



# Felix

The Student Newspaper of Imperial College London

## NEWS



Imperial slips down *Guardian* League Tables

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## MUSIC



The perfect soundtrack for your revision

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## FOOD



*Felix* taste-tests on-campus instant ramen

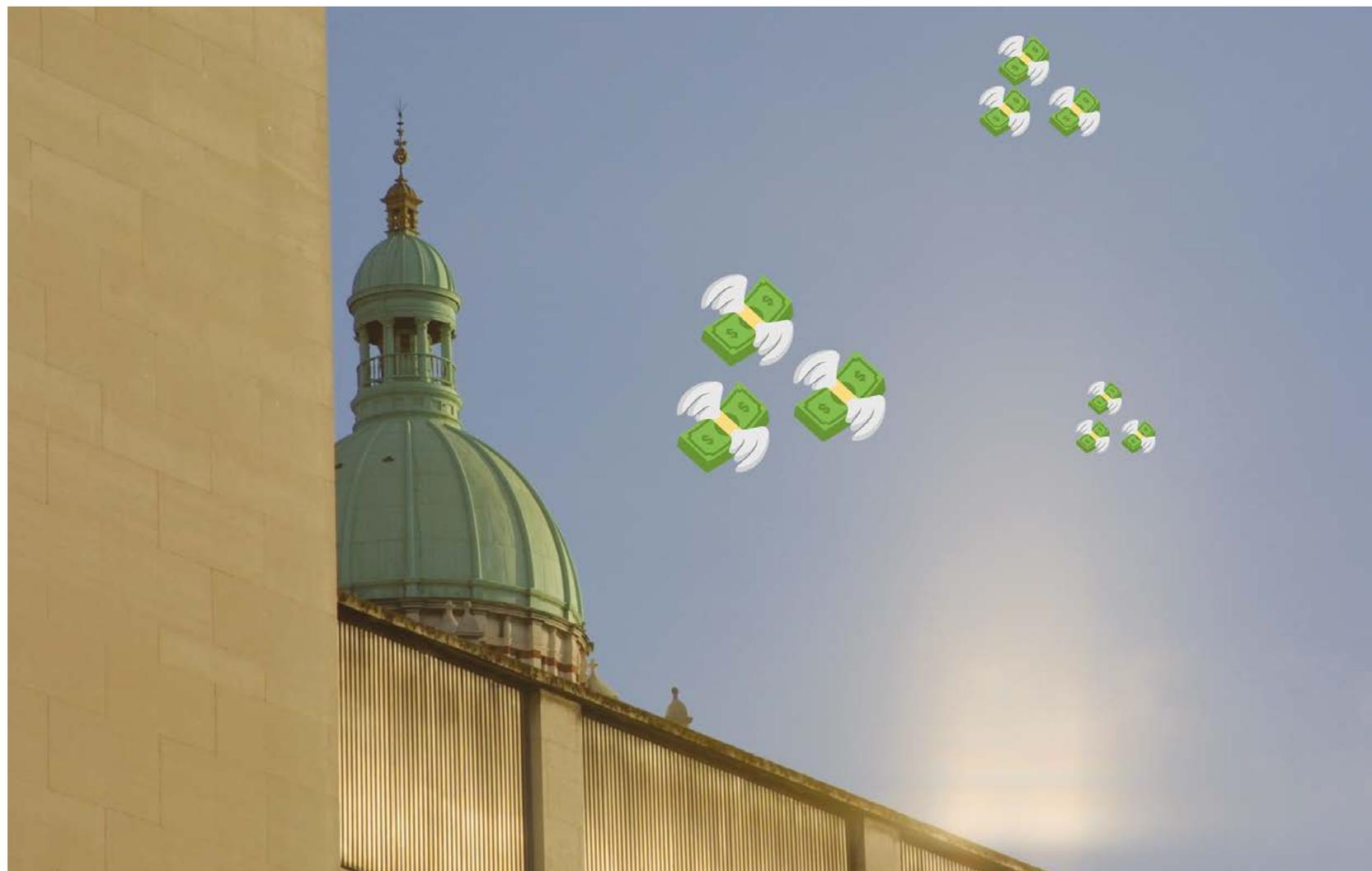
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## TRAVEL



The best UK seaside destinations

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Professor Gast's expenses totalled £43,965 last year // Imperial College London

## Imperial President's expenses bill among highest of entire Russell Group

### NEWS

**Fred Fyles**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

*Professor Alice Gast last year claimed back £43,965 in expenses, one of the highest for any head of a Russell Group university.*

Professor Alice Gast, President of Imperial College London, last year had one of the largest expense claims of any Russell Group head, *Felix* can reveal.

Data obtained from

Freedom of Information requests show Professor Gast last year claimed nearly £44,000 in expenses, mainly for travel abroad.

The expenses claimed are slightly higher than the median salary for employees at Imperial, and come on top of her annual salary of £433,000. A *Felix* report earlier this year revealed Imperial spends more on senior staff salary than any other Russell Group university, with key management personnel receiving £5.6 million last year.

Professor Gast's expense bill is one of the highest for any Russell

Group vice-chancellor, with the average Russell Group university head claiming under £10,000 a year. The next highest expenses bill came from

**“Professor Gast's expenses were higher than the average salary for Imperial College staff”**

Professor Koen Lamberts, Vice-Chancellor of the University of York, who claimed £20,743.20, under half claimed by Professor Gast.

The vast majority of the £43,965 claimed back by Professor Gast was spent on trips abroad: in 2016/17 she claimed back expenses for 16 trips around the world, including over £26,000 spent on three trips to America. She spent a further £6890 on a trip to India, and over £7000 on trips to other countries in Europe, including a visit to Davos, where she spoke on ‘Maintaining Innovation’.

The remainder of her

expense claims were for taxis, gifts, and ‘hospitality’.

Other members of senior leadership at Imperial had a wide range of expense claims: Professor James Stirling, Provost of Imperial, who will be retiring this summer, last year claimed under £1,500. This included nearly £500 for office equipment. The furthest trip he claimed for was a visit to Cambridge.

The three Vice-Presidents of Imperial – Sarah Waterbury, Vice-President (Advancement); Luke Blair, Vice-President

*Cont. pg 3*

# EDITORIAL

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## The end of days...

For many of the team this year, the Felix Office has become a sort of refuge – a place they can come to chill out, or to work; where they have unlimited tea and coffee; and – recently – where people have been sleeping after pulling an all-nighter to revise. This week, it's become a refuge from something else: the weather. While it might be blisteringly hot, unbearably muggy, or skin-drenchingly wet outside, in the office we've got the A/C on full blast, and are luxuriating in its cool puffs of air.

I know it's a stereotypically British phenomenon to talk only about the weather, but have you been outside this week? It feels like wading through a steam room, with close hot air clinging to your clothes, pressing down on you. And if it's not tropically humid, the air is being rent by great flashes of lightning, as the downpour of rain reaches biblical proportions. It feels uncomfortable and strange, like there's some kind of impending apocalypse waiting to sweep us all away.

All this booming



thunder and sheets of rain feels apropos, since we are coming to a sort of ending: for many of you, exam season has either already finished, or is beginning to wind down; many of our editorial team have been counting down the days until their last exam desperately, anxiously awaiting the time when they can stop spending all their time at Central Library, and are instead free to spend all their time at the Union downing pints. And yes, I know some of you still haven't even exams yet, but we've all got our cross

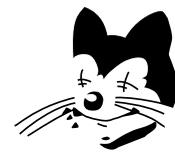
to bear.

At *Felix*, we've only got two more issues left after this one – the culmination of a year of producing papers that have covered all the latest developments on campus, from the UCU strikes through to sexual misconduct scandals. And along the way there've been plenty of centrefolds, Hangman articles, and puzzle sections to keep you entertained. We're still using the layout templates from our first issue, meaning every week we need to change the date from September to today – every time I

do so, we've moved a bit further away from when we started, and a bit closer to the end of the year. It feels bittersweet.

This year has gone by incredibly quickly, but when I look back at when we first started, what I am amazed by is how little I knew our editorial team. So many of our section and copy editors are new this year, and before September I didn't even know most of their names. How things have changed: this year the editorial team have been like a family, and I will genuinely miss seeing their faces every single week when I return to my studies next year.

And, on that note, I want to offer an invitation to all of you: you are welcome to get involved in producing *Felix*. It's a student paper, produced for students, and created by students. It's your voice we want to represent, but we can't do that without your involvement. We're a friendly, welcoming bunch – there may even be some cake for you in the office – so, if you've got any questions about how you can help, or want to join the most wholesome society in Imperial, you know where to go.



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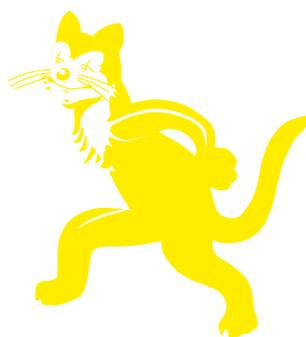
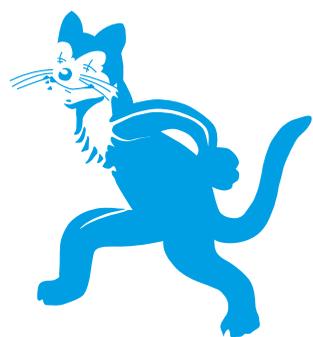
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## Felix is recruiting!



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

# NEWS

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## Professor Gast's £44,000 expenses bill included over £26,000 on trips to America

Cont. from front

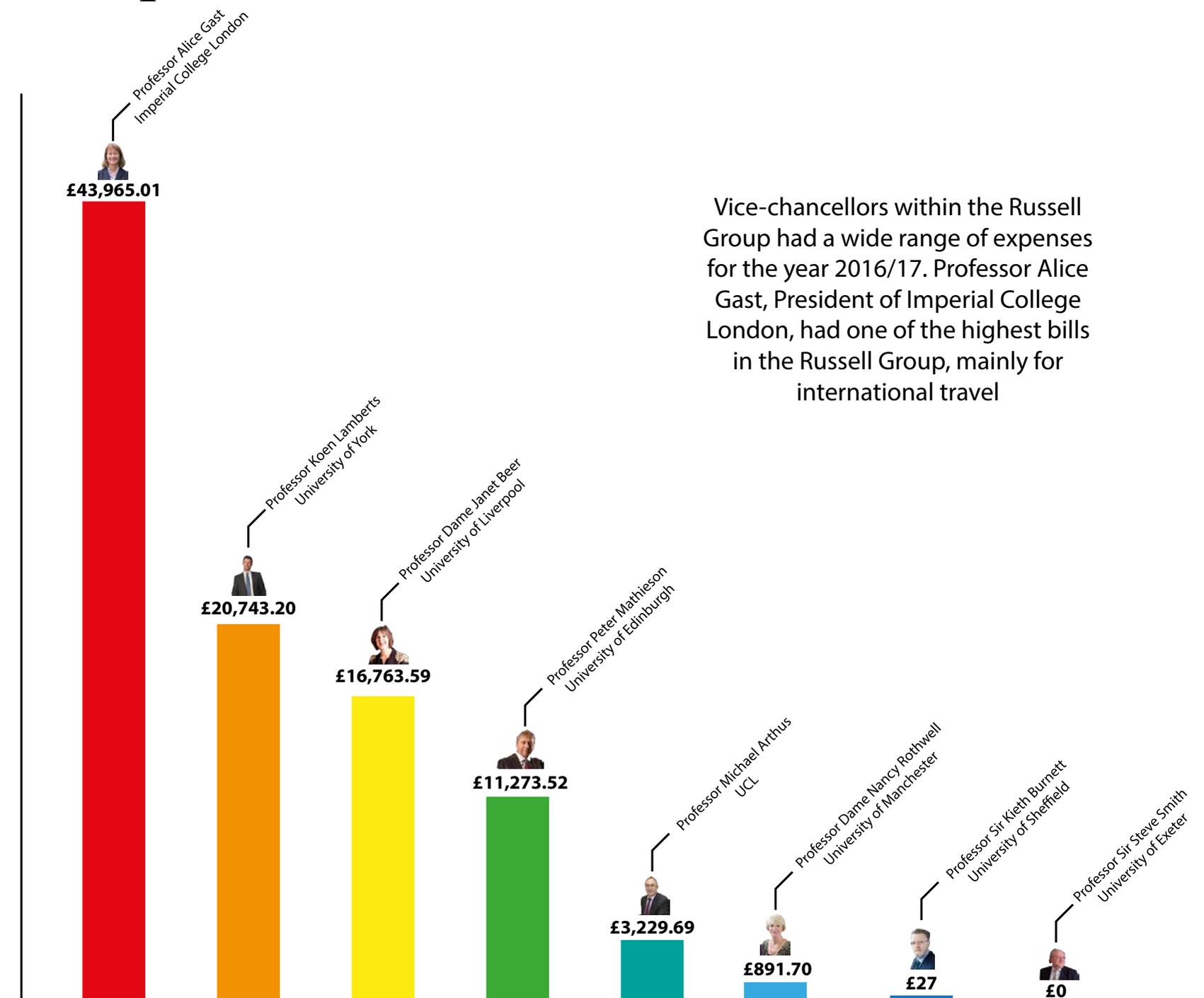
(Communications and Public Affairs); and Professor David Gann, Vice-President (Innovation) – claimed over £18,000 between them, with a significant proportion spent on visits abroad.

A spokesperson for Imperial College London told *Felix* it was “vital that senior staff can build and strengthen relationships with industry, academic partners, government, philanthropists, and alumni.”

They went on to say: “All senior staff play a role, but President Gast has a particular responsibility for safeguarding the College's financial future and maintaining academic excellence and is expected to give greater emphasis to Imperial's external relationships, development and fundraising. She regularly travels abroad to raise Imperial's international profile, forge new partnerships, and host meetings with key figures, including alumni and philanthropists.”

**“On average, heads of Russell Group universities claimed back £9,578 last year”**

While Professor Gast had one of the highest expenses bills in the Russell Group, there was a wide range in claims. On average, vice-chancellors of Russell Group universities claimed back £9,578.82 over the



Vice-chancellors within the Russell Group had a wide range of expenses for the year 2016/17. Professor Alice Gast, President of Imperial College London, had one of the highest bills in the Russell Group, mainly for international travel

course of 2016/17. Other high spenders, aside from Professors Gast and Lamberts, included Professor Stuart Corbridge of Durham University, and Professor Dame Janet Beer of the University of Liverpool. They claimed £18,711.61 and £16,763.59 respectively.

Other vice-chancellors had much smaller expense claims: the vice-chancellors of the University of Exeter and Queen Mary University of London did not submit any expense

claims for 2016/17. Professor Sir Keith Burnett, of the University of Sheffield, claimed for a single taxi journey last year, which cost £27.

A report from the University and College Union (UCU), published earlier this year, found the average vice-chancellor across the entire higher education sector was spending £7,295 each year on flights, and £3,498 on hotels. A significant portion of vice-chancellors flew exclusively in

first and business class.

Vice-chancellor expenses hit the news earlier this year, when an investigation by Channel 4's *Dispatches* programme found university senior management had claimed nearly £8 million expenses over the past two years. A number of vice-chancellors came under fire for their spending, which included fine dining, Fortnum & Mason hampers, and travel for a pet dog.

In response to the

findings, Robert Halfon MP, chairman of the Commons Education Select Committee, compared the situation to the MP expenses scandal of 2009. He called on universities to publish information on the expenses of senior management, saying “We live in an age of transparency... We have a duty to the taxpayer, we have a duty to the student.”

Different universities have different approaches to publishing expense

claims: some Russell Group institutions, such as the University of York, publish all their vice-chancellor's expense claims on an annual basis; others, such as Imperial, do not make this information publicly available.

An Imperial spokesperson told *Felix*: “All expenses are claimed in line with the College's policy to reimburse staff for valid expenses in the performance of their duties for the College.”

## NEWS

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# Imperial subjects fall in *Guardian* League Table, as Cambridge retains top position

## NEWS

**Fred Fyles**  
Editor-in-Chief

*New methodology this year saw big changes, as some subjects fell nearly 20 places, and Imperial fell to seventh in the UK*

Imperial College London has dropped one place in the *Guardian* League Tables, with a number of individual subjects dropping sharply in the rankings.

Overall, Imperial was ranked seventh in the country, between Bath (which placed 6<sup>th</sup>) and Warwick (which placed 8<sup>th</sup>). Cambridge, Oxford, and St Andrews took the top three places for a third year in a row. Imperial's ranking is one place down from last year, when it was ranked joint 6<sup>th</sup> with Loughborough university.

