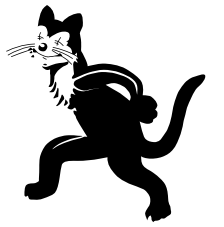


felix ...

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON



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Enter the kink | loonies

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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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To submit email your work to phoenix@ic.ac.uk

Deadline | 28 February 2017

Are sweet potato fries really worth it?

Lef Apostolakis

In a rare twist, they might actually taste better when they're cold

The Union has launched a new menu and is now a proud server of sweet potato fries. The new dish is another addition to the Union's growing vegetarian and vegan options in support of Go Green Week (yes, sweet potato fries are vegan, we asked).

A side of dem sweet potato fries will set you back £2.50, 70p more than student favourite curly fries and 20p more than curly fries WITH cheese. But is it worth it?

"They're so good...", says vegan Francesca Aras, "but they're so expensive."

We sent in a felix reporter to evaluate the new menu addition. We selected Theresa Davey, who's been at Imperial for almost a decade and knows what's up. "I'm super basic, so obviously if sweet potato fries are an option, I

have to have them. I haven't even tried them yet, but I just know they're going to be even better than the curly fries!"

Upon entering FiveSixEight and looking at the menu, Davey spots the sweet potato fries and the pricing. "They're slightly more expensive than curly fries with cheese so I'd expect them to be better than the staple option" Davey says. "On the other hand the price doesn't seem to be deterring anyone because everyone is ordering them."

But let's talk fries.

"They were hot and crispy which is pleasant. Sweet potato was well cooked

\\ Just like the sweet potato fries, this review should also be taken with a pinch of salt \\



Hopefully students won't be put off by the higher cost \\ ICU

throughout. Good consistent layer of batter on all fries. They definitely need salt though. They're very bland." Just like the sweet potato fries, this review should also be taken with a pinch of salt, as Davey is not a food critic and we've been informed that the sweet potato fries aren't actually fried in batter.

"They're almost nicer when they've cooled down a bit and

\\ I feel like we're trying to be too fancy. We're not h-bar, we're not a gastro-pub \\

costs? Were there difficulties programming the sweet potato fries into the new tills? Have there been significant training costs to prepare staff for the onslaught of sweet potato fry orders? How are kitchen staff coping with trying to balance three types of fries?

Johnston tells us everything is fine and that the tills are being reprogrammed and fine tuned constantly anyway. She did point out the existence of the new pulled pork pizza though. "Apparently it's not very nice. I watched someone eat it and they were not enjoying it." Good to know.

But what about logistical

Imperial to go smoke-free*

Lef Apostolakis

*Some exceptions apply

's official: Imperial will implement a smoking ban on all College campuses and properties starting the 1st of August.

The move which has been in the making for quite some time now, is a result of various lengthy consultations including a 'referendum' that took place earlier last term.

The referendum was meant to gauge the feelings of the student body and asked the question "Should smoking be allowed on campus?" A total of 748 students (or 4.5% of the student population) participated, with 219 voting "Yes", 421 students voting "No" and a further 108 voting "No, except for Beit Quad"

The referendum results were taken to a College Working Group, which has been discussing the issue since January 2016.

The Working Group's decision was finalised and made public earlier this

\\ The driver behind the ban is the recognition of smoking (and its passive counterpart) as the leading preventable cause of disease and death in the UK \\

week, with an announcement declaring that starting next August, "all Imperial campuses and properties will be smoke-free. This means that smoking by staff and students will not be permitted on or within 20 metres of College land."

The ban is expected to be implemented through the cooperation of staff and students "but particularly staff in management positions". If confronted with

individuals who refuse to take their smoking elsewhere, Imperial students and staff are encouraged to contact College. It is unclear what the role of security will be in monitoring smoking not only on campus, but especially off campus, given that the South Kensington campus neighbours extremely busy public venues such as The Royal Albert Hall and the Science Museum. A college spokesperson however did tell felix "it will not be principally the responsibility of security

staff." What if you're only a casual smoker that just partakes in a little bit of chain smoking after you've had a few? Fear not, as smoking will be permitted in Beit Quad on Wednesday and Friday evenings during term-time when you have to pay to get in.

Imperial's smoking ban has been branded as an attempt to fulfil its "duty of care to staff and students". The driver behind the ban is the recognition of smoking (and its passive counterpart) as the

leading preventable cause of disease and death in the UK.

Although vaping is already prohibited inside College buildings, a gap in health and tobacco related legislation means vaping is not included in the ban, and students and staff will be allowed to vape on College Land as long as it does not break existing rules.

With Imperial trying to fulfil its "duty of care to staff and students" the question arises, what about its duty to society? A felix investigation last year (Issue 1636) uncovered that £2.3 million was invested into tobacco companies via intermediate funds, which is in direct contradiction with the smoking ban and "benefit of society" sentiment prevalent in the institution's mission statement.

It remains unlikely that we will soon see a divestment from the tobacco industry in conjunction to the smoking ban.



Smoking may be banned but vaping isn't (sort of) \\ Vaping360

Greens speak up for suspended students

Joanna Wormald

Last week we reported on the suspension and arrests of several students from King's College London following their involvement in a campaign to persuade KCL to divest from fossil fuels. Since then, several members of the Green Party have written to King's to show their support for the students.

After hearing about the protests online, Siân Berry AM, a London Assembly Member for the Green Party, was approached on Facebook by one of the students involved. In response to our email

inquiry, Ms Berry said she had been "more than happy to do something" and wrote to Professor Edward Byrne AC, the current President and Principal of King's. The letter (which was also posted on social media) was co-signed by elected Green Party members Caroline Russell AM (and Islington Councillor), Jean Lambert MEP, and Councillor Scott Ainslie. It is hardly surprising that the Greens support divestment, which Ms Berry has advocated for in her capacity as both Assembly Member and Councillor for Camden.

\\ This is not just about ethics but investing in things that actually have a future \\

The letter begins by suggesting the students involved in the protest merely wanted a "proper discussion" regarding the future of fossil fuels at KCL and that calling the police was a "very unusual" step. The letter goes on to explain that divesting from

fossil fuels (a move reportedly supported by 96% of KCL students) would not only help to reduce climate change, but could be financially beneficial for the university as well.

Referring to previous examples of divestment, the letter explains that fossil fuels are fast becoming stranded assets and investing in companies reliant on their use is increasingly risky. Ms Berry told us that she thought it was a good idea to put forward the financial case because this issue is "not just about ethics but investing in things that actually have a future, such

as renewable energy, rather than fossil fuels".

The letter concludes by urging KCL to reconsider their actions against the students, imploring them to talk to the campaigners rather than punishing them for their part in an "entirely non-violent and peaceful protest" on an issue "of great concern to us all".

King's has not yet issued a response but Ms Berry is hopeful that they will pursue a dialogue with the campaigners rather than imposing these "harsh sanctions". Academic careers may depend on it.

Lef Apostolakis

Eating Disorder Awareness Week hits IC

As we're entering this year's national Eating Disorder Awareness Week, which takes place over the first week of March in the UK, Imperial College Union will be hosting events and launching a social media campaign in support.

A screening of eating disorder documentary THIN will kick off the events. The critically acclaimed 2006 documentary and winner of the John Grierson Award for best feature-length documentary at

the London Film Festival, follows four women with anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and other eating disorders in their struggle for recovery.

There will also be a lecture by eating disorder health specialist Dr Paul Robinson who'll be discussing the benefits of intensive community treatment vs inpatient treatment.

This year's EDAW is themed around early intervention. "We're trying to show the importance of early intervention," says Emily-Jane Cramphorn, DP Welfare, "from THIN which shows the less

than ideal conditions within many treatment centres, to Dr Robinson's lecture which touches upon the benefits of community treatment and risks associated with waiting to treat patients until they're physically unstable"

To raise funds for b-eat ICU will also be offering tours of the tunnels and the Queen's Tower, doing an online prize draw and a hummingbird cake sale. B-eat is a national eating disorder charity. They provide support lines and run support groups, invest money into research, training and

lobby for better services.

For Cramphorn this campaign is particularly special "I was diagnosed with anorexia nervosa when I was eleven and repeatedly refused entry into specialist services because I wasn't 'thin' enough." she says. "I've been hospitalised five times and nearly lost my life as a consequence of inadequate services. Now I'm on the path to recovery but some of my friends have not been as lucky. Chronic illness or even death is the unfortunate reality for many sufferers who are made to wait for treat-

ment. Only one in five people with anorexia fully recover but evidence suggest that early intervention could significantly improve this"

In conjunction with Sport Imperial, ICU will be launching an online campaign to promote body positivity. Though hopefully the campaign will avoid the sexist undertones that characterised Sport Imperial's last campaign, which aimed at encouraging women to pick up sport by "jumping away the calories"

The LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS 2017

You are Imperial.
Will you take the lead?



There is still time to stand in The Leadership Elections 2017

You still have time to stand for The Leadership Elections 2017! Nominations close at 23:59, Sunday 26 February. The Leadership Elections 2017 are your chance to shape the future of student life at Imperial. Every single Imperial student, no matter their subject, degree level, or campus, can cast their vote for the students that will lead the groups that make this student community what it is. Imperial College Union brings together Clubs, Societies & Projects, Constituent Unions, Liberation Officers, Academic Representatives, and Community Volunteers into one vibrant and active organisation. You can grill your candidates next week at our unmissable Meet The Candidates event, see it on Wednesday 1 March! Find out more and stand now at:

imperialcollegeunion.org/elections

STUDENT ACADEMIC CHOICE AWARDS

SACA nominations close 26 February

This Sunday (26 February) is your last chance to celebrate excellent teaching and support at Imperial. Don't miss out on your chance to say thank you to a member of staff that has made a difference to your educational experience.

Imperial is one of the best universities in the world; have your voice heard and help us to identify and celebrate best practice in teaching, research & support at the College that will keep us on top.

Nominations close Sunday 26 February, get yours in before its too late!

imperialcollegeunion.org/sacas

Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2017

From 27 February through to 5 March, the Union will be helping to highlight 'beats' national campaign to help raise awareness of serious eating disorders. There are plenty of amazing events held across the week, from tower tours to prize draws, and subterranean expeditions to cake sales. Emily-Jane Cramphorn your Deputy President (Welfare), is leading on this week.

For more information check out our posters around campus or head to:

www.is.gd/EDAW2017



VarsityFest is almost here, have you got your ticket?

VarsityFest is back this year! It starts with a Hockey Varsity on Wednesday 1 March before a day of sport at Heston on Saturday 4 March. You can book your tickets online now - there are a range of options and bundles to choose from! It's set to be a fantastic day with students, staff, family and Alumni coming together to celebrate and showcase sport at Imperial College London.

Don't miss out make sure you get your ticket!

imperial.ac.uk/sport/club-sport/varsity



FREEZE PEACH

C O M M E N T ... felix

My eating disorder



Conchi Hermida Sánchez shares her relationship with food, the starving and the binge-eating, and hopes for a brighter healthier future

\\ I started tracking every single bite of food that went into my mouth. That is when my eating disorder properly started \\

As part of Eating Disorders Awareness Week, I would like to share my personal experience and hopefully help someone out there.

"You are going to get fat."
"Don't let yourself go as I did."
"Remember: a moment on the lips is a lifetime on the hips". These are all expressions I have been hearing at home since I was a kid.

Since school I have always been chubbier than my friends, but it was not something that bothered me till the summer before arriving at Imperial. Wanting to be fit for university, I started running for about an hour a day and limiting my portions significantly, which resulted in eight kilos lost and compliments from literally everyone.

\\ I remember going to my counselling sessions and wondering how I got to that point \\

In my first year, and due mainly to my lack of cooking skills and laziness, all that weight returned to me and so did the 'friendly reminders' regarding how wide my hips were getting and how 'curvy' I was. I was continuously getting comments from random



people about my body and in all honesty, feeling objectified is quite disgusting.

After the Christmas break of my second year and as a new year's resolution, I made the decision to get fit for once. I started doing weight training and tracking every single bite of food that went into my mouth. Was that the solution to my problem? Nope, that is when my eating disorder properly started. I remember checking online how many calories I was supposed to eat a day and believed that just by following that approach I would get my dream body, I would feel great and happiness would immediately appear in my life. I was definitely wrong.

At the beginning, I managed to follow a crazy diet while excessively exercising but on the third week I remember being completely starved. I felt quite disappointed at myself and thought I was just lacking willpower. That weekend I decided to have the famous 'cheat meal' which turned into a 'cheat weekend' and then into binge eating.

This cycle of starvation Monday to Friday followed

by binging on the weekends, continued happening all the way through my third year – not to forget the hours in the gym with a calorie-burning mentality.

My hair was falling out, I stopped having my period and that – together with Imperial's workload – made third year a complete nightmare. Another factor that contributed to the development of my eating disorder was the external pressure I felt to look a certain way due to all the exercise I was doing.

Once third year finished, I decided to start dieting strictly for the summer season while simultaneously attending counselling. I remember going to my counselling sessions and always wondering how I got to that point – I used to be so happy and full of energy all the time.

We used to talk about my degree, my friendships, my plans for the future and my family, but exercise and food were topics that I barely mentioned even though they were something that were taking a lot of space in my life. On the fourth session and after a lot of thought I decided to be open about my relationship with food and the stress that this was causing.

After saying that out loud for the first time, I felt like something finally clicked in me, I was ready to stop making food and exercise controlling mechanisms in my life. I started searching online for articles about binge eating disorder, spent hours on

Youtube watching videos but I was still quite confused. Some said binging was just a way to cope with emotions, others that it was part of our survival instinct.

By that time I was six weeks binge-free, till that Sunday: another binging episode. That upcoming week I was meeting the counsellor again and that Thursday was honestly one of the most meaningful days of my life. I realised in the session that I forgot what being satisfied and most importantly having a balanced life meant. I remember him mentioning the expression 'intuitive eating' and I felt completely scared about it. For me at the time there was only black and white, moderation did not exist. Suddenly, I realised that my problem was that I was not eating enough.

The following morning when I woke up, for the first time in ages, I listened to my body. I ate till satisfaction and I ate what I wanted to have without thinking about the 'consequences'. I remember having for breakfast some scrambled eggs on toast and an apple dipped in Nutella.

Something as simple as having Nutella without binging the rest of the day or feeling

guilty and embarrassed about it was a huge step for me, and ever since the 15th of August I have been binge-free. I found that being open about my unhealthy relationship with food was the most important thing I did and even writing this has been liberating and

\\ For the first time in ages, I listened to my body. I ate till satisfaction and I ate what I wanted without having to think about the "consequences" \\

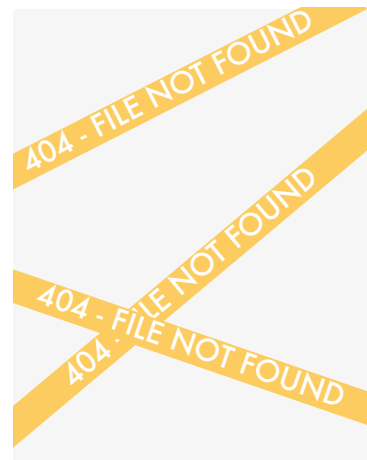
helpful to remind myself how far I have come.

I can finally say that eating is not a stressful activity anymore, that I have found my passion for lifting again and that I truly love myself and my body – including every stretch mark and every bit of fat and cellulite.





An ode to my roommate, whom I love



An anonymous writer shares their love letter to their room- (and soul-) mate

\\ Sometimes I just wish that everyone could be at least as lucky as I am and have such an awesome roommate \\

I love my roommate. Quite the statement, isn't it?

I love the way she never turns off the lights and always turns the desk light on when I go to sleep (even though I do it too). I think it's her way of making sure that I get my light dose for my photosynthetic processes.

I love how she makes a lot of noise whenever she comes in late - I think that the amount of noise she is making is proportional to the hours she's spent out before midnight and inversely proportional to my capacity to deal with it.

I love her street language - I am just annoyed that I don't speak street. I would reaaaally like to be able to say 'yo' and 'bruv' the way she does. But I know that she thinks about me all the time because she says these words only when we are in public - when we are in our room, she doesn't say a thing.

I love the way she waits in front of the door whenever I go into the bathroom in the morning and invades the bathroom as soon as I am out, even if I am just out just because I forgot my lipstick in the room. I guess that I just

\\ I love how she never gets her hair out of the shower and how regularly it gets stuck in there and how regularly the bathroom gets flooded \\

and the beds and everything. I am quite amazed by what wonder my half of the floor is not packed with all kinds of 'treasures'. Oh wait, I know - because normally, my half is the one that gets flooded first.

I love how she loves the environment so much that she never uses the washing machines and always hand washes her clothes in the sink - don't ask me how it works! I think it must be another one of her super-powers or something because she still just manages to flood everything all the time. And of course I love to see all

I love her. Probably. That must be why she just assumes that she can just take my things (almost) all the time, from pens and staplers and papers to soap and once, my foundation, even if my skin tone is at least four shades lighter. Or has the wrong undertone. But, hey, she totally managed to rock the look!

