



Felix

The Student Newspaper of Imperial College London



Nominations open Monday 4 February
imperialcollegeunion.org/elections

Details inside

EDITORIAL

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Happy Valentine's Day

Andy Djaba - Felix Editor



This week, I've not done it well at all. Much like Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's Manchester United, I've been lulled into a false sense of security by the relatively smooth running of the last few issues. However, the honeymoon period is over and, with this issue, I've come crashing back down to Earth. Maybe not in as embarrassing fashion as only mustering one shot on target at home in the Champions League, but it is 8pm and I still have a page and a half of News and a double page Music spread to finish...

This time last year, I was at a Jorja Smith concert watching my babes perform. Who'd have thought just one year later, I'd be spending my Valentine's Day in a basement with a bunch of dudes. In the immortal words of Clean Bandit, "there's no place I'd rather be". Anyway, perhaps it's the romance in the year because I'm in a very poetic mood. I've taken the liberty of writing a few short Valentine's poems (this has nothing to do with me trying to fill up space right now):

Shall I compare thee to a Summer's Day, hot and sweaty in the West Basement.

Roses are red, violets are blue, I'm stuck in this basement from 9 'til 2 (am).

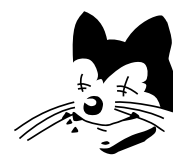
The breeze blows softly through my fingers as I type this editorial, thinkin 'bout you.

any opinions of the less than glowing content we often include about the university. Would she quiz me on the origins and cultural significance of the *Felix* centrefold, like the Provost did last term? Alas, she kind of ran off before we had the chance to have a proper conversation. I had been hoping to grab her for a quick interview but sadly it was not to be. I'm sure our paths will cross again.

This week, the paper includes a rundown of the most hotly anticipated awards show of the year, the 4th Annual NeighbourHOOD Grammys. For that reason, the Music section easily snatches the Section of the Week prize this week (a subtle reminder to the Arts Section that, in the words of J Hus, this competition is "all about quality not quantity"). Special shout-out to the Books Section for once again providing an extremely compelling read - definitely skip to that section if you have a chance (after you've finished taking in the #HOODGrammys2019 of course). Anyway, I'm out. Happy Valentine's Day!

Kiki, do you love me? Are you riding? Say you'll never ever leave from beside me.

I can't think of anymore sadly. Anyway, on reflection this has been an interesting week. There have been a number of developments in the News and this also marks the week that I finally met our President, Alice Gast (if you don't count me shaking her hand at Graduation). I must admit, I was slightly nervous ahead of meeting her, wondering if she reads the paper and has



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The designer baby debate

The Power To Control Your Own Evolution, with Robert Winston, Tom Whipple, Gunes Taylor and Inga Prokopenko.

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Robert Winston


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Inga Prokopenko

NEWS

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Union to scrap breakfast offering following huge losses

NEWS

Andy Djaba
Editor-in-Chief

The trial of Union Breakfast has come to an end, just five months after its launch

Imperial College Union announced its decision to cancel its breakfast offering following substantial financial losses.

From Monday 18th February, Union Breakfast will cease to be served and the opening hours in FiveSixEight will revert to 12pm. The decision was taken a week ago, with the breakfast offering being described as causing the Union to “absolutely haemorrhage money”.

Speaking to Felix, Rob Tomkies, Union President, said: “There was an initial spike in the performance of sales and so on, which is obviously really good, but actually it then started to peter out. Towards the end, we’d get about £16-17 net a day, and that’s without staffing costs or anything, which equates to four meals a day. At which point, the decision was made that it wasn’t financially viable. If you have one staff member

on, they’re earning £8-9 an hour, they’re there for five hours – you’re minus £20 a day. If we carried it on, it’s predicted to cost us £8000, just because of staffing costs outweighing the food performance.”

Claudia Caravello, Deputy President (Financial Services), was allegedly not consulted prior to the decision being made, highlighting a possible disconnect between members of the Senior Management Group (SMG) and the student-elected Officer Trustees. One member of staff commented, “largely it’s been Julia and SMG taking things on”.

In an e-mail informing Union staff of the decision to end Union Breakfast, Julia Mattingley, Head of Commercial Services, stated: “I am extremely proud of the effort, creativity and willingness of our amazing Bars & Catering team to take on a new project at the busiest time in our year and without full resources. You’ve worked hard and it hasn’t gone unnoticed.”

Union Breakfast was announced in response to the the widely unpopular decision to scrap breakfast in the Senior Common Room (SCR) at the start of the 2017-18 academic year. Felix was provided with a joint statement by Julia Mattingley and Rob Tomkies:



The most important meal of the day // Imperial College London

“The breakfast project came about as a result of the five year Commercial Strategy and a steer towards extending and improving our food offer generally across the Commercial Services, to include bar food, functions catering and retail grab ‘n’ go. The work first started on the early stages of the breakfast project in April 2018 with a view to launching during the Welcome period. We were always clear that this was a trial – as this was not something we had tried before – and there were several unknowns at launch mainly due to the timing of the launch and several operational challenges that we were (and still are) experiencing at the time. We got amazing feedback from our membership which we will factor into all of our future plans going forward. We have taken the decision to cease breakfast service for the time being in order to lay firm foundations. These foundations will

set us up for the future and ensure the long term viability of our outlets in order to better serve our membership.”

After the disastrous performance of Union Breakfast during its trial, stakeholders, such as students and Union staff have raised the question of why the trial was launched in the first place without firm foundations already being in place.

According to Rob, competition with the breakfast offering in the Library Café was a substantial obstacle: “One of the main factors we struggled with is the Library Café do run breakfast, it’s a very similar offering to our own and, overall Campus Services put in £1m subsidy a year. Which means they can go down to costs that we literally just can’t match.”

This comes as the latest development in the ongoing efforts being made to improve the catering offerings on campus.

Rob informed Felix that, “Claudia has been putting a lot of work into the food offering on campus with Campus Services because they have a considerably bigger budget than us, they can do all sorts of things.”

Despite the failure of this short-lived breakfast trial, students are being reassured that this does not mark the end for breakfast offerings on campus. Reflecting on this, Rob added: “We are very much still looking into reviewing breakfast

but, at this point, we need to actually look at all the information we got, the customer feedback, the performance reports and so on. Actually try and figure out why is it that we’re only making £17 a day. Why is it only four people are having food here each day? When it comes round to next budgeting, look at what the lessons learnt are because students do need food but clearly what we’re doing at the moment isn’t what they want”.



No more // Imperial College London



Scrapped! // Imperial College London

Imperial to launch arts fellowship

NEWS

Andy Djaba
Editor-in-Chief

The Blyth Art Fellowship will provide sustained creative Fine Art support for current Imperial students for the 2019/20 academic year

Staff and students at Imperial College London will be offered the opportunity to have their artistic and creative talents nurtured through a new arts fellowship starting in October 2019.

The Blyth Art Fellowship, a new initiative run through Imperial's Blyth Music and Arts Centre, will provide support to students and staff through

weekly drop-ins and free workshops. Specialised support will also be provided through four 1:1 mentoring sessions with a professional artist, a materials bursary of £500 for experimentation/ to make new work, an annual membership Tate card and through free subscription to Blyth Drawing evening classes.

Mindy Lee, Head of Art at the Blyth Centre, said:

"We know there are a lot of talented artists throughout Imperial who are studying science. I wanted to further enhance our creative support and reach out to provide a more formal and sustained provision of 1:1 mentoring and access to a regular drawing class for exceptionally talented students. The cost of art materials and visiting exhibitions can be prohibitive, so a bursary and Tate card will be provided, to allow the artist to explore free from

financial restraints."

Applications are now open and current undergraduate and postgraduate students are being invited to apply. To apply, artists must write a 250 word statement about their work and how they plan to use the opportunity, as well as sending three jpegs of recent work (300dpi, max 1MB each) via email to gallery@imperial.ac.uk using the subject heading, 'Blyth Art Fellowship 2019'.

Mindy, who is also a professional artist, tutor and curator, added:

"The Fellowship has been written based on fellowships for professional artists and in response to student feedback. It is an incredibly exciting opportunity. It will enrich a student's knowledge. I cannot wait to receive the applications and look forwards to seeing what everyone has been making. As a professional

artist I would LOVE to do this Fellowship myself!"

The deadline for applications is 10th March 2019, with shortlisted artists to be contacted in May 2019 and interviews to take place in June 2019. Shortlisted artists will be required to bring ten original artworks to their interview. For more information and how to apply, please visit: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/music-and-arts/visual-arts/art-fellowship/>

The Blyth Art Fellowship is the latest in a number of opportunities for Imperial students to get involved with Arts. The Blyth Gallery, located on Level 5 of the Sheffield Building, is also currently holding its Annual Open Call for exhibitions. This represents an opportunity for staff and students to receive free personalised guidance and support in developing their creative ideas from Mindy Lee and



Blyth Art Fellowship // Blyth Arts Centre

to have their art on display in the Blyth Gallery for the next academic year. The deadline for applications is 10th March 2019. For application guidelines, visit <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/music-and-arts/visual-arts/want-to-exhibit/> and click on Imperial College proposals.

ac.uk/music-and-arts/visual-arts/want-to-exhibit/ and click on Imperial College proposals.

Sir Michael Barber visits Imperial

NEWS

Andy Djaba
Editor-in-Chief

Imperial welcomed the Head of the Office for Students, Sir Michael Barber

Sir Michael Barber, the Head of the Office for Students (OfS), visited Imperial College London on the morning of Wednesday 13th February.

