

# felix ...

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON



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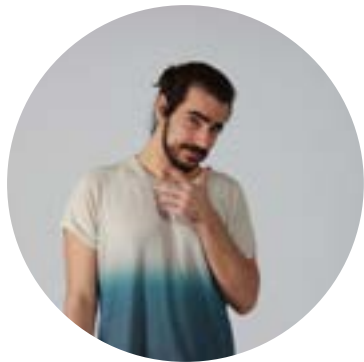
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I will not challenge the status quo  
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I will not challenge the status quo



## This is not a token issue



It makes me feel warm and fuzzy inside seeing – or rather, being unable to see – the paper around campus on a Monday. It might be that someone is making a life-size papier-mâché replica of Queen’s Tower, or that someone requires A LOT of kindling. But I want to believe that it was you picking up *felix*, reading our ‘top journalism’, getting your news, your science, your culture, your puzzles fixes.

Apparently some of our writing has caused a bit of a stir, but hey, for me that feels like a nice pat on the back – we’re encouraging dialogue. You can hear the buzz of conversation in the library cafe; then again maybe it’s just starved postgrads.

This week the union screwed up the autumn elections. They sent out a humble email, (subject “We made a mistake”) and apologised Hollywood-style, acknowledging their error.

Also, Commemoration Day came and passed. There were long queues and that’s really it.

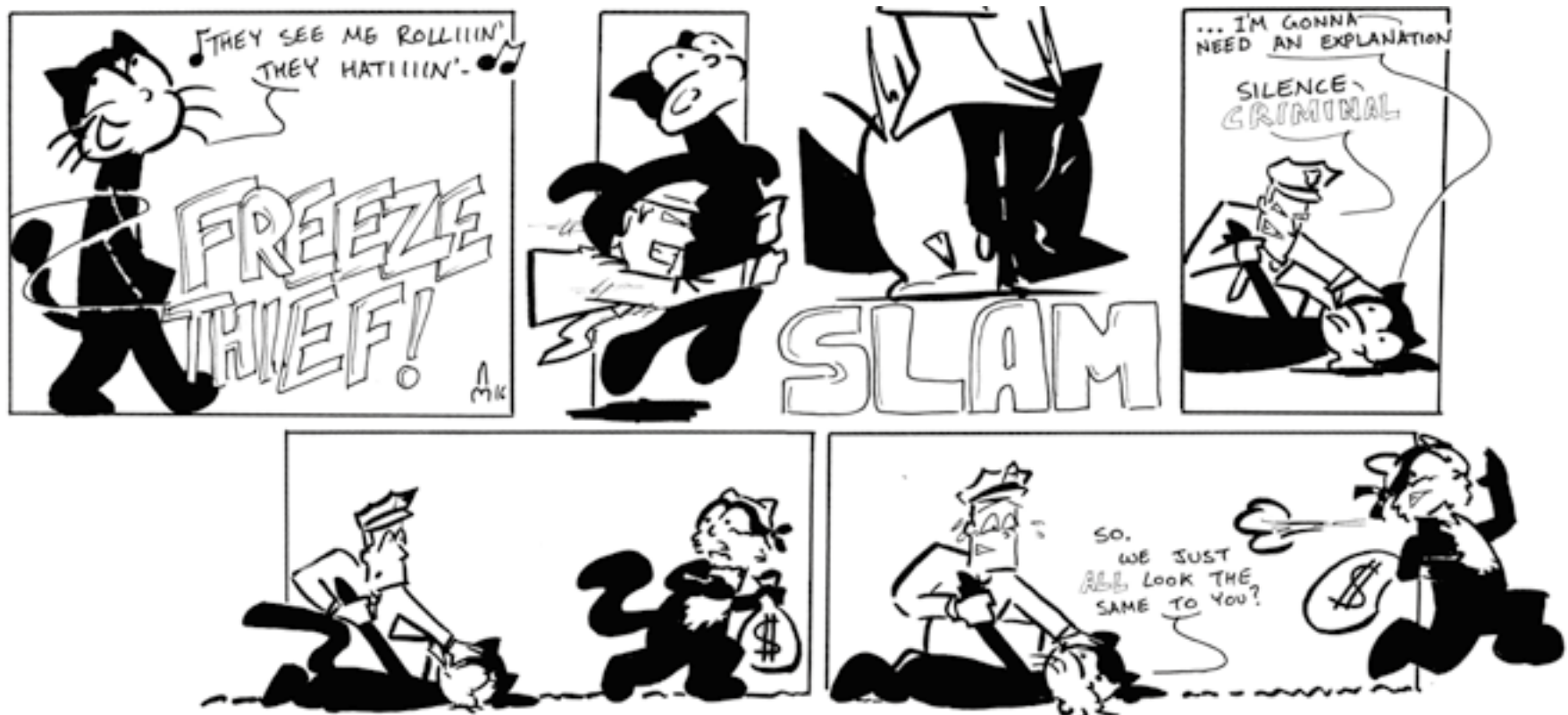
But, despite commemoration day, this issue is dedicated to the black, ethnic, and minority (BME) members of our community. As we’re approaching the end of October you might not have realised that we’re also nearing the end of black history month which, in one form or another, has been around since the 1920’s.

Race has always been a divisive issue and giving a platform to voices from all cultural backgrounds so that they can be heard loud and clear, is something we as a society (not just an Imperial society) are still working on. We worked with the BME officer at Imperial this year to send a message, that part of our mission is to strengthen these voices; we are here to discuss issues that need discussing. We don’t want this to be a token edition, but it depends on you as much as it depends on us. If you feel that there were issues that we didn’t touch upon this week, tell us, or even better write for us. We’re only as good as you let us be.

T H E  
T E A M

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# Alice Gast's autumn letter

Matt Johnston

*felix reads it so you don't have to (you're welcome)*

Imperial College President, Alice Gast, released her autumn letter this week and set out College's vision for the future, a post Brexit future.

The letter touched on the fact that (spoiler alert) Brexit is happening and what the College plans to do to keep the status quo as much as possible. Gast acknowledged that the vote had "created a great deal of uncertainty for the College and for many who work here" but urged that Imperial had overcome challenges in the past and would do again.

With the Government severing quite a few ties with the EU, Imperial must continue to "Think and act internationally" the letter continued, outlining the President's ideas and plans on immigration, research collaborations, and corporate partnerships.

In essence, immigration involving students and staff is valuable to the college and despite it being "Clear that there are going to be restrictions on the free movement of people" the College is planning to do all it can to nudge the government to keep the borders open as much as possible for academics.

Gast proposes that this is largely going to be achieved through the increase of visas to the relevant people, visas she suggests could be fast tracked by giving top universities accreditation. This presumably gives College a bit more autonomy as to who they could hire.

**\\ Gast almost urges readers to focus on things other than Brexit, things which are more important \\**

"If we are unable to negotiate a political solution to Brexit that allows us to fully participate in European Union funding, we need to evaluate what elements of funding and collaboration are the most important to us." Read this as "We might lose a lot of funding, we need to find ways to not go broke" (You and me both, Alice). Again visas come into this as without people to collaborate with, there are no collaborations.

One way touted as a method to help with the reduced freedom of movement is the European Partners Fund which college is establishing. £100,000 a year will be made available for Imperial academics to both "develop collaborations in Europe which lead to new science and to applications for external funding". Slightly longer term Imperial is planning to partner up with European institutions and "pursue bilateral partnerships".

Corporate partnerships were also brought up in the letter and Imperial are again planning to try and do as much as possible to sway government into policies and actions that help companies to thrive. Thriving companies are in the interest of pretty much most people so this seems a great idea, how much sway Imperial will actually have in consultations (if there even are any) remains to be seen.

The letter then takes a more personal note as Gast almost urges readers to focus on things other than Brexit, things which are more important. "One of the things that most worries me about the outcome of the EU Referendum is the amount of intellectual energy that



You Can Call me Al \\ Imperial College

everyone is expending on this topic at the cost of other more forward-looking and positive things".

Whilst the referendum has taken up a decent chunk of airtime in the past few months, it has the potential to be a pivotal moment for both future careers and research. These will affect students and academics alike and a dialogue still needs to be had.

Imperial's performance in the National Student Survey (NSS) was also mentioned, with

a five percent drop in overall satisfaction attributed to some students feeling "unseen and unheard". Plans to combat this were vague but will be "novel, evidence-based ways of teaching, fit for a leading STEM-institution such as ours that can truly inspire students and staff". If teaching methods are the only way Imperial are planning on making students feel more included I wouldn't bet on our NSS ranking improving greatly.

The 'Excellence Fund for Learning and Teaching Innovation' is to be set up to form a community of teachers who will play a role in "Helping the College to deliver a world-class educational experience for all of our students".

Other funds, grants and corporate partnerships (Thomson Reuters and all round good guys, Nestlé) were announced as well as emphasising the strong links that are being built with alumni, possibly an outlet that Imperial are planning to use for increased funding.

Gast concluded by reiterating that Imperial is, and would remain, a global university, whether this will be the case, your guess is as good as mine.

**TeachFirst**

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Rebecca McKelvey  
Social Entrepreneur  
Taught: Science



# Union screws up autumn elections

Lef Apostolakis

Days without election mistake ~~1599~~ 0

Imperial College Union had to remove 73 positions from the Autumn Elections that were underway this week, after a technical error that allowed students to vote twice.

The announcement was made on Tuesday afternoon, when Andrew Keenan, head of the student voice and communications, sent out a mass apology to the student body entitled "Autumn Elections: We've made a mistake".

"This is causing us to not have representation for the first few weeks of the year. These weeks are really important especially for first years who don't have any idea how

things work", said one CGCU departmental representative. "In our department the first student staff committee had to be pushed back a week, but similarly departments across campus are having to deal with this"

The error means that another round of elections will have to take place next week.

Protesting the delay, a letter was sent out by Abhijay Sood, Physics Dep Rep, requesting that voting for these 73 positions resumes ASAP and closes on Friday as it would normally. Sky Yarlett, Representation and Campaigns Coordinator, reportedly said that wouldn't be possible, however, for a

number of reasons including the election by-laws which state that appropriate notice is given (namely "5 clear College days in advance of nominations opening").

**\\ In our department the first student staff committee had to be pushed back a week, but similarly departments across campus are having to deal with this \\**

The screw up was partly due to the Union's approach to many last minute student registrations. As it's still early days, and some students have only just recently registered with their departments, or are in the process of switching course, their status is occasionally not updated in time for the autumn elections. This communication delay might mean that these students will not be eligible to vote during the elections.

To allow as many students to vote as possible, the Union keeps refreshing registration details till the very last minute. However, whereas the last refresh usually occurs before the elections begin, this year

the final refresh overran 40 minutes, allowing students who voted during those first 40 minutes to get a second vote after the refresh.

An inside source told *felix* that the only reason the union even became aware of the technical error was that union officials were contacted by surprised (and we imagine mildly amused) students who had managed to vote twice.

Though the Union estimates that the opportunity to vote twice was only made available to fewer than 150 students, out of the 17,000 that comprise the student body, it's often the case with Dep Rep elections that the outcome is determined by a few votes.

# Professor Hawking visits Imperial

Talks about Hawking Radiation. Pfft, show off

Matt Johnston

Esteemed theoretical physics boffin, Professor Stephen Hawking, gave a lecture on Monday evening, speaking on black holes, Hawking Radiation, and AI.

Taking place in a packed Great Hall, Professor Hawking was introduced via a video from The Big Bang Theory's Sheldon Cooper before launching into his speech which largely covered the area of physics that he has become synonymous with, black holes.

25,000 applications were received for tickets, but only

a select few managed to gain entry to the hour long talk. 60,000 people have now watched the Facebook Live video of the Q&A section that Hawking did after the main talk in which members of the audience had the opportunity to ask questions.

One such question focussed on the rise of AI, a topic which Professor Hawking has warned could end mankind. In the talk he said that AI is likely to surpass humans in the next 100 years and hopes that "their goals are aligned with ours".

The LHC was also brought up with Hawking hoping

that the next big discovery is one related to either supersymmetry, or the true nature of dark matter but acknowledged that it would be even more exciting if something unexpected was found.

Professor Hawking also praised the College earlier in the day. "Looking forward, Imperial College continues to be one of the world's leading centres for research in theoretical physics, string theory, cosmology, and quantum gravity, and the College should be very proud. I am confident that the Theoretical Physics



Sheffield hadn't been this packed since lunchtime \\ Imperial College

Group, including five former members of my own Relativity Group in Cambridge, will continue the great tradition of fundamental physics research at Imperial."

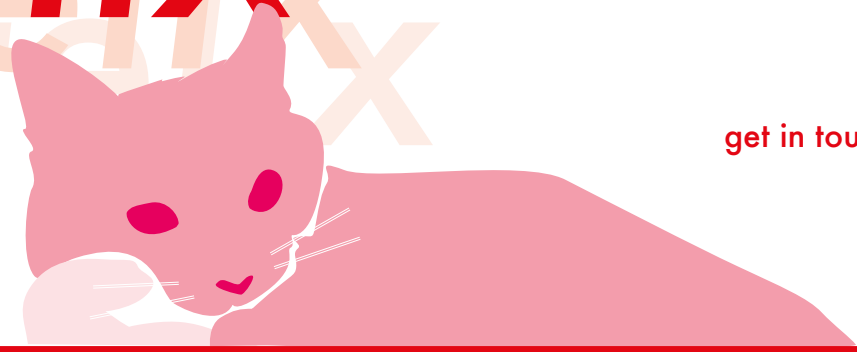
Hawking also managed to add in a motivational quote during the talk, saying "If you feel you are in a black hole, don't give up, there's a way out". Cheers, Prof.

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## Celebrating black scientists

This Black History Month, we'd like to celebrate some **black** individuals who've made significant whom faced the very harsh realities of systemic and institutional racism. Most suffered setbacks



\\ NASA

### Mae C. Jemison | 1956 – Present

**Astronaut, Chemical Engineer, Doctor, Dancer, Actress** and all-round badass Mae C. Jemison made history in 1987 as the first African-American woman admitted into the astronaut training program. As if this wasn't enough, she blasted off aboard the Endeavour shuttle in 1992, becoming the first African-American woman in space. Born in Alabama in 1956, she spent a lot of time growing up reading about science and was a consistent honours student at school. She finished high school with a scholarship to study at Stanford where she got a BSc in Chemical Engineering whilst being head of the Black Students' Union, and participating

**Astronaut, Star Trek actress, teacher and founder of two technology firms**

in dance and theatre productions.

She got her M.D. in 1981 and later worked as a GP. For the next two and a half years she was a Peace Corps Medical Officer in Sierra Leone and Liberia where she taught and did medical research. When she got back to the US in 1985, she applied for the astronaut training program and went on to make history. During her eight days in space, she conducted experiments on weightlessness and motion sickness on the crew and herself.

Founded the National Medical Association, a professional organization for black medical practitioners, who were not allowed membership for American Medical Association

Daniel Hale Williams was one of the first physicians to perform open-heart surgery in the United States and founded the first hospital with interracial staff.

Due to the discrimination of the day, African-American citizens were still barred from being admitted to hospitals and black doctors were refused staff positions. Believing this needed to change, in 1891 Williams opened the Provident Hospital and Training School for Nurses, the nation's first interracial hospital.

### Daniel Hale Williams | 1856 – 1931

In 1893, Williams continued to make history when he operated on James Cornish, a man with a severe stab wound to his chest. Without the benefits of a blood transfusion or modern surgical procedures, Williams successfully sutured Cornish's membranous sac (enclosing the heart), becoming one of the first people to perform open-heart surgery. Cornish lived for many years after the operation.



**Invented the technology that helped to restore the sight of blind individuals**

other patients to which she attended, and eight times more likely to develop glaucoma. Her research led her to development a community ophthalmology system, which increased the amount of eye care given to those who were unable to afford treatment.

In 1976, Bath co-founded the American Institute for the Prevention of Blindness, which established that "eyesight is a basic human right."