So, yes, I do love my roommate and, as you can see, I have a lot of reasons to. Sometimes I just wish that everyone could be at least as lucky as I am and have such an awesome roomie! Yo!



have to wait or skip lipstick because she ain't gonna finish in time for me. See, I actually can speak street, I'm just not very good at the 'yo' part. But I'll learn, no worries!

I love how she never gets her hair out of the shower and it regularly gets stuck in the drain and how regularly the bathroom gets flooded; and how afterwards, she just pretends that nothing happened, no matter how many times you ask her; and after a while, the room floods too and then she can no longer pretend nothing

happened but she still audibly wonders how this happened! And I don't say that my hair is not in there, too - but it is not! I dare you to DNA test it and see if you can find more than one hair that's mine.

I like how her half of the room is just a mess. I don't say that my half is the cleanest place in the universe, but I try to keep my things on my desk mainly - the only messy things about me are vast quantities of papers and books piling up- on my desk! But her clothes and shoes and food and everything just invades her desk and the floor

her not-so-sexy underwear hanging everywhere all the time. Who wouldn't?

Did I mention that one time she went hiking for a weekend and when she came back she left muddy traces all over the carpet? It looked really cool - exactly the kind of art I love! Isn't it really nice of her that she thinks about my mental well-being and aesthetic choices? Of course she didn't bother to clean up, but (un)lucky me, the cleaning crew was due to come the following Tuesday.

And on top of everything, she actually knows how much

\\ She went hiking and when she came back she left muddy traces all over the place. It looked really cool - exactly the kind of art I love \\



Is the Union fixing the leadership elections?



An anonymous writer discusses the Union's interference in the democratic process

\\ Whatever the Leadership Elections are, they're definitely not democratic, so let's not pretend that they are \\

It's a well known fact that if you're one of the beautiful people, you're more likely to be successful in the Union elections. But as well as having beauty be a requirement, there is also a culture of successful candidates being chosen from above.

To say that the Union (and by that I mean the staff and student trustees) have no say on who wins the elections would be to deny them credit for their hard work in obscuring the democratic process. While technically, yes, the student body does vote and elect the winners, who chooses to run and the nature of their campaigns is incredibly dependent on the advice they've been given, which makes a huge difference to who we elect. Suitable candidates are often headhunted, vetted, and persuaded to run. Year on year, I've seen offhand comments from a Sabb at a bar night - "You'd be great at DPPFS, you should run!" - that were not so offhand: they'd been discussed extensively in the Union offices before. Of course, it is sometimes just

friendly encouragement to do something you're obviously passionate about - they're

\\ To say that the Union have no say on who wins the elections would be to deny them credit for their hard work in obscuring the democratic process \\

not all terrible people. But these conversations about the role and what's best for it going forward can subtly brainwash candidates into trusting the current policies, not questioning and improving them as would be their role.

Chosen candidates might be told historically successful campaigning strategies, and informally prepped for the role through friendly chats - nothing technically against the rules, but not everyone is receiving this information, and it lends a huge advantage. Those who've won know that campaigning often comes down to a simple formula of who gets their name out there most and who does the most lecture shout-outs (name recognition and a trustworthy face is key), and being backed by someone in a position you respect does a lot to help you power through the exhausting

weeks of campaigning.

The Union (and by that I mean the staff and student trustees) have been known to help their chosen candidates write manifestos points that they know are achievable and in line with their current aims: they fulfil their bigger picture. In other words, these candidates aren't bringing anything new to the role in terms of ideas and student representation.

It's in the Union's interest to have docile, obedient officer trustees. They want sabbs who won't make waves, who won't push a strong agenda. They will work hard at the tasks they're given, sure, but their manifesto points are just reiterations of what was in the works anyway. In other words, they keep their mouths shut and let the staff do their job: running this multimillion pound charity in the way that they see fit, away from the interference of annoying students who dare to have opinions on what it should be doing.

The students who do this best are the ones who are in it for the CV points - they care a bit, but not enough to protest too much at only being a figurehead. Undeniably, this is efficient. Nothing prevents an idea being realised like a clash between Union staff and an officer trustee, where butting of heads can lead to deep unpleasantness and a stalling of any progress whatsoever. From the perspective of those who have worked hard on policies, either for a year or longer, you don't want someone with different ideas to come in and

trash all your work. There's nothing like the illusion of power to make people think that what they're doing is the best, and it's easy to lose track of that and become incredibly protective of your (sometimes misguided) policies.

In many ways, the current sabbs are the most qualified to choose their replacements. They know the ins and outs of the role, and they should be able to recognise what traits will make a good candidate. It's great that the Union are thinking about the students in the many volunteering roles and considering how they could progress to bigger things. When the Union hits the mark, and wants to do things that really are best for Imperial students, this can be

\\ It's in the Union's interest to have docile, obedient officer trustees \\

really good. Our Union staff have largely come to Imperial after working in student unions all over the country, and between them have a wealth of experience. Unfortunately, the nature of Imperial as an elite, science and engineering university means that the needs of our students are a bit different to those of students at other British universities, and too frequently the staff don't tailor their ideas to this. They don't always realise that what



worked well in Leeds may not work at Imperial.

The policies and strategies are being guided by the staff at the Union and those who have spent a year in the belly of the beast and can't remember the real struggles that affect students most. Bringing in more people who are on the same page can be a huge waste of money that's supposed to be spent on representing the actual voice of students. It isn't the students who stick to the Union agenda who make a big difference - it's the ones who call for radical change.

Whatever the Leadership Elections are, they're definitely not democratic, so let's not pretend that they are.



What have the sabbs actually been doing?



Nas Andriopoulos explains what the sabbs have been up to in the first half of their term in office, while the felix editorial team fills in the gaps.

The sabbs were warned about the felix teams's evil streak but they went ahead anyway. Kudos.



Nas Andriopoulos | ICU President

James Cowx | Deputy President Clubs and Societies (DPCS)

Emily-Jane Cramphorn | Deputy President Wellfare (DPW)

Rachel Blythe | Deputy President Finance and Services (DPFS)

Luke McCrone | Deputy President Education (DPE)

The Officer Trustees OTs \\\ ICU

Elections are fast-approaching and campus will soon be overwhelmed by candidates eager for your votes, but it may surprise you that February only marked the halfway period for the current Officer Trustees' (OTs) term of office. It's normally around this time of year that the well-worn criticism, "the sabbs don't do anything", is trotted out to play down the coming elections. Pleasingly, I haven't heard that phrase very often this year, either because I am completely out of touch or perhaps because this year's Officer Trustees have been getting on with things. So, what have Emily-Jane (EJ), Luke, Rachel, James and I been up to? Well, here is our highlights reel for the first half of our term in office. After years of blood, sweat and tears (and that was just me during revision time) the College have agreed (and final authorisation has now

Feels like it's been years.

Maybe because student apathy is at its highest point ever. This is probably not true. We just felt like we

I hear frosted tips is also a good look.

And a felix petition - don't forget the felix petition.

At the Jazz and rock saga which started three years ago. When the Union spent hundreds of thousands in the West Basement redevelopments. But the construction company completely fucked up and ripped the Union off, making a practice room which lacked appropriate insulation, which led to noise complaints from students living above it in Beit, which has led to another £180,000 going into it. Originally the Jazz and Rock re-development was meant to have been completed by the end of the winter break. Then it got pushed back to February, then March, now it's not expected to be complete until next term. Our guess is the Jazz and Rock room will not be done until 2020.

happened, whoop) to install air-conditioning in the Central Library! This is a huge win for us students, costing millions of pounds, which follows years of lobbying by Officer Trustees on students' behalf, and shows

Yay?

\\ Luke has led our response to College's worst National Student Survey scores in ten years \\

that the College are listening to us and willing to invest in our student experience. Whilst on the subject of infrastructure, working with College we have invested £180,000 to sound-proof and remodel the Jazz & Rock studio (opening again next term) so student bands can rehearse and record in a purpose-built facility.

Such stunning innovations include the rebranding of Biomedical Science to Medical Biosciences. Can't wait for the rebranding of DPFS to DPSF. #thefutureisnow

I don't really understand it. I'm never late. I either do the work or I don't.

Don't know how much the Union had to do with this. The library went rogue.

In education, Luke has led our work with Vice-Provost (Education) Prof. Simone Buitendijk to develop a new Learning & Teaching Strategy that, when completed, will underpin an active, technologically-enhanced teaching revolution to future-proof Imperial education for the 21st Century. Furthermore, heading up the Academic Rep Network, Luke has led our response to College's worst National Student Survey scores in ten years, coordinating and encouraging change across departments, faculties and College. We've done all this to a backdrop of huge legislative change in the Higher Education sector, caused by the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework and the Higher Education & Research Bill, which has triggered the Union to develop a new Higher Education Funding

What students actually wanted didn't happen. College shot them down. Students wanted a 10% penalty for every day of being late.

From the Union website: "The Union stood by this as the preferred alternative to zero-tolerance in favour of the views of students." "The new policy will mean that work that is submitted up to 24 hours after the deadline will be capped at the pass mark, anything submitted beyond 24 hours will then be zeroed." "The Union are delighted in achieving one of its pre-existing objectives by lobbying College with our most powerful mechanism: the student voice!"

What does that even mean? Is this a toothpaste commercial?

stance. Oh! And we also scrapped the zero-tolerance policy for late submission. Meanwhile, James completed a major manifesto pledge when we announced that funding for Clubs, Societies and Projects would increase next year by over £35,000 to £390,000 - the highest

\\ Oh! And we also scrapped the zero-tolerance policy for late submission \\

increase in our history. He has also delivered a CSP Management Group restructure, something that has been painfully overdue, which will make administrating clubs more

Also I hear you went to the house of Lords ;)

\\ The Imperial Health Centre will now send text messages to those being treated for mental health problems \\

efficient and reduce the burden on student volunteers in Management Group committees. This is on top of the day-to-day support we offer CSPs and student-led events, such as Green Week and the City Varsity. Following EJ's work, the Imperial Health Centre will now send text messages to those being treated for mental health problems, reminding them to attend their follow-up appointments and collect repeat prescriptions. This will mean that some of the most

How many working groups did it take? Did all the hours in working groups really reduce the burden on student volunteers overall? Although we do back this - good job.

Does this statement hold given our plummeting economy?

"send nudes"

Yo mental health is important - don't joke about it.

vulnerable of our members are less likely to fall through the cracks or run out of their medicines. EJ has also worked closely with College on a grant bid for bystander intervention training and Sexual Violence Liaison Officers, who will coordinate College's response to sexual violence and act as a point of contact for students and staff. EJ has also reinvigorated the Union's approach to tackling study stress with the Under Pressure campaign. As well as constitutionally changing the role of Deputy President (Finance & Services) to be less administrative and more strategic, Rachel has directly overseen the introduction of the new Electronic Points Of Sale (EPOS), which will mean faster service for you at our bars and shops. Furthermore, in order to make the Union's accounts more accessible, in line with Our Strategy, Rachel has started a series of account infographics to allow students to have a more direct say in how the

Is this training going to be in the same vein as the mental health first aid training that was supposed to be given to welfare officers during handover, which was finally rolled out towards the end of second term, with not all welfare officers being invited to receive it?

And it only took seven years.

Union is run. Rachel has also taken the student lead on pushing for College, and the Union, to become leaders in environmental sustainability. Let's not forget to mention that by working with the Islamic Society and College we managed to refurbish the Brothers' Prayer Room in Princes Gardens this year. Finally, we have also launched

\\ Rachel has directly overseen the introduction of the new Electronic Points Of Sale, which will mean faster service for you at our bars and shops \\

That cost £46,000 - but fine.

What is this? How can we comment on something we don't know exists? Are there going to be puppies?

The Green Week guest burger isn't even vegan - unless it's actually golden syrup and not honey. WHAT IS IT?

It would be nice to see a push for environmentally sustainable divestment, too.

We have already made our thoughts on the strategy clear.

Our Strategy 2017-20, which sets out how Imperial College Union intends to deliver a world-leading student experience. This, like many of the accomplishments above, could not have been achieved by just the OT team, but relied on the valuable contributions from permanent members of Union & College staff, members of Council and a huge number of student volunteers - and I would be remiss to not thank them for their efforts to improve the lives of students at Imperial. However, there is still a lot for the team to do in order to give you - our members - the experience you deserve. In the next six months we will be relaunching our new and improved Life Membership, supporting the roll-out of the College's Rent Guarantor Scheme, improving the student sport experience, consulting on the new Well-being Reps roles, extending the

So as nominations close on Sunday, you may be thinking "why should I run to be an Officer Trustee?" Run to effect significant change, and run to improve the student experience for years to come.

Nobody knows what the 'new and improved' Life Membership is. What is it? Is it cheaper? Why won't you tell us? Why all these months of secrecy?

Thanks, Jennie!

\\ Run to effect significant change, and run to improve the student experience for years to come \\

*AND felix

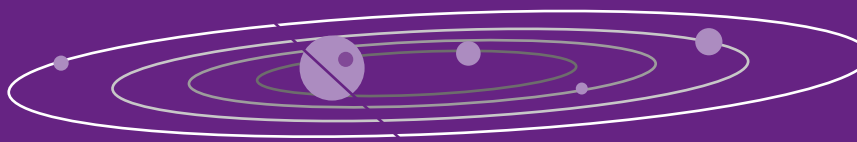
academic Feedback Traffic Light system, conducting a review of our democratic structures, ensuring Our Strategy 2017-20 is embedded into everything we do and much, much more.

So as nominations close on Sunday, you may be thinking "why should I run to be an Officer Trustee?" Run to effect significant change, and run to improve the student experience for years to come.

And it only took sexist coverage of sexist behaviour (with bonus sexist comments) to flag this as a problem - good job

SQUATS SQUATS SQUATS

Run to be lovingly teased by the felix editorial team xoxo



Workings of a tick's immune system

Ipsita Herlekar looks at how the immune system of ticks is adapted to host disease causing bacteria without being affected themselves

Have you ever been bitten by a tick? Hopefully not. But if you have, maybe make sure you are not infected with any of the near fatal diseases that ticks sometimes carry. Ticks, like mosquitoes can be vectors of diseases like Kyasanur Forest disease and the more widely spread Lyme disease which affects nearly 3,00,000 people in USA and 65,000 in Europe each year. Apart from causing extreme discomfort in the form of itchiness that sometimes borders on agony, people suffering from Lyme disease experience severe muscle aches, fatigue and high fever. How is it that the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* responsible for Lyme disease affects humans to such a large extent, without harming the ticks themselves? Scientists from University of Maryland's School of Medicine have now found out how ticks manage not to succumb to the infection of the bacteria they so generously harbour.

Though ticks appear similar to most insects, the functioning of their immune system has been found out to be very different. They seem to be missing the genes

**\\ Nearly 3,00,000 people in USA and 65,000 in Europe are affected by Lyme disease each year **

that are pivotal in directing immune response. Through a process called RNA interference, where RNA is used to obstruct the expression of a gene, a gene named IMD was identified that contains the key codes required to trigger an immune system response in mosquitoes. This gene was however missing in ticks. Several other crucial genes were also found to be missing. For example, PGRP, a crucial molecular component required for immune responses in mosquitoes, helps identify invading microbes by the presence of sugar in their cell walls and thereby triggers the immune system response. Though this molecular component was also found to be present in ticks, it did not seem to affect *Borrelia burgdorferi* in any way.

The pathways that link the immune system, the IMD and PGRP are the same in both

mosquitoes and ticks, however the mechanism in which they work are entirely different. In mosquitoes and other insects, the immune system responses are triggered on the detection of sugar molecules in the cell wall of the invading bacterium. But the tick immune system is triggered upon detection of fat molecules instead.

Further examination of *Borrelia burgdorferi* revealed that it does not have a sugary cell wall that mosquitoes and other insects respond to, but that it has one composed of fat molecules instead. Ticks, therefore, appear to have an immune system that is specifically adapted to handle this. It is also believed that *Borrelia burgdorferi* may also contain an anti-freeze protein that helps ticks to thrive in freezing temperatures.

The differences in the mechanisms and workings of the immune system between insects and ticks are an indication that the two evolved separately. Scientists therefore believe that ticks and other insects have an evolutionary distance of nearly 500 million years, similar to that between humans and fish.

Increase in the deer population is believed to be the reason why more people are being infected by Lyme



**\\ *Borrelia burgdorferi* may also contain an anti-freeze protein that helps ticks to thrive in freezing temperatures **

disease in the recent years. Extended periods of warm weather further help the ticks not just to survive and persist, but also to spread. Ticks are most likely to catch the *Borrelia* 'bug' during their lymph stage from smaller animals like rodents and birds which they cling on to. As they grow bigger, they transfer onto larger hosts like deer. The deer however are not infected or affected by *Borrelia burgdorferi*, even though they play hosts to the ticks.

Scientists are now exploring ways in which the immune system of the ticks can be tweaked in order to strengthen it and make the ticks less vulnerable to a bacterial invasion. They hope this helps prevent transmission of bacterial infections like Lyme disease from ticks to humans.

