawn to Imperial because in the Petroleum and Geoscience industries, many employees speak highly about our graduates and are usually themselves past students from here. Furthermore, London is a place he can't stay away from, and not many universities offer the diverse range of technical specialisation courses that are available here at IC. He also revealed that he "regretted not doing a science degree for UG as it's more valuable than what [he] has now – so [he] reworked his personal 5-Year Plan to make sure [he] end[s] up in a technical vocation."



Obligatory stock photo of Open Day

SHILADITYA GHOSH/FELIX



Sample of paper paraphernalia on offer

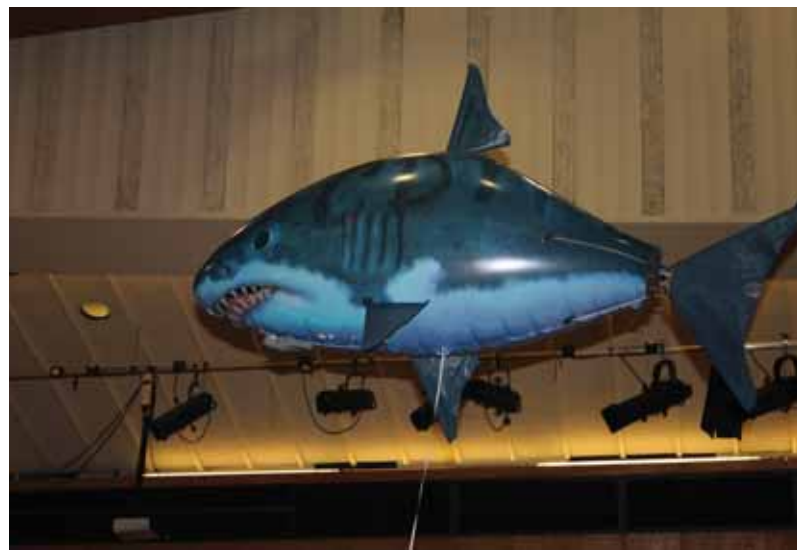
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for clearance purposes but may as well have come dressed as a school kid for all the difference it made.

As an undergraduate myself, my objective was to find out what motivated people to consider becoming postgraduates and to come to or stay at Imperial for PG studies, and how Imperial addressed their

circumvent the focal point of the spotlight away from me a couple of times, by interviewing some attending prospective postgraduates.

Lawrence, a 3rd year EEE student already at the College, felt that he wanted to come back to continue his PG studies here because: all his friends are here – why leave? His other



The Great Blue Physics Shark...can fly!

SHILADITYA GHOSH/FELIX

interests in the form of the Open Day. The focus point of the day's proceedings was the departmental exhibition in the Great Hall, with each department also organising their own tours throughout the day. As such, the bulk of sleuthing around was confined to the Sherfield building itself.

It was clear that some departments were much more bothered about the even than others; evidenced by the

motivations to pursue a PG degree in general were so that he could "learn more technical aspects of things, and gain specialisation in a particular field – something you don't get from the broader scope of a UG degree". In addition, he felt he wanted to make a contribution to academics after gaining so much from it.

Jane, a UCL Geology MSc alumnus who'd grown weary after ten years in



Handy-dandy Imperial Mobile App!

SHILADITYA GHOSH/FELIX

I then asked each student about how useful they found the departmental event and what suggestions they had to offer – perhaps most tellingly, Lawrence's response was to merely open the Imperial Mobile app on his iPhone, select the PG Open Day icon and display the blank page to me. ICT couldn't have been too pleased. It was also suggested that the registration process was unclear in general and

4-year PhD candidates into their programme. When asked why they think students would want to come to Imperial and walk this path, they casually let on that Imperial's ICB-CDT was one of the founding CDTs in the country back in 2003 and is world-leading in its research focuses.

Next, I approached the pair of Climate-KIC (CK... no, not that CK) and the Grantham Institute for Climate Change (GICC). Following a similar discussion, I gleaned that what distinguished the two departments was that while CK was more of a network for PGs to learn how to translate their innovative ideas into business models and a way to gain entrepreneurship skills (not least through a 5-week summer school), GICC was a decentralised body that worked across many departments at Imperial to fund PhDs that addressed their climate and environmental focuses. Moreover, GICC felt they were alluring as they were exclusive to Imperial and offered public engagement and policy exposure opportunities, while CK served up unparalleled networking opportunities due to Imperial's reputation and good career opportunities due to industrial partners.

I also asked all three departments



Enthusiastic volunteers on the job...or just posing?

SHILADITYA GHOSH/FELIX

that departmental activities were haphazard and not really apparent.

After I'd made several further unsuccessful attempts at distracting potential students from the actual event, I thought I'd annoy some of the (momentarily) less active booths and give them someone to talk to, although we could also go with the official reason of wanting to hear both sides of the tale.

First I sat myself before the Institute of Chemical Biology's Centre for Doctoral Training (ICB-CDT) booth, to figure out what they were all about. Generally speaking, they were all about a multi-disciplinary approach to PG work and focussed on drawing students with a STEM background to work on "interfacial projects to address the world's problems". They plan to take about 15 fully funded

about how valuable they found the Open Day event to be in garnering applications, and what other publicity strategies they preferred to use – ICB-CDT said they found it extremely valuable to be there as usually a third of their applicants are obtained as a direct result of the Open Day and CK expressed similar sentiments, however GI admitted that they were present only to "cover all their bases" and usually got their applications as a result of word-of-mouth publicity and the internet.

With my job done, I swiftly grab a fistful of chocolates from a booth near one of the exit doors, capped my camera lens and walked out, savouring the fact that I was still merely an undergraduate. TL;DR – become a postgraduate to avoid getting a job!

Welcome to Wellbeing

Marissa Lewis
Wellbeing Editor



Hi I'm Marissa. As well as being Deputy President (Welfare) of the Union, I'm also the editor for the Wellbeing section of Felix.

The Wellbeing section will run fortnightly and feature articles from students about any issue which affects us or our friends. Whether it's an article about cycling safely in London, leading a healthy lifestyle or about what you or your society is doing for a national, international or Union campaign, I'd love to hear from you.

At Imperial, it's very easy to fall into the trap of caring about our academic work more than we care about ourselves and living for the end of each term or coursework assignment. However, this isn't a sustainable way of working and it definitely isn't an enjoyable way of spending your years at university. It is such a cliché to say how important creating a work-life balance is, but ensuring you are able to look after yourself whilst looking after your studies will set you up for the world of work when you don't have a lovely DPW to look after you.

Do you have any first-hand experiences of mental health conditions that you would like to share? Send them in to: disoff@imperial.ac.uk

If you would like to get involved in the IC Open Minds mental health awareness campaign, 'like' us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ICOpenMinds>
Or contact Moeko: disoff@imperial.ac.uk



Depression Mythbusters

With all the talk of mental health awareness floating around with exam stress and other bothers that we all undoubtedly experience, it may be hard to distinguish what is meant by depression as a mental health condition. Open Minds are here to debunk some of the common preconceptions of depression.



Depression is not a real medical illness

Depression is a diagnosable illness, defined as "a common mental disorder, characterized by sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, feelings of tiredness, and poor concentration" (World Health Organisation).



There are many different types of depression

As a general term, depression can be classed as: major, which may involve feelings of lowered self-esteem, and a lack of motivation to work, sleep, eat, or do once-pleasurable activities for a certain period of time; chronic, where symptoms are less severe but depression lasts for a longer period of time; or bipolar/manic, where one's mood may swing between extreme depression and extreme happiness. Other mental health conditions may also be associated with depression. Depression will likely manifest itself differently in different people.



You can inherit depression from your family

There is some evidence that depression runs in families, although no specific causative genes have been found. This does not mean that you will definitely get depression if someone in your family has it, nor does it mean that you cannot suffer from depression if it does not run in your family.



Everyone gets depressed sometimes

Life can be very stressful, and everyone will go through spells of feeling down. However, with depression, these feelings persist for weeks, months, or years. Depression is an illness with specific symptoms such as losing interest in things that you previously enjoyed, feeling like you are a failure and having trouble sleeping or sleeping too much. If you think you may be depressed, you should see your GP as soon as possible.



You're depressed because you don't exercise enough

Depression cannot be classed as a mood that can be 'snapped out of'. Rather, it is an illness that requires recognised treatments and, likely, a certain recovery time. Good diet and exercise can help to alleviate a low mood, but they are not a cure for depression.



Depression is treatable

Yes! There are many different treatment options for depression. The treatment will depend on the type, and severity, of depression you experience. Some common options are:

- Medication: selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are commonly used to treat depression and anxiety. They boost serotonin levels in the brain to help lift mood. Medication is not a magical cure for depression, and SSRIs are often taken in conjunction with talking therapies or CBT.
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT): CBT aims to link how you feel (cognition) to how you act (behaviour). It does not focus on your past or what may have caused your depression, but rather on practical ways to manage your feelings in a positive way. Treatment may include keeping a mood diary or making a diagram linking your thoughts, feelings and behaviour, in order to break the negative cycle of depression.
- Counselling: counselling is a form of talking therapy where a trained counsellor will provide a safe environment in which for you to express your feelings. Rather than offering advice, counselling will help you to find your own insight and understanding of your problems.

These things are often easier said than done and you need to be fully committed to treatment for it to work. However, most people do recover from depression if they seek treatment early.

World AIDS Day: 1st December 2013

MEDSIN talk about their take on this international campaign

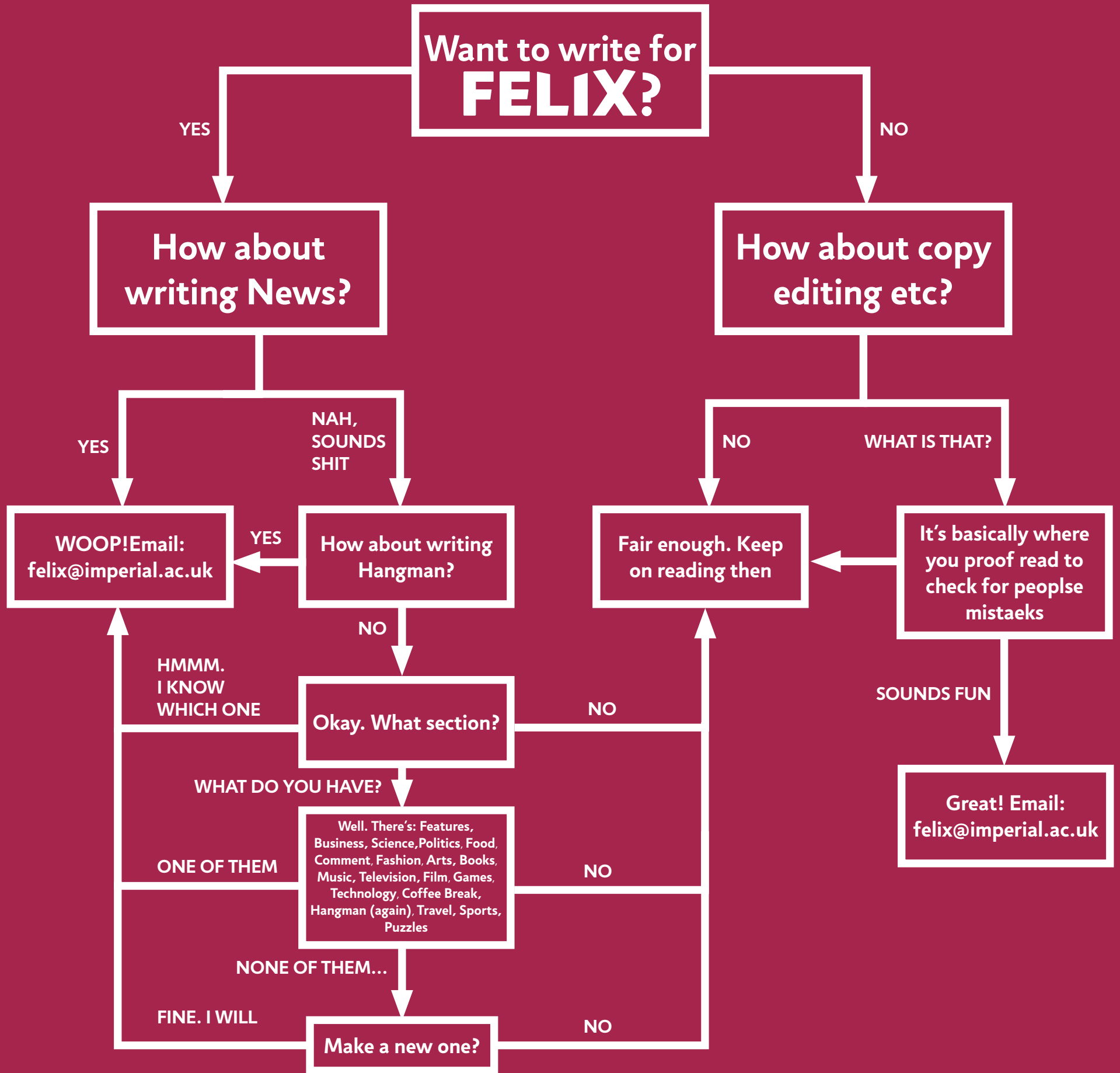
Education is key in the fight against stigma associated with HIV, believed to be one of the biggest barriers that hinders the drive towards more testing and helping those living with HIV live a life without fear of discrimination. If you would like to know more about the recent challenges and developments in the HIV story or a personal insight into the life of someone living with HIV in the UK, come along to this free event! Medsin Imperial invites you to an evening with Red Elmahdi, currently undertaking a PhD in the subject, and Sophie Strachan, from the charity Positively UK on Tuesday December 10th in the Huxley Building, LT 711C at 6pm. We will also be selling red ribbons, so come along, ask questions, wear a ribbon and show your support!

We look forward to seeing you there!

Five facts about HIV

1. People with HIV have a normal life span if diagnosed and treated in time
2. There's no job that someone can't do specifically because they have HIV
3. Treatment can mean that people living with HIV are no longer infectious - in fact treatment can reduce infectiousness by 96%
4. Men and women living with HIV can become parents of an HIV-free baby
5. BUT people living with HIV still face stigma and discrimination





FELIX

felix@imperial.ac.uk

felixonline.co.uk

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Gender differences? It's all in our head

Philippa Skett on how our minds are already made up when it comes to sex

New research has shown that the brains of females and males have different patterns of connectivity, possibly alluding as to why men may not behave the same as women. In this impressively large study published by PNAS, 949 people had the connections of their neuronal clusters mapped, and results indicated significant differences between the wiring of the minds between the two genders.

So what were the connectivity differences? Males often had stronger connectivity profiles within the separate hemispheres compared to females, although females were found to have significantly more inter-hemispheric connectivity across the whole brain. This means that although males have greater connectivity between the front and the back of the two sides of the brain, both of the two hemispheres in females are more intricately connected from left to right.

The study, carried out by Pennsylvania University, was led by Dr Ragini Verma, an associate professor in the department of Radiology. Verma thinks there is a link between these results and differences in behaviour between the genders: "These maps show us a stark difference – and complementarity – in the architecture of the human brain that helps provide a potential neural basis as to why men excel at certain

tasks, and women at others."

In behavioural experiments also run by Pennsylvania University, females outperformed males when it came to testing attention spans, memory retention and facial recognition, whilst males were better at spatial processing and had quicker reaction times. Meanwhile, males generally performed better when only working on one task, whereas females could process several at one time and were also found to have superior social cognition skills.

Such results could be seen as indicative that the connectivity patterns Verma has identified relate to these differences in behaviour, although little was mentioned in the paper about neurological plasticity as a result of external environmental influences. Could it be that a gender-biased lifestyle is shaping such connectivity instead?

When looking at age, the contrast between male and female connectivity increased as the subjects got older. Subjects of both genders below the age of 13 were found to have very similar connectivity profiles, whilst differences were most prominent in those that were 17 or older. This may indicate that puberty could play a part in shaping the dimorphism of adult human brains, almost as much as it influences physical gender-orientated development too, although more research is needed.

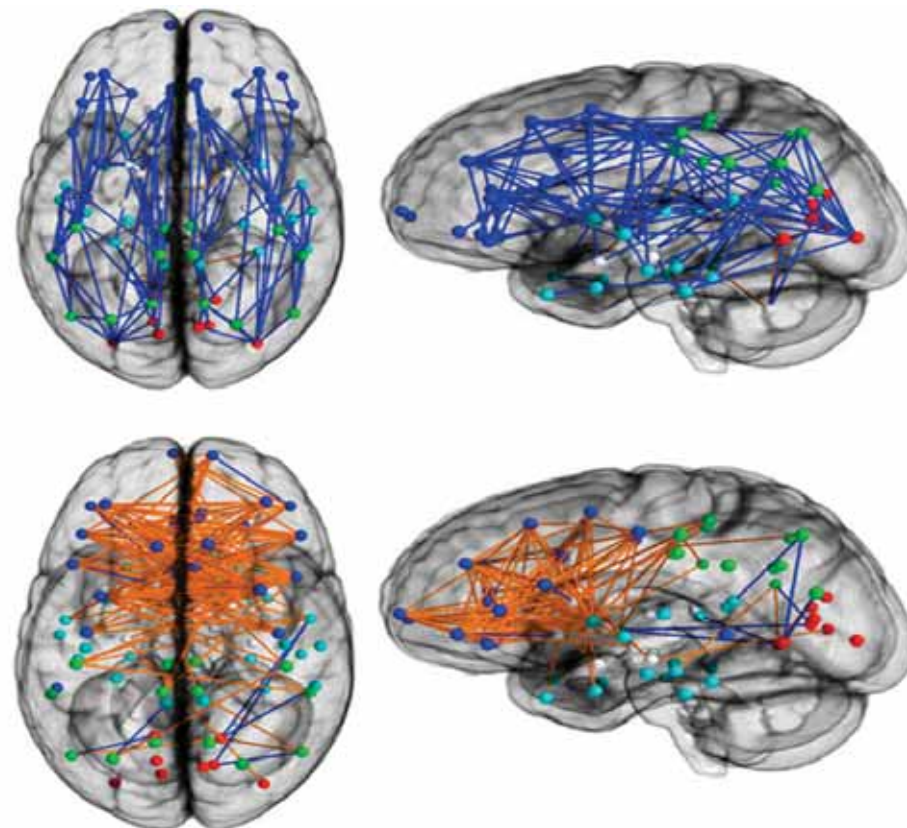
Tracking the connectivity patterns was done using diffusion tensor

imaging, an MRI technique that maps the movement of water particles moving throughout the brain. Being able to see where water moves can allow tracing of the underlying fibres of the brain that are directing the water movement.

Such fibres are composed of large bundles of hundreds of axons of neurons, and show which regions of the brain connect to and influence others.

Modelling the entire profile of all the connections within the brain at a cellular level is still yet to be completely done, but would be the ultimate endeavour in brain mapping. The Human Connectome Project, launched back in 2010, is aiming to do this, although estimations of its completion in 2015 have been met with varying levels of scepticism.

Studies into the connectivity of the



INGALHALIKAR, M. PNAS, DECEMBER 2, 2013

Connection patterns of the fibres within the brain. Female brain is blue, male brain is orange

brain are no longer novel, but are still providing increasingly interesting results. Although this study looks at neural bundles, being able to study the brain at an even greater resolution is next in the neuroscience agenda. Not only that, but coupled with further

research in behaviour and neural development and better imaging techniques, we may one day be able to pinpoint exactly what in our minds make us who we are.

DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1316909110

Why solar cells prefer Adele over Beethoven

Keir Little
Science Editor

Could Miley Cyrus help lower your energy bills?" asked the Daily Mail. The answer: probably not, but ambient noise could increase the efficiency of solar cells, researchers at Imperial College and Queen Mary University of London have found.

Professor James Durrant of Imperial's Department of Chemistry spoke to *Felix* to explain the findings. "Myself and Steve Dunn from Queen Mary have been looking at piezoelectric effects, which are when mechanical strain gives an electric

current – electric lighters are the example Steve always gives. There is evidence that these effects are helping in the field of photocatalysis, where sunlight is used to degrade pollutants. We were interested in whether this sort of approach might be applicable to solar cells, and whether sound might be able to induce this effect."

Sound produces a strain which could induce a current in piezoelectric materials; however, due to the random orientation of sound waves and the fact that the high and low pressure effects could cancel each other out, the Imperial team were initially doubtful that it would significantly affect power output or efficiency. "Steve thought it would work," said Professor Durrant, "but I didn't believe it."

To investigate the effect, they manufactured small solar cells

containing zinc oxide nanorods, which are a piezoelectric material, and measured their response to different levels and frequencies of sound. They found that sound as low as 75dB, such as conversation or roadside noise, increased the efficiency of the cells, and that the best response was to sound at around 10kHz.

As music is usually played in Professor Durrant's lab, the team also looked at the response of the cells to different kinds of music.

"It's not very scientific," he admits, "as it's hard to quantify the sound as the amplitudes and frequencies change.

Still, we found that the response to Adele was better than to Beethoven or traditional Persian music.

At first we didn't know why that was, but then found that electronically-



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Adele's fan base at her sold out concert

synthesised music has more high-frequency sounds than classical."

Though common silicon cells do not contain piezoelectric materials, they can easily be manufactured into newly-developed printed and polymer solar cells.

Dr Steve Dunn said, "after investigating systems for converting

vibrations into electricity, this is a really exciting development that shows a similar set of physical properties can also enhance the performance of a photovoltaic solar cell."

Next, the researchers will be looking to understand the mechanistic reasons behind the effect, and how it scales with different sound intensities.



Extinction, death and dinosaurs

Rosamund Pearce writes for *I, Science* on resurrecting the extinct

The loss of a species was once thought to be as final as the demise of its last survivor but now, thanks to advances in biotechnology, reviving an extinct species is no longer pure fiction. But instead of asking “can it be done?” the conversation is changing to “should it be done?”

The possibility of bringing species back from the grave – a process known as de-extinction – was widely popularised by Michael Crichton’s 1990 book, and Spielberg’s 1993 film, *Jurassic Park*.

Inspired by the advent of genetic engineering, Crichton’s tale gained cult-status, but just as Aldous Huxley’s vision of artificial reproduction was brought closer with the advance of IVF technology, so the process of de-extinction has moved from sci-fi concept to real life science.

In 2003, a team of French and Spanish scientists achieved the impossible task of bringing a species back from

Not only that, but of the 439 eggs used, only 57 developed into embryos, only four made it to full term, and only one survived to birth – a pretty poor survival percentage.

Despite these problems, this breakthrough gave hope to the emerging de-extinction movement and, propelled by a combination of curiosity and conservation, many more de-extinction attempts are on the horizon.

The Tasmanian tiger and the passenger pigeon are just two of the candidates being vetted for resurrection. Furthermore, in March 2013, a team from the University of New South Wales announced that they were attempting to bring back the gastric brooding frog – a bizarre creature that used its stomach as a womb.

The birth of the ibex has also fuelled more ambitious and controversial ideas. For instance, could such technology be applied to ancient, long-dead species?

between 6,000-10,000 years ago, well-preserved mammoths are routinely dug out of the Siberian tundra and scientists have been able to collect enough DNA fragments to piece the genome back together.

Sadly, cloning requires much more than a reconstructed genome.

Artificially assembling DNA can be done easily with current technology, but free-floating DNA is of little use to a cell. The real challenge is packaging the DNA into chromosomes and inserting this into a nucleus. The shape of the DNA affects how it interacts with chemicals in the cell, and these interactions control gene expression, a factor every bit as important as the DNA itself.

Finding a living mammoth cell would sidestep such difficulties, and a Japanese-Russian collaboration is currently leading the hunt for such a cell. The team plan to use a technique pioneered for cloning mammals from frozen tissue, which was successfully implemented on a mouse that had been frozen for 16 years.

The idea is for an elephant to then be used as an egg donor and surrogate to grow the properly packaged DNA. If a good soft-tissue sample is found, the researchers say a woolly mammoth could be born in a matter of years.

Even so, there is a great difference between bringing back an individual and bringing back a viable population. De-extinction would at best produce a handful of individuals that may or may not reproduce. And how can we engineer the mammoth’s social structure and behavioural adaptations?