\\ National Library of Medicine

### Patricia Bath | 1942 – Present

Among many firsts, Patricia Bath is the first African American to complete a residency in ophthalmology, the branch of medicine looking at the disorders of the eye. She was also the first African-American female doctor to receive a medical patent. She invented the Laserphaco Probe for cataract treatment in 1986. Through her studies at Columbia University, she discovered that African Americans were twice as likely to suffer from blindness than

First black chemist elected to the National Academy of the Sciences in America

**Chemist** Percy Julian was a pioneer in the synthesis of medicinal drugs such as cortisone, steroids and birth control pills. Although his race presented challenges at every turn, he is regarded as one of the most influential chemists in American history.

Despite earning international acclaim for synthesising a drug that could treat glaucoma, the university he was researching at still refused to make him a full professor because of his skin colour.

Julian applied for jobs at prominent chemical companies, but was repeatedly rejected when hiring managers discovered that he was black. Ultimately, he obtained a position at Glidden Company as lab director,

### Percy Lavon Julian | 1899 – 1975

where he invented Aero-Foam, a product that uses soy protein to extinguish oil and gas fires. He continued his biomedical work, discovering how to synthesize the hormones progesterone and testosterone, to be used in hormonal contraception. He was also lauded for his synthesis of cortisone, which became used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.

Julian left Glidden and established his own laboratory, in 1954. He sold the company in 1961, becoming one of the first black millionaires, before founding Julian Research Institute, a non-profit organization that he ran for the rest of his life.



\\ ChemHeritage

## Eight scientists you should know of

contributions to science. It's important to acknowledge the **resilience** of these individuals, many of due to the colour of their skin and some were even **born into slavery**.

Daniel Ogbonna

**First African-American examiner for the American Board of Surgery, collected 14,500 pints of blood during WW2**

Charles Drew was an African-American surgeon who pioneered methods of storing blood plasma and organized the first large-scale blood bank in the U.S.

In 1938, Drew received a Rockefeller Fellowship to study at Columbia. Drew developed a method for processing and preserving blood plasma. Plasma lasts much longer than whole blood, making it possible to be stored or "banked" for longer periods of time. His research served as the basis of his doctorate thesis, "Banked Blood," making him the first African-American to earn this degree from Columbia.

### Charles Drew | 1904 – 1950

As World War II raged in Europe, Drew was asked to head a special medical effort known as "Blood for Britain." He organised the collection and processing of blood plasma from several New York hospitals, and the shipments of these life-saving materials overseas to treat casualties in the war.

After creating two of the first blood banks, Drew returned to Howard University in 1941. He served as a professor there, heading the university's department of surgery.



\\ Howard University

### James West | 1931 – Present



\\ John Hopkins University

James West is a U.S. inventor and professor who, in 1962, developed the electret transducer technology later used in 90% of contemporary microphones.

He knew he wanted to pursue his interest in science academically, though his parents were concerned about future job prospects for an African-American scientist. Undeterred, West headed to Temple University in 1953 where he received his BSc in Physics in and was later hired for a full-time position as an acoustical scientist.

**Prolific writer and inventor with more than 250 patents**

In 1960, West teamed up with fellow scientist Gerhard M. Sessler to develop an inexpensive, highly sensitive, compact microphone. In 2 years they finished development on the product, which relied on their invention of electret transducers. By 1968, these microphones were being mass produced. West's and Sessler's invention became the industry standard, and today can be found in telephones, tape recorders, camcorders, baby monitors and hearing aids.

**First African-American to become an IBM Fellow Inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame**

**Computer scientist and engineer** Mark Dean helped develop a number of landmark technologies for IBM, including the colour PC monitor and first gigahertz chip. He holds 3 of the company's original 9 patents, with 20 more patents associated with his name.

He is credited with helping to launch the personal computer age with work that made the machines more accessible and powerful. In 1979, he graduated at the top of his class at the University of Tennessee,

### Mark Dean | 1957 – Present



\\ IBM

where he studied engineering. Not long after college Dean landed a job at IBM, a company he would become associated with for the duration of his career. In 1999, Dean led a team of engineers at IBM's Austin, Texas, lab to create the first gigahertz chip—a revolutionary piece of technology that is able to do a billion calculations a second.

### George Washington Carver | 1864 – 1943



\\ TradingCardsNPS

Very few discussions on influential black scientists go by without mention of George Washington Carver. He was a brilliant botanist who invented hundreds of products from peanuts and other crops, producing substances that included plastics, paints, dyes and even a kind of gasoline.

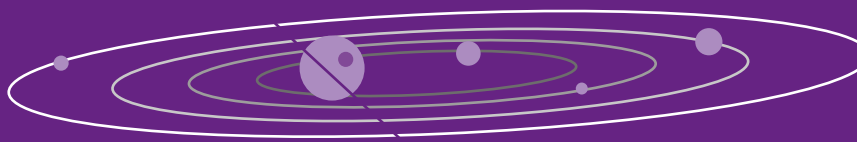
He was born into slavery in Missouri around 1864. A year later, slavery was abolished in that area, and his former owner's wife taught him to read and write as schools did not take black students. In his free time, he studied nature and developed a prodigious talent for botany.

**First African-American to have a national monument dedicated to him**

Eventually in 1891, he began his botanical studies as the first black student at Iowa State Agricultural College, excelling at his studies and establishing his reputation as a brilliant botanist.

His ground-breaking research on plant biology brought him to critical acclaim, but he also did important research on crop rotation and alternative cash crops for farmers in areas heavily planted with cotton. His work directly contributed to economic stabilisation among the black population as he focused his research on struggling farmers who were formerly slaves.





# Macaques pave road for HIV therapy

**A**n international study treating rhesus macaques with SIV (Simian

Immunodeficiency Virus), related to HIV, showed, for the first time, long-term control of the disease for up to two years. The macaques were able to use their own immune system to keep the virus cell count at low levels, without the help of drugs, and for nine months the virus was undetectable. This is great news for HIV sufferers that have to undergo frequent and intense drug therapy to keep HIV at bay.

Globally, 36 million people suffer from HIV, and there is no permanent cure for the disease. Currently, antiretroviral drugs are used, which target the virus to slow its replication.

Antiretroviral drug therapy (ART) means that HIV patients are able to live with the virus, avoiding the death sentence. Usually, regular and intense levels of drugs are needed to slow viral charge build up. This can have bad side effects, such as poisoning, inflammation and accelerated aging. Given that ART is the most effective treatment at the moment, reducing patient suffering is a priority. This study brings hope that one day, such rigorous drug treatment will not be needed.

The key to success appears to have been the result of using combination therapy: both antiretroviral drugs and an antibody. The monkeys were treated with antiretroviral drugs for nine weeks, and an antibody was also given after week nine until the end of the treatment. An antibody is a protein

**\\ After stopping both treatments, the viral cell count was undetectable for nine months, and was still low two years later \\**

used by the immune system to target harmful viruses and bacteria. The antibody given was a variant of Vedolizumab, a therapeutic antibody used in the treatment of inflammatory bowel diseases. It targeted another protein used by SIV, and HIV, to enter cells. This stopped further spread of the virus, as viruses depend on using other cells as hosts to

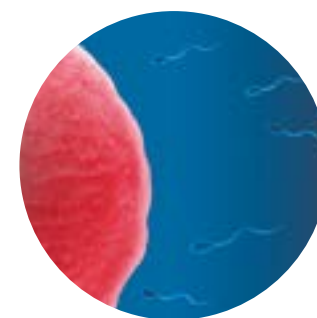
replicate and spread.

After stopping both treatments, the viral load was undetectable for nine months, and was still low two years later. The success of the therapy paves the way for better treatment in humans, and a clinical trial is already underway in the US. The goal is to see whether this combination treatment, using antiretroviral drugs with the antibody, can have the same long-term effect in humans. The researchers involved are confident that the results will be life-changing for HIV sufferers.

Lara Bailey

## Sex

A Long Time Coming



\\ Zappys Technology Solutions

**F**act | Sperm takes longer to make than you ever imagined: 43 million years.

No, not quite 43 million years each – it takes a mere 60 days for a single sperm to fully develop.

The true scale of the problem of sex comes down to the sheer number of sperm required to raise the odds of just one reaching the egg. The average man will release 250 million sperm each time he ejaculates. If you made one sperm at a time, back to back, it would take 43 million years to produce that number.

Luckily, billions of sperm start development every day, so you can turn once-in-a-lifetime into 4-times-a-day, although sending that many children through university could be pretty crippling in 20 years. We aren't the sexually advanced species we might like to imagine though; Rams produce nearly 100 billion sperm per ejaculate, and a male lion can mate up to 75 times in a single day during mating season. Legend.

So, men everywhere are furiously producing sperm while flying planes, repairing the International Space Station and running the United States of America. Who said we can't multi-task?

Another one of Mr Shau-nak's Little Bites of Science

# How much water is too much water?

**T**he mantra that drinking lots of water is good for us is a familiar one and indeed, the NHS recommends drinking 8 glasses a day. However, a new study has challenged this popular idea. For the first time, scientists have gained an insight into the mechanism that regulates fluid intake and stops us from drinking too much. This research suggests that we should listen to our bodies and drink according to thirst rather than sticking to a rigid routine. In fact, over-drinking can even be fatal.

Previously, scientists had shown that there is a 'stop mechanism' that regulates brain signals, telling an individual to stop drinking water when no longer thirsty. A new study led by Monash University has shed light on this mechanism, revealing that a 'swallowing

inhibition' is activated by the brain after excess liquid is consumed, helping to maintain the correct volume of water in the body.

In the study, led by associate professor Michael Farrell from the Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute, researchers asked participants to rate the amount of effort required



to swallow water under two conditions: when they were thirsty after exercising and then later when they were satiated. The results revealed a three-fold increase in effort after over-drinking, implying overcoming some sort of resistance. This resistance is caused

by inhibition of the swallowing reflex once enough water has been drunk.

The scientists used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to measure brain activity just prior to swallowing. They found that the pre-frontal areas of the brain were much more active during effort-full swallowing than when swallowing whilst thirsty. This suggests that the pre-frontal cortex overrides the swallowing inhibition to allow water consumption.

In this age of health food bloggers, many people are formulating their eating and drinking habits around elaborate routines. You can even get apps which allow you to log how much you drink and remind you when to drink more. However, your own body is the best judge of your needs. Remember that water is contained in food and other beverages. Drinking according to a schedule whilst ignoring

signals from your body can be dangerous. Over-drinking can potentially lead to water intoxication or hyponatremia (abnormally low blood sodium levels), leading to lethargy and nausea and, in the worst case, convulsions and coma. In rare cases, marathon runners have died after drinking excessive quantities of water before a race.

It seems we needn't be slaves to drinking 8 glasses of water a day without reference to thirst. Your body is highly skilled at maintaining tightly calibrated water levels, signalling you to drink long before you are dehydrated and balancing water levels with urine. The swallowing inhibition is probably crucial to this process. So, trust your body and drink to thirst.

Sophie Protheroe



# Trollish by name, trollish by nature



Even the cast of *Trolls* aren't too impressed with the film \\ DREAMWORKS ANIMATION



Jenny Shelley

The latest **animation** from Dreamworks shows that the studio has hit a **new low**, producing an annoyingly **terrible** piece of work, with essentially no redeeming features

**D**ue to a stellar cast, impressive soundtrack, and production from the studio that made *Shrek*, my expectation for *Trolls* was pretty high – even for a kid's film. This was clearly matched by the anticipation of others, given that it was nominated for the Teen Choice Award 'Choice AnTEENcipated Movie' (groan). Before the film is even released, there was merchandise in every shop and children already own the full set of Troll dolls. But all this build up made the disappointment of the actual film that much more bitter.

Things started well enough. A surprisingly dark introduction explains how the song-filled, forever cheery

\\ All the build up to *Trolls* only made the disappointment of the actual film that much more bitter \\

Trolls are held captive and annually massacred on 'Trollstice' by the miserable Burgens. The Trolls are eaten because this is the only way the Burgens can experience true happiness. However, on the eve of Prince Gristle's (Christopher Mintz-Platz) first Trollstice, the Trolls carried out their escape, led by Jeffrey Tambor's King Peppy with the rallying cry of 'no troll left behind'. We then cut to twenty years later, where the trolls have already forgotten the threat of the Burgens due to their ceaselessly joyous (read: perpetually irritating) nature and decide to throw a loud celebration. Of course, they're found and trollnapped, leading our heroine Princess Poppy (Anna Kendrick) and grey, songless Branch (Justin Timberlake) to rescue them and save the day. Cue the usual rescue-mission dangers, eventual fuzzy-feelings between the two leads, and eye-rolling plot points, topped off by

\\ The eye-rolling plot points are topped off by bludgeoning the audience repeatedly with the film's message that 'everyone has happiness inside' \\

bludgeoning the audience repeatedly with the films message that 'everyone has happiness inside'.

Meanwhile, the romantic subplot between scullery maid Bridget (Zoey Deschanel) and Prince Gristle initially invokes some sympathy, tapping into universal feelings of impossible love and unreturned attraction. However, the connection was short-lived when they turned it into a contrived Cinderella. Branch is supposed to be the sarcastic, relatable, sob-story co-star. His trauma derives from killing his own Grandma with his singing – mine will forever be derived from viewing this film. The brief positive was the soundtrack. The use of well-known songs was enjoyable and creative, bringing in a variety of hits at clever moments, such as Gorillaz's *Clint Eastwood* and Lionel Richie's *Hello*. The music department did an excellent job. Unfortunately, the rest of the team did not.

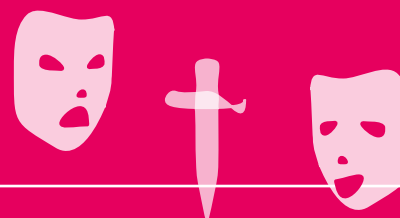
If the cast had any input at all, it could not be felt. Having well-known comedians on hand left no mark as jokes fell flat and comedy timing was

non-existent. It was horribly clear that many of the headlining cast had gone to the studio for the day, recorded their few lines and collected their paycheck, thank you very much (I'm looking at you James Corden and Russell Brand). Their characters were difficult to care about and did not inspire compassion or empathy – key values off which children's film are so often based. I did not think they were cute or funny, nor did they put a smile on my face. My most profound surge of sympathy was directed toward the crying child who could be heard throughout the cinema when he just couldn't take anymore. I would've been quite pleased if they'd all be eaten by the Burgens – at least then there'd be no chance of a sequel..

The film is sold as the 'most smart, funny, irreverent animated comedy of the year'. This is the publicity team's own version of 'trolling'. Simply put, the writing was frustrating and the storyline was old, tired and lazy. Attempts to avoid this, such as the slightly-too-subtle references to classics such as *Labyrinth*, were lost in the malaise of cringe; in the same scene, we met a cloud whose entire dialogue consisted of Dad jokes about high fives. There was so much potential here. But once the character 'Guy Diamond' (Kunal Nayyar) had farted glitter in someone's face for the third time, even the youngest in the audience couldn't keep laughing. Use of the (sadly endemic) phrase YOLO was a depressing nadir of the film. As the credits rolled, and we tried to escape, I had to wake up a Dad who was not only asleep himself, but had his two sleeping boys on top of him. I sincerely doubt this was the effect the studio was going for. The tagline reads 'Find your happy place' – yours will be as far away from this film as you can get.



*Trolls*: as annoying as they are creepy \\ DREAMWORKS ANIMATION



## DOCUMENTARY OF THE WEEK

# Lo and Behold: Reveries of the Connected World



Werner Herzog takes us on a journey through the internet \ \ DOGWOOF



By Steve Bohnel

The Internet. It was invented in 1969, and has objectively become a part of society's daily consciousness. And yet, director Werner Herzog reminds us that it is much more powerful than we could have even imagined.

In *Lo And Behold: Reveries of the Connected World*, Herzog masterfully pieces together a 94-minute documentary that details how exactly the online world has permeated our lives, from the evolution of self-driving cars to cyber security becoming a priority among governments.

This film's excellence lies in the simplicity of Herzog's style: much of the film is interview footage ranging from expert hacker Kevin Mitnick to famous entrepreneur Elon Musk. There is the occasional b-roll and diagram to break up the face-to-face interaction, but what we see is mostly authentic footage and raw uncut film that usually loses the audience's interest, but not here. The subject matter is just too interesting when we look at it through Herzog's eyes.

And perhaps one of the veteran director's most thought-provoking views

came in an answer to an audience question before the free screening at the Curzon Soho on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October: "Documentaries should not just be facts ... facts do not always constitute truth."