The rankings are generated from a number of metrics, including student satisfaction, student to staff ratio, and employment after six months. This year *The Guardian* also looked at the proportion of first year students who progress to their second year.

A number of individual subjects also saw significant changes in their rankings. Chemistry saw the biggest overall drop, falling 19 places to 37<sup>th</sup> in the country, while mathematics went from 3<sup>rd</sup> place to 21<sup>st</sup>. Both subjects have continuation rates below average for Imperial as a whole, with over 10% of first year chemistry students not making it to the second year.

Physics, which last year fell 22 places in the

*Guardian* rankings, fell another two places to 32<sup>nd</sup>. While they had a continuation rate in line with the university as a whole, they dropped their score on student satisfaction with course and teaching. Physics students were the least satisfied with their course and feedback in the country. Similar problems were highlighted recently in the Complete University Guide (CUG) league tables.

**“Chemistry saw the biggest drop overall, falling 19 places to 37<sup>th</sup> in the country, while mathematics went from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>”**

Other subjects saw smaller drops, such as materials and computer science, which dropped two places each. Mechanical engineering was the only subject to improve their ranking year-on-year, climbing four places to take the top spot; Imperial was also ranked the highest for earth and marine sciences, and civil engineering.

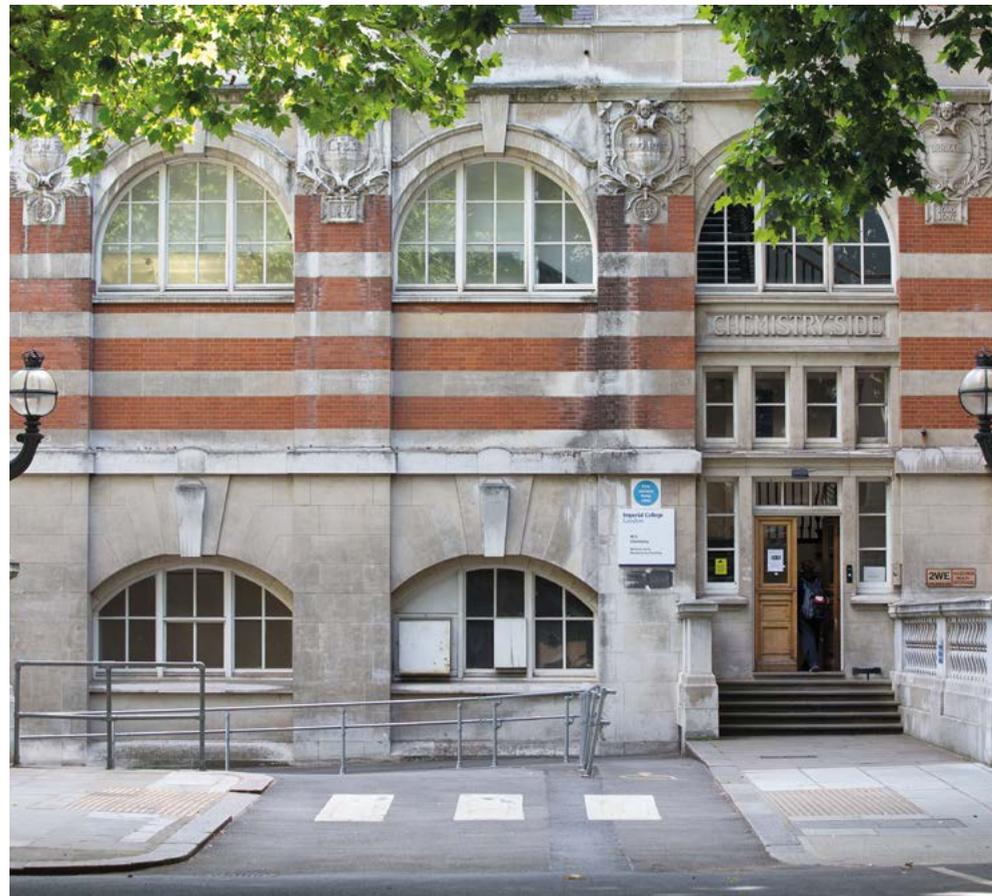
Overall, Imperial dropped their score slightly on student satisfaction with courses, teaching, and feedback, which are based on National Student Survey (NSS) responses. This year's NSS results showed a wide range in student satisfaction, with students highlighting particular problems with

feedback and marking. Several departments scored poorly on the NSS response, including physics and chemistry.

Speaking to *Felix*, a College spokesperson said: “Imperial College London is committed to offering all of its students a world-leading, rigorous, evidence-based, inclusive educational experience as part of a vibrant research environment. The College is embarking on a radical transformation of the way it educates by applying new teaching methods that enrich the student experience and improve inclusion and diversity. We will be working with students at every opportunity to get feedback, as we understand that we need this evidence base if we are to offer students the very best in teaching and support services.”

*The Guardian's* league tables have a different methodology to other league tables, choosing to exclude scores for research, since they are “of limited relevance to students.” This sets them apart from other rankings, such as the *Times Higher Education* (THE) World University Rankings, or the CUG rankings, which both include research scores. Imperial was ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the world in THE's rankings earlier this academic year, while Imperial was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the UK in the CUG rankings.

However, some have expressed concern over the dramatic nature of some of the shifts within the *Guardian's* league tables: City, University of London, dropped 63 places from last year's tables, while Liverpool John Moores rose 31 places, overtaking the University of Liverpool, a



Chemistry was one of the subjects that fell in the league tables // Thomas Angus

Russell Group institution.

**“The dramatic shifts within the league tables prompted concern from some over their methodology”**

Speaking to *\*Research*, an academic news network, Professor Stephen Curry, Imperial's Assistant Provost for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, and professor of structural biology, said these changes were “a concern for *The Guardian* and for anyone relying on their published rankings.”

***Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings see UK fall***

This week also saw the release of the *Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings*, which saw Imperial drop two places to 20<sup>th</sup> globally. Imperial was one of four London universities in the rankings to drop places, with UCL coming in highest at 18<sup>th</sup>.

Overall, the UK went down in the rankings in comparison to last year, with one fewer university in the table, and six of its nine universities features dropping in the rankings.

The USA remained the most represented country, with 44 universities in the top 100. While Asian universities have been climbing in the overall league tables, this success hasn't translated to prestige outside the continent.

The rankings are generated from the Academic Reputation Survey, which is sent out to scholars across the world. Institutions are given a score for their research and teaching reputations.

# NEWS

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## Postgraduate timetabling audit reveals Wednesday afternoons still not free

### NEWS

**Frank Leggett**

News Writer

*The audit shows PG students still have teaching on Wednesday afternoons, despite College policy stating they should be kept free.*

**A**n audit into postgraduate Wednesday afternoons – which are supposed to be reserved for free time – has found that they are widely used for teaching.

The audit was carried out by Nick Burstow, Imperial College Union's Deputy President (Education), and Luke McCrone, President of the Graduate Students' Union, with input from Central Timetabling and faculty staff. It was shown the protected Wednesday afternoons were only practiced on paper, with 239 teaching

sessions – representing a total time of 594 hours – being scheduled for MSc and MRes students across the entire year.

Under Imperial's Academic Timetabling Policy, all Wednesday afternoons are to be kept free from noon for all taught students for "sport and society events and activities of a non-compulsory nature," providing a work-life balance.

Burstow told *Felix*: "Postgraduate taught students should be able to take part in the same activities on Wednesday afternoons as their undergraduate counterparts", further adding: "It is unacceptable that some courses continue to schedule teaching for taught postgraduates on Wednesday afternoons, despite the academic timetabling policy currently in place"

The audit looked at timetabling within the Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Natural Sciences, and Institute of Molecular Science & Engineering. The Imperial College Business School is exempt from the

timetabling policy.

McCrone said the report, which followed on from work completed last year, was "hugely important". He told *Felix*: "We want to ensure PGT students have the space and time each week to achieve a balanced lifestyle during their time at university, including the development of skills outside of their taught programme.

The number of hours and sessions varied between faculties; the Faculty of Engineering took the lead with 124 teaching sessions scheduled for the year, against 110 for Natural Sciences and five for the institute of Molecular Science & Engineering. Physics was the department with the highest number of teaching sessions, 36, followed by Civil Engineering with 33. Earth Science Engineering has the most hours per teaching session, with an average of nearly five hours, closely followed by Civil Engineering with over three hours per teaching session.

One taught postgraduate, who has not taken



Teaching on Wednesday afternoons has impacted postgraduates // Thomas Angus

part in any Wednesday afternoon activities this year told *Felix*: "I would have liked to get involved in societies, and if I was a member of sports teams I would have been annoyed [by the scheduled teaching]. My previous university was much more social – here postgraduates seem to just be focussed on work, work, and more work."

Keeping Wednesday afternoons free has been a long-running goal for student representatives,

with the last two Deputy Presidents (Education) promising to hold College to account on timetabling. In 2016, a paper presented by the then-Deputy President (Education) Luke McCrone found that almost half of all Msc and Mres students had been affected by the infringement of the Academic Timetabling Policy.

A College spokesperson said they were "very grateful to Nick and Luke for highlighting this", and the curriculum review

for postgraduate taught programmes should help "ease the pressure on timetables." They told *Felix*: "Extra-curricular activities are an integral part of the student experience at Imperial. Setting aside Wednesday afternoons for students to participate in clubs and societies is important to us, and we are sorry that this hasn't been the case for taught postgraduate students on some courses."

## Union elections close, with some positions unfilled

### NEWS

**Fred Fyles**

Editor-in-Chief

*A number of positions have no candidates running for them, including the LGBT+ Officer.*

**I**mperial College Union will close their Summer Elections at noon today, 1<sup>st</sup> June.

Students had the

opportunity to vote in the third set of Union elections this academic year from noon, Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May – a significantly shorter voting timeframe than the last set of elections, which saw voting open for nearly an entire week. As of the time of writing, turnout is around 5.5%

In total, 113 roles are up for election through the Union's website; the majority of these roles are Club, Society, or Project (CSP) roles that were

unfilled during the last election cycle. Students will need to be a member of that particular CSP before they are able to vote for the roles. Alongside this, a number of Constituent Union (CU), Wellbeing Representation Network (WBRN), and Academic Representation Network (ARN) roles also have people running.

However, there are several notable positions that will be left unfilled for the second election cycle in a row: this

election marks the second time no candidates have put themselves forward for the Union's LGBT+ Officer, one of the eight Liberation Officers, who "works to stop any discrimination against the LGBT+ community at Imperial".

Alessio Incitti, the current LGBT+ Officer, told *Felix*: "Even though this time the position was promoted individually on the Union's social media, and I was contacted by some potential candidates,

sadly no-one ended up running."

He said the fact the LGBT+ Officer was the only position left unfilled "means that there is a problem with the engagement of the LGBT+ community, and I hope it won't be ignored by next year's Officer Trustees. Personally, I would encourage LGBT+ students to take the leap and run for leadership positions like this one. It has been one of the most rewarding experiences during my

time at Imperial."

A significant proportion of candidates are running uncontested: in total, only around 40% of the roles will be contested between more than one candidate, while nearly one third of submitted candidates failed to provide a manifesto on the voting website.

The last election cycle took place in March, and saw the election of a number of high-ranking roles, including sabbatical officers.

## COMMENT

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# Starting a great crusade against cultural appropriation

*Comment Writer Jian Li Chew returns, and he's set on stopping people from appropriating from other cultures, until things go a bit awry...*

## COMMENT

Jian Li Chew

Comment Writer

On Wednesday morning I woke up to the news that, horror of horrors, a white girl in America wore a qipao/cheongsam to her prom. Social Justice Warriors (SJWs) on the internet were lambasting and criticising her for culturally appropriating a traditional (actually classical: it only came into existence in the 1920s) piece of Chinese clothing. Notwithstanding the fact that cultures mixed and traded words, cuisine, and fashion for the entirety of human civilisation, and that she looked amazing, I was offended. So offended, I decided to go on a social justice crusade again, after an 18-month hiatus.

**"I was offended. So offended I decided to go on another social justice crusade"**

I ruffled through my cupboard and found I had a Malay sarong in it. I was appropriating an element of Malay culture. I also realised that my entire cupboard was made up of T-shirts, jeans, my Uniqlo Heattech inner clothing, shorts, collared



Get your hands off my culture // Flickr/William Murphy

shirts, and dress pants, as well as a blue suit. How dare I appropriate American, European, and Japanese culture! I took everything up to the roof of my building and set fire to it. I was left with one samfu and my underwear. There were also hardly any shops in London selling traditional Chinese clothing. I don't think I planned this out well.

I then sent a message on WhatsApp to my mother to burn all my clothes in my room in Malaysia. Not only did I have more articles of

American and European clothing there, I had a kurta as well! I ran to my Indian flatmate's room, knocked hurriedly on the door and apologised to his sleepy and confused face about my appropriation of his beautiful culture. Right after that, my mum replied, asking if I had gone stark raving mad. I was disappointed by how brainwashed she was. She has much to learn.

Realising that I needed to spread my social justice crusade to Malaysia, I typed a frenzied article, posted in on Facebook

and sent it to every newspaper and news website in the country. I wrote about how people should stop speaking any language other than their mother tongue, stop eating food from other cultures, stop wearing traditional clothes of other cultures, and burn all of their Western clothing like I did. Some people criticised me for trying to disrupt the harmony between races. Some people accused me of insulting Malay culture. Some people called me a race traitor. Some people cursed at me in Tamil.

Mostly people called me a blooming idiot. My job done, I decided to go to university.

That day was Postgraduate Commemoration Day. Thousands of people were celebrating graduation with their families, wearing – gasp – suits and gowns! I screamed at everyone for culturally appropriating not only Western clothing, but education as well. Some people were offended, but mostly people didn't understand why there was some guy in his underwear screaming at

them in Chinese. You see, speaking in English was a form of cultural appropriation too, and I needed to stand in solidarity with the English people. Security came to escort me out. I didn't want to be caught, so I ran across Queen's Gate and was hit by a car.

**"At graduation, I screamed at everyone for appropriating both Western clothing and education"**

I woke up in hospital to see the same nurse who tended to me the last two times I went on a social justice crusade and ended up in hospital. She refused to speak to me, except to say that my injuries were minor and that I'd be discharged in a week. She then threw a copy of the *Daily Mail* at me, with the headline "HALF-NAKED CHINESE MAN SCREAMS AT EVERYONE AND GETS HIT BY A CAR". I was proud. My crusade was getting media coverage. Soon others will join me, and a movement will rise, telling people to focus on real or imagined forms of getting offended instead of actual important things like terrorism, climate change, or getting a job. Long live social justice! End cultural appropriation! Make that girl rue the day she bought a nice dress!

# Imperial College London



## Student Support Fund

If you suddenly find yourself in **financial difficulties** or experience an unexpected change in circumstances, you may be eligible to apply for **emergency financial help** through the Student Support Fund.