**\\ Tweaking the tick immune system to make them less vulnerable to bacterial invasions can help reduce the transmission of infections like Lyme disease from ticks to humans **



Man's Best Friend



Fact: Dogs can smell cancer.

A charity called "Medical Detection Dogs" is undertaking the first clinical trial looking at using sniffer dogs to do something a little more holistic than seeking out drugs and sausages at Manchester Airport.

The procedure is simple – wee in a pot, pooch gives it a sniff and if they sit down you have over a 90% chance of having prostate cancer. Men everywhere should be rejoicing: current detection of prostate cancers relies on tests with high false positive rates. This can lead to men undergoing unnecessary exploratory surgery (which carries complication risks of erectile dysfunction and incontinence), but the use of detection dogs as a second line of testing before surgery could help to reduce the damage caused by unneeded procedures. It's not just for men though – early reports suggest that the dogs may detect other types of cancers, including breast and lung.

Their secret is a highly tuned sense of smell (about 100,000 times more sensitive than humans). Cancer cells show altered metabolism to normal cells, and so produce different waste products. These waste products are then released in the patient's urine, breath or blood and dogs can be trained to pick up their characteristic odour to help diagnose early and elusive cancers. Yet more proof that dogs > cats.

Another one of Mr. Aran Shaanak's Little Bites of Science



Moonlight | A miraculous masterpiece



Alex Hibbert and Mahershala Ali are phenomenal in *Moonlight* \ Alamy



Fred Fyles

Barry Jenkins' tale of the coming-of-age of a gay black man is just as good as you've heard: *Moonlight* is a miraculous piece of cinema, one that tells the stories so often untold by Hollywood

In Barry Jenkins' masterful film *Moonlight*, the coming of age of a gay, black man is compressed down into a mere 111 minutes, distilled for your viewing pleasure.

Nearly split into three sections – revealing the structure of the play upon which it is

based, Tarell McCrory's *In Moonlight Black Boys Look Blue* – we follow Chiron, first as a child taken under the wing of a drug dealer, then as a teenager mercilessly bullied at school, and finally as a young man revisiting figures from his past. The result, of seeing a life sped up, allows

us to examine the patterns that establish themselves in people's lives, and the cycles that the characters seem unable to escape.

We first see Little, as he is known, running from a group of bullies, Jenkins' camera trailing him in a tight, anxiety-inducing close-up. Taking refuge in an abandoned flop den, Little comes across a used syringe – the full impact of the discovery is only revealed later, when we learn that his mother is a drug addict – and is eventually found by Juan (Mahershala Ali), a local drug dealer. We were first introduced to Juan at the start of the film, in a dizzying tracking shot that immediately establishes him as a known figure in the neighbourhood – Liberty City, Miami – keeping its inhabitants supplied with crack cocaine.

From the off, Jenkins is interested in challenging our conventional ideas about how a drug dealer should act: Juan and girlfriend Theresa (Janelle Monáe) take Chiron under their wings; when Chiron asks if he is a 'faggot', Juan replies "you can be gay...but you don't have to let anyone call you a faggot". Juan takes Little to the beach, teaching him how to swim in a scene that is more-than-reminiscent of a baptism; Jenkins' camera bobs up and down beautifully in the warm Pacific waters. Chiron will return to this beach in the next two acts, first literally, when he runs into Kevin and desire spills over into action; and later only figuratively, as the two men re-explore that night in their memories.

But while Juan may want to provide some kind of father figure to Chiron, the fact that he supplies the drugs that turn Chiron's mother into a monster means he will never be able to – a fact revealed in a crushing scene at the end of Act I. This sees the end of Juan's role in the film, but he echoes throughout *Moonlight*, with the older Chiron modelling himself on Juan, right down to the small crown on his car's dashboard.

Putting on Juan's appearance is like a mantle of

armour for Chiron, one that leaves him invulnerable, yet constrained. Just as in the second act, in which violence begets violence, Chiron seems unable to escape the societal and familial influences that shape him.

What is striking about Jenkins' and McCrone's script is the volume of silence contained delicately within it, like a delicate skein of words surrounding a core of emptiness; at times, *Moonlight* plays like a silent film, a point underscored by the scenes in which the sound cuts out, in favour of Nichola Britwell's haunting, string-heavy score. The compelling performances of the three actors playing the young, teenage, and adult Chirons – Alex Hibbert, Ashton Sanders, and Trevonte Rhodes, respectively – underscore this idea, all simmering with intense, quiet physicality. All seem to be judging each line carefully, deciding whether breaking through the isolation is worth the vulnerability it will bring; all too often they choose to remain silent, making certain lines all the more powerful, such as teenage Chiron's heart-breaking confession that "I cry so much sometimes I think one day I'm gonna just turn into drops". Hibbert's performance, which is the most compelling; his presence on the screen is hypnotic, and his unflinching gaze completely magnetic.

This wordless performance directly contrasts with Naomi Harris' role as Chiron's mother. We follow her too, through a journey from crack-addict to tentative rehab inpatient, in a narrative that runs parallel to Chiron's; the two are tied together with shared trauma. By turns comforting and intimidating, Harris is able to effortlessly ricochet between moods in the blink of an eye; in one terrifying scene she asks teenage Chiron to let her into their apartment, staring straight down Jenkins' lens like a woman possessed. The fact that she filmed the entirety of her scene over only three days just adds to the tremendous achievement.

Jenkins has spoken about

his admiration of the films of Wong Kar-Wai, and in many ways *Moonlight*'s closest relative is Kar-Wai's masterpiece *In the Mood for Love*. Both feature characters conveying their inner struggles in hushed tones, and also revel in the sheer sensual beauty of cinema – in *Moonlight*'s case this is achieved with James Laxton's incredible cinematography, which explores the bewitching effect of lights: moonlight, neon lights, streetlights. In *Moonlight*, like *In the Mood for Love*, key scenes take place in a diner – this time soundtracked by Barbara Lewis' haunting *Hello Stranger* rather than Nat King Cole's *Quizas, Quizas, Quizas* – which acts as a third space, between private and public, in which connections are tentatively tested.

To call *Moonlight* a 'universal film' is to do it a disservice, to downplay its ensconcement in particular cultural contexts, to sand it down to a bland message on 'masculinity', as if a single word can contain the film's multitudes. It is a film about pain and love, yes – although perhaps intimacy is a better term than love – but it explores these emotions through the specific lenses of growing up gay, black, and poor. Flattening this out in pursuit of universality is to ignore the particular features of the film's conception: Jenkins and McCrone both grew up in the Liberty Square housing project; both had mothers addicted to crack; both carry the weight of this experience in their life and work. *Moonlight* does not contain any universal truth about the nature of life, but rather particular truths, about particular lives – it is all the more powerful for it.





Academy Awards 2017 | Our predictions of

Heading to an **Oscars** party and unsure of who to root for? Not seen *Fences*, but want to pretend you have? **Just want to seem like someone who has an opinion?** Then read on, as our Culture Editor **Fred Fyles** takes you through all the top prizes, letting you know what's coming out on top, who's coming home empty-handed, and **why you should be pissed off when *La La Land* wins everything**

It seems likely that Damien Chazelle will snatch this award for *La La Land*, but it would be a pyrrhic victory, given that his far-superior breakout feature *Whiplash* didn't even earn him a nomination. Chazelle manages to mine the classic trope box of old-fashioned Hollywood musicals, but doesn't add anything new to the equation. Kenneth Lonergan similarly takes cues from emotionally bleak, realist dramas, but seems to be able to draw out better performances from his cast. In an ideal world, however, the prize would go to Barry Jenkins for his even-handed portrayal of a gay black man growing up in poverty, *Moonlight*. *Moonlight's* plot is never overshadowed by Jenkins' mastery with the camera, despite the numerous awe-inspiring shots. The fact that this is only Jenkins' second feature – and his first on a major budget – makes his achievement all the more astounding.

Best Director



Should win: Barry Jenkins (*Moonlight*) | Will win: Damien Chazelle (*La La Land*)



who will win, and who should win

Best Picture

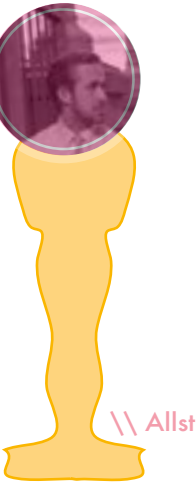


\\ Alamy

Since 2009, the Best Picture nomination list has swollen from five to a maximum of ten, and as a result the category tends to feel bloated. This is definitely the case this year, when a number of the nominees provoke little more than a surprised 'huh?' *Hacksaw Ridge* and *Hell or High Water* both seem completely unlikely to come anywhere near the top prize. Similar could be said for *Lion*, *Fences*, and *Arrival*, which – despite being good films – don't seem to have a chance of reaching the top. *Manchester by the Sea* could get a late-in-the-day burst of support, but it seems more likely to pick up the acting and screenwriting awards; similarly *Hidden Figures*, while one of the most popular films nominated in terms of box office revenue, seems unlikely to make it. So, at the moment, it seems to be a two-horse race

Should win: *Moonlight* | Will win: *La La Land*

between *La La Land* and *Moonlight*, and what a contrast those two films are: *Moonlight* is a film that is political to its bones, while *La La Land* is the very opposite, almost anathema to politics, light and fluffy to the core. In a year like this, where the political arena is dominated with hatred and division, it would seem remiss for the Academy to not place a film about a gay, black, poor man at its heart, showing that these stories are needed now more than ever. *Moonlight* is also, in my opinion, a far superior piece of work to *La La Land*, which doesn't have much to say. At the end of the day, however, it seems most likely that the Academy will choose to award *La La Land* the top prize, since it's a celebration of everything those in Hollywood hold dear: themselves. While I would love for *Moonlight* to take home Best Picture, I'd put my money on *La La Land* – above all, a safe choice.



\\ Allstar

Best Actor



\\ Allstar

A short time ago, it seemed that Casey Affleck had this award locked down for his performance as an emotionally-repressed, grief-stricken janitor in *Manchester by the Sea* – and so he should, his performance is great. But nothing is certain in Oscar-world (except my judgments on what should win; those are infallible). With the increased attention on Affleck, sexual harassment lawsuits have come to light, which could put a dent in his chances. And who's that coming up on the horizon? Why, it's Denzel Washington, whose performance in *Fences*, which he also directed, has been in second place behind Affleck all awards season. He could prove to be a challenger to Affleck, especially since Hollywood would never rehabilitate or celebrate anyone who's been accused of sexual harassment... oh wait. It's probably Affleck's year then.

Should win / Will win: Casey Affleck (*Manchester by the Sea*)

Just one gripe before I get on with the predictions: it is a complete travesty that Rebecca Hall has not been nominated for her central turn in *Christine*. Anyway, moving on... Meryl Streep has her customary annual nomination for *Florence Foster Jenkins*, but she has no chance of winning. Similarly Ruth Negga doesn't seem to stand much of a chance, but it's great to see her break through. This leaves us with a three-horse race. Emma Stone has been garnering a number of awards for her turn in *La La Land*, but I think (or hope) the role is too light to stand up to the Academy. As such, the award will likely go to Natalie Portman for her portentously campy performance in *Jackie*, and she would be a worthy winner; but for me, Isabelle Huppert's powerhouse performance as rape-victim-turned-avenger in *Elle* deserves to take home the top prize.

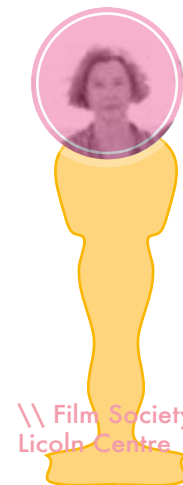
Best Actress



\\ SBS Production

Should win: Isabelle Huppert (*Elle*) | Will win: Natalie Portman (*Jackie*)

Best Original Screenplay



\\ Film Society of Lincoln Centre

Adapting the works of another is a daunting enough prospect, but equally intimidating, if not more so, is creating a world completely from scratch. In this respect, my allegiances for Best Original Screenplay are split: on the one hand, we have Yorgos Lanthimos' and Efthimis Filippou's script for *The Lobster* – a masterful black comedy, which managed to invent an uncanny Earth-like world; on the other, we've got Mike Mills' equally-astonishing script for *20th Century Women* – a masterful work, combining witty dialogue with a multitude of visual images and film clips. Mills' screenplay is worth reading as a stand-alone piece of art, and for that it's my top choice for the award. In all likelihood, however, the prize will go to Kenneth Lonergan for his drama *Manchester by the Sea*, and to be fair to Lonergan, it would be well-deserved.

Should win: Mike Mills (*20th Century Women*) | Will win: Kenneth Lonergan (*Manchester by the Sea*)

Best Adapted Screenplay

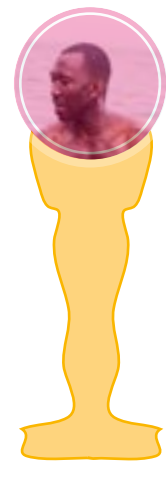


\\ Alamy

This year's nominees are marked by the fact that none of them were based on a straight-forward novel: instead we've got films based on plays, short stories, and non-fiction books. *Fences* marks an unusual posthumous nomination for August Wilson, whose play formed the basis of the script. Eric Heisserer does well to adapt the complex short story *Story of Your Life* into *Arrival*; similarly Allison Schroeder and Theodore Melfi manage to make a balance between true life and drama in *Hidden Figures*. In my opinion – and it seems likely that the Academy will agree with me – Barry Jenkins and Tarell Alvin McCraney should win for their screenplay *Moonlight*, based off the play written by McCraney; it manages to retain the original play's structure, but bring it wholly into the world of film, and for that, they should be rewarded.

Should win | Will win: Barry Jenkins and Tarell Alvin McCraney (*Moonlight*)

Best Supporting Actor

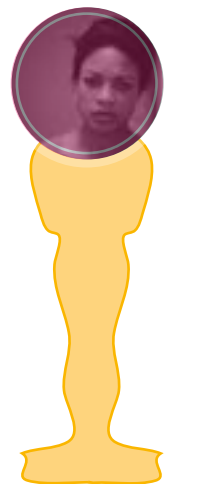


\\ Alamy

A rare category in which *La La Land* isn't nominated, the Best Supporting Actor award is also noticeable in having the only nomination for *Nocturnal Animals*, which was widely seen to be one of the main snubs of this year's awards. Lucas Hedges is a welcome addition to the short-list for his explosive performance in *Manchester by the Sea*, and Dev Patel could provide some competition for this category, for his role in *Lion*, in which he was able to display great emotional control. The award is most likely to go, deservedly, to Mahershala Ali for his role of Juan in *Moonlight*. Juan is only present in a few scenes in the film – he's a neighbourhood gang member and drug dealer who becomes a father figure for the young Chiron – but he makes a powerful impact, leaving an impression on the remainder of the film.

Should win / Will win: Mahershala Ali (*Moonlight*)

Best Supporting Actress



\\ Alamy

Viola Davis is widely predicted to take home this award for her role as Rose Lee Maxson in *Fences*. Michelle Williams' performance, also up, in *Manchester by the Sea* was a complete stand-out of the film for me, a deeply powerful performance born out of a chasm of grief. Octavia Spencer and Nicole Kidman were good in *Hidden Figures* and *Lion*, respectively, but at this point the nods seem like... well, little more than just nods. For me, it would be fantastic if Naomie Harris were to take home the top prize for her astonishing performance in *Moonlight*: in a film bursting at the seams with incredible actors, Harris left the strongest impression as a crack-addicted mother, whose narrative arc never quite reaches redemption, but comes damn close. Plus she filmed it in three days – girl's got skill.

Should win: Naomie Harris (*Moonlight*) | Will win: Viola Davis (*Fences*)

Best Cinematography

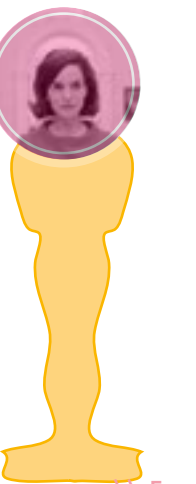


\\ Alamy

Cinematography is often overlooked, but it can make or break a film. This is most apparent in *Moonlight*: James Laxton, the film's cinematographer, has created a world of nuanced tones and hues, with great attention to detail. This is apparent even on the film's poster, which reflects the three-part structure of the film whilst also highlighting the masterful role colour plays in the work. Without such additions, *Moonlight* wouldn't be half the film it is. Bradford Young's work on *Arrival* is similarly moving, as is Rodrigo Petro's stunning work on *Silence*. All signs point to Linus Sandgren winning, for his technicolour dream *La La Land* – the cinematography was the best part of the film. However, nothing is set in stone: the American Society of Cinematographers presented their award to Greig Fraser, for *Lion*, so don't be surprised of an upset on the night.