Despite these challenges, ambitious plans have already been made for a Pleistocene Park in North-Eastern Siberia.

In a similar spirit to the *Jurassic Park* of literary fiction, the dream is to restore the tundra to the mammoth steppe, a vast grassland habitat. Bison and reindeer have already been reintroduced, but the arrival of the mammoth may take a little longer.

Unsurprisingly, de-extinction is highly controversial. The implications of such initiatives are hard to predict, and there are questions regarding the well-being of the clones.

Recent sequencing of Neanderthal DNA has made cloning the homo species theoretically possible, bringing us into unfamiliar ethical territory.

Even efforts to resurrect recently extinct animals are divisive. While advocates say that we have a moral responsibility to bring back the creatures we drove to extinction, critics argue that such strategies hinder efforts to save the habitats and species that remain.

Perhaps resources would be put to



Wolly mammoths...possibly coming to a zoo near you

WILDLIFE-BLOGSPOT.COM



Jeff Goldblum struggles to come to terms with de-extinction

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the dead, although only temporarily.

The Pyrenean Ibex was a large, mountain-dwelling member of the goat genus *Capra* that went extinct due to grazing pressure from domestic and wild ungulates in 2000. When the last Pyrenean Ibex died, its cells were preserved and, later, a nucleus from these cells was injected into a denucleated domestic goat egg, which was then implanted into a surrogate mother.

In 2003, a clone was born. For the first time ever an animal had been brought back from extinction.

Sadly, the baby ibex died shortly after birth due to lung defects. Rather than rejuvenating the Pyrenean Ibex, it served only to provide an unfortunate demonstration of the obstacles that remain in reproductive cloning technology.

Unfortunately, it doesn’t seem like dinosaurs will be brought back any time soon as DNA decays with time, and cloning technologies require pristine DNA for success. Within hours of death, cells start the process of apoptosis, which releases enzymes that shatter DNA into an indecipherable mess.

As it ages, DNA also undergoes chemical changes that alter the nucleotides – the base guanine changes into adenine, and cytosine changes to thymine.

So much time has passed that it’s inconceivable the full genome of dinosaurs such as *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, which died out around 65 million years ago, would have survived to the present day.

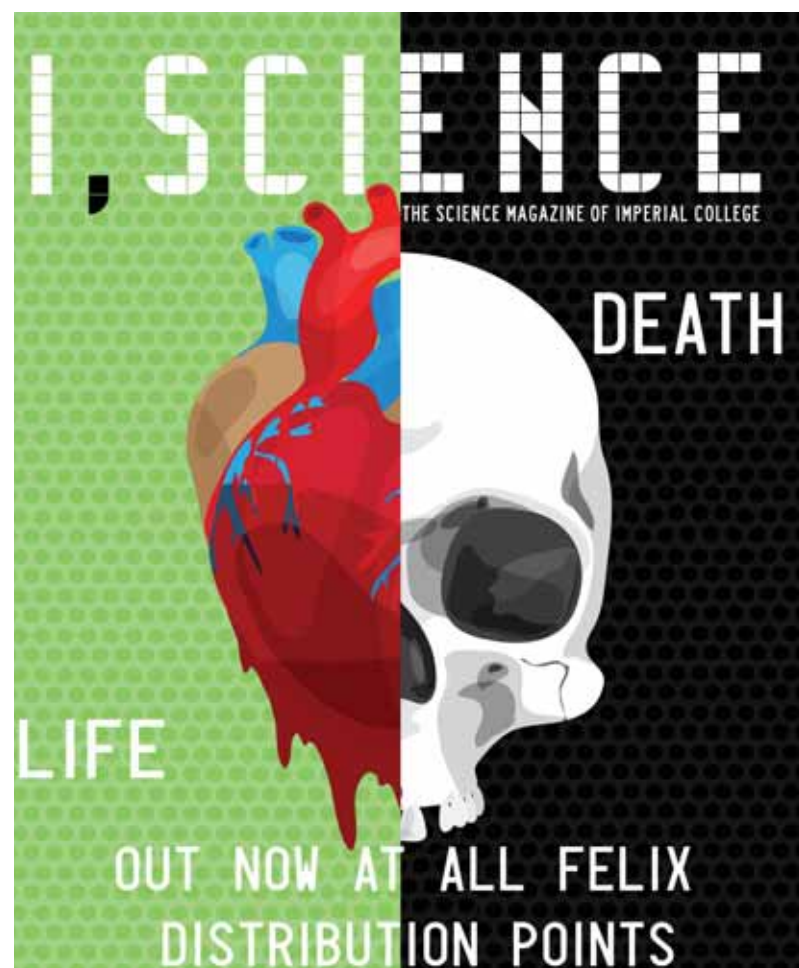
Could a woolly mammoth be a more realistic goal? Disappearing

better use by boosting the populations of currently endangered species. In anticipation of this, San Diego Zoo has created the ‘Frozen Zoo’ project, a biobank storing tissue from over 1,000 extant species.

In a similar vein to the Millennium Seed Bank Project, it is hoped that the Frozen Zoo can help the survival of critically endangered species as well as providing a kind of insurance policy against extinction.

Like it or not, de-extinction technology does have a future. When science is this exciting we just can’t help being curious. After all, who wouldn’t jump at the chance to see a real life woolly mammoth? Whether or not it leads to the all-action sci-fi ending remains to be seen.

Find this article, alongside many more on the theme of life and death in I, Science this week!



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COMMENT

Ramblings on Personal Legend



Comment Editor
@eoghantotten

Paul Coelho's best-selling novel, *The Alchemist*, reminds us to be true to ourselves and to seek out our 'personal legend'. A king advises Santiago, the chief protagonist, that, "when you really want something to happen, the whole universe conspires so that your wish comes true." This in itself is an uplifting prospect. In spite of this the various realities and sufferings happening around the world on a daily basis demonstrate that this is, all too often, far from the truth. A line that I read in Albert Camus' *The Plague* emboldened this for me. "To the day I die I shall refuse to love this creation

in which children are tortured." The so-called 'lost generation' of Syrian children serves as a case in point. How can an individual best serve humanity in the modern age while staying true to oneself?

One might argue that the 21st century is one of pragmatism, that with a growing population and consumption of both our land and resources, administering to 'the self' is fundamentally unjust. The concept of pilgrimage serves as a suitable allegory. People have travelled for centuries, yearning to absorb and utilise as much of our natural world as possible by searching for inner unity and insight. The modern irony is that, when travelling, we actively tarnish the world around us (through travel on planes, trains etc.). Even the pursuit of knowledge via modern channels impinges on the planet (laptops, tablets etc. require both plastic and rare earth metals).

This might be perceived to be a negative take on things. The pursuit of

knowledge has yielded dividends for humanity as a whole. Particle physics demonstrates that, as we continue to strip layers from the fabric of the universe, there will always be more surprises awaiting us. Modern medicine has extended our life span. Freedom of information undermines inequality. These revelations share the common thread of our humanity in an imperfect world. To my mind Coelho hit the nail on the head in a 2005 New York Times interview, "I believe enlightenment or revelation comes in daily life. I look for joy, the peace of action. You need action."

In brief, it could be argued that, in searching for our personal legend in the 21st century, we affect (for better or worse) humanity's collective legend. We cannot turn back. Our sphere of existence is what it is. Each one of us will do as we always have and administer to ourselves. Who knows? The world may change for the better by doing so.



GEEKPEEKS.COM

Silvio Berlusconi: Down and Out



Writer

On the 27th of November 2013 at 17:43 Silvio Berlusconi was expelled from the Senate of the Italian Republic; he no longer represents anyone but himself. He cannot abuse his parliamentary seat anymore to avoid his legal troubles. He cannot run for office and may even be tried for his various crimes.

In a way, if you'll forgive me a cliché, it's the end of an era. Berlusconi has warped and corrupted Italian politics by neglecting the country to solve his personal issues. He has created a barbarous culture of illegality. The right has become a joke (divided between xenophobes and his spineless serfs). The left has either been entrenched in its own pseudo-intellectualism or too complacent to fight him properly. Furthermore, another party has risen as the direct expression of Berlusconi's message of base populism, appeal to the masses and divinely inspired self-righteousness.

With his political demise, however, we can, perhaps, hope to move on. Maybe we'll get a political party worthy of definition instead of the bands of conniving speculators that mostly sit in parliament. Maybe we can start discussing the economy, investment in education and research and the role

of Europe without having to hold long discussions regarding Berlusconi's trials. Maybe we can extirpate the mentality of illegality that he has protected and fostered. I, for one, am not going to hold my breath.

I've been awaiting this moment for many years, and I don't mean my adult life. As a child I remember being lectured on how Berlusconi was a crook and a cheater. Luckily, at that time, his crimes 'merely' consisted of tax evasion, fraud, Mafia deals and conspiracy against the state, so I was spared from having to learn about prostitution rings. Despite this, Berlusconi has always been the central player of Italian politics as long as I've been able to rudimentarily understand it (if anyone can claim to). You might

infer that the end of his reign should be a significant event.

Despite the momentousness of what has happened I cannot cheer. Berlusconi has made the country poorer, both in wealth and spirit. The effects of these twenty years will long outlast him. Apart from running the economy into the ground and making many useless or deleterious reforms, he has made my country the subject of jokes and ridicule. He has forced me, along with thousands of my compatriots, to leave Italy, in order to find proper studying opportunities (let alone work). He has prolonged the culture of chauvinism, homophobia and intolerance that other, better nations have already begun to cast off. Only Mussolini has done a worse

job at running Italy and he had to ally with the Nazis to accomplish that.

This is not something that can be solved overnight. People vote for him in droves because he has an iron grip on the minds of many. He has inculcated a mentality of nepotism and corruption in Italy that has taken root to unprecedented levels. There have been corrupt people in Italy before (including corrupt people in charge) but none of them have been so successful at it. None have been so unrepentant, so blatant, in their disregard for the common good. There are millions who believe his falsehoods and it will take nothing short of an entire generational change to finally rid us of his shameful legacy.

If this comes across as bitter and hopeless it's because I am, profoundly so. The mere fact that we have to celebrate when a senator is expelled from Parliament on fraud charges

testifies to how anomalous the Italian situation has become. I will keep on following the political scene and voting. I will do all else that I can do from here. Perhaps I'll return one day, better equipped to help than I am now. Italy will otherwise remain a disappointment for me, a country of great culture, of immense value and potential, a nation that could and should help Europe and the world. Alas, it is shackled by ineffective and corrupt leaders. When I see the latest news on the weather, wreaking havoc thanks to corrupt administrators, mothers forcing their underage daughters into prostitution or the widespread and barbarous exhibitions of racist mentality or a magnate that lies his way to freedom (and dupes millions while those who should fight him are too spineless, litigious or outright accomplices to do so). I am reminded of my favourite definition of Italy; a heaven inhabited by demons.

“

Perhaps I'll return one day, better equipped to help than I am now. Italy might otherwise remain a disappointment for me. It should be a country of great culture, of immense value and potential, a nation that could and should help Europe and the world. Alas, it is shackled by ineffective and corrupt leaders.

”



COMMENT

Editors: Eoghan J. Totten, Tessa Davey
comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Christmas Confessions of a GTA

There will come a time when you don't have to work at Christmas

The GTA
Anonymous



Christmas at Imperial as an undergrad quite literally sucks. All I can remember was all my friends from alternative universities having a fantastic time with mulled wine, carols, slightly questionable decisions at the Christmas dinners, and retiring home to make snowmen with all their lovely family. Meanwhile I had more than five peices of coursework on the go, numerous tests, and 'fun' end of term activities on my course, that were hideously weighted so you could not pass if you were slightly the worse for wear in the morning. Instead of acting out the Christmas dream, I was struggling to get out of the department, at all. I often found myself wondering what halls actually looked like at this time of year, or whether it was light outside (there's an app for that). I was at my most excited on the last day of term, at my joyful reunion with my bed.

The low point had to be fourth year.

My course was such that I had finals in January, and not mid to late January, but starting on the 5th. That holiday, I took one day off for Christmas. It always baffled me why Imperial was confused about the low satisfaction ratings. Tests on a Friday afternoon on the last day of term are not exactly a positive influence on our mood levels. This year, looking at it from the other side, the undergrads look as ill as I felt. I have three invigilations booked in the next two weeks and still more for the first week of January. So I'm afraid it is not looking bright for a change in the future. So for all of you who are suffering this I wanted to instil a bit of Christmas hope; It really does get better.

I've always thought I hated Christmas. All the pressure to be happy and thrilled about life, but actually it is pretty great when you don't think you are going to fail anything if you take the weekend to go shopping. Suddenly I was helping with a carol concert, putting up decorations, enjoying a mulled cider, and chatting about the possibility of snow. I have two weeks off! This has not happened since mock GCSEs over 7 years ago.

So my confession for this week, though not as cheery as I would like

is: if this rings a bell with you, keep going. There will be Christmases around the corner where you can get

completely drunk at a party and hit on someone you'll never talk to again, but right now enjoy the little things

like half price mince pies or finishing that stupid coursework. If we made it through you can too.



A single unicorn beats Santa's nine reindeer any day.

CRAZY-FRANKENSTEIN.COM

How to procrastinate at Christmas

And not feel (too) guilty about it



With a bit of ingenuity and a lot of flour, you could make something this delicious

Tessa Davey
Comment Editor



As a student at Imperial, the lead up to Christmas can seem like one of the busiest times of the year, a feeling compounded by the multitude of seasonal events that you just have to go to. No matter how overwhelmed you're feeling, there are always some parties that you will just refuse to miss, because everyone knows that reservations and propriety fly out the window as soon as mulled wine and mistletoe are involved. Whether you're the kind of person who's at the front line of the drama, or you just like watching it unfold, Christmas parties are often unmissable, and a good way to release the stress that's gradually built up throughout the term.

So we get it; no matter what else you should be doing, Christmas (or other

seasonal celebrations) parties are always fun and we should make sure that we find time to enjoy them. But what if you really need to be studying for those exams, and the constant study guilt prevents you from relaxing properly? I think that I solved this problem, and I would encourage you to do the same: turn the festivities into study material.

Are you an engineer? Use some of your recently-acquired skills to build something challenging. Out of gingerbread. Are you a physicist or mathematician? Conduct an analysis of the flows of people around the mistletoe. A medic? Examine alcohol related injuries and offer your friends hangover cures. Not obviously specialised to the season, but you'll make a lot of people happy if you do it wearing antlers or a Santa hat. You get the idea; every subject can be adapted to some festive fun.

You're studying at Imperial because at some point, you decided that you love your subject. It's really easy to lose track of that amidst all the maths lectures and tedious labs, so why not

use Christmas as an opportunity to take a step back and do something not directly related to your course purely because you enjoy it. It won't necessarily get you better marks in that coursework (unless someone's involved in a project investigating the material properties of gingerbread, please someone let me know if that is actually a thing), or help you remember that equation you're inevitably going to forget in your upcoming exam, but it might rejuvenate your passion for your subject, which will help get you through all those times over the holidays when you'll be cracking open your textbooks when all your non-Imperial friends are passed out in a food coma at the foot of the Christmas tree.

Everyone needs a break now and then, but you'll feel a bit less guilty about the time off if you utilise it in a somewhat productive manner. And if, like me, you opt for a giant gingerbread creation, you'll find that offloading large quantities of sugar onto your friends does wonders for your social standing.



ICU RAG SAVE THE CHILDREN PRESENTS...



IMPERIAL'S GOT TALENT AUDITIONS

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COMMENT

Editors: Eoghan J. Totten, Tessa Davey
comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Debate: Should gender segregated seating be allowed in universities?

Usman S.
Comment Writer



YES

Yes, student societies should be allowed to have events where men and women who wish to be seated separately have the option of that accommodation. When it comes to an individual's beliefs, views and choices (which, by the way, are at the very heart of human rights and not merely a sidenote), the ethical standpoint must be to respect that individual's autonomy if it is within our capacity to do so. There needs to be watertight reasoning for the beliefs in the column opposite to come before the beliefs of the audience of an event and their student society.

Time now for the inappropriate and, frankly, disrespectful comparisons between separate seating arrangements and Apartheid, US pre-civil rights, and even Nazi Germany (honestly, I've seen this last analogy with my own eyes). In this shadow, it is unsurprising that the word 'segregation' carries a lot of emotional baggage, but the differences could not be more significant. Racial supremacism in all its forms is a stain on humanity, a hatred fuelled by the desire to dominate the other. What we are talking about here is a choice made by both males and females, it is not about discrimination towards one or the other as it is so often made out to be.

Which brings us to the elephant in the room. The true problem, and the reason why this altogether harmless issue receives so much undue attention, is because of the false conception that gender segregation by some conservative groups follows the same model as the supremacism outlined above. Indeed, my respected opponent himself has previously written that it "stems from ideologies that view women as very much inferior to men". Whether he still believes this or not, I don't know, but it could not be further from the truth. In conservative religious groups, maintaining a respectful distance between the genders is important – as with, for example, respect for the elderly, or compassion for the young – in preserving the moral fabric of society. Why should it be assumed that the cultural narrative in the column opposite under the guise of "fair access" is superior? Just as the right to sit beside one's male or female friend is being championed, so must we protect the rights of those who choose to sit apart.

The Universities UK conclusion on the matter (as published this November as part of guidance to student unions regarding external speakers),

“
The true problem, and the reason why this altogether harmless issue receives so much undue attention, is because of the false conception that gender segregation by some conservative groups follows the same model as the supremacism outlined above.”

that the Equality Act 2010 does not object to separate seating by gender (a separation that happens all around us, from changing rooms to hospitals) in the absence of less favourable treatment, is a reasoned one. It develops further and becomes more interesting, discussing the question mark over the 'right' to a third, unsegregated area, in light of responsibility towards divergent views. It seems to me, however, that we cannot progress in our discourse until we first accept that forcing men and women to sit together should they not wish to do so is an infringement on their autonomy. We cannot progress until we accept that this is not about hierarchy or oppression, and – just perhaps – it might be worth asking both the females and the males who subscribe to this position why it is they do so.

To close, I would say that there is room for further mature and academic discussion on the subject, but we must be ever wary of delegitimising beliefs which we may not understand, of sensationalism creeping into the discourse, and of views tainted by baseless or fundamentally misconstrued assumptions.



Rory Fenton
Comment Writer



NO

It is astounding how quickly we forget or wilfully ignore that human rights are there to protect people – not beliefs. Worryingly, we increasingly see this confused notion of rights being applied on UK campuses. Whether it's student groups intimidated for "blasphemy", as at LSE and Reading, or religious societies refusing unmarried women permission to speak, as at Bristol, this trumping of individual rights by the supposed rights of "beliefs" is increasingly common.

The recent guidance from Universities UK was by-and-large what you would expect; how to handle far-right speakers, what kind of speech might fall foul of hate-speech laws and what groups are banned under anti-terror legislation. But nestled in the report was a bizarre and backward recommendation; universities should be willing to enforce sex segregation between male and female audience members if a speaker requests it.

The report's peculiar logic ran as follows: speakers have the right to free speech but if their demands for sex segregation are not met they will refuse to speak. Therefore to not enforce sex segregation is to deny the speakers' freedom of speech. The report is careful only to endorse the 'nice' kind of segregation with men and women split on the left and right hand sides of a lecture theatre rather than front and back, the logic here being that men and women are being treated 'equally separately', whatever that means.

This logic has echoes of the old racially segregated Deep South of the United States; separate but equal. To argue that segregation is not inherently unequal is to fail to see just why men and women are being kept apart in the first place; this drive for segregation stems from ideologies that view women as very much inferior to men. To allow these ideologies power in UK universities is to betray hard-won individual rights and the principle that in public spaces all must be treated equally. Separate is never equal.

The Universities UK report treats the ideology driving the segregation as if it were something inherent to the speaker that he (and it will always be he) can't help, as if requiring him to speak to a mixed sex room would be like asking him to levitate. The reality is that ideologies are chosen and speakers alone are responsible for them, not their audience.

“
Universities have a duty to protect the rights of their students, they do not have a duty to protect their beliefs.”

Many religious student societies will hold their own events, such as collective worship, at which students will choose to separate themselves by sex in accordance with their beliefs. Insofar as this is voluntary, this is acceptable. What Universities UK have endorsed, however, is enforced segregation, with students told where to sit, according to their sex, or they can leave. The report then goes on to consider having a third, mixed sex section of the audience as well as a male and a female section. Incredibly, this apparent compromise is then rejected by the report, which warns that to insist on a third mixed sex section may still be infringing on the rights of the speaker to have a segregated audience. The report goes as far as to say that non-religious beliefs, such as feminism, should take second place to "sincerely held" religious beliefs. That's right; the mere fact that they are religious makes some beliefs more important than others because, of course, Feminist can't be sincere in their beliefs.

The Universities UK report focuses on sex because it's an issue that has come up before but there is no reason for its logic to stop there. If a racist is invited to speak – should he not have the audience forcibly segregated into whites and non-whites? What if his beliefs are really "sincerely held"? Could the EDL insist on all Muslim students sitting separately? Of course Universities UK would never support this.

In advocating for enforced sex segregation they are cowardly capitulating to religious extremists in a way they surely never would to political extremists. In bending to these extremists, universities betray the moderate majority in religious groups who do not wish to see segregation or, at least, would not want it to be forced on others. Men and women should sit where they wish. Universities have a duty to protect the rights of their students, they do not have a duty to protect their beliefs.

Union Page

Oppose the Immigration Bill



Help us fight against Government proposals that would unfairly penalise international students and damage the UK's standing as a global leader in higher education.

The UK Government is set to release a new immigration bill which would introduce yet more unfair conditions for international students. These changes will impact on international students - who make up 75% of all those in the UK who are subject to visa controls.

We will be lobbying Members of Parliament, including members of the House of Lords. Union Council, the voice of Imperial College students, unanimously voted to oppose the bill and to work with the National Union of Students on this issue.

To learn more and show your support, visit our campaign pages online.

imperialcollegeunion.org/immigration-bill

We love Christmas Dinners!



With less than 23 days to go until Christmas, it's time for the Union's famous Christmas dinners to return as the best value turkey dinners (or nut roasts for vegetarians) on campus.

Starting tomorrow and running every Tuesday and Thursday lunchtime and evening until the end of term, we will be serving up a plate-full of Christmas dinner with all of the trimmings, including a Christmas cracker!

With turkey or nut roast (sweet pistachios, cashew nuts with mushrooms and spinach), roast potatoes, pigs in blankets (not with the nut roast!), parsnips, carrots, sprouts, gravy and cranberry sauce all for only £6.50, the dinners are a wintery treat not to be missed.

So, join us for Christmas Dinners at the Union in FiveSixEight between 12:00 -

imperialcollegeunion.org/christmas-dinner

Give it a Go returns in January

Give It A Go ran for the first time at Imperial College Union in October 2013. It encouraged almost 3,000 students to take opportunities and attend trips or try new activities before committing to joining one of our 300+ Clubs, Societies & Projects. GIAG provided a great way for people to find out about some of the great events our student groups organise.

We asked if you thought you would benefit from a second GIAG and 76% said yes, so it will be back in January 2014! Clubs can sign up to GIAG for free advertising and promotion of events in booklets, online and in person on South Kensington campus. These events are open to non-members and every student can see a calendar of events they can attend without commitments!

imperialcollegeunion.org/give-it-a-go

Student Academic Choice Awards

After a successful launch last year, the Student Academic Choice Awards are back and nominations are open!

The Student Academic Choice Awards – or SACAs – enable students to celebrate and reward excellence and innovation amongst Imperial's academic and professional staff. We aim to build a community in which academics, staff and students all feel empowered to bring forth new ideas.

Every student at Imperial will have the chance to recognise the innovation, skill, engagement and energy of the staff they learn with. Nominate someone today on the Union website.

imperialcollegeunion.org/sacas

COMMENT

Editors: **Eoghan J. Totten, Tessa Davey**
comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Student Protests in Ukraine

Christy Kelly
Writer



The dramatic events in Ukraine in recent weeks have again brought the country into the headlines. The mainly student protests in Kiev are about reneged promises over further integration with the EU.