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TO FIND OUT MORE:**

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[www.imperial.ac.uk/fees-and-funding](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/fees-and-funding)

# SCIENCE

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## Mercury spacecraft BepiColombo makes its landing at the Science Museum

*A full-size model of BepiColombo, the first European spacecraft to venture to Mercury, which will take off later this year, is now on display at the Tomorrow's World Gallery.*

### SCIENCE

**Rosie Dutt**

*Science Editor*

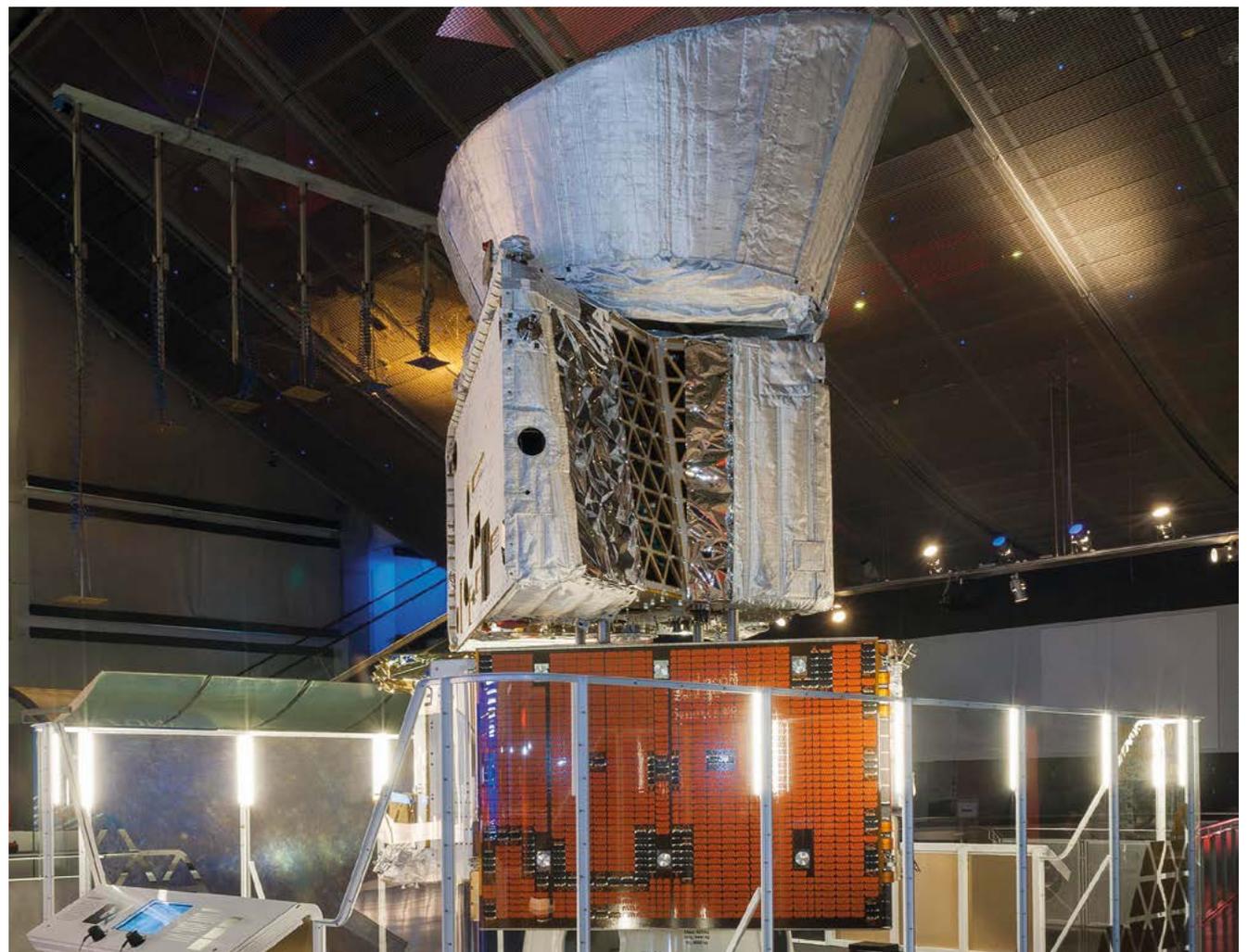
**T**he unknown. It is a concept almost every individual fears in one form or another; one that many question, but few have the ability to really explore. On May 16<sup>th</sup>, the Science Museum had the privilege of unveiling a full-size structural thermal model of BepiColombo, the first European spacecraft to venture to Mercury, the planet closest to the sun. BepiColombo was developed thanks to the combined efforts of the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and is following in the footsteps of NASA's Mariner-10 and MESSENGER (MErcury Surface, Space ENvironment, GEOchemistry, and Ranging).

Mercury itself is, unsurprisingly, the least-investigated of our solar system's rocky planets, being only 36 million miles away from the sun – over four times closer than the Earth is to our star! Furthermore, temperatures on Mercury are often in the excess of 350 degrees Celcius, fluctuating from as high as 430 degrees Celcius on the sun side, to as low as -180 degrees Celcius on the night side. The surface of the planet is marked with signs of the harsh space environment it is subject to, with craters across its surface indicating previous tectonic

and volcanic activity. Additionally, due to the small obliquity – the tilt of the planet on its axis – there is an absence of the traditional Earth-like seasons, replaced with the presence of thermal seasons governed by the distance of the planet from the sun itself. Technology has been built from scratch to help the spacecraft cope with this extreme climate, and reach Mercury safely.

**“The project started in 2000; 18 years later, 12,000 individuals from 16 countries have made BepiColombo a reality”**

The drive to travel to Mercury started in 2000; 18 years later, 12,000 individuals, including engineers and scientists from 16 countries, have helped materialise this intersection between science and technology, to produce this six-meter-tall spacecraft, which will travel 48 million miles over the course of just over seven years. Travelling to Mercury will require more energy than travelling to Pluto – which is 70 times the distance from Earth! BepiColombo will be launched from Europe's Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana in October



**BepiColombo Structural Thermal Model (full-scale) designed for testing prior to the flight model's 2018 launch // Science Museum**

later this year, and will arrive in Mercury's orbit at the end of 2025.

Speaking to *Felix*, Abigail Mackinnon, Assistant Curator at the Science Museum, said: “this exhibition is an incredible opportunity to get the public excited about a mission that has not yet begun. Usually, in space galleries you talk about things that have already happened, but to have an area dedicated to what is about to happen is exciting! People will already know of Bepi before the launch, as they have been to the museum and seen the structural thermal model, the scale

of it, and all the engineering... many people will be awaiting its launch!”

**“As much as 60% of the technology on the spacecraft has been newly-developed for the mission”**

Jan van Casteren, Project Manager of the European Space Agency,

told *Felix*: “The engineering of BepiColombo is extremely important as the spacecraft cannot reach Mercury and collect data if it does not survive! Therefore, the engineering to overcome this harsh environment is key, with as much as 60% of the technology on the spacecraft being newly developed – it is an engineer's dream to work on this project.”

Van Casteren said the international cooperation needed for the project had been complex: “Working together with Japan, this is the first time this has been done on this scale. The benefits of international

collaboration are huge, as the cost for development is in the excess of €1.4 billion, which no country could fund by themselves. The financial aspects require international cooperation, but scientific questions are the same all over.”

The model itself has been subject to the same environment the spacecraft will experience on Mercury in the future. If you're interested in seeing the model, you can visit the Tomorrow's World Gallery in the Science Museum to get a closer look!

# SCIENCE

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## Stressed Mother, Stressed Child?

*What we experience in the womb can have a huge impact on how we develop in life, from stress to hunger.*

### SCIENCE

**Sarah Wong**

*Science Writer*

**B**efore any of us were born, the only way we could get information from outside was via the senses of our mother. In terms of evolution, it would be greatly beneficial if we could respond to the external stimulation our mother's sensed, since it would increase our chances of survival. This process of responding to change is called foetal programming.

Foetal, or prenatal, programming comes in various forms, from behavioural to physiological modifications – and these



Dutch citizens queuing for rations during the Hunger-winter // Wikimedia

changes can last until adulthood. A famous example comes from a dark part of human history – the Dutch Hunger Winter.

In World War II, the Netherlands was occupied by Germany. During that period, the Nazis had cut off the food supply to a part of the Netherlands,

resulting in the population starving for seven months. This tragedy, however, provided a window for scientists to look at the effects of famine on human health, especially on unborn babies.

By following up the families of the victims, scientists found children of the women who were pregnant during the time of famine were born smaller than their peers. Moreover, children were also smaller on average when growing up. This effect was also seen to be passed down to the next generation, where the children of this population were also smaller in size.

Such potent effects can also exhibit themselves in other forms. In a ten-year study, a higher lynx density is seen to

correlate with a reduced birth size in snowshoe hares, with the offspring of the hare more likely to exhibit predator-avoidant behaviours. This could be explained by the increase in predation risk, leading to an increase in stress level, causing the changes observed!

In a recent study published by Dr. Zaneta Thayer and others, a similar trend can be observed across 14 different vertebrate species. In their meta-analysis of 114 results, they demonstrated the effects of prenatal exposure of maternal stress on the function of the Hypothalamic Pituitary Adrenal (HPA)-axis. The HPA-axis is the system our body uses to respond to stress, increasing our chances of survival. When

exposed to a stressor, for example exam stress or the stress of predation, the HPA-axis causes stress hormones to be released, in turn affecting the body size or maturation rate of the foetus.

As 14 different species were studied, the scientists adjusted for the brain:body size and maturation rate of these animals. Their result revealed that the offspring that were exposed to higher prenatal stress level had a higher stress hormone level at birth. Amazingly, this is observed across species. This finding is significant as it suggested that this reaction to maternal stress is ancient and conserved, taking us a step forward in understanding the evolutionary origin of this response.

## Connect with Conservation: insect apocalypse

### SCIENCE

**Steve Allain**

*Science Writer*

**R**emember back to the days of your childhood when you would go on long drives to see family, or to visit the coast on a warm bank holiday. Like me, you may have been observant enough to recognise that car windscreens are devilishly good at catching insects. Fortunately, this was picked up by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in 2004 when they asked motorists to take part in the Big Bug Count, counting how many squashed insects had accumulated on the number

plates of cars. Now, back to the present day: how many times have you noticed an abundance of unfortunate dead insects stuck to the outside of the car after a long journey? The likelihood is it has been some time. Before our very eyes, insects such as bees and butterflies have slowly been disappearing, but more drastic declines in other insect groups have only just been documented.

A recent study found that the abundance of flying insects in Germany had plunged by 75% over the course of the past 25 years. I am sure many of you will find this statistic shocking, just as I did when I first read it online. Insects are an integral part of ecosystems, with some of their most important

roles being pollinators and prey for other wildlife. These new data were gathered in nature reserves across Germany, but have implications for all landscapes dominated by agriculture, such as here in the UK. The causes of decline are not yet clear, although factors such as the destruction of habitat and the widespread use of pesticides are likely – as is the climate. For those of you aware of the impacts of DDT in the '60s and '70s, it seems that we have created a second *Silent Spring* with our overuse of neonicotinoid pesticides.

To reverse this trend, we of course need a drastic change in farming practises, and to replant wild flower meadows – otherwise the world as we



Not the bees!!! // Flickr/Louise Docker

know it may change for the worse, as ecosystems start to collapse from the bottom up. Without pollinators such as bees, our very existence could be at risk as approximately one-third of the world's agricultural crops depend upon pollination

provided by insects and other animals. Insects are providing us with an ecosystem service for free, and the least we can do is to help provide them with the habitat and tools they need to do so. Yes, some may be vectors of disease and cause damage

to crops, but they are vital for life as we know it. As Sir David Attenborough once said: "If all back-boned animals disappeared overnight then the insects wouldn't bat an eye, but if they disappeared then we would certainly notice".

## ARTS

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Tacita Dean, 'Antigone', 2018. Two synchronised 35mm anamorphic colour films, optical sound, with a running time of exactly one hour. Film still (detail) // Courtesy the artist, Frith Street Gallery, London and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris

## Tacita Dean's *LANDSCAPES*: Self exploration, fate, nostalgia, and lots of thinking

*The third of Tacita Dean's London shows highlights the artist's wide range of talents.*

## ARTS

## LANDSCAPES



**Where?** Royal Academy  
**When?** Until 12<sup>th</sup> August  
**How Much?** £12; students £10

**Febi Sidiku**  
*Arts Writer*

**L**ANDSCAPES is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Tacita Dean's series of exhibitions, with *PORTRAIT* and *STILL LIFE* being displayed in other galleries in London, broadcasting the artist's wide range of talents. By reminding the viewer that the places you go are often linked to something personal, *LANDSCAPES* creates an incredible vision of reminiscence, curiosity, and emotion.

Grand pieces are present, like 'The Montafon Letter', depicting the Austrian Valley mountains in a mix of pitch black backgrounds, sharp edges, and soft white and grey strokes; Dean uses the events of its 1689 avalanches to provide the viewer with an understanding of chance, the malleability of the future, and a sense of powerlessness against it all. Her slate drawings, however, are far more abstract, with titles floating in each piece helping the viewer anchor their interpretations to what would otherwise be simple clouds. She does this with surprising efficacy.

Dean also creates space for the softer feeling of nostalgia, with her collections of 'Round Stone' and 'Four, Five,

Six, Seven and Nine leaf Clover', which I feel grounded the exhibition. The care she put into collecting, preserving, and organising these otherwise meaningless objects from childhood could be keenly felt. It conjured up the feeling of being young and building your world around small found things. This curiosity and attention to the world around us can get lost in adulthood. Dean's curation brought a bit of that childlike wonder back: it was almost humbling to see.

Dean then juxtaposes these curations with my favourite piece of the exhibition: the strong 'Quarantania (Mount of Temptation)'. This striking collage represents a scene from the Christian bible, in which Jesus encounters the Devil in

the Judean Desert, and is tempted by him. Dean uses rich colour to depict the scene, making it stand out from the rest of her largely-monochrome exhibition. The piece is dynamic, angry, and painful, somehow portraying how Christ must have felt without description or explicit story telling.

The connection of memories and emotion to landscapes and the world culminates in her final piece, a hour-long film entitled 'Antigone'. Antigone, incidentally also the name of Dean's sister, was both the daughter and sister of Oedipus. She was a strong woman, standing for justice, but, as with most Greek myths, was caught in her family's tragedy and destined to die. Dean fills out her story using the film. We

know of Oedipus's story, which culminates in him blinding himself after he learns of his atrocities; from here, Dean follows Oedipus in his journey leading to Antigone, and her part in delivering him to the gods.

For Dean this film was 20 years in the making, and stemmed from her experiences in Utah at a screenwriter's retreat. Conversations with fellow writers and the poet and classicist Anne Carson, whose poems form part of the script, shape this film; it is an exploration of her relationship with her sister, along with a meditation on how fate interacts with the world – which could be defined as landscape – to take you to your destination. The ideas of fate, emotion, and of self-reflection from the other pieces in this exhi-

bition are repeated like a mantra here. Different videos are played side by side, making it impossible to focus on either. This immerses the viewer in sound and light, creating a canvas on which the viewer can project their feelings as Oedipus delivers a monologue, but can also become confusing and distracting.

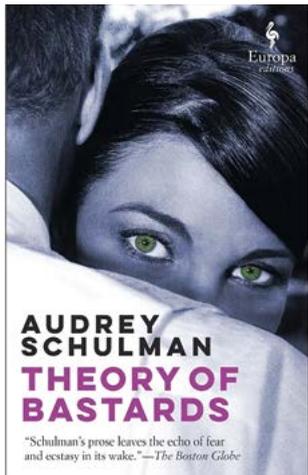
This exhibition shows Dean's range in the media she uses to convey how the world we live in can affect us, as well as how we can use it to affect our own personal journey. There is often no clear narrative in Dean's pieces, and many pieces are abstract – Dean simply invites us to reminisce and explore, without promising a tidy explanation. No two visitors will come away having experienced the same thing.

# BOOKS

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## *Theory of Bastards*: the short distance between man and animal

*Audrey Schulman's novel explores a dizzying array of topics, from modern technology to primal relationships. It doesn't always hit the mark, but when it does it soars.*



### BOOKS

#### THEORY OF BASTARDS

by Audrey Schulman

Europa Editions. 403 pp.

#### Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

There is something slightly off-putting about our simian cousins – those gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos who seem so human-like and yet also so distant from us. We know that many such species behave in ways similar to humans – they exhibit complex social behaviour, are self-aware, and are able to communicate with us to a remarkably proficient degree. At the same time, however, there remains a distance between them and us, which catches at the back of the mind – perhaps it's a sense of the uncanny, or how they remind us, unwelcomely, how we are all merely animals.

This idea of distance is present throughout Audrey Schulman's *Theory of Bastards*, a dystopia-cum-drama-cum-science-fiction

book based off a mountain of scientific research. Early on in the novel, we're presented with a reminder of just how powerful these creatures can be: Dr. Frankie Burk is a brilliant young evolutionary scientist, fresh from winning a MacArthur Genius Grant, who has come to a research facility in a near-future America to study the mating habits of bonobos. On her second day at the Foundation, she tries out a carnival-style strength test game, to see which animal she's equivalent to – she gets the ring-tailed lemur, which weighs only five pounds. The bonobos she'll be studying weigh 70, meaning she'll need to tread carefully.

But, of course, Frankie is also hampered by the fact she's recovering from radical surgery to try and cure her endometriosis, which has caused her excruciating pain throughout her life, and hardened her attitudes to those around her.

Schulman weaves a complex narrative, looping back and forth between Frankie's early life, warped by her daily pain, and her current research, related to her groundbreaking 'theory of bastards' – the idea that women cheating on their partners has evolutionary benefits for the species as a whole. Alongside this we're presented with a romance plot, a survival drama, and a quasi-dystopian backdrop. It proves to be slightly too much at times, with different themes developed half-heartedly in tandem, rather than individually



*Theory of Bastards* centres around a group of bonobos in captivity // Wikimedia

and fully.