Should win: James Laxton (*Moonlight*) | Will win: Linus Sandgren (*La La Land*)

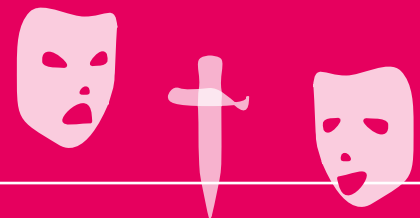
Best Original Score



\\ Fox

At this point, it seems pointless to debate the winner of this award. It will be Justin Hurwitz, whose score for *La La Land* has been picking up plaudits all season. Hurwitz's music is certainly good, although I would argue that little of it is memorable – a cardinal sin in the musical theatre world. On leaving the cinema after seeing *La La Land*, I could remember one song – two at most – and the rest I had to listen to online. This contrasts unfavourably with my experience of Mica Levi's score for *Jackie*, which wormed its way into my brain. Like in *Under the Skin*, the score is filled with haunting strings, sliding between notes until they find a place to land. Levi should really be the winner, for a score that accentuates the haunting nature of *Jackie* without ever detracting from the on-screen drama.

Should win: Mica Levi (*Jackie*) | Will win: Justin Hurwitz (*La La Land*)



And the Best Picture Award goes to...

A selection of our **writers** let us know which film they **think** should take home the **top prize of Best Picture** at this Sunday's Academy Awards Ceremony

Moonlight...



\\ Alamay

Every so often a film comes along on the big screen and, for a brief moment, thaws out the iciness of our hearts, reminding us of what it means to be human – profoundly vulnerable and emotional – before we return to our seemingly robust and apathetic façade. *Moonlight* happens to be such a film. The centrepiece of this cinematic triptych is Chiron, a boy whom we all know from school – that boy who was called ‘faggot’ before he even understood what it meant.

Some of us may have had to endure the unfortunate affair of being mercilessly bullied, taunted, and humiliated while growing up for being born a certain way, and the lucky ones are blessed with abundant care and love from people they can depend upon, enabling them to bounce back up relatively unscarred. But that isn't the case for young Chiron, who lives in an impoverished neighbourhood and whose mother is a drug addict. Recovering from such a terrible ordeal is akin to finding the way out of a tunnel without a flashlight – it seems hopeless. But the ending of *Moonlight* suggests that he has found hope and has attained his yearning for love, with a concluding scene open to interpretation if one isn't optimistic enough – and it's hard to be optimistic in the current climate.

It is refreshing to watch a film portray a black man as a quiet, sensitive protagonist as opposed to the aggressive criminal stereotype all-too-often used in mainstream Hollywood films. *Moonlight*, in its entirety, is a film about love and its capacity to alleviate painful past experiences – and that is something we can all relate to, regardless of our differences.

Hafiz Zainal

...Arrival

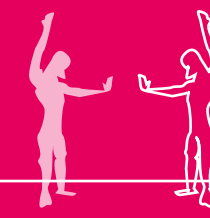
With *Arrival*, Denis Villeneuve has turned a tedious and uninteresting topic – the translation of an alien language – into science-fiction spectacle. From its meticulous sound design to its subdued lighting, the whole film looks and sounds otherworldly. Cinematographer Bradford Young showcases his talent, with sweeping shots of rolling clouds and the cavernous inside of an alien spaceship, while Jóhann Jóhannsson's score is filled with strange and erratic noise, complementing the harsh clicking of the heptapods' speech. Of this year's Best Picture nominations it is easily the most technically impressive (despite picking up less nominations in technical categories than *La La Land*), and even with its interesting alien ‘antagonists’ it feels far more rooted in reality compared to most modern science-fiction.

Reflecting on how language shapes our world and interactions, the film's protagonist Dr. Banks (Amy Adams) asserts that “language is the foundation of civilization. It is the glue that holds a people together. It is the first weapon drawn in a conflict.” The unfamiliar language of the heptapods replaces the wonder and excitement usually provided by explosive alien weapons; the creatures emit an ink-like substance which flows through the air ‘spelling’ out calligraphic-style messages which Dr. Banks and Ian Donnelly (Jeremy Renner), a mathematician, must decipher. Amy Adams' performance as Dr. Banks, the foremost expert in her field, is equally impressive: we see her struggle with her past as she tries to save the planet from destroying itself, and international rivalries escalate. *Arrival's* promotion of communication over conflict, and cooperation over military intervention, is timely given the world in which we currently find ourselves.

Cale Tilford



\\ Paramount Pictures



...Hidden Figures

Let's face it: this has been a pretty shit year. From the rise of the far-right in Europe, to an American president trying to block Muslims from entering the country, it's been a political atmosphere dominated by fear and hatred of others, and a centralisation of voices that would previously be marginalised. Into this environment therefore, the success of *Hidden Figures* is something to be celebrated. Based on the true-life stories of the African-American women who calculated the trajectories for NASA astronauts during the space race, *Hidden Figures* acts as a call for unity, reminding us that the ‘greatness’ that Trump supporters want to bring America back to wasn't that great at all.

Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer, and Janelle Monáe star in the film, which mainly centres around the ‘computers’ – groups of women who performed complex calculations at top speeds to help rockets get off the ground. The film highlights the vital importance these women played and the challenges they faced, in an era when high-tech computers were a distant vision. Henson plays Katherine Goble, whose skill with analytic geometry saw her calculating space flights, breaking down racial barriers placed in her way with a single-minded strength of will.

Hidden Figures is celebratory and unashamedly so; it is ‘feel good’ viewing at its most pure and wonderful. It celebrates the legacy of these black women, which has been largely unnoticed by historians, but also asks us to remember that all individuals have worth; not just those who can help NASA. It's a lesson many leaders could learn, and the Academy would be sending out a strong message to the world by selecting a film that is so inherently political as Best Picture.



Indira Mallik

\\ 20th Century Fox

La La Land...



\\ Allstar

Tom Stephens

What a year it is for Best Picture nominees. There really is something for everyone on the list this time around: family drama in *Manchester By The Sea*, *Fences* and *Lion*; sci-fi in *Arrival*; war drama in *Hacksaw Ridge*; intelligent thriller *Hell or High Water*; and even a classic “based-on-a-true-story” unsung heroes (or in this case, heroines) tale in *Hidden Figures*. It's one of the most all-round acclaimed collection of nominees in years – none of the films have an approval rating on Rotten Tomatoes lower than 85% – but despite this there have only been two films dubbed to win at any point in the process: *Moonlight*, which began picking up speed as a possible Oscar winner when it won the Golden Globe for best drama earlier this year, and *La La Land*.

I'll confess now; I haven't seen *Moonlight*, and I feel ashamed about it – not just because by all accounts it's one of the most moving portrayals of a man coming of age that has been put to the screen this decade, but because I can't make a fully informed judgement about which film truly deserves the golden statue this year. But I will say this: *La La Land*, frontrunner for the award from the get-go and darling of critics and crowds alike, has received all that hype for a reason. The main reason, aside from its cinematic beauty, the perfection of its direction and writing, the power of its two central performances, and its utterly lush musical score: it is a film that dares to dream. In the era that we're living in, where the entire world seems to have taken a turn towards the dark, it takes a hell of a lot of heart to make a film this powerfully uplifting, that reminds all who watch it of the power of self-belief without miring itself in cliché.

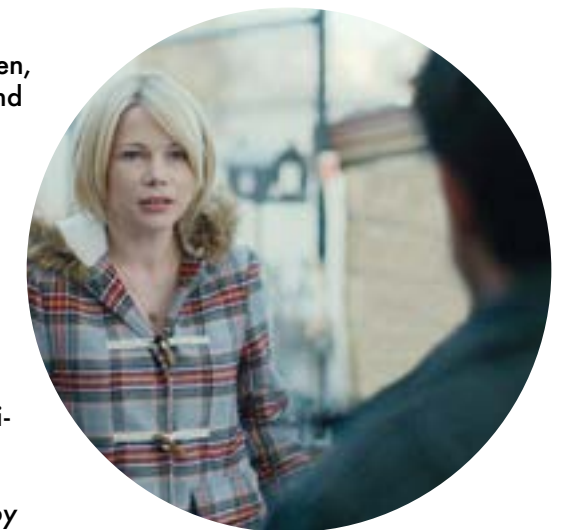
...Manchester by the Sea

Which of these films will matter a year from now? What about five years? What about a decade? Too often, the Academy has made the decision to give the Best Picture award to a film that, realistically, won't stand the test of time. How many times have you watched *Argo*? What about *The Artist*? What about *Crash*? It's time that the Academy bucks the current trend, and goes for a winner that will really hold up down the line. That winner is Kenneth Lonergan's *Manchester by the Sea*, a heart-breaking tale of loss and grief, which eschews happy endings in favour of real drama.

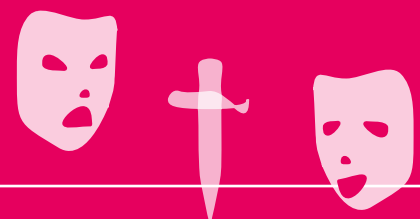
While the tale might seem simple on the surface – Casey Affleck plays Lee, a janitor who must return to his hometown after the death of his brother, to look after his teenage nephew – Lonergan's script and the excellent acting from the cast help plumb hidden depths. As the film unfolds, we begin to realise what Lee has been running from all these years and old emotional scars are reopened in violently emotional scenes. While Affleck does well with his character – all downcast eyes and low voice – the real beating heart of the film can be found in Lucas Hedges' performance as Lee's nephew, whose adolescent angst plays off against Lee's repressed calm. Michelle Williams, similarly, puts on a barnstormer of a performance as Lee's estranged ex-wife.

At its heart, *Manchester by the Sea* is an emotional drama, comparable to works by Ibsen or Chekhov in its nuance and power. A reasonably simple story, well-told, with direction that gets the very best out of the actors: *Manchester by the Sea* is a classic, and deserves to win the Best Picture award.

Fred Fyles



\\ Allstar



Macbeth | Breathing new life into Shakespeare



Macbeth \ National Theatre



Waleed El-Geresy

Macbeth was on at the National Theatre from the 6th – 20th February

Shakespeare for schools is an attempt by director Justin Audibert to bring Shakespeare closer to a 'younger audience': school children, especially those who may have been disillusioned by endless GCSE English lessons analysing iambic pentameter, may not have had the chance to step back and simply appreciate gripping Shakespearean narratives, such as *Macbeth*.

Macbeth is a play that you would think well-suited to an adaptation of this kind – with satisfying amounts of black magic, murder, and back-stabbing, which Audibert, together with the cast and team, attempt to exploit to the fullest extent. The play's pace is rapid and the scenes action-packed, with the production's length half that of the traditional script, making for an engaging storyline that makes it difficult not to become engrossed in. The characters are expressive: Macbeth (Nana Amoo-Gottfried) delivers animated soliloquies, which were fairly terrifying; Lady Macbeth (Madeline Appiah) is as tragic as you could hope for – the cold ghosts of her terrible deeds haunting the Dorfman Theatre as she attempts to wash a perennial smear of non-existent blood off her hands as she stares blankly through the audience, pupils the size of pinholes.

From the off, there was the immediate evocation of a tribal atmosphere. A thunderous, rhythmic percussion complements much of the action, with war drums banging in a regular rhythm: sound

is evidently a major part of this performance – a part of the attempt, it seems, to keep younger viewers of the play interested – and it seems to work. Actors in ragged clothes run round chanting and bashing sticks together, with the odd haunting Gaelic chant giving a nod to the play's original Scottish setting.

What I found particularly odd, were the strange anachronisms that introduced themselves now and again – notably Macbeth dons a WWI-era gas-mask at several points. While my initial thoughts were that they were short on props, it became clear that this was a deliberate theme, with jerry cans and metal flasks popping up everywhere. It was refreshing to see *Macbeth* performed in such a different way, but I felt the mix of tribe-like culture and post-apocalyptic society were too much with too little explanation and were potentially confusing.

Although the fast pace of the play, combined with the archaic language, did make it slightly difficult to understand the finer points at times, this was compensated for by other methods of exposition: there is much movement in the play, and many thrilling

fight scenes to keep the story moving, all different in their own way – eerie necromancy being practiced in one mad scum turns into a rough knife-fight to the death in the next. Despite an arguably docile scene at the end, where a gas mask is raised into the air in triumph, as opposed to a real head, in general they don't skimp on the gruesome details: in one particularly horrifying moment Lady Macbeth's throat is slit in a frankly horrifying display which would satisfy the hunger for gore of the greediest viewers.

It seems as though Audibert wished the characters to stay true to much of the original dialogue – Shakespearean language is, of course, part of the experience – with the occasional addition, and frequent omission to cut the performance to a more manageable length, allowing for scenes to focus on other aspects such as physical movement. The abridgement of the script was done well: the story didn't really feel as if it was missing anything and flowed throughout. Most importantly, the production accomplished its goal of adapting *Macbeth* to enthuse younger audiences about the works of the literary behemoth, whose plays are often unfairly stereotyped as difficult or outdated. The creative way in which the story of *Macbeth* was told throws a new light on Shakespeare and begs the question of why – given the success of a TV show like *Game of Thrones*, which is similar in terms of the combination of kingly power-struggles, violence, and betrayal – tales like *Macbeth* don't have just as much of a passionate following among the youth of today. Perhaps the old tales simply need new voices.



Madeline Appiah in rehearsal as Lady Macbeth \ Ellie Kurtz



Thomas Ostermeier's production of *Richard III* is a celebration of the wicked, the tragic, and the profane. The play is on tour from Schaubühne Berlin and is performed entirely in German with English surtitles on the stage.

Not only is this a departure from the original Shakespeare in terms of language, but also in setting and style. Thanks to a soundtrack of loud industrial music, a live on-stage drummer, pyrotechnics, and shouted German, the play at times feels like a concert by heavy-metal band Rammstein. Fittingly Richard is portrayed by Lars Eidinger – a renowned German theatre and television actor – like a depraved rock star. This portrayal is no doubt greatly influenced by Rammstein's frontman Till Lindemann... Edinger flourishes in a role where he can be lewd and shocking: his comedy is deeply cynical, and he delights in breaking the fourth wall. At one point

\\ The production does not surrender any of its idiosyncrasy to the English theatre tradition, and retains the clear marks of German absurdity \\

in the penultimate scene, a beeping noise disrupts Lars in mid-speech and he stands, on top of a table in his crown demanding that the audience identify and stop this sound as he will only continue when it has disappeared. The show is filled with similar interruptions, such as Edinger reading aloud the English surtitles, interrogating members of the audience going to the bathroom, or at one point rapping the script out loud to rock music.

Despite these alterations the inner character of Richard is kept close to the original.

He is a hunchback with a deformed foot, deeply bitter and cynical: "I am determined to prove a villain / And hate the idle pleasures of these days". Pathological in his obsession for power, and very much aware of the irony of his circumstance – "I'll

\\ The progression of Richard from anti-hero, whose actions appall but whose rhetoric enamours, to pure villain is eloquently portrayed \\

marry Warwick's youngest daughter. What, though I kill'd her husband and her father?" – Edinger is certainly the right casting choice to carry these traits forward. The progression of Richard from anti-hero, whose actions appal but whose rhetoric enamours, to pure villain is eloquently portrayed. By the time the two princes have been murdered in the tower we very much empathise with Queen Elizabeth and Margaret, despite earlier their being the butt of Richard's jokes and scorn. One striking alteration is that the battle at the end is replaced by a short physical monologue where Richard is murdered and suspended precariously from the theatre ceiling by his foot.

The production does not surrender any of its idiosyncrasy to the English theatre tradition, and retains the clear marks of German absurdity: Richard strips nude and removes his hunchback and club-foot when courting Lady Anne; similarly the murder of Clarence is made darkly humorous but also excessively gory, and the effect is one of cognitive dissonance – most of the audience don't

know whether to laugh or be appalled. The setting is self-consciously anachronistic, the opening scene begins with the cast in tuxedos and designer dresses as the royalty sip from champagne flutes. This works well – *Richard III* is full of references to the debauchery of the house of York, at a time when leisure meant banquets, masked balls, and waltzing. Making this apparent to a modern audience means updating costumes, locations, and references.

Richard III's corpse was identified and exhumed from a city council car park in Leicester, by a team of archaeologists and scientists at Leicester University in 2012 who then restored the remains to Leicester Cathedral. He was the last English monarch to be killed in battle and his death marked the end of the house Plantagenet and rise of the Tudors. Over generations his physical whereabouts may have been forgotten, but his character was not, and thanks to Shakespeare's pro-Tudor agenda he has been

\\ For all its absurdity, Schaubühne Berlin's production touches the heart of Richard III's character – a shocking depiction of the face of tyranny \\

immortalised as a monster in English culture.

Whether his infamy is deserved or not is still an area of debate. Either way, *Richard III* is not a great play due to its historical accuracy, but instead because it tells a timeless story of the creation of an anti-hero through the politics of rejection. For all its absurdity, Schaubühne Berlin's production touches the heart of *Richard III*'s character – it is a shocking depiction of the face of tyranny at such an apposite moment in global politics.