This idea applies throughout the film, but one particular example that jumps to mind is where Herzog interviews the family of Nikki Catsouras, an 18-year-old who died in 2006 in a car crash in California.

The family, who saw horrible pictures of Nikki disfigured online, denounce the Internet as an "evil" force. Lesli, Nikki's mother, even goes as far to say that those who are connected online have demonic spirits in them – a statement that is hard to believe, but also hard to argue against. This, however, effectively illustrates the non-factual element of documentaries that Herzog appears to value.

It is this attention to detail that makes the story more effective – even for a 21-year-old who clearly knows what the Internet is and its ability to connect others. The raw emotion in the Catsouras scene forces us to step back and realize its negative impact. Herzog says in the press release for *Lo and Behold*

that he isn't a journalist, but that he is merely conversing with those in the film. But I respectfully disagree – the information shared through his subjects is an integral part of being a competent reporter.

Despite all these complex narratives, Herzog retains an ability to chronologically span through the Internet's history, from its 1969 conception at the University of California to what it will mean in the future. This could easily have been a hindrance to the movie's pacing, but instead, it advances the narrative and allows viewers to better understand the Internet's impact through different eras.

Attempting to examine the reach of the online world is a daunting task. Herzog, however, tackles the subject with relative ease, informing and actively engaging his audience through a stimulating mental journey. Along the way, he's assisted by the expertise of several people whose lives have been dramatically impacted by the Internet's presence. Thanks to all of them, once the credits start, we have a much richer understanding of its impact in our lives.

## Three french films that aren't *Amélie*

Meryl Anil

Everyone who's cool has seen *Amélie*, it's one of few French films that has enjoyed success outside of France. Starring the adorable Audrey Tautou, this richly coloured film with an equally mesmerising soundtrack filled with quirky characters doing quirky things in the quest for love, is (in)famous for being saturated with sweetness. But there's more to France than cute Audrey and nostalgic tinted cinematography. So here are some other films from France that are as delightful to watch as *Amélie*.

### Delicatessen

The similarities between this film and *Amélie* are so obvious that it should come as no surprise that they share the same director, Jean-Pierre Jeunet. The tone of the film, although with a much darker topic, shares the same humour, quirky dialogue and cinematography that is abundant in *Amélie*. A no-brainer for anyone who enjoyed *Amélie*.

### Les Emotifs Anonymes (Romantics Anonymous)

Romantic comedy done right. This film is about a budding romance between two very socially awkward people. Set in a chocolate factory, there's enough 'sweetness' to go around.

### Le Rayon Vert (The Green Ray)

Directed by the one of the men involved with the creation of the French New Wave cinema, Eric Rohmer, *Le Rayon Vert* is not expected to disappoint. And it doesn't. A gentle film about an aimless woman recovering from a break-up; it follows her during her vacation and highlights her growing boredom and frustration at being expected to play the role of the single woman. Not sweet enough? Don't worry it has a satisfying ending!



Marie Rivière and Béatrice Romand in Eric Rohmer's *Le Rayon Vert* \ \ Creative Commons



CULTURE...

felix

## Self Defense Family at the MOTH



Sweaty, loud, and much cooler than you \\ Deathwish Inc.



Upon arriving at the MOTH Club in Hackney I was instantly impressed by the 80's working man décor with large booths, gold painted walls and ceiling and darts championship winners' plaque attached to the wall. This décor was clearly kept by the current owners and set a good tone for the slightly weird bands on the bill.

First up was Cassels, a two piece from London, playing a really promising brand of indie rock. Whilst their lyrics were a bit esoteric at times, the emotional impact of their final song was undeniable. Creative Adult followed shortly after. I must admit at this point that I have never gotten Creative Adult on record; their post-punk too psychedelic for my taste.

By the time the headliners Self Defense Family hit the stage the anticipation was palatable, with the MOTH

Club now teaming with a flannel wearing, bespectacled crowd. Rather than choosing to feed off this excitement with a rowdier song, Self Defence instead started off with the miserable plodding *Cottaging*, one of their slowest and saddest songs. Crowd

\\ Crowd-pleasing clearly wasn't their aim \\

pleasing clearly wasn't their aim, a vibe echoed by the idiosyncratic between-song banter from their frontman.

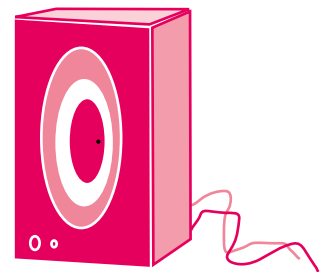
The dark atmosphere was continued into the next couple of songs, with the beak simple guitar line and kick drum intro of *Good Idea Machine* and the (slightly) more uplifting *Self Immolation Family*.

Swiftly moving onto perhaps their best live song *Tithe Pig*; the crowd visibly reacted to the powerful layered guitars.

With the blocky chords shifting and competing for space with the driving bass line whilst simple guitar riffs swirl amongst them, *Tithe Pig* effortlessly achieves the catharsis that so many bands try and fail to achieve. Many other bands would choose to end their set on such a well written and performed live song, but that would simply not be Self Defense. Instead they drop into the recently released long and jammy Brittany Murphy in 8 Mile.

All in all the gig proved to be a wonderfully cathartic experience.

By Robert Garside



Cited by Noel Gallagher as one of the reasons that he has yet to reform Oasis, Jagwar Ma's debut album *Howlin'* (2013) was refreshingly full of new and experimental riffs, alongside 90s acid-house. This Australian duo return with a second serving of electro-psychedelic rock. The intervening 3 years have mellowed and matured their style although their youth and inexperience still shine through.

Formed in Sydney in 2011 by Gabriel Winterfield (vocals/guitar) and Jono Ma (synths/production), they were joined in 2012 by English bass guitarist Jack Freeman. Having supported Foals, The xx and Tame Impala on tour, elements of all three can be heard. Effortlessly shifting and sliding between both genres and live and synthetic instruments, the album is a showcase by a band not afraid to play by its own rules. Stand out

tracks include teaser single *O B 1*, which sounds like The Big Pink take on trip hop, and *Say What You Feel*, which dissolves from retro 60s vocals into steel drums underpinned by a four-to-the-floor beat.

At no point do these influences seem out of place or forced, rather it feels all too comfortable. Lacking the roughshod energy of *Howlin'*, this album is muted in comparison. The more serious mood – with a track list reading "*Falling; Loose Ends; Don't Make It Right*", doesn't quite fit with the bands carefree and playful character. Typically simple and repetitive lyrics give us impressions instead of windows into Gabriel's and Jono's experiences. While enjoyable and easy to listen to, it doesn't leave me itching to hit replay.

Altogether a very solid and varied production, especially considering its all in-house – Jono Ma helped build the studio they used to record it. Yet when so easily compared to similar sounding giants,

Tame Impala, we can only hope they have some growing left to do. It's a stormy

\\ At no point do these influences seem out of place or forced, rather it feels all too comfortable \\

album cover and reflective title, perhaps signs of an angsty teenage phase that will be shed in favour of a less self-conscious sound. Expect big things to follow.

Listen if you like: Temples, Tame Impala or Oasis.

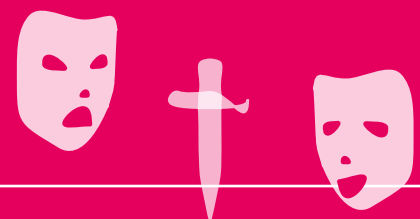
## Jagwar Ma Every Now and Then



Jagwar Ma's *Every Now and Then* \\ Mom + Pop Music



By Theo Farah



## Why are we offended by X Factor's Honey G?



'Modern day blackface' or just a poor performance? X Factor's latest tabloid favourite, Honey G, leaves us feeling offended without really knowing why.

Theo Farah

\\ ITV and Syco Entertainment

**S**hout out the lyrics to 2pac's California Love while panting and gyrating across the stage, Honey G's first live X Factor performance was truly a spectacle. The budding "genuine urban" artist's short career hasn't been lacking in controversy. Recently she's been accused of being a "fake" by Little Mix (of Simon Cowell circa 2011) and has been subject of an opinion piece in The Guardian likening her to 19th century blackface minstrels. I admit her performance left me cringing and feeling confused. But trying to disentangle the mess of reasons why her act is so off-putting proves to be no easy task.

Is this political correctness gone mad? Cultural appropriation is and always has been a contentious topic. Determining the point where inspiration becomes denigration of a minority groups art and history is muddled further when its agent is farcical. The onus lays with Honey G to show us. If like Little Mix you suspect she isn't a true supplicant to the altar of Hip Hop, her act seems like a cynical parody of rap culture.

Iggy Azalea, the white-Australian, Pop-Hip Hop artist,

came under fire for misappropriation of black culture after being nominated for the BET Best Female Hip Hop Artist award in 2014. She was accused by Azalea Banks of "cherry-picking" parts of black culture while ignoring its difficult history and the issues still faced by black people in the US today. What particularly irked some is Iggy's 'blaccent', which she attributes to learning to rap in the American South. Whether appropriated or not, none can deny her genuine musical talent and commitment to her genre, as demonstrated by her 129 award nominations.

Watching Anna Georgette Gilford's character Honey G leaves us questioning the authenticity of her persona. Her clothes feel like a costume, her mannerisms stiff and awkward, as if too-little practised facing a mirror. A friend from her time at the University of Salford told The Sun she had "dumbed herself down" for the cameras whilst

\\ Recently she's been accused of being a "fake" by Little Mix \\

\\ The clue is in the name: Honey G is a 15-years-too-late tribute to Sacha Baron Cohen's character Ali G \\

masking her middle class accent. Lola Okolosie of The Guardian attributes this to a 'reductive caricature' of the black rap artists she is covering, 'as if blackness is the antithesis' of her white middle class upbringing. But is this really fair?

The clue is in the name: Honey G is a 15-years-too-late tribute to Sacha Baron Cohen's character Ali G. Honey G's true target of ridicule is those that may be accused of cultural appropriation themselves. The British Hip Hop fans that mimic the style and mannerisms of their favourite American stars. She proclaims to hail from "North-Weezy. North-West London. In Harrow" and is most definitely "true to the game". Her persona is designed to mock her audience. It's just a shame that she's ridiculing pop culture that hasn't been relevant for over a decade. So far, the two songs she has 'performed' have been Work

It (2002) and California Love (2005).

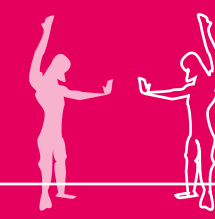
Baron Cohen's character first appeared on Channel 4's, The 11 O' Clock Show and was immortalised in his 2002 film, *Ali G Indahouse*. A satirical stereotype of a "white British suburban male who imitates rap culture" he is permanently decked in oversized, brightly coloured shell suits and draped in gold chains. His 'rude-boy' accent a parody of the BBC Radio 1 DJ Tim Westwood. Ms Gilford's persona is a sad mimic of Baron Cohen's original. With the humour that brought appeal stripped away, all that's left is a woman with poor fashion sense and limited musical ability.

Not that Ali G was free from controversy himself, with critics such as F. Dexter complaining that by adding a degree of abstraction he

\\ She proclaims to hail from "North-Weezy. North-West London. In Harrow" and is most definitely "true to the game" \\

\\ Our discomfort at Anna's meta-caricature could stem from a sense that truly her performance is still a mockery of black stereotypes \\

allowed the "liberal middle classes to laugh [at black street culture] while they retain their sense of political correctness." Our discomfort at Anna's meta-caricature could stem from a sense that truly her performance is still a mockery of black stereotypes. This is a typical ploy of the X Factor producers: a weaker than average performer that just keeps being "saved" by the voters. Plucked from a list of the weird and wonderful of the British Isles; sadly deluded shower singers that the audience can both ridicule and pity, they add another element of drama to each week's theatrical live show. Perhaps what stings most is the feeling of being played by Simon Cowell as he rides the tabloid storm created by Honey G all the way to the bank.



## I'm black and I don't rap



The late, great Tupac Shakur \\ Leo Gonzales

I get these questions all the time: "Who's your favourite rapper?", "I bet you can freestyle!", "How can you not love Tupac? You're black!"

Hip-hop for some reason never really appealed to me when I was younger - I didn't hate it, but I tended not to go out of my way to find it. After moving countries and entering adolescence, I began to consciously avoid listening to it; something that thankfully I've now gotten over.

For me, there hasn't been really much of a reason for me to associate with rap and hip-hop culture in general, but most notably its music has been synonymous with the urban Black American experience. But that was the problem - I felt detached from the scenarios often narrated in the rhymes, lost in the graphic depictions of places and people. At the time, it didn't fit into my personal idea of blackness.

Within the past decade or so, rap as a sub-genre of

\\ It's always awkward when no-one skips that line and everyone continues singing \\

music has become gentrified beyond its inner-city roots, in that it is no longer solely tied to, though it frequently references, its base culture. This, however, brings with it its own problems.

Like any art piece, when you take rap out of the culture from which it came from, there is a loss of cultural context.

The original pioneers of hip hop infused much of their culture into their music; with their accents and cadence, they painted the world they saw and recorded the language they used.

Language which included the word 'n\*\*\*\*a'. (Now of course, there is a distinction between 'n\*\*\*\*a' and 'n\*\*\*\*r', but for all intents and purposes we can assume them to be one and the same.)

The problem with the use of the n-word in hip-hop is that because it has been so widely used in the genre, there is an assumption that it is a marker of the genre; when it should in fact be viewed as indicative of the musicians themselves as people.

Consider the following scenario: you're with friends, there's music playing and Kanye's *Gold Digger* comes on. Needless to say it's always awkward when no-one skips that line and

everyone continues singing.

When I finally began to warm to the themes and sounds of hip-hop, this proved to be a bit of a stumbling block - getting into it could easily become a commonality between myself and other non-black friends who may have taken this mutual ground as an excuse to go full steam ahead. What's worse is when people try to justify it - the indignant, "it's just a song!", is

\\ I once tried to ignore the sting of the word, shrugging when asked "do you mind if I say the n-word?" Some people, drunk with 'new found freedom', altogether stopped using my name \\

often followed by accusatory, "not everything is offensive, you know."

Some might (and have argued to me) that the diversification of hip-hop and rap means that the word has taken on a new meaning, no longer black-centred - just

the other day a non-black friend of mine was tagged in a Facebook post with this caption:

Wit my nigga after a year and half eating #chicken Lool

Here is what I'm saying - music is so infused into our day-to-day life, we have to consider the fact that it can very easily go from our playlist to our lexicon; and not everyone is fine with the way this word is used.

I once tried to ignore the sting of the word, shrugging when asked "Do you mind if I say the n-word?" a few years ago: as far as I was concerned, it didn't really feature much in my history, or my culture, so I was apathetic to it. That very quickly changed when some people, drunk with 'new-found freedom', altogether stopped using my name.

Despite coming from a background and a place where the 'n-word' essentially had no power, it was still relatively easy for me to learn to take offence at it. Now consider those people who've grown up in communities where they've historically been called n\*\*\*\*s by people

who don't look like them, and understand why this would feel very uncomfortable.

Let me be clear on how

\\ By all means, keep on jamming out to your favourite Kendrick song, just 'cos he gets to say n\*\*\*\*a, don't mean you do too \\

I feel, rap music has most certainly gone beyond the African-American/Black community to permeate and include some cultures and experiences. But that does not mean that the n-word is bound to rap music itself. The word is tied to the genre, it's a derivative of the culture from which the music emerged from and out of which it's predominantly produced.

By all means, keep jamming out to your favourite song; but the next time a Kendrick song comes on, be aware that just 'cos he gets to say n\*\*\*\*a, don't mean you do too.

By Chimdi Igwe

# Union Page



## ACT NOW! Launch Event: Monday 24 October

Raise a glass with us at our free launch event of our student social enterprise support programme, ACT Now! Social enterprise is doing good through business and innovation, and we know all Imperial students have the potential to become great entrepreneurs!

As well as telling you about the support, training and funding available to help flex your entrepreneurial muscles through ACT! Now, we will be joined by special guests to hear about their entrepreneurial experiences and ventures: Chemistry Undergraduate and Althea Imperial 2016 Finalist Lauren Dennis; Engineering Undergraduates Tristan Dell & Debesh Mandal from IRIS Drone Technologies; and two of Imperial's Alumni Ilana Taub & Michael Midge-Dixon who have successfully crowdfunded to launch Snact, a social venture tackling food waste.