The OfS Head was

accompanied by Imperial President, Professor Alice Gast, and the Provost, Professor Ian Walmsley, as the visit began at the Carbon Capture Pilot Plant in the ACE Extension (ACEX) building. Dr. Colin Hale, Senior Teaching Fellow in the Department of Chemical Engineering, was in attendance as Chemical Engineering

students discussed their learning experience and ran a demonstration of the Carbon Capture plant for Sir Michael, Professor Gast and Professor Walmsley.

Sir Michael's visit concluded with a trip to the Imperial Enterprise Lab. Following a short introduction by Liz Choonara, Head of Programmes & Community at the Imperial Enterprise Lab, a number of student entrepreneurs presented their start-ups and fledgling businesses, providing the guests with an insight into the work of the Enterprise Lab.

The event ended with

"Topics of discussion included student entrepreneurship and the student experience at Imperial"

a 'round table'-style discussion, chaired by Becky Neil, Imperial College Union Deputy President (Welfare), during which



Sir Michael Barber // Thomas Angus

students in attendance had an opportunity to ask the guests questions. Topics of discussion ranged from student entrepreneurship and the student experience at Imperial to the increasing cost of international tuition fees and Imperial's recognition on a global scale.

Speaking to *Felix* after his visit, Sir Michael

Barber said:

"I've really loved meeting the students here. I'm very inspired by the students I've just met. You see the energy, the creativity in the room. I think it's a fantastic place to come and I'm hugely grateful to everybody here who enabled me to come visit."

Imperial hospitals face £650m repair bill

NEWS

Andy Djaba
Editor-in-Chief

The three hospitals with the biggest urgent repair bills are all part of the Imperial College Trust

Three west London hospitals run by the Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust are the most urgently in need of repair in the country. Charing Cross (which is the hospital with the highest urgent

repair bill of £312m) in Hammersmith, St. Mary's in Paddington and Hammersmith Hospital are facing total costs of about £650m for high-risk and significant-risk repairs.

Speaking to *The Sunday Times*, a spokesperson for the Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust responded: "Our staff are still managing to provide very advanced care in buildings that are simply not fit for purpose."

In September 2018, problems with the lifts at St Mary's Hospital, which is facing the second highest repair bill of £229m and is the hospital at which the Duchess

of Cambridge had her three children, affected its maternity services and forced women hoping to give birth at the hospital to make alternative arrangements.

This revelation comes following an investigation by *The Sunday Times* into the 102% increase over the last three years in the total sum needed to eradicate the NHS maintenance backlog of "high-risk" and "significant-risk" problems. This figure now stands at over £3bn and has left an "alarming" hospitals are "falling apart".

Urgent repair bills include high and sig-



Data is for the 2017-18 financial year // NHS Digital

nificant risk issues. Significant risk repairs are those that "require priority management" and "risk healthcare delivery or safety". The NHS defines high-risk repairs

as those that "must be addressed with urgent priority in order to prevent catastrophic failure, major disruption to clinical services or deficiencies

in safety liable to cause serious injury and/or prosecution.

Luna Terra Sol

NEWS

Helen Money-Kyrle
Arts Editor

Heavenly bodies: Imperial's annual Charity Fashion Show hailed stellar success

entertainment.

First on was Polish designer Karol Cygan's collection, his bold and futuristic designs setting a modern and exciting tone for the show. Next up was the latest Appareal collection, designed by Olesya Nazarova, with sleek and mysterious moon-grey outfits, tailored for the 21st century woman. The

brand prioritises sustainability, using recycled fabrics and crafting the collection in solar-powered factories. After a quick change, our models were back wearing An Original Leroy, designed by Natasha Wright, in bold and unapologetic neon prints, paired with strangely charming Escape the Cloud laser-cut jewellery by Imperial student designer Olivia Gallupova.

After a vibrant performance from Imperial's Belly Dancing Society, the second act kicked off with the Ardiil Larosi contemporary menswear collection, followed by Kashida's outerwear collection, pairing earthy coloured jackets with simply embroidered scarves. Student-led movement SolidariTee finished the Terra segment of the show, whose shirts raise support for refugees and whose profits go towards legal aid in Greece.

Onto the final section of the show; fashion guru Nuno Lopes De Oliveira flies in from Macau for his second collection at Imperial College Charity Fashion Show. Inspired by the gas giant Jupiter, where it rains diamonds, the models glittered their way down the catwalk in Nuno's latest collection. Featured in British and Italian Vogue, designer Nuno told *Felix* that his current work is partly inspired by the increasing popularity of online



Strut your stuff // Migpin

make-up tutorials, with colours inspired by eyeshadows. The event closed with lingerie, notably the Made by Ava collection, of which each item was handmade.

Not only did the event celebrate fashion and design, but all profits will support three deserving charities, namely The El Salvador Project, The National Autistic Society and, finally, Doctors without Borders, where efforts are being focussed on the current humanitarian

crisis in Yemen. The show closed with some moving thank you's from organisers Marianne Gazet and Izabella Higson, who extended their thanks to all who contributed, from the make-up artists and photographers, to the models who spent hours rehearsing and to the DramSoc team behind the scenes. A sleek and sparkly event for a good cause, this year's Fashion Show was certainly a memorable occasion.



The latest Appareal collection by Olesya Nazarova // Migpin

COMMENT

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Union Reform has only just begun – now we need you

This week comment writer **Ansh Bhatnagar** argues for your support for far reaching and enduring Union reform

COMMENT

Ansh Bhatnagar*Comment Writer*

After a hefty debate about my paper, with many a discussion being had about if we need Union reform, when we need Union reform, why we need Union reform, and how we should do Union reform, the paper was passed, with an amendment limiting the scope of reform to democratic engagement; currently done through Union Council and its subcommittees.

If you missed my article last week, here is a quick summary why I want to shake things up at the Union. I believe that the Union is currently not doing a great job of involving students in the decision making process.

The procedure for the passing of motions for the improvement of the student experience is often bureaucratic, new changes have to go through long periods of exhaustive and exhausting review before being implemented (often lasting as long as or even longer than a year or two!) and are incredibly inaccessible for the average student. This might mean that a change you set in motion could only be enacted after you graduate. As a new Council Rep last year, I faced a steep learning curve that barred me from getting more involved and this is an issue faced by Council Reps every year, as well as people on CSP committees, Management



Beit has literally never looked this nice // Imperial Asset Library

Groups, etc.

Union Council is the central democratic body of the Union. It's where, in theory, the work of Officer Trustees (the elected President + Deputy Presidents) is scrutinised, and where senior volunteers pass policy for the Union. However, over the last few years it has become increasingly clear that it hasn't been successful in acting upon these principles, with some volunteers feeling that it's one great big formality and that very little is actually achieved. I don't believe this is to do with the people elected on to Council; the people on

Council are some of the hard-working and committed volunteers I know, and if they weren't, you'd expect the effectiveness to fluctuate over the years. The fact that it hasn't been effective despite having effective individuals sitting on it suggests that the way Council is structured is the source of the problem – the structure of the Union's current democratic processes do not allow for our students to flourish and really lead the Union.

Last week I put out a call in my article calling on students to come to Council to show support

for my paper. I was messaged by people who said they were surprised that they could just show up to these meetings. Despite the Union trying to communicate this year that anyone can come to Council and propose a policy paper, non-voting member attendance has continued to be virtually non-existent. These are the main reasons why I think we need a better democratic structure that allows for grassroots participation and for our students to lead the way in how the Union is run. After I argued strongly for change, Union Council

agreed and has approved a process for reform.

Many senior volunteers were concerned that this reform would lead nowhere, especially with the spectre of third term looming on the horizon. Would it even be possible to get the new structure passed in time? This is where you step in; the procedure to achieve a more transparent, member-led, and accessible Union needs students from all parts of campus (and other campuses!) to join in a "working group". This group would meet regularly and discuss where our Union succeeds,

where it fails, what other student Unions do better, and most importantly: how we can improve our own Union. Whether it be a modified version of Council or something completely different, by the end of it we will come up with a proposal that the majority of the working group will agree on, and submit to Council for it to be approved. Who knows, it might be the last thing Council passes in its current form!

Any major changes to the Union require a 2/3rd majority vote at Council. This is incredibly hard to win, especially when proposing something this huge. This is why we need to make sure that the proposal has backing from all kinds of students – such as academic and wellbeing reps, clubs and societies committee members, management group volunteers, council members, Officer Trustees, and even students who don't hold an elected role. The changes will affect the way that everyone participates with the Union, so we need lots of students to get involved and make sure that we get it right – after all, you know better than we do how you interact with the Union!

So come along to the discussions when you want, contribute what you can, and get involved with a project that will make the Union work better for you in 2020 and beyond! Sign up for the working group at bit.ly/ICUReform, and contact me at ab4616@ic.ac.uk if you have any questions or ideas for the Union!

COMMENT

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Voluntourism: wasting time abroad

Comment writer **Sara Ahmed** thinks that voluntourism is coming to a well-deserved end.

COMMENT

Sara Ahmed

Comment Writer

Voluntourism, short for volunteer tourism, is when someone travels abroad and volunteers while on vacation, usually lasting a week or two. The glory days of voluntourism are slowly coming to an end. The reality that it does more harm than good in the long term is slowly dawning on people. Before we continue, let me make it clear that voluntourism is not the same as volunteering.

Voluntourism is the volunteering done while on vacation and it is usually a non-recurring event in someone's life. It is usually a one-time experience that you can use to beef up your resume or to feel better about yourself.

If you are planning to spend a week in Africa to aid poverty-stricken orphans, you should probably reevaluate what you are doing to help. In theory, giving children moral support, passing out food and teaching English sounds like the perfect way to help. However, this couldn't be further from the truth. The people whose volunteer work

can be classified into voluntourism are usually people lacking expertise in the skills required. They therefore spend a week learning a new skill instead of being productive. This vicious cycle keeps repeating as, by the time people pick up a skill that might be useful, they return home. Despite this fact, most volunteers leave with a completely new mindset – that they must rescue people from the suffering they have witnessed. It's a noble thought, but this trend of voluntourism shows that people don't really learn about the country they went to, or what causes

the suffering they saw. This leads to two major issues, with one feeding into the other.