Richard III | The Bard given Teutonic overtones



Schaubühne Berlin, Richard III, Lars Eidinger and Jenny König \ Arno De-clair



Ezra Kitson

Richard III was on at the Barbican from 16th – 19th February

Wyrd Sisters





Little Simz Welcome to Wonderland: The Experience



Little Simz, real name Simbi Ajikawo, returned to the Roundhouse Rising show, having performed a headline set in 2014. This year, she headlined and curated a varied line-up of emerging talent. An art installation accompanied the show, with the *Wonderland* theme in focus throughout. An animation introduced her performance, with a cartoon Little Simz asking Cheshire "Why am I here?" His response: "Simply, you're here to fuck up the balance".

Ajikawo's energy is on full pelt from the start. The set list is based heavily off her latest LP, *Stillness in Wonderland*. The tracks take on a new optimistic life with the live band. On the album, the vibe is hazy – it seems the wonderland is an escape Simz uses to cope with her struggles. We're invited along

to follow her in her journey though the rabbit hole, and the experience is immersive. Even when the lyrics are dark, her dynamism onstage means the mood is liberating rather than wallowing. On *Trust Issues*, she raps *Nobody is an angel these days/if you disagree please speak up please say*. It is clear Little Simz is at her most comfortable rapping and singing,

\\ She might be the illest doing it right now \\

and she commands the stage effortlessly. Between tracks, the atmosphere falters slightly – there is little introduction to each song and the fact that this is her biggest show to date starts to show. Despite her nerves, she never ceases to be lively and charming.

A highlight of the show

is *God Bless Mary*, a song dedicated to her neighbour for never complaining about the loud music next door. The audience gains perspective: Simbi is only 22 and was working from her home not long ago. Despite her success and critical acclaim worldwide, Little Simz has remained defiantly independent and true to herself. Kendrick Lamar said she "might be the illest doing it right now". Her style is more hip-hop than grime, but she is no stranger to the scene, having worked with an impressive set of artists on the album. Ghetts and Chip join her onstage for an electric performance of *King of Hearts*, and for the finale of the show she is joined by Stormzy and Kano for *Dead Body*.

By Simran Kukran



No unsolicited mail

Mazen Almaskati discusses what it takes for aspiring musicians to make it in music industry full of obscure managerial branches.

\\ Martin Fisch i.e. marfis75

Just last week, Camden's very own Roundhouse opened its doors to artists and industry professionals as part of their Artist Toolkit Day. The event included a series of performances, clinics, talks and collaborations during the weeklong Roundhouse Rising Festival.

I made my way to the iconic venue on Sunday morning, collected my wristband and nestled into a seat amongst roughly forty others, pen and notebook in hand, starry-eyed and eager to learn something I didn't know about the world of music. Around me, others eyed up their peers. Some made a daring effort to stand out with 90s inspired bowl cuts, snake skin knee high boots and in one instance, a *Hello Kitty* bomber jacket. Others were social butterflies, floating from one guitar slinging twenty-something year old to the next with the oddly familiar: "what kinda music do you make?", or "what genre do you listen to?" More often than not people smiled and shrugged: "A bit of everything y'know?"

Soon after, lights were dimmed, and the talks began with the familiar squeal of mic feedback and a unanimous wince. We were taken through the various gears and cogs of the music industry. First with an introduction to

the world of PR, then licensing, management, publishing, booking agents and finally the label industry. The panel included speakers from Coda, Imagem, BBC Extra and Universal Music each with their own set of tips, insider secrets and almost always a story of struggle, opportunity and eventually success.

Throughout the day we were reminded that though there was no fixed recipe for success, you could only go so far without a manager, label, PR agent and yada yada yada.

"Can I send in an application to a PR company or publisher?" Someone asked. "Not really" replied the speaker, "we don't accept unsolicited mail."

"Can I apply in hopes of

\\ Instead of having to impress multiple members the industry with your singer songwriter skills, now you merely need to impress one. A Manager \\

getting picked up by a booking agent?" Another hopeful asked.

"Not really" replied the speaker, "we don't accept

unsolicited mail."

Soon enough, there appeared to be a trend and we were left baffled by the catch-22.

With the means to make music becoming far more accessible and with music itself becoming far more available, industry professionals have had to shield themselves

\\ These guys can be found floating around the live music scene keeping their eyes peeled for the next big thing \\

from the resulting fall out. It appeared as though companies across the board gradually started relying on stamps of approval from their contemporaries as a means of time and resource management as they sifted through the heaps of emerging new music.

Surely this makes it more difficult to land a deal with anyone in the industry? Nope. In fact, this couldn't be further from the truth.

Instead of having to impress multiple members the industry with your singer or songwriter skills, now you merely need to impress one. A manager.

Managers comfortably sit

right in the middle of a web of industry professionals, they curate their roster, represent their artists, but most of all they deliver consistent talent to their peers. A manager with a solid reputation are your keys to the industry. This way, PR representation, licensing, and booking gurus are simply an email away. So instead of trying to win over your allies one by one, simply get yourself a well-respected manager.

"Can I email a management company and ask to join their roster?"

Ironically, management companies too do not accept unsolicited mail. However unlike their industry counterparts, these guys can be found floating around the live music scene keeping their eyes peeled for the next big thing. And that's not all. In fact, behind the scenes industry professionals will frequently share hotly tipped artists to one another, trying to gauge the interest of their peers. With their ears pressed up against closed doors, managers will listen out for chatter. The louder the chatter, the more appealing it becomes to add the artist in question to their roster.

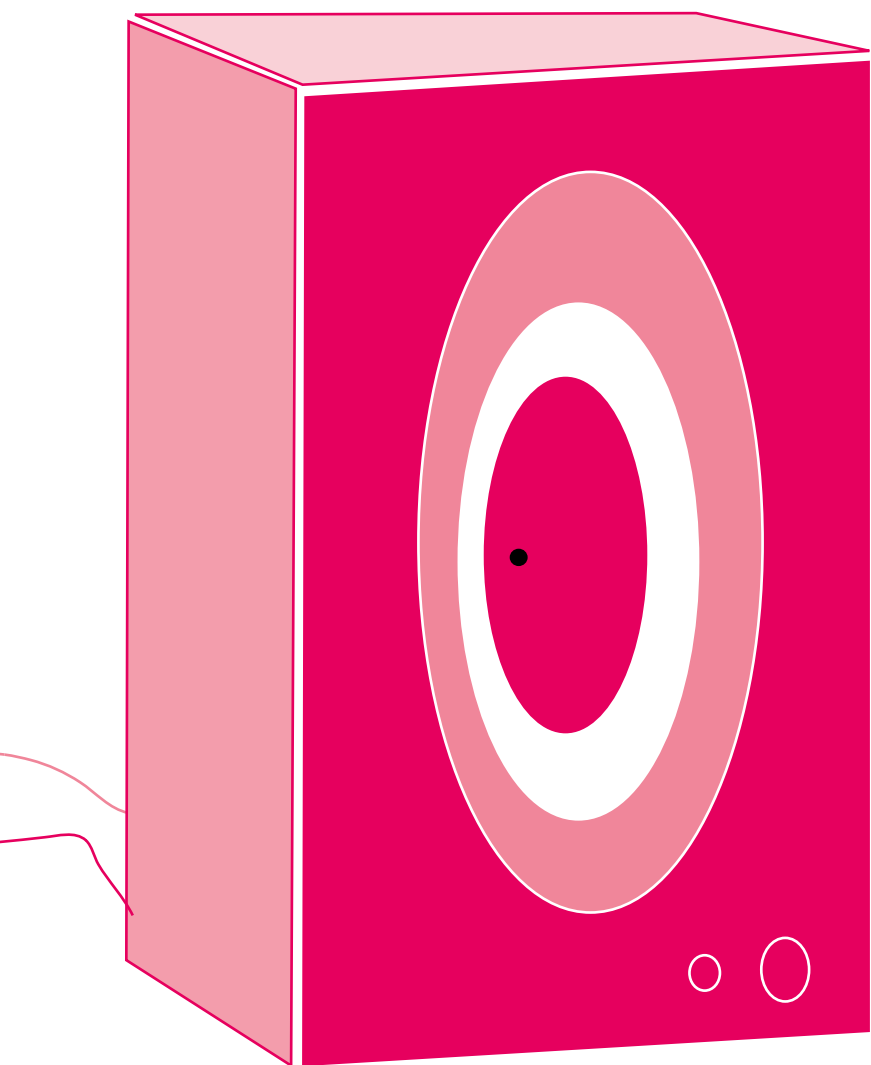
So where does all this chatter come from? Lets say you play a gig, or you upload a track to a streaming website, or you collaborate with an established artist and somehow word gets

\\ Good, bad, or simply weird, the message gets back and nothing goes unmissed. Why? Because nothing is worse than missing the next big act \\

around. More likely than not, the news will be picked up by the safety net we called A&R scouts. Scouts dwell in the corners of dingy clubs and gig venues and will often look unassuming, sipping on a pint of lager. The difference is, once they've finished that pint, they report straight back to HQ. Good, bad, or simply weird, the message gets back and nothing goes unmissed. Why? Because nothing is worse than missing the next big act.

So what does that mean for you? Not much really. But understanding what goes on behind the curtain is a nice little reminder that you and your music do the talking. With a couple of solid tracks under your belt and a stirring live performance, you too could be the next big thing.

Just remember, "We do not accept unsolicited mail".



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NeighbourHOOD Grammys 2017

Once again we have reached that time of the year, when the weather is bad and the Grammy's decision-making skills are even worse. Thankfully **Jamell Samuels** and **Le Osikomaiya** have linked up for the **2nd Annual NeighbourHOOD Grammys 2017**, bringing through two new **bruddas** onto the committee: **Andy Djaba** and **Jamill Wallace**. Last year was mad for **Hip-Hop** with many of the biggest names producing **phenomenal** work, its only right we acknowledge those who are really out here for the **culture**. The **Grammys** tried to play us, but they played themselves, so we're about to tell you what was really played on the streets and recognise the **mandem** that have held it down and done bits.

Album of the year

The Life of Pablo, Kanye West [aka Yeezus] "We on an Ultralight Beam... This is a God dream... This is everything." Despite the unprecedented commercial success of Views, the committee came to the decision that Drizzy simply has to come harder than he did on this album to be deserving of Album of the Year. Travis and Schoolboy both came through with impressive sophomore efforts and both albums have very few skippable tracks. The committee was in agreement that *4 Your Eyez Only* was stunning, however its brevity, although leaving fans wanting more, actually worked against it in this case (the whole album is only 45 minutes long). *The Life of Pablo* saw Kanye return to his crazy, experimental and creative best. The heavy gospel influences throughout the album are apparent, with the hauntingly beautiful *Ultralight Beam* a particular committee favourite. It's safe to say this is one of Kanye's best bodies of work to date.
Nominations | Views, Drake [aka Drizzy, Champagne Papi, 6ixGOD] | *Birds in the Trap Sing McKnight*, Travis Scott [aka La Flame] | *4 Your Eyez Only*, J. Cole | *Blank Face LP*, Schoolboy Q [aka Quincy, Groovy Tony]
Honourable shoutouts | *The Sun's Tirade*, Isaiah Rashad [aka Zaywob] | *The Divine Feminine*, Mac Miller
The Divine Feminine has to be the best rap love album of all time, hands down. Dude used 10 tracks to speak about one woman. If Mac Miller's grandma don't love your heart, you cold.

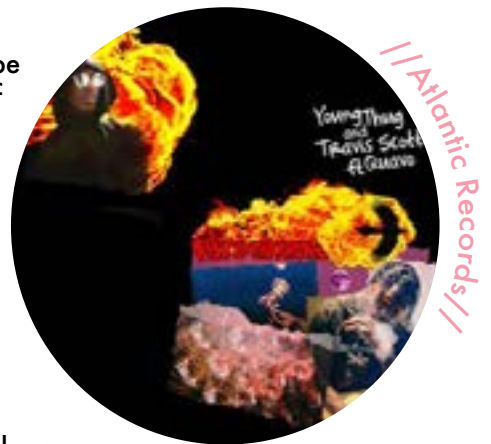


Mixtape of the year

Colouring Book, Chance the Rapper [aka Lil Chano from 79th] "Am I the only nigga still care about mixtapes?" After taking one of the biggest Ls in recent rap history in his beef with Drake, Meek Mill's career was hanging in the balance this year. DC4 served as a reminder that he is still capable of producing some pure heat. *Slime Season 3*, the highly anticipated third and final instalment of Young Thug's *Slime Season* projects provided us with near perfect hype music. Noname impressively came through with a very outstanding debut mixtape in *Telefone*, displaying her melodic raps and 'happy go luckily' musical style with a full body of work. On *Project E.T.*, DJ Esco and Future linked up to do what they do best, releasing yet another fire mixtape. *Colouring Book* is a blend of gospel and hip-hop; all credit is given to Lil Chano for creating such a consistent and concise piece of work.
Nominations | DC4, Meek Mill [aka Meek Milly] *Slime Season 3*, Young Thug [aka Thugger Thugger, Young Slime, YSL Lord, Jeffery] | *Telefone*, Noname | *Project E.T.*, DJ Esco
Honorable shoutouts | *Purple Reign*, Future [aka Future Hendrix, Plato, Astronaut Kid]

Song of the year

Pick Up the Phone ft. Quavo [Young Thug & Travis Scott, Jeffery & Birds in the Trap Sing McKnight] Despite Drake's undeniable success for Kyla's *Do You Mind*, the committee agreed that the lack of originality meant it could not be crowned the winner. Kanye West's soulful use of T. L. Barrett's gospel track also named *Father Stretch My Hands* is another gem off the album. The Metro Boomin production merges almost perfectly with the voices of Ye, his former pupil Kid Cudi and the backing choir. A latecomer to the 2016 party, *Bad & Boujee* could easily be called the song of a generation. The term 'Boujee' comes from the word 'bourgeois' used to describe the middle class; but to be honest, nobody could care less because the track is flames. Name another song to get a shout-out at the Golden Globes! *Panda* is simply an undeniable hit. You hear the song and you can't help but get excited. It has been heard everywhere from fashion shows to the grimmest shubs. However, all these come second to *Pick Up the Phone*. The tropical vibes and melodic tones from Thugger Thugger and La Flame make the song irresistible. It has something for everyone and Quavo brings one of the best verses of his life to seal the win.
Nominations | *One Dance* [Drake, Views] | *Father Stretch My Hands Pt. 1* [Kanye West, Life of Pablo] | *Bad & Boujee* [Migos, Single] | *Panda* [Desiigner, New English]
Honorable shoutouts | *Ultralight Beam* [Kanye West, Life of Pablo] | *Nas Album Done* [DJ Khaled, Major Key] | Nas goes in with one of the most fire verses of the year, with a powerful message to go alongside it. All just to remind us that his album is done and that we should be looking out for it. If his album is anything like this track it's definitely on our most anticipated list.



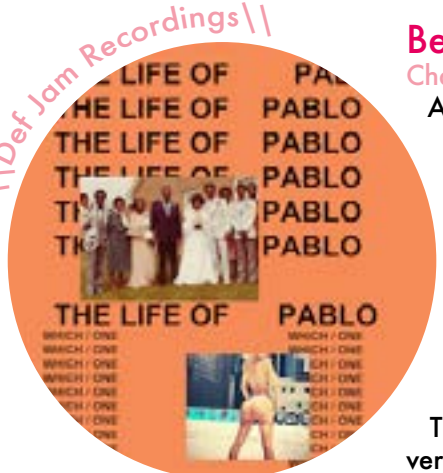
Best collab track

Future & The Weeknd - Low Life [Future, EVOI] "I turn the Ritz into a poor house / It's like eviction number four now" We felt it was important to include this category for the culture. This category recognises those tracks for which you can just tell the artists really collaborated together to craft something special. The distinction between this category and the "Song of the Year" category is that, to be eligible for this category, the track requires more than just artists dropping feature verses on each other's beats. We have to hear that the artists spent time together grinding in the studio to refine their collective art. Having said that, *Low Life* is a worthy winner, with the similarities in The Weeknd's flow on this track and on *Six Feet Under* from his *Starboy* album further testament to the hours spent in Future's company producing heat (the two tracks were likely made in the same recording sessions).
Nominations | Kanye West, The-Dream, Kelly Price, Kirk Franklin & Chance the Rapper - *Ultralight Beam* | Young Thug & Wyclef Jean - Kanye West [Young Thug, Jeffery] | 21 Savage, Metro Boomin, Future - X [21 Savage & Metro Boomin, Savage Mode] | Kanye West, Life of Pablo | YG, Drake & Kamaiyah - Why you Always Hatin? [YG, Still Brazy]
Honourable shoutouts | Rihanna & Drake - *Work* [Rihanna, Anti]
 This song has special memories for the committee, we have all definitely lost composure to a solid whine to this track.