Before we come to the table with our personal prejudices and biases over the EU (and both UKIP and the idiotic liberal reaction to UKIP suggest we have many) we need to remember Edward Said's warning that very few political principles survive translation, inserted, as they are, into a new set of power relations. The first directly relevant point here is that Ukraine is the world's third largest exporter of grain. Certainly the EU protects its farmers (and as a leftist I should like to point out the cost to third world farmers that this protectionist policy has) and Ukraine has much to gain from joining the EU. However, as the continuing economic crises in Greece, Spain etc. show, the integration of a notoriously fragile economy into the EU may well be tantamount to handing the keys over to Germany.

EU aside, there is the ever perennial Big

Brother to the East. Putin clearly doesn't want Ukraine to integrate more with the EU, and the oil debacles in 2006 and 2009 show Putin isn't scared of punishing sheep that stray too far from the flock. The criminal actions in Chechnya are perhaps a more sinister example. This brings us nicely to internal politics: President Yanukovich was widely seen as the 'Russian' candidate in the 2004 'election', and indeed the base of his support is in the predominantly ethnically Russian east. Ukraine is infamous for its East/West divide, with the country more pro-Soviet as you head east, and these protests have once again thrown this factor into relief.

Yanukovich is without doubt a dubious character, with very serious allegations of corruption levelled at him, despite the highfalutin rhetoric. Then there was the blatant electoral fraud in 2004 which led to the Orange Revolution. The revolution was perhaps more of the type we physicists are used to dealing with as Yanukovich soon saw himself back in power in 2010, elected in perhaps the cleanest election in the post-Soviet bloc to date.

Mind you, Yulia Tymoshenko is not perhaps as much the fairy-tale candidate that Guardian readers would like to believe. Perhaps this is just prejudice, but I am not sure that becoming one of the richest people in the country during a period where GDP shrunk to 40% of its Soviet era economy is quite justified by business sense and initiative. Despite the personal difficulties she has no doubt faced since her arrest in 2001, it was the incompetence and infighting of the Orange revolutionaries that brought Yanukovich back to power. Finally, Tymoshenko is all too cosy with the wrong sorts of people: note her meetings with Dick Cheney and Condoleezza Rice in 2007, or her transformation into Russia's preferred candidate in 2010.

One final word: democratic uprisings have a life of their own. Slavoj Žižek once made a wonderful point about how best to rewrite *Antigone*. Forget the fights between Creon and Antigone, the chorus should send both to the prison camps and start life in a new commune. My call to the people of Ukraine is analogous; forget the Mafioso politicians and gas baronesses. Unite and protest!

Letters

Why don't you click on this cool link?

Hey Hun, we found your email going thru some profiles. I'm just looking for fun... think you can handle this?

I came across your email going thru some profiles. I'm just looking for fun... think you can handle this?

Check out my pics here, maybe we should meet up and be friends with benefits ;) Hope you Like what you see!

<http://goo.gl/uvqQdW>

Clariss Always

Ed. - Seriously SpamBot Always, is that the best you can do? Why do you even bother? You know I'll ~~only click this link if I'm extremely bored~~ never ever click your suspicious link that clearly leads to <http://GiveMEAVirusForChristmas.Org.Gov.RandomTLD...>

Why don't you call me?

Dear Editor,
It's been days since you last called me! What's the matter? Are you too busy with your friends to have any time for me?

Why do you take so long to reply to my calls? You know that I'll bring you food and new clothes if you just pick up and dial! And we can have such a great chat, we've got so many things to catch up with!

I've sent this letter to all of your personal accounts and sent a letter to your office all in the hope of hearing from you!

Love,
M

Ed. - Dear Mother, thank you for your various emails and voicemail messages. It seems as though I always just miss your call whenever you ring. Maybe try calling on Wednesday, I'll be at this really quite room called Metric...



One term down, two more to go!

Joseph Letts
Editor-in-Chief

Well, this is it! The moment you've all been waiting for! With one week left until the end of the College term, the Felix team is happy to present you one final issue before we take a break over the Christmas holidays!

But never fear, because although we might not be in print for the next few weeks, we'll still be fairly active online, when not scoffing mince pies or drinking some of Tessa's lovely gingerbread vodka (it really is nice).

Now you may not celebrate Christmas, but there's one gift that we all receive from our belevolent masters at College, and that is a novelly break far away from campus (well for most people). Think not of coursework, revision or exams while you frolick around in the snow outside (during your 20 minute revision break) or while you set up yet another episode of Archer on Netflix.

As you prepare to come back next term and face whatever comes next Felix hopes that you

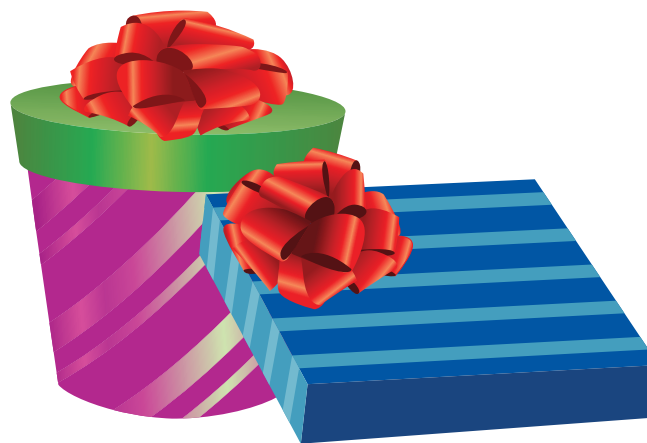
remember that you're at least 1/3 through the year now, so things can only get better!

If you're lucky enough to see some snow, send some tweets to @felixImperial and we'll be sure to give you some retweet love! Maybe we'll even be able to beat the BBC's insipid snow coverage (no pun observed).

For those of you who have revision over

the festive period, don't forget to take a break every now and then, lest your energy stores dry up and you involuntarily collapse in front of a day long special edition of the Paul O'Grady Show. Trust us, there are far better things!

Felix hopes you have a wonderful winter holiday and a fantastic new year :)





 @feliximperial

 FelixImperial

ARTS

Scientific sound art at GV Art

Kamil McClelland talks to Mendel Kaelen, an Imperial PhD student whose artwork is on display in the GV Art Gallery in London

What: NOISE & Whispers
Where: GV Art Gallery, W1
When: 8th Nov - 14th Dec 2013
Price: FREE

Mendel Kaelen received his BSc and MSc in neurological and behavioural sciences at the State University of Groningen, and is now doing a PhD at Imperial College. He also works as a sound artist and experimental musician and is currently exhibiting at the GV Art Gallery's NOISE & Whispers exhibition.

So Mendel, what are you researching at the moment in your PhD?

We are looking at the neurological effects of psychedelic drugs. We do so at 'resting state', meaning that people in the scanner are allowed to lie there with their eyes closed, letting their minds wander freely.

In 2001, researchers found that certain brain regions are actually more active at rest. My supervisors found that psychedelics seem to very specifically target these resting state networks, and my research builds on this.

Moving on to your art, how would you describe what you do?

Ever since I started experimenting with sounds, I became really fascinated by environmental ones. Field recording plays a very central position in my work – although I also work with objects and instruments.

Furthermore I often don't use these field recordings in their pure form. I am more interested in how the sound feels, rather than what it is. After I modulate my recordings, you often don't recognize the original sound any more, but you still have this organic quality to it.

Why do you find natural sounds so appealing, as opposed to purely electronic sounds?

I don't think they're more interesting. For instance, I have a deep appreciation for the work of artists like Carsten Nicolai, where often there is no natural context at all. I just tend to constrain myself at the moment, to give myself focus.

However, I do find it appealing that they represent, both concretely and in a more abstract sense, forces of nature. We are constantly surrounded by mechanistic sounds, so it is easy to become estranged from these natural ones. Maybe I still have a

kind of romantic vision of nature at a subconscious level in my practice.

What are you trying to do with your music? Are you trying to capture a landscape, reveal some hidden reality, or just create emotion? Do you think about these things when you create your music?

Absolutely! That question has much to do with how I define art. I see art as a form of communication – a language that is irrational, and that doesn't bother to be rational. It gives voice to those forces you feel inside that are difficult to quantify. When I create art myself, I see it as giving people a symbol that that bypasses the intellect. It's about giving people a phenomenologically rich experience.

Do you see your work as academic?

No, not at all; I see it as art, and art is not academic for me. That doesn't mean it cannot be inspired by scientific concepts, though. Science is about objective truth; it provides explanations of reality no matter what you may feel about this reality, whilst art is about subjective reality and what you experience. Theoretically they are extremely different, but they both have to do with, in a very abstract sense, finding explanations for your experience of life.

What are your main artistic influences?

They are a rich blend of science, literature, music and visual art. I keep being inspired by new musicians; it's a never-ending process. Works by Francisco Lopez have greatly affected my artistic development. He works with field recordings in very immersive, abstract works. There is one of his albums called *La Selva* that really opened my ears to new ways of listening.

Talk to me about your piece on display at the GV art gallery.

Altered Space of Consciousness started very intuitively back in Groningen, where I was studying neuroscience. I often found myself driving home in the middle of the night. At night, the city centre turns into this carnage of human instincts; people are very disinhibited. I would always try to avoid it; it had a kind of intrusiveness to it. However, I eventually found it fascinating to listen and overcome my resistance to that soundscape. So then every time I drove back home, I would bring my sound

recording equipment with me.

Afterwards, I thought about how I could recreate that experience for listeners. I came up with the idea of having a beer can hanging upside down, lonely in a dark space, and playing these sounds really subtly. There was intrusiveness in the original soundscape, and I wanted to invert that by playing the sounds very softly, as an invitation for closer inspection. Planet Earth floats as a peaceful pearl in black space, but a close look reveals the acts of joy and genocide being played out simultaneously. So only with your ears next to the can do you hear the songs that celebrate booze and football and those that glorify rape and prostitution, all performed together.

What is psychologically interesting is that as an outsider, you won't hear the difference. The sounds are locked up, and resonance and overtones are created by it being played inside this enclosed metal space.

Do you feel a visual element to your sound art is quite important then?

Yes, although this is not always the case, as some is best experienced in complete darkness. Then, the visual element is your mind's eye. It is however often the visual part of a work that triggers your first associations, when it's presented to you. So I think it is important that the visual art resonates with what you want to communicate with your sound.

In your works are you actively trying to convey the emotion the field recording originally gave you?

I always make something from my own emotions, but the output is always a surprise. You also never have control over what the audience feels. I got rid of that idea very soon after my first release in 2010, when it became clear that everyone had their own unique thoughts about the music. In the beginning, a part of me didn't like that because I wanted to communicate something very specific. But now I realise that this is something beautiful; you create a piece, but what people do with it is up to them.

What do you see for the future of your art?

Right now I'm focusing more on live performances and installations. Where everything is going, I don't know. But I do want to keep creating and developing the character of my pieces. My art will always express how I develop as a person.

So how was the exhibition?



COURTESY SUSAN ALEXJANDER AND GV ART

In 1913, the futurist Luigi Russolo constructed a manifesto that was to transform how we thought of sound. In *L'arte dei Rumori* ('The Art of Noises'), he redefined music for an era of machinery, electricity and dynamism. Western musical convention was, for him, far too limiting when an infinite palette of noises lay out there.

Today, sound art aims to realise this dream, and one hundred years on, *NOISE & Whispers* at the GV Art Gallery displays works that, by any traditional definitions, would not be considered music. Here, art is fused with modern technology, generating sound works that manipulate Earth's innate rhythms into pieces that enhance our experience of our environment.

From the moment you put on the headphones, you see just how radical Russolo was. Any ideas of conventional melody are abandoned, replaced by an expanse of microtonal minutiae created through field recordings and digital modulation. Is this music? Well, it depends on how you define it – but most of those I have asked don't think so, regarding it as unpleasant background noise that has no place in the 'elite' art of music.

Therefore, one must approach *NOISE & Whispers* with an open mind. Despite representing one hundred years of musical development, some works may still seem unconventional or hard to understand. Preconceptions will be challenged; that is for certain. However, in places, pieces may seem oddly familiar, preserving the repetitive, electronic texture of much of today's popular music whilst abandoning its 'pleasant' chord progressions.

Science and art, so often at odds, find harmony in this exhibition. Through science, the artists are able to unearth the inherent sounds of our atmosphere, revealing melody that we never knew existed. Raxil4's *Solaris Beta* even manages to extract the sound of the sun through conversion of pressure oscillations on the solar surface into an audible format, creating an acoustic domain like nothing ever heard before.

Without any formal musical background, I found the lack of visual art in the exhibition disconcerting at first. It appeared occasionally, maybe a photograph or film clip, but existed more as an accompaniment to audio recordings, as opposed to being the focus of sensation. It seems sound art is a genre often best experienced with closed eyes, introspective, allowing you to construct your own imagined world.

Sound art never achieved any great commercial success. It is often described as monotonous, uninteresting and overly academic, and I can understand where this criticism is coming from. Listening to a whole gallery of such intense music can become strenuous and tiring. I feel it takes a certain state of mind to fully appreciate these works, a state of utter mental relaxation, and only then are you able to succumb to this deep sonic massage.

But *NOISE & Whispers* is a must-see. It may seem experimental, and not conventionally beautiful, but it cannot be missed. The exhibition has changed my perception of the environment, honing my ears to pick up on atmospheric noises usually ignored and appreciate them for their unique timbral characteristics. Moreover, its ability to combine science and art so seamlessly is exceptional, applying scientific objectivity to art where previously only the subjective experience of truth and emotion existed.



World class opera in our backyard

Emiel De Lange

Writer

What: Ravel Double Bill – *L'heure Espagnole* & *L'enfant et les Sortilèges*
Where: Royal College of Music, Britten Theatre, SW6
When: 6th and 7th Dec, 7.30pm
Price: £10, £20, £30, £40

Our prestigious neighbour, the Royal College of Music, is a fortress tucked away behind our own Sheffield building. Until now its activities had been hidden from me; but I am so glad that that has finally changed.

This week I attended the premiere of a Ravel double bill opera, produced and performed by the Royal College of Music (RCM) International Opera School. Given the relatively low ticket prices and the proximity to campus – it's basically on campus – there's not much of an excuse not to go, and if the world of opera has yet to open itself to you, then this is an ideal introduction.

I must admit I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. Yes, this is the famous RCM, but surely I shouldn't anticipate all too much from a student production? But to put it in those

terms is misleading; these aren't simply students, but the next generation of stars, some of whom I suspect may one day grace the stage in Covent Garden. To put it simply, the vocal performances were of the highest quality, and in such a small theatre these young voices carried magically. The orchestra, too were fantastic, with the finesse and virtuosity of the best professional ensembles.

The first opera performed was *L'Heure Espagnole* (the Spanish Hour), a raucous, witty and sexy affair about a rather 'hungry' housewife juggling her three suitors while her husband is out. Ravel's sensuous scoring gives each character a colourful and distinct personality, yet isn't afraid to descend to humorous sound effects when slapstick is called for. The production was genuinely funny and beautifully transparent in its approach. Only the final quintet was clumsy, and the choreography a little confused. The cast managed to portray their obnoxious and self-absorbed characters without becoming caricatures, which is no mean feat – even if some of the greater subtleties of comic acting weren't fully there.

We were then witness to Ravel's 'other' opera, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* (the Child and the Spells), also in one act. This magical fairy tale involves furniture coming alive and talking animals teaching an insolent boy his

lesson. In my view these technical challenges were handled less successfully than in *L'Heure*, although for a group with such limited resources they were inventive and impressively carried out.

My companion was more convinced, though we were both left a little confused at some of the directorial choices, such as 'trees' being represented by cogs on chains. Apart from this, the performance was equally strong as *L'Heure*, and showcased some fantastic action for the chorus. The end result was a beautifully lit and touching portrayal of the boy wanting his 'maman'.

Opera is after all a kind of 'total' art form, a *gesamtkunst* (to borrow a term from Richard Wagner), and this is clearly a concept understood by the creative team. The stagecraft was impressive for such a small platform, complete with multi-layered sets and moving staircases, and some theatrical illusions were pulled off brilliantly. The lighting was creative and atmospheric – although a little limited as occasionally singers were left in the dark.

All of this gave an impression of professionalism, and, when combined with the enthusiastic and skilful musical performance, an enthralling and engaging spectacle resulted. I couldn't think of a better way to spend a few evening hours away from the library.



ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

The invention of vibrators...

Clara Clark Nevola

Writer

What: *In The Next Room, or, The Vibrator Play*
Where: St James Theatre, SW1
When: 13th Nov – 4th Jan 2014
Price: £15 to £50



JOHAN PERSSON

What's in a name? Probably some erotica, as the name is "*The Vibrator Play*".

Unquestionably the play lives up to its name, with a certain amount of overt sexual content. But *In the Next Room* or *The Vibrator Play* is also much, much more than a bawdy comedy or theatrical pornography. American playwright Sarah Ruhl has created a piece that deals with the most intimate of human relationships: husband and wife, doctor and patient, woman and confidante, mother and child, man and woman.

The starting point of the drama is the 19th century practice of treating women with hysteria with a 'pelvic massage', a tiring and time-consuming medical massage (known to you and me as masturbation), which resulted in a 'hysterical paroxysm' (that's an orgasm), thus relieving the patient's symptoms. In case you're wondering, this treatment is no longer available on the NHS.

Towards the end of the 19th century, when this play is based, electrically powered instruments were developed to help achieve this paroxysm in less time – and yes, I'm talking about the invention of the vibrator.

Ruhl uses this rather amusing premise to kick start her piece; Dr. Givings is a renowned New York doctor who treats patients for hysteria, helped by his non-nonsense nurse Annie. Meanwhile, as the patients come and go, his wife Catherine sits downstairs fretting about her baby, who she cannot feed sufficiently for lack of breast milk.

The next room, the doctor's examination room, is the real keystone of this performance. Not only is the stage brilliantly set up in a two tiers, so that the public can follow the action in both rooms at the same time, but the physical space represents the emotional content that the play is centered around. The concept of a next room highlights the female condition in a male-dominated society, in which the action happens in another room, above the heads of the women, who are left waiting outside closed doors. The next room is what Dr. Givings closes himself into to escape from his marital tensions, where he devotes time to his female patients while his unhappy wife waits outside, lonely.

The other characters weave in and out of this wife-husband relationship, with a progressively chirpier Mrs. Daldry coming in for regular treatment with her overbearing husband, the self-centered, heartbroken, English artist

coming in to be treated for "a rare case of male hysteria", and the black wet nurse Elizabeth, who visits regularly to compensate for Catherine's lack of milk. These characters intertwine, creating a complex web of interpersonal relationships, by turns comic, touching and shocking.

The two female leads, Catherine (Natalie Casey) and Mrs. Daldry (Flora Montgomery) are truly captivating characters from the very first scene, drawing the audience into the chaotic Givings household and making up for the sometimes shakier performance of the other cast members. The second

act picks up considerably, with the whole cast showing a remarkable talent and turning the piece into a far more vivid, real performance than what the first act achieved. As the curtains close on a romantic, snowy embrace you might even find yourself shedding a tear or two.

In The Next Room encompasses comedy, emotion, sex, scientific innovation, race, history, gender relations and mental health issues. But it is not just a list of buzzwords: it's a truly moving, thought provoking piece that deals with human relationships at their rawest.



JOHAN PERSSON

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The Government Inspector

Jack Williams
DramSoc Social Secretary

DramSoc's winter play this year is Nikolai Gogol's satirical comedy *The Government Inspector*. Banned by the tsarist government of Imperial Russia on its first publication, the play makes a mockery of the stupidity, greed and corruption of the officials of a small provincial town.

The director, Simon Parker, has done a fantastic job of staging the play in an engaging, thought provoking and somewhat surreal way. There are many points in the play which will intentionally bemuse the audience, one of which is the rather original freeze-frame used to conclude the show. Many of his personal touches can be witnessed throughout, including the niche music that accompanies the play, and a strange old man with a long beard who sits and watches as Khlestakov (Nicolas Pimparé) proposes to Marya (Svetlana Guggenbuehl).

Amongst the newcomers to DramSoc are Helen Root as Anna Andreyevna and Svetlana Guggenbuehl as Marya Antonovna. Helen gives a pristine performance as a morally grounded older woman who competes with her daughter, Marya, for the affections of Khlestakov. Svetlana is a pleasure to watch as a flaunting, beautiful and eloquent young woman who is continually shunned by her mother, but whose persistence pays off as she wins over Khlestakov's heart.

Khlestakov (the 'inspector') is played by Nicolas Pimparé, whose outrageous flamboyance and eccentricity suits the role perfectly. So good is his performance that his speech, during which Khlestakov utters outlandish lies about his supposed life as a high ranking official, will trick the audience into thinking they are in the Apollo theatre.

Tiberiu Chis (Tib) plays the highly stressed Mayor, whose efforts to control the chaos that ensues throughout the town are hilariously futile. Tib's character perfectly blends an air of authority with that of hopelessness and complete impatience, and he manages to keep the character funny and relatable whilst hinting from time to time at a darker, more tyrannical man.

The townspeople provide laughter throughout in each of their own dysfunctional ways. Dobchinsky and Bobchinsky (Jack Williams and Joseph Hosier), ultimately the cause behind the chaos which engulfs the town, pile laugh upon laugh as their complete naivety and stupidity are embodied in ridiculous one-liners and episodes of physical humour; the sheer nonsense offered by their characters is something all lovers of silly jokes will appreciate. Zemlianka (Max Falkenberg McGillivray), the Judge (Joseph Dudley), Luka (Paul Cosma) and the Postmaster (Prashant Mahendran) as the corrupt officials complement each other's characters very well, and all try to impress Khlestakov in their uniquely fruitless fashion.

The costumes are spectacular and the props and set also convey the mood and setting of Imperial Russia very well. The crew, especially the costume designers, have performed a stellar job in that department. The show is a very entertaining one, and I urge you to go and watch it on the two remaining nights!

The Government Inspector is being performed this Friday 6th and Saturday 7th December in the Union Concert Hall in Beit Quad. Tickets can be bought from the union website and are £5 for students, £7 for non-students, £1 extra on the door.

Who is Paul Smith?



ANTHONY CROLLA

Fred Fyles
Writer

What: Hello My Name is Paul Smith
Where: Design Museum, SE1
When: 15th Nov - 9th Mar 2014
Price: £7.50 students, £11.85 adults (including donation)

The title of the Design Museum's latest exhibition, 'Hello My Name Is Paul Smith,' feels slightly redundant. Over the last 40-odd years, Paul Smith has become one of the most recognisable men in the British fashion industry, heading a brand of global renown, and producing a vast range of products, all emblazoned with his own signature. Surely he is a man who needs no introduction?

But the museum promises to give more than a cursory overview of the man and his designs. Instead it proclaims to 'offer a unique insight into the magnificent mind of Paul Smith.' So does the exhibition manage to get under his skin, stripping away the tailoring and stripe patterns, giving us a peek at what makes the man tick?

Unfortunately not. Instead, all they manage to offer is a shallow glimpse at one of the most famous menswear brands on the planet, in a show that seems to add up to little more than shameless advertising.

Beginning with a mock-up of his first 'shop' – in reality a boxy, windowless room in Nottingham – the exhibition moves through various stages in both his life and his design process, until we end at the finished product. Born just outside Nottingham in 1946, Smith showed more interest in cycling than fashion for most of his youth, but underwent a change of heart as a teenager working in his father's clothing warehouse. After taking classes in tailoring, and a brief stint in Savile Row, he set up his first shop in

1970, and showed his first collection in Paris in 1976. The exhibition features a recreation of this first 'show', in which Smith laid out his collection of around 10 pieces on the bed of his friend's apartment, highlighting how hard Smith worked to set up his first shop in London in 1979.

In a post-internet world, where designers are often plucked out by benefactors such as Lulu Kennedy before they have even finished their graduate collections, it's interesting to see how designers used to get themselves noticed. In Smith's case, it was his knack for combining traditional tailoring with a uniquely witty edge; boring jackets reveal florid linings, traditional shirts are spiced up with garish prints, in what I suppose would now be called – somewhat nauseatingly – 'eccentrically British'.