We'll also be joined by Chrissy Levett, founder of Creative Conscience, an organisation that inspires students to apply their talents to socially valuable projects. Find out more about the programme and event at

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



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**Friday 21 October, 11:00 - 16:00**  
**Queen's Lawn / Open to all students!**

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To see the companies attending the fair, visit

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# Chris Ofili | More than elephant dung



No Woman, No Cry by Chris Ofili \\ Tate

**E**lephant dung is to Chris Ofili what sunflowers are to Vincent Van Gogh. An art residency in Zimbabwe in 1991 in which he saw lots of elephant dung (but no elephants) sparked a period of fascination with the medium that would fling the recent art school graduate into the limelight of the modern art scene in London. Elephant dung has featured in some of the most memorable episodes of Ofili's career. In 1999, *The Holy Virgin Mary*, a black Madonna with her one exposed breast made out of lacquered elephantdung, caused something of a media firestorm in New York, so much so that it caused then Mayor Rudy Guiliani to cut funding for the Brooklyn Museum, where the work was displayed.

No stranger to controversy, Ofili has made a career of creating visually arresting, larger than life works that push boundaries even without elephant dung. His paintings in the past have been intricate creations, bold and colourful, filled with vibrant yellows and scarlets, and flecked with glitter. Ofili's work deals in large part with the black experience. He is of Nigerian descent and grew up in Manchester. He came to study in London,

first at the Chelsea School of Art and then the Royal College of Art, and he has since moved to Port of Spain, Trinidad. In some of his most moving paintings he has dealt with the subject of race and identity head on. The 1996 painting, *Afrodizzia*, features tiny cut outs of black cultural icons. Diana Ross, Cassius Clay, Martin Luther King Jr, Tupac Shakur, among many others appear with identical hand painted afros against

**\\ Irreverent, intricate, and colourful, Ofili's work has a lot of political bite, even when covered in glitter and elephant dung \\**

a riot of colour. It is a celebration of black identity, not only of the individuals who succeeded in their respective fields during the Civil Rights movements. Ofili describes the use of celebrity in this painting as a shorthand for brotherhood; the faces are recognizable close up, but their identical Afro hairstyles are meant to amalgamate them into a collective. "It's

not about identifying faces, it's about dissolving faces." he has said of the work. The background is a pulsing array of colourful dots, inspired by the formative Zimbabwe trip, where Ofili encountered tribal paintings in caves which he says reminds him of 'rhythm of chants and drumbeats'.

It is this exuberant, joyful way of painting, mixing together influences from jazz to hip hop to celebrity that has characterized Ofili's work through the decades. However, even in its irreverence and surface level frivolity, his work has bite.

Ofili won the Turner Prize in 1998, the first black artist to do so (he remains to this day one of two: Steve McQueen won the following year). One of the works submitted as part of portfolio was *No Woman, No Cry*. Named after the Bob Marley song, the canvas is of a black woman, inspired by Doreen Lawrence, crying. Huge white tears fall down the length of the canvas, and inside each tear is the face of Stephen Lawrence, who was stabbed to death in 1993 in South London in a vicious racist attack. The painting reflected the grief and frustration that the Lawrence family, and the wider black community, felt at the fact that men who had committed the murder had been arrested but never convicted. The Stephen

Lawrence inquiry would later find two of the men guilty, and in 2011, they were sentenced. The inquiry found evidence of systemic and institutionalised racism at the Metropolitan police during the 90s.

After a period of relative absence from the art world from 2010, Ofili returned with *Blue Devils*, painted in 2014. In *Blue Devils*, gone is the elephant dung, gone are the bright hues and dots; this is a

**\\ Ofili's painting is exuberant, joyful, mixing together influences from jazz to hip hop to celebrity \\**

pared down Ofili.

The vast, almost three-metre high canvas is entirely blue as nebulous shapes painted in slightly different shades of blue and black emerge and dissolve. It was inspired by the performers who cover themselves in blue pigment and descend on the annual Carnival in Paramin, Trinidad, pitchforks in hand. This disquieting otherness and

violence of course carries a dual meaning. 'Blue' in this case could just as easily refer to 'the boys in blue', police officers, both in America and the UK.

Black men face discrimination at the hands of police in both countries. This has been most stark in America in light of the police brutality and many killings of black men that has sparked the Black Lives Matter movement. In Britain, with the merciful lack of firearms, the violence is less overt and yet the discrimination no less potent. *The Guardian* reported last year that black people were up to 17.5 times more likely than white people to be stopped and searched by the police in some parts of the UK. This disparity in stop and searches (the majority of which do not end in arrest) show what absolute power the police can have to inconvenience at best, humiliate and hurt at worst. *Blue Devils* with its undercurrent of menace, portrays this eloquently.

In January next year, Tate Britain will be holding a retrospective of Ofili's work, bringing together his earliest work with his more recent output. There could not be a more timely return to Ofili's paintings.

Indira Mallik

# One from the archives

to feature in a centrefold email [felix@ic.ac.uk](mailto:felix@ic.ac.uk)







**S**et in 1969 Connecticut, David Hare's new play is based on thriller novel 'La Main' written by Belgian author Georges Simenon. The underlying themes include jealousy, sexual desire, and how impulsive actions can drive a man to insanity.

The production itself has a strong start, with 2 couples amidst heavy snowfall attempting to make their way home from a high society party after their car was stuck in snow. The effects were really intense, with a wind blower that would put Dyson hand dryers to shame. When they finally make it home, only the two women make it inside. They're swiftly followed by a man, Donald Dodd, played by Mark Strong who you may have seen in *Body of Lies*, *Sherlock Holmes* or *The Imitation Game*. After several minutes of panic, the trio realise that the fourth member of their group and Mona's husband, Ray, is not coming back. Donald again leaves the safety of the house for a further two hours, coerced by his wife, Ingrid, to try and find him. However, this is to no avail. What happened to Ray? Is he alive?

The events that follow focus on the effect the inevitable death of this man has on the three survivors.

As the story unfolds, we see Donald, initially a dull yet loyal and good-natured

**\\ This gripping tale of deceit, betrayal, and affairs, staged with intensity and drama will not disappoint \\**

figure in his family and community, get dragged into an affair. This, of course, is with the beautiful widowed actress Mona, played by Elizabeth Debicki, who most recently starred in *The Night Manager*. As rumours start to spread, many start to wonder what happened on the night of the snow storm. Did Donald really go out searching for Ray that night? Did he have secret motives to let this man, his former best

friend from Yale, die in the cold? This thrilling and gripping tale of deceit, betrayal, extra-marital affairs, and madness culminates in a chilling ending, which I guarantee will not disappoint.

One of the most interesting things about the play itself is the way four black screens from all sides of the stage create a sort of square pinhole effect between scene changes, focusing on certain characters almost like a lens. The screens also frame rooms of differing dimensions, creating a small black box around cramped low-ceilinged rooms and widening again when, for example, we're shown Mona's spacious Manhattan apartment. As you'd expect from the National Theatre, the set is extremely well designed and the black framing made it feel almost like a cinema screening. Even in scene changes, telephone calls booming from the speakers enable the narrative to continue moving without the actors in sight.

On the whole, this play was a continuous 110 minutes of top-notch acting and a gripping plot. I would happily see it again and hope you make the effort whilst it's on in Southbank!

## The Red Barn



Elizabeth Debicki in *The Red Barn* \\ National Theatre



Lizzie Riach

**The Red Barn is on at the National Theatre until 17th January 2017.**

Mon – Sat 7.30pm  
Thurs & Sat 2.15pm  
Runtime : 10 minutes

Tickets £15 - £65.

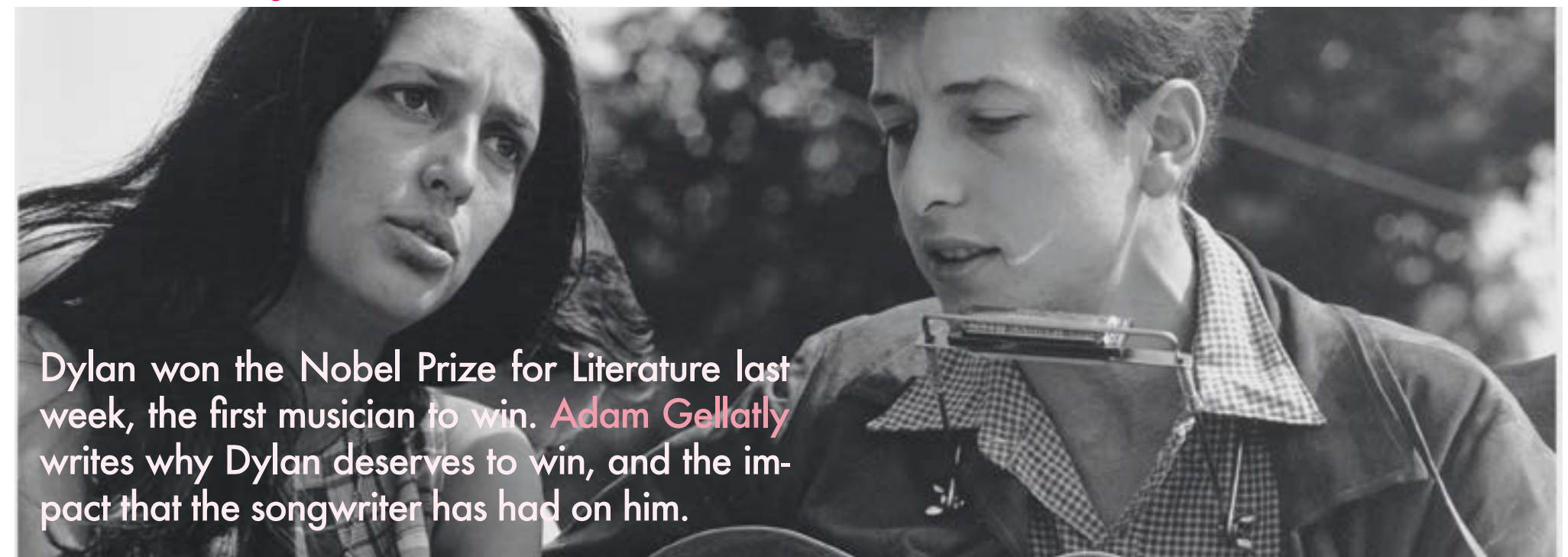
Concessions Available.  
Book ahead



\\National Theatre



## Bob Dylan first musician to win Nobel Prize



Dylan won the Nobel Prize for Literature last week, the first musician to win. Adam Gellatly writes why Dylan deserves to win, and the impact that the songwriter has had on him.

Bob Dylan and Joan Baez, who gave Dylan his first big break \\ Archives Foundation

**B**ob Dylan has never not been a part of my life; his songs were played constantly in my parents' car and home throughout my childhood. Despite his reputation as a lyricist, it was the sound, not the content of his songs, that I first fell in love with. *Positively 4<sup>th</sup> Street*, a single never to appear on an LP, stands out amongst my early Dylan listening. With a plodding piano melody and Al Kooper's unmistakable organ playing leading into his voice, it sums up the sound that Dylan was recording in 1965. It was a sound that marked the end of Bob the folk singer and the start of Dylan the rock star, a sound so beautiful that as a 7-year-old you don't fully appreciate that the song is a rather vicious attack on a former friend. In a similar way to *Like a Rolling Stone*, there's an immense amount of anger in his words, but not his voice; for Dylan, the subject matter does not stand in the way of a great song. Once you start to listen to the lyrics, though, my god do the songs take on a new life.

I did so, inadvertently, while doing homework on a winter

night in my early teens. I decided to put on the album *Bringing It All Back Home*; I did this a lot, but normally didn't get past the first three tracks: *Subterranean Home Sick Blues*, *She Belongs to Me*, and *Maggie's Farm*. I loved these songs so much by this point that I would always skip back to the start of the album once the third

**\\ Before Dylan (and the Beatles), the idea that a chart topping musician would sing their own songs was unthinkable \\**

had ended so I could hear them all again. I guess I was distracted by my work and so forgot to do so that particular evening. The album ran. By the time the penultimate track came on I'd finished the homework and started to listen to each and every word. *It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)* is, to this day, perhaps the single greatest example of song writing I've had the pleasure

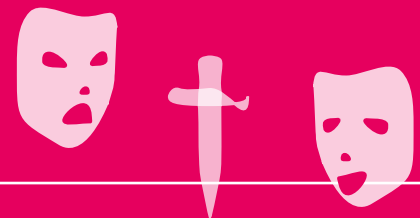
of encountering. No backing band this time, just the folk singer, accompanied by a harmonica and an eerily quiet guitar, whose simple chord progression changes little over the song's seven and a half minute run time. I listened to those seven and a half minutes on loop for the rest of the evening and I've been listening to them regularly ever since. Each and every line written and sung by the then 24-year-old stands out. "Darkness at the break of noon", "Advertising signs that con you into thinking you're the one, that can do what's never been done", "For them that must obey authority..... Do what they do just to be nothing more than something they invest in", "Money doesn't talk, it swears"; most lyricists would be prepping a Grammy acceptance speech for having penned just one. Bob Dylan wrote 15 verses of them (oh, and choruses). Bob Dylan isn't most musicians, he's a Nobel Laureate. "For having created new poetic expressions, within the great American song tradition" read Prof. Sara Danius, Permanent Secretary of the Swedish Academy, on the announcement of Dylan's Nobel Prize in Literature win

last week. Right she is, but not only that: he performed those expressions. Pre-Dylan (and pre-Beatles), the idea that a chart topping musician would sing their own songs was unthinkable. Hits were written in office blocks by men in suits and handed to the likes of Elvis Presley for recording. It is fitting then, that Dylan,

**\\ Dylan's songs are as great a work of literature as a collection of novels, as much poetry to read as they are songs to listen to \\**

with 37 studio albums to his name and having reinvented himself constantly over the last 54 years (from acoustic to electric and back to acoustic, from rock to country, from a secular voice to that of a man who has just found Jesus), becomes the first musician to win the prize in its 115-year history. Much has been said over the past week as to whether the award should be presented a singer at all.

*Tarantula*, a prose poetry book and the first volume of his autobiography, are all Dylan has written in terms of original literature. On top of that his music has been critically acknowledged his entire career (13 Grammy wins and an Academy Award to name but a few), so is there any need to be lavishing him with a prize intended for those who occupy the world of written expression only? Others, however, have argued that his lyrics themselves, published several times, are as great a work of literature as any author's collection of novels and that they are as much poetry to read as they are songs to listen to. Dylan has not yet spoken publicly about his Nobel Prize, despite playing a gig in Las Vegas hours after it was announced. A quote from the man himself, given during a press conference in San Francisco in December 1965, in response to whether his music or his lyrics are more important, is perhaps the best argument one could give for the greatest songwriter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century winning writing's most coveted award: "The words are just as important as the music. There'd be no music without the words".



## Picasso's portraits reveal more about the artist

**C**ubism. People made out of sharp angles and brightly coloured geometric shapes stacked on each other in a wild, psychedelic form of portraiture. This is what defines Picasso in the public perception. Picasso's portraits at the National Portrait Gallery certainly deliver on that front, but far more intriguingly places his cubist work in the context of Picasso's entire oeuvre which encompasses a range wider than certainly I had anticipated.

The NPG has gathered together all sorts for this exhibition from huge canvases of almost Impressionistic work to doodles on tablecloths, mixed

\\ Picasso's subjects are deconstructed in the cubist tradition; pulled apart and re-stitched in technicolour \\

the corridor connecting two gallery spaces are small collages of unflattering drawings of Picasso's friend and assistant, Jaume Sabartés. He is shown as a small man with cartoonish bulbous features leering at gorgeous women: glamorous actresses cut out

long, straight nose, and the same almond shaped eyes. It's not hard to see why the goddess of wartime wisdom, a symbol of strength and fortitude, might've been on Picasso's mind at the time. The Athena motif is recurring. In the 1931 bronze *Head of a*

*in a Hat (Olga)*, painted in 1935, the year of their separation, Olga is replaced by white and green shapes, two over-large staring eyes and uncertain black slash for a mouth. Atop this forlorn collection of shapes sits a large upturned kidney bean

never looking at the viewer and are out of reach. As the women become more familiar to Picasso they are deconstructed in the cubist tradition, pulled apart and re-stitched in technicolour. They somehow become more present and at the same time are abstract, robbed of their humanity. Men are almost never given the same treatment.