Best featured verse

Chance the Rapper - Ultralight Beam [Kanye West, Life of Pablo] "I made Sunday Candy, I'm never going to hell" As usual, Kendrick came in with the fire feature verses. His verse on *Goosebumps* deserves a special mention for his unexpected falsetto bars- nobody else in the game is brave enough or versatile enough to even attempt this. Quavo's verse just reminds us all that we will never have as much sauce as him - the man is just effortlessly cool. Jay Electronica stole the show with his verse, dropping arguably the best verse on Chance's whole album. Chance uses the gospel backdrop, to give listeners a personal insight into his relationship with God in the standout verse of the album. Fault is almost impossible to find in what he crafted.
Nominations | Quavo - *Pick Up the Phone* [Young Thug & Travis Scott, Jeffery & Birds in the Trap Sing McKnight] | Kendrick Lamar - *Goosebumps* [Travis Scott, Birds in the Trap Sing McKnight] | Kendrick Lamar - *Wat's Wrong* [Isaiah Rashad, The Sun's Tirade] | Jay Electronica - *How Great* [Chance the Rapper, Colouring Book]
Honourable shoutouts | Kanye West - *Pop Style* [Drake, Single] Kanye's verse needs this shoutout because it was flames to the point at which Drake removed him from the track | J. Cole - *Jermaine's Interlude* [DJ Khaled, Major Key]
 The committee came to an agreement that essentially this track was essentially a J. Cole 'song' therefore couldn't count as a featured verse since no one else was on it..



R&B album of the year

A Seat at the Table, Solange The Weeknd proclaims "Legend of the Fall, took the year like a bandit", on *Starboy* and, although that's very difficult to argue with, after much deliberation, we decided that he fell slightly short of having R&B Album of the Year. After a brief hiatus from dropping albums, RiRi returned to remind us all why she's one of the best pop artists of our generation. Frank Ocean also returned after a not-so-brief hiatus from releasing anything and proved he really is deserving of all the hype. A lot has been made of the Grammys overlooking Beyoncé for album of the year. Well, she's getting overlooked here again because, at the Hood Grammys, we believe her little sister Solange had the R&B Album of the Year.
Nominations | Anti, Rihanna | *Blonde*, Frank Ocean | *Campaign*, Ty Dolla Sign | *Starboy*, The Weeknd
Honourable shoutouts | *PartyNextDoor 3*, *Partynextdoor* | *Sept. 5th*, dvsn



Best UK album

Konnichiwa, Skepta We had to include this category to recognise the work that the homegrown UK mandem have been putting in. The grime and urban scene has had a recent renaissance and continued to flourish last year, with BBK headlining Wireless Festival and Skepta selling out Alexandra Palace for his stunning homecoming concert. Skepta held it down for us, representing London and the UK on a global stage. Skeppy has been the UK artist of the year and it's only right that his album *Konnichiwa* should win this category.
Nominations | *Made in the Manor*, Kano | *Landlord*, Giggs | *Growing over life*, Wretch 32

Lyricist of the year

Chance the Rapper "Bruh, I'm at your head like Craig did Deebo" One thing that the Drake vs. Meek Mill beef showed us is that, more than for any other genre, in hip-hop, an artist's credibility and legacy is ultimately dependent on the strength of their pen. Lyrical ability can make or break an artist in this game and perhaps this is why Drake came so hard at Meek after the ghostwriting allegations. We included this category to acknowledge the artists with the kind of bars that force listeners to stop and really think. Not traditionally known for his lyrical ability, Chance elevated his game this year and his verse on *Ultralight Beam* alone is enough to make him deserving of this category.
Nominations | Mick Jenkins, Isaiah Rashad, Ab Soul, Mac Miller
Honourable shoutouts | Meek Mill, Kendrick Lamar



Producer of the year

Metro Boomin [aka Young Metro] Metro wins this category for the second consecutive year, retaining his crown as the best producer in the game. He won for the simple fact that, once you hear "If Young Metro don't trust you I'm gon' shoot you" or "Metro Boomin wants some more nigga" on a track's intro, you just know the track is going to bang.
Nominations | Zaytoven, London on da Track, Travis Scott Southside
Honourable shoutouts | Nineteen85



Peace, Love, and Death Metal | *Nos Amis*



Note: Not actually death metal\\
HBO



Anurag Deshpande



In HBO's latest documentary film we follow the *Eagles of Death Metal* as they return to Paris following the attack on the Bataclan.

Colin Hanks' directorial debut, *Nos Amis*, is a powerful albeit atypical music documentary.

Opting to focus on the humanity of its subjects far more than their music, this HBO production follows the band Eagles of Death Metal as they attempt to recover from their ordeal at the Bataclan. An impactful cold open shows us the beginnings of the concert as the energy and life seen juxtaposes with the foregone conclusion already simmering in the viewer's mind. But the footage ends abruptly, long before the tragedy would occur. The spectre of dread this evokes, however, hangs over the rest of the feature.

The piece is measured with its pacing, spending the first third of its runtime laying the building up our central subjects. At its core, this is a story about two best friends, and their almost extraordinarily clichéd friendship. We focus, initially, on the shared adolescence of Queens of the Stone Age frontman Josh Homme, and Eagles of Death Metal frontman Jesse Hughes. We hear about the beginnings of their friendship and the 'fucking John Hughes cliché' that was the first time they really got to know each other. In their own words, Jesse and Josh share this story with us. Jesse, a stereotypical square is being bullied at a high school party; forced into the pool and not allowed to come out. Josh, lumbering Viking that he is, walks into the party and comes to his rescue. Exploration of the incident sets up the major themes of the documentary: guilt and responsibility. In this case, Jesse's feeling of guilt for not standing up for himself and fighting back, and Josh's growing feelings of responsibility towards Jesse.

In fact, these frank, honest, and intimate interviews with the pair form the emotional backbone of the piece and really help keep the audience's interest. For obvious reasons, more focus is given to Jesse, with his retelling of his childhood and early

adulthood painting a picture of a man who has always struggled to fit in, frequently broken by circumstance. Many observers, myself included, have expressed discomfort with some of Jesse's statements. But for a man that's already so haphazardly put together to take such a shattering blow?

Well, it's incredibly hard not to give him a free pass. It doesn't help that, as with many outspoken artists these

\\ At its core, this is a story about two ordinary friends and their extraordinarily cliched friendship.

days who are aren't the best at expressing themselves, detractors are ready to bastardise and amplify certain statements over others. Hanks, at least, goes to great pains to portray Hughes sympathetically whilst still not shying away from addressing Jesse's more controversial statements. Homme too shows a vulnerability here that, outside of his music, we don't see much of.

Following the story of the formation of the Eagles of Death Metal, which again highlights the responsibility Homme takes for Hughes, we move onto the events of the Bataclan. These are the documentary's most harrowing and tense moments, as we hear retellings of the



Not quite the Beach Boys\\ Steve Agee\\HBO

night from those who were there. Spliced in with interviews from the band are interviews from members of the concert's audience, together with actual footage from it. The result is a frantic and sobering immersion in the brutality of the attack. This equalisation of performer and patron ties into the piece's title of '*nos amis*'; 'our friends'.

It codifies what Jesse talks about throughout, the fact that they were all in this together and consequently how he feels responsibility for it. We also alternate between Josh's and Jesse's stories of the night; Jesse as he struggles to escape, and Josh as he finds out about the incident and tries desperately to do something about it. As these parallel odysseys unfold, each party's feelings of guilt over the night become clear. Whilst Hughes experiences survivor's guilt, Homme feels guilt over not having been there to watch over Jesse, as he always has before. That this man and this band, who have made fun and simplicity their vocation, must know find themselves in the midst of such complexity and tragedy, is unfortunate.

There's plenty of star power to be found here, as the documentary even manages to get an appearance from Bono. It goes without saying that the feature has a kick-ass soundtrack, sampling not only EoDM's three albums, but also QotSA's extensive discography. This is, undoubtedly one of the most poignant and well-crafted documentaries of the year. While fans will of course enjoy it, the wider audience may actually gain more out of it; getting to see for themselves the larger-than-life people we already know Josh and Jesse to be.

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Stressing out to chill out

Saad Ahmed talks about how some games really aren't fun to play and are immensely challenging, and how that makes them some of the most fun games around



Oh No! That's like, the 37th time I've died! \\\ Allan Rotgers

Once upon a time, games used to be hard. Like really, really fucking hard. You had to spend hours grinding and levelling up, looking for the right items or NPCs and learn the technique needed to progress.

By comparison, the majority of games these days are relatively easy to play and get into. Not much skill is required to play a game of Angry

\\ Dark Souls is a game where you really need to learn the right combos and strategies \\\

Birds for example. Given our limited leisure time, busy lifestyles and acknowledged limitations, developers have designed games to be more user-friendly and provide a quick and casual way to have

fun. However, in this large market of games, there are those that retread the style of the early games and are hard for the sake of fun. Ask any number of veteran gamers for a frustrating and difficult game and you should be hearing the name *Dark Souls* crop up several times.

Dark Souls has earned itself a reputation due to the nature of the gameplay. It's a game where you can't just button mash, where you'll die multiple times, not just because you don't know how to best the enemy but also because killing them depends on you dying multiple times. But dying is not forgiving, and death comes with the loss of a few items from your inventory. *Dark Souls* is a game where you really need to learn the right combos and strategies and have incredible patience to make it through.

Several other games aside from *Dark Souls* share this complex playstyle. Even a cute looking indie game like *Story Meat Boy* requires pressing the keyboard at

precisely the right moment (easier said than done). Does this difficulty spike diminish the game's appeal? Far from it. Executing the right commands, finally getting through an obstacle and advancing to the next stage:



together they provide more satisfaction and fun than *Mario Kart* could ever hope to aspire to. It's kind of like some BDSM relationship where feeling the pain is all part of the pleasure. Instead of a safe word, you bash your keyboard and pull out your hair in frustration.

So what's the real issue? Why isn't everyone enjoying

the awesomeness of dark souls? It's because the kind of playstyle and techniques needed to really enjoy these hard games just isn't compatible with most people, or even casual gamers.

I'd love to invest over a hundred hours into a game, earn the best weapons and build the muscle memory to execute the right combos. But frankly, I have other shit I need to do. Looking after myself, attempting to go to lectures as well as catching up on animé or the latest marvel movies. Sometimes people want to relax and have fun, as opposed to be punished for their incompetence, lack of cat-like reflexes as well as painstakingly earning achievements.

As hard and as tiresome as these games may be, some people are still able to play them. And once you really get to experience their depth and precision, you realise that they are damn awesome. The reason why so many people love these games is because they get better each time they

play them, so they'll progress further and further. Yeah, you die a lot. But you'll know

\\ Sometimes people want to relax and have fun, as opposed to be punished for their incompetence \\\

why you died, and you learn from that. And you'll improve. Maybe one day, when I have more time on my hands, I can see for myself what makes *Dark Souls* so captivating for others. Until then I'll bang my head over problem sheets while daydreaming of the days when I can bang my head over the final boss fight.

Pokémon Go on a bike

Tessa Davey details her thrilling and dangerous adventures of playing *Pokémon Go* while biking through London



To catch a Pikachu \\\ Jill Carlson

Do you remember that blissful moment in *Pokémon Red* when, after walking around at a snail's pace for so long, you could finally get your bike in Cerulean City

\\ As an adult, I have managed to combine these two passions \\\

and glide effortlessly down Cycling Road to Fuchsia City (or indeed, to anywhere)? No, you probably don't because now it's been a long time and you were probably barely born when they were released. Well, I do, because I was nine years old when they came out (in the UK) and along with all the boys in my class, was immediately obsessed.

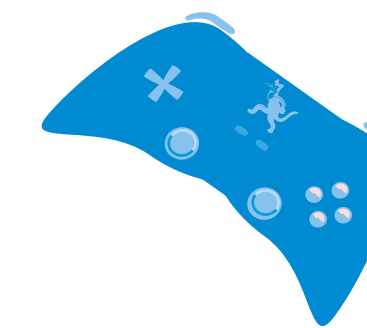
For me, there was almost no greater pleasure than whizzing along the routes of Kanto on my bike. Maybe it was the jaunty MIDI keeping my spirits up, or maybe it was just the increased efficiency of starting fights with Bikers, but it was a wonderful time. As a child I was always on a

bike, whether it was when I was immersed in my Game Boy, or actually outside in the real world (where, thanks to growing up in the country, a wild animal really did occasionally appear). Now, as an adult, I have managed to combine these two passions, and finally, more than seven months after this was nothing more than an exciting concept, I have perfected the *Pokémon Go* bicycle rig.

I know that our esteemed Games Editor thinks *Pokémon Go* is over (and is lacking a lot of the bits that made the original RPGs fun), but the Gen 2 *Pokémon* dropped last week, bringing 80 new *Pokémon* and huge changes (OK, small additions) to the mechanics of the game (more berries and evolution items). Along with the holiday events that made everyone bored of novelties like Pikachu wearing Christmas hats (but not six hour lures, they're still great), this has caused a small resurgence. Not enough to get everyone playing again, but it's stirred the completionists like me – who sometimes likes to catch a few Pidgeys on the bus while hoping I'll run into that Aerodactyl I'm still missing – back into full catching mode.

Back in July, I hunted a lot on my bike, holding my phone in

one hand and steering with the other, while cycling slow enough to hatch eggs along the residential streets of West London. As well as getting a very sore steering arm, I fell off (or more accurately, I fell into stationary objects) a couple of times before I got the hang of it, but it did up my game. Now, with a nearly full Pokédex and the existence of an actually functioning tracker, I can be more selective about what I catch, and with Pokéstops



spawning evolution objects at random, covering distance and hitting as many places as possible becomes the name of the game. So I got out my phone mount for my bike, and started hunting on my commute. At first I was a bit wobbly, nearly swerving into parked cars as I threw my Poké Balls or spun PokéStops, but after a few minutes I

caught three Pikachus while cycling along Shepherd's Bush Green without leaving the middle lane of traffic (don't do that, it's stupid and you will get hit by a truck and killed). You don't get as much distance as if you walk or take the bus (a quarter of the distance if you're lucky), you'll get to your destination slower than if you cycle full pelt, but it is really very fun. Hunting *Pokémon* on a bike captures the essence of the game, where you can excitedly dash between locations to get the *Pokémon* you need. There's nothing like the unbridled joy of finally hatching that Togepi while free-wheeling down High Street Ken, and getting all of the evolution sets for common *Pokémon* is a breeze.

Safety warning: it is a huge distraction when cycling, and you need to keep your wits about you. You need to be prepared to cycle past that Tyrannitar that spawned on Hammersmith roundabout when you can't stop safely (you can always go back for it!) or leave a *Pokémon* hovering uncaught on your screen for five minutes while you navigate through a traffic jam. On balance, I don't think it reduces your awareness much more than listening to music when you're cycling

(no matter how leaky those earphones are, it's just not safe), which I do not condone at all, but if you aren't very confident in your ability to not get too sucked into the game then you definitely shouldn't do it at all.

If you do want to reignite your love for *Pokémon Go*, now is the time. Buy a handlebar phone mount (they're only about a fiver on Amazon), and embrace your inner nine-year-old me, excitedly speeding down Route 17 picking up all those delicious hidden items. But maybe don't do it at rush hour, drivers in London are crazy.

\\ There is nothing like the unbridled joy of finally hatching that Togepi while free-wheeling down High Street Ken \\\



All hail the mighty Internet

Andrada Balmez

Do you remember the days when you had to actually chat to your friends or neighbours or call your mom to find out how to cook something new? Well, neither do I, because we're all used to using the almighty godly internet instead.

Good thing that nowadays you are only a search away from "I want to try some Thai tonight!" or "How am I supposed to eat an artichoke?". But sometimes the Internet does more bad than good and gives too many recommendations. I mean, how are you supposed to decide between that perfect steak and the perfect cake? What about that oh so easy to make soup recipe you stumbled upon the other day? I mean, I know you want to eat them all, but you don't want to waste all your life cooking - a.k.a. becoming a chef - and you promised yourself that you are going to lose a few pounds so you're

**\\ This is the kind of food you don't make unless you have a lot of time and you are pretty confident in your skills **

taking it easy on the food.

Good thing that you have me here as I typically have a bunch of people to feed at all times and don't feel the time pressure to test everything the internet has to offer. For obvious reasons, I'm not going to transform *felix* into Good-Food and will contain myself at the best dish I've tested in the past month (worth all the trouble).

And because there's a good chance that you have some

**\\ There are a lot of ingredients and I suspect that just too much or too little of any one of them could ruin the whole dish **

money to spend on a nice cut of meat, I will be writing about something that is not a cake - my weak point. For me, this recipe has a nice story because this is the first time my friend (read it as that special someone) told me that normally they hate pork but they have no problem eating mine because it's just so good - and there's nothing sexual in that statement. My self esteem as a cook after that grew exponentially which I'm thankful for. But enough about my life, assuming that you are not here to read a diary.

This time we'll be trying Vindaloo ribs - recommended by Tastemade. This is the kind of food you don't make unless you have a lot of time and you are pretty confident in your skills. The actual cooking is pretty simple, but there are a lot of ingredients and I suspect that just too much or too little of any one of them could ruin the whole dish. The main point about this particular recipe is the harmony of the spice combination. But give it a try next weekend when you are once again pretending to be studying. Keep in mind that you should know beforehand when you want to eat it as it requires a 24 hour preparation. I recommend two slabs of pork ribs.