Schulman writes with a short, sharp prose style – contracted sentences fire out rapidly, drawing the reader's attention on. This method really comes into its own with the descriptions of pain and endometriosis Schulman uses throughout the book – it's probably one of the only books I've read that deals so rawly with the condition, which affects 10% of women across the globe. Schulman explores how pain can be beneficial – “the mother to us all, slapping us back from the hot stove, forcing us to put down the sharp knife...training care into our bones” – but that the chronic pain felt by Frankie “was not a mother. It was an abuser...it wrapped itself around the ribs, settled on the shoulders, a weight to be borne...pain like this did not open up the world;

it erased it bit by bit. Over time it erased her love of yard sales, of eating, of the simple act of laughing.” Fluid descriptions like this recur throughout the novel, and are by far its strongest moments.

### “Fluid descriptions of pain recur through the novel, and are its strongest moments”

There are a number of developments that Schulman doesn't quite follow through – the world Frankie and others inhabit is a near-future where self-driving cars are a practical reality, and

everyone has implants that essentially graft a smart phone directly into their eyes. The hysteria around the technology never quite reaches a fever pitch, which is a good thing, since it makes the developments that much more believable. But references to outdated bioware, and mysterious symbols that begin accumulating on Frankie's viewscreen – which we presume must symbolise something much more sinister than the need for an update – fail to develop into anything substantial. Similarly, we begin the novel expecting to get more of a backstory of her research assistant Stotts – an ex-soldier who brings a quiet reserve to the research project – but this isn't forthcoming.

There is a clear division between the two main sections of the book. Frankie starts by gaining

the trust of the bonobos she is studying, gradually getting more and more integrated in their clique. It is at this point where Schulman is at her best, backed up by a dizzying amount of research that she outlines in an addendum at the end of the novel. A catastrophe midway through the novel shifts the tone to a survival drama, highlighting in the process how reliant we all are on our technology. It doesn't quite live up to the promise of the first section, and the satirical elements are slightly obvious, but it's still thrilling enough to keep the pages turning rapidly. In examining our relationship with pain, with each other, and with modern technology, Schulman has a lot on her plate; while *Theory of Bastards* doesn't always live up to its potential, where it does, it soars spectacularly.



# *The Breadwinner* fails to win our heart

*The animation, set in Taliban-controlled Kabul, has good intentions, but a weak script and lack of direction.*

## FILM THE BREADWINNER



**Dir:** Nora Twomey. **Script:** Anita Doron; Deborah Ellis. **Starring:** Saara Chaudry; Soma Bhatia; Noorin Gulamgaus. 94 minutes

**Fred Fyles**  
Editor-in-Chief

**T**he *Breadwinner*, Nora Twomey's follow-up to her breakout film *The Secret of Kells*, opens with a scene we are to take as paradigmatic of life in Afghanistan at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: a one-legged man, who fought in the Soviet-Afghan war, hawks a red dress his daughter has never had the chance to wear. The girl, Parvana, shoos away a dog sniffing at their wares, and attracts the attention of a hostile young member of the Taliban, who threatens to demand her hand in marriage. Later that evening, the Taliban member has her father, Nurullah, arrested, and carted off to prison. With the main male family member gone, there is nobody to support Parvana, her sister Soraya, her mother Fattema, or baby brother Zaki. Women cannot leave the house alone without facing a whipping. And, so, Parvana dresses up as a boy, setting out to help her family.

Interspersed with the action is an ongoing tale Parvana tells, both to herself and those around her, in which a young boy saves his village, whose seeds have been stolen by an evil Elephant King living atop a mountain. The animation in these sections is beautifully



Shout-out to that animated Kabuli palaw for making me hungry in the cinema // StudioCanal

distinct, with the already-stylised visuals of the film undergoing a further refinement, until characters resemble flat puppets moving against a flat screen.

The flatness of the animation style is something of a refreshing corrective, in an industry dominated by 3D animation – no 2D film has ever won the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature. Twomey is adept at building characters out of collections of simple lines and shapes, creating a panoply of body types and movements that never feel anything less than genuine.

The style, however, remains the best thing about the film, which is otherwise, unfortunately, held back by a stilted script and poor development. We've barely met Nurullah for five minutes before he is carted off to prison, making it difficult to connect with his character. Similarly,

ideas within the film tend to be introduced and then forgotten about, or never really introduced at all. The topic of the death of Parvana's brother, Sulayman, for example, is referred to in passing multiple times early on in the film, but, by the end, is supposed to function as a major plot point. The tale told by Parvana, similarly, seems to serve very little purpose other than to show off a different animation style; it doesn't link to the main story well, either in theme or action, and when it does there is the sense it is being forced. While it does begin to touch on the idea of the unreliable narrator, and the ever-shifting nature of storytelling, it stops too short to be anything close to mind-expanding.

The voice acting – all done in English with a Middle Eastern lilt – is passable, although at times it can be stilted. This is most likely due to the dialogue within the

screenplay, which never feels truly naturalistic.

There are two films that come to mind when watching *The Breadwinner*: firstly, Siddiq Barmak's 2003 production *Osama*, which also tells the story of a young girl who dresses up as a boy to help her family survive in Taliban-controlled Kabul. *Osama*, which is live-action, manages to do a much better job at communicating the danger inherent in the practice, and the blisteringly oppressive nature of the regime. While *The Breadwinner* does make much of the societal restrictions placed on women and girls – as well as the harsh punishments meted out – it never really instills the same sense of tension. We always feel Parvana will make it home at the end of the day.

The second film it made me think of was Marjane Satrapi's brilliant 2007 animation *Persepolis*, based on her experiences

growing up in post-revolutionary Iran. While *Persepolis* and *The Breadwinner* are roughly the same length, the former manages to pack far more into its runtime, engaging with numerous serious themes in short vignettes, treating them with the respect they deserve. *The Breadwinner*, on the other hand, rarely explores topics beyond the broadest outlines – that the Taliban regime was hostile and oppressive. There are certain points of the film that cry out for more exposition – Parvana's friendship with Shauzia, another girl dressing as a boy, which seems to teeter on the edge of romance; or the way cycles of power and abuse can replicate themselves. As a boy, Parvana is able to repeatedly disobey the orders of her sister and mother, leaving the house knowing they can neither stop her nor follow. It would have been interesting to see these ideas explored further.

The historical context of the film is also flattened into a mere backdrop. Parvana's father, at the beginning, explains to her that Afghanistan has always been fought over by others, making the Taliban seem like one more in a long line of nameless, faceless oppressors, rather than something with a specific cultural and historical context. Swaths of history become mere anecdote, and references to previous acts of violence – Nurullah's missing leg; hidden landmines – that continue to have repercussions. Jet fighters occasionally race across the sky, and the film climaxes with the start of the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, but present it as just another act of violence, rather than a sea change. The result is a film that, although obviously a work of beauty and passion and love, leaves the viewer with little to remember it by.

# GAMES

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When the entire squad comes together // Epic Games

## The *Fortnite* phenomenon – Battle Royale

*Fortnite Battle Royale is the game that's all the rage these days. But what exactly makes it so popular?*

### GAMES

**Saad Ahmed**  
Games Editor

Unless you've been living under a rock, you've most probably heard of *Fortnite*. And what is it exactly? It's the game that is currently trending amongst YouTubers, gamers, and angry ten year olds alike. And it has been for the past several months; in fact it's basically a cultural phenomenon at this point. What exactly about *Fortnite* makes it so popular? And will the trend last? Let's discuss.

First some backstory; *Fortnite* has been in development for a while. In fact it's actually a zombie survival horror game that was announced all the way back in 2011. In mid 2017, a game called *PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds* was released and rapidly became popular as

a multiplayer online battle royale game. Seeing an opportunity to capitalise on the trend, Epic Games created a battle royale mode out of *Fortnite* which was released as *Fortnite Battle Royale*. It's this spin-off version that everyone is playing and which is so popular.

**"It's free, so that already gives it an edge over other multiplayer games"**

The biggest thing going for it is that it's free, so that already gives it an edge over other multiplayer games like *Star Wars Battlefront* or *Call of Duty*. Free-to-play means anyone can download and

play it from the get go. It can always be a risk to release a game for free, especially when you've put in so much time and effort into developing it. However, being free means more people will try it out, including the people who would've otherwise dismissed the game and not played it otherwise. So you have this domino effect where people play and enjoy the game, rave about it so other people hear, and more and more people play because of its accessibility.

In addition to this, *Fortnite* is multiplatform; you can play it on a Playstation, Xbox, PC, or even a phone. While there's no android version yet, it's in development and due to be released in the coming months. Multiplatform, again, means that a large variety of people are able to play it, and it's been designed in such a way that you can play against console players while

playing on the iPhone. This makes it really feel like one, big game that everyone is playing and helps make sure nobody gets left out.

Obviously being a free game can only go so far. The biggest thing, at the end of the day, is that the game is just plain fun. The vibrant colours and aesthetics immediately make it stand out from its otherwise bleaker or more drab FPS counterparts. It also combines the building features of *Minecraft* with a shooter game; something which doesn't sound like it should work but does. Is there an enemy sniper gunning you down? Just a build a wall so they can't get to you. It makes for more interesting and varied play styles and strategies. It's an easy game for anyone to get into, though it would take quite a while to really master.

The game also has multiple updates, new modes and timed events

that add a new twist everytime you play. You'll

**"All in all, the game appeals to your inner child"**

never know what to expect when you log onto the game. Sometimes you can throw boogie bombs to make a group of enemies dance non-stop. Other times you can literally ride a rocket. There's always some new and interesting curveball that changes up the game mechanic. This means that everytime you play will be memorable, and there will always be something you can share online. Some crazy wild strategy that worked or just being at the right place at the right time, (or maybe the wrong place at the wrong time depending on which side you're

on.) All in all, the game appeals to your inner child and is a shining example of how to have fun and not give a damn.

So is this the new game of the century or is the *Fortnite* trend only going to last for a short while? Probably the latter if we're being realistic about it. Other games have been trending before; their popularity peaks before tumbling back down. *Pokémon Go* lasted a month while *Flappy Bird* was able to make do for a week. Having said that, the *Fortnite* craze is not slowing down anytime soon, thanks in no small part to the recent mobile release and the weekly updates spicing things up.

Whether the hype dies down in a few months or years, there's no denying that the game has made a lasting impact. Even if fewer people play it, the game will still be as fun, and as outrageous, as ever.

# Your Union events

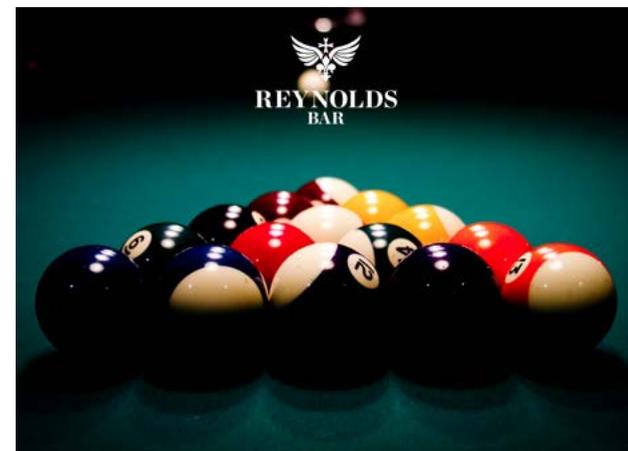
Friday 1 June



[imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on)



[imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on)



## FREE POOL

Free pool all night long at Reynolds  
Just ask at the bar for cues, chalk and balls

Every Day from 17:00

[imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on)



## Coming up in our bars



### Super Quiz

Every Tuesday  
20:00 - 22:00

### Cocktail Night

Every Tuesday  
18:00 - 23:00

### iPOP

Friday 8 June  
12:00 - 02:00

### Find us on Facebook

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### Cocktail Club

Every Tuesday  
19:30 - 23:00

### Pub Quiz

Every Thursday  
19:30 - 23:00

### PGI Friday

Every Friday  
16:00 - 23:00

### Find us on Facebook

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### Free Pool

Every Day  
17:00-23:00

### Pub Quiz

Every Tuesday  
18:30-23:00

### Sports Night

Every Wednesday  
18:00 onwards

### Cocktail Night

Every Friday  
17:30 onwards

### Find us on Facebook

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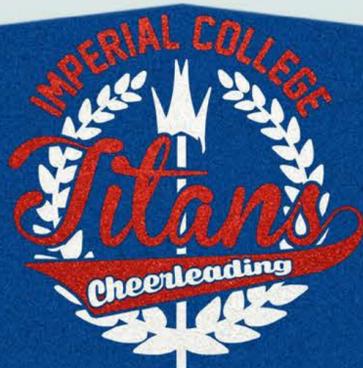
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*What Imperial ratio?*



*(pls we need more boys)*

## MUSIC

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## The revision soundtrack you wish you had this year

*The Felix Music Editor-delinquents planned out this piece, like, three weeks ago, but they didn't publish it until now by fault of a stunning lack of functionality. Oh, and exams and all that. We are mortal men after all.*

## MUSIC

Fred Fyles

Editor-in-Chief

Andy Djaba

Music Editor

Henry Eshbaugh

Music Editor

Right in time for the end of exam season, the usual suspects rec some LPs that you should've been listening to all along. Sucks you don't have a time machine, or you could've had that many more hours of pleasant revision coasting emotionally on the bangin' tunes we tell you to like. Well, there's always next year...

### E.MO.TION

Carly Rae Jepsen



E.MO.TION // Genius

The commercial success that has escaped *E.MO.TION*, the musical masterpiece of Canadian pop queen Carly Rae Jepsen, is one of the greatest injustices of the modern music industry. Don't @ me.

The twelve songs that make up the album, as well as the eight that were included in the EP of B-sides, are, without exception, stone cold bangers. Jepsen enlisted the help of a wide range of producers, including Dev Hynes, of Blood Orange

### "The whole thing just... bops. Trust me"

fame, Rostam Batmanglij, and Este Haim, resulting in an album defined by smooth baselines, funky melodies, and catchy hooks. The whole thing just... bops. Trust me.

So, you might be asking, why would you recommend an album that is the complete antithesis of ambiance? An LP consisting of tracks that would never be seen dead on a 'Deep Focus' Spotify mix? Well, the reason I recommend *E.MO.TION* as a revision album is because there's much more to revision than simply studying hard. To revise properly, you need to get into the right mindset – the 'I'm gonna show this exam who's boss because I'm amazing and nobody can tell me different' mindset. Jepsen can help with that. Next time you're feeling like you're at the end of your tether, just take a quick break, and put on this album. Trust me – as soon

### "The commercial success that escaped E.MO.TION is one of the greatest injustices of modern music"

as the iconic saxophone intro kicks in on opener 'Run Away with Me', you'll start to feel a whole lot better. By 'I Really Like You' you'll be feeling confident enough to take on the world, and by the time 'LA Hallucinations' is queued up, you're gonna be ready to plough on with your quantum physics notes. God bless you Carly Rae Jepsen.

– Fred Fyles

### The Disintegration Loops

William Basinski



// 2062

William Basinski's *Disintegration Loops* are not only a brilliant piece of ambient music, perfect for long days revising in the library, but they come with their own evocative backstory. The recordings were produced when Basinski was transferring early recordings made on magnetic tape to digital format; as the tape loop passed through the tape head, the magnetic ferrite would slowly flake off, resulting in a gradual degradation of sound. If this wasn't already meaningful enough, Basinski completed the project the morning of 9/11, listening to the final recordings on his Brooklyn rooftop as plumes of smoke on Manhattan Island signalled the beginning of a new global era.

The *Disintegration*

*Loops* are different from other ambient music; while we are listening to repeated samples, each time the sound plays, it's slightly different than what came before. Over the course of an entire loop, the sound will change with imperceptible slowness, from a relatively clear sample, through to a murky sludge. What you're listening to is, quite literally, the effect of time and decay, transmuted into music; the recordings are romantic and incredibly moving, creating a sense of doubly-removed temporal distance – we are listening to sound that first existed nearly 40 years ago, and has come to us through a variety of permutations, like the light from a distant star.

In total, the four loops run to nearly five hours in length, meaning – to bring us back to cold practicalities for a minute – they are excellent for timing revision breaks. When I was deep in revision mode, I would listen to the whole thing straight through, and then finish up for the day. On a more philosophical level, the album reminds us that everything fades eventually; the universe has one direction, and that is towards decay. Puts that fluid mechanics module into perspective.