The men Picasso paints are those he respects. He borrows themes from Matisse, Ingres and Velasquez, placing himself in the pantheon of the European artists.

The most revealing of the works displayed is a self-portrait. A small monkey dances with a grin on its face. This is

\\ Picasso's cubist sculpture is vaguely reptilian, like plates on a suit of armour or the shell on an armadillo \\



A *Woman in a Hat (Olga)* by Pablo Picasso \\ Collection Centre Pompidou, Dist. RMN Grand Palais

media collages, sculpture, and of course his cubist paintings.

The exhibition, spanning work from the several decades of Pablo Picasso's career, weaves through his many phases, and reveals a great deal of the evolution of his style and his work. More importantly perhaps, it reveals a great deal about Picasso's attitudes to women, to himself, and to other artists.

We witness the beginning of a career with cartoons drawn for friends, these are scratchy, exaggerated caricatures brimming full of life and character. In another room, there is the magnificent *Portrait of Sebastia Junyer i Vidal* (1903), a prominent work from his Blue period. The figures seem to glow, lit from within. Running down

from magazines.

Dotted throughout the rooms are sculptures quite different from the surreal, fiercely modern work exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York last year. One in particular stands out: 1909 bronze *Head of a Woman (Fernande Olivier)* is cubism rendered 3D. Here, Olivier's face appears gnarled, distinctly reptilian, like plates on a metal suit of arms or the shell on an armadillo. Others, more than anything, reveal the impact and influence classical art had on Picasso. *Head of a Woman (Dora Maar)*, sculptured during the second World War in 1941, could be a bust of Athena lifted straight from ancient Rome; the same

*Woman (Marie Thérèse)* there the profile is again, and in the 1962 *Jacqueline with a Yellow Ribbon* the same features are present.

Much of this exhibition revolves around Picasso's portrayal of women. An entire room is dedicated to Picasso's paintings of his first wife, Olga Stepanovna Khokhlova. The paintings early on in their relationship are figurative, traditionally beautiful. In the 1923 *Portrait of Olga Picasso*, Olga appears against a plain background, flatteringly lit. This room, and the one that follows, displays Picasso's portraits of his subsequent lovers and wives and serves only to make clear what Picasso thought of women.

"There are only two types of women," he said, "goddesses and doormats". The women, early on in their acquaintance with Picasso, appear in figurative paintings or drawings, goddess-like. They are almost

how Picasso saw himself, an impish rebel, even as he was hailed as one the century's greatest artists.

Many have accused Picasso of rampant misogyny, many other of genius; this exhibition displays all these facets without flinching. The NPG has gathered together some rarely seen works. It's worth going if only to see what all the fuss is about.

Picasso Portraits is on at the National Portrait Gallery until 5th February 2017

Tickets from £14.50



Indira Mallik



## The Crucible and the politics of fear



Anya Chalotra \\ Clive Barda



Ezra Kitson

The Crucible is at The Milton Court Theatre, until 22nd October 2016.

Every day 2.00pm or 7.00pm

Tickets £10. Student £5.

**G**od may be dead, but Miller's legacy lives on in a refreshing take on The Crucible at Guildhall's Milton Court theatre. The Crucible gives a semi-fictionalised account of the Salem witch trails that occurred in Massachusetts Bay Colony at the end of the 17th century. In an escalating atmosphere of religious paranoia, mass hysteria sweeps through Salem village as bewildered children 'confess' to alleged crimes of witchcraft and begin to testify against their neighbours. The accused are sentenced to die while the confessors are rewarded with impunity.

Written during the second Red Scare in 1952 the play is intended as an allegory of McCarthyism and an indictment of the House of Representatives. The consequences of state paranoia of communism were high; 320 artists were blacklisted on the basis of unsubstantiated rumours, and Miller himself was questioned by the House Un-American Activities Committee. In this crucible of suspicion, all individuals become subject to unbearable pressures.

These themes are entirely

pertinent today. One doesn't have to look far to see how terrorism in the 21st century breeds vigilance and mistrust. Nor are we still surprised that Trump's jingoisms have reached the level of fanatical. Are we experiencing McCarthyism in the modern age? This was certainly a question I was pondering as I left the

\\ The Crucible, initially a response to McCarthyism and paranoia towards communism, is just as relevant to today's political climate \\

theatre, a tribute to an immersive performance.

Continuity-wise, the performance does not stray far from classic interpretations. In 1953, the play's first Broadway run received poor reviews, and Miller chastised the over-stylised production and its "pitiless sets of rude buildings". The subsequent re-cast was far less embellished in nature, and this is the vein in which director Mike Alfred has conducted the Guildhall performance.

The production is

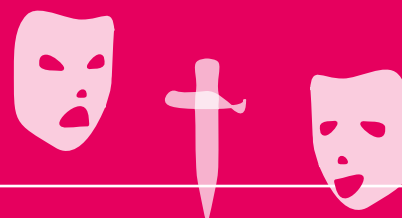
minimal. The stage is bare of everything except a few wooden benches and props are used rarely. A backdrop of knotted rope hangs as an ominous reminder of the fate awaiting the accused. There is no music, and little off-stage dialogue means the actors on stage are constantly the focus of our eyes and ears. The stage is well lit, contributing to a lurid atmosphere of disquiet and surveillance.

The performances are impressively assured, especially given the age of the cast (all final year students at Guildhall). The pacing is good and the dialogue felt authentic and well accented to reflect the British heritage of the early pilgrims. Particular mention should be given to Caleb Roberts for a convincing portrayal of John Procter and Martin Quinn for the charisma he lent Reverend Hale. The calibre of talent at Guildhall is evidently high and difficult roles such as Tituba and Marry Warren were filled seamlessly.

Overall, this is a successful take on Miller's work and a great piece of amateur theatre. Guildhall tickets are cheap and the experience is well worth it. I would encourage any fans of theatre to seek out performances like this one.



Students at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama \\ Clive Barda



# Brexit, modernism, and art history



How deeply intertwined are politics and art? **Fred Fyles** argues they are closer than you might think and makes the case for the continuation of teaching A-level art history.

United Kingdom poverty line for two adults and two children: £24,436 as published on the 1st of September 2016 by Michael Dean \\ Archives Foundation

**B**rexit is the news topic that, like Japanese knot week, just refuses to die. Since the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> June, when pollsters and politicians alike woke to a country they didn't recognise, vast portions of the media have been trying to unpick the decision of 52% of voters. There is no aspect of life that is safe from Brexit, not even linguistics; the British tongue has been forced to contort itself around portmanteaus like Bremain, Bremoaners, and Brenial.

Even the world of art isn't untainted: last week a YouGov poll was released, which served as a perfect analogy for the state of the nation, a Brexit in miniature. The poll showed over 4000 members of the public a selection of artworks – from classics like Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, through Pop Art, right up to the four Turner Prize nominees – and asked them the deceptively simple question 'Is this art?' None of the works received universal acceptance; even *Mona Lisa*, perhaps the most recognisable instance of Western art in the world, was viewed with suspicion by 2% of those surveyed.

Alongside this, the surveyors collected data about how

respondents voted in the EU referendum, and this is where things get really interesting. For nearly all works, those who voted to leave the EU were less likely to think it was art than their Remain counterparts. This difference was particularly marked in the responses for more abstract art, which sharply diverged. For Mark Rothko's *Untitled (Yellow, Orange, Yellow, Light Orange)*, a classic example

**\\ There is no aspect of life that is safe from Brexit, not even art \\**

of Abstract Expressionism, the Remain camp voted 45% in favour of it being art, while in the Leave camp only 21% thought it was. Similar differences were found with works by Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, and Marcel Duchamp.

What does this mean? Well, the most obvious argument would be that those voted Leave are as closed to free artistic expression as they are to freedom of movement. It is this lack of openness, this refusal to understand the other, that most commentators seized upon in the run-up to and fallout from the

result; Leave were painted as parochial bigots, with no real appreciation of European culture. Certainly, this has an element of truth, but it's an interpretation as basic as it is dull. Taking another look at the data, things get interesting.

The Leave camp didn't overwhelmingly reject the works they were presented with. There were two works which more Leavers claimed were art than Remainers – *The Singing Butler* by Jack Vettriano, and *Mystic Mountain* by Bob Ross. Both are works that are by-and-large completely rejected as real works of art by the majority of critics. Jonathan Jones, of *The Guardian*, said that Vettriano has "no imagination and heart", and paints "fetishistic, stylish objects...with a slick empty panache". Similarly, Bob Ross is better known for his PBS show, which aimed to spread the relaxing and uplifting potential of painting to the masses, rather than any critical acclaim.

These results reflect the distrust the Leave camp seemed to have of mainstream media and metropolitan elites – as Michael Gove quipped, "people in this country have had enough of experts". In many ways, they have a point. Can anyone really act as an adjudicator of what

constitutes 'real art'? Critics certainly try, and many live up to the caricature of a liberal elite: out of touch, snobbish, and uncaring about popular tastes. Is it really surprising that the Leave camp – after rejecting the mainstream media, leading industrialists, and global political leaders – would shun the condescension critics regularly place on work that

**\\ The continuation of art education is vital, not only for members of our royal family, but for every person in this country \\**

is quite visually appealing?

If this is the case, then the obscene decision from the government to scrap art history A-level makes even less sense. The country is divided along fault lines, both political and aesthetic. London-based liberals feel their country counterparts are backwards while home county conservatives see metropolitans as a snobbish mob. Perhaps if more people were exposed to art, and educated about it, there would be less

of this ridiculous and pointless division.

And what of Michael Gove's ridiculous idea that art history is a 'soft' subject? It is a subject that combines a number of other disciplines – knowledge of the politics of the country and time a work was produced is invaluable. Scientific developments in the art of painting form a key part of the context in which art is made. Art history engages our critical thinking and trains our evaluative faculties. Even STEM subjects cannot be divorced from a base of philosophy. Art history is rooted in the same basis as chemistry or biology – a deep thirst for knowledge.

Brexit was a cry of a number of individuals who felt they were locked out of the political arena. What could be the use of locking them out of our art galleries too? The continuation of art education is vital, not only for members of our royal family, but for every person in this country. By cutting it, we are telling people that the right to view art, to engage with it, is nothing more than a 'privilege'. The government say that it is part of school reform, but all I can see is a move that will drain our cultural capital, encourage regional divisions, and deny people a voice.

Aziz Ansari and co in *Master of None* \\ Netflix

## Tearing down TV's ghettos

**D**onald Glover: creator, writer and star of *Atlanta* is a guy I don't think that can be classed as anything other than a genius. Having such an expansive career as a writer, stand-up, actor and rapper at such a young age isn't something that most could manage. Neither could most create such a great show as *Atlanta*. The most adequate way I can describe it would be as a

\\ Though the show sticks with a half-hour comedy format, it really excels in straddling the line between drama and comedy \\

more fictionalised counterpart to Louis CK's *Louie*. Taking place in the city where Glover

himself grew up, the show primarily follows Glover's Earn Marks, a man struggling to keep his head above water financially who gets a small lucky break when he finds that his cousin, Paper Boi, has released a locally popular mixtape. The two, along with their friend Darius, seek to keep the fame train rolling. Despite this premise, you never feel like this is really in grasp for the characters, but you hope with them all the same. Though the show sticks with a half-hour comedy format, it really excels in straddling the line between drama and comedy, never quite coming down on either side in any given scene. This is shown most expertly in a scene in episode 2 dealing with a mentally ill man in jail. This scene is a great example of the way the show portrays dealing with the experience of Black America. While never forcing it down your throat, the constant awareness and understanding of the characters' poverty

**A**s *Master of None* explained late last year, time was when if you had more than one black person in a show, it would be written off as a 'black show'. In fact, time still is that having more than one Asian person in a piece results in it being known as an 'Asian show'.

However, with the increasing democratisation of TV, and the general on going streaming service paradigm shift, this is slowly beginning to change. Shows like *Atlanta*, *Luke Cage*, *Master of None*, *Citizen Khan* and *Fresh off the boat* have penetrated the mainstream, consistently pulling in high viewership numbers and critical receptions. Alongside the growing volume of people of colour in our visual media, the variety of characters has also blossomed. Obviously, we've started slowly drifting away from stereotypes, but in

addition to this we've begun to reach the stage where characters aren't defined by their race. Now, of course it's great to have characters make grandiose statements about their race and place in the world, but sometimes it's nice to have someone who's like you just there: no fuss, no fanfare. It gives you a

\\ It's great to have characters make grandiose statements about their race and their place in the world \\

distinct feeling of belonging and a triumphant assurance that this is the way it should be. Unrestricted inclusion also generates better and fresher content through the conveyance of a range of experiences. The spread

of narratives that wouldn't traditionally have received wide exposure or new takes on existing stories and that might better engage people is only good for entertainment. A curious counter-argument surfaces to this. People bemoan 'diversity for the sake of diversity', but this is one case where this is a good thing. 'Minorities' have spent decades relating to white characters and will continue doing so. Is it too much to ask that we try relating to a few of them?



Anurag Deshpande

## Atlanta



Atlanta shows us an experience of Black America \\ FX

\\ I certainly feel comfortable calling this one of the best shows of the year \\

'black show' with an all-black writing staff makes it timely as well with the heightened racial tension across the states at the moment. While it hasn't yet finished its first season, I certainly feel comfortable calling this one of the best shows of the year. It really is a testament to Donald Glover to have another such wildly successful project under his belt. The one thing I don't like about this show is that it means Donald will have less time to devote to his music.

Harry Wilkinson





# Luke Cage and the black superhero



Luke Cage, star of Netflix's latest series \\ Netflix/Marvel



Henry Wild

In a time where comics books have been rapidly diversifying their casts, their on-screen counterparts have been increasingly left behind. Recently, however, that is beginning to change, and leading the charge is Marvel's *Luke Cage*.

Marvel finally has its first black lead character in the invulnerable *Luke Cage*, and he's not clothed in primary coloured spandex, but rather in a hoodie filled with bullet holes. Given that the same piece of clothing is heavily associated with the Black Lives Matter movement (which began after the killer of Trayvon Martin, a 17 year old African American in Miami murdered back in 2012, was acquitted of all charges) it doesn't take an English Literature graduate to see the symbolism here. However, the bulletproof Luke Cage wasn't always a symbol of black power. He first appeared in *Luke Cage: Hero for Hire* in 1972 as part of the 'Blaxploitation' movement. The 'Blaxploitation' genre of media was one designed to target a young, urban, and African American audience, and is notable for featuring a mainly black cast, as well as a primarily funk/soul based soundtrack. While some considered the 'Blaxploitation' genre as representing black empowerment, the general consensus is that it was instead just perpetuating stereotypes about black people. Its characters' main traits were almost always their skin colour and other stereotypically connected attributes such as being 'intimidating' or having a lack of respect for authority.

Thankfully, *Luke Cage* moved past that, as well as his original costume of an almost entirely unbuttoned yellow shirt, a chain belt, and a metal headband thing. As his character, and thankfully his dress sense, improved throughout his comic run, he became one of Marvel's better known characters. While he certainly isn't as popular as Iron Man, he is at least well known among comic fans. Luke Cage's history in 'Blaxploitation', however, isn't forgotten by the series, one shining example of this being a scene wherein the use of the n-word by a kid prompts Luke to give a

Martin-Luther-King-esque speech which still gives me shivers to watch.