Marinade

10 garlic cloves (in my opinion, the more, the merrier and yes, I remember what I said about the proportions of this recipe, but no one ever complained that there's too much garlic in my food - ok, maybe once)

2 serrano peppers - can be replaced by jalapenos
ginger root

Grind the garlic, ginger and serranos (or jalapenos) together. Rub into the ribs and wrap tightly with plastic wrap and let it rest in the fridge for 24 hours - or less, if you are in a hurry.

Spice rub

1 cinnamon stick - you can also use powder, silly student!

5 - 7 cloves - can be replaced with nutmeg

1 tbsp of coriander seeds

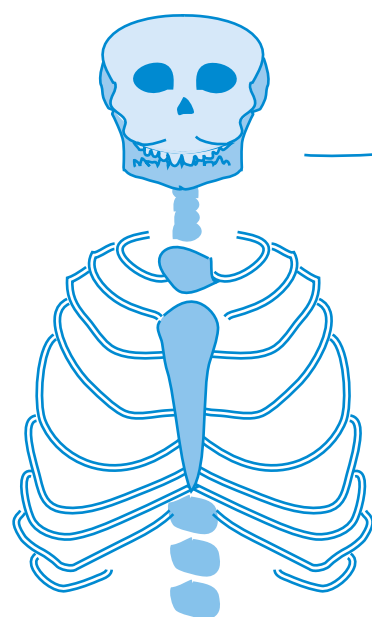
1 tbsp of cumin seed - I just pretended that this part does not exist and didn't add it

4 dried chilis

1 bay leaf - or 2 if you really want

10 peppercorns

When you decide that you really need to eat the ribs, toast all the spices in a pan until all the people from your flat come to ask what you are cooking. The key in this process - and the most complicated part of the recipe, if you don't have a grinder - is to grind all the spices to a



My ribs are fucking tasty mate

powder. Season the ribs and massage all the spices into the meat.

Roast them for 2 1/2 - 3 hours, remembering to flip them every 30 minutes or so.

Cucumber dip

1/2 cup Greek yogurt

1/2 cucumber

1/2 tsp cumin - also skipped this cumin; can you see the pattern here?

Zest and juice from 1/2 lime

Salt and pepper

Finely chop the cucumber and then mix together all the dip ingredients and let the dip (Netflix and) chill in the fridge for half an hour.

**\\ Normally they hate pork but they have no problem eating mine because it's just so good **



Ten of the best

Brunch means lazy morning, indulgent eating, and a general disregard for adult meal norms. If you're anything like us brunch is more important to you than both breakfast and lunch. This is why we went out and found the hottest spots around London where you can eat what you want, when you want.

Christy Lam

1 | Dirty Bones Shoreditch

Fried chicken on waffles for brunch? Definitely. Hit up Dirty Bones for their boozy brunch menu with mac 'n' cheese burgers, short rib crumpets and more heart attack-worthy dishes!

2 | Café Loren

Looking for a homey, warming breakfast? Café Loren in Camden Market dishes out their extensive menu of shakshukas with home-made bread!

3 | Sunday

Once crowned the best brunch spot in London, this local café in Barnsbury will give you a shock with their hour-long queue, their delicious menu and jaw-droppingly large portions. Their fried chicken on waffles and buttermilk pancakes are among their favourites.

4 | A Wanted Man

This tiny café offers a spark of individuality on King's Road serving good coffee and these amazing, crunchy, spongy sour-dough waffles with peanut butter and jam. Also head upstairs to their salon for a groom when you are done.

5 & 6 | Cereal Killer Café

Gentrification? Check. Hipster overload? Double check. A visit to the Cereal Killer Café on Brick Lane is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Prepare to consume a month's worth of sugar in one go with your choice of cereal and their crazy hot chocolate.

7 | Daisy Green

Daisy Green is a chain of Aussie-inspired cafés proudly serving a healthy menu and their award-winning banana bread. Check out their banana bread sandwich with berries and mascarpone.

8 | MILK Café

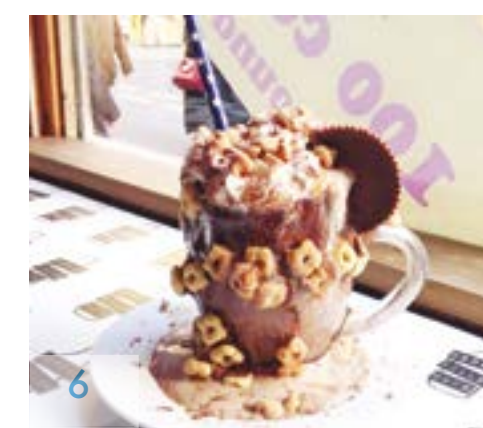
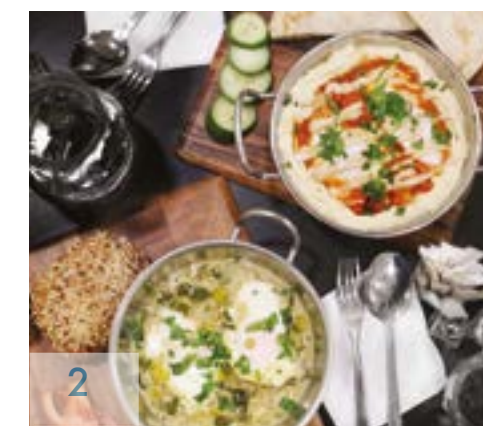
The other king of brunch nests in Balham. MILK Café offers a unique menu including the Convict, and the Sweet Maria. You'll have to visit to find out what they are - you won't be disappointed. Oysters for less than a meal at the QTR.

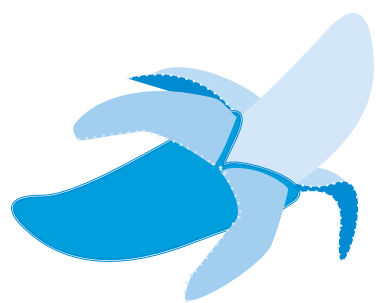
9 | Caravan Bankside

The favourite café in King's Cross just opened a bigger, better spot near London Bridge. Find them buzzing during weekends with marble tables full of good coffee, baked eggs and kimchi pancakes with pork belly.

10 | Friends of Ours

This little café hides away in the residential areas near Old Street with a seasonal menu full of ABSOLUTELY STUNNING, colourful dishes. And guess what? They taste as good as they look.





SEX

Enter the kink | Looning

B.C. Maile

Have you ever looked at a **balloon** and thought “I would”? Well you know what **they** say. You haven't really **played** until you've played with a **16-inch** balloon. And by they I mean **looners**.

Dan got into the shower, washing himself. Holly said she would clear up the mess they had made after the pump-to-pop in the sleeping bag. He still couldn't believe what Holly did for his birthday. They had had a few sessions with balloons before but nothing like this. Last time they had a blow-to-pop race with twelve inches, it was fun but Dan didn't know Holly would get into it, she must have been practicing. After a few minutes Holly enters the bathroom, completely naked, holding a red balloon. It's deflated but looks like a 16-inch.

"Ready for a bit more fun?" She says in a sexy voice.

Dan feels his heart starting to race. Holly steps into the shower with him and takes the shower head off.

"What are you doing?" Asks Dan.

"You'll see." She places the neck over the balloon, it starts to fill with water.

"Sit down, you're going to enjoy this." She says.

That was an excerpt from a story written by Wildheart, a senior member of a 'looner' forum called blow2pop. Looners are people who have a sexual attraction to inflatable objects or the act of inflation, deflation or bursting. Looking online I found

vast quantities of YouTube and XTube videos exhibiting this exotic fetish, and forums for like-minded people to share experiences. Like most well-established fetishes, looning comes with a nice set of terms to describe specific activities or subgroups.

**\\ A popper is an individual who derives satisfaction from bursting inflatable objects **

Looners are separated into two main groups, 'Poppers' and 'non-poppers'.

A popper is an individual who derives satisfaction from bursting inflatable objects. This can be achieved in a variety of ways and enjoyed for a multitude of reasons. Poppers enjoy activities such as popping balloons underfoot, hugging and squeezing balloons tight until they burst. Another popular one is B2P or blow-to-pop; this is inflating the balloon, usually by mouth until it pops. This is generally done with ear plugs so not to damage hearing as the noise can be loud, especially when playing with larger balloons. Others are aroused by the idea of popping balloons with pens, pencils, pins or knives, and often have a preferred

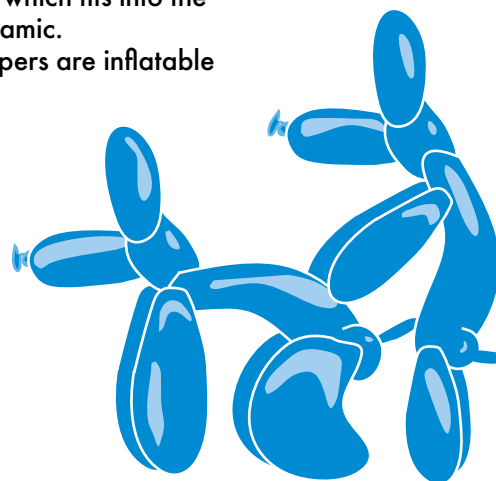
object for popping.

From reading popping stories, it looks like a lot of the sexiness lies in the anticipation. For the B2Pers, the uncertainty of when the balloon will pop plays a big role, so it's sort of an abstracted form of sexual teasing. Like a lot of kinks and fetishes, there seems to be an element of catharsis involved too. The sudden change of state from order to disorder seems to bring with it a sense of release, which fits into the sexual dynamic.

Non-poppers are inflatable

some custom-made to include a 'love hole', although this is an uncommon feature.

I saw a lot of fantasies about being in collapsing bouncy castles, or involving the 'riding down' of an inflatable, which is basically sitting on it until it's out of air. The sound of the air rushing out of the object is apparently quite a turn on. There were also those who liked the idea of sitting on something as it was pumped up, with some



fetishists who don't have any interest in the bursting of inflatables. Whilst having a lot in common with poppers, their interest lies solely in the objects. A common theme is the rubbing of inflatable objects on the body or genitals, inflating them with a pump, or deflating them. Inflatable pool toys, love dolls or airbeds are often ridden or sat on for satisfaction, with

having preferences for types of valves, with Boston valves being a common favourite.

The derivation of pleasure seems to stem from a wide range of stimuli, but for most looners it is about the feel, smell and sound. It's hard to pin down exactly what is sexy about a fetish. If you could, it probably wouldn't be a fetish. I guess inflated things have curves and shapes kind

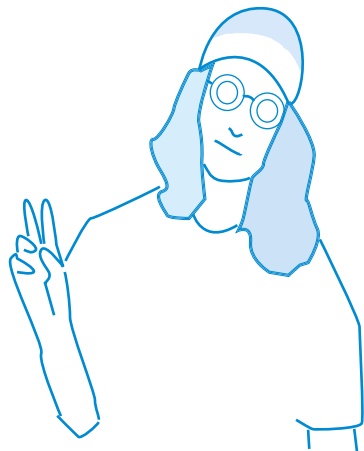
of like butts, legs and boobs so that's probably part of it. As for the smell and sound, past experiences can shape people in extremely complex ways. Most people on these forums believe that their interest started very early on, with some remembering specific childhood experiences. One user wrote about a balloon being popped in his face at a birthday party, which led to a life long phobia of balloon popping, but a strong sexual affinity for balloons and inflatables. This type of story is far from uncommon in the looning community. They even endearingly describe people with this relationship to inflatables as 'Phobics'. It seems that, whatever the reason, looning runs deep. For one man, it ran deep enough to destroy his marriage. Sharing these feelings doesn't always end up going well, but for the vast majority of cases, the partners tend to be at most indifferent. In some cases they're even willing to indulge, so it doesn't always end in tears.

Whilst I'd be lying if I said this isn't bizarre for my standards, I know for sure that it's not hurting anyone (beyond maybe causing a slight ringing in the ears). So if you're a looner, popper or phobic, just know that you're not alone. Be yourself and loon on, you crazy diamond.



M I L L E N N I A L S ...

felix

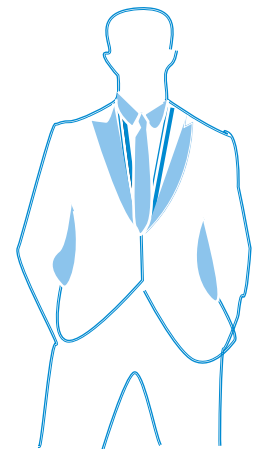


WOMEN WILL INHERIT THE EARTH!

Don Ma has had it with this regressive policy bullshit

Our fathers worked hard for all our inherited wealth

Mon Da just wants to be held by Donald Trump's strong, manly, yuuuuge hands



V O S

I didn't want to mention this scum again. I didn't want his Cheeto flavoured name appearing anywhere near my mouth, violating it with its orange, rancid, artificial taste. I wanted to focus on the beauty of this world from my safe space (in my mum's bed) and just enjoy my Matcha green tea latte (made from real Matcha, unlike those that touch the tongues of uncultured swine who visit oppressive chain coffee stores like Starbucks *literally vomiting right now*) and explore my sexuality and emotions through Instagram comics.

But here we are. The oversized oompa loompa has finally gone and done it. He's done the one thing that ensures that the age of self-determination and self-respect are far behind us. He has endangered our children in the most disgusting and vile way possible. Yes, this pussy-grabbing cislord has doomed us all. He has rolled back the guidelines for the protection of transgender students, citing "a need to consider further legal issues".

Now transgender students will no longer be able to use restrooms and facilities associated with their gender identity. This is rape. There is no other way of putting this. These sick bastards are forcing innocent, curious children to adhere to expired social constructs, and continue to cram sexual misinformation down their unprepared throats.

Make no mistake, this is a direct assault on the freedoms of all people: young, old, black, Asian, trans, gay, female... What is stopping these dictators from "rolling back" on other discrimination laws? Perhaps they don't

want black people voting or else in 2020 they would get another Barack Hussein Obama Bin Laden at the helm of the "greatest country in the world" (except it's not, because the USA is literally under oppression at the moment). Or, may the spirits forbid, they take away women's rights. Well alright, women barely have rights to begin with, since men continue to deny their institutionalised, societal, and internalised misogyny. IT'S NOT THAT HARD TO ADMIT YOU'RE A SEXIST. What is stopping them from taking away the liberties that women deserve? Of course I am not a woman myself, but I personally believe that women are definitely the leaders of today and tomorrow. Watch as it will be a female scientist who will discover the cure for cancer, not a man. We are of the past.

We have truly entered the darkest timeline, may the spirits have mercy on us all.

Except for you, white cis males, you will be just fine. Oh and that orange pile of dung as well.

Hal! Yes, this news brings a hearty, jolly, honest laugh from the deepest regions of my heart. The man himself, the wondrous Donald Trump has taken on yet another pitiful 'progressive' law and crushed it in his mighty, massive, and muscular hands.

Jeff Sessions is one of the most honest to God men that I have ever known. He was a delight to have as a dinner guest just last week at the Dasters' Mansion, and truly a saint as the Attorney General. With his expert guidance and ability, I have no doubt that the United States will return to its roots of being an institution made for the American people, by the American people.

His decision to roll back the devil's schemes to pollute our children's minds with sick 'choices' and 'freedoms' is true progression. Yet another huge victory for those who will remain in the right of history. Finally, my daughters will not have to fear a 'self-identified woman' man from staring at her body in the restroom. Those poisoned freaks will be taught the true meaning of freedom. Remember, there is no freedom without restriction. True American freedom is, and has always been, grounded in the Christian values of purity. This refers to purity in our hearts and minds, and the ignorant and delusional 'progressives' have spent most of the 21st century corrupting our youth with sexual immoralities. Such hypocrites, as they seek liberation with the devil, they lobby to take away our God given rights to bear arms and freedom of speech. Pushing their toxic narrative through fake news outlets

such as CNN and Huffington Post, and taking away the voices of good, honest Americans.

Yes, their motives are clear: by poisoning our young ones, they gain power over the future of our wealth. But we, the 0.01%, didn't get to our socioeconomic standings by being stupid. No, it was through our fathers' hard work and diligence and our continued hoarding of the country's wealth. So we will fight back, as we always have, by maintaining our purity. Purity of heart and mind, as well as of the body. That is correct, Demarco, you will not be taking my daughter to prom this year, and you will only refer to myself as Sir and my daughter as Miss.

Donald Trump, keep up the fantastic work. I continue to look forward to tomorrow, to see what this magical man has to offer humanity.

* Sponsored by Purity Rings LTD



CRISIS

Chris

Dear Chris,

I'm writing to you because I'm bored. Nothing in my life brings me joy anymore. Not my Playstation, nor my Playstation 2, neither 3, nor 4 and I'm pretty sure that even when the Playstation 5 comes out and I eventually buy it, it will too fail to bring me joy. Even my work in Quantum Mechanics has stopped bringing me joy. Even my afternoon pot noodle tastes like ashes in my mouth.

OK that last part is a lie. I mean how can a pot of chicken and mushroom noodles taste like anything other than sweet sweet ambrosia?