This, along with his charming personality helped spread his brand across the world, most notably in Japan, which now has over ten times the number of Paul Smith stores than the UK. Now approaching 70, and still active, it is difficult to see Smith as anything other than the grandmaster of British menswear.

However, while 'Paul Smith' itself is a personal brand, the exhibition does a very poor job in getting across any of Smith's personality, instead presenting him as a sort of sterile amalgamation of influences, a faceless face behind the label, a Betty Crocker of the fashion world.

We explore a recreation of his office, which resembles a kooky antique store – coffee table books fight for space with toy robots and cycling paraphernalia, while papers fill up every available inch of desk space. While I am sure that this idiosyncratic range of interests has greatly contributed to Smith's success, this magpie approach to design and retail has been co-opted by high street giants like Urban Outfitters or Topshop, making what might have once been a unique attribute seem like a cynical marketing ploy.

Similarly, the recreation of his HQ,

where he and his team cook up their collections, seems like little more than an intern's idea of what a 'trendy, London design firm' would look like: Apple computers gleam on white countertops cluttered with fabric samples and copies of *Fantastic Man*, while various fashion sketches are pinned up around the room. It is as far from a 'unique insight' into Smith's design process as possible.

The only interesting tid-bit of information we are given is that they wind string around cardboard to create their iconic stripe patterns. But other than that, there is little to make Smith stand out from his contemporaries. While other designers, such as the late Alexander McQueen or the doyenne of Italian fashion Miuccia Prada, manage to make their collections seem like an exciting continuation of their personal vision, Smith seems somewhat removed from the entire process – a figurehead of a brand that has its own separate identity.

The exhibition culminates with a corridor of Paul Smith designs from a number of previous collections. It is worth pointing out that this is the first time we are exposed to any actual clothes from his collections, and the result is somewhat lacking.

A victim of his own success, Smith's clothing, when presented as a solid block, appears quite dull and banal. His formula of British tailoring with a twist has served him well, but after nearly 40 years in the industry, it is beginning to wear somewhat thin; there are only so many times you can churn out a floral shirt, no matter how well designed. What was once exciting and new now seems almost staid.

It is therefore something of a pity that Smith has come to represent the pinnacle of British menswear, when there are so many young, unique designers ready to take up his mantle. New talents such as Craig Green and Nasir Mazhar are producing extremely daring garments, adding a shot of danger and intrigue into the near-catatonic world of menswear, but are obscured by the long shadow cast by those like Paul Smith.

All in all, it would be churlish not to recognise the service that Paul Smith has done for the British fashion industry; by spreading his clothing all over the world, Smith has ensured that UK menswear continues to be relevant in today's globalised fashion world. However, I felt let down by the exhibition. Rather than giving me an 'insight' into Paul Smith's mind, it left me frustrated that none of my questions about the man and his working practice has been answered. The exhibition feels less like an exploration into one of the most famous men in fashion, and more like a cheap exercise in self-promotion – something of which Paul Smith has little need.



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ARTS

Serpentine Double Whammy

Meredith Thomas
Writer

What: Wael Shawky: *al-Qurban* & Jake and Dinos Chapman: *Come and See*
Where: Serpentine & Serpentine Sackler Gallery, Hyde Park, SW6
When: 29 Nov 2013 – 9 Feb 2014
Price: FREE

Visiting the Serpentine Gallery, situated in the middle of Hyde Park, usually constitutes a pleasant lunchtime distraction. I cannot recommend that over the next few months. The current exhibitions are spread across their two venues; *Wael Shawky: al-Qurban* at the Serpentine Gallery and *Jake and Dinos Chapman: Come and See* at the Serpentine Sackler Gallery. Both are, in their own ways, dark, challenging and absorbing, requiring serious investment in the artists' languages and totems. Wael Shawky's three short films are at least relatively accessible. The emerging middle-

eastern artist is fresh enough not have yet acquired a Wikipedia page, yet his brace of prestigious awards is growing rapidly. His works, most notably his films, explore the history and culture of the region of his birth, with an emphasis on questions of mythmaking, truth and authority.

The Horror Show File and *The Path to Cairo* both cinematically retell the history of the Crusades, utilising marionettes and unravelling stories of conflict, death and betrayal. The puppets themselves are on display at the gallery and are worth examining. Their grotesque, occasionally chimeric, design plays on the notions of mutability and caricature that are threaded through his explorations of historical narrative.

Both films are narrated in Classical Arabic, the language of news reports, lending a superficial authority the stories, which, in reality, interlace fact and legend. Allusions like these may be lost on those (such as myself) who lack a familiarity with Arab history. However, the films stand on their own as eerie, atmospheric and self-contained tales of human nature.

A third film, *Al Araba Madfuna II*, is

also on show. This newer work utilises child actors to tell two parables by the Egyptian writer, Mohamed Mustagab. The cinematography is beautiful and evocative, anchoring the stories amid ancient mud building and waterways. The children's speech is provided by adults. They also wear adult clothes (and fake moustaches) but, far from veering towards absurdity, the device lends a strange naivety and pathos to the parables.

It is difficult to avoid seeing the show in the light of contemporary events in the middle-east, many of which seem to echo those of the past. The question hangs in the air: how will the stories we are living through today be told in years to come?

Any meditations on human nature and ancient history with which you leave the gallery are but airy whimsy in comparison to what the Chapman brothers have in store for you. For those who damn contemporary artists for peddling provocation and shock, the Chapmans are chief among sinners. Torture, gore, genocide, perversion and pain are their media and they employ them without restraint. The bewildering



© JAKE AND DINOS CHAPMAN

show constitutes a mass of work dating back to the 90s. The show-stealers however are a set of four of the brothers' infamous dioramas. For those unfamiliar with the Chapmans' work, these deserve some description. Each piece consists of a large, intricate diorama composed of painstakingly painted plastic models... of Nazis in hell. Whatever depraved, evil, genocidal activities you can think off, the Third Reich and their skeletal accomplices are doing it to themselves. The scenes are horrific illustrations of human evil and overtly reference Hieronymus Bosch.

The dioramas are only one example

of a cornucopia of confrontational and darkly humorous works. The gallery is also populated with mannequins in the garb of KKK members, peering at the artwork and lounging on chairs. Beneath their robes the plastic Klansmen wear brightly striped woollen socks.

Whilst nightmarish and shocking, the Chapman brothers' work provides a provocative and thought provoking exploration of the darker side of human nature. The show may not be for everyone, but as an overview of the artists' work it is worth a visit for the adventurous. Art may have lost its ability to shock, but not to disturb.

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Drawn in Black Chalk

Hannah Edmondson interviews Christopher Yates on the inspiration behind his university-set psychological thriller

It started out as a game to win £10,000, but the stakes were so much higher than expected.

Christopher Yates' *Black Chalk* centers on six Oxford first years who set out to play the ultimate game. Not a game of fake money or expanding colonies, but a psychological game that asks its players to risk what they cherish most: their self-images, their lives.

While predictable twists and unrealistic events might be expected from a thriller like this, Yates truly excels in suspenseful plot development. The novel begins in first person narration by a character the author describes as "a hermit living a peculiar life driven by strange routines." As the story progresses, so does the reader's relationship with the narrator and by extension, the characters. Page by page the reader becomes more acquainted with this isolated narrator and his tale only to second-guess everything learned because of one sentence or hint.

These cruel realizations and stunted growth reflect the narrator's own experience. His return to his youthful past shows that this story is not a coming of age, but rather an anti-bildungsroman. The narrator has not grown in life; he has shrunk until all he knows are the bedroom walls in his poky Manhattan apartment. Yates juxtaposes this cloistered deterioration with the unending optimism originally present in the university setting. When asked why he chose Oxford as his story's location, the author

and former alum said, "I love the age of the characters and their youthful enthusiasm for holding certain beliefs, for their desire to experience life."

The Oxford setting also fuels the characters' increasing interest in the game. The competitiveness between these university friends is what elevates the game to such unpleasant heights. The rivalry is present from the beginning, when the group tries to outdo each other's underprivileged backgrounds, and becomes increasingly more vicious as the story goes on. The tipping point comes when the narrator critiques another player's intelligence, for while "obscurities were not terms with which they could hurt or offend one another, such words meant almost nothing [...] never had any of them called another stupid." Through the backdrop of the game, the author explores this theme of competitiveness, so prevalent in campus life, while ridiculing the students' conceit.

However, not everything is gloom and doom in this tale. Yates offers comic relief through Jack, the typical clown of the group, and the obscure memory techniques of the narrator. In one passage, the narrator is standing naked above a salad bowl trying to remember what the mnemonic device represents. He eventually realises the undressed salad is a reminder for him to clothe himself. While Yates depicts a brutal side to humanity, he inserts humorous

scenes and realistic situations, such as six friends hanging out at the pub or one student staying up all night to finish the three papers he has due the next day, to make his characters relatable, and identifiable. It's like *Lord of the Flies* in a familiar setting.

Nothing is quite what it seems in *Black Chalk*. The game, the characters, the narrator are not as straightforward as they first seem, for, as the author reminds us in the introduction, nothing in this tale is to be trusted. Even the motives behind the individuals are unreliable, making readers question what truly drives people.

Once the characters move past the ingrained social rules of being respectful to others, caring for all, loving their neighbors as themselves, they see what actually motivates them: power, success, and the desire to be loved. Once the white chalk rules are erased, the characters' genuine outlines are revealed, drawn in plain black chalk.

Hannah Edmondson: *What was the inspiration behind Black Chalk?*

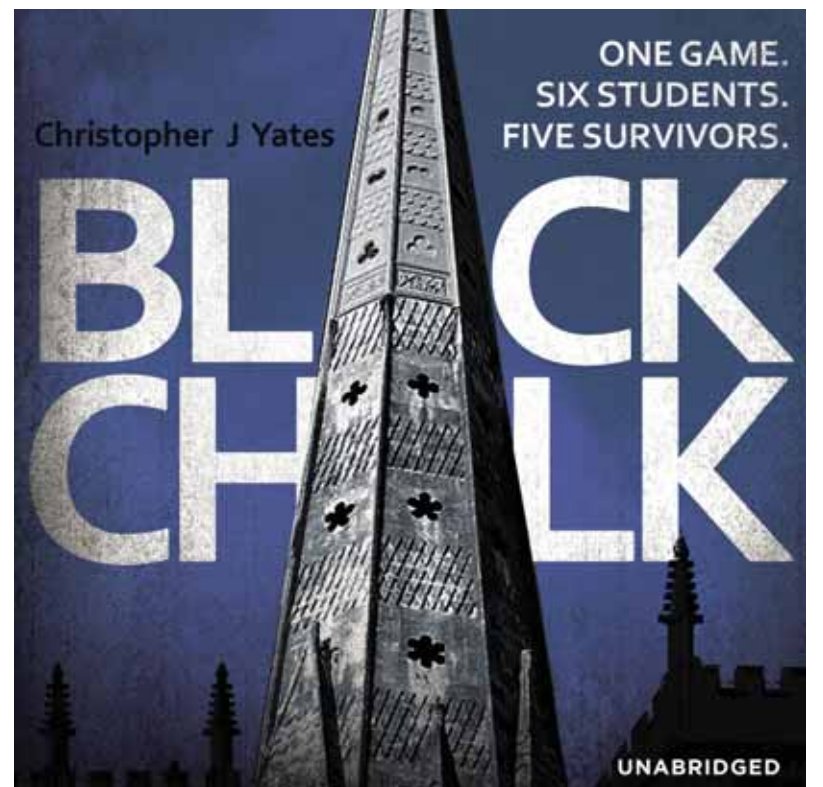
Christopher Yates: The inspiration for *Black Chalk* came from real life. I really did have an idea to play a game of psychological dares much like the one played in my story. This was something me and my friends chatted about in the bar a great deal, trying to come up with interesting forfeits for each other. I think it's very fortunate that we never did play because it means we're all still friends.

HE: *How did your personal experience at Oxford influence your novel?*

CY: There's a lot of my own personal experience in *Black Chalk*. Not a single one of the events that occur in the book actually took place in reality but I used my own experience to shape the settings and plot. And it was my own experience of Oxford that helped me in trying to build as plausible a tale as possible. I suppose you might say that my own Oxford experiences are the DNA of *Black Chalk*.

HE: *Why did you choose a university setting?*

CY: I loved everything about writing a novel that used a university for



its setting. I loved the age of the characters and their youthful enthusiasm for holding certain beliefs, for their desire to experience life. The intimacy of such a setting is also a huge plus to a writer; I went to a college of around 400 people which meant that, to some degree, I knew just about everyone there, and this creates an atmosphere that can be both excitingly convivial and frighteningly suffocating. All excellent ingredients.

HE: *In what way do you see this novel as a bildungsroman or rather a missed bildungsroman?*

CY: Yes, I suppose there's a sense in which it's a bildungsroman in reverse because what we see is not the psychological growth of someone but actually their decline. The narrator doesn't come of age in the world so much as want to lock themselves away from the world that's uncovered.

HE: *Which of the characters did you find it hardest to write about?*

CY: The narrator was the hardest character for me to pin down. The story is told fourteen years on from when the game began. We know right from the start that the narrator's

been damaged by this mysterious game and that the narrator is a hermit living a peculiar life driven by strange routines. So the narrator has no one to talk to but the reader, which means I had to find a way to suck the reader in without using any dialogue between characters (and I have a particular love for writing dialogue). So this was a challenge to write. But challenges can be fun. And challenges can also lead to bursts of creative thought. So in the end, I was very happy with my peculiar hermit.

HE: *Which authors are you influenced by?*

CY: Graham Greene for his sense of writing meaningful books with great prose; but not for one second does he ever forget to entertain and beguile his reader. And this is something Donna Tartt does brilliantly as well. Also Vladimir Nabokov for his love of language and games (he is constantly toying with his reader, a chess player who's several moves ahead of you). And I love great sentence-writers such as Martin Amis, John Updike and Cormac McCarthy.

Black Chalk by Christopher J Yates is published by Random House and is out now!



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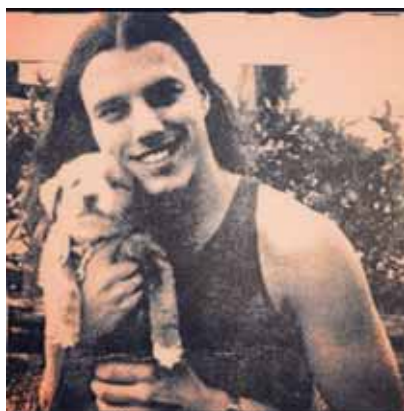
Death: A Restrospective

Thomas Heaven recalls the band synonymous with death metal

It is difficult to exaggerate how important the band **Death** is within extreme metal circles. Whilst Possessed may have coined the term 'Death Metal' with their 1984 demo of that name, it was Chuck Schuldiner and the vehicle for his musical vision, the band; Death that laid out the blueprint for the death metal sound. Death's debut album *Scream Bloody Gore* has been described variously as "death metal's first archetypal document" and "the first true death metal record", whilst Chuck is widely regarded as the "Father of Death Metal". Whereas influential groups **Celtic Frost** and **Venom** had previously stumbled onto the territory that would one day evolve into the myriad forms of extreme music. In Chuck, death metal had a pioneer who sought out the blazing, savage, and lyrically graphic music that abounded with

frantic double bass and blast beat drumming, down-tuned bee-swarm guitars, and low guttural and largely unintelligible vocals. "Chuck said: Hey listen, my band is gorier and darker than anything else. He stepped out on a limb at a time when that wasn't fashionable." – Kelly Shaefer (**Atheist, Neurotica**).

As one of the first to embrace the death metal genre and movement Schuldiner became central to the scene at its heart in Florida. After playing guitar for only six months he began recording at the age of 16, from here his constant drive for musical development, and search for increasing



levels of complexity and technicality kept Death's line-up in constant flux. The influence of Death can be seen simply by looking through the roster of its ex-members. Twenty-seven musicians were in the

band over its eighteen year career, with Schuldiner as the only constant. This reveals the auteur like role being played by Chuck, in his attempts to drive the genre he helped to create forward.

As well as its high levels of musicianship death metal's obsession with graphic subject matter can also be traced back to Death. A lot of songs on *Scream Bloody Gore* were based directly on horror movies. 'Torn to Pieces' is about *Make Them Die Slowly*, 'Regurgitated Guts' is about *Gates of Hell*, 'Scream Bloody Gore' is about *Reanimator* and 'Evil Dead' is about, you guessed it, *Evil Dead*. But as one of

the first adopters of the style Schuldiner can also be credited as one of the first to feel pigeonholed and try to move away from what was becoming the norm towards a more mature progressive feel on later records. He even regretted his choice of band name, which at 16 had seemed the height of cool but at 30 just seemed silly.

Given all this the early loss of Chuck to brain cancer in 2001, at the age of only 34, was a heavy blow to fans. Not only because of the lost creative output that may have been yet to come from such a prolific personality, but also because they had lost an icon within the genre.

Twelve years later there is some consolation for Death listeners as the line-up from the record **Human**, with the addition of Max Phelps on vocals and guitar, present a sampling of works from across all seven albums in a "celebration of Chucks Legacy". Projections inside the Kentish town forum show footage of interviews from the man himself and those on stage are keen to focus attention on his memory rather than themselves. For those in the crowd this is a rare and unlikely opportunity to enjoy a live performance of so many classic and beloved



tracks. It is hard to see Death returning without the virtuoso frontman at the helm, it wouldn't be right. This line-up touring under the name **Death To All**, and giving proceeds to charity, is as close as many of us are ever going to get to the true Death experience. Romanos Skiadas said after the show the he could now "die happy" having seen the performance. This is a sentiment likely shared by many who never thought they would have a chance to experience track like 'Pull the Plug' and 'Flattening Of Emotion'.

If you would like to listen to some Death yourself I'm afraid I can't pull that off via newspaper, but **Rocksoc: The Aftermath** will be doing their own Death retrospective on icradio.com so you can appreciate Chuck's genius there if you like.

AMS album of the week

TOY – Join The Dots

TOY are basically the voice of British Krautrock, or at least its closest descendent. An online stream of their second album, *Join the Dots*, due to be released on December 9th, went online this Tuesday. Almost exactly a year after their first album "TOY" came out, once again I am pleasantly surprised by what I hear.

Opening with a throbbing bassline and the typical TOY synth, the leading single, "Join the Dots" is an almost 8 minute piece that drives itself forward and is well worth a listen.

The hectic touring schedule [including several successful festival appearances this summer] and a well received single with Rose Elinor Dougal have focused the band and the effect on this first snippet of music compared to pieces from TOY is noticeable.

They are slowly carving out a distinctive sound, somewhere between **My Bloody Valentine** and [to my immense pleasure] some of the earlier and longer **Pink Floyd** compositions – *Join the Dots* and especially *Conductor* sound as if they could burst into an extended "Set The Controls for the Heart of the Sun" type soundscape everytime the lyrics stop. This slightly darker and yet more experimental direction makes me glad since it would be very easy for them to continue riding the Krautrock-revival image that's been pinned to them, and therefore not explore their unquestionable potential with their new album.

There are some minor gripes with the overly repeated and simplistic lyrics, but I think the whole presentation of the music makes it clear what frontman Dan Carey and the boys are trying to get across – this album definitely gets my seal of approval, as well as a retrospective recommendation to listen to their first if you have any love for Krautrock, Floyd or slightly left-centre pop rock.

Eamonn Postlethwaite



James & The Rabbit Hole: EP Review

Julia Spindel
 Music Writer

James & the Rabbit Hole have worked hard as a band since we last heard from them and it's definitely paid off. The band was assembled following an application to the music competition Uni Music League, and new material was scribbled down hurriedly as they powered through the competition. Although the musical talent of each member was clear from the start, the slight lack of depth to the songs and their disjointed corners hinted at their speedy creation. Now, however, it's a different story. Their debut EP is due to be released today and it sure packs a punch.

'Quoth the Ravin' sets the funk vibe rolling. The guitar and bass riffs merit comparison to **Stevie Wonder** tracks and will have your foot tapping within seconds. The next treat is the first vocal entry. New member of James & the Rabbit Hole, Katie Addy, has a voice that sounds as if it were designed for such a punchy track. She maintains a rich vocal tone throughout spiky articulation and accentuation of lyrics and decorates phrase ends with warm vibrato. It becomes grittier as the song

builds. With many talented female vocalists following the crowd toward electronic music at the moment, it's refreshing to hear such a voice in a Rock 'n' Roll band. The harmonies and guitar fillers in the chorus of 'Quoth the Ravin' complete a great hook, whilst the instrumental solos toward the end of the song are equally exciting.

The vocals and guitar stabs are seductive from the beginning of 'Lions'. But the highlight of this song is the chorus, if one can call it that. Three vocal sections, which sound a little like a 90s pop song sung by a gospel choir, are alternated with three instrumental sections, which are more reminiscent of a **B.B. King** melody. Against all odds, it works. The ease with which

James & the Rabbit Hole straddles multiple music genres without overcomplicating songs is brilliant. The musicians adapt to each style seamlessly. This is especially audible from the guitarists as well as the drummer, Dan Day, who builds a huge number of com-

plex rhythms into the three track EP.

The final track of the EP, 'Edyta', is the most memorable track from when I first saw James & the Rabbit Hole live. It's slightly less cleverly constructed than the other two songs on the EP. However, the fast tempo, complicated guitar riffs, harmonised choruses and reams of lyrics ensure that everyone will have a good time dancing to this. James' twangy voice and progression from singing into almost talking at some points suits the song well.

James & the Rabbit Hole are playing at the Workshop on the 14th of December to celebrate the release of their EP. I highly recommend purchasing a ticket (details can be found on their Facebook page).





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MUSIC

The Who?-siers

Sandy Nimmo sees The Hoosiers at the O2 Academy

Do you remember the UK “odd-pop” trio **The Hoosiers**? I wouldn’t blame you if you didn’t – when I told fellow students I was going to see them at the O2 Academy, the response was a collective “Oh, are they still going?” (apart from one obsessive Popjustice reader). Riding the 2003-2008 wave of guitar-based pop being chart mainstays and the radio norm, their 2007 first album *The Trick To Life* went double platinum in the

UK and spawned two infectious-catchy top-5 singles ‘Worried About Ray’ and ‘Goodbye Mr A. Slots’ on popular TV shows ensued, alongside an extensive tour and stints on the festival circuit. Despite their popularity, criticism of their cheesiness abounded from the more snooty indie types due to their perceived omni-cheery demeanour and 70s ELO-influenced sound; they won NME’s Worst Band award in 2008. This, and their “aren’t we quirky?” penchant for dressing up in superhero outfits at gigs, still couldn’t dampen overall public enthusiasm.

Their 2010 second album *The Illusion of Safety*, despite improved media reviews, did not boast such impressive sales figures. After the fancier **Hot-Chip** stylings of lead single ‘Choices’ was well-received on radio yet failed to make the top 10, Sony cut their losses and pulled further promotion, leaving the band out in the wilderness, a fate similarly bestowed on their mid-2000s contemporaries **The Fratellis** and **Kaiser Chiefs** (but not, bizarrely, **Scouting For Girls** – a more punchable name and sound could surely not be found). Back



on their own (partially fan-funded) label, they’ve been busy readying another album slated for release in March 2014, and came to London as part of a low-key tour to test their new material. The superhero outfits are gone. They mean business.

They opened with their lat-



est single ‘Somewhere in the Distance’, currently available on Spotify and as a free download if the album is pre-ordered. This nodded to indie-bands-du-jour with synth sounds reminiscent of **Everything Everything** and a **Foals**-like spacey pre-chorus and choppy guitars, while vocal melodies and the powerful chorus sounded reassuringly Hoosier-ish. Other new cuts sounded equally promising,

such as the bouncy ‘Fidget Brain’ or the crowd-pleasing lyricism of ‘Handsome Girls’ and ‘Pretty Boys’.