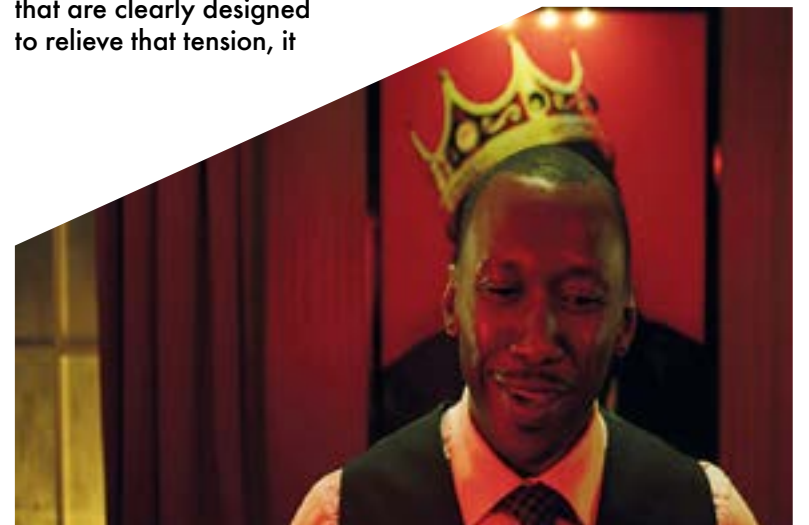
*Luke Cage*, played by The Good Wife's Mike Colter, was first introduced in the MCU in *Jessica Jones* as a quiet foil and love interest to Krysten Ritter's drunken titular character, a role which he played to a tee. Given his quiet demeanour in that series, some people raised concerns over whether he

\\ Its characters' main traits were almost always their skin colour and other stereotypically connected attributes such as being 'intimidating' \\

could hold a whole show by himself. Thankfully those concerns were entirely unfounded as he plays a much more conflicted character than he did there, torn between helping others and keeping himself hidden. While Colter's acting is more than sufficient, there are other problems with the series. Although Luke Cage does a largely excellent job with its characters and the basic premise of the show's story arc is fine - a petty crime drags Luke into fighting a world of organised crime that he originally had no desire to fight - its pace is not quite right. After a slow and tense build to Luke's call to action, despite a couple of moments that are clearly designed to relieve that tension, it

never quite feels like that tension is paid off. Don't get me wrong, there are some intensely cool moments, most of them juxtaposed against the various songs playing in a club called Harlem's Paradise, one of the key locations, but (almost) none of them ever felt like they truly hit their mark. Beyond that and the script for one particular character (Spoilers: It's Diamondback) who kept quoting cringey Christian scripture like a robotic preacher on a loop, it truly is an excellent show.

As weird as it is to write, one of the things that sold me on this show was the abundance of references that I had absolutely no clue about. Whether it be the usage of a specific type of coffee for the oft-used swear jar, or a debate regarding various black pulp fiction writers, the usage of each reference that I didn't get was a reference that someone else did, another party being catered to beyond young white men. Luke Cage surrounds itself in the culture of Harlem, and black America in general, basking in the people and places that make it what it is. From being the main driving force behind one of the major antagonists of the series to the reason why Luke stays and fights a battle that he doesn't have to, it's clear that Harlem is the true protagonist of this story, and quite fittingly, a bulletproof black man in a hoodie filled with bullet holes its agent.



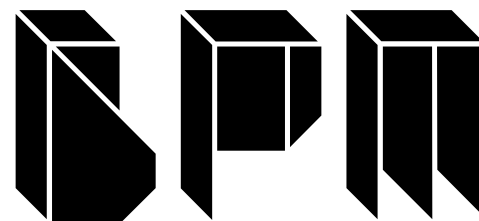
Mo' powers mo' problems \\ Netflix/Marvel

# FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER



## COCKTAIL NIGHT

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SPECIAL STUDENT VOTED THEMED NIGHT FEATURING THE MUSIC OF

FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER

20:00 - 02:00

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£1.50 GUESTLIST

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FEATURING THE MUSIC OF  
*THE CHAINSMOKERS*

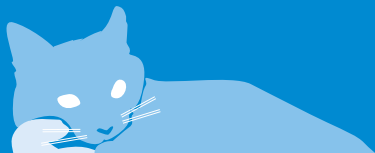
CALVIN  
HARRIS



MAJOR  
LAZER

## COMING UP!

Venue	Regular Events	Time	Day
Metric & FiveSixEight	BPM	20:00 - 02:00	Friday 21 October
FiveSixEight	Super Quiz	20:00 - 22:00	Every Tuesday
Metric	Cocktail Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Tuesday
Metric & FiveSixEight	CSP Wednesday	19:00 - 01:00	Every Wednesday
Metric & FiveSixEight	iPOP Halloween Special	20:00 - 02:00	Friday 28 October
h-bar	Pub Quiz	19:00 - 21:00	2nd & 4th Thursday
h-bar	PGI Friday	16:00 onwards	Every Friday
Reynolds	Quiz Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Monday
Reynolds	Board Games & Film Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Tuesday
Reynolds	Sports Night	18:00 onwards	Every Wednesday
Reynolds	Pizza Club	18:00 - 23:00	Every Thursday
Reynolds	Cocktail Night	17:30 onwards	Every Friday
The Foundry	Quiz Night	19:30 - 22:00	1st & 3rd Thursday
The Foundry	Karaoke Night	20:00 - 23:30	2nd & 4th Friday



## Rez Infinite



Area 2 \\ Enhance Games



Cale Tilford

**Rez Infinite by Enhance Games is out now on PS4 and PS VR**

be like – a landscape built from 3D meshes, hexagons, floating cubes and circuit board-like textures.

Anti-aliasing smooths out all the lines, giving the game a more modern feel,

\\ The improved visual fidelity and sound make *Rez Infinite* feel like a game that has barely aged \\

while low-res textures add to the 80s inspired aesthetic. The many floating objects, swirling monsters and floating battleships are quite unlike anything in gaming today. Yet surprisingly, this vision of a cyber-dystopia looks back in time more than it does forward: at the beginning of each boss encounter the player hurls towards and through a massive digital monument. From pyramids to greek temples, these structures house inside them god-like creatures that the player must defeat. The forms of these creatures are constantly in flux, often coming in multiple stages, and they're far more challenging than the levels that precede them.

Simplicity is where *Rez* succeeds the most. The on-rails shooter genre has disappeared from mainstream

gaming over the last decade but with VR it looks like it might see a revival.

In *Rez* the player's avatar floats throughout each level, like the snowman from Raymond Briggs' cherished children's picture book. Unlike other shoot 'em ups, Mizuguchi's masterpiece does not require players to furiously press the triggers of their Dualshock controller. *Rez* uses a lock-on system, where holding down the 'X' button and hovering over enemies sets them as a target. Release 'X' and the game automatically fires missiles and ammo at each target in rhythm with the game's soundtrack. This gives players the freedom to play in different ways; they can try and select every target on the screen at the same time or go for small clusters on opponents in quick succession. These different approaches are unlikely to change a player's success but can have a large effect on the music.

At times, the music of *Rez* almost becomes background music, not because it's uninteresting but because it becomes part of the player's decision making, subtly controlling their in-game actions. The vibrations of your controller act as a sixth-sense, a thumping rhythm that never lets up. Defeating different enemies makes different sounds that dissolve perfectly in the endless beating of the background track. Scatter your

aim across lots of small targets and the game responds with a sequence of snare drums while destroying larger enemies creates deeper, bassier sounds.

Completing the original five stages rewards the player with access to Area X, a glimpse at the potential future of the series. This new stage goes off rails and offers a different vision of a cyber landscape – a world illuminated by laser-dot pointillism rather than the grids and thick lines of the prior five areas. The gameplay itself is unchanged but the music takes a more modern twist, inspired by recent electronica

\\ The on-rails shooter genre has disappeared from mainstream gaming over the last decade but with VR it looks like it might see a revival \\

such as *Four Tet*. Together, the vastly different music and graphics make something that feels more open and dream-like. Since 2002, the way we see the internet has changed drastically. *Rez Infinite* reflects that change, with Area X a representation of the freedom that the modern web gives us.

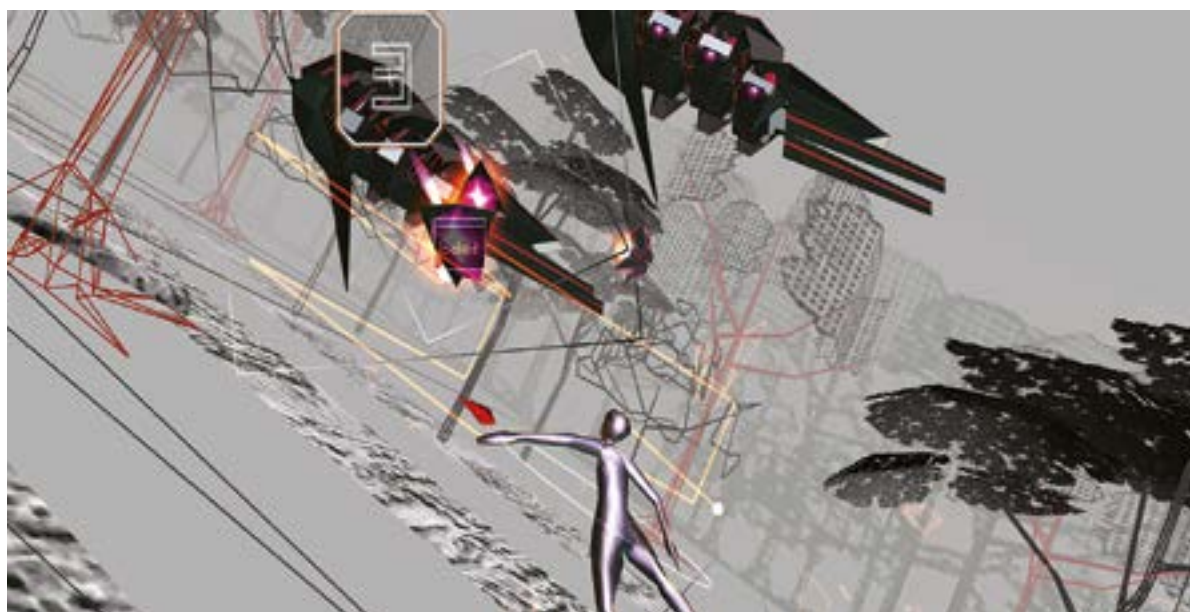
There is a certain aesthetic, pioneered by movies like *Tron*, that popular entertainment still returns to today;

an 80's vision of a virtual future that never came to be. Our nostalgia for this type of visual style was what helped make *Rez* a cult hit when it was first released for the Dreamcast and PlayStation 2 back in 2002. In the original, producer Mizuguchi realised a vision of a computer "supernetwork" navigated by an on-screen avatar that would now be called 'retro'. But it wasn't the gameplay or graphics that set *Rez* apart.

It was a rhythm game that didn't require players to think about rhythm, an on-rails shooter set to electronic music enhanced by the player's actions.

Today, even without experiencing the VR mode of the game, the improved visual fidelity and sound make *Rez Infinite* feel like a game that has barely aged. Its simple rail shooter mechanics (a genre which barely exists in 2016) are a welcome relief from the complex controls of popular rhythm games or third-person shooters.

*Rez* captures perfectly the classic vision of what being inside a computer might



Floating in a sea of Low Rez textures \\ Enhance Games



# Subcontinental Appreciation Soc



*felix* investigates the many jewels of the subcontinent that London has to offer, ignoring the pilfered gems and riches of the V&A in deference to the wonder of a curryhouse that is Hopper, in Frith Street.

Christy Lam

**H**ow do I define a curry?  
I can say that a curry is that exotic, fragrant, bright orange-coloured tikka masala in your disposable takeaway box on Friday curry night, along with poppadoms and yellow basmati rice.

In truth it is much more than that. It is a complex combination of herbs and spices, varying cooking algorithms and ingredients. Its deep history is not only exclusive to the subcontinent, but with much loved variations across many countries and religions. Despite its many different colours, accompaniments and recipes, we can all agree that a curry is not just a dish, but a culture. For me, a curry, a good curry, is like coming home after a long day leashed by lectures and project deadlines – my ultimate comfort food. Hong Kong-style curry fish balls set my mind back to my childhood days sneaking off to those street food hawkers in the narrow alleys after school. The balance of mellow spices and sweetness in a Japanese katsu curry from Tombo embraces my senses like my white, warm, fluffy bathrobe, even during their busy, buzzing lunch hours. The kick of heat from Dishoom's masala prawns sends sparks of excitement down my spine like watching a glittery Lush bath

bomb explode into a galaxy of colours in the bath tub.

Despite our reputation for transforming the wonderful, full-on Indian flavours into artificially coloured and frightfully bland adaptations (proudly named as the British national dish), London has never ceased to surprise me with spectacular, authentic curries. My last encounter with such a curry was at Hoppers, a restaurant serving authentic, family-style dishes inspired by Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu, a South Indian state.

This little canteen has earned quite some attention across the food community since it opened its doors at 49 Frith Street, with its cornflower blue walls and coral red steps against the dull brick walls of the rowdy neighbourhood. The no-reservation policy guaranteed long queues outside the tiny 40-seat restaurant every night. Knowing its popularity and tendency to form two-hour long queues, I visited at 12am on the dot on a hot summer weekday (yes, I skived off work for that), joining a short line of excited visitors who, like me, were anticipating the delicious, hearty food described in the numerous blogs, articles and online reviews.

I stepped through the navy blue door into an entirely different world. The room was dimly lit with warm yellow rays from the ceiling



lights, like rays of sunshine. Rattan covered the ceilings and the walls; the prominent earthy colours from the furniture to the tiles and the leaves dangling from the shelves created an exotic,

// Curry is not just a dish, but a culture //

holiday-like environment. For a split second, my mind was transported across the world from the gloomy British Isles to the subcontinent.

Feeling comfortable in my seat by the window, I ordered one of their special drinks to quench my thirst. The Rhubarb

and Lankan Ginger came in a tall glass with a beautiful peach-coloured ombre from top to bottom, garnished with a strip of rhubarb. The sweet, fizzy drink was like a ginger ale with a bit more heat.

The menu was simple and easy to read, sectioning into sides, short eats (small dishes), kothus (a Sri Lankan street dish made with a finely chopped roti cooked with vegetables, meat or seafood) and their signature hoppers. Following the recommendations online, I went for the bone marrow varuval from the short eats and their infamous egg hopper.

The bone marrow varuval came first on a brown, thick-bodied, earthenware

dish. The thick, orange sauce covered the pair of bones and glistened with the light, while radiating an appetising fragrance. A hand-sized circle of roti with golden brown patches accompanied the dish. I couldn't wait to start.

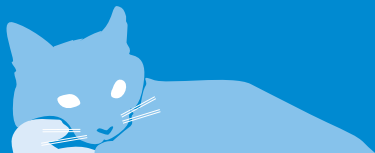
With the marrow scoop, I scraped the insides of the bone, dolloped the wobbly mixture onto a piece of roti and threw the combination into my mouth. It was an explosion of textures and wonderful flavours. The bone marrow melted into a rich, velvety liquid with deep flavours of lamb. The curry sauce surrounded the tongue with welcoming spices with a noticeable kick of heat. The roti dissipated into crispy, chewy strands which embraced and absorbed the sauces.

The hopper, the signature dish of the restaurant, came as a spectacular, thin, bowl shaped pancake made from fermented rice and coconut milk, with a runny egg splattered at the bottom, all on a hammered copper tray. It came with three condiments: pol sambol (a relish made with fresh ground coconut, sun dried bonito, onion and red chilli), seeni sambol (a caramelised onion relish) and a coriander chutney.

I broke off the crispy edge of the hopper and dunked it into the bright orange yolk. The pancake became softer and chewier towards the bottom; the relishes gave a variety of flavours and experimentation. It was more of a snack, but can be a meal when paired with the many karis available in the menu.

Hoppers definitely proved its worth for its hyped reviews and multi-starred ratings with its friendly ambience and approachable menu – and an exciting addition to the London curry scene!





# Diaries of a Student Baker



*felix* encourages the (mis) adventures of a new cook with a foray into that italian classic, Spaghetti a la Lloyd Grossman. This column might end up with a health warning one day...

Henry Throp

I am a man of few talents. In fact, I'm a man of such few talents that one of my few skills is to essentially boast to anyone and everyone of how untalented I am at a given activity. Take, for example, cooking. I will happily, nay, confidently tell you how I am on first name basis with most Deliveroo drivers, how my first potato cutting experience was straight out of a Tarantino movie or how my housemate (God bless his soul) had to promise my dear mother on the phone that he would make sure that I ate well this year.

So it was on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October a great surprise to wake up to find that I would be writing for the Food Column of *felix*. Now to say that I don't enjoy food would be a lie. Quite the opposite in fact, I enjoy the eating of food and take part in the act daily (one of the aforementioned talents), or browsing Ainsley Harriet based memes online, I have just never been one to create my own such food. But to write about making it? This was surely beyond me; a task akin to the Daily Mail writing articles on politics. Preposterous. Ridiculous. Impossible. I accepted. (Joke's on you *felix*, muhaha.)