As you might have noticed, I have a flare for the dramatic. But the fact remains: nothing brings me joy anymore (except pot noodles). What do I do?

Best,

Bombay Bad Boy

Dear Bombay (if that's even your real name),

You've listed a very particular set of things that bring you joy. Then again you are a physicist so what else can one expect.

The way I see it, your 'love' for pot noodles has overshadowed every other pleasure in your life. I'd like you to try a mental experiment to assess whether your relationship with pot noodles is healthy or not. Whenever you have to make a decision, for example choosing x over y, I want you to also throw into the mix option pot noodle.

For example, let's say you're on a flight and the flight attendant asks you whether you'd like the meat or the vegetarian option, I want you to mentally add the option pot noodle. Likewise if you're going to the cinema and your friend asks you whether you'd like to watch



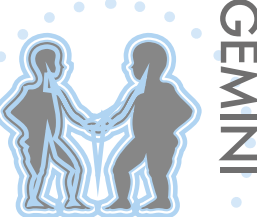









Arrival or Beauty and the Beast, you add the third option pot noodle. Or in bed when your partner asks missionary or doggy style, I want you to think 'but what about pot noodle?'

If you find that you're always going for the pot noodle option regardless of the scenario, you might have a problem. Your only option might be filling an inflatable pool with pot noodle and submerging yourself in it in an attempt to oversaturate your brain and get over your obsession with pot noodle.

This is my professional opinion as a florist.

Big luv,
Chris xxxx

HOROSCOPES

 <p>ARIES</p> <p>This week you're excited to play in an adult ball pit your friend's taking you for your birthday. Until you realise that it's actually a pit of testicles.</p>	 <p>TAURUS</p> <p>This week you decide as a joke to run for ICU President. On Monday you realise that you're running uncontested. KA-CHING</p>	 <p>GEMINI</p> <p>This week you watch <i>The Crown</i> and realise that lieutenant is actually pronounced leftenant. Mind. Blown.</p>	 <p>CANCER</p> <p>This week you get crabs and rush to the hospital because you're allergic to shellfish. You're also a complete idiot.</p>	 <p>LEO</p> <p>This week you get drunk and wake up the next morning in a pile of balloons. They make you promise never to speak of the night of passion you shared.</p>	 <p>VIRGO</p> <p>This week you can't believe you're being dragged by your friend to an adult ball pit for their birthday. Until you realise it's actually a pit of testicles.</p>
 <p>LIBRA</p> <p>This week you decide to be edgy and grow back your mono-brow. Before you know it, your mono-brow has consumed your entire head and is making its way down the rest of your body.</p>	 <p>SCORPIO</p> <p>This week you come into the office to find someone has left a jar of 'virgin' milk on your desk. You don't say anything but you're pretty sure you've been cursed.</p>	 <p>SAGITTARIUS</p> <p>This week you leave a nasty review of <i>felix</i>. Who hurt you? *pat pat*</p>	 <p>CAPRICORN</p> <p>This week you go to an Eating Disorder Awareness Week panel discussion. You raise your hand and ask whether eating ass is a disorder. You promptly get kicked out.</p>	 <p>AQUARIUS</p> <p>This week you're IC Women's Hockey. You said you'd send headshots in to <i>felix</i> by Wednesday but you lied. Why? WHY?</p>	 <p>PISCES</p> <p>This week you go home for the weekend. Your mum comes to pick you up from the bus station. She hugs you and whispers in your ear "Nobody loves you". Every fucking time.</p>



C L U B S
& S O C S ...

felix

The Confused Nursery exhibition

A look into the intriguing Blythe gallery display from LeoSoc and PhotoSoc

Tom Mutimer

Friday of last week, I had the pleasure of attending the Blyth gallery for the opening of a joint exhibition between Leonardo Fine Arts and PhotoSoc, titled 'Confused Nursery'.

The space is a time machine that will take you back to days you hardly remember and juvenile feelings that you forgot existed (remember feelings?). An eclectic array of children's toys, many of which you'll recall fondly, is on display. And although 'display' is ostensibly the right word, many of the items in the space are not just meant to be looked at, but to be picked up and played with, enjoyed in precisely the way they were originally intended. There's no ironic element intended; this exhibition is

to be enjoyed simply and sincerely. There is a cardboard box tunnel/fort, but not just any; the epic kind that your six-year-old self would have dreamed of building.

**\\ Smattering the walls is a selection of tasteful, and sometimes thought-provoking, imagery contributed by PhotoSoc **

There's a ball pit, and a gigantic crayon doodle on the floor. Slightly disjointed with the rest of the display, but nonetheless effective, is a collection of hanging guns, crafted from plastic bottles



The exhibition came with a face painting stand! \\Tom Mutimer

and other domestic items. Their silhouettes are cast on the wall opposite, creating an interesting illusion. Smattering the walls is a selection of tasteful, and sometimes thought-provoking, imagery contributed by PhotoSoc.

I heard one guy announce that he didn't 'get it', which highlighted for me the fact that this is not the form of art you will find in the Tate or Tate Modern, for example: unlike other exhibitions, that try their hardest to appear proper and fit expectations, this one isn't trying to imitate the archetypal Art Gallery. This is its greatest strength. It's not about standing for ten minutes, reverent and solemn, while you try and unravel some impenetrable monstrosity made by an artist who cares more about being avant-garde than making something you'll be able to appreciate. In fact, reverent and solemn are two words that have nothing to do with this exhibition. The joy that it contains is immediately apparent, and there is no need to think too hard about what any deeper, darker meaning could be.

More interesting than the

exhibition in and of itself was how it came alive on the opening night: wine and snacks were laid out, which for a typical Blyth exhibition is intended to provide a sense of sophistication and decorum. But the exciting atmosphere of the room swiftly did away with formality, and within minutes shoes

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came off and people could be seen crawling like toddlers as they disappeared and emerged at various points in the tunnel. People sat on the floor, playing with Lego and assembling marble-runs, and dived into hauntingly epic novels such as 'Elmer the Elephant'. The assigned floor

space was doodled upon with great velocity and abandon. There was face painting. No one appeared to embody the spirit of the exhibition as much as LeoSoc committee member Jack Campbell, who, wearing an animal onesie, juice box in one hand, crayon in the other – but somehow with dignity – strolled around the place, just enjoying the whole thing.

The evening was punctuated with bursting balloons which, like at a childhood birthday party, are an unavoidable side-effect, one that strangely brought the whole room together for a moment in shocked gasps, while we figured out that none of us had in fact died. It only reinforced the best qualities of this unique exhibition: inclusivity, authenticity, and fun. Those qualities LeoSoc Dev Sec Sophie Inman imbued so effortlessly into this defiantly cheerful installation, behind which she was the creative and organisational driving force.

The 'Confused Nursery' runs until 23rd February, free of charge, and is in the Blyth Gallery, level 5 Sheffield building.



The exhibition as displayed in the Blythe gallery \\ Tom Mutimer

Your Union events

Friday 24 February



iPOP **VK NEON PARTY**

BUY ANY FOUR VK'S ONLY £9.30

FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY
20:00 - 02:00
ALL BEIT BARS

FREE BEFORE 20:00
£2.50 AFTER
£1.50 WITH FACEBOOK GUESTLIST

imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on



h

Pub Quiz

Test your minds and enter the h-bar Pub Quiz! It's free to enter, and you and your team could win a £50 bar tab. Second prize is a bottle of house wine. Free every Thursday!

Every Thursday
19:30 - 23:00 / h-bar

imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on



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Super Quiz

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20:00-22:00

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CSP Wednesday

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iPop VK Neon Party

Tonight
20:00-02:00

Common People

Next Friday
20:00-02:00



Pub Quiz

Every Thursday
19:30-23:00

PGI Friday

Every Friday
19:00-00:00

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Quiz Night

Every Monday
18:00-23:00

Board Games & Film Night

Every Tuesday
18:00-23:00

Sports Night

Every Wednesday
18:00 onwards

Pizza Night

Every Thursday
18:00-2:00

Battle of the Bands | Heat 1

Thursday 2 March
19:30 onwards



Quiz Night

Every Thursday
19:30-22:00

Sunday Roasts

Every Sunday
All day

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You can run but you cannot Hyde



n Saturday, the 11th of February, more than 600 runners from

universities across the UK, Netherlands and Sweden took part in the 69th Annual Hyde Park Relays, hosted by Imperial College Cross Country and Athletics Club. Men's and mixed teams were made up of six runners and women's teams of four, with each runner completing a five-kilometre lap around the east side of Hyde Park.

Imperial College students, staff and alumni from across all faculties were kept company by teams from Cambridge, Oxford, Portsmouth, Reading, UCL, LSE, King's College, St George's and more.

At 2pm sharp, the relays were set underway by a cheap plastic air-horn (the budget was tight) with the weather conditions less than favourable for athletes and spectators alike; cold winds and occasional flurries of snow.

Harry Scriven was first up for the Imperial Men's

A team, and jostled with the lead runners to post an impressive 16:07 (minutes). Cambridge led the first leg, closely followed by Oxford University & Alumni teams along with UCL, with many runners dipping under the 15-minute mark.

Asia Hamdorff took the Imperial Women's A team to a speedy first leg of 19:31, narrowly behind Oxford and leaders Cambridge and UCL.

The race moved quickly along, with hundreds of students out on the course, some sporting a hilarious range of fancy dress costumes, to the delight of the spectators: grandmas, the Avengers, Pac-Man, and all variety of onesies were out on display.

Matt Douthwaite was up next for the Imperial Men's A team, putting in a strong performance to run 16.35, followed by Club Captain Will Jones in 18.06. Over in the women's race, Hamdorff handed over to Amy Davila who finished with an impressive 19.25. The mass of teams around the bandstand created a fantastic atmosphere with spectators cheering runners around the length of



the course, and documenting the occasion with the help of the all-new exclusive race Snapchat filter!

The Men's A team held a strong position with a great run by Fergus Johnson, who completed the lap in just over 17 minutes and also organised the excellent event along with fellow club member Lewis Jackson. Johnson handed over Greg Jones (17:38) before the baton was finally given to Chris Allison, who ran the fastest Imperial leg of the day in 15:51. The Women's A team also battled away with great runs from veterans Jess Prior and Alex

Mundell running 19.44 and 18.44 respectively.

The Men's B team gave some very good performances with almost all the team coming home in sub-18.30, and led by Andre Gourdon in a nifty 17.41. Notable runs for other club teams The Sesh and Boyz Boyz were Will Scott (18:34) and Duncan Ingram (18:26), both with the fastest leg for their respective teams. In the women's, ICXC WE SO SXY were led home by Leanne Lyons in 21:31.

After the excitement of the relays, the teams headed to the SCR for the customary jacket potatoes, prize-giving, and a chance to warm up. The Men's A team placed a respectable 7th, with the teams from Oxford, UCL and Cambridge proving too strong on this occasion. The girls fared better, placing 3rd overall and winning one of the coveted engraved relay baton trophies, behind UCL and Cambridge.

Many other teams from Imperial also competed, with All the Boys pipping Triathlon's Tri-als and Tri-bulations to the finish line and leading hall team Wake Me Up Gabor You Go-Go to top spot in the internal student category. Triathlon tasted victory in the women's race however, with the Tri-hards coming in less than a minute ahead of ICSWP Girls 2, followed by

Keith's Caravan.

The internal student teams are often noteworthy for their choice of team names, with this year's particularly witty ones coming from the Electronic Engineering department: No Pain No H(f) and Fast and Fouriers.

In the battle of the halls, Wake Me Up Gabor You Go-Go led the way ahead of Falmouth & Keogh, Pembroke Hall Gents, Parsons Tigers, and Xenia Wardens. In the ladies' race Pembroke Hall Ladies beat Parsons Tigresses to the line.

Following this, many of the runners headed to the after party in Reynolds Bar with celebratory drinks for organisers Lewis Jackson and Fergus Johnson. This was also an excellent opportunity for all involved to get to know runners from other universities and dance until the early hours!

The club would like to say a massive thank you to them for all their hard work in ensuring both the day ran smoothly and everyone had fun, and also to the volunteers who helped throughout the day.

Full results can be found at hydeparkrelays.co.uk. If you want to get involved look out for the event next year or email run@imperial.ac.uk.





The ultimate showdown between us and them

With Varsity fast approaching, we thought we'd put a spotlight on the women over at IC Hockey. Let's find out who will be facing off against those pesky Medics.



Alice Tidswell

Regularly spotted in RSM attire, this girl is ready to increase her already high scoring record. Oh, and she is pretty sweet at hockey too!

Becky Rickman

You think Finding Dory was this year's hit, more like Finding Becky! Never knowing when she will show her face, one thing is for sure: Becky strutting her way into Varsity.



Chantal Fifield

A forward's nightmare, our girls know nothing gets past Chantal. With an unrivalled stamina that is just waiting to be put to good use, no doubt Varsity will be the perfect occasion.

Claudia Jackaman-White

This captain may look like a Disney princess, but just wait until she's on the pitch! Like a true Scouser she will play hard to the end or at least until the lights come on in metric.



Profiling IC Hockey ahead of VarsityFest 2017

Their sticks are ready, their gumshields have been washed and the kit has been given the Daz treatment.

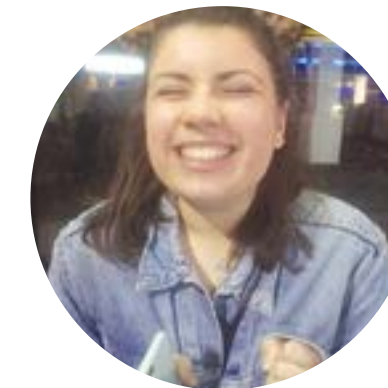


Emily Middlebrough

Whether she can see or not, Emily always finds the back of the goal. Just don't touch her coat, alright!?

Hayley Thompson

The longest standing team member, Hayley has four previous varsities under her belt. Specialising in stick work, this girl knows how to handle hockey players.

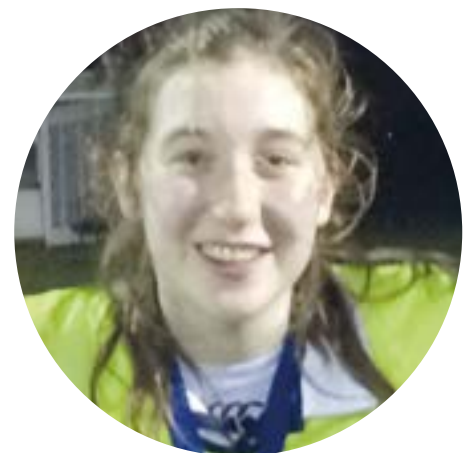


Jess Omassoli

After a brief stint on the dark side, she finally saw the light and donned the blue kit. Her main focus is hockey, but that doesn't mean she is afraid to engage in some rugby.

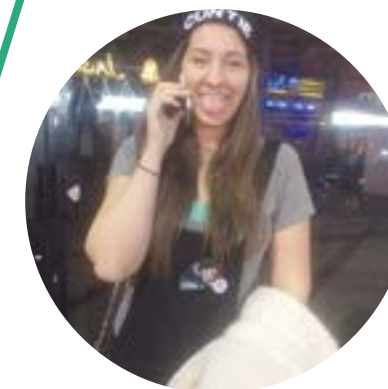
Emma Couves

Provided she isn't getting injured, this girl will get that ball up the pitch no matter what. If you're lucky you may even get to see her signature move.



Nora Clarke

This defender has got our right side covered. Known for impressive fancy dress, she will be sure to fool you. Sorry to break it to you though, you're not the only one she loves!



Georgie Wearing

After a year's hiatus from all things varsity, our goalie is back! She may sound nice, but she will stop you from scoring, unless of course you're Irish with big thighs.

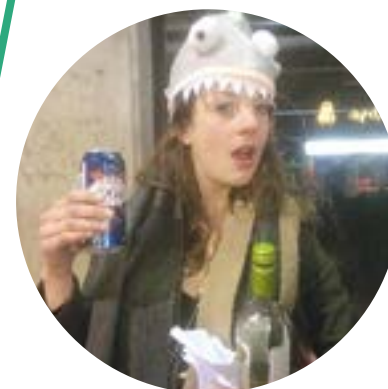
Jess Sharp

Fancy a cocktail? You've found your girl! Don't worry though, she still has time to showcase her mean hitting skills and something else if you're lucky.



Alicia Logan

A new Masters addition, Alicia may be small but she is a force to be reckoned with. You won't know she's there until she's long gone, with the ball and your dignity.



Bobbi Lang

She may be playing club, but that doesn't mean she has forgotten ICHC. This physicist knows all the right angles to get IC the win.



Lidewij Gossink

Representing for L1s hockey freshers, this Dutch transfer has been running rings around everyone. No one can catch this girl, no matter how hard the RSM boys have tried!



Charlotte Baumhauer

Whether Charlotte's skilfully playing her way up the left wing or downing the drinks in the union, our resident German will happily show all you boys how it's done!



Emma Flynn

You can always count on this defender to not let those freshers past without a fight, no matter how dirty she has to play.