– FF

### Baduizm

Erykah Badu



// Universal

If you're stuck in the computer lab, feeling like your life is going nowhere, then don't listen to this album. Erykah Badu was only 24 when she released 'On & On', the first single from her debut *Baduizm*, helping kick-start the neo-soul renaissance, and becoming an instant icon of modern music. You've still got a few more years, but – let's be real here – you're never gonna beat that.

### "If Badu can get Drizzy through his distrust of the modern world, she can get you through another day in Central Library"

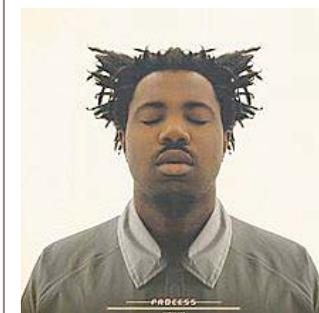
*Baduizm* was released over 20 years ago, and yet still retains a freshness. From the opener, 'Rimshot (Intro)', it's clear we're in the presence of a visionary: anchored by slick bass licks, overlaid with relaxed beats, and then topped off with Badu's melodic, instantly-recognisable voice, *Baduizm* was one of the best albums released in the 1990s, and helped pave the way for innumerable women in music, with a direct line to modern albums like Solange's *A Seat at the Table* or Janelle Monáe's *The Archandroid*. The hour-long album moves through a series of moods, but Badu always

retains a sense of amused detachment. She's the perfect companion for a hard day of revision. She even has Drake's seal of approval – he raps about going over to her house for a cup of tea and advice about love in 'Days in the East'. If she can get Drizzy through his distrust of the modern world, she can get you through another day in Central Library.

– FF

### Process

Sampha



// Young Turks

My time as an Imperial student officially came to an end on Friday and, during my four years here, I have come to the harsh realisation that I have the attention span of a gnat. I struggle to focus on revision for more than half an hour and, without music, my falling asleep in the blink of an eye is almost inevitable. Having said that, if the music is too engaging, it becomes a distraction and I get little to nothing done. My go

### "I have come to the harsh realisation that I have the attention span of a gnat"

# MUSIC

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to for revision is smooth R&B. The chilled, lo-fi production creates the perfect atmosphere conducive to making those brain gains. Sampha's iconic 2017 album *Process* is ideal for studying. On the album, he expresses the emotions of loss, love, and growth within multiple tracks, using his unique voice to tell the story of his mother's passing. The album served to prove why his talent has him as one of the most trusted collaborators in the industry, working with the likes of Drake, Solange, and more. Sampha's smooth vocals overlay subtle instrumentals and, as a result, *Process* makes for an overall calm and soothing listening experience. It is perfect for revision because it relaxes me, allowing me to get in the right frame of mind to study, and it doesn't serve to distract. *Process* also has the added bonus of being engaging enough to pay attention to the lyrics during your breaks and get lost in Sampha's world.

– AD

## Beat Tape 2 Tom Misch



Beat Tape 2 // Dummy Mag

Shoutout to my brother, Josh, for putting me on to this album. I recently discovered Tom Misch and was thoroughly impressed with his most recent album, *Geography*, which dropped in April. Much like *Geography*, *Beat Tape 2* is a smooth, chilled offering which serves to highlight Misch's musicality and instrumentation. Unlike *Geography*, on *Beat Tape 2*, Misch allows his vocals to take a backseat, letting the multiple featured artists take control of the singing (and rapping, in Loyle Carner's case) over the top of his production.

– AD

## “Beat Tape 2 is a smooth, chilled offering highlighting Misch's talent”

## CTRL SZA



// Top Dawg

In 2017, SZA dropped her stellar debut album *CTRL*. The album was met with overwhelming critical acclaim and, although she was snubbed by the Grammys, she did take home “R&B Album of the Year” at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual NeighbourHOOD Grammys (shameless plug!). To quote NeighbourHOOD Grammys Committee member, Jamell Samuels, “*CTRL* is an astounding album

written almost entirely from the perspective of a sidechick. For too long, the women on the side have been neglected in the music industry and SZA's album plays a pivotal role in shining a light onto their plight, raising awareness and starting a necessary dialogue on proper mistress management.” All jokes aside, SZA's beautiful voice shines on *CTRL* and the album marks a departure from the more ethereal sound of her previous mixtape efforts.

## Yes Lawd! NxWorries



//Stones Throw

*Yes Lawd!* is the 2016 collaborative effort of NxWorries, a group comprising eccentric vocalist Anderson .Paak and producer Knxwledge. Anderson .Paak is the epitome of a unique artist and it is difficult to categorise his eclectic style and to put into words exactly what he brings to the table.

## “Nxworries' Yes Lawd! will undoubtedly put a smile on your face, despite being trapped in the sweaty confines of Central Library”

I know one thing for certain, Anderson .Paak is a wavy dude. Anderson .Paak can rap with the best in hip-hop, has a unique voice that seems well-suited to R&B and the music he releases has shades of neo-soul and funk. He is the quintessential alternative artist and, in Knxwledge, he has managed to find the perfect musical partner to complement his artistry. This album is packed with chilled, summer time vibes that will get you through revision by

reminding you of the good times ahead. With tracks like ‘Jodi’, ‘Side-piece’, and ‘Lyk Dis’, *Yes Lawd!* will undoubtedly put a smile on your face, despite being trapped in the sweaty confines of Central Library. To be honest, I could recommend any Anderson .Paak because I am of the firm belief that everybody needs some .Paak in their lives. However his solo music tends to take a more upbeat, groovy direction which some may find too distracting for revision in comparison to his collaborative output with NxWorries. Save albums like his solo effort *Malibu* for a quick dance during your break.

– AD

## Harmony in Ultra-violet Tim Hecker



Ooh, gloomy // Keanky

This, fellas, is a heckin' good album. It's got a real transcendental gloom to it – I like listening to Foreign Policy's *ER* podcast with it goin' in the background. There's just something nice about how the broken-up-over-the-shitty-phone-link conversations about the Impending End of the World and whether Amazonian natives have the right to kill disabled newborns goes so nicely over a grimy chorus of harsh noise; and yet, Hecker pulls naught but the loveliest of harmonies out of seemingly nowhere. There's a reason why this album has topped the lists of many an ambient album reviewer, and it ain't the cover.

The exact vibe is pretty difficult to pin down.

## “Dream Catalogue's 2 8 1 4 sounds like the last album I wrote about fucked Blade Runner and went on to have a vaporwave album for a love-child”

It has elements of that feeling of coziness during a rainstorm; there's just a hint of malaise – a pinch of decay – a drop of grit – maybe just a little bit of the ol' too-bummed-to-feel-my-extremities, just like you, you sad-sack haven't-slept-in-three-days walking corpse of a student in exam season. Well, frankly, it's hard to pin down. The whole *point* is the vibe, not virtuosic displays of technicality, or deep lyricism to read into, or some tragic backstory about how the Guy Who Made The Happy Album Really Wanted to Kill Himself And That's Why I Listen, Because I'm 14 And Appreciate the Clusterfuck That Is Human Emotion, and if that vibe is difficult to succinctly express, well, maybe that's a hint that the album is nice and nuanced.

I'll give you more than a hint, though: the album is deeply, deeply rich. There's no need for flashy technicality; the beautifully-architected soundscape and the complexity of the mood so effectively evoked by the album cement its position in my pantheon of adored albums; the handy fact that it's a slow-paced instrumental album makes it pretty good to study with. Go forth and enjoy, you sorry lot of strung out

math dorks.

– Henry Eshbaugh

## Dream Catalogue 2 8 1 4



//2814

Well, hey, this is a spread about albums to study to. If we're doing the “variations on a theme” thing, that theme might as well be crippling depression, because nothing else quite sums up the mood of exam-time Imperial.

I kid; this album isn't quite as dour as you might suspect from the first paragraph. It is, however, decidedly mellow and mid-dlingly dystopian. Scratch that, it sounds like the last album I wrote about fucked *Blade Runner* and had a vaporwave album for a love-child.

Swelling synths, reluctantly descending arpeggios, that whooshing sound every door in every sci-fi TV show makes when the disposable guy in the red shirt goes through – what's not to love? If rainy cyberpunk near-future LA is your aesthetic and you need a peaceful soundtrack for the thousand-yard-stare out your window every night, notes clutched and crumpled, tears rolling, you'll love this album.

I'm out of space. Cop some jazz and funk too, ok?

– HE

## “Go forth and enjoy, you sorry lot of strung-out math dorks”

# MUSIC

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## A\$AP Rocky is TESTING out some new material

### MUSIC

#### TESTING



**Artist:** A\$AP Rocky.  
**Label:** RCA Records.  
**Top Tracks:** Fukk Sleep; Distorted Records; A\$AP Forever. **For Fans Of:** Tyler, the Creator; Vince Staples; Travis Scott. 52 minutes

**Ben Tenman**  
Music Writer

The Harlem-born rapper and record-producer, Rakim Mayers, better known as A\$AP Rocky, released his aptly titled *TESTING* last week, much to my surprise and delight. I say 'aptly titled' as this is easily his most experimental and 'out-there' record to date; an intriguing flirtation with the avant-garde unlike what we have seen from A\$AP Rocky before.

The album is littered with glitchy bass-lines, eccentric beats, and detuned lead melodies.

There are more than a few stellar performances from featured artists on this record. I might even go so far as to say that they steal the show a little bit. FKA Twigs' verse on 'Fukk Sleep' is especially memorable and phenomenal, making that track the best on the album. Skepta nails the hook on 'Praise The Lord (Da Shine)', and Frank Ocean gives a heartfelt and subdued performance on the closing track, 'Purity'. The single that was released ahead of the album, 'A\$AP Forever', sounded promising and contained an unexpected feature from none other than the one-and-only: Moby. That song also had features from T.I. and Kid Cudi.

Even though his guests steal the show, this does not mean that A\$AP Rocky is unable to hold his own. The opening track, 'Distorted Records', a noisy and abrasive banger, sees Rocky leading the charge and raising the roof. Definitely a standout on the record, even if it

is in large part due to its uniqueness, as it is the only real banger on the album.

And this is the biggest gripe I have with the album: it feels terribly lopsided. The first half has most of the 'up-tempo' songs, while the second half loses itself in a seemingly endless swamp of down-tempo trap beats, wobbly guitars, and spaced out vocals. There are songs in which this formula works, of course, the aforementioned 'Purity' being one example and 'Hun43rd' being another. But after the third or fourth track the same-old tricks get very old indeed. The absolute low-point for the album happens about halfway: the track 'OG Beeper' sounds like a first draft demo on the bonus edition of a B-sides record. Yes, it is that bad.

However bleak a picture I might have painted for you in the last couple of paragraphs, I did in fact enjoy this record a lot. I have to laud A\$AP Rocky for his



TESTING // XXL

willingness to experiment and for the strength of the songwriting in the singles. Songs such as 'Distorted

Records' and 'Fukk Sleep' have already ended up on my playlist. It is unfortunate that the record

in its entirety is spoiled by some lazy filler material and a badly structured track-list.

# *Felix is recruiting!*



**We want you – yes, you! We're looking for writers, photographers, editors, illustrators, reporters, computer experts and grammar nerds to join our team. No experience needed – we'll teach you everything you need to know.**

**If you're interested, send us an email on [felix@ic.ac.uk](mailto:felix@ic.ac.uk)**

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# FOOD

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## Felix Food taste test: instant ramen flavours

*As exam season continues to crunch, a group of intrepid Felix writers gave their verdict on varieties of instant ramen on offer across campus. They barely make it out alive.*

### FOOD

**Fred Fyles**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

There is, fairly or unfairly, perhaps no meal more closely associated with the student experience than instant ramen. Different universities may have their own iconic foodstuffs, but the ubiquity of instant noodles seems to cut across time and space. At the most basic level, instant noodles appeal to students because they have the twin virtues of being quick and cheap, making them handy in an environment where neither time nor money are particularly forthcoming. They also conform to a long-held prejudice against students: that we are too lazy, or too

stupid, or both, to cook for ourselves.

While the exam period is beginning to wind down for some people, others have yet to even start, and, as the student loan begins to fritter away, Deliveroo is becoming a less-viable option for late-night library sessions. As always, instant noodles will have your back. In the interest of bringing you all the most relevant content, an intrepid gang from the *Felix* editorial team took it upon themselves to taste-test some of the many varieties of ramen available on campus. It was, in the words of one participant, “a stomach ache waiting to happen”. Not all heroes wear capes.

We head first to the Union Shop, but the pots on offer are too small, and we feel we would be left hungry. Little did

we know. Instead, we head down to Essentials, cutting across the shade of Prince’s Lawn, and pick out five varieties of ramen, bringing them back to the office for testing.

**“The pack says ‘share with your friends!’, as if instant ramen weren’t the loneliest meal in the world”**

Within each round, squat container there is a tangled nest of dried noodles, along with various packets, whose contents – beige, ash-like

powders; dehydrated peas that resemble little pills; blobs of off-white fat, solidified into glistening clumps – are a mystery, united only by a presumed reliance on MSG. A message, printed on the side of some of the packets, cheerfully exhorts us to ‘share great taste with your friends’, as if a package of instant noodles for one is anything other than the loneliest meal in the world.

### PHO GA

This is the first type we try, which is lucky, since its flavour is quite muted, and few of the later varieties will leave our taste buds fully intact. Some would call the flavour of the Pho Ga delicate; others would say it is non-existent; one participant simply says “no”

when he tries it. The dish, supposedly modelled after the popular Thai food, has nothing to it other than texture; the flavour is entirely bland. Pieces of what we assume are meant to be dehydrated chicken bob around the pot, like overgrown sea-monkeys; I put a piece in my mouth, and it squeaks against my molars, like a piece of fatty gristle.

All of the ramen come with little plastic forks, but the one included with the Pho Ga is different – with a thinner stem, wider head, and three prongs, it resembles more of a trident than a fork, allowing its wielder to live out their Poseidon fantasy. It’s an apt choice: the flat noodles are akin to some kind of deep sea creature, perhaps a hive of eels, or those long worms that peek out near volcanic vents. They wriggle and flap, barely able to stay on the fork long enough to take a bite. When we’re finally able to get them to our lips, they are completely tasteless, wet and slimy, and – despite the hot broth – somewhat clammy. It’s not an auspicious start to our experiment.

Score: 3/10

### ARTIFICIAL STEWED PORK CUTLET FLAVOUR

On the surface, this doesn’t appear promising; the name alone is enough to turn us off. If there is any word that could make the idea of ‘stewed pork cutlet’ less appetising, ‘artificial’ is pretty high up there. But after the boiling water is poured in, this ramen cup is what most closely resembles the

instant noodles of childhood: curly thin noodles, looping and swirling around each other like tangled yarn, floating in an orangey-green liquid, and flecked with shards of green, which could be dried herbs, but could also just be pieces of plastic.

One participant has already tapped out by this point; eschewing tasting, he instead sniffs each cup, giving his olfactory rating. To him, this one smells like “the floor of a Chinese restaurant”, but the taste is surprisingly inoffensive. There’s a strong hit of generic stock, with undertones of extreme saltiness. It’s quite bland, true, but that is probably to be expected; as a flavourful meal, the dish is lackluster, but it serves as a potent reminder, for me, of the times when I used to be allowed instant noodles as ‘a treat’ at home, so I’m sold, if only on the nostalgia front.

**“One participant says the ramen smells ‘like the floor of a Chinese restaurant’”**

After a discussion, the initial rating we give this pot is a four. However, had we known what culinary horrors lay ahead, I feel we would have been a bit kinder to our poor, boring artificial stewed pork cutlet, so I’m bumping it up to a six.

Score: 6/10



The chilli flakes clog up the opening of the packet, and only two thirds of the mix makes it in // *Felix*

# FOOD

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## SPICY HOT

During exam season, the *Felix* Office has become a regular study space, and this variety of ramen is a permanent fixture, so we were quite excited to dive in. Assembling the ramen throws up the first practical challenge: it comes with a packet of chilli oil that has clumped together, chilli flakes glued to each other in small, flat compresses. Getting them out and into the pot is a struggle, and only about two-thirds make it out of the packet.

In retrospect, this was still far too much. Once the water has been added, the noodles become completely invisible, hidden by a thick layer of chilli oil, a shade of luminous caramine, pooling like blood on the surface. It's the kind of substance that stains your clothing, and quite possible skin and teeth. In the words of one participant, the dish looks like "my chance of getting a first at this university."