Firstly, we must tackle the mindset of the 'benevolent West' having to 'rescue the poor'. This thought process leads to Western intervention in countries where volunteers may be needed. For example, pictures of starving African children are being used in campaigns to draw people in, but this only convinces people that the poverty there can't be solved without Western intervention. The situation isn't helped by the general lack of knowledge about

these countries. This feeds the second major issue: that the root problems of suffering countries are not addressed, as most people are not even aware of what they are. Volunteers are so caught up in what they see that they don't stop to think about what the underlying issues could be. As these volunteers only see the suffering, their misconceptions remain and nothing is done to address the fundamental issues.

This raises the question: is voluntourism doomed? No, it isn't. I do not raise the issue of voluntourism so that people shy away from short volunteering

trips, but instead to inform them on how to make their time worthwhile. This can be done by understanding that volunteering trips aren't about helping the poor, but rather learning more about the crisis the country is in, understanding what its people are going through, building relations, and finding out more about the country's culture. Having a better understanding between different cultures can help bridge the gaps we are faced with, as once we stop looking at these countries as charity cases we can begin to find a way to help build them up.

The designer baby debate

The Power To Control Your Own Evolution, with Robert Winston, Tom Whipple, Gunes Taylor and Inga Prokopenko.

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Robert
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POLITICS

felix@imperial.ac.uk



London is at knife's edge: fatal stabbings at record high

How can we handle the situation?

POLITICS

Aaron Hadley
Politics Writer

London has a knife problem. By the time of writing, ten people have died in 2019 from stab wounds. By the time you are reading this, that number will likely have increased by two or three. But people are not just numbers on a spreadsheet. Lives are being lost, and a blanket of fear is descending upon the youth of London. Knife crime has increased year on year since 2014, with the greatest increase among young people, namely those between 13 -17. In fact, there are over 1,000 recorded admissions to hospital for young people a year just from stabbings, and this has risen by 60% since 2013. Why is this happening, and how can we address it?

Experts refer to knife crime as a 'health problem'. They do this because knife crime spreads like a disease. If knife crime were a disease, then we are very close to a pandemic scenario. More and more teenagers are carrying knives because they are afraid. There is this illusion that carrying a knife will make you safer, that you are less likely to be stabbed if you carry a knife. However, the opposite is true. The escalation of a situation to violence is far more likely given the false sense of security and confidence people experience when carrying a knife. To give



Some of the victims killed by knife related crimes in 2018// *The Guardian*

an interesting analogy, drivers who have taken lessons to learn how to drive safely on ice are more likely to have an accident on ice, as they overestimate their own ability and become confident. The combination of fear and false confidence results in more and more violent crimes, which has reached the highest on record, over 250,000 offenses in London alone for 2017.

The young are more vulnerable to this kind of crimes, in both carrying knives and being wounded from them. Students who are expelled from state

schools are most likely within their age group to commit offenses. They are also perfect targets for recruitment from gangs in London.

What has been done so far?

In response to the problem, Sadiq Khan the London mayor launched a task force of 272 in February 2018, whom in the first six months made 1,361 arrests, and seized 340 knives and 40 fire arms. Inching closer to the source of the problem,

every London school has been offered access to knife wands, to detect students carrying knives. 200 schools have taken up the offer thus far. Glasgow once held one of the highest murder rates in western Europe. But since treating knife crime as a health issue, the number of offensive weapons has dropped by 69% over a decade. The number of children and teenagers murdered has dropped to zero for five straight years (2011 – 2016). Experts who worked with Glasgow police to tackle violent crime there have since come to London,

working with the Mayors office to help to solve London's problem.

What else can be done?

This is a good start, but it does not tackle the heart of the matter. Young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, or have mental health or behavioral issues, are turning to crime. They do

“The young are more vulnerable to this kind of crimes crime, in both carr knives and being wounded from them”

this for several reasons. Firstly, teenagers are less well-off, and have less resources and opportunities available to them than in previous years. Turning to crime can be very lucrative. It also offers something to do and provides social opportunities. Students who have fallen out of the state school system, through suspension or expulsion, are particularly vulnerable to these motivations. Youth services are a great way to provide support

and social opportunities to young people in a safe environment.

They are often touted as great institutions for preventing youth crime and for collaborating with police. But in the past three years, funding has been cut down by a third. In my hometown, the youth club was forced to close. Some research suggests that well-run youth clubs help reduce crime, but poorly funded and badly supervised clubs can encourage crime alongside other social problems such as underage drinking. The number of students expelled from school has increased year on year since 2013, hitting 35 a day in 2015. School spending on students was cut by 8% since 2010, with the greatest cuts being sixth form funding at 25%. Often, schools and sixth forms do not have the resources to address the situation of problematic students or to offer them additional support. It is now easier for schools to expel students than to allocate enough resources for them to continue. As well as tackling knives on the street and the sale of knives to young people, the government needs to stop the source of these crimes, in a compassionate way. Our youth are not criminals: they are vulnerable people who have become victims of fear and circumstances. The government must bring back funding for the institutions that can help them.

MUSIC

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Kendrick vs Kendrick: *To Pimp A Butterfly* or *good kid m.A.A.d city*?

As the end of a decade in which Kendrick Lamar has dominated approaches, which of his records is truly the best?

MUSIC

Miles Gulliford

Music Writer

Ten years ago today, the name Kendrick Lamar meant no more than anyone else's. The now 31-year-old rapper was still going by K-Dot and would shortly receive a career-changing cosign from Lil Wayne. Today he is one of the best known and certainly most respected artists in music. With twelve Grammys and four platinum records under his belt – not to mention the first Pulitzer prize awarded to a non-classical or jazz musician – few can claim to have been so successful in both critical and commercial fields.

But as the 2010's – or *teens*, as this decade may be (hopefully not) known – draw to an end, music fans everywhere must ask themselves, “what was the best album the decade?” For many the answer will be a project by Kendrick Lamar – but which? The decision may at least be narrowed; only two of Duckworth's records pack the lyrical, musical and conceptual punch to be up for consideration. While both *Section.80* and *DAMN.*, have many a good quality between them, neither match the precision and cohesion of our two contenders: *To Pimp A Butterfly* and *good kid, m.A.A.d city*.

Critical heavyweight *To Pimp A Butterfly* (*TPAB*) clocks in with eleven Grammy nominations, five wins, and platinum status. ‘How Much A Dollar Cost’ even earned the top spot on Obama's

song of the year list. With brazen influences from jazz, funk, and soul, the record is an ear opening experience; every track boasts instruments and textures a hip-hop historian would be hard pressed to find on any other record in the genre. From Thundercat's bubbly licks slinking all over opener ‘Wesley's Theory’ to the skipping beat, warped, and increasingly trippy vocals (courtesy of a Sufjan Stevens sample) of ‘Hood Politics’, Lamar's bold experimentalism serves the record well. ‘For Free?’ brings a wailing big band to Lamar's caricaturish demands for wealth from an exploitative record industry (“I need forty acres and a mule / not a 40 ounce and a pit bull”) blending together to create a surreal swagger. Another standout moment from ‘u’ sees a distant sample hopping seemingly at random from ear to ear in your headphones, while K-Dot murmurs to himself, suicidal and depressed in his hotel room, creating a supremely palpable moment.

“Lush, dark samples, with addictively catchy rhythms and hooks”

One of Duckworth's greatest talents is undoubtedly his storytelling ability and both records bring it in spades, both drawing from and dramatizing his personal experience to build a meaningful narrative. *GKMC* hops

between scenes from the lyricist's adolescence with less regard for chronology than Quentin Tarantino, its tales stitched together by a collection of voice-mails and conversation recordings that are surely now quintessential to the hip-hop art form. The moral of our young protagonists' story is also played out through these scenes, first on ‘Sing About Me, I'm Dying of Thirst’, where Lamar encounters an elderly neighbour (Maya Angelou), who offers him baptism as the beginning of a new life. The wordsmith's mother also makes an appearance on the album's penultimate track, advising him to follow music and “tell his story”.

TPAB on the other hand, takes a more refreshing approach with tracks concluded by a spoken word poem – one which grows as Kendrick's journey through fame and racial politics goes on. Only on the final track is it read in its completed form, alongside an “interview” between Lamar and Tupac, sculpted from old interview clips and finally a second poem, this time fleshing out the metaphor of the inner butterfly – “talent...thoughtfulness” within a “prisoner of the streets”, who exploits his artistic streak to his advantage, with turmoil ensuing. While both interlude styles hem songs together effortlessly and deliver a message similar beyond coincidence, *TPAB* brings a more unique frame for its 16 tracks to the table, as well as allowing it to deliver its message more powerfully.

GKMC has an appeal that lies not so much



Criss-Cross! Everybody clap your hands! // Wikimedia

in pushing hip-hop's borders, but creating something original, intelligent, and catchy from its building blocks. Lamar's first major label release cruises over lush, dark samples, with addictively catchy rhythms and hooks that make it both an engrossing experience and a fitting backdrop for any party. With more typical, though nonetheless gorgeous, production than *TPAB*, the record is a fun and fascinating listen for hip-hop fans, instrumentals laced with detail (and a healthy helping of Outkast influence) that suit attentive listening as well as relaxation. Lyrically Kendrick had found the formula: flip a hip-hop trope on its head with a hook that sounds as if the trope were being followed. The results? Hits like ‘Swimming Pools (Drank)’, ‘Backseat Freestyle’, and ‘Bitch Don't Kill My Vibe’, earning the record triple platinum status.