While lead singer Irwin Sparkes was in fine voice throughout, in full control of his impressive falsetto register, and Alan Sharland banging the drums with goofy enthusiasm, the quality of their live sound was mixed at times. First album song ‘Everything Goes Dark’ was particularly impressive, building to a swelling, emotional crescendo that far outweighed the album version, but songs like ‘Worst Case Scenario’ sounded lightweight and insubstantial, lacking the “oomph” provided by the studio recordings.

As someone more used to Glasgow audiences that jump around constantly chanting riffs and basslines when there’s no singing, the smartphone-toting London audience appeared a bit sterile, but the band got everyone into the spirit of things masterfully with good song choices and excellent between-song banter, part self-deprecating, part faux-pomposity. Swedish ex-fireman and bassist Martin Skarendahl played the straight-man throughout, alongside long-standing live multi-instrumentalist Sam Swallow who recently became an official fourth member. With the gig ending on the massive high of ‘Goodbye Mr A’, given a full rocky outro, everyone left with a great big grin on their face. While yours truly was a big fan of the second album and so would’ve preferred more songs like ‘Bumpy’ Ride or the **Muse**-isms of ‘Glorious’, it’s no doubt that the Hoosiers offer a great night out and some cracking songs – even if they are unlikely to ever again reach the giddy heights of their commercial peak. Beats **Guns ‘n Roses** anyway.

The Hoosiers’ fourth album, The News From Nowhere, is set to be released some time next year.



Emiel’s Guide to Classical Music

Emiel de Lange

Episode IV: A New Art

Onwards we march! Well, not quite marching, as the first notated rhythms tended to be divisible by three. During the 13th Century, a new class of literates emerged as a result of the university at Paris, and, combined with the now well-established body of written works, music became an intellectual pursuit, theorised and written about – but more importantly, the first complete system of writing music came together. Notation could now convey almost everything necessary for performance, allowing literate music to set off on its independent course.

The foundations for this were laid in the 12th Century *Ars Antiqua*, which we discussed at length in the previous instalment. Aside from the already-mentioned developments in polyphony, perhaps the most important contribution of the old school at Notre Dame was the clear division of music through time. Music had become metrical; notes were quite simply held for different lengths relative to each other and alternated to give what is called a rhythmic mode (for example, long-short-long-short-long, where a long has twice the duration of a short). However, these rhythmic modes were derived from ‘quantitative’ poetic meter and didn’t require a new notation of any kind; the mode could simply be given and applied to a whole composition. It wasn’t until now, the 13th Century that a method was devised to assign duration to each written note individually.

The music of Paris at this time was secular, urban and playful. Composers became renowned for their ‘virtuosic’ composition, often pulling together melodies from many different sources and arranging them into a single piece. Polyphony became more complex, with different voices using different rhythms. Often the higher voices moved at a faster pace than the lower and so modal rhythm had in effect already become redundant. Once again visit the Felix website and have a listen to composers such as Adam de la Halle.

One hundred years later, in the 14th Century, a style developed called the ‘*Ars Nova*’ – still centred on the university at Paris. This movement has been compared in magnitude to the introduction of perspective in painting and marks the beginning of the Renaissance in music. Paradoxically, many *Ars Nova* composers were also mathematicians, and applied their knowledge to explore new rhythms and combinations of

rhythms to achieve an unprecedented freedom of expression.

The prototypical music here is the collection of motets known as the *Roman de Fauvel*, which set various satirical poems to music. However, arguably the greatest musician was **Guillaume de Machaut** (d. 1377). Not only was his ‘stacking’ of voices incredibly intricate and sensuous but his harmonic language was to be emulated for the following two centuries. Previously, a historical imperfection in the notation of scales



or ‘modes’ had made it necessary to sing notes outside of the system in order to properly harmonise certain intervals. We now call these notes sharps or flats which lie between the notes of the scale. For example, C#: a pitch slightly higher than C, but still lower than D. Machaut made free use of these for the first time and wrote them into his music. The result is dissonance for the sake of dissonance and a powerful sense of resolution – a potent expressive tool. Music could now ache and throb much like the heart does.

Machaut spent the majority of his life in the service of various aristocrats and kings. At the time, he was best known as a poet and writer of love-songs and courtly ballads, yet today he is remembered mostly for his setting of the mass – the first to be attributed entirely to a single composer, functioning as a coherent whole. Luckily for us, in his later years he became preoccupied with the preservation of his manuscripts for posterity.

As we have seen, the development of musical thought and language has been inextricably linked to the development of a means to notate it. We have already covered some 5 centuries, but only now is literate music fully diverging from oral traditions and coming in to its own. Next week we will enter the renaissance; a period of massive change and development and the birth of modern music.

Editor: **Simon Hunter,**
Riaz Agahi, Stuart
Masson, William
Stocker
 music.felix@gmail.com



Riaz & Stuart's Albums Of The Year

Editorial bigwigs reveal their most favoured releases of the last 12 months

1. Mika Vainio & Joachim Nordwall *Monstrance*



While both have distinguished themselves with impressive solo releases this year, **Vainio & Nordwall's** collaboration manages to capture the best elements of both of their work. Despite the small selection of instruments on the album, variety abounds. From rhythmic bassy rumbles (courtesy of Vainio) to ambient synths via metallic scrapings and screaming guitars, *Monstrance* is one of the most richly diverse and satisfyingly eerie musical journeys of recent times.

2. Fire! *Without Noticing*



Swedish noisy jazz trio **Fire!** followed February's orchestral album *Exit*, with *Without Noticing*, an album that really emulates the live experience. As well as being bookended by noisy sketches, 'At Least On Your Door' starts with a classic noisy sax jam before dropping into an irresistibly catchy bassline augmented by Mats Gustafsson's always enthralling saxophone heroics. That pretty much sums up what is an insanely catchy yet aggressively hard hitting album.

3. Abul Mogard *Drifted Heaven*



Abul Mogard, a retired Serbian factory worker, maintains the cathartic, hauntingly beautiful industrial tones of previous works, like a modernist **Steve Roach**. Where it has changed, is that it sounds more like many of his VCO counterparts, with a more classically electronic sound in places and more open suggestions of melody. The result is a more instantly rewarding listen, being dipped for the length of the album in swathes of Mogard's ethereal electronics.

4. Nicholas Bullen *Component Fixations*



For the most part, I've tried to avoid albums I've covered before, but I really felt I did the **Napalm Death** founder a slight disservice last time round. Like Japanese noise artist **Aube**, Bullen uses a single sound source - his garden, yet the results approach more closely the abstract electronic experimentation of **Eleh**, where common garden sounds like running water combine with more processed counterparts to make a complex, serrated, intimidatingly claustrophobic experience.

5. Slow Walkers *Slow Walkers*



Slow Walkers is a collaboration between **Lawrence English** and **Grouper**. The result contains the brilliance you'd expect from two cornerstones of the ambient genre. Grouper's warmly dissonant pop-ambient and English's evocative drone based soundscapes combine to perfect effect in a wonderfully flowing homogenous soundscape of the most sumptuous ambient you will hear this year.

1. The World is a Beautiful Place and I am no Longer Afraid to Die *Whenever, If Ever*



I am obsessed with this album. The range of moods and styles is captivating, and how it fits together so coherently is breathtaking. Mixing midwest emo with post-rock, indie pop and math rock, this album is everything I've ever wanted (in an album). It's exciting, it develops with every listen, it's bursting with emotion, it namechecks **Rival Schools**, I mean, what else do you want?

2. Old Gray *An Autobiography*



I imagine most of you are looking for an album chock full of twinkly guitar, frenzied crescendos and intense screaming. This is what you're looking for. *An Autobiography* is a fantastic blend of screamo, midwest emo and post-rock. From the opening track through to the last it is just fantastic. It's heavy, but it's also really beautiful. It will blow your socks off and bring you to the point of tears simultaneously, and that is the dream, so, yeah.

3. The National - Trouble Will Find Me II *Trouble Will Find Me*



The National have long been one of my favourite bands, and this might be their best yet. 'I Need My Girl' is definitely my song of the year. A lilting guitar line backs a beautiful vocal performance... and it just blows me away every time. To be honest, it's all great. The tightest rhythm section in indie rock continue to impress good, the guitar lines are brilliant and Matt Berninger's baritone is at its silky best. Top stuff.

4. Pity Sex *Feast Of Love*



This shoegaze / emo hybrid has had me hooked since my first listen. Hiding amongst layers fuzz are some really catchy hooks, a driving rhythm section and some top notch alt rock tracks. There are tracks about masturbation and loneliness, but for the most part it's about bad casual sex. Happily, it's much closer to self-deprecating humour than depressing self-analysis. If you want to immerse yourself in fuzz and unhappiness, then this is the best 2013 had to offer!

5. Iceage *You're Nothing*



Iceage play visceral post-punk. Full of snarling vocals and dissonant instrumentation, their sounds owes more to **The Fall** and **Wire** than the more obvious touchstones of **Joy Division** or **Gang of Four**. From the accelerating madness of 'Coalition' to the pure manic brilliance of 'Wounded Hearts', this is one to get you on the dancefloor, and then embarrass yourself badly by throwing yourself around without any semblance of style. This is a spectacular listen, if a slightly exhausting one.



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TELEVISION

2013: A Television Odyssey

Emily Fulham looks back at some of the TV highlights of the year

New Shows

Hannibal

A surprise hit, HBO's *Hannibal* was a slow burner that turned out to be one of the best shows of the year. A lot of credit goes to Mads Mikkelsen for his flawless performance as everyone's favourite cannibal, but Hugh Dancy also deserves praise in his portrayal of Will Graham, the unstable FBI agent Hannibal deceives and manipulates, as his grasp on sanity becomes increasingly tenuous. Throw in a great supporting cast, inspired guest stars (including Eddie Izzard as you've never seen him before) and cinematography that makes even the most brutal murder look oddly beautiful, and you've got an intriguing premise for a show which is far more than your standard crime procedural.



HBO

Sleepy Hollow

Another surprising success, *Sleepy Hollow* combined the unlikely partners of apocalyptic horror and American history with unforeseen success. Ichabod Crane, Oxford professor and Civil War soldier, is transported into the future thanks to a curse from the Headless Horseman, where he partners up with local policewoman Abbie Mills to solve supernatural mysteries. The 21st century takes Crane some getting used to, with coffee machines and the concept of paying for bottled water some of the biggest obstacles. A likeable cast and a propensity to not take itself too seriously gave *Sleepy Hollow* its edge in the latest wave of Autumn shows imported from the US.



FOX

Finales

Breaking Bad

After five glorious series, we finally bade farewell to Walter White, the meth dealer who made students everywhere look at their Chemistry teachers with new-found respect. The final series started off with a bang (literally), and rarely let up the pace. With more plot twists and shocking moments than you can shake a stick at, *Breaking Bad* kept audiences on the edge of their seats until the very last episode. With actors Bryan Paul and Aaron Paul consistently outstanding in every scene, the final stage in Walter's metamorphosis from unassuming high school teacher to mastermind drug lord cemented the show's status as one of the greatest of all time.



AMC

The IT Crowd

The escapades of Roy, Maurice and Jen came to an end as one of Britain's best comedies in recent years gracefully bowed out in September. And graceful it was – with each of the actors going on to bigger things (Chris O'Dowd now a familiar face in Hollywood blockbusters and Richard Ayoade a well-received director in his own right), *The IT Crowd* chose to go out on a high. With nods to some of the highlights of previous series and several fan-favourite cameos, the final episode was a crowd-pleaser all round. Undoubtedly, the sitcom will be sorely missed, and we'll have to wait until next year for Channel 4's other comedy jewel, *Peep Show*, to return to help ease the pain.



CHANNEL 4

2014 Previews

Game of Thrones

Game of Thrones tested its reputation for killing off characters to the max in the 'Red Wedding' of the penultimate episode of its third series. Those who knew what was coming watched between their fingers as (spoiler alert) the Starks proved themselves to be the most ill-fated family in the whole of Westeros. The fourth series, starting in Spring, will continue to deal with the aftermath of the event, as well as building up to the series' next wedding between the hateful King Joffrey and Margaery Tyrell.

Girls

The much-talked about show has divided opinions, with loyal fans and skeptics abound. Hannah Horvath and crew return in January; while details of any storylines are being kept tightly under wraps, it's a safe assumption that there'll be plenty more nudity, painfully awkward sex scenes and interesting hairdos.

Doctor Who

OK, it might not be on until August, but the news that Peter Capaldi has been chosen as the 12th Doctor has already got everyone hyped up. Fans of *The Thick of It* will be intrigued to see if he can shake off his foul-mouthed persona to play the family favourite Doctor.

Cartoon Corner

Phineas and Ferb

Tom Rivlin

Phineas and Ferb is a show that's all about formulae. Almost every episode of the show follows a fairly rigid structure: it's about two pre-teen stepbrothers on their summer holidays, and every day they decide to do something that's creatively impossible (opening a restaurant, or building a city-spanning rollercoaster, or building a rocket), at which point their controlling teenage sister Candace tries to "bust" them by showing their mum the dangerous

things they've been doing. Just before she can show Mom, the amazing creation of the boys is cleaned up thanks to the antics of their pet platypus, Perry, who is actually a secret agent battling his nemesis Dr. Doofenshmirtz on a daily basis (I am not making a single word of this up), leaving Mom to think Candace is crazy. At some point there's also a musical number, because why not?

Besides the catchy tunes and creative high concept wacky fun, the real appeal of the show is in

how it plays with the formulae it creates for itself. The first episode is the archetypal one – every point in the checklist is ticked in a rote way – but after that it gets interesting. The characters become aware of the routine, and some try to actively fight it, while others learn to live with it. For example, in one episode, Candace tries to keep staring at the Thing the boys make for the whole day. (It then turns invisible as soon as she turns her head.) In another, Doofenshmirtz has a waiting room for Perry the Platypus to wait in while he finishes his latest evil contraption (which, as a group, he calls his "-inators"), because, of course, Perry can't foil his evil scheme until he's finished preparing it.

It extends beyond main story beats, though. There's an assortment of catchphrases, running gags,

recurring characters, and settings that get introduced, built up, and then deconstructed in various amusing ways. In early episodes, Doofenshmirtz talked about various tragic backstories he had which made him want to do his various schemes ("It all began on the day of my actual birth. Both of my parents failed to show up."), but eventually it devolves into "when I was a boy my mother would never let me swim in public pools... What? That's it! You know, not every back story has to have some big, in-depth spiel."

The creators have shown a very keen understanding of TV show tropes and formulae, and of how to play with them, but they are just plain funny. Most of the best gags come from Doofenshmirtz (who is voiced by one of the creators), but everyone

gets great lines at some points.

For most of this review I've just been going "oh and that time where that thing happened was so funny!" but that's kind of how it is. The characters aren't especially dynamic or remarkable, and, for the most part, they don't get much room to grow. The plots are deliberately repetitive (with some notable exceptions). The main thing the show has going for it is that it just has really solid, clever, and funny dialogue – it's just a collection of really great gags.

At over 200 episodes, it's Disney Channel's longest running show, surviving long past the channel's move away from animation towards lame sitcoms, purely on the basis of it being just that good; definitely worth checking out.



Editor: John Park
film.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Here's looking at you, It's been a good year for...



Sandra Bullock and Melissa McCarthy

Hot off her Oscar-nominated comedic turn (comedy not something that is generally recognised by awards ceremonies – she was really that good) in *Bridesmaids*, McCarthy continued her successful streak in the film industry with her box-office number one financial hit, *Identity Thief*. The critics hated it, with one rather unpleasant review comparing McCarthy to a hippo, but the audience clearly loved it, grossing well over its budget internationally, with a sequel already in the works.

Teaming up with Bullock, the pair starred in *The Heat*, a female-driven buddy cop comedy that went above and beyond everyone's expectations by actually being very, very funny. With Paul Feig, the director of *Bridesmaids*, McCarthy scored yet another solid comedy role, this time more foul-mouthed than ever, with Bullock enjoying quite a considerable paycheck (\$10 million) compared to her more modestly paid co-star (\$2.5 million).

Oscar buzz is also building for Bullock, who genuinely looked to be giving it her all in Alfonso Cuarón's terrifyingly intense space drama, *Gravity*. The critics loved it, and the world can't seem to be getting enough of it. Already \$600 million dollars in the bag, the sales keep coming in strong, and is a hotly anticipated Oscar contender this year.



Flying high...defying gravity

The 6th installment in the *Fast & Furious* franchise, the aptly named *Fast & Furious 6* showed no signs of slowing down by pulling out all the stops. The Rock? Check. Vin Diesel? Check. Fancy cars? Of course. Women? Oh yes. A tank? Why not. The sillier it gets (who can forget THAT airport runway scene?), the more money it makes it seems, as it went on to become the biggest money-maker of the series, even taking inflation into account.

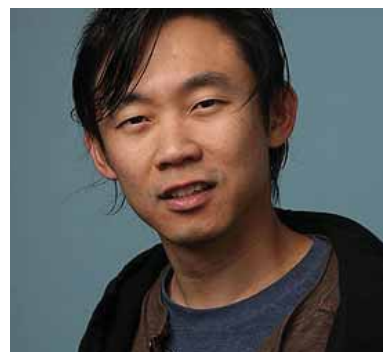


Superheroes who aren't Wolverine

Marvel's world cinema domination of course continued in 2013, with both their films benefiting greatly from the phenomenal success of last year's *Avengers Assemble*.

Geared up as a direct sequel to the events of *Avengers Assemble*, *Iron Man 3* is currently the highest grossing film of 2013, and became a billionaire globally. *Thor: The Dark World* wasn't quite as huge, and although it won't come close to hitting that billion point, it's already reached half of that, which is still an impressive feat, done within a month of its release.

DC has also been making a bold comeback thanks to Christopher Nolan's input into the *Batman* saga, and they rightly paraded his name around every advert there was for their Superman reboot, titled *Man of Steel*, with relative newcomer Henry Cavill taking over the coveted role. It made enough money to warrant a sequel, although both fans and critics alike were somewhat let down by Superman's complete disregard for the concept of collateral damage in his final action sequence.



James Wan and low-budget horror films

Spending very little (relatively) then recuperating a final total that is considerably more is a tactic that has served director Wan well this year, with both of his horror hits, *The Conjuring* and *Insidious Chapter 2*, which were made with small budgets (\$20 million, \$5 million respectively), earned a cool combined total of \$460 million+ internationally.

Similar success was enjoyed by *The Purge* (budget: \$3 million, earnings: almost \$90 million), a simple, yet interesting and thought-provoking idea, well executed and incredibly well advertised during a box office period where not many great new releases were out to entertain and grab the audience's attention.



Tom Hanks

His films both opened and closed the London Film Festival (*Captain Phillips* opening, *Saving Mr Banks* closing), and they have both been incredibly well received. There's even talk of him scoring a double nomination (for both best leading and supporting actor), an achievement only a handful of thespians have managed in the past.



Luke Evans

The Welsh actor has been busy of late, starring in *Fast & Furious 6*, scoring a significantly sized role in the remaining *Hobbit* films, whilst also landing iconic roles of both Dracula and The Crow in their newly rebooted films (*Dracula Untold* and *The Crow* respectively). How they will turn out no one knows for sure, but by this time next year he could be the big name on Hollywood campus.



kid: a 2013 round-up



Jennifer Lawrence

For starters, she won an Oscar earlier this year, and it's obvious she's becoming one of the most talked about and loved young actresses around. She's the cool, new, hip young woman to like, which explains why so many returned for the sequel of *The Hunger Games*. *Catching Fire* is doing great business, with everyone fully invested in the revolution that is brewing against the Capitol, who quite frankly deserve everything coming their way.

Independent films

Once again, films grabbing the important awards buzz are the more modestly financed (but by no means less advertised) films that are winning glowing reviews from critics and cinema-goers alike. Steve McQueen has already bagged numerous awards with his latest slavery drama *12 Years a Slave*, which is looking to be the one to beat come the Oscar season. Matthew McConaughey and Jared Leto should be winning a handful of awards for their work in the funny and touching *Dallas Buyers Club*, Woody Allen is on career-peak form with *Blue Jasmine* featuring Cate Blanchett's bravura performance, whereas once again the Coen brothers work their magic with *Inside Llewyn Davis*.



Leonardo DiCaprio

There is always some sort of an Oscar buzz surrounding DiCaprio, who sadly hasn't currently won any. *The Great Gatsby* was looking to be a juicy role but the film was bumped from its original award-bait 2012 Christmas Day release schedule to all the way in May 2013 where, to be fair, the movie enjoyed great box office success (almost \$350 million globally).

Hope remains however, as Martin Scorsese's new film *The Wolf of Wall Street* will certainly be going for that awards glory. This could serve as DiCaprio's fourth acting nomination. A first win? Only time will tell.



Sleeper hits

Films that hold steady week after week despite stiff competition can give surprising results, as demonstrated by *Now You See Me*, a light-hearted heist movie with slick magic acts to trick the audience, that showed some mighty holding power in the charts. It opened modestly compared to its not-so-cheap budget, but has now grossed over 350 million worldwide. Sequel? Already on the way.

Then there's *Lee Daniels' The Butler*, an inspirational true story about an African-American witnessing all the important 20th Century American Civil Rights events as he works in the White House. The American audience loved it for obvious reasons, there's talk of Forest Whitaker and Oprah Winfrey getting some well-earned nominations, and it's posting some more than respectable numbers elsewhere, for a current grand total of \$150+ million. Probably not appropriate to expect a sequel for this one though.

Animation

Families still love going to the cinemas, it seems, as there was quite a number of animated hits this year, regardless of actual film quality.

Planes, an ill-advised Disney spinoff of Pixar's *Cars*, was a flat, generic ride with a colourful voice cast, and *The Smurfs 2*, which ended up being a whole lot worse than its predecessor, both generated a respectable number of ticket sales, which means there are sequels planned for both films (oh dear God).



Comedies

Amongst all the summer blockbuster madness, quite a few comedy films came to light and enjoyed some effective counter-programming successes. *We're the Millers* turned out to be one of Jennifer Aniston's highest grossing films (\$269 million worldwide) even though it was facing what seemed to be an unfair fight against the eagerly anticipated *Elysium* and other late-summer blockbusters that attempted to steal the spotlight.

This is the End, starring everyone you can think of in an American stoner comedy movie, opened in direct competition with *Man of Steel*, and yet was not completely crushed by the superhero and did decent business in its complete run, crossing the \$100-million mark in the States alone, although results from around the world were a touch disappointing.

Last but not least, Jonny Knoxville of *Jackass* fame decided to dress up as an old man and do inappropriate things in front of his grandson. With a modest budget of \$15 million, *Jackass Presents: Bad Grandpa* is currently the second biggest money-maker of the Jackass franchise, with almost \$130 million in the bank.

Two of this year's earlier animated releases were *The Croods* and *Epic*. *The Croods* did better business, but *Epic* also managed to hold its own despite *Fast & Furious 6*, *The Hangover Part III* and *Star Trek Into Darkness* trying to out-compete for the audience cash.



And who can forget the little yellow minions of *Despicable Me 2*? Those tiny little things are so popular they're getting their very own movie, set to be released in 2015. Illumination Entertainment has found a gold mine with this series, with *Despicable Me 2* earning \$900 million+ (!) this year worldwide.

Let's not forget about Pixar either, who did well with their first ever prequel, *Monsters University*.





Here's looking at you, It's been a bad year for...



Failed Oscar hopefuls

Australian actresses Nicole Kidman and Naomi Watts had big biopics planned to be released during the awards season; Kidman playing Grace Kelly in *Grace of Monaco* with Watts taking over the role of Lady Diana Spencer in *Diana*.

Kidman's film was bumped for an insignificant release date in March next year, whereas Watts' film was widely panned by critics who had nothing but scathingly harsh words to say about it, and became an industry laughing stock. The box-office result for *Diana* was also abysmal, completely ruining whatever chance the film had in competing for awards.

The same goes for Benedict Cumberbatch and his muddled film *The Fifth Estate*. Despite the world's favourite Sherlock putting on his best Aussie accent to impersonate Julian Assange, it failed to take off, having one of the worst opening weekend numbers this year. "The Cumberbitches have got my back" he said. Err...sure about that?