Still, we push on, dredging up the noodles, which are slick with a layer of glistening oil. The first mouthful burns. It's not the pleasant burn you get from a finger chili, not even the over-sweetened kind you have with sriracha sauce, but something more

corrosive, like a chemical burn. It tastes like the big black and orange crosses on chemical labels. It tastes like the reasons labs have fume cupboards. It tastes like singed hair and heavy industry and silent springs. I don't know if we can go on.

Score: 0/10

## BROAD NOODLE ARTIFICIAL BEEF FLAVOUR HOT POT

In all honesty, I barely remember how this one tasted. In my notes, I've written that one participant described the smell as "hot sweat", but after the Spicy Hot variety I might as well have blacked out, so little do I remember about the experience. All I can recall is being distracted by the texture of the dish: broad, flat noodles wriggle in the broth like giant kelp fronds. Despite leaving the noodles 'cooking' far beyond the recommended time, the noodles still feel underdone: they manage to be gelatinous on the outside, but still tough in the middle. They are, on the whole, seemingly-indestructible: our teeth compress them, rather than biting through them, before they spring back to their original shape again. They're difficult to

swallow, slapping against the side of the throat, creating a choking sensation, like being water-boarded from the inside out.

**"The first mouthful feels corrosive – something like a chemical burn. It tastes like heavy industry"**

With all this sensory overload, the taste leaves no impression on the tongue; the ramen is bland to the point of forgettability. Either that, or we've already burnt our taste buds in the previous challenge. Disappointment is the word that comes to mind. As one participant says, "you know how most food that ends up covering your lips with grease tastes delicious? I feel I've been cheated."

Score: 1/10

## HOT AND SOUR

On occasion, in newspapers or magazines, you come across articles



So many noodles, so little time // Felix

detailing what it is like to suffer from anosmia, or the loss of the sense of smell and taste. Although it might be temporary – most of us have experienced it to some degree during a blocked nose or head cold – in some cases the damage will be permanent. Sufferers describe a world closed off to them: food is like ash in the mouth, a tasteless texture; they are robbed of some of the greatest joys in life, whether that be the ability to taste a fine wine, or the smell of freshly-cut grass in the summer.

Eating the hot and sour ramen, I begin to feel jealous of them. The dish is a complete assault on the senses, so much so I would petition for its existence to be reclassified as a crime against humanity. Problems begin as soon as the packet is opened: a thin brown liquid is poured over the noodles, and a stench of unwashed feet pervades the room, catching in the back of the throat. Decanting some of the thin, slippery noodles into a cup, I can feel the gorge rising in my throat, and I need to pause for a while before I can bring

them to my lips.

**"Eating the hot and sour ramen, I begin to feel jealous of those who've lost their sense of smell and taste"**

The noodles have the same undertaste as the hot and spicy variety – a sinister chemical punch – but the overwhelming top note is one of vinegar, which absolutely pummels all other tastes into submission. In comparison with this two-dimensional barrage on our taste buds, the other ramen seem complex and nuanced, like a Canaletto painting, filled with previously-unseen details. My great-grandmother used to drink pickling juice, and I feel even she would balk at this ramen. It tastes like a pail of

dirty socks soaked in lye; like the sharp sting of a chemical factory wafting over a motorway on a midsummer's day; like rotting fruit, macerating into a sour liquor. How anyone could enjoy it is completely beyond us.

Score: 0/10

§

After testing the final variety, none of us are able to stomach any more. We sit back at our desks, returning to work as the saltiness of the noodles makes itself known, dehydrating us into a postprandial stupor, headaches thumping against our temples. The pots sit on the side, rapidly cooling; the thin layers of fat float on the top, before beginning to congeal. We eventually take them out to the bins, the wet noodles making a sickening thwack against the shiny black bags. Back in the office, the smell of the ramen pots – a strong note of star anise, undercut by something putrefying and chemical – hangs in the air, before it dissipates.



We don't understand how anyone can enjoy this // Felix

# TRAVEL

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## Beach better have my money: affordable seaside destinations

*When a rare heat wave hits London in summer, it's nice to get out of the city and head to the beach for some sun, sea, and fish & chips. Going to famous European resorts can be expensive and time-consuming but don't worry, we've got you covered – here's a guide to some affordable seaside destinations close to London.*

### TRAVEL

**Edita Pileckyte**

*Travel Editor*

With the upcoming summer break, many of us will want to get away from busy and polluted London and relax on the beach. I can't count the times I was tempted to buy a plane ticket to Spain or Greece for a weekend just to treat myself to some sun and sea. However, flight costs can skyrocket to over £200 one way in summer, even with budget airlines like Ryanair. Ain't paying that! Luckily, the south coast of England boasts lovely beach towns, some of which can easily rival the popular Mediterranean resorts. Plus, they can be a convenient last-minute choice for a day trip on those rare occasions

when the temperatures in London reach the unbelievable 30°C.

### Bournemouth

This lovely town was a pleasant surprise to me. The beaches in the region are sandy, although it's on the same coastline as Brighton which I visited a few years back and where I couldn't walk barefoot on the sharp pebbles (which felt more like shards!). But Bournemouth is totally different: the warm golden sand was a pleasure to both walk on and look at. The tall cliffs with fancy villas on top, separating the seashore from the streets, offer breath-taking views of the beaches from above and are perfect spots to slow down, relax, and enjoy the moment.

I didn't get to explore the town much since I opted for the whole day on the beach, enjoying the

sun, warm water, and a refreshing sea breeze that was much needed on such a hot day. I walked along the coast towards Poole (to the west of Bournemouth) and was not disappointed by the mesmerising views of the sea on one side and the cliffs on the other. To this day, Bournemouth is my #1 recommendation for a beach trip in England

### Broadstairs

Broadstairs is another seaside town with sand beaches, located in the South-East, less than two hours away from London by train. It prides itself on being home to the Viking Bay, where Charles Dickens used to spend his holidays back in the day. Despite being a small town, it's a popular destination on hot summer weekends, especially for families with small children, so the beach might get a bit crowded



White cliffs of Broadstairs // Edita Pileckyte

and loud. Not to worry though – you can still find somewhat quieter and emptier places by the sea (walking a bit further away from the main beach will do the trick). Also, the place boasts amazing white cliffs, characteristic of South-East England, that are a treat not only for your eyes but also for your Instagram feed (hey, no judgement, we all do it!).

### Hastings

Situated around a two and a half hour drive from London, Hastings offers a range of leisure activities besides sunbathing and swimming. The beach itself is pebbly, so may not be as nice as the sandy ones mentioned before. But I visited the place on a rather cool and windy summer day, when swimming wasn't much of an option anyway, so

instead we hiked up the hills via a trail that was officially closed (#thuglife) and savoured the beautiful panorama of the city and the beach from above.

We also visited the ruins of Hastings castle and spent some quality time sitting and chatting on the beach, with the calming sound of waves in the background.

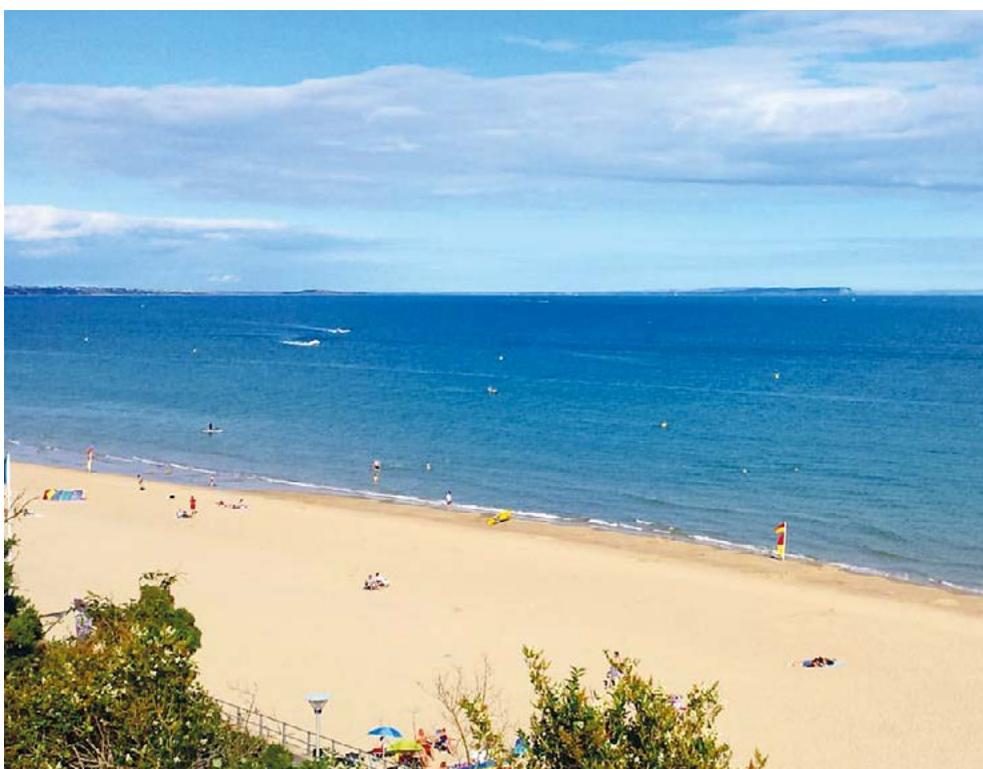
### Southend-on-Sea

Probably one of the closest beach destinations to London, Southend-on-Sea is not nearly as appealing as others. Both the sand and the water are rather dirty, and the beach is full of broken glass and other rubbish. However, it has the longest pier in the world and is probably the most convenient place to go to by public transport. But in my opinion, it's worth travelling a bit further from London for

a more fulfilling beach experience.

### Last tips

Most of the southern and south-eastern destinations are around two hours away from London and can be conveniently reached by direct trains or buses. You might even be able to score some affordable train tickets, especially to places like Broadstairs. And when you go there, don't forget to get some fish and chips, an integral part of your British seaside experience! But beware of seagulls – if you have food on the beach, they will definitely try to snatch it from you, even if you're holding it in your hands (been there one too many times: getting my Tesco meal-deal sandwich stolen was one of the saddest moments of my life).



Bournemouth beach resembles some resorts in Southern Europe // Edita Pileckyte

# TRAVEL

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## Dartmoor training weekend: rehearsal for hiking in Crete

*Earlier this year we published a series of articles about a group of students hiking in Corsica, a challenging expedition funded by IC Exploration Board. The Board is now funding another exciting hiking trip in Crete, and the team went on a training weekend in Dartmoor, England to prepare.*

### TRAVEL

#### Niamh French

Travel Writer

Our team leader Georgios had asserted himself early on by arriving to our training weekend in a blindingly stylish grey-and-buttercup-yellow outfit. We will be hiking across the Greek island of Crete for three weeks this September with the financial support of Imperial's Exploration Board, and we picked Dartmoor as a place to try out our new equipment. It was an early evening when we arrived so we needed to get to our riverside camping spot before the light of the sunset cast the moors the same warm yellow as Georgios' coat.

With backpacks hoisted onto our shoulders, we made our way through the long grass to Bellever Tor (one of Dartmoor's high points). The panorama from the Tor revealed the charming landscape waiting for us, which we admired cheerfully in the company of three wild horses. A short walk downhill past a forest carpeted in soft moss took us to the riverbank where we would sleep – a peaceful spot sheltered by gentle hills. We won't be using tents in Crete, instead we will be sleeping under the stars wrapped in sleeping bags and bivy bags to protect us from the elements, and so we didn't use tents in Dartmoor either. One of the main advantages of using bivy bags is their rapid set up. Here's a quick guide to our approach: lay down



The majestic sunrise was well worth the early start // Niamh French

an emergency blanket silver-side-up to keep the dew out and the heat in, inflate your sleeping mat, unroll your sleeping bag and bivy bag.

It was getting late and darkness was creeping in but we still hadn't eaten. This was not the time for cooking disasters,

and yet... Fire singed the hair from Georgios' arms. Michail shielded his eyes. I commando-rolled away as the flaming stove arched through the air and tumbled into the river. Our pile of spilt rice was instantly blackened. Between our seven scientific minds it had not

occurred to us to keep our stoves more than 15cm apart from each other or our faces. The result was a rapidly expanding ball of flame. We had learnt our first lesson.

With a new level of respect for health and safety, we tucked into lentils, rice, onion, carrot,

and some wispy poached egg. We collected our waste in a bin bag and wrapped the remaining bags around our backpacks to keep them dry.

Sleeping in a bivy bag is somewhat like being wrapped up in a sock that's floating through space. Every time you open your eyes you are met with a sea of stars, crossed by the occasional satellite and centered on the moon. Only the scent of grass reminds you that you're still on Earth. However, we woke to a less romantic scene. The condensation of our breath had left our bivy bags wet, and the cold night air was pinching our noses. We learnt our second lesson: wear balaclavas, and only use a bivy bag if it is raining.

The clock struck 4am and we sprung awake, packing up under the light of our head torches and shivering sleepily. A quick hike back to Bellever Tor warmed us up, and we timed it perfectly with the sunrise. A deep stillness hung in the air, pierced only by birdsong and the stirring music from someone's phone. Not a word was spoken while the glowing sun broke the horizon. We were entranced.

We breakfasted on tahini, porridge, and nuts, while Carla smashed out a navigation crash course, preparing us to take turns by guiding the team around the moors. We passed ancient archaeological sites, fell into squelching bogs, and came dangerously close to farm guard dogs. Our faces tanned and our spirits stayed high despite

the occasional blister.

When lunchtime came, we hopped across some stepping stones and dipped our feet in the cool, clear river. Our lunch was the same as our previous night's dinner, although now more skillfully cooked and with no fire-related panic. We scrubbed our pans clean with sand and river water, making a mental note to pack biodegradable soap and a scouring pad for Crete. As much as we would have liked to explore Dartmoor further, we needed to get back to the cars and our London lives.

**“Every time you open your eyes you are met with a sea of stars, crossed by the occasional satellite and centered on the moon. Only the scent of grass reminds you that you're still of Earth”**

A couple of hours through forests and fields brought our trip to an end. We have come away with lessons learnt, a strong team dynamic, and smiles on our faces, now all the more excited to begin our expedition across Crete.



Lost again but we always have each other // Niamh French



## Name our House Cider

One of the many upsides to changing our bar supplier on 1 August? We get to name our house cider. From about 100 suggestions, we have created a shortlist of four.

**Mr. BrightCider:** Regulars to Metric or Reynolds on Wednesday and Friday nights will recognise it as a fave tune, so why not name our house cider after it?!

**Psi.dr:** Psi is the Greek letter  $\psi$ , used in physics to represent wave functions in quantum mechanics. dr is the differential with respect to r, usually distance in the radial direction in polar coordinates. Duh.

**Malus Principia:** Malus is the scientific genus under which apple trees are classified. Principia translates to principles and is also the name of Sir Isaac Newton's theory on gravity. Potential translations: 'principles of evil', 'a bad beginning' or 'fundamental truth of apples'...

**The Chipper Piglet:** Because, why not?

What 's your fave? Tell us at [imperialcollegeunion.org/cider-poll](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/cider-poll).

## Apply to be a Student Trustee

### Become a Student Trustee

There's an exciting opportunity now available for two Imperial students to sit on the Board of Trustees of Imperial College Union and help make important decisions on how our charity is run. You'll make legal, financial and governance decisions as one of four Student Trustees on the 15-member body. Two of the Student Trustees are elected in the Leadership Elections annually, while the others are appointed from qualified applicants.

The Board of Trustees meets six times a year and provides a great development opportunity for successful applicants. To learn about the criteria, responsibilities, time commitment and Board configuration, visit [imperialcollegeunion.org/studenttrustee](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/studenttrustee).

Deadline for applications is 5 June 2018.

To apply, visit at [advice@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:advice@imperial.ac.uk)



## Summer Elections Results

Results are expected today, 1 June in Summer Elections 2018. Polls close online at noon, after four days of voting. Positions were open across the biggest Clubs, Societies and Projects, Constituent Unions, as well as the Academic and Wellbeing Representation Networks.

Scores of students submitted nominations to contest the elections to fill the positions left open, following the Leadership Elections in March. Imperial runs three main elections every year: Autumn Elections, Leadership Elections, and Summer Elections. Each provides Imperial students the opportunity to shape the student experience by standing and voting for the change they wish to see.

To vote today before polls close at noon, or to see the results later, go to [imperialcollegeunion.org/elections](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/elections)



## Hello ICU

Help us welcome new Imperial students next term as part of the HelloICU Crew. It's one of the most rewarding volunteering opportunities available on campus as you get to make a difference in the lives of our exciting new cohort of students.

Members of the HelloICU Crew help provide directions and advice, staff stalls and events, help with the move into halls or just provide reassurance and a friendly face.