GKMC's setting in Lamar's youth provides the perfect backdrop for him to critique everything from drinking culture to

rap's habit of impossibly hyperbolic braggadocio: “pray my dick get big as the Eiffel tower / so I can fuck the world for 72 hours”. While this leaves Kendrick open to criticism of having his message too easily missed, lines like “all I see is strobe lights blinding me in my hindsight” and “this is cul-de sac and plenty cognac and major pain” prove he has more than enough skill to eloquently balance catchiness with harsh reality.

TPAB is not without its shortcomings; critiqued for its self-indulgence, it's often dense. Abuzz with intense lyrics, complex harmonies, and rhythms with song structures that veer off into new territory without warning, this record can be challenging, even on repeated listens. Dense harmonies on tracks like ‘Alright’ and ‘Complexion (A Zulu Love)’ might centre their lyrics' reflection on black culture, but at the price of encumbering the grooves of the tracks. Contrastingly simple, raw tracks like ‘The Blacker the Berry’ and ‘i’ are more than welcome by the end of the

record.

In many ways it is good that Lamar has delivered his powerful message in two distinct and thoroughly cinematic masterpieces; fans of the catchy hooks of *GKMC* might not hear out *TPAB*'s seven-minute spoken word conclusion, while those enjoying the complexity of *TPAB* might not tolerate the simple riffs of bangers like ‘m.A.A.d City’. The constant between the two records is the man behind the mic – Kendrick Lamar whose myriad voices, dense rhymes, and ingenious wordplay never cease to amaze.

In my opinion however, *To Pimp A Butterfly* is simply a more compelling and original piece of art, achieving something completely unique on tracks like ‘u’, ‘For Sale?’, and a significant remainder of its track listing – as well as delivering its message more precisely. Earning it, in my eyes, a place at the top of Lamar's discography.

What's your album of the decade? Let us know at fmusic@ic.ac.uk

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Noonday Dream revisited: How one gig opened my

Released back in June 2018, Ben Howard's *Noonday Dream* was drastically unlike any of his previous works, dividing fans and critics alike. Initially panned by many (music writer Alex Large included) for its sombre and desolate tones, the album is a slow burner that has to be experienced live to be fully appreciated.

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NOONDAY DREAM



Artist: Ben Howard. **Label:** Island. **Top Tracks:** Nica Libres at Dusk; Towing the Line; What The Moon Does; Someone In The Doorway; Murmurations. **For Fans Of:** Bon Iver; Damien Rice; José González. *50 minutes*

Alex Large
Music Writer

Ben Howard has had an interesting change in sound throughout his releases. His debut, *Every Kingdom*, was full of uplifting indie-folk songs with sing-along choruses and a (generally) carefree tone. His next release, *The Burgh Island EP*, marked a change in mood hinted at by the cover art; these songs were darker, but the shift from naiveté to moodiness made the music more compelling; optimistic melodies and lyrics were replaced with moments of soul-bearing emotional potency which were far more exciting in their honesty and vulnerability.

His sophomore album, *I Forget Where We Were*, continued to eschew the light-hearted ballads that brought him fame, and again featured album art to broadcast this intention. The majority of the songs were dark and complex, yet kept accessible by

clear and well-crafted song structures and Ben's passionate, emotional delivery.

It was evident, therefore, that Ben had disavowed the upbeat tone of *Every Kingdom* that had brought him fame, and his biggest hits. The first trajectory of Ben's sound was from youthful innocence to a more mature, sombre tone, and *Noonday Dream* demonstrates a second shift: from extreme approachability, to a heavier sound made compelling by raw displays of emotion, and finally to a style that is far more reserved, less attention grabbing, and more difficult to appreciate on a first listen.

"Powerful lyrics which are at times abstract and poetic, at times direct and profound, but always sung with charming restraint"

Because of this unexpected change in accessibility, when I first listened to *Noonday Dream*, I was disappointed. I'd grown to expect melancholic

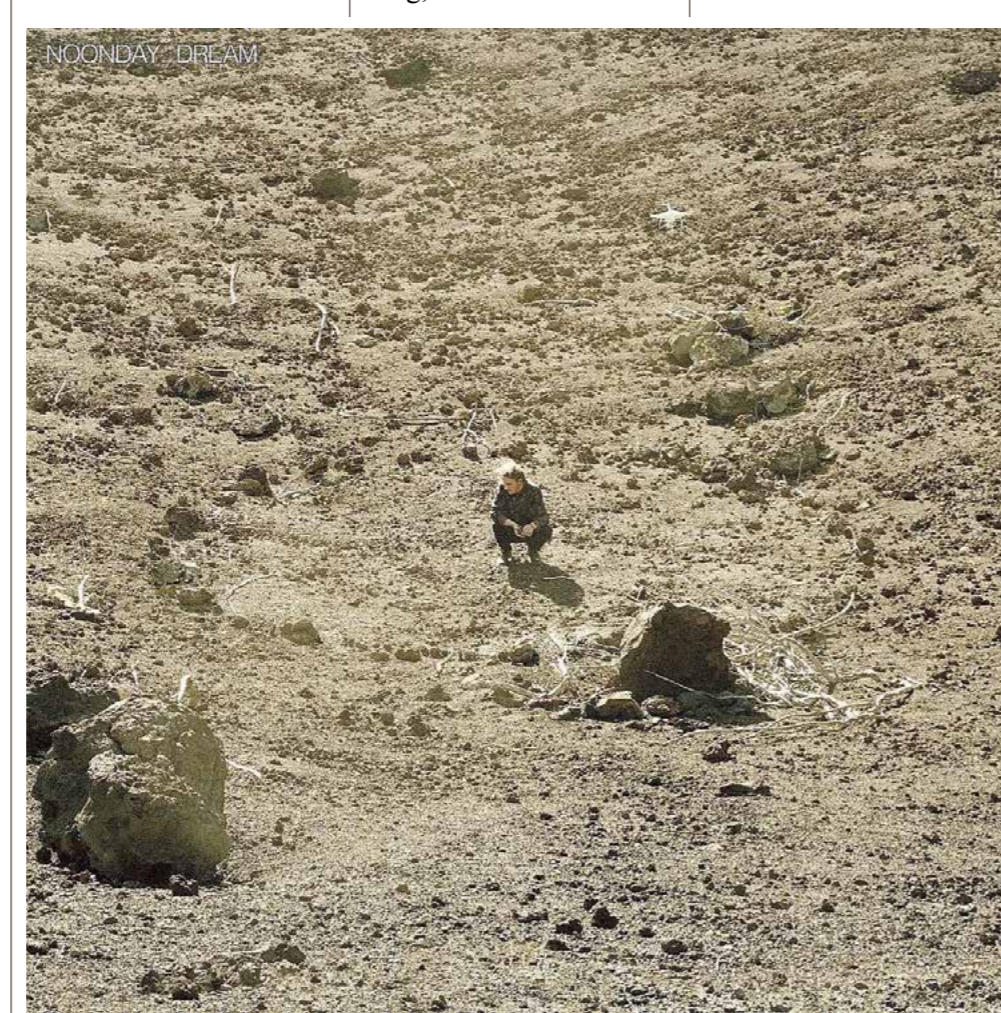
and desolate music that was still transparently emotive and direct, with clear melodies and song structures that could be parsed without requiring much focused attention. I shelved the album, thinking he had lost his passionate spark and gone oddly tame.

However, after attending a live show this January, the music clicked. These live performances were just as subtle and understated as their album counterparts, but the act of being present in the same room as the performer and his band, with full attention paid to the music, made their oblique beauty come to life. And the fact that Ben chose to play these songs almost exclusively struck me as brave, considering the marked difference in tone between them and the songs most of the crowd no doubt wished to hear. It was admirable that Ben stuck to his guns and didn't play a single sing-along hit that he must now see as childish, and demonstrates great faith in the new material.

With a newfound appreciation for both the music and Ben's artistry, I revisited the album, and found a veritable treasure trove of beauty. The simple, catchy choruses of *Every Kingdom* are gone, and so too are the dark, tormented screams of passion that provided many of the most potent moments from his previous album.

In their place are powerful lyrics which are at times abstract and poetic, at times direct and profound, but always sung with charming restraint. The instrumentals are softer, denser and more interesting than previous albums, with less reliance placed on a finger-picked guitar, and still contain moments of intensity that lend the album a good sense of pacing and variety.

The primary theme of this *Noonday Dream*, evidenced both in the newly restrained sound and Ben's lyrics, is an appreciation for the little things, for a quiet, modest life, more reminiscent of a well-travelled poet than a celebrity. The album art and promotional music video mirror this intention; on the cover, Ben is present, but his face is never visible. This rejection of fame was also apparent during the live show, where the spotlight was trained on Ben from behind, transforming him into an elusive silhouette.



Day after day, alone on a hill... // Island

A number of lyrics reflect Ben's newfound interest in simplicity and peace, enjoyment of the present, and an appreciation of nature. Like many profound things, these lyrics can seem simplistic and banal when read or stated plainly, but paired with the evocative music and Ben's sincere delivery, they often strike you as both aspirational and inspiring. From the opening track, 'Nica Libres at Dusk', the lyrics "Now I am older / I don't look over my shoulder / I know what is there in front of me" provide the emotional climax of the song, and demonstrate

Ben's newfound maturity and contentment with living in the present.

This opening track is fantastic because of the lyrics, but also because of the intense sonic disparity between verse and chorus. As the album opener, the verses are surprisingly unsettling, with an unrelenting guitar loop that refuses to shift, and the first line "Door is locked / My gums are bleeding", combining to create a disorientating, uneasy mood. However, this uncomfortable sound transforms with the chorus, becoming blissful and euphoric, and the preceding unease contributes greatly to the newfound feeling of salvation and safety.