After all, cooking is a fantastic skill to acquire, and I thought that if even I could

learn one simple meal at a time, then maybe this may be of help to other closet baker flakers at Imperial to seize the spatula and open the oven. What follows in the next few paragraphs is a record of my attempts to create what has been optimistically entitled "The Best Spaghetti Bolognaise" on the recipe section of the BBC website. I hope this may be of use; perhaps as a guide of what not to do as much as a useful recipe, but a guide nonetheless of cheap, easily-prepared meals for a busy student.

#### Ingredients

- Onions and Garlic
- Pasta
- Bolognaise Sauce (cheeky shout-out to my go-to bolognaise boy, Lloyd Grossman, available at all good supermarkets)
- Parmesan
- Mince
- Seasoning
- Lea and Perrins' Sauce
- Olive Oil

**Price** Below £10 for over 3 meals worth of food.

**Step 1** In which the onion and garlic were chopped

This was an emotional moment for me; with my first step into the world of cookery, I began to cry. But with the support of my housemate, we were able to successfully dice the onion and garlic. With the first sharp-edged hazard avoided, the next

task was to face fire. Having successfully scored a hat-trick of oven burns in my first year freshers' week, I was determined to not let the same fate befall me this year. With great care, the onions, some chopped garlic and some olive oil were placed into the pan and into the fire, with

// I am a man of few talents. In fact, I'm a man of such few talents that one of my few skills is to essentially boast to anyone and everyone of how untalented I am //

blasé disregard for common phrases, until they were 'sweating' (they had assumed a brown/coconut colouring.)

**Step 2** In which the mince is added

This step is fairly self explanatory. The mince was added.

**Step 3** In which Step 2 is explained

The mince was added to the pan and heated under a moderate flame. The meat was allowed to simmer for about 30 minutes, with the addition of the bolognaise sauce once the meat had turned brown

after approximately five minutes. Salt and pepper were also added to the meat at this time. The lid was placed on the pan, and a bottle of wine was consumed over a period of five minutes.

**Step 4** In which not a lot occurred

Wine had been consumed, and what happened over the following ten minutes is unknown. What can be assumed is that meat continued to simmer for the remainder of the 30-minute cooking period.

**Step 5** In which the pasta is boiled

Having filled a pan with water which is then brought to the boil, the pasta is added to this pan for approximately eleven minutes. I would suggest just trying a strand of the pasta anytime after ten minute and once it has assumed the texture that you want then you are good to go. The pasta can be drained, and the meat added. Bon Appetite.

**Step 6** In which a conclusion is drawn

I really, really enjoyed making the Bolognaise. Although I can't promise I won't still be catching up with my Deliveroo friends every once in a while, I know that I would like to take the opportunity to definitely cook some more. One thing I found from

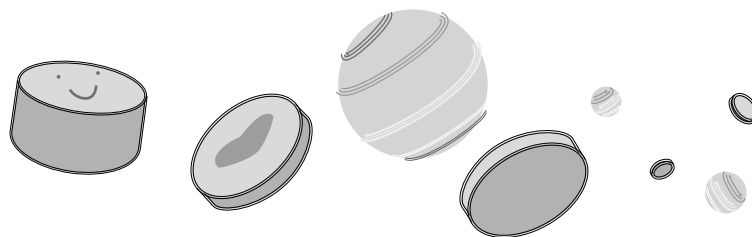
the whole experience, despite making such a big meal out of the process, was that it was easier than I expected. There is definitely more satisfaction in eating a meal that you have played a part in creating. Therefore, dear reader, I don't ask of you to use this recipe for future meals, although you are, of course, most welcome to, but I ask of you to be more open about your cooking. Take this article with a pinch of salt, quite literally, and don't be afraid to make a hash out of your meal, figuratively speaking, after all, if everything doesn't go to plan there is always Deliveroo (have I plugged these guys enough yet?). Exchange ideas for recipes and cook together with friends. The most enjoyable part of the whole process was the social side to cooking with my housemate, and I will be sure to give another meal a go in the next few days. Bring it on.

// Take this article with a pinch of salt, quite literally, and don't be afraid to make a hash out of your meal //



MILLENNIALS...

felix



# DRUGS

## Drug Bible | Marijuana 101

Weed Bud Mary Jane Herb Pot  
 Indica The Devil's Lettuce Grass Skunk  
 Ganja J Green Dope Wacky Tobaccy

### What it does

**Cannabis** is a depressant drug whose main psychoactive constituent is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). It kicks in within around half an hour, and makes you feel relaxed, gives some people the giggles, and makes most people really hungry. Your senses may be heightened, and at times may feel slow. Some people find that it makes them feel sleepy and forgetful.

Smoking weed makes some people feel anxious, and long term use is associated with psychosis, hallucinations, and paranoia in those who are vulnerable to mental illness.

### How you use it

**Cannabis** is used in many ways as derivatives of the cannabis plant. Different strains and preparations tend to have stronger effects due to the different amounts of THC contained and the method of absorption. The most common way to use cannabis is to smoke it. Unrefined dried cannabis can be rolled into cigarettes by itself, or along with tobacco. Hash, a resin form of cannabis, is often smoked crumbled into tobacco. Marijuana is famously used in cooking, traditionally in baked goods, as the active component is absorbed readily when dissolved in fats such as butter. Bong, and shisha pipes are often used to smoke cannabis, and word has it that the East London hipsters are all vaping their weed these days.

### Glossary

**Blunt** – a cigar filled with cannabis  
**Bong** – a pipe containing some water used for smoking  
**Joint** – a cannabis cigarette  
**Munchies** – the insatiable hunger experienced after smoking weed  
**Roach** – a small piece of cardboard at the mouth-end of a joint  
**Spliff** – a cigarette rolled with marijuana and tobacco  
**Stoned** – the blissful state of mind after smoking weed  
**Token** – to inhale marijuana smoke  
**Whitey** – to become dizzy or sick after smoking cannabis

### Some statistics

**Cannabis** is the most widely used drug in the UK, with 6.9% of adults aged 16-59 having used it in the last year. Of those who have ever taken illegal drugs (around one in three adults), 93% of them have taken marijuana, and for 82% of them, it was the first drug that they took.

### Things to do when you're high

#### Do

- Watch My Little Pony/cult movies (that don't make any sense except when you're high)
- Have sex (although be aware that having sex under the influence may lead to poor decision making, such as having unprotected sex)
- Explore new and exciting food combinations (like Pringles with Nutella – that shit tastes good)

#### Don't

- Masturbate (it will be painful and frustrating)
- Drink (no one wants to whitey)
- Watch Horror. You will be terrified, get paranoid and be unable to sleep
- Do a drug test (duh)
- Generally do not do tasks that require mental and physical dexterity, like driving, performing surgery or generally go to work

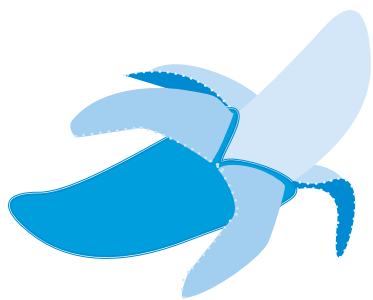
### Legality

In the UK it is illegal to possess any cannabis. For a first time offence, the police may issue a Cannabis Warning, which does not show up on criminal record checks. A Penalty Notice for Disorder, which is an £80 fine, may be issued on the spot for a second time caught with cannabis, and if this fine is paid promptly, no criminal conviction is recorded. If you're caught more than this, you can be arrested and be given up to five years in prison and an unlimited fine.

Surveys show that although the prevalence of marijuana use has increased to an all time high, the numbers of arrests and cautions have dropped by around 50% since 2010. In fact, in County Durham, you can grow small numbers of plants for your own personal use, and they'll turn a blind eye.

In many other countries, cannabis is legal. As well as the well known Dutch coffee shops, some countries including Portugal, the Czech Republic, the USA, and Uruguay have begun legalising cannabis for recreational or medicinal use in recent years. Other countries, such as Jamaica and Switzerland allow you to possess very small amounts for personal use, but forbid its sale or distribution.

If you're struggling with drug use, visit [talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com)



# SEX

## Are you a **Tinder** racist?

Lef Apostolakis

**R**acial discrimination. It's everywhere. Blatant or covert. If you deny that it's an integral part of our society, you're either an alien or white. Workplace, education, media. It seeps through every aspect of society. So it obviously comes as no surprise that it would influence the way we select our partners.

"Oh whatever", I can hear you say. "Race has nothing to do with physical attraction. How can you even measure physical attraction? Get off your politically correct high horse and face reality."

\\ If you deny that it's an integral part of our society, you're either an alien or white \\

Conveniently for me, we live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century where everything is digital, including love and sex, i.e. everything is quantifiable if you're willing to put in the hours. And that's exactly what OkCupid did first in 2009 and then again in 2014, looking at over 25 million users (which is a BIG sample). So what did they observe?

Well the pattern they found, I like to call the *I'm not racist, but pattern*, includes people feverently denying being racist but ending up falling into patterns that definitely exhibit racial bias.

To explain what I mean:

OkCupid saw that a very small percentage (approx 10%) of users openly objected to interracial marriage, which is almost as blatantly racist as forming a white hood wearing mob and prowling the streets with your mates. But actually, more than twice as many (approx 20%) said they would date someone with a vocal racial bias and over four times that number said they prefer dating individuals of their own race. Now remember. The sample size is 25 million. So we're talking big numbers here.

Looking more closely at their data, they saw that overall white males got the most replies when they initiated the conversation while they tended to ignore messages from black women. Similarly, white women tended to almost exclusively reply to white men. The same preference was not only also exhibited in Hispanic and Asian women, it was actually more pronounced.

What do these numbers mean? Well, we still maintain a fair amount of racial bias. Whiteness is desirable. And how can it not be when it's the prevalent standard of beauty in the fashion industry? When it's associated with power in politics, or with brains in academia. When a pairing of colour with crime, immigration, and extremism is constructed on a daily basis?

Some of the clearest illustrations of the desirability of whiteness can probably come from Grindr, a popular gay hookup app, though I often think of it as a meat market.

Your profile includes stats such as height, weight, body type and race. There is no swiping, on the contrary you are presented with a grid of users in order of proximity. You are able to do advanced searches and filter through potential mates, based on the above characteristics.



And of course there is the option for total anonymity. All these features combined allow for a good deal of racism.

From the fetishisation of certain races "Black to the front" to the blatant discrimination against others "No fems, no fats, no asians" – Yes, this staple text from real profiles and far more common than it should be. Just as I was writing this piece, I opened the app and within a 500m

radius found two profiles cashing in on the fetishisation of gay black men (with the inspired names "Blackguy" and "Blacktop"), one profile fetishising black men ("more attracted into darker skin guys") and one profile who wasn't into Asians "unless muscular".

"Racial bias is nothing new to me whether it's in the job market or a dating app," says a black user who wishes to remain anonymous. "The realistic view is that black guys are fetishised and criminalised at the same time. We are not playing at the same field [sic]". Indeed racial fetishisation is just a different side of the same coin. It is a result of racial stereotyping, with objectification as an added bonus. Homi Bhabha, a very important figure in postcolonial studies, argues that racial fetishism stems from colonial discourse, i.e. a discourse that recognises yet denies racial differences at the same time, allowing the construction of the 'other' and its demonisation and simultaneous idolisation.

Tinder, due to the swiping mechanism is harder to investigate. Again you construct a profile, but you're randomly pitted against other profiles, which you then have to swipe left or right on, depending on whether you like them or not. If you both swipe right there's a match and a platform for conversation is unlocked. This allows racial bias to remain relatively conspicuous. Yet racism always finds a way.

"I had a (white) guy on Tinder ask me if I had ever been with a black guy. I

asked why he was asking and he said he wouldn't sleep with me if I'd slept with a black guy. Suffice to say he didn't make it to a date", says an anonymous Imperial student.

We are genetically designed to seek out partners as different to us as possible. Different genetic makeups decrease the risk of inbreeding, increase the chances of finding a partner with a complementary immune system and produce healthier

\\ The realistic view is that black guys are fetishised and criminalised at the same time \\

offspring. Some theorise that the reason Brazilians are considered so attractive it that they are one of the planet's most outbred populations. So it's truly remarkable that a social construct such as racial bias can make us go so strongly against our nature.

Whether race is real or constructed (it's constructed) is irrelevant, because race has been used as a tool to mould society for centuries. Race butts into our collective discourse every time there's international conflict, whether that is cultural, financial or plain old war. It is used as the main fence to partition ideologies, beliefs and ways of life. So instead of denying racial bias in dating, let's look it straight in the eye and address it.



# CRISIS

Chris

Dear Chris,

I'm really not happy with the friends I have made in my first couple of weeks at halls. None of my two roommates respect my rampant cocaine use and my kitchen mates do not share my new love of chinos and bright pink polo shirts polos. Therefore Chris I was wondering if you could help me find some new friends, banker friends. I want someone who will take me out for a night out and pay for all my drinks with untattered £50 notes.

So Chris will you help me find my way into this confusing new world?

Best wishes

Kyle Freer

Hey Ham!

Kyle, I see your problem. Not everyone finds it easy to form friendships in the busy confusing world of halls. People who shouldn't live together are often pushed together and made to get along in ways god would not have intended. So don't worry, it might not be **totally** your fault.

To find new banker friends I would absolutely start with the degradation of your dangerously pure morality. It's hard to fall such a long way in a small time so start small, by putting the toilet roll on the wrong way; before slowly moving up to the heady heights of using up the last of your kitchen mates marmite.

Once you feel you are suitably degenerate it is best to move onto creating a single minded unadulterated love of money. Start watching *the Wolf of Wall Street*. That film may have come out last year but the combination of

Leonardo Di Caprio's beautiful performance as the dastardly Jordan Belfort along with the crisp editing of Martin Scorsese combines to give a satisfying full bodied story that is both entertaining and informative.

Now that you have watched *the Wolf of Wall Street* once, stop, take a moment to gather your thoughts and start the film again. Now you will be able to properly enjoy the film, watching knowing the end of the film (Jordan goes to prison, #sorrynotsorry) gives the ensuing screenplay a wonderful pathos which provides the film an undeniable emotional impact.

At this point I realise that I haven't watched *the Wolf of Wall Street* for around two days. Soz.

Yours faithfully  
Chris

# HOROSCOPES



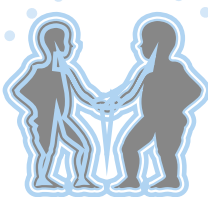
ARIES

This week your girlfriend from home unexpectedly comes to visit you in London and whilst it's a pleasant surprise, you were planning to break up with her. Oh well. Sex for breakfast, lunch and dinner it is.



TAURUS

This week you wonder whatever happened to Jedward. They might have perished in a great fire, caused by their insufferable hair being held together with five litres of hairspray catching fire. They're probably at a Butlins.



GEMINI

This week you realise you can vote twice in the autumn elections. So you contact the Union and cause the removal of 73 positions. You just had to open your mouth, didn't you?



CANCER

This week you fall in love with a stranger you meet at a club. You start picturing your life together, your three children, your pack of dachshunds. Your fantasy breaks down when you realise he's voting Trump.



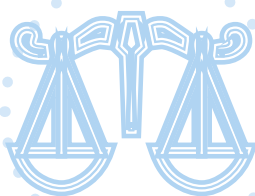
LEO

This week you receive a passive aggressive email that calls you an ungrateful immigrant who doesn't appreciate the opportunities he's been given. 15K a year these opportunities cost.



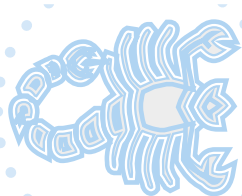
VIRGO

This week you're Boris Johnson and his leaked 'Remain' article. Don't know how bad this is? Imagine actually sending off your true feelings in peer assessment instead of your "showed great punctuality" one.



LIBRA

This week you wish that the Harambe meme would die as you think the joke became unfunny a long time ago. But you would, wouldn't you. You're no better than the zookeeper that shot him.