Desperate Twilight wannabes

Now that the *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* films are over, 2013 marked the race to see who could fill this gap with a lasting franchise. Three potential candidates came forward, with all of them falling flat both in terms of not being able to make a mark on the box office, as well as failing to impress the critics and cinema-goers.

First up was *Beautiful Creatures*, a story about good and bad witches, which had promising leads, with Alice Englert and Alden Ehrenreich doing their best not to sulk and be useless. It had a great supporting cast too, with Viola Davis, Jeremy Irons, Emmy Rossum and Emma Thompson filling the adult roles. But the story went nowhere and although equipped with so much supposed magic, the film failed to have fun with its fantasy concept. A box office disappointment? For sure.

Released next is the worst on the list, which was penned by the same woman who was responsible for *Twilight*. *The Host*, arguably one of the most awful films of 2013, had the talented Saoirse Ronan caught up in a laughable love triangle as she battled with her mind when it came to debating over who to kiss. The two lads in question were frustratingly slow, with a possessed-looking Diane Kruger acting as an unintentionally hilarious villain. This also didn't set the box office on fire.

Most disturbing however, was *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*, a film that came dangerously close to advocating incest as long as it doesn't feel wrong in the heart. Any film that can quite seriously say with a straight face that Johannes Bach was a demon hunter is one that you shouldn't feel bad about laughing at, which is the one thing this film was good for. There are talks of a sequel for this, which is completely baffling since it barely made back its production budget.



Wolverine

Every Wolverine movie ends up making less money than its predecessor and this one was no exception. Simply titled *The Wolverine*, the immortal Adamantium-filled hero was sent to Japan to fight assassins on a bullet train and then throw that all away to be a part of one of the worst final climax sequences a 2013 film has so far offered. It baffled and bored despite Hugh Jackman's best efforts to flex every single muscle in his body, although the end-credits scene hinting at next year's big *X-Men* reunion was reassuring.



Abdellatif Kechiche

Despite his deserving Palme d'Or win this year, it's not every director's dream to be labelled as being a nightmare to work with by two of his leading actresses (Adèle Exarchopoulos, Léa Seydoux). But such is the fate of the *Blue is the Warmest Colour* director. The crew behind his film are claiming his never-ending shooting schedule was illegal (harassment, unpaid hours), and his incredibly long, graphic sex scenes have attracted controversy. It was all smiles, kisses and tears of joy when the film premiered in Cannes, but since then there has been an ugly war between the director and the cast/crew. Kechiche is now threatening to sue the defaming actresses, and has stated his wish the film should never be released with all this bad press going with it. However this should only be a minor setback for the Tunisian-French director, who is very much respected in the European film market.



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FILM

kid: a 2013 round-up

Old people

Die Hard came back for yet another addition to its struggling franchise, with the 58-year-old Bruce Willis teaming up with Jai Courtney acting as John McClane's tough CIA agent son (he had a son?!) as they cause chaos in Russia. The "old man" jokes certainly got old and tiresome quickly as that was the only kind of dry humour the script had to offer in the midst of highly unsatisfying action sequences.

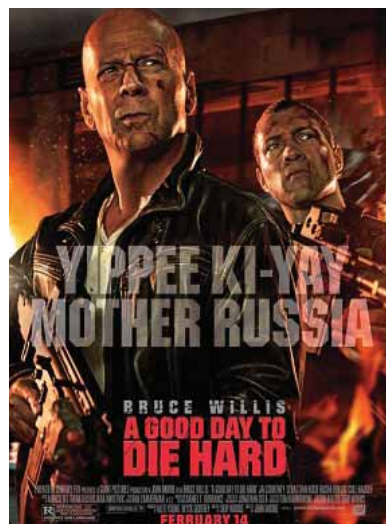
But nothing could have been clunkier and more repetitive than *Red 2*, even with the kind of talent involved. Dame Helen Mirren acting as a bad-ass spy never got the screentime that she deserved, and the "banter" hinging on Bruce Willis looking careless, laid back and cool was downright embarrassing. Not even the newest additions to the cast, Anthony Hopkins (old), Catherine Zeta-Jones (getting there), and Byung-hun Lee (also getting there) could add something genuinely fun to the film.

And perhaps 2013 was the year in which has-been tough guys all collectively decided to stage simultaneous comebacks. It all started with Sylvester Stallone beating everyone to a pulp in *Bullet to the Head*, a film that was both badly received and bombed at the box office.

Then it was Arnie Schwarzenegger's turn to produce something mediocre, which he did, with *The Last Stand*, in which we found Forest Whitaker where he should never have been.

As if that wasn't bad enough, Stallone and Schwarzenegger teamed up for *Escape Plan*, where they found themselves imprisoned in the world's most secure prison by Jesus Christ Jim Caviezel.

Clearly these guys need the money have the energy, passion and, most importantly, stamina to handle such physical roles, which is probably why *The Expendables 3* is set to be released in 2014 with an even bigger cast.



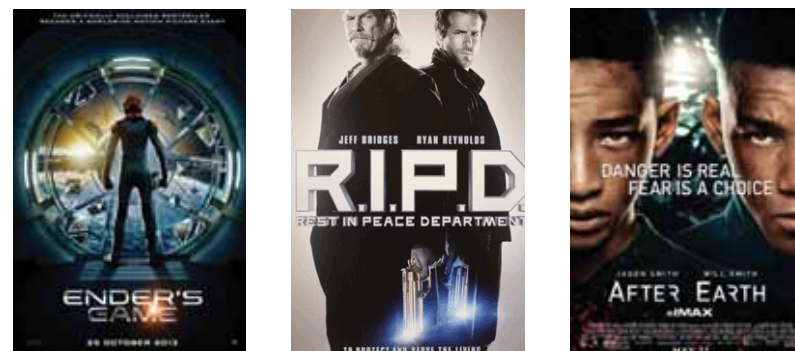
Box office losers

It's unrealistic to expect that every movie will turn a profit and become a runaway hit. For every hit there's a miss, and this year quite a few of those misses managed to hemorrhage money for their studios.

Jack the Giant Slayer did debut at the top of the United States box office but opening to a feeble \$27-million three-day weekend gross. Its budget? \$195 million. Without a bankable star (Nicholas Hoult is not yet someone whose name alone can attract a large group to cinemas) and without an appealing idea that clearly aimed at a broad demographic (word is, the director's darker, adult-themed vision clashed with the studio who wanted a family-friendly action-adventure film), no one was all that keen on Jack and his dangerous quest to save a princess he has a crush on.

Disney has reportedly broken its studio record with \$4 billion at the global box office. Perhaps that can be used to plug the gigantic hole that was made when Gore Verbinski's hugely expensive western *The Lone Ranger* flopped hard. The film alone created a loss of \$160-190 million, but given the \$4-billion intake, are we really feeling sorry for them? The failure must come as a blow, however, to the usually hit-making producer Jerry Bruckheimer and his regular collaborating director Verbinski. They tried blaming the critics for the disappointing financial performance, which of course is ludicrous, since critics more often than not have very little sway over what the public chooses to watch (as evidently proved by the ever-so popular *Transformers* franchise).

Now Sam Raimi's *Oz the Great and Powerful* wasn't as big a flop as the two films already mentioned, but given the extremely high production cost, the cast, as well as the big hype involved in trying to become Disney's next early-year March hit (much like 2010's *Alice in Wonderland*), it should have performed much, much better. A sequel is in the works, thanks to a good push from the international contribution, but it will be a struggle to keep this one alive for long.



Science-fiction

It's a genre that is tough to crack, especially if working with original material that doesn't have an established fanbase, and this year was no exception when it came to expensively-shot movies not securing a big-enough audience to truly consider itself a massive success.

Cloud Atlas is one that no one saw but everyone should see, *Oblivion* underperformed despite carrying the name Tom Cruise as its leading man, Guillermo del Toro's robots vs. monsters movie *Pacific Rim* wasn't as explosive as its bombastic action scenes, South African director Neill Blomkamp's sophomore directorial feature *Elysium* was muddled and received mixed reviews and failed to become a big hit, *Ender's Game* hardly turned into the worldwide motion picture event it promised to be, with *R.I.P.D.* and *After Earth* severely flopping, as very few people had nice words to say about either of those films.

The White House

Terrorists just can't help themselves when it comes to attacking the most iconic building in the United States. The beloved White House that houses the President was attacked not once, but twice in 2013, and each time America was lucky to have a lone-wolf hero working his butt off trying to first save the President, but then the world.

Olympus Has Fallen saw Gerard Butler, the retired Secret Service agent being the last hope for America as terrorists tortured the highest ranking government officials for nuclear codes.

White House Down had Channing Tatum protect Jamie Foxx the President as they humourously banter with one another in the direst of circumstance while everyone looks on in disbelief.

Hasn't the White House suffered, seen, and been through enough by now?



FASHION

Editor: **Cécile Borkhataria**
fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk



The Top 5 Fall/Winter Trends

These winter warmers will put you ahead in the style stakes this season

Cécile Borkhataria
Fashion editor

1. The Pink Coat

Boyfriend, trench or peacoat – a pink coat or jacket is so feminine and chic. This season, pink is the new black and every big brand from designer to high street is dishing out their version of the trend. If your budget is stretched, check out Zara for a cute wool peacoat. If you have the money, splurge on this beautiful version by Chloé.



Zara, £79.99



Chloé, €1,495.00



H and M, £7.99



Topshop, £75.00



Topshop, £8.00



Whistles, £75.00



Asos, £21.00



Abercrombie and Fitch, £28.00

2. Roll Necks

Roll necks are back and they're a simple winter piece that can be dressed up or down. What's great is that they're so easy to find for a decent price. Get one in a muted tone like nude or black and dress it up with a statement piece of jewelry.

3. Emerald Green

Emerald green is another one of the essential colours of this season. It's easy to wear in any way. Accenting your everyday wardrobe with emerald accessories, like ballet flats or even a belt, will have you rocking the trend.

4. Knit Beanies

Knit beanies are practical and affordable. An essential piece for the frosty winter days, you'll definitely wear this everyday. Accessorise it with a chunky knit scarf for bonus style points.

5. The Mini Bag

The mini-bag is a fall/winter essential-perfect to take to all the festive season parties because it's so dainty and practical. Opt for one with a strap if you don't want to carry it all night long. For an inexpensive but sleek looking version, look no further than the oasis mini cross body bag.



Oasis, £22.00

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GAMES

Linking Ages Past and Present

Eoghan Totten

Comment Editor

I remember the turbulent release period of *Pokemon Gold & Silver* back in 2001. As a gallant eight year old boy I had anticipated its arrival in April. Unfortunately the date of release coincided with the outbreak of 'Foot-&-Mouth' disease. As an Irishman, ensnared by water on all sides, the ensuing aerial trade embargo dashed and deflated my hopes. My anticipation incrementally ratcheted to breaking point between April and October. In that interval, deprived of the game, I envisaged it in all its glory in the classroom, in the playground, at the dinner table. When *Gold* finally arrived, it was every bit as satiating as I had hoped. The *Legend of Zelda: A Link Between Worlds* is the first game in twelve years to emulate those infantile impulses of nostalgia. My own copy is lying in wait under the Christmas tree back home in Ireland... Roll on December 14th!

IGN eloquently summed up the essence of the latest addition to the series.

"Not only does it pay homage to

Zelda's past glory: It reinvigorates its spark."

Trailers and reviews not only led me to relate to the a priori form of previous *Zelda* games but subtly hinted at a new and unprecedented dynamism. Its crux is said to lie in a multi-tiered, challenging puzzle platform, bolstered by colour coding

and a retro Gameboyesque top-down 2D view. As a massive supporter of Nintendo, I am glad to see them develop yet another memorable game that simultaneously exhibits traditional traits and innovation.

If you are a true *Zelda* veteran you will immediately draw parallels between *A Link Between Worlds* and

A Link to the Past, released on the SNES back in the 1990s. The Hyrule map shows many similarities with that of its predecessor. These blueprints are touched up by the impressive graphics on the 3DS platform. Other characteristics of the game also stand out. Many items can be "rented" at a given location, ensuring that the

player is well-equipped for the tasks at hand. This saves time searching around in dungeons and caves for treasure chests.

The puzzles have been awarded an increased level of intricacy. Some argue that *A Link Between Worlds* is the "best puzzle game that Nintendo has ever released". From trailers and teasers it looks like they've drawn from *Pokemon*, *Mario Kart* and even *Metroid Prime* (if it is possible to do so). Whether it will surpass that of *The Ocarina of Time* remains to be seen. Link's ability to morph into a 2-Dimensional shadow gives him the ability to merge with walls and pass enemies and obstacles with relative ease. When combined with the ability to "fast track" around the map, it is said that the game never fails to surprise: A given dungeon, plain or village will always yield a welcome surprise upon return.

If you want to reminisce about the days when your only concern was the myriad of puzzles contained in your SNES, Gameboy, Nintendo 64, to name but a few, *A Link Between Worlds* will not fail to disappoint. By honouring the Nintendo pledge to continually surprise, it will also challenge a player. To my mind this can only be a good thing.

Zelda: a link to my past



Calum Skene

Games Editor

The 3DS has sometimes suffered from its line-up, but it's always had great *Zelda* games. Starting with *Ocarina of Time 3D* which was a great remastering of the original with a Master Quest. It's a seriously good game which was enough for me to buy a 3DS. Since then there have been a great many good games for the 3DS, but *A Link Between Worlds* is truly a special game not only for the 3DS but for *Zelda* games in general.

A Link Between Worlds is somewhat of a *Link to the Past* remake, but its more than that. Yes, the world is pretty close to *Link to the Past* and some elements are the same, but it is really a new game in its own right. The game has its own charming art style and Link controls more fluidly than ever before. Just walking around this game is fun! The world being similar to a *Link to the Past* just provides many moments of nostalgia, but also causes moments of surprise when things are different. It's a modern top down *Zelda* and this is a really great thing. One stand out thing about this game is the music. It's a beautiful sounding

score that draws on the soundtrack to a *Link to the Past* and will make you feel so entranced by the magic of *Zelda*. Nintendo has had success with the *New Super Mario Bros* games and I feel that this *Zelda* is akin to that. The overall feeling of a *Zelda* game is there but it is a different experience to play. Players of the *Ocarina of Time* remake will enjoy this just as much or even more!

There are some new features unique to this game that really make it stand out. The 3D provides depth and is a welcome but not necessary feature.

This game brings back the feeling of the older games in which you must discover for yourself instead of being led. Dungeons can now be done in pretty much whatever order you want, with the items you need not being obtained throughout the game but rented from a cute, and nowhere near as annoying as Tingle, character named Raviio. Shortly into the game you have access to all weapons and the game allows you to decide which items you want to rent. At first I really liked this feature, and as I had amassed a small fortune in Rupees decided to

invest in the whole lot, but then I died. Shortly after my death Raviio's assistant came and took my weapons back to the shop, meaning I had to travel back to the shop to rent the items again. This can get annoying if you find a particular boss hard meaning you die and need to repeatedly go to the shop to rent the items you want, but on the whole the extra freedom you have enables you to enjoy and explore the game more as you follow no set path. The freedom to do the dungeons in any order is a feature I wish to see in the future in other *Zelda* games, but

maybe refined a little. The travelling required is made better by a handy Witch who will take you around on a magic broom to various Weather Vanes you have discovered, and is a bit like the teleportation from other *Zelda* games. Another new feature is the ability to merge into walls and move around. Once you get used to this (I got stuck for ages because I forgot I could do this) it makes the game so much fun. The dungeon puzzles are the best they have been in ages and this is largely due to the merge ability. If I were to play a *Link to the Past* again, something this game really makes you want to do, I would feel sad that the merge ability is not there as its already become one of my favourite game mechanics, not just in *Zelda*.

A Link Between Worlds isn't just a great 3DS game, it's a great game and shouldn't be missed by any *Zelda* fan. I strongly believe this game should be up there with other Franchise favourites like *Ocarina of Time* and *Windwaker*. The game is a refreshing new *Zelda* experience after all the remakes Nintendo has done. With the 3DS virtual console having *Oracle of Ages* and *Seasons* you can now get the majority of 2D *Zelda* games on the 3DS system, and I highly recommend you pick up this one!

A bright outlook for Zelda's future



Editor: Maximilian Eggl, Calum Skene, Imran Rashid
games.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Steamy love for PC Gaming

Maximilian Eggl wants to give credit to where its due

Recently a lot of console love has been going round in the game section. With the releases of the PS4 and Xbox One, the reactionary Wii U article, I just felt that one big part of gaming, namely PC gaming was being a bit left out. Therefore I wanted to bring it back into the spotlight by describing my love for one of the big champions of PC's gaming, Steam.

For all you unlucky ones who don't know what steam is, imagine an amazon just for games. However instead of actual physical goods, you only get the software. Therefore once you buy the game you can immediately download it. Furthermore once you buy a game it stays in your inventory forever, meaning that you can never misplace it.

Now before I gush on about this absolutely wonderful service, I'll run through all the negatives so you guys don't think I tried to deceive you. Firstly, the thing that caused so much pain to the Xbox One, DRM, which means that you cannot exchange games with friends and/or sell them on, is impossible with steam games. However to be perfectly honest, this was almost always so on PC and therefore something that most PC gamers are used to. This will be only



a concern for you console gamers out there. Secondly if anything goes wrong, there is no helpline telephone number. This means if somehow you are locked out of your account, play your game etc. you are pretty much screwed. You have to email Valve

(the developers of steam) and wait for a reply (which can take anywhere between a few hours to several days), which may or may not be helpful. The last and absolutely worst thing is the steam sales. Coming around every other month, the offer great games

at incredible prices. These sales also come at a time when I think I am doing quite well in terms of finances, boom the sale comes along and after having bought about 5 games I am broke yet again.

However these steam sales are also one of the best things about this online store. This way you can get some of the best games ever at super low prices. In fact for the last sale (which ended on tuesday) I managed to get the Skyrim legendary edition for 10 pounds!! If I walked into a store this would be possible in the same capacity. In store, the number of games that you can buy is limited by the demand and actual physical size of the building, while steam is limited only by its server size. Therefore most games that you can think of will be available, that would have been physically unavailable for years. Another positive thing that steam does is its support of multiple operating systems. Regardless if you play on Windows, Mac OS or Linux steam is available on your platform as well as offering games for you. Apart from Blizzard no major game studio or distributor really does this to such an extent. The last thing I want to mention, is related to my

carelessness. In my past when games still were on CD's and you needed a game key to install it, I would frequently either lose the CD, little booklet with the game key, case which would have the game key or any combination of these three. This would mean that if I would want to reinstall the game, I would have to go on a massive treasure hunt to find the missing piece, with failure meaning I would have to re-buy the game if I wanted it really play it. With steams system, once you have bought a game it is in your inventory indefinitely and you can download it as many times as you want. This has just made my life so much easier, and means that for each individual game I do not need to put in a new game CD. There are so many more great things about steam, e.g. achievement systems, bundles, auto-updates of games and integration with demos.

Steam is one of the best things that has happened to gaming for a while, I mean its one the biggest success stories of the gaming industry at the current time. Steam is a great service to be part for even if you are not the biggest gamer, and furthermore its free! For all the things you get, why would you not sign up???

Imran Reviews: Games of the Century

Kingdom Rushing to the frontier

by Imran Rashid

Clicking your way to cookies

For those who loved the original Kingdom Rush are really in for a treat with the new Kingdom Rush Frontiers available on android, apple, and now Armorgames. This game employs the same incredibly polished Tower Defence gameplay, artstyle, and presentation as its prequel with new elements that enhance the gameplay.

Frontiers makes some changes in the deeper elements of the gameplay. The enemies are a lot more varied and some of the enemy bosses can pave their own paths through the map forcing you to completely rethink the course of strategy defence. The four basic tower defences still remain the same as in the prequel but the tower upgrades have been completely revamped with some really cool towers that can for example raise undead minions from enemy corpses and use totems to dispel enemy magic all to allow for a more varied strategy.

But it's the really subtle additions that leave the prints of an artist. The background environment for almost every map is interactive so you can find

yourself poking camels in the desert and explode them if you poke them enough. There are side-missions and achievements in the game that relate to the environment interactions such as helping Indiana Jones escape a temple in a jungle. Sometimes the creatures that live on the map can aide you in battle.

Frontiers retains the much loved Heroes addition from the prequel but with a wider range of Heroes to aid you in battle. Unfortunately, many of the heroes are only available upon purchasing them with real money however the game can be completed fine without purchasing additional heroes. Hero upgrades are more refined than the prequel. The longer the Hero battles, the more he or she upgrades until the next level is reached. Higher levels correspond to increased attack power as well as other bonus upgrades specific to the hero.

Kingdom Rush Frontiers was released on the 26th September 2013 and can be bought for under £3.00 on iTunes and Apple store.



Cookie Clicker is the highly addictive game with the goal of producing an infinite number of cookies! Yup – it's a game that never ends as much as it never lets you go.

To make a cookie is simple. Just click the giant cookie on the screen.

Cookies are the currency of the game. With enough cookies you can buy a grandma to bake cookies for you. Sell a grandma, oh you horrible person! and unlock an achievement for doing the wrong thing!

With a lot more cookies you can buy even more powerful cookie producing devices that further accelerate your cookie producing power including a time machine that will go back in time to retrieve all the cookies in the past.

Unfortunately I fell victim to this game some months ago and it was getting to the point where I would leave CookieClicker on my laptop all night (turning off the hibernation settings) and sporadically emerging from slumber to buy upgrades.

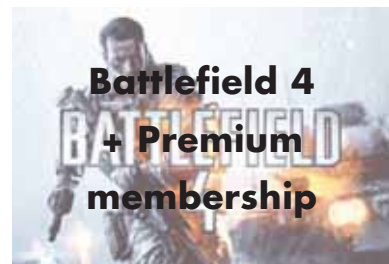
If you don't cherish your sanity enough to even think of playing this game, below are a list of remedies to CookieClickerAddiction:

1. Suicide
"Kill me. If you've ever been my friend, kill me."
- James Dashner, The Death Cure.
2. Find another addictive game/music/hobby out there!
3. Hack the game. This is what I did. I followed instructions on a Youtube video that gave me pretty much enough cookies to unlock all the current achievements – although more achievements are added as its makers. Surprisingly CookieClicker clocked on to the hack and gave me the "bad cookie" award.

The dark game, this absolutely dastardly invention of a clearly insane mind, can be found on the link <http://orteil.dashnet.org/cookieclicker/> which you obviously are not going to play anyway, coz you have a life an all right?

Endless dosh, what would you want?

Maximilian Eggl knows Santa's checking his list, doing it twice!



I have been playing shooter games forever, from Star Wars Battlefront 2 and Halo all the way to Counterstrike and Call of duty. The battlefield series has always interested me, and I almost splashed out for Battlefield 3. However I either never seemed to have the money or time and therefore my time to play this seemingly awesome game had passed. Yet with the release of Battlefield 4, the next instalment in this series, major steps forward seem to have been taken and an improvement of an already good game. With levolution, updated graphics and generally sick maps, this looks like a shooter I would really enjoy, but at a combined value of £80, this bundle is quite an investment. If I had enough money, this would be first thing I would buy, on the other hand you never know might actually just get this game if I save up enough!



If I had more money than sense, this would be the gaming laptop I would go for. Alienware is known to be one of the best manufacturers of gaming laptops (if a bit on the pricey side), and use some of the best ingredients for their products. Costing about £4,000, the Alienware 18 includes a full 1080p 18" screen, 2 Nvidia GTX 780M (one of the best GPU's on the market at the moment, 32GB of RAM, the list just goes on. Everything that is considered the best on the market. Every game you could think of, this game could run it very comfortable on the ultra graphics settings and not drop below 60 frames per second. Using the Alienware 18 would make playing any game an absolutely great experience. Also, that lighting doesn't look half bad, now does it!