After this comes 'Towing the Line', a quiet and understated song consisting primarily of Ben's vocals, a muted guitar, and subtle vocoder backing vocals. This track, which is somehow both delicate

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eyes to the full beauty of Ben Howard's latest album

and powerful, is followed by 'Boat To An Island On The Wall', a seven-minute odyssey which gradually builds, ending in a distorted guitar solo that provides an appreciated moment of heaviness in the track list.

'What The Moon Does' is another highlight (although almost every song is a highlight), and maintains the intensity that the previous song established with a driving and propulsive guitar lead. Lyrically, Ben reflects on the purpose of his music, and also demonstrates his newfound affinity for a simple life: "Feed the dog / Walk a mile / Most things now / Make me smile", may seem saccharine and reductive when read here, but is delivered with such sincerity that it becomes heart-warming.

The interlude track 'All Down The Mines' provides a 47 second breather after the again propulsive and danceable 'Someone In The Doorway', but also serves another purpose: to make the sudden, heavy

and noisy sound of the following track, 'The Defeat', even more arresting and powerful. Here, a distorted saxophone provides the backbone for a compelling and unsettling track that stands out in the list, providing paranoia and unease that contrasts well with the sincere and honest tone of the previous songs.

Following this intensity is another moment of quiet, 'A Boat To An Island Pt. 2 / Agatha's Song', which is the only track that the album could have done without. The ambient drone is pretty, but at just shy of 5 minutes it overstays its welcome, with a barely existent structure that makes the song vague and nebulous.

The final song, 'Murmurations', mirrors the first track by creating extreme beauty through dissonance, but this time the effect is even more powerful. The verses are incredibly odd and unsettling, with an evil-sounding drone and unsure, nervous singing. The verses evoke intense



Is that Kevin Parker in the background? // Wikimedia

feelings of unease, and, like 'Nice Libres', the choruses provide a contrast so gorgeous they feel transcendent, redemptive. Each chorus is short-lived, plunging the listener back into the darkness, before a final chorus brings you to the surface for good,

with extra layers of lush instrumentation and drums. Again, charming lyrics display Ben's appreciation for plainness and simplicity, sung in a triumphant and jubilant tone. "Missed the end of the world / And that was just fine / Saw my family for the holidays / And

we had a good time" is beautiful in its directness and understatement, and (again) the sincerity with which they are sung.

This album is poetic, restrained, gorgeous, and moving. It is incredibly admirable that, instead of following the hit-making, platinum-selling formula

apparent on *Every Kingdom* for producing radio-friendly ballads, Ben has developed a sound that reflects artistry and honesty, a sound which is more difficult, less direct, but strikes those who persevere with its unique, subtle beauty.



The designer baby debate

The Power To Control Your Own Evolution, with Robert Winston, Tom Whipple, Gunes Taylor and Inga Prokopenko.

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NeighbourHOOD Grammys 2019

Editor-in-Chief, Andy Djaba, is joined by the NeighbourHOOD Grammys Committee, Walé Osikomaiya, Jamell Samuels and Jamil Wallace, to bring you the most hotly anticipated awards show of the year, #HOODGrammys2019

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Andy Djaba
Editor-in-Chief

Album of the Year

Daytona

Pusha T

“It was written like Nas but it came from Quentin”



Daytona // Wikimedia

Nominations | *ASTROWORLD*, Travis Scott | *Invasion of Privacy*, Cardi B | *Black Panther*, Various Artists | *FM!*, Vince Staples | *Victory Lap*, Nipsey Hussle | *Book of Ryan*, Royce da 5'9"

ASTROWORLD marked Travis' graduation moment - when his music transcends hip-hop and receives mainstream recognition. However, for all the stellar curation that Travis offers, what this album lacks in bars will always prevent it from taking home Album of the Year. *Invasion of Privacy* represented an impressive debut and her Best Rap Album victory at the Grammys represents the latest fascinating development in her remarkable career. However, much like *ASTROWORLD*, what the album lacks in bars and pure lyrical,

rapping ability prevents it from taking home the HOOD Grammy.

Book of Ryan is an autobiographical masterpiece. The album is by no means perfect but Royce makes up for the shortcomings by weaving an introspective story of his life into every song.

With *Daytona*, Pusha T delivers a collection of timeless luxury raps, living up to the album's name. It's does what all the other albums in the 7-track G.O.O.D. Music roll out failed to do - making you want to re-up the album like your local Pusha re-ups on the pack. Production on the album has been crafted with the precision and brilliance we've seen from Kanye in the past. Here it's displayed in a continuous uniform state of one sample-based instrumental after the other. This, with Pusha's lyricism on the topic of the inner-workings and tribulations of drug dealing represent the essence of hip-hop, spanning from the Big Daddy Kane's to the Jay-Z's. Despite its brevity, *Daytona* is a worthy winner of Album of the Year

Honourable Shoutouts | *Swimming*, Mac Miller | *Nasir*, Nas

Swimming represented the latest development in Mac Miller's musical journey of maturing, which we had been following with each albums. It is a cruel shame that this journey was cut short by his tragic, untimely death. R.I.P. Mac.

Nasir is a testament to Nas' longevity within

the rap game. Although he has been rapping for a considerable amount of time, he is still able to deliver a solid project. The lyrics are deep and meaningful, resonating with the audience as he delivers his message.

Song of the Year

'SICKO MODE'

Travis Scott ft. Drake

“I did half a Xan, 13 hours 'til I land
Had me out like a light”



“Young La Flame, he in Sicko Mode” // Hip-Hop Wired

Nominations | ‘Mo Bamba’, Shek Wes | ‘God’s Plan’, Drake | ‘I Like It’, Cardi B

Although Cardi B's infectious party tune ‘I Like It’ and Shek Wes' ubiquitous white boy mosh pit anthem, ‘Mo Bamba’ were both solid tunes, this category came down to two standout smash hits - Drake's ‘God’s Plan’ and the Drake-assisted Travis Scott number one, ‘SICKO MODE’. Deciding between these two got pretty heated but in the end, since the Grammys awarded Drake with Best Rap Song ‘God’s Plan’ and it's still fuck the Grammys all day, the committee decided to award Young La Flame. ‘SICKO

MODE’ is a Drake and Travis-infused banger of epic proportions. Drake comes through with a new flow, fresh out of the OVO sweatshop. The use of distorted organs serves to give the track an eerie feel and the beat change adds to the track's unique flavour. Travis Scott serves as the orchestrator behind this track, bringing Drake and Swae Lee in with perfect timing.

Honourable Shoutouts | ‘Mob Ties’, Drake

‘Mob Ties’ is Drake's love letter to the cruddy lifestyle he wishes to embrace. He tried it with ‘Headlines’ and failed but, with ‘Mob Ties’, he has succeeded in adding a lavish touch to a lifestyle that few would understand.

R&B Album of the Year

My Dear Melancholy,

The Weeknd

“And I know right now that we're not talkin'
I hope you know this dick is still an option”



My Dear Melancholy, // Wikimedia

Nominations | *East Atlanta Love Letter*, 6LACK | *Lost & Found*,

Jorja Smith | *Isolation*, Kali Uchis

Kali Uchis' *Isolation* is a certified bop, however its pop-leaning sound meant it was difficult to categorise as R&B and even more difficult to justify as R&B Album of the Year.

Jorja Smith's *Lost & Found* is another excellent debut and would probably take home Debut Album of the Year, if not for Cardi B.

This category ultimately came down to 6LACK and The Weeknd and, despite The Weeknd's offering only being an EP, the committee had to go with the lightskin sensei supreme, Abel.

My Dear Melancholy, is The Weeknd in one of his rawest and most exposed forms to date. We see Abel's growth, not only as an artist, but as a person as he transitions from making music about partying, drugs etc. to having an EP solely dedicated to dealing with his feelings of heartbreak. It's a bittersweet moment to see ones sensei go through such feelings of turmoil, however it gives us an opportunity to view The Weeknd through a different lens, one that allows us to see his compassion and vulnerability, whilst also dissecting the negative aspects of how he deals with such emotion.

Honourable Shoutouts | *K.T.S.E.*, Teyana Taylor | *Suncity*, Khalid | *November*, SiR | *Lady Lady*, Masego

SiR's *November* is another smooth offering from TDE's resident male

R&B aficionado. It is a real shame that Teyana Taylor let Kanye West get his hands on her album because we suspect her vision for the project was far greater and her creativity was stifled by G.O.O.D. Music's strict seven-track regime.

Masego's *Lady Lady* is by far the smoothest listen of the year and, if it weren't for its neo-soul/jazzy instrumentation taking it out of the conversation for R&B Album of the Year, it would easily have swept up an award.

UK Song of the Year

'Homerton B'

Unknown T

“Baby, bend ya' back and then dig it”



“It's Unknown T, Homerton B” // iTunes

Nominations | ‘Jumpy (Remix)’, Ambush Buzzworl ft. Chip & Skepta | ‘Funky Friday’, Dave & Fredo | ‘Know Better’, Headie One ft. RV | ‘Options’, NSG

This year has been a stellar year for singles in the UK, with the seemingly ancient art of crafting an album being almost wholly abandoned by the scene in lieu of infectious drill and afro swing

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tunes. Headie One led the drill charge with ‘Know Better’.

Dave & Fredo had a massive achievement with their ‘Funky Friday’ banger, which made it to number one.

This category ultimately came down to a decision between Ambush Buzzworl's ‘Jumpy (Remix)’ and Unknown T. Although the award almost went to Ambush for his hypnotic “sweet one” ad-lib, Unknown T emerged victorious. ‘Homerton B’ is the only drill tune that you're allowed to catch a whine to at carnival and it not be weird.