We provide training, a shirt so you're easily recognised and everything you need to be a great volunteer!

Sign up at [imperialcollegeunion.org/helloicu](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/helloicu)

# LIBERATION

felix@imperial.ac.uk

## On creating a legacy

*Students may not always realise it, but they have the power to make a lasting change at university.*

### LIBERATION

#### Connor Qiu

*Campaigns Officer*

Mathematical curves rise and fall, changing their assumed trajectory at a moment's notice at inflection points. In life, too, there are certain times the prevailing greater wisdom considers to be inflection points – often-pivotal moments that mark so-called milestones. Examples include graduation and marriage. Characteristically, the passing of such moments has a final and enduring influence on us.

In reality, changes in life are rarely so instantaneous. Most progress in life is gradual. Nowadays, the accepted cultural norm is for significant milestone moments to be marked with a shiny plaque, certificate, or perhaps widespread media recognition; nevertheless, these are essentially snapshots of a lifetime of marginal gains.

Change itself is a two-sided platform and not a unilateral, unidirectional effort. It naturally follows then that all students change when they arrive at their university and leave behind a legacy of some sort when they depart. Their classmates, lecturers, and even the buildings themselves will be irrevocably changed by their presence. Leaving a student legacy is assured. If so, perhaps, it would be valuable to consider the student experience not only as a time for personal academic growth – learning, for example, every metabolite in the Citric acid cycle – but as

a prime opportunity to leave behind a positive lasting impact on your peers as well.

David Rubenstein, co-founder of The Carlyle Group, one of the most successful private equity firms in the world, is often quoted explaining that philanthropy is more than just rich people giving money away; rather, it can be 'money, time, or ideas'. As such, in this hyper-connected world, there is no reason to wait to give in feasible and logistically acceptable ways. Legacy, like philanthropy, can be 'money, time, or ideas'. Reaping the emotional and intellectual rewards of leaving behind a positive legacy is too valuable to restrict to the end of life.

**“Leaving behind a positive legacy is too valuable to restrict to the end of our lives”**

At their best, educational institutions provide students with the safety of a semi-structured curriculum to make marginal gains in all aspects of life, that will ultimately be rewarded with the assurance of a piece of paper that certifies the culmination of their achievement. Such development for individuals is impressive, but somewhat well-circumscribed and linear. Arguably, branching out with intention laterally would provide for a more

holistic and three-dimensional development. One way to frame this idea in context is to consider the merits and specific requirements behind leaving a personalised legacy during the multitudes of journeys that lead to the inflection points in our overall life journey.

As graduates know, the contact details they leave behind will be used extensively for the purposes of soliciting monetary donations and other forms of support for institutional advancement. The impact that can be had with this type of philanthropy is profound, yet it is inevitably delayed.

It may feel like an enormous burden to take on more 'responsibility' during a time of high stresses, but a sense of purpose creates fulfilment. To think how each assignment and personal interaction could be further pursued to create widespread positive lasting impact on their institution, and even society-at-large, can be very rewarding.

Regret usually stems from what has not been done. From anecdotal and personal experience, it is not the temporary embarrassment that accompanies a 'bad' choice or decision that plagues the mind forever. The CV of failures is long or short, depending on your luck, genetics, and circumstances, but it is the feeling of not knowing what could have been that stays forever in the mind. It is universal and waiting to be triggered, especially during important defining moments – inflection points.

In summary, to leave behind an exceptional

legacy as a student is simple:

1. Be uncomfortably vocal
2. Reach out far beyond your immediate peer group
3. Listen, read and think about how things should be

**“Leaving a legacy of a positive nature is something that can be done as a student”**

It would be regrettable if future generations, some of the brightest minds not yet known, miss out on the joys of giving early, for lack of knowledge, encouragement, or support. By thinking a bit more laterally, a bit more broadly, and a bit more bigger-picture, student life could become even more transformative for the vast majority of students. Leaving a lasting legacy of a positive nature is something that can be done as a student. It is not about going out of your way to disrupt current practices. It is about paying attention to positive behaviours and attitudes, and making a conscious choice to promote them in your own unique way. Building a legacy and reputation that puts the spotlight on your uniquely valuable character and potential is not something that needs to be left for a time beyond middle-age.

It begins today.

## On positive change



### LIBERATION

#### Connor Qiu

*Campaigns Officer*

It has been an enormous privilege to be your Campaigns Officer this year. To see the dynamism and enthusiasm that transcends our university campuses when various campaigns jump into action has been not only educational, but most enjoyable.

This year I spearheaded a campaign of my own, called SleepImperial, to promote healthy sleeping habits amongst staff and students. The amount of energy and effort required to deliver this campaign successfully was, I admit, much more than I had initially expected or intended. To effectively communicate with key stakeholders delivering events, obtain funding for a website, and draft in professionals to design graphics to be projected across high-profile screens across campus – to name just a small selection of jobs – was most challenging. Coupled with being on geographically distant placements that were intertwined with key interviews and examinations made for bittersweet and, on reflection, entertaining memories. To join SleepImperial, and for top sleep-related tips, please visit: [www.sleepimperial.com](http://www.sleepimperial.com)

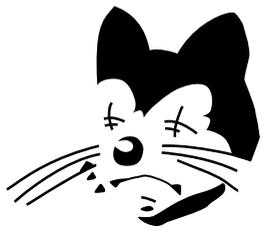
I am enormously grateful for the support across all levels of the university, from students themselves to senior staff. Seeing the impact that can be had with campaigns has justified the very real and personal sacrifices made.

As the organisational structure of the students' union changes, and the broader education curriculum reform begins, of which I had the chance to be a part, the need to be the force for change has never been more relevant.

In the end, the nature of student-led campaigns leads to the need to be creative and resourceful. Compromise will be an integral part of moving forward, and by embracing differences we can build better synergies, creating better solutions.

The mark of a successful campaign lies in its longevity. Making the transition from a founder-driven movement to that sustained by equally enthused and passionate leaders is the most challenging part of leaving behind lasting positive change. If it can be done, it is the ultimate reward. Put simply, people will always need to be helped by people.

*Get sleepy for a re-run of SleepImperial's Imperial Sleep Week w/c 4th June 2018*



# Hangman



When will the Beanie Baby bubble burst? // Imperial/Flickr/Housing Works Thrift Shops

## Senior management expenses revealed: £200k on Beanie Babies

### HANGMAN

**Negafelix**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

*Imperial College London have said the soft toys represent a sound investment for the university, while elsewhere thousands spent on Club Penguin.*

Imperial's senior management team last year claimed nearly £200,000 on Beanie Babies, *Hangman* can reveal.

In an investigation

undertaken by *Hangman*, a series of Freedom of Information requests revealed powerful members of College faculty had spent vast sums of money on the small plush animals. Internal claims from senior management show Professor Alice Gast, President of Imperial College London, last year claimed back the £80,000 she had spent on the toys; it is believed that, over the previous five years, members of senior management had amassed a collection of nearly 25,000 Beanie Babies – enough for one each for every student and

staff member.

Following the findings,

**“Beanie Babies are a solid investment – a quick scan of eBay shows how much an original Princess Diana memorial bear is worth”**

members of senior management defended the spending. Francis McNally, Vice Provost (True ‘90s Kids), spoke to *Hangman* about the findings: “While on the surface, this may seem like a personal indulgence, in actuality this represents a fundamental aspect of the College’s investment strategy. Beanie Babies are a solid investment for the College – they’re collectors items, which are actually in very high demand. You only need to have a quick scan of eBay to see how much an original, mint-condition Princess Diana memorial

bear can fetch. The only way their value can go is up. Trust me, I’ve visited the Business School before.”

The spending was widely criticised by student and union representatives, however. One staff member who spoke to *Hangman* called the spending “obscene”, highlighting the reduction in pay experienced by Imperial staff: “it’s absolutely out of order that Professor Gast and the others are spending College money on their premium stuffed toys, while the rest of us have to make do with poor quality knock-offs

from IKEA. Things need to change.”

Other members of senior staff were found to be spending vast amounts on things tangentially-related to their jobs: one of Imperial’s core management personnel had spent nearly £5,000 on Club Penguin subscriptions. Speaking to *Hangman* on the condition of anonymity, the staff member explained how he’d spent so much: “I had to keep on buying new subscriptions throughout the year; I kept on getting banned for telling other users to stay the fuck away from my puffles”.

# HANGMAN

negafelix@imperial.ac.uk

## Tropical plants found growing in hot and humid Central Library

### HANGMAN

Negafelix  
Editor-in-Chief

*The Library has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest, after tropical plants were found growing on level three.*

Imperial College London's Central Library has been declared a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), after several varieties of rare tropical plant were found to be

growing on level three. The plants, which usually only grow in the Amazon rainforest, were discovered behind a bookshelf in the fluid mechanics section. It is the first time such species have grown in the British Isles.

Professor Barry Luglow, chair of botanical sciences at Imperial's Faculty of Natural Sciences, said the find was "hugely exciting" for plant-enthusiasts: "previous attempts to grow these species in tropical hot houses in the UK had always failed, since there was not enough power

available to generate the right amount of heat and moisture. However, having hundreds of undergraduates packed into the overstuffed Central Library has resulted in a climate akin to the subtropics."

Student reaction to the discovery was mixed. Sally Porter, a second year biology student, told *Hangman*: "naturally I'm thrilled about this discovery. It really helps make the climate control problems we've been facing worthwhile – last week I slipped over in a puddle of sweat, and cracked a rib, but knowing we're



The Library continues to be sweaty af // Imperial

making scientific history makes me forget the pain."

Others were less enthusiastic, however. James Bonnet, a final year

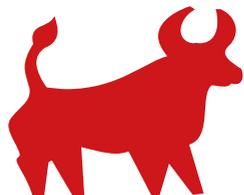
physicist, told *Hangman*: "yeah, I'm pleased for the plants and whatever, but that doesn't make up for the fact the Library is fucking gross at the

moment. When I walk in I can feel myself breathing in the humid sweat of hundreds of nervous undergrads. It's disgusting."



**ARIES**

This week you're the *Felix* Editor, and your appearance in last week's centrefold has triggered some interesting conversations on the family WhatsApp chat.



**TAURUS**

This week you've finally finished your exams. Now to get back to your regular routine of complete mediocrity.



**GEMINI**

This week you're a joke about GDPR emails. You're already old and tired.



**CANCER**

This week revision is going so bad you start googling whether being struck by lightning counts as extenuating circumstances.



**LEO**

This week you're looking so hard for means of procrastination, you nearly vote in the Union elections. You're not quite that desperate yet, though.



**VIRGO**

This week you forget it's half term, and decide to head down to South Kensington station at 6pm. You're never seen again.



**LIBRA**

This week the weather matches your mood. It's pathetic fallacy. That's right, I did English GCSE, bitch.



**SCORPIO**

This week you decide to take all your Central Library breaks outside. People can't see your tears in the rain.



**SAGITTARIUS**

This week you resort to googling some of the terms used in the *Felix* Sex Survey. The government now has you on a watchlist.



**CAPRICORN**

This week you get into your exam, and the paper is full of mistakes! You can barely understand a thing! Then you leave and realise it's just because you're an idiot.



**AQUARIUS**

This week you take a step back from your studies, taking time to be mindful and focus on the real questions. Like, just *how* do they get curly fries that curly?



**PISCES**

This week you're the Horoscopes Writer, and you're so uninspired you nearly turn to r/humour for inspiration. Nearly.

# CLUBS & SOCIETIES

felix.clubsandsocieties@imperial.ac.uk

## BUSINESS SCHOOL STUDENTS LAUNCH STUDENT INVESTMENT FUND

Earlier this year, the Imperial College Business School officially launched the Student Investment Fund – a student-led fund, responsible for managing £100,000 in assets, open to students of the Business School with an interest in developing their skills in investing. We sat down with the Fund's Executive Committee to talk about how it all came about:

### How did the Fund come about? Was it a student-led initiative?

The Fund came about when several students on the MSc Investment & Wealth Management and MSc Finance & Accounting programmes identified the need for a forum in which students could practically apply what they were learning in the classroom. It was wholly student-run, but has been strongly supported by both the Business School and the central College.

### What were some of the challenges faced in establishing the Fund?

There were a number of key challenges we faced in setting it up. Raising the funds took considerable time and effort, with multiple pitches and proposals to convince the Endowment Board to give us £100,000. The Business School were keen to ensure the project would be an ongoing complement to their curriculum, and would allow students to put their Imperial-learned skills into practice. As such, we spent a lot of our time designing the Fund as an ongoing part of the Business School's – and hopefully, later, the College's – offering.

In order to get students interested, as well as



**The Executive Committee. Back Row (L-R): Nicola Zanetti (Co-Chief Investment Officer), Davide Sciuto (Co-Chief Executive Officer), Jan Rinck\* (Co-Chief Investment Officer); Front Row (L-R): Jonathan Fielding (Co-Chief Executive Officer), Katherine Tunaley (Head of Communications), Atiba Jackson (Chief Risk Officer), Edoardo Pediconi (Head of Research). \*Jan has since left the Fund // Student Investment Fund**

attracting further funding from external sources, we needed to establish the Fund as a credible initiative that would increase student employability, their practical skills, and their exposure to the buy-side industry. The Executive Team met with countless industry professionals to build our network, with some of these professionals running training sessions in the future: for example, we had one last month run by Ryan Shea, Head of Research at Amareos, on bridging the gap between classroom learning and best practice in the asset management world.

### How is this Fund different to other finance societies at Imperial?

Our Fund is different, because it combines both fundamental and quantitative investment strategies. As far as we are aware, we are the only student-led investment fund that runs quantitative investment strategies. We're also partnering with key industry firms, such as Fidelity, to form specialised training programmes for our

analysts. In addition, we are working with a start-up, QIARK, which allows us to make democratic investment decisions between a theoretically infinite group of analysts. This could, in theory, allow us to open up the Fund to the entire College in the future.

### How exactly does the Fund work?

The Fund is run by an Executive Team of six MSc Investment & Wealth Management students, an MSc Finance & Accounting student, and an MSc Strategic Marketing student. It is also overseen by an Investment Committee from the Business School, which ensures we're complying with previously-agreed requirements and risk controls. We also have an Advisory Board, which is made up of several industry professionals, from companies like JP Morgan Asset Management, Aviva Investors, and Tikehau Capital. The Advisory Board guides us, offering expert advice as we make our trades. Having the support of key management personnel

who are currently working in industry has been invaluable in fine-tuning our investment strategies.

We run two types of strategies: a discretionary strategy, based on fundamental analysis, and quantitative strategies, based on algorithms. The investment is divided between these two in a 30:70 ratio. We want to showcase Imperial's unique value proposition – that of a technologically-innovative university – in the type of investing we do. As such, our quantitative strategies are allocated a larger proportion of the available funding. Any profits from the fund are reinvested for future use.

### Who can get involved with the Fund?

At the moment, any Business School students with an interest in investing, or who want to learn more, can apply. Students can apply to either be an equity analyst or a member. Equity analysts produce tear sheets, which they use to present their ideas for new investments at our frequent stock pitches. If approved, the tear sheet forms the

basis for a proper equity research report. The ones that are approved by the Executive Team are implemented within the portfolio.

Membership alone requires no formal time commitment – students may just enjoy coming along to the stock pitches, events, or hearing from our partners and speakers. The Fund is also designed to be a networking tool for those interested in becoming analysts in the buy-side industry, hence our use of industry networks to deliver training programmes.

The students we are looking for have a real passion for research and investment management, a systematic and methodical way of thinking, and an analytical mind-set. They should also really enjoy in-depth company analysis. While we're only open to Business School students currently, we hope to open the Fund up to the wider student body as soon as possible.