I myself am quite an avid strategy gamer. Being the first genre of games I really played intensively, I have gone through all kinds of variations on the tried and tested approach. Therefore this game, which has been on my steam wish list for quite a long time, seems like exactly the kind of game I would enjoy. However for 40 (at some points actually 80) pounds, I find this would be a bit much to spend on an unknown quantity regardless of its apparent epicness. Furthermore at the moment it is in Beta, meaning it could be buggy. The risk is just too high that I'm throwing a significant amount of money down the drain for me to really warrant purchasing it. However if money was not an issue, this would be one of the games I would totally go for.



Audio is a very important aspect of gaming. In fact the quality of your headset can be the deciding factor between you hearing your opponents footsteps and killing him, or him sneaking up on you and knifing you! This is indeed true for shooters and other online games, however even for other single-players games, the atmosphere that excellent quality music and sound is paramount to a great gaming experience. For my choice of Headset I go for the A50s, which are 300 pounds a pop, but make up for the price impressively. Dolby 7.1 surround sound and wireless just make these puppies a joy to use, and should make any audiophile drool. Also they not just limited gaming, and make great general use headphones. So if I was crapping gold, this is one of the first things i would buy!



If I had an absolutely enormous amount of money, and really couldn't care less, I would buy about a thousand CS:GO keys. A quick explanation of what they are: if you play a round on CounterStrike there is a random chance that you are assigned a box of loot, which you can only open if you buy a key. Within these boxes they have some absolutely epic decals and skins for some of your most common guns. They do not add anything to the game play, except for the visuals of your gun change, which if you are dominating make you feel that extra bit more like a badass. However at 1.50 a pop, which relatively low chance of actually getting what you want, the risk versus reward is way to high. Yet if I really couldn't care less, I would just buy a boatload of these things

Calum Skene editors wishing upon a gaming star

Super Mario 3D World



As a massive fan of Super Mario 3D land for the 3DS and of all other 3D Mario games I have been super excited about Super Mario 3D world. A game which combines all the fun of 3D Mario but in stunning HD and, for the first time, multiplayer. Super Mario 3D world for the Wii U lets you play up to 4 people multiplayer with Mario, Luigi, Toad, and Princess Peach (and her umbrella) as playable characters. I for one am super excited to play as Princess Peach. A great Present for any holiday season.

Pikmin 3



I missed this title when it came out earlier this year and Christmas is a good time to pick it up. Offering the same fun as Pikmin 1 and 2 all those years ago but in HD and with the added functionality of the Wii U gamepad this is a game to get excited about! Whether you have played the previous games in the series or not I think this game has a lot to offer and I hope that it delivers. It will be interesting to see how my experiences of Captain Olimar and his Pikmin differs now that I am older.

Batman Arkham Origins



The combat system in the earlier games has ensured that this game has a special place in my heart. After honing my skills in Batman Arkham Asylum and perfecting my style in Arkham City I am definitely ready for the next title in this series. More story, more challenges, more Batman lore. This is a great success in super hero games. I love Batman, DC comics and these games are awesome! Taking all in consideration I may even buy this game regardless of how much money I have!

Assissins Creed Black Flag



I am hoping that this game is like the 4th Pirates of the Caribbean movie and so it will make me excited about this franchise again. After loving the first game and then experiencing the magic that is Assassins Creed 2 I felt let down by the rest of the series. I wish that this game brings the series back to the excitement I had when playing 2. I want more days spent jumping over rooftops and finding hidden feathers. I'll have to wait and see if this game offers more than just Pirates.

PS4



If I were to get another console this is what I'd go with. After missing out on the Playstation 3 maybe it's time to get back in on their list of exclusives. The store should be offering the PS3 games I missed out on plus indie games and other goodies. Playstation Plus is also the next best thing to free online multiplayer. In addition to my Wii U and computer the PS4 would open up some interesting new gaming options. It would also function as a great media center with Twitch, Netflix and a blu-ray player.



What would your tech editors d

Maximilian Eggl, totally needs a Roomba to clean up after him #yoloswag

iPhone 5S



Considering how much of an apple fan I am, I think this is a bit of an obvious one. At the moment I have an iPhone 5, and I don't see the 5S as enough of an upgrade to pay out that much money. I mean sure the 64-bit processor and the fingerprint scanner are all really nice, but do I want to pay upward of £500 for it? I'd rather wait for the 6, and get some real improvement for my money. However if the dough was not an issue, I could easily imagine myself going for the new iPhone. Now, which colour? Should I go for the blingy gold?

Mat Charger



Sometimes I get really tired of chargers, with all the wires and plugs. Furthermore with our modern day smartphones, you need to charge your telephone everyday and/or bring chargers with you if you are a power user and want your phone to last the entire day. Therefore if I had unlimited cash, I would totally go for one of those charger mats. Basically you throw a case around your phone, plug in the mat, lay your phone on the mat and voila it will charge. This just seems the ultimate convenience for me, as it doesn't look half bad and the concept is just so cool, how could I not consider it?

Hoodie with Earphones



A hoodie with built in earphones, that even exists, I hear you say? Yes, and it has been my dream to wear one of these for a long time now. Perfectly machine washable, I consider these jumpers the height of human invention. Imagine how stealthy you just plug one of those cords into your ear and listen to music. No one would suspect anything! Ok yes you would a bit weird, but well what the heck. However at £60-80, the price tag is a bit too much for what I get considering that I can only use these earphones for 3 (maybe 4) days max before they have to be washed, which means that 3 days out of the week I have no earphones.

Super Fast Internet



Right now I have a 30Mb connection for my home, which considering my needs is more than enough. However once I starting streaming 1440p youtube videos, downloading games on steam and trying to browse the internet on my iPad, sometime I do see that it gets a bit slow. However if I had too much money, I would totally go for the maximum, in fact I would probably would go for the business deals, which give you an insane amount of speed (which can go up to one 1Tb). With this I would never have to worry about downloading a movie on iTunes!

Roomba



As a student I am kinda lazy. Yes its true once in a while I don't vacuum my room, and to be really honest am do not feel very guilty about it. However if I had a Roomba, the handy cleaning robot, I would never have to worry about vacuuming. However at £200-300 for the best model, it is quite outside my rather meagre means. Yet every day I imagine, how great it would be to just kick back and see that little robot whizzing around. Now all I need is a robot that does my laundry as well, hmm....

Osama Awara, going for the extravagantly amazing tech

Samsung KN55S9C OLED TV



If you've ever thought that HD pictures were not enough, fear no more, the Samsung OLED TV that uses organic self-emitting pixels would blow your mind away this Christmas giving you the best quality, surpassing even the best LCD TVs. This TV doesn't come cheap, expect to be paying an average price of nine grand, however if you consider the price per pixel it almost makes it worth it!

Archipod



This little beauty beats your average shed, that's for sure, if you fancy chilling in your garden this Christmas but want to keep warm in this cosy pod with its inbuilt fiberglass insulation you wont be disappointed. True, this is not exactly what I would call a 'piece of tech' but imagine setting up your gaming rig in here and playing Battlefield 4 on a winter's night. The cozy atmosphere would just completely add to your skill

Marchi Mobile



Yes...this luxury truck/hippie van is more expensive than my home and your home put together. The Marchi Mobile vehicle has everything you need this Christmas all in one, with a master bedroom, fireplace, 40 inch TV and a huge living room to name a few. You could probably have your Christmas tree and presents and even throw your after party in this beast. This is pretty much the definition of travelling in style!

Tron Motorcycle



The TRON bike is one of those vehicles you'll see on the street and ponder upon its street legality. This bike sure does look impressive despite not having the loud throaty roar of a Harley Davidson, due to its whisper quite technology. If you don't like the sound of your internal combustion engine, this is probably the smoothest ride you can have this Christmas, especially with the TRON replica light illuminations to give you that night glow and make you look like you've literally shot out of the movie screens.

Batcave Movie Theatre



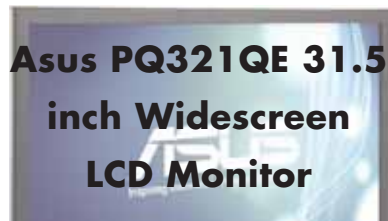
We all know how Bruce Wayne dines in style from his Stately Wayne Manor, but where does he watch movies? In his bat-cave of course, and now theatre designer Elite Home Theatre seating is offering the chance to share the same experience for a staggering \$2 million but would sure be worth it if you have the spare cash this Christmas especially when it t's the season... where the best movies come out on TV.



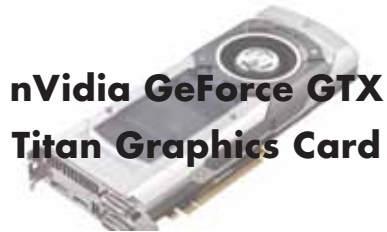
o, if they were crapping money

Yong Wen Chua, fancy shmancy yet completely down-to-earth

Every year, as Christmas nears, I would like to think that I have some really rich and wealthy relative who is a Lord somewhere, perhaps some Lord of the Silicon. I would then write up a list of five items I would really like to have and then present it to them, knowing that I would probably get almost all of the items on the list that very Christmas. So this year, I am going to do the same. To help those busy Lords out, I'm going to list the prices of the items in my list, just to show them how little it would cost them. Of course, because they are so busy, I would like to help them out by including the prices from Amazon UK too, so that they could just click those "1-click order" buttons and send them my way.



Well, isn't this a beauty: this 31.5 inch TV sitting on a desk is capable of displaying a resolution of 3840 by 2160 pixels (4K) is simply a marvel. It is also the first of its kind for the consumer market. Anandtech calls this a display that has "left [them] in constant awe over how incredible it was to use on a day-to-day basis". Definitely a must have when trying to write all those thousand lines C++ code projects. Those pesky missing semicolons will now be displayed in glorious 4K.



Of course, if you have such a gorgeous display, you also need something really good to drive the display. Always looking for the best, the new nVidia flagship would just about suffice. Once again, because I am too poor to actually get one of these gems, I would have to turn to Anandtech who calls this graphics card is "simply in a league of its own right now, reaching levels of performance no other single-GPU card can touch".



When you've got a setup as gorgeous as mine (eventually, after Christmas!), you've got to capture the moment with a good camera so that you can broadcast it to the world via Facebook, Twitter, and the likes! What better way than to use the Sony NEX7 camera. It's a mirrorless camera that allows for interchangeable lens. It's one of those compact DSLR cameras that you could potentially fit into a small bag.



I write lots of code, perhaps GB worth of code on my computer (don't even ask how many lines of code there are). Of course I would need something to store those tons of code -- and the 960 GB SSD is the best that money can buy right now! With a cost of nearly £0.60 per GB, the SSD prices have never been any lower for this reliable medium.



Finally, when writing code, I would like to immerse myself in the world of digital music. I hate wires getting in the way, and the Ultimate Ears (UE) 9000 headphones is probably the best bluetooth headphones you can get out there on the market. The noise cancellation and audio profile on this thing might not be perfect, but it is one of the most expensive right now.

Felix Technology wishes you a **long** and **fruitful** holiday! Let us know if you receive any **awesome presents** (and **write a review** or two)!



CONFUSED ABOUT YOUR FUTURE?

10 Minutes With creates short and informative video interviews to provide students with a wealth of career guidance. Upon signing up and completing a profile, students are provided with unique opportunities within established companies across Europe and Asia. The industries leaders are looking for fresh engineering and business talent across the country - sign up, complete your profile, and let them find you.

www.10MinutesWith.com

10 Minutes with...



Hungry for gift ideas?

Felix Food is on hand to help with your Secret Santa (under £5)



PREZZYBOX.COM

DIY Drinking Straws

Being engineers, scientists and medics, we at Imperial should have quite good problem solving skills, yet be creative at the same time. Using what we have learnt in lectures to twist and turn this set of straws and create loads of crazy shapes will be quite interesting in any situation! There are 21 pieces in total so it will keep you entertained after the end of term when you suffer from coursework withdrawal symptoms.

This could be more fun if you arrive at the party and have a few packs to hand - not only is it a great game to play with everyone, but also, you can probably build a network to drink from two glasses at the same time! Who needs mixers anyway?



PREZZYBOX.COM

Ice Tankard

Let's be honest, it's a problem we face every day, not just at Christmas: taking cold drinks out of the fridge. To the standard of most people, room temperature is not exactly ideal for 'best served cold'. Ice cubes might do the job for half an hour, but soon it might make your coke tastes like it's from a dispenser machine in the JCR.

This ice tankard has a sealed outer wall that is filled with freezable liquid, so the product is portable and 'cool'. Just freeze the mug and the liquid will keep your drink cold without the need for ice! The only thing we can pick on is that it can only hold 400ml - that's not even a pint!



FIREBOX.COM

Self Stir Mug

This gift is for two types of people: avid tea/coffee drinkers and people who are plain lazy! Let's be honest, washing up a teaspoon can be quite an effort sometimes, or worse, it could leave stains on shiny silverware/steelware.

This mug could potentially change the world for the better, you only need to flick the switch and the mug stirs away, creating a tea vortex. The switch is ergonomically located at the top of handle, so there really is no excuse for an imperfect cup of hot drink. Just need to remember to buy the batteries, and oh, you can't put it in a dishwasher - so it's not completely lazy-proof.



FLUFFYPUFFPUFFS.COM

Gourmet Marshmallows

Marshmallows are a must for any barbecues. Sadly it is way too cold to have one in December. Just to remind you and your friends of that toasty feeling, why not try these gourmet marshmallows? London-based start up Fluffy Puff Puffs makes them with unusual flavour combinations, like key lime pie, caramel slice and even Oreos.

A new flavour has recently been added to the store - a Christmassy one with rum and dried fruit Christmas pie. These mallows have no added preservatives so that even suits those who like natural ingredients! Available online and some food markets at the weekend!

Celebrate Christmas at Imperial

The end of term is upon us and it's time to celebrate what we have achieved this term and year. Want a traditional Christmas meal but feel lazy and don't want to spend a fortune? There is so much to try, even at Imperial!

FiveSixEight

FiveSixEight is serving Christmas dinner at a bargain price of £6.50 next Tuesday and Thursday. It's got all you can expect - roast turkey, roast potatoes, pigs in blankets and

the usual vegetables. You even get a free cracker - so enjoy it with a couple of friends or even just yourself, but that will be a bit boring.

On a slightly different subject, Mushroom, Tomato and Basil has won out on the pizza poll and will be available all week until the end of term!

Eastside Bar

Want something more substantial? The Eastside bar is serving a three course dinner at £13.95 - starting with

salmon, turkey roast with port and even Christmas pudding. They even provide an alternate dessert - chocolate fondant! If only we can have both... Available every day until 20 December. Booking advised for large groups.

College Cafe

Gingerbread latte is available in College Cafe and it tastes just about as good as Costa's. And it's just £1.99 for a large one (student price)!

INTO THE FUTURE



NATURAL MACHINES

Sometimes we think that a customised gift is a lot more personal - be it a named memory stick or a hand-drawn Christmas card. It might sound like something from Star Trek, but how about printing food? NASA has invested USD\$125,000 into a project looking into this, but you don't need to be an astronaut to try this cutting-edge food. Although the idea might not sound appetising, a Barcelona startup is now working on a machine that can sit comfortably in your kitchen. The idea is similar to a 3D printer you may find in the lab, raw ingredients are made into paste form and the dish is built layer by layer. The device, called Foodini, will sport up to six capsules so, in theory, dishes with six ingredients can be 'manufactured'. The prototype has shown massive potential - custom

shaped chocolate, cakes and even ravioli are literally a few clicks away. The most impressive food it has made so far is a bean cheeseburger - again, printing layer by layer, ingredients by ingredient, and then into the oven to cook.

The idea behind this is to encourage more healthy home eating. The device gives a chance for users to know what exactly is in the food they are about to eat. And since we are living in the 21st century, the device is even cloud connected, making recipe sharing and instagramming that much easier. This might sound a bit like a gimmick, but the machine is due to be on the market in the next few years at around €1000. So still slightly cheaper than the cheapest MacBook Air, would you consider it?

On #FelixFood this week



A giant gingerbread castle from our very own Comment Editor, Tess Davey.



@feliximperial

FelixImperial

CAREERS

Spoilt for Choice? How to decide

The Careers Service
Imperial College London

If you find yourself in the position of having more than one job offer give yourself a pat on the back. Well done! However, it can be surprisingly hard to decide which one to accept

Remember that different factors are important for different individuals. Make sure you have sufficient information when trying to make up your mind. You can ask prospective employers for both more information and more time to decide.

The list below is an attempt to cover the factors you might consider when making your decision, but it is not exhaustive. Your decision will be uniquely your own. Remember that your first job is simply that, and not a life-sentence. However an unwise decision can mean a few very difficult months.

Money, hugely important but...

When you have debts to pay off, this seems like a big factor. However, remember that salary may rise quite quickly in the first couple of years of employment. Then there may be bonuses, and other benefits to consider. Do not attach too much significance to the starting salary. Remember also that salary progression may be much faster in some areas of employment than in others.

Nonstop training

Think about the training opportunities each job will provide. In today's relatively fluid job market, it is more important than ever to take responsibility for your own career development. Being in a good position to keep learning and developing skills is a great advantage, whether you are hoping for progression or for a change of career direction later on. If formal study is required, make sure the issue of study leave and fee payment is clear.

The daily grind

Do you know enough about what you will actually be doing day-to-day in the job? Will it provide enough variety and intellectual challenge? Is the level of responsibility about right, and how soon will that responsibility come? Is the job likely to be pressured, with lots of deadlines, and are you likely to enjoy that? Will you be essentially office based, out on site, meeting with clients and customers or working with other parts of the organisation?

What about the future?

Think about the state of health of the prospective employer and/or its sector – is it expanding or contracting? Is the company profitable or does the organisation have a good reputation? In an uncertain world, it may be better if a job offers a range of career development options, rather than leading into a narrow field. How marketable are you likely to be after two years' experience?



Hmmm, this might take a while... Should you go for the sweetest or the toughest? WNYC.ORG

Little or large?

Advantages of larger employers can include the following: more training on offer, internal moves are possible, more recent graduates around so better support/social life. However, in a larger firm you may feel your contribution is not significant, you might get "stuck" in a department and you might struggle with bureaucratic systems. On the other hand, in a smaller organisation it may be possible to gain a responsible position or be "making a difference" more quickly. There may be the opportunity for wider ranging experience and the organisation may be less bureaucratic. On the negative side, there may be less opportunity for formal training, the peer group may be small leading to feelings of isolation, and there may be little chance of internal moves.

Comfort factors

You should consider whether the job may conflict with your values. Do you admire the products or services of this employer? Does its environmental stance cause you concern? Are there other ethical issues? You won't be happy working somewhere if there's a fundamental misalignment here.

Shirt & Ties or T-shirts & Jeans

This may not be easy to define, but it includes things like whether or not the organisation is static, formal and rigid or fluid, informal and embraces change. Is there a very clear hierarchy within the organisation? Who would you be reporting to and where do they fit within the structure. When you visited the organisation what was the level of formality, how did people meet and greet each other. Think about the other employees you have already met. If you liked them, you would probably be quite happy working with them.

Nine to Five?

Many employers these days talk about the "work/life" balance which is quite important to many graduates. However, in some organisations there can be a 'long-hours' culture with lots of unofficial overtime and weekend work. Does the organisation encourage working from home? Will you have a set location or desk or is 'hot desking' the norm? What about travelling away from home? Is this something that you will do

regularly and if so what proportion of your day/week/month will be away? Consider what your priorities are. Is it important for you to maintain regular social, sporting or relationship commitments outside of work and how will the job impact on this?

Location, Location, Location

Think about your journey to work, the cost of living in the area and any likely advantages or disadvantages of the location. House prices and the cost of renting might have an impact on your decision. Can you still get access to the things that are important to you, culture, entertainment, friends and family? Satisfy yourself that you will be able to afford to live within a reasonable distance of the job and that you are likely to be happy doing so.



Hopefully these ideas will help you to evaluate any offers that you receive and make a well informed choice. The important thing is to keep your employer contacts informed. Do not just accept everything and think that you can make a decision later. Reneging on job offers is very definitely frowned upon by recruiters and, as the graduate recruitment market is a surprisingly close knit community where people do actually meet and talk with each other, you could get a bad reputation very quickly by reneging. It is much better to be honest and open and let all concerned know that you might like some more time to make a decision. Asking for a week or perhaps two is reasonable but don't expect a company to keep a job offer open for much longer than that. Remember that every offer you are hanging on to is an offer that someone else could benefit from. If you need help making your decision talk it through with others, friends, family, you can also use your careers consultant at College as a useful sounding board. But if you do discuss with others remember the final decision must be yours!

Careers Events

Apply via Jobs Live unless stated

Workshop
9 December, 12:30 – 14:00
Preparing For Assessment Centres - Presentation Skills

Workshop
10 December, 12:30 – 14:00
Preparing for Assessment Centres – In-Tray / E-tray Exercises

Seminar
10 December, 16:15 – 17:15
Assessment Centres

Workshop
11 December, 12:30 – 14:00
Group Mock Interview

Seminar
11 December, 16:15 – 17:15
CV

Workshop
12 December, 12:30 – 14:00
Preparing For Assessment Centres - Group Activities

Seminar
12 December, 16:15 – 17:15
Interviews

Seminar
13 December, 12:30 – 13:30
Applying for Postgraduate Study



HANGMAN

hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk



This Week In The Past

The Historian
Hangman Contributor



2004 - The Civil Partnerships Act comes into force allowing people to be homophobic in a socially acceptable manner for another 10 years.

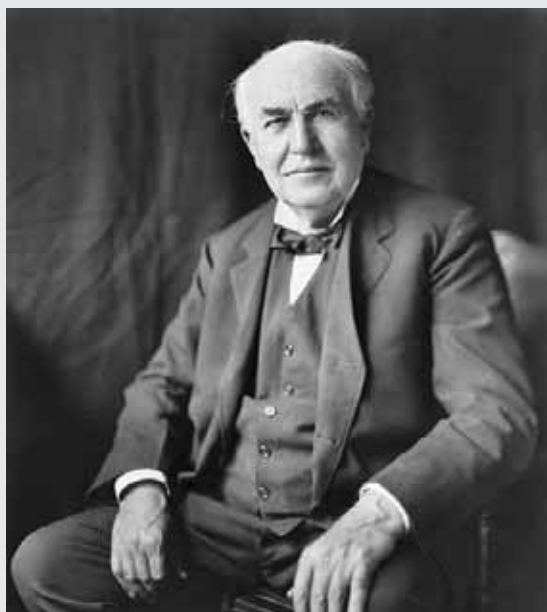
1978 - The Soviet Union signs a highly suggestive "Friendship Treaty" with Afghanistan if you know what I mean ;)

1958 - The Preston by-pass opens meaning no one has to forcibly suffer Preston ever again.

1877 - Thomas Edison creates on the earliest recordings of the human when he sings "Mary had a little lamb". The single opens at #1 in the US charts and stays there for a total of 126 weeks.

1697 - St Paul's Cathedral opens and subsequently goes on to feature in numerous skylines of London as one of Britain's best-loved silhouettes

1676 - The Battle of Lund sees a Danish Army engage a Swedish Army which ends in a long and happy marriage the likes of which you just don't see anymore these days.



The front cover to Thomas Edison's first Album "Lovin' DC" released to coincide with his promotion of direct current. It featured such classics "One Direction (No Alternative)" and "Planning (For Laptops)" as well, of course, as the #1 hit "Mary Had a Little Lamb".

"DO YOU HAVE ALL THE NEWS? Email hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk AND GIVE IT BACK."

"Do you feel lucky, punk? Email hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk and find out!"

EDITORIALISTMAS

The Hangman
Hangman Editor



North Pole - As the year draws to a close, this editor gives his advice on the festive season.

Drink. Any moment spent without an alcoholic beverage in your possession is an insult to the baby Jesus and everything Christmas stands for.

Indeed, it is this writer's belief that any kind of effort made over Christmas should be entirely focussed on the acquisition and consumption of inebriative substances. Which leads nicely onto the second piece of advice...

...Ignore your family and loved ones. Those guys have held you back all year. They take up time, money and love that would have been more usefully spent on yourself. Christmas, as I shouldn't need to remind you, is all about the individual.

In fact, instead of buying presents

and cards for others you should buy yourself copious gifts, have them sent to your home address and make your family watch as you unwrap present after present.