Honourable Shoutouts | ‘Boasy’, Avelino | ‘Money Right’, Dizzee Rascal ft. Skepta | ‘Dancing Man’, J Hus

Free J Hus. J Hus needs to be free so that Summer can officially begin - the sun won't shine until the Bouff Daddy is free

R&B Song of the Year

'Call Out My Name'

The Weeknd

“Girl, why can't you wait 'til I fall out of love?”



“Call Out My Name” // IMDB

Nominations | ‘February 3rd’, Jorja Smith | ‘After The Storm’, Kali Uchis ft. Tyler, The Creator & Boots Collins | ‘Better’, Khalid | ‘Sorry’, 6LACK

‘Call Out My Name’ represented an anthem marking the return of The Weeknd that we have been missing. Who knew all it needed was for Abel to have his heart broken

for him to really enter his bag and give us the music that we deserve from him?

Ultimately, the award had to go to Gunna and Lil Baby. The dynamic duo and direct descendants of Young Thug join forces almost as well as Gohan and Trunks following the fusion dance in Dragonball Z to create one of the year's most infectious trap bangers. The two have seemingly learnt from the mistakes of Future and Young Thug before them and have made sure to join forces at the start of their careers, as their buzz is about to enter its most feverish hype. This union can only serve to improve their respective careers.

Collab Track of the Year

'Drip Too Hard'

Gunna & Lil Baby

“Drip too hard, don't stand too close
You gon' fuck around and drown off this wave”



Drip Too Hard // Dreddit Worldwide

Nominations | ‘Potato Salad’, ASAP Rocky & Tyler, The Creator | ‘Wow Freestyle’, Jay Rock ft. Kendrick Lamar | ‘Reborn’, KIDS SEE GHOSTS | ‘OTW’, Khalid ft. Ty Dolla Sign & 6LACK

This was the most hotly-contested category and proved the most difficult for us to reach a decision. To be honest, the winner of this category changes depending on mood.

ASAP and Tyler together create magic. We've seen it time and time again, they truly are a dream team and ‘Potato Salad’ is the latest proof of that. Let's hope the rumoured collab album proves to be true.

Jay Rock and Kendrick Lamar effortlessly swap bars on ‘Wow Freestyle’ and their chemistry is evident from start to finish.

Of this category, ‘OTW’ could be described as the only truly collaborative effort since it is the only track with more than two

contributors. The three R&B crooners join forces to craft some magic here.

Ultimately, the award had to go to Gunna and Lil Baby. The dynamic duo and direct descendants of Young Thug join forces almost as well as Gohan and Trunks following the fusion dance in Dragonball Z to create one of the year's most infectious trap bangers. The two have seemingly learnt from the mistakes of Future and Young Thug before them and have made sure to join forces at the start of their careers, as their buzz is about to enter its most feverish hype. This union can only serve to improve their respective careers.

Feature Verse of the Year

Jay Z - 'What's Free'

Championships, Meek Mill

“On God, it's off the head, this improv but it's no comedy
Sign I fail? Hell nah (Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha)”



“No red hat, don't Michael and Prince me and Ye” // YouTube

Nominations | Don Toliver - ‘CAN'T SAY’ [*ASTROWORLD*, Travis Scott] | J. Cole - ‘Off Deez’ [*DiCaprio 2*, J.I.D.] | Cardi B - ‘Backin’ It Up’ [Pardison Fontaine] | Drake - ‘Look Alive’ [Blocboy JB] | Joyner Lucas - ‘Lucky You’ [*Kamikaze*, Eminem], 2 Chainz - ‘X’ [*Black Panther*, Various Artists]

This was by far the easiest category to decide. If it weren't for Jay-Z dropping one of the best and most important verses of his career, trap newcomer Don Toliver (who has been described

as as Trap Michael Jackson, would have swept this category with his unique and almost disrespectfully hard verse on Travis Scott's ‘CAN'T SAY’. When someone is giving you a look with a guest spot on their album, you are not meant to come this hard. Especially if you are relatively unknown. Don Toliver doesn't care.

Drake had arguably the best feature run in 2018 and this was launched by his verse on Blocboy JB's ‘Look Alive’ at the top of the year. Drake did what Drake does - he floated on the beat and stole the song for himself, whilst simultaneously putting Blocboy JB on and catapulting the song into the top five. This has become a tried-and-tested formula almost as old as time itself and it shows no signs of failing any time soon.

J. Cole ran features in 2018, seemingly running a campaign to jump on every rapper's tune and murder every beat. This is unprecedented behaviour from rap's resident recluse but, after a lukewarm reception to his *K.O.D.* album, this was an easy way for him to remain relevant and keep his name in the conversation. Any number of J. Cole features could have been selected for this nomination but, in the end, it went to his verse on J.I.D.'s project. J. Cole impressed by keeping pace with the rapid spitter J.I.D. and dropping one of the bars of the year - ‘y'all n****s homonyms, sounding the same’. Mind blown.

Jay-Z's verse provides an insight into the concept of freedom, viewed from multiple perspectives, whether it be from a historical viewpoint of the Black American struggle, or a look at the current plight of the Black community. However, he adds a personal aspect to it as he journeys from these perspectives to how it personally affects him, his family and his friends. He

likens current machinations of the music industry to slavery, where artists are trapped in 360 deals which are not only difficult to get out of, but also take significant amounts of the artist's revenue, leaving them trapped in what is almost a perpetual cycle. He ends his verse demonstrating his resolve to be and remain free, mentioning his past and current escapades.

Honourable Shoutouts

| J. Cole - ‘a lot’ [*i am > i was*, 21 Savage] | J. Cole - ‘My Boy’ [*Free Lunch - EP*, Wale]

Newcomer of the Year

Lil Baby

“Wah-wah-wah, bitch I'm Lil Baby”



Lil Baby // Wikimedia

Nominations | Gunna | Blocboy JB | Shek Wes

Blocboy JB and Shek Wes both burst onto the scene with smash hits but their lack of sustained success through a debut project (Blocboy JB is yet to drop his debut and nobody was trying to hear Shek Wes' *Mudboy*) meant it would be difficult to justify them winning this category.

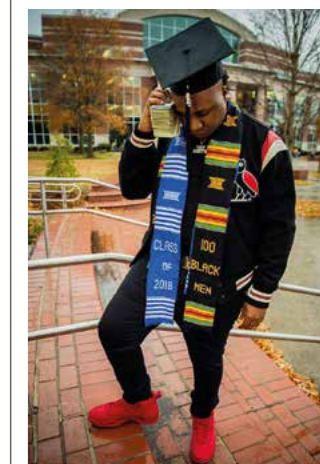
Therefore, this category ultimately came down to frequent collaborators Gunna and Lil Baby. It feels weird to have the two compete, especially when they work so much better together. Although Gunna had a stellar year fea-

tures-wise, the award has to go to Lil Baby, by virtue of the fact he dropped three solid projects in his breakthrough year.

Producer of the Year

Tay Keith

“Tay Keith, f*** these n****s up”



Tay Keith // The Source

Nominations | Kanye West | Metro Boomin | Wheezy | Boi1da | Murda Beatz

Although Boi1da, Murda Beatz and Wheezy held it down with solid production this year, there were three clear front-runners in this category - Metro Boomin, Kanye West and Tay Keith. Having had a stranglehold over the NeighbourHOOD Grammys Producer of the Year award since its inception four years ago, this year saw Metro Boomin's dominance start to wane. In a quiet year for Young Metro, he still managed to deliver a solid, nomination-worthy album in November's *NOT ALL HEROES WEAR CAPES*, which was enough to keep his name in the conversation. If we're keeping it 100, Kanye West deserves to win this category for the immense feat of producing five albums this summer. However, it's still fuck Donald Trump all day (word to YG) and Tay Keith is a worthy winner after fucking these n****s up all year.

ARTS

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The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name

Love is in the air at this romantic time of year but is it for everyone? This Valentine's Day, Arts writer Tesni Haddon-Macmillan considers repression of different forms of love through the ages.

ARTS

Tesni Haddon-Macmillan

Arts Writer

Love is perhaps the most integral and celebrated part of the human condition. People have been known to try to express and capture it since 800BC when the oldest recorded love poem was created in Mesopotamia. It is without question that love is a unique experience for all, and so countless artists have produced their own beautiful interpretations of it over the years. However, not all love was deemed to be acceptable for the eyes of the public, and waves of censorship have plagued the past.

Perhaps the most obvious repression is of homosexuality which was actually only decriminalised for men in the UK 52 years ago, and even after this, considered scandalous or taboo. The daring nature of art, though, meant that such legislation did not deter

gay artists from exploring their sexuality and they instead adopted sophisticated code and symbolism to relay their desires. Common symbols include the peacock feather and green carnations. These were worn by men to identify themselves without being caught, and were also famously included in pieces such as *Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon as Medieval Saints* by Edmund Dulac.

“not all love was deemed to be acceptable for the eyes of the public, and waves of censorship have plagued the past”

Another icon used to undermine censorship was drag performance. Andy Warhol, a gay man

himself, was a champion of the queer aesthetic and his bold representations of Marilyn Monroe as a pop drag queen, amongst others, was a true rebellion against the homophobic views of America.

Yet, the censorship, and even fear, of homosexuality is in no way limited to the 1900s; the rich history of queer art extends far into history and into the present day with surprising differences in views.

The Ancient Greeks produced a plethora of gay art and had a rather unique view of romantic relationships to other ancient cultures. We could go as far to say that same-sex attraction was revelled in, with often explicit scenes being depicted in pottery and other art forms. Most notable is the complex and emotional relationship between Achilles and Patroclus in Homer's *The Iliad*.