If you would like to join the Fund, please email your expression of interest to [investfund@ic.ac.uk](mailto:investfund@ic.ac.uk)

## BAD FORM PRESENTS: ALEX T AT CORSICA STUDIOS

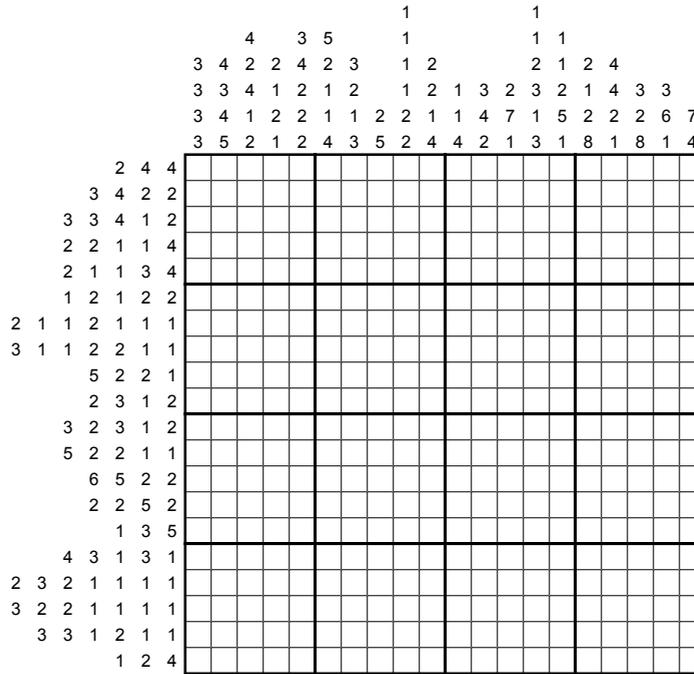
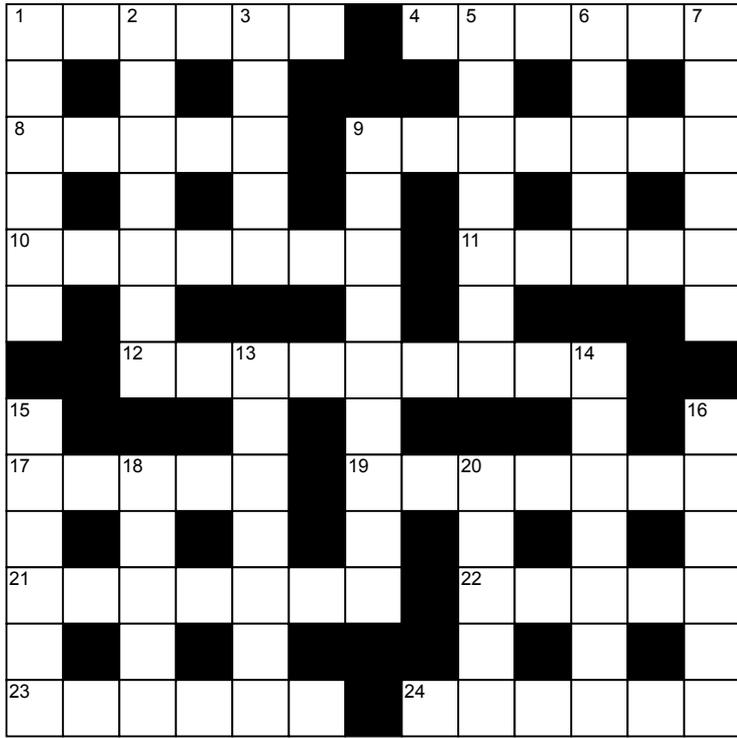
Off the back of a well-received event with Imperial alumnus Doppelate, Imperial Soundsystem once again heads south of the river for its raucous annual soirée, this year with Leeds-based party starter and Dimensions resident: Alex T. Alex has long been bringing huge names like Hunee, Carl Craig, and Lena Willikens to his nights around York and Leeds, and has recently earned himself a monthly slot on renowned UK radio station Rinse to push his dark and percussive style. Be prepared for some interesting cuts when he takes to London's deepest sound-system.

Big sets are also expected from Imperial Soundsystem's impressive roster – providing your ideal soundtrack to a guilt-free Wednesday.

*Bad Form will be taking place Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June, at Corsica Studios, 10PM – 3AM. Tickets £3 advance, £5 on the door Tickets: [bit.ly/badformalex](http://bit.ly/badformalex)*

# PUZZLES

fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk



**FUCWIT**

1	Nonogram of Ketamine	359
2	Q	332
3	Puzzle Snuggle Cuddle Couple	322
4	TioUdin	311
5	OK	261
6	Luncheon Pals	214
7	Abelian Grapes	197
8	Maxiane	186
15	yHt	81
18	Snails	63

Send in your solutions to [fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk) before midday Wednesday!

**Points Available**

Crossword	4
Nonogram	4
Codeword	4
Sudoku	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

**Solutions**



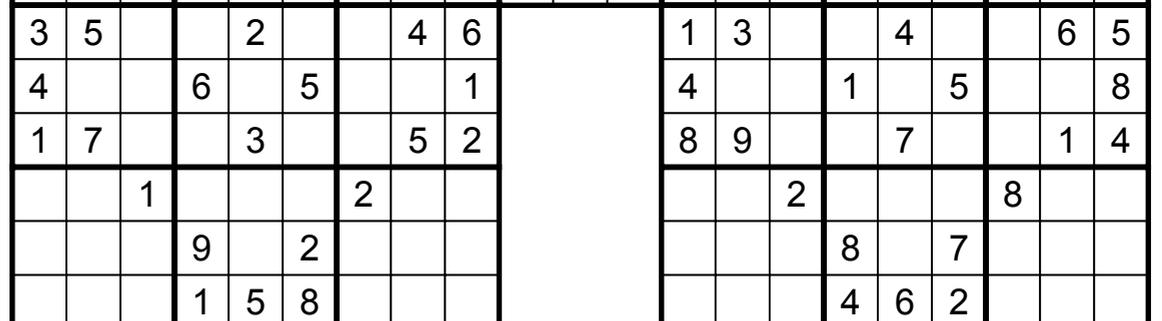
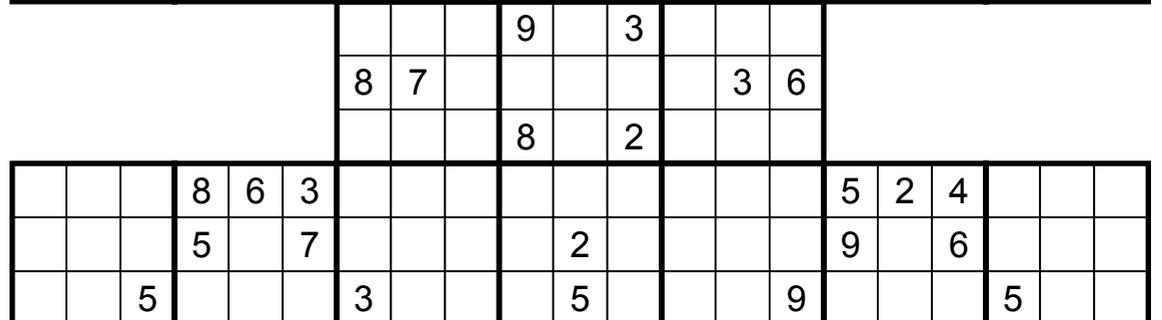
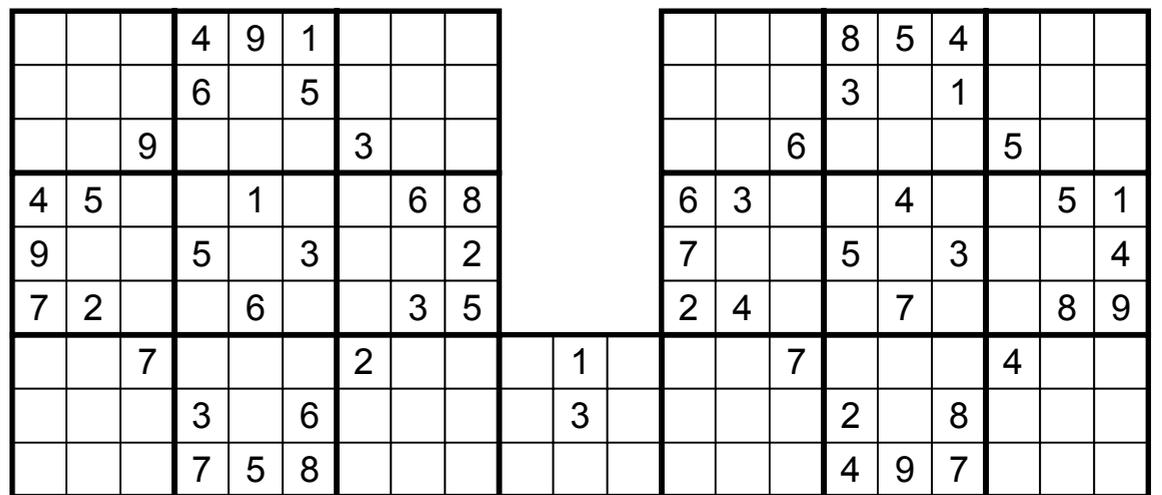
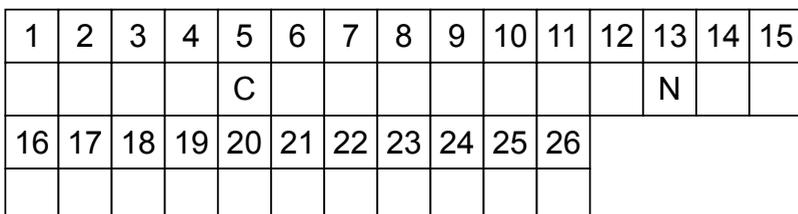
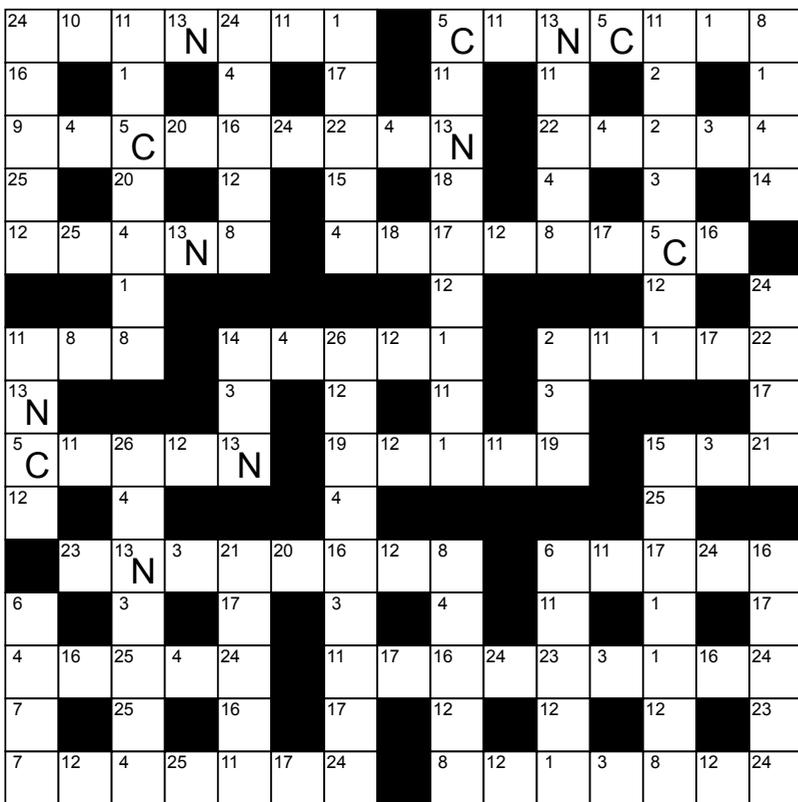
**Across**

- 1. Extremely small (6)
- 4. Raffia (anag) (6)
- 8. Female goat (5)
- 9. Porridge ingredient (7)
- 10. Young swans (7)
- 11. Norwegian dramatist (5)
- 12. Country of Central America (9)

- 17. Exterior (5)
- 19. Antiquated (7)
- 21. Pay (7)
- 22. In the air (5)
- 23. Annually (6)
- 24. Hinder (6)

**Down**

- 1. Threaten (6)
- 2. Nine-sided figure (7)
- 3. Aromatic herb (5)
- 5. Appropriate (7)
- 6. Regions (5)
- 7. Become less severe (6)
- 9. Perceptive (9)
- 13. Cautious (7)
- 14. Fashionable (1,2,4)
- 15. Rickety (6)
- 16. Reaping tool (6)
- 18. Pacific monarchy (5)
- 20. Demand as a right (5)



## SPORTS

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

# Imperial dodgeball: Championship teams battle it out in the final tournament of the year

*Two Wolverine teams head up north to Burton-on-Trent for the final tournament of the year. Battling through hardship they play well, and at the end of the day say goodbye to members who will be graduating.*

## SPORTS

**Lochlann Allison***Wolverines' Secretary*

Last Sunday, Imperial Wolverines ventured one last time out of the comforts of London into the wilderness of the north for the final university dodgeball fixture of the year: the University Championship. Teams from far and wide dropped their revision books and grabbed their balls to take part at the event at St George's Park, Burton-on-Trent.

Imperial assembled two teams of battle-hardened Wolverines who were willing to sacrifice their body, soul, and a good night's sleep for victory. The assembly point for our warriors before their trek north was outside Beit Hall at 6am; however, it seemed one of our freshers who actually lives in Beit Hall found the trip downstairs most challenging. Sleeping through an alarm

clock could be a forgivable offence, if it wasn't already the umpteenth time it has happened this year alone.

Both teams found themselves in competitive groups where it was all to play for. We arrived at the venue at 9.51am, with the 1s due to play their first game against Birmingham 2s at 10.00am. The odds were unfortunately stacked against our brave heroes: Leo Haigh had a groin injury from the day before, the courts were different to what we usually play on, three players were recovering from questionable minibus driving from Lochlann Allison forcing some out of their seats, useless line referees and the ghastly mental image of the main ref in short shorts, which left nought to the imagination and would put even the best professional athletes off their game. The game ended in a 3-11 loss. The lack of a warmup proved costly as nervous errors and miscommunication blighted our play style. We failed on so many

of the basics and looked far from the divisional league winning team we had been two months ago: highlights included not making a catch in the entire game, foot faults on lines, and failure to capitalise on four ball situations.

The next game against Lincoln started much the same as we struggled to find our mojo. Three fantastic catches in a single game by our Club Captain George Fish before the half changed the momentum of the match and gave us the foothold to get into our groove before going on to control and dominate with a final score 12-4. The next game was a local derby against UEA, a rival in our divisional league. The first half was dominated by us, thanks to our initial ball advantage earned by Captain Filip Sebest, which ended 6-2 in our favour, only losing a silly 30 second set just before the half. However, the handicap of having the same useless line refs as our first game would



Public service announcement: THE DAB IS DEAD // Wolverines

strike again. A questionable catch followed by the failure to acknowledge an obvious hit would prove pivotal in the match. To highlight their incompetence: one of the referees blatantly said the questionable catch wasn't a catch and another, when asked if he were a referee, said 'no, I'm just standing here.' The game ended a draw 7-7 and regardless of our wingers' – Nithin Thoppuram and Nifemi Adejumobi – fantastic play, as well as George's 'tactical' floor crawling against Lancaster in the final game ending 12-4, the fate of the first game consigned us to third place in our group.

Wolverines 2s had a particularly challenging group. The first half ended a miserable 1-7, although pin point single throwing from James Rice-Mellor narrowed the margins in the second half. In the final set, Yan Jin Ho found herself alone on the court. However, a lionhearted catch proved not enough to win the set and we lost

7-9 in the end. Coventry were arguably the easiest side our 2s were going to meet this day as the remaining teams – Winchester 1s, Birmingham 3s and Hertfordshire As, – are all top flight teams.

Winchester lived up to their nickname 'Wincheating' with an exceptional display of poor sportsmanship and dishonesty as expected. Our brave Wolverines did manage to win a game after a pivotal catch from retiring Wolverine Ciaran Coneelly and draw a game after James hit out two England nationals but ultimately lost 3-17. It was much the same in the third game against Birmingham 3s, however the scoreline wasn't the true tale of the match. The 2s Captain Philip Zeeuw valiantly lead from the front but unfortunately found his team being eventually overcome in each game, losing 2-12. The final game of the day was another local derby against a divisional rival, Hertfordshire As.

Knowing our play style well, they focussed early on hitting out our strong arm throwers on the wings usually leaving Yan Jin or Lalita Radtanajiravong to the end. These two phenomenal catchers unfortunately struggled to fish a catch from multiple ball attacks and the game finished in a 0 – 20 loss.

Although a disappointing day for all concerned, Aagu Kangatharan's harmonica playing soothed and consoled our saddened hearts. The club's spirit proved unaltered, however, on the minibus ride home as we had a celebratory KFC meal and performed a Katy Perry tribute rendition much to the displeasure of other motorists.

The club sadly has to say goodbye to a few retiring members. Club Captain George Fish, 1<sup>st</sup> Team Captain Filip Sebest, Steve Ndumbe and Ciaran Coneelly; we wish you all the best in the future. Throw together Wolverines, dodge alone.



The whole squad posing for a photo // Wolverines