Finally, don't forget to spend the whole time complaining about the commercialisation of Christmas, because it will fascinate everyone you see.

So, forget going to family gatherings; treat yourself; maintain a blood-alcohol content of at least 0.2% because Christmas is all around.

Mushroom Pizza Elected

Timothy McSweeney
Hangman Contributor

The vote this week to elect a new food representative to the FiveSixEight has returned the Mushroom, Tomato and Basil Pizza as the new Vice-President (Hot Foods). After a closely fought battle with the Deluxe Spicy pizza, Mushroom won out with by a slim 2% margin.

The campaigning was fierce from both sides and often threatened to descend into vitriolic name-calling. However, after initial concerns over whether the election would be "free and fair", the result was accepted by all involved.

Whilst both the Spicy Deluxe and the Mushroom, Tomato and Basil were always considered the front runners, the Pizza Union put in an unusually strong showing - garnering 23% of the vote. It has been speculated that its strong stance on immigration was instrumental in its gaining a large percentage of the vote.

It was a disappointing showing for the Napoletana, proving once again that College is unprepared for egg on pizza.

Imperial College Union announces Summer Ball for next 75 years



Timothy McSweeney
Hangman Contributor

This week Imperial College Union announced its plans for the next 75 Summer Balls, until Imperial finalises its merger with the other London universities. The most surprising part of the announcement was the change from the usual Ball theme of the evenings, with a new 'Hunger Games' style system proposed. Rather than listening to a band that was nearly famous 5 years ago, undergraduates will be forced to fight to the death with the ultimate prize of a 1st class degree and their

lives. Two tributes will be reaped from each Department, with training provided by the senior tutors. The safe students will be able to watch the games, with the business school already starting the necessary paperwork to be a registered bookie in time for the first event. The location for the first games is rumoured to be Silwood Park, where the presence of a nuclear reactor is expected to add a certain spice to the occasion. An anonymous Union source told Hangman "Imperial has over 40 departments, so with all 80 tributes we'll have almost doubled the attendance figures from last year. Heck with the insider knowledge of the location we might even turn a profit on it!"

People Taking Lift To Gym Definitely Got The Right Idea

The Hangman
Hangman Editor

A new study has this week confirmed that those who take the lift to the Ethos gym have definitely understood the whole gym idea.

The survey conducted by researchers in the Faculty of Medicine conclusively showed that all those who had decided that the best way to get fit was to take the lift all the way to gym had definitely understood the basic principles of exercise.

"Clearly these people have truly understood the idea behind going to a place full of exercise aids" said one researcher.

"In fact, not only have they understood the concept, they have also happened upon the most efficient way to conserve their energy prior to exercise" he continued.

"By avoiding taking the stairs to the second/third floors, these innovators are saving their energy for that extra push on the treadmill".

The study was also able to successfully

show that spending lots of time doing weights is definitely well worth it because you are "certainly going to be faced with many scenarios in which all that extra muscle will come in handy".

The university has put plans into motion to remove the stairs in Ethos altogether on the grounds that people might do exercise in a non-exercise designated area.

At press time, the researchers were beginning investigations into whether those that smoke and also exercise regularly are onto something.

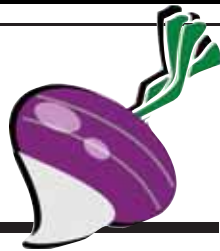


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HANGMAN

the turnip

Hangman's Finest College News Source



Banks Figure It's About Time For Next Misdemeanor Get Fined For Rate-Rigging

After a prolonged period of months in which they had neither fucked over the economy nor significantly defrauded anyone, the banks this week decided that they would get themselves fined £1.4 billion for forming illegal cartels to rig interest rates.

A spokesman for Barclays said "We felt the time was ripe for another banking scandal".

"At Barclays, we are committed to being involved in a new outrageous revelation on an annual basis" he continued.

"In fact, we feel this is the banks greatest misdemeanor since playing a major role in the 2008 financial crisis."

The scam, which essentially involved several banks agreeing not to change their interest rates and thereby protect



Interests rates being directly manipulated by insidious banks. Photo Credit: investopedia.com

their own obscenely vast assests, came nearly a full year since the last scandal.

The Royal Bank of Scotland, not one to miss out on a major banking crisis, again played a key role in the cartel. This time however, they got fined. Although since the bank is publically owned, it seems as if they cheekily got the public to pay for this one too.

Thankfully, the two banks who faced the biggest fines - Barclays and UBS - grassed on their fellow banks and thus avoided fining at all.

CRACKER CONTENTS BEST PRESENT MAN WILL GET THIS YEAR



Photo Credit: Adam Bronkhorst

Farah Announces Marriage Going Well

"I Love My Wife"



Mo Farah does his famous pro-marriage celebration - the Mobot. Picture Credit: The Times

Following the news that Tom Daley is no longer single, Mo Farah has confirmed that his marriage is still "going swimmingly".

The news comes much to the chagrin of Farah's many admirers who had secretly hoped his 2010 marriage to Tania Nell was on the ropes.

"Since I found out Daley's taken, I was hoping Mo's marriage had deteriorated" said one secret admirer.

"I mean there's always Greg Rutherford, but he's from Milton Keynes, so he's probably really boring"

"Are there no single 2012 GBR medallists left?"



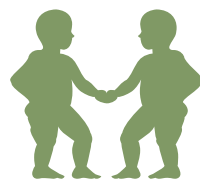
ARIES

This week you buy Christmas dinner at the Union, after being convinced by the convincing blogs by the Union DPFs and President. Little do you know, much like Polari, this is a secret signal to the Union hack subculture who approach you with hopes of discussing Council papers.



TAURUS

SO THIS WEEK. WOW! MUCH AMAZE. VERY GOOD TIME. WHY CAGE? SO HUNGRY. MUCH MOON SHINES. SO TRANSFORM. VERY RAGE. MUCH HOWL. NICE WOLF.



GEMINI

This week you are praised by a computer generated voice every 15 minutes. After the first five days of basking in the adulterated worship you decide to take it one step further and you connect your computer to twitter and apply a pseudo-markov generator which causes chaos, destroying the central library. Somehow.



CANCER

This week you are featured on a new Spotted at Imperial page. Except this page refers to your possessions instead. "Spotted in the Library, one red pencil case with a name tag for Jodie". As you hurry to collect your belongs your praise the existence of the page and wonder what the fuss was about. It's mostly harmless right?



LEO

This week you roar into the Beit Quad on your pimped up scooter, wearing furs and exaggerating about the size of your genitalia. Unfortunately nobody is amused since it's winter and sane person walks around topless and wearing sunglasses. You realise your stepped into to wrong era and return to your time machine.



VIRGO

This week is the last week of term! Hurrah! As the quality of your work begins to deteriorate and you begin to frequently drink unusual quantities of alcohol, responsibly, you wonder why you even bother with this whole studying thing and decide to take a weekend trip to Siberia in your shorts. You die. #YOLOSWAG



LIBRA

You start on your journey to Law School wearing your workshop overalls from your last lab. As you enter the door the snobby OxBridge toffs snub you, walking past with their fresh game in search of a kitchen. You have the last laugh since you went to Imperial and watch a lot of CSI. It's not real science you know...



SCORPIO

This week you decide to enter the RCSU Science Challenge. After taking advantage of the free bottle of wine that the event organisers paid through the nose for, you realise that you need practise. So you decide to open Felix, pick a section and send a message to the email at the top of the left hand page, with an article. You win all! Much amaze!



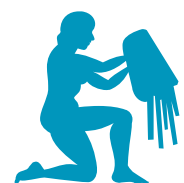
SAGITTARIUS

This week you realise that the NSA is tracking you wherever you go. Deciding to fuck with their minds a little, you decide to leave your phone in a British Airways check-on luggage bag. You laugh as your glob-trotting travels are bound to confuse the NSA who know you are a mere engineer, until they comethrough your door at 1 AM.



CAPRICORN

This week you are a unicorn. Wait, do you exist? How can you tell? Is the pain that you feel real? In order to test the probability of your reality you decide to disguise yourself and go to a PETA meeting. Several hours later with you ears bleeding from the shear crap forced through them you resign yourself to your fate in the corporeal world and start chasing rainbows. You fall of the balcony.



AQUARIUS

This week you decide that you've had enough of the drivel that you read in the horoscopes and decide to send in your own. I mean really, the person/thing that writes these mush have never seen a real horoscope. After several successful weeks your horoscopes become too successful and you wish for a simpler life.



PISCES

This weak ewe decide two take a different approach to righting. Instead ov taking you're thyme and thinking a head ewe decide to just put down what ewe r thinking. Butt know one finds the knew ewe funny and ewe just end up in a corner, alone and sad. Ewe decide ewe don't knead them anyway and become a street busker...



Give It A Go!

Yas Edwards
Deputy President
(Clubs & Societies)



Give It A Go is a programme that ran for the first time at Imperial College Union in October. The aim of the programme was to give a taste of some of the numerous activities offered by our many Clubs, Societies & Projects. These were predominantly free or cheap taster sessions, events and activities which most importantly did not require the purchase of any membership beforehand. The aim was to enable students to try new activities with many different clubs before committing to becoming a member. As many Clubs, Societies & Projects already ran such activities it seemed a natural step to help them publicise them all under the one banner.

We had almost 3,000 students participating in the activities on offer and it really highlighted some of the amazing activities that our Clubs, Societies & Projects offer. Synchronised swimming, Greek dancing, learning how to run a cinema projector, and building an energy kiosk were just a few of the varied activities for students to experience.

71 clubs in total were involved in our first Give It A Go and received publicity in booklets distributed at Freshers' Fair 2013 and on the What's On pages of the Union website. Membership figures are almost 5% up on where they were at the same point last year and our feedback suggests that Give It A Go certainly helped with this.

So where next with Give It A Go? We asked participating clubs if they thought they would benefit from a second scheme in January and 76% of respondents thought they would. Many people miss opportunities in first term due to the time constraints of adapting to new timetables and London life and it's not too late to try something new and to join a Club, Society or Project that you've not been involved in before. That's why Give It A Go will be making a return in January, with more opportunities to get involved in the exciting opportunities provided by our Clubs, Societies & Projects.

Clubs, Societies & Projects can sign up to Give It A Go online until Wednesday 11 December. This will ensure you get for free advertising and promotion of events in booklets, online and through promotional activities on South Kensington campus.



The Winter All-Nighter

What to expect at ICU Cinema's movie marathon



IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION CINEMA'S

Ellen Mathieson
ICU Cinema

As the nights draw in, coursework piles up and dreamy smiles cross students' faces at the thought of the Christmas holidays, Imperial Cinema are hard at work preparing for an evening of hostages, hotdogs, Somali pirates and soup. That's right, it's time for your favourite event of the year: the Winter All-Nighter.

Imagine if you will, a Tuesday night in the Union. Everything seems normal downstairs, as the bar is full of people enjoying their slightly-too-expensive pints. Up a floor and things begin to change. Winding down the staircase you see a queue of people in dressing gowns, their nonchalant poses slightly ruined by the fact that they are cuddling pillows. You try to figure out what is going on, you hear talk of people filled with regret at having to spend an extra two pounds on an all-night ticket as they forgot to buy online beforehand. You realise this is where you've wanted to spend your evening all along: the cinema.

As you take the seat that will become your home for the next fourteen hours, you are filled with anticipation, almost bubbling over with excitement. This is soon replaced with an uncomfortable sensation in your left buttock as you realise why people decided to bring pillows, which you attempt to rectify by doing a strange dance in your seat to remove the pressure, resulting in strange looks from all around you. But, this soon passes as the first film begins.

Three films pass and you're doing fine. But as midnight comes and goes, you begin to dream of the staple of university students everywhere: caffeine. You pray to every deity you can think of to supply you with just one drop, before you remember that you actually paid for free food and make your way upstairs.

Warmed to the depths of your soul by soup, and energised by coffee near saturated with sugar, you feel ready to continue. You watch as the people around you slowly give up, dropping off to sleep in their seat, or for some lucky few, sneaking back to their room in Beit for a quick nap. But you know that you are stronger than them. You know that

you can make the entire night.

And you do. As dawn breaks, you feel the pride of being alert and aware, satisfied by the films you have just witnessed. Now you return to your home, to be reunited with the one you know as sleep.

Now only one question remains. What films are we actually showing?

First up, we have the new and genius concept of precocious children capable of greatness, as Earth's brightest kids are trained to become military commanders against an alien threat, the Formics. But this is much more than Harry Potter in space, as we follow the life of six year old Andrew 'Ender' Wiggen, watching him grow from bullied child to a man capable of fulfilling his destiny. Based on the 1985 novel by Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game* boasts gorgeous cinematography, zero gravity battle sequences and the first time we've seen Harrison Ford in space since Star Wars. And if you are worried about Card gaining your hard earned cash (also known as booze money) to put towards his famous homophobic rants, you need not worry. He doesn't see a penny of the profit of this film.

Next, from Formics to Formula 1 we have Ron Howard's racing drama: *Rush*. Even for those who have better things to do on a Sunday than watch people drive in circles, this film is an engaging watch. Set during the 1976 racing season, *Rush* is the tale of the rivalry between English ladies man James Hunt, and austere Austrian Niki Lauda from Brazilian beginnings, through fiery German crashes to the adrenaline fuelled Japanese finale. Overall, with superb acting, a well written script and action packed directing, *Rush* is a slick, well-oiled machine (sorry).

The first in our accidental trio of hostage related films is *Captain Phillips*. This is far from your stereotypical pirate film, you won't hear a single 'arr' in this chilling thriller based on a true story. The eponymous Captain Phillips has his cargo ship overtaken over by Somali pirate Muse, who decides to hold him and his crew hostage in the hope of making millions. This plan gets even more dangerous for both parties involved when the US Navy get on the scene. *Captain Phillips* is exciting, tense and will probably make you think twice about that beach holiday to Somalia you were planning over the summer.

The stakes have never been higher for everyone's favourite Norfolk DJ as he returns for his big screen debut. In *Alan Partridge:*

Alpha Papa, after fellow DJ Pat Farrell is threatened with redundancy, he decides that the only solution is to hold the rest of the staff hostage. And the only person that he will negotiate with is Partridge himself. Despite nearly twenty years since his first outing, this film shows that Partridge still is, as he always has been hilarious, embarrassing and still somehow loveable.

Prisoners asks the question of how far you would go to keep your family safe. After his young daughter and her friend are kidnapped, and the only suspect is released due to a lack of evidence, Keller Dover decides to take matters into his own hands. With a great performance by Hugh Jackman, and Jake Gyllenhaal tattooed and rugged like we've never seen him before, this is the perfect film to keep you awake at four in the morning.

Our final film is Joss Whedon's latest offering. From the genius behind *Buffy* and *Cabin in the Woods*, and featuring cast that includes Agent Coulson from *Avengers: Assemble* and Mal from *Firefly*, this is a recipe for sci-fi magic. Or Shakespeare for that matter. Filmed in Whedon's house in the two weeks between filming and editing *Avengers: Assemble*, this modern adaptation of *Much Ado About Nothing* is a monochrome masterpiece.

So there it is. A chance to see six films for the price you would usually pay to see one. And a decent excuse to miss lectures the next day. So what are you waiting for, book your tickets now. I'll see you there!

Line Up:

18:00: Ender's Game
20:30: Rush
23:30: Captain Phillips
02:00: Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa
03:45: Prisoners
06:30: Much Ado About Nothing

The Winter All-Nighter is on Tuesday 10th December.

Tickets are £10 online (until 4pm on the day) or £12 on the door. If you don't fancy staying all night, tickets are £3 per film on the door.

For an extra £5, you can get All-You-Can-Eat Hot Food and Drink all night. This includes the usual mix of tea, coffee, toasties, hot dogs, soup, pot noodles and more. Tickets can be bought from **tickets.imperialcinema.co.uk**.



Felix Sport wishes you a Merry Christmas!

Premier League Predictions

IC thrash UCL and Brunel

Zain Rizvi
IC Indoor Cricket Player



IC INDOOR CRICKET

On 23rd November, Imperial indoor cricket team played the second round of the BUCS indoor league at the University of East London's SportsDock centre.

Our first game was against UCL and it was time to exact our revenge after defeat in the previous round. We won the toss and elected to bowl first, and our opening bowlers, Zain Rizvi and Vignesh (Viggy) Venkateswaran took early wickets, with Zain finishing with figures of 3 overs, 3 wickets for 9 runs, accompanied by some fine bowling by Matthew Knights who picked up 2 wickets off his 3 overs. Due to the impressive bowling effort by Imperial, UCL could only muster a mere 78 runs in their 10 overs. Imperial began their run chase perfectly, with Vishal Nair retiring not out on 27, and Juhin Patel (22*) and Viggy (10*) seeing Imperial through to a solid win without the loss of any wickets.

The second fixture of the morning was against Brunel University. This time, Imperial lost the toss and Brunel elected to bat first. Following the success in the first game, Imperial made breakthroughs courtesy of Viggy and Zain, with Jayanth Ganapathy bowling superbly at the death, picking up 2 wickets as well as keeping the runs down. Brunel crawled their way to 67 all out before Imperial launched their run chase.

Vishal played with class on his way to 26 not out, accompanied by a mature knock from Viggy (25*) and some late hitting by Jayanth, to see Imperial home by 5 wickets.

James White

Football Columnist

Arsenal v Everton
(Sunday 4pm, Sky Sports 1)

Roberto Martinez's Toffees remain outsiders for a Champions League spot after quietly impressing thus far. But their commanding league position is based largely on their outstanding home form, and they remain pretty inconsistent away from the fortress that is Goodison Park. Their full backs like to play an open, expansive game but will have to be disciplined and batten down the hatches against the Gunners. Arsenal remain impossible not to back at the Emirates and Aaron Ramsey, Olivier Giroud and co. should have no problems here. But the real test of their title credentials will be provided by the teams around them.

Prediction: 2-0

Man United v Newcastle
(Saturday 12:45, BT Sport 1)

David Moyes' men are finally starting to look like title contenders, but they are making a bad habit of dropping points, rather like Moyes' Everton sides of yesteryear. It won't be easy here against a bang in-form Newcastle side. Alan Pardew has gone from favourite for the sack to flavour of the month; that he has left the likes of Hatem Ben Arfa on the bench recently shows the Magpies have real strength in depth. They will believe they can follow in the footsteps of West Brom and claim all three points here, so hopefully we are in for a classic like last season.

Prediction: 3-2

Southampton v Man City

This is a fascinating match-up. The Saints have failed to beat the big guns of late despite their strong start. But for all their exceptional home routs, Man City are poor on the road and do not possess the same fear factor. Make no mistake, Mauricio Pochettino badly needs to reinvigorate his side – they will be hurting from defeats at Arsenal and Chelsea. But you always feel City are prone to errors – just look at how this fixture panned out last season, when City's title bid effectively ended at St Mary's Stadium. The first goal will be crucial and the Saints are experts at bagging it, so I'm backing them to share the spoils.

Prediction: 1-1

Sunderland v Tottenham
(Saturday 5:30)

Gus Poyet has been luckless of late and the Black Cats have found the net hard to come by. But they have already beaten Man City and Newcastle at the Stadium of Light and I expect them to overcome an under-pressure Spurs side short of goals.

Prediction: 1-0

Stoke v Chelsea

Rather like Man City, the Blues' away form is not that of champions. But Stoke were atrocious at Everton last weekend, posing no attacking threat whatsoever, and Jose Mourinho can silence some of the doubters here.

Prediction: 0-3

Crystal Palace v Cardiff

Crystal Palace make up for lack of quality with desire and excellent organisation. Cardiff pose little offensive threat away from home and this is a brilliant opportunity for Tony Pulis to claim 3 vital points.

Prediction: 1-0

West Brom. v Norwich

The Baggies seem to give everybody a really good game nowadays. Steve Clarke has moulded a quality side nailed on for regular top-half finishes. By contrast, the Canaries have been very average of late and rarely produce a surprise result.

Prediction: 2-0

Fulham v Aston Villa
(Sunday 1:30)

Martin Jol's sacking last weekend was no surprise at all and Rene Meulens has his work cut out to stop the rot. Unfortunately for Fulham, Aston Villa produce their best performances away and will be up for this after frustration last weekend.

Prediction: 3-0

Liverpool v West Ham

Despite their setback at the KC Stadium last weekend and Daniel Sturridge's injury, Liverpool remain a free scoring side – in stark contrast to the Hammers. Sam Allardyce's men never concede lorry loads of goals but there can surely only be one outcome.

Prediction: 2-0

Swansea v Hull
(Sunday 4pm)

You get the sense Swansea's indifferent form is down to the difficulty of balancing European and Premier League commitments. Hull are notoriously hard to break down but Michael Laudrup at least has the flair players to do it and claim an important home win.

Prediction: 2-1

IC score walk-off win

Chris Carter
IC Baseball

Oxford started brightly, scoring two runs in the first innings due to some sloppy fielding in the Imperial outfield. After the first two batters struck out, the innings started to look up as Zack Wang hit a single into centre field. Unfortunately, the two runners were left on base as Oxford struck out the next batter.

After the second inning, the Oxford batting progressed steadily, and the runs crept up. This was complemented by the Oxford pitcher's impressive performance (albeit with a less than impressive Movember attempt), recording ten strikeouts as he shut out the Imperial offence, giving Oxford a fairly uneventful (hence only two paragraphs) 11-0 win.

Imperial feared the worst as Oxford started the second game strongly, hitting 6 runs in their first innings. The Falcons clawed two runs back courtesy of Zack getting a hit in the bottom of the inning. In the bottom of the second innings, however, the Imperial offense started to come good. After the lower order batters all got on base, the big hitters at the top of the order came back to drive the runs in. As the score racked up, the Falcons began to take control, as J.D. Smith was walked to tie the game at 7-7. Imperial first baseman Chris Carter stole home to put the home team up by one run going into what would be the final innings.

In the top of the third, Oxford took the lead. Oxford's big American shortstop launched a huge hit towards left centre field. As the away team looked certain to score, the ball was plucked from the air by left fielder Steph Mangeon, making a fantastic game-saving catch. After the final Oxford batter ground out to J.D. Smith at second base, Imperial needed two runs to win from their final innings.

Alex Fung launched a line drive into right field for a single, bringing the Imperial top order back up. After a new pitcher walked the next two batters to load the bases. On the third pitch, Ashley belted a line drive into centre field. Vincent slid in, meaning the Falcons took a tense 10-9 victory after a tremendous walk-off single from Ashley.

Tour Match doesn't offer many clues for England

The Ashes Column

Kunal Wagle
Sports Editor



GETTY IMAGES

After a traumatic first Test in the series for England, in which they lost by a large margin, as well as seeing Jonathan Trott return home for a stress-related illness, it was important that the team used their tour match against the Cricket Australia Chairman's XI effectively. What happened instead was unlikely to instil much confidence in an already faltering batting line-up, who struggled to 212-7 on day one. In addition to this, England's pace bowlers were only able to take one wicket between them.

But it isn't all doom and gloom for England – Tim Bresnan has been added to the Ashes Squad, having come back playing strongly for the Performance Squad. Gary Ballance is also looking solid whilst playing in the Tour Match in Alice Springs – he was the only player to pass fifty for England in the first innings.

Early indications suggest that it will be Ballance who wins the race to replace Trott, ahead of Jonny Bairstow (who showed signs of weakness against the short ball in the summer), and the all-rounder Ben Stokes. Bresnan is also likely to be selected, this time ahead of Chris Tremlett, who seemed lacklustre in the first match. The selection of Bresnan will also have the added advantage of giving England more batting depth.

Graham Gooch, England's batting coach, has dropped the biggest hint yet that it will be Joe Root who bats in Jonathan Trott's position at three. How successful this venture will be remains to be seen. When he has opened for England, Root has seemed to struggle, suggesting he might be vulnerable if England were to lose their first wicket early.

Adelaide presents a huge opportunity for England to get back into the series. The last time they played here they trounced the Australians, with Graeme Swann picking up a five-wicket-haul. The Australians have opened the door to the Ashes – England have to make sure that it shuts again this week.