By contrast, records of lesbian relationships in Greek art and, in fact, generally are very sparse. We can only deduce their existence from the love poetry of Sappho and Plato's comments on women with 'female attachments'.

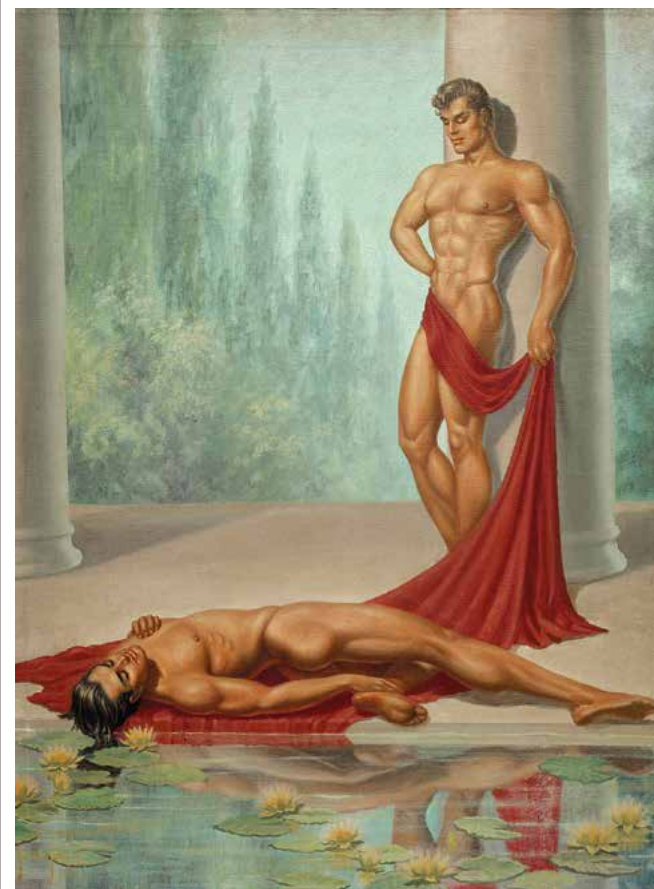
In the present, we would consider gay relationships to be commonly accepted but even recently, repression has been experienced in the art world. In 2010, the *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture* exhibition, considering the fluidity of gender and sexuality, was displayed in the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. Its presence actually sparked talk of a congressional review of the Smithsonian's funding and led to the removal of one of the pieces, *Fire in my Belly* by David Wojn-

arowicz- from the exhibition. Although it is evident that complete freedom of expression is still a fiction, other installations have aimed to represent such controversial themes and this includes Tate Britain's *Queer British Art (1861-1967)* in 2017.

Of course, gay and lesbian relationships are not the only supposedly 'non-traditional' relationships to have been considered distasteful. The plain absence of black relationships and interracial relationships is equally shocking and upsetting to acknowledge.

Black relationships, regardless of orientation or nature, are largely missing from art collections. The extent of this is captured perfectly in the 1992 painting *Slow Dance* by Kerry James Marshall, dubbed one of the greatest depictions of lovers in art by the Artsy database. It shows an intimate moment between an African-American couple as they enjoy a slow-dance in a living room surrounded by bright colours and swirling music notes. The mundane tone and simplicity of the scene stresses the normality of such images and cries out against racist attitudes. It has a clear mission to encourage such representation in the mainstream and this was revolutionary.

This act was taken further by Leslie Barlow to celebrate interracial relationships in her mixed media series *Loving*, created in 2015. This series is the namesake of the famous American court case of *Loving vs Virginia* in 1967, when the Supreme Court finally deemed anti-miscegenation (anti-interracial relations) laws to be



Idyll (1952) // George Quaintance

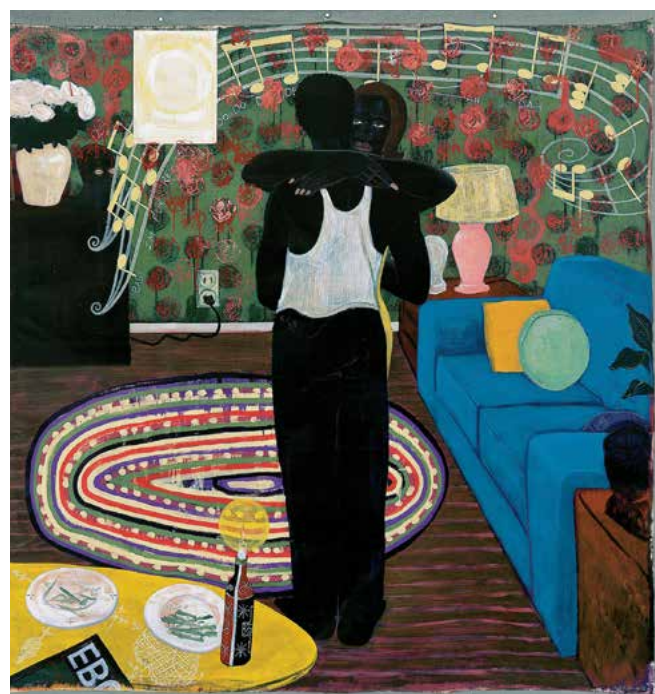
unconstitutional. To emphasise, it has been only 52 years since interracial marriage was legalised in the United States.

“Ultimately, art will find a way to conquer taboos and provide an outlet for lovers of all types”

As with Marshall, Barlow restricts her work to uneventful and commonplace scenes with the similarity that all of the scenes are harmonious, and the couples and families are happy. And this artist is not alone in

her efforts to correct public opinion of race through art. Donna Pinckley fights through her *Sticks and Stones* photo series. This project is powerful in its simplicity, capturing shots of interracial couples in muted black and white. With each picture is a caption containing a slur or insult used against the couple in question.

I could go on, but I believe the point has been made that love, although generally celebrated, is also villainised if not fitting societal ideas of 'normal'. Love is a personal experience that can be queer, interracial, open or otherwise seen to be unconventional but ultimately, art will find a way to conquer taboos and provide an outlet for lovers of all types.



Slow Dance (1992) // Kerry James Marshall

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Cougar at the Orange Tree Theatre

Sexual politics and climate change aren't two themes I'd naturally put together, but this play is proof that it works.

ARTS



Where? Orange Tree Theatre

When? Until 2nd March

How Much? From £15

Shivani Gangadia

Arts Writer

The title of Rose Lewenstein's play is not vague in any way – it triggers a very obvious association with the image of an older woman, presumably in her forties, seducing a younger man into an illicit sexual relationship. Leila, (Charlotte Randle), is a superficially powerful woman leading the way for corporate sustainability in the wake of climate change. She becomes lovers with a young bartender in his

twenties, John (Mike Noble), and pays to bring him along on her travels across the globe as she lectures corporate giants on the profitability of the "Green Agenda". Their time is limited to hotel rooms that blur together as the play progresses, becoming indistinguishable from one another, as do the cities they hop between.

It becomes clear that John is essentially a very expensive piece of luggage that Leila is lugging from country to country, and, though he begins to fall for her, she seems emotionally impenetrable. He is just a sexual object to her, refusing the intimacy he desires. The chaos within their relationship is mirrored both in the chaos of the outside world and the physical chaos of the set, which

is slowly demolished throughout the play.

"brilliantly acted and directed"

The actors have an effortless dynamic, and their wide emotional range is clear from Randle's depiction of a hypocritical Leila, jet-setting around the world as some sort of climate change warrior whilst trebling her salary and living a wasteful life of luxury, and Noble's transition from a contented, albeit disillusioned, guy to an unhinged, overly reliant lover.

Though brilliantly acted and directed, what is most remarkable is Lewenstein's choice of form: 80 short scenes in just 75 minutes, depicting



Mike Noble and Charlotte Randle as John and Leila // Orange Tree Theatre

frenzied non-linear snapshots of John and Leila's affair, and how it comes to fall apart. The dialogue flicks back and forth in time to repeat previous sentiments and lines, and the effect is enhanced by the use of lighting and movement. My closing piece of advice would

be not to be put off by the mediocre reviews this play is receiving (a surprise to me personally). It's a visually stimulating power play between the two characters. At its heart, this is a play about consumption, in all the different senses of the

word. As writer Rose Lewenstein powerfully puts it in a podcast with Orange Tree Theatre: "They are consuming the world, we are consuming the world, they are consuming each other, and the play is consuming them".

The Great Gatsby: An Immersive Experience

"There are only the pursued, the pursuing, the busy and the tired"

ARTS



Where? Gatsby's Drugstore

When? Until 28th July

How Much? From £29.25

Disha

Bandyopadhyay

Arts Writer

Not to brag, but I was seated personally by Jay Gatsby himself.

The Great Gatsby is a tragedy written by F. Scott Fitzgerald set in 1920s America where the wealthy squander their money, behaving recklessly, loving foolishly. The story centres around love triangles between a mysterious Jay Gatsby and a married (to a

cheating Tom Buchanan) Daisy Buchanan. They throw grand parties as facades to their unhappy lives, only to end in murder and suicide.

Though immersive theatre is always very interactive, the success of this show exceeded my expectations. I spent the entirety of the show skirting actors, hoping to not get called, but also curious enough to tail them from a safe distance and not miss out on the juicy drama.

Roaring twenties fashion doesn't exist in London now, for good reason. It's simply too cold, as was Gatsby's Drugstore. But amidst masking the shivering for jazz hands, the open bar throughout the show made the chills less uncomfortable. Gatsby's Drugstore is a shady derelict building, but with a charm capturing the hedonistic pleasures of the

1920s. Large dance floors, two bars, balcony, and other hidden rooms are left for the audience to roam through and explore, just like in a house party.