SCORPIO

This week you have one last chance to salvage your mess of a campaign in the final debate. You decide that the best cause of action is not to talk about the issues but be racist instead. Works every time.



SAGITTARIUS

This week it's your graduation but you failed to remember that Imperial is a money-sucking vampire and you pay close to £150 for the whole boring day. At least nobody dabbed at the cerem... oh wait.



CAPRICORN

This week you're the Union elections and are entered twice. I wish my sex life was that interesting.



AQUARIUS

This week you decide to hit the careers fair. You check out Network Rail but some douche says that's no place for a little lady. Not only is he sexist he's also oblivious to the fact you're a thirty year old man.



PISCES

This week you manage to flood your lab. You use nearly 1,000 copies of felix to mop your mess up. You leave no trace other than the suspicious absence of felix from the South Ken campus.



Abigail de Bruin talks to the director and star of 13

**Musical Theatre Society** recently performed the musical *13* in a double bill with DramSoc's performance of *Hair of the Dog* in their annual **October show**. We catch up with Trent Allen, the show's director to talk about how everything went and what it's like to be a director.

**How did you end up directing a musical with MTSoc?**

It's quite a funny story. No one had proposed a show for October show by the deadline back in June/July but I was around all Summer, being in fifth year, so I said to Roshani (MTSoc President) I'd be happy to be MD (Musical Director) if anyone needed one. She asked if I would be interested in directing. And I was like "If you're offering, sure, why not." Apparently they had a few other MDs that were interested but no one who wanted to direct. So I said "Fine, I'll give it a shot!"

Then we were trying to think of small cast, small band, short, low budget shows. I had done *13* with my Youth Theatre company, The Young Theatre, five years ago, and it just happened to be the first show that fit the bill that sprang to mind. Roshani who was also choreographing, liked it as well, so it became a choice just really instantly.

**So your directing team, it was you and Roshani?**

And Colm Molloy, who was the musical director

**So how did that come about? The three of you directing a show together?**

Roshani, as President, was always involved, and was happy to choreograph, especially with the lack of anyone else. I don't actually know how Colm got involved, I just remember Roshani telling me he was MDing.

**Did you do much work beforehand as a directing team before you were let loose on the cast, before or after auditions?**

Before Auditions, no, very little to be honest. I think the first time I met Colm was at auditions but we had spoken. And then yes, we did do

a lot of work before rehearsals. Roshani choreographed the whole show, and ended up producing it as well, since she's president of MTSoc and we didn't have a producer. I did all the blocking, deciding on set, lights, and deciding where I wanted people to go and how I wanted them to do things. So yeah, certainly an awful lot more for the start of rehearsals than the start of auditions.

**How much rehearsal time did you then actually get with the cast between auditions and show?**

We had a month of rehearsals essentially, four weeks and then show week. We rehearsed Sunday afternoons and Monday and Tuesday evenings. It was probably not quite 12 hours a week total though most people weren't needed for everything.

**How were you feeling by the night of the tech and the night of the dress rehearsal? Were they as horribly panicked as they often can be?**

I was optimistic heading into the tech rehearsal and it then proceeded to be in contention for the worst night of my life. Things that I thought we had sorted beforehand didn't happen or didn't exist. At that point, there was very little that I could do about it. I had done the planning. We'd had a meeting with the tech team and been through the whole show in a 'paper tech' rehearsal. So we'd been through all of the queues for all of the lighting and all of the set changes and how they were going to work and then they just didn't happen. We didn't have some of the set and we didn't have some of the sound effects.

Also, and I probably should have mentioned this earlier, I had to play one of the parts in the show for lack of people auditioning. There are supposed to be 13 characters in *13*. We cut two of them and then I

\\ I was optimistic heading into the Tech rehearsal and it then proceeded to be in contention for the worst night of my life \\



had to play another because we only had 10 cast members who auditioned. We were short a boy. We were also short another boy during the tech rehearsal because he had Technics rehearsal. So I had to essentially do the work/be in three places at once which didn't help. All three suffered for it. I wasn't the most helpful director I'm sure, or in the best place.

The dress was slightly better than the tech and then the first show was an awful lot better than either. It did go OK in the end.

**What was opening night like? Was it scary or did you feel prepared by then?**

I was fairly calm come opening night, I think because at that point I'd just accepted that what was going to happen was going to happen and there wasn't anything I could do about it. Thanks to an awful lot of MTSoc alumni turning up in the audience and making it an absolutely fantastic atmosphere there were laughs right from the get go and it was a wonderful night.

**So, you've had your experience, would you ever be interested in directing for MTSoc again?**

Yes, I would. Ideally not directing and acting in it, the Kenneth Branagh as someone called it. Yeah, it definitely feels like both ends suffered. I certainly only actually got into the part on opening night because that was the only time that I gave up on everything else,

since the directing was done. The directing wasn't done on the first night but I told myself that it was. So yes, I can definitely see myself directing again.

**So you were in a double bill with DramSoc, what did you think of the experience of being in a double bill?**

It's certainly a strange dynamic. First off I don't think we publicised clearly enough what was happening. Some people didn't realise that it was one show then an interval then another show so we could've worked on that. Other than that, it worked fine from our point of view, we just had to be quiet while DramSoc did their show before we then could then start warming up vocally in the interval.

**Did you get a chance to see their show at any point?**

Not on any of the nights, but I did see bits in rehearsal of course. It seemed funny from what I saw, I grasped the story but yeah I didn't see the whole show start to finish.

**In that case my last question is no longer quite so relevant, but it's one we want the answer to in the office. Has seeing Jack Steadman in a romantic role made you fall in love with him?**

I've always been in love with Jack Steadman.

\\ I had to play one of the parts in the show for lack of people auditioning \\

## DramSoc does *Hair of the Dog*



The premise of this show is a simple one. Keith, played by Jack Steadman, wakes up hungover as all hell and with no memory of what happened the night before. Sounds familiar right? Unfortunately for Keith he hasn't woken up having just drunk texted an ex like a normal person but has, in fact, made some more significantly life altering decisions as he discovers over the course of the play.

The show is a pretty stereotypical 'Waking up in Vegas' story which certainly had the potential to feel dated but was actually carried well by talented acting that leaves you feeling thoroughly emotionally involved in the lives of these characters. It is a romcom by all definitions and it plays out over the course of one very emotionally charged day. We follow the much-travelled journey of two lifelong friends finally discovering their feelings for one another, feelings that are blindingly obvious to the rest of their friends.

The play tracks the

aftermath of a very boozy stag/hen night for Keith's brother, Dave, and Dave's fiancée Lynn. Keith wakes up to find his best friend Amy, played by Daisy Rogers-Simmonds, in his room sat innocently on a chair waiting for him with a cup of coffee. The situation is one he does not deal with particularly gracefully. In the audience we were trying to work out if he was legitimately hungover as it was a particularly

\\ He's missing his dignity but also his trousers \\

convincing scene.

It then turns out he's not only missing his dignity but also his trousers. He's also left his wallet in a wedding chapel. All of his friends proceed to be decidedly unhelpful in helping him get to the bottom of what happened. It eventually turns out that Keith has asked Amy to marry him. It's probably not the most dramatic reveal to ever happen but you do stay

relatively engaged with the characters. Alongside the story of Keith and Amy, we also watch Dave and Lynn who, despite supposed to be getting married the next day, do not seem particularly keen to rush home. We follow their relationship's ups and downs through Lynn thinking she no longer wants to get married, to realising it's only the high-maintenance wedding planner that Dave's parents have hired that she's opposed to. Whilst the acting itself can't be faulted, the text of the play seems to prevent the characters developing enough depth to be genuinely invested as an audience member in their lives.

By being set almost entirely in a single Vegas hotel room, set changes were kept to almost none, which definitely helped keep the transition between scenes smooth. Overall, I definitely enjoyed the performance but it's probably not a play I'd be in a hurry to go and see performed by anyone else.

Abigail de Bruin



## Imperial Netball 2s continue winning streak

Though term has only just started, Imperial netball have been very busy with trials, and over the last week, the first matches of the season. The 1s have yet to play their first match due weather conditions but the other teams have been doing the club proud with a series of great matches.

The first match of the year for the 2s was against UEL, meaning a long journey and a challenging match. The team were up by a goal by the end of the first quarter, which was impressive for a team with three new freshers and a reserve from the 3s. The team played well together as a whole but the second and third

quarters got tougher as the opposition noticed some of our weaknesses. The fourth quarter was when we came into our own; the defence were making incredible interceptions and the attack were working better than they had all match. This combination led to a quarter win. The final score was 24-26 with Zoe Hall (GK/GD) chosen as player of the match. The 2s have continued this winning streak on Monday with a 28-20 victory against Kings 3s.

After a long trek to Ethos, the 4s began their first match of the season against Kings' Medics 6s. Getting the ball down court was no challenge, however the exceptionally tall GD and GK meant that shots on goal were a bit tricky.

Nevertheless, Jess O and Alice worked well together in the D and scored some amazing shots. Sadly, the Kings shooter didn't miss a single shot and meant that it wasn't a win for the 4s that day. But half-time snacks (that turned into post-game snacks) meant that all-in-all it was a great and fun first game for the 4s! The final score was 13-30 with the player of the match being Bibi Wood.

The 5s also started out strong by beating Roehampton's first netball team. It was even more impressive since it was the first time we had played together as a team (some people playing for the first time ever) and we managed to gel really well as a team: defence was solid, passing was snappy



and shooting was on point. This was reflected in the final score of 36-12 which puts us on a winning streak of 1 with the player of the match being Shen Yin Gan. The 3s had a strong first match as well but unfortunately lost 40-15, with

the player of the match being Alexis Abayomi. Overall the last week of matches has put the club on a really solid standing for the rest of the year.

Maddie Webb

## Men's rugby fails (valiantly)

IC 1s XV arrived at an unusually warm Harlington; the pristine pitch perfectly maintained by the excellent groundsmen over the summer could give Twickenham a run for its money. The game began in stunning sunshine with IC putting pressure on Brunel all over the park. This was lead by Matt Blackett's darting runs balanced with a effort to maintain decorum, but he failed 2<sup>nd</sup> year so no one really cares about that.

Too many penalties cost the home side a lot of territory and possession. The tackling was lazy and passive with too few players putting in dominant tackles, leaving the officials with little choice but to penalise.

Creative refereeing of the scrum hampered the boys

in the front row, who were unable to make much headway. The superior Molnar brother and Head battled hard but were unable to make up for the ref, so the scrum tended to be in reverse gear.

Brunel capitalised on the momentum, and from a tapped penalty they finally decided to spread the ball wide and target the forwards that IC were forced to field on the wing. They scored a pretty dull try.

This ignited a spark in Imperial bellies, and they came out with guns blazing. Stand-in Captain, Billy, got his dancing shoes on, made a half-break and offloaded to chief back-up dancer Alex 'The Rhino' Clayton. Clayton put his blunt horn down and barraged a few poachers out of the way, then found an offload to gameskeeper

Charlie Price-Smith. The ball was then fired out to Macbeth, who ghosted through a tackle before sending the ball back to the safari, where a grateful giraffe somehow caught the ball and loped over the line. Naturally, the conversion was fluffed, and the score was back to 7-5.

After a strong carry, Billy succumbed to the curse of the captain, which has claimed the health of the last five incumbents.

Half time. The game resumed after a stern talk on the importance of retaining lineout ball. A couple or 7 misplaced lineouts later, with some pooey throwing, Henry was consigned to the servants' quarters for three nights by Lord Edward Allingham.

At this point Zaboronsky entered the field and was



promptly sin-binned within three minutes. Despite this idiotic behaviour, IC managed to wrestle back three points to lead the game 8-7. However, IC struggled against the increasing wind and became pinned back in their twenty-two and after heavy pressure, conceded in the corner. IC pressured hard for a try to clinch victory but

fell short.

Notable mention for greying fresher Connor who carried hard throughout.

Missed the main man and top dog loads.

Final score 14-8 to Brunel, man of the match Matt Blackett.

Ali Zaboronsky



## disc Doctors host beginners' tournament

Last Saturday, Imperial's Ultimate Frisbee club (aka the disc Doctors) hosted a beginner's tournament in Hyde Park - a chance for all the new players to experience competitive ultimate in a tournament scenario whilst



playing against other beginner teams from around London. There were twelve teams in total, with Imperial being able to enter two teams: dD Rick and dD Morty.

This tournament was a chance for the beginners (of which there are always many) to learn the basics of the game such as throwing, catching and cutting (movement on the field) whilst also incorporating lots of fun.

Early on in the group stages, the weather was fair and there was little wind, making it easy for teams to play and nice to sit around when they weren't playing. dD Rick and dD Morty topped their pool and finished second in their pool respectively, both going through to

the top eight bracket.

During the final round of games, the heavens opened in dramatic fashion, dumping a ridiculous amount of rain onto the players. Nonetheless, the games continued (albeit with a much more slippery disc to catch). The final was a really great game to watch, with both Horsham and LSE very evenly matched, and a score line to reflect that. At full time, the scores were level, which meant carrying on into 'universe point' (the frisbee version of sudden death). Deep into overtime and in the pouring rain, a layout (diving) grab gave LSE the victory and the tournament win.

Away from the final, the two dD teams did themselves proud, with dD Rick finishing

in sixth and dD Morty finishing in eighth. Everyone has progressed greatly from two weeks ago when they were at the taster sessions learning how to throw to now being able to play and understand both the game itself and the spirit of the game such as integrity and self-refereeing.

All the teams improved vastly throughout the tournament and the layout grab at the end was proof of that. More generally, as the teams played more and more matches, they were able to play much more fluent frisbee and maintain possession of the disc more. This showed in the score lines and as the tournament progressed, the score lines got bigger.

The tournament was really successful and enjoyed by



all. The players can look forward to many outings coming up with BUCS and LUSL games as well as mixed indoor regionals in a couple of weeks and the club can look forward to a successful season.

Anthony Featherstone

## Women's rugby fails better (also valiantly)

A close game full of surprise turns and breakout stars, with three players playing their first and therefore best match ever.

The game was delayed thanks to the refereeing company not informing the team of a cancellation (again). The coincidental disparity between the quality of treatment the men's and women's teams receive for their refereeing needs is amazing, but that's a discussion for another day. Luckily, a delightful Brunelian stepped in to referee, choosing a 10's game with uncontested scrums.

The game was off to a flying start. With a strong advance, Imperial dominated the first quarter with a core backbone of experienced players. Two

minor injuries within five minutes of play were not enough to put anyone off with Imperial slowly making gains up the field. This culminated in a scrum just metres from the try line, a tense scene, the ball precariously held at the edge of the second row. It was all on number nine Elizabeth. She darted out, took advantage of a gap in the defence, and ran straight to the try line, scoring between the posts.

Then out strode the kicker, Moran, placing the tee on the ground and with an almighty kick, the ball went soaring over and between the posts.

Yet following this excellent display, the Imperialites began to tire and Brunel went on to score three tries to Imperials 1s. Things went from bad to worse as captain Charlotte was forced off after a

bad fall on her hand. During these times of hardship, Anna was standout with a wicked sprint. With natural ease she brought down players that broke through Imperial's defensive line again and again just metres from the try line.

At this point, Captain



Charlotte insisted on being put back on despite several suspected broken fingers and quickly scored Imperial's second try of the match with the help of Moran and Laura. It goes to show, as long suspected, doctors don't always know best.

So, one quarter to go, the score stood 19-12, Imperial only needed one more try to break even. Suddenly, Anna broke through Brunel's defences: "Run! Run!" the spectators screamed, and run she did, with the audacity to outrun and cross over three different opposing players, to not only score a try in her first game from a run half way up the pitch, but between the goal posts as well. The Imperial Team ran to swarm her in an emotional scene, with about half of them making it, the rest slowing to a walk. The

Imperial team continues to work on its fitness.

With a conversion bringing them equal and ten minutes to go, Imperial was feeling good - confident, even. This was dashed when Brunel's star player was brought back on and scored two more tries before the whistle, leaving the final score at 19-31. I'm not saying every time Brunel started losing they brought on an England quality player to score two tries and then immediately go off, but that's definitely what happened.

Still a great start to the Season for the Imperial Womens, they didn't lose by triple figures and no one got broken (except Charlotte, more like caPain, am I right?).

Rebecca Simpson