The chandeliers, sofas, and pianos scream ostentatious at the viewer, but

"capturing the hedonistic pleasures of the 1920s"

together with the atmosphere, I began to believe the absurdity of that lifestyle. In fact, I was a part of it.

Cast and audience were dressed alike in art deco style, making the line between reality and the fiction very thin. We learnt how to do the Charleston

dance with Miss Baker, and an audience member ranked the best dancers. Everyone was in character (but my hurt for not being chosen was real). Throughout the show, the arguing characters would storm off taking some of the audience with them, forming allies. Ms Baker dragged me and some other ladies to Daisy's room and we decided what she should wear to her tea with Gatsby (we had to settle for a white dress because Daisy's maid

"the active improvisations were a testament to the skills of the actors"

has no sense of style and didn't pack anything good enough).

The premise of the show is to transform and take the audience to the times of 1920s America for about 85 minutes. They did this very well, judging by some teary faces at Myrtle's funeral. What's even more special is that all your reactions and contributions matter and make a difference to the specifications of the story. The active improvisations were a testament to the skills of the actors, with special mention to Ivy Corbin (playing Jordan Baker) who clearly stole every scene with her glamorous persona.

For those Fitzgerald fans who are looking to appreciate the literature and the Daisy-Gatsby dream team, sadly this isn't a show for you. But for the Gatsby fandom who

want to be a part of the story, tickets are available till July.

Although you won't get to take photos until the very

"chandeliers, sofas and pianos scream ostentatious"

end ("phones in the 1920s would shock the people out of their minds"), the Charleston dance moves you learn will make you the suavest person during your next night out.

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Nerone and Poppea - Falling for the Villains

This Valentines Day, Arts Writer Maria Portela reflects on one of opera's great romances... how can we love the unlovable?

FORTUNE and VIRTUE: There is no human nor divine heart that may dare to contend with Love.

LOVE: Today in a single contest both of you, overthrown by me, will admit that the world acts on my commands. (Prologue)

ARTS

Maria Portela

Arts Writer

Literature, movies and plays are all filled with couples that we love to love. Be it with “happily ever after” fairy tales or tragic romances, we, as an audience, tend to be in favour of those characters who live their stories for the pursuit of love. We gladden when they meet, find ourselves wishing for their happiness, weep when tragedy pulls them apart, and excuse their flaws or poor choices with the righteousness of their motives. On the other hand, anyone who opposes our favourite fictional couples and threatens them being together is vicious and deserves punishment. There is an underlying assumption that someone who is capable of love must be a good person and, conversely, that the bad guys don't get to love and should suffer eternal loneliness instead.

The protagonists of

Monteverdi's opera *L'incoronazione di Poppea* seemingly defy all these conceptions. Both historical figures, Nerone (Italian for Nero) and Poppea are all but virtuous.

He was a Roman Emperor, known for matricide, extravagance and tyranny, chief suspect of the Great Fire that in 64 AD destroyed half of Rome, and the first serious persecutor of the newly-born Christian faith. She was an ambitious noblewoman, known for marrying her way to the title of Roman Empress and plotting the murder of everyone who opposed her along the way. Hardly your typical boy meets girl story...

“The truth is no one can resist a good love story, even if it is a wicked one”

Opera Profile

Name *L'incoronazione di Poppea*

Translation *Poppea's coronation*

Composer Claudio Monteverdi

Libretto Giovanni Busenello

Language Italian

Structure Prologue + 3 acts

Original production 1643 carnival season, Venice



Nerone (Philippe Jaroussky) and Poppea (Danielle De Niese) // Teatro Real, Madrid (2010)

During the course of the opera, which liberally condenses historical events from several years into a single day, we accompany the machinations that lead to Poppea's ascension to the throne. These include adultery, political intrigue, treachery, forced suicide, disguise, divorce and the exile of Nerone and Poppea's respective wedded partners. Of course, because we're talking of Baroque Opera, one or two mythological gods must make their appearance. Eventually, Poppea is crowned empress while divine choruses of Cupids and Graces dub her the goddess of beauty on earth, and Roman Consuls and Tribunes praise her sovereignty over “this happy empire”.

The opera ends with its most iconic musical number, a delicate duet where Nerone and Poppea pledge eternal love (see right).

This piece is often performed in concert halls, where it is easily

*Pur ti miro, pur ti godo,
pur ti stringo, pur t'annodo,
più non peno, più non moro,
o mia vita, o mio tesoro
Io son tua, tuo son io,
speme mia, dillo di.
Tu sei pur l'idolo mio,
sì, mio ben, sì, mio cuor, mia vita sì.*

*I behold you, I delight in you,
I press you, I tie you to me in a knot,
I no longer suffer, I no longer die,
O my life, O my treasure.
I am yours, you are mine,
my hope: say it, speak.*

You are my idol, my beloved, yes, my heart, yes, my life.

(Act 3, Scene 8
- Finale)

regarded simply as a beautiful love song. But when we analyse it within the broader context of the opera, our collective “audience morality” becomes at stake. Because we have just seen (for the past two hours!) how terrible those people two are, and yet, their song somehow captivates us. We hate their tyrannic habits and we know from History that they turned out to be even crueller than the opera portrays them. Roman historians claim that real life Nerone kicked a pregnant Poppea to death, a mere three years after marrying her: how's that for true love!? But yet, in those brief moments, we pick their side and secretly wish for

“Are we falling for the bad guys?”

their happiness. Secretly, because as much as we hate it, we love those

villains!

The truth is no one can resist a good love story, even if it is a wicked one. As *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* proves, this can be achieved by a trick as simple as changing the lens through which the story is told. By focusing on evil characters, this opera makes them more relatable and thus more deserving of experiencing every facet of human life.

As we learn their motives, we tend to read their deeds at a more favourable light. No, we don't forgive them. But we might concede that everyone should have a chance to love and to be loved, no matter how reprehensible their actions are. Maybe Monteverdi is right, and the world does act on Love's commands...

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Dior: Designer of Dreams

Enter a dream world of elegance and glamour

ARTS



Where? V&A

When? 2nd Feb - 14th Jul

How Much? £20; £15 students

Claire Chan

Arts Editor

In the world today, haute couture is one of the last repositories of the marvellous,' said Christian Dior in 1957. The dresses of the House of Dior combine fantasy and futurism – the exoticism of far-flung countries, the allure of delicate flowers, and the old-world grandeur of eras long past. It is not merely a dress that is sold to us, but a dream; not just an everyday garment to be worn, but a rare piece of 'ephemeral architecture'.

This February, the V&A plays host to the largest retrospective of the House of Dior ever seen in the UK. Spanning from Christian Dior's first collection in 1947 to the work of current creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri, it features over 200 hand-stitched

garments drawn from both the Dior archives and the collections of the V&A.

The exhibition opens with none other than Dior's Bar Suit, an emblem of his revolutionary 'New Look'. Presented in his debut collection, the ultra-feminine silhouette with its cinched waist and full skirt was a radical departure from the austere, utilitarian look of the postwar period. Its unapologetic decadence – a single dress requiring yards of fabric to create – sparked protests and took 1950s Paris by storm.

This explosive start is but the opener to eleven carefully-curated rooms of Dior design, all exquisitely presented in immersive sets designed by Nathalie Crinière. The second room, for instance, showcases dresses that Dior designed over the course of his career. It is strikingly presented: the entire room is dark, leaving the focus squarely on the dresses, each enclosed within a mirrored box and lit by the soft glow of fluorescent light.

While many of the pieces were showcased at the *Musée des Arts Déco-*



'A ballgown is your dream, and it must make you a dream' - Christian Dior // Adrien Dirand

ratifs in Paris last year, the London exhibition is much altered from its Paris rendition. V&A curator Oriole Cullen shows off Dior's ties to Britain with a section dedicated to exploring his self-confessed Anglophilia. Prominently displayed here is the extravagant off-shoulder dress famously worn by Princess Margaret on her 21st birthday, as well as dresses worn by fashionable English clients such as Nancy Mitford and

Margot Fonteyn.

Of course, this exhibition is not just about Christian Dior alone. Beyond the first few rooms, the designs of the man himself are seamlessly blended with those of the six creative designers who succeeded him. We view the dresses by themes that have inspired each successive generation of designers: flowers, 18th century court fashion, cultures from around the world. Yves Saint Laurent, Gianfranco Ferré, John Galliano... all brilliant designers in their own right. An entire room gives us the opportunity to see their individual interpretations of the Dior style, displaying dresses by each of the designers alongside quotes and a brief biography.

Crinière's sets continue to amaze, with 'The Garden' room featuring delicate paper sprays of wisteria cascading from the ceiling, and 'Diorama' showing off an impressive colour-coded cabinet of shoes, bags and tiny scale models of iconic dresses. The oft-forgotten ateliers get a look-in too, with a floor-to-ceiling display of white linen *toiles* (dress

prototypes) used in the making of actual Dior pieces.

But the best is saved for last. At the end of the exhibition, we enter a dazzling grand ballroom. Elegantly dressed mannequins stand in groups around us, decked out in the unashamedly opulent imagination of Dior designers from past to present. Mirrors multiply

"A beautifully curated, comprehensive look into the world of Dior"

their images infinitely, so that we feel like we're actually at a ball, surrounded by beautiful people in their beautiful gowns. From Dior's multi-petalled *Junon* (1949) to Galliano's *Silvery Water Harlequin* (1998) and more recent ballgowns worn by celebrities on the red carpet, they stand proudly under an ever-changing ceiling – one moment the deep blue of a starry sky, the

next a Renaissance fresco bathed in golden light. It speaks to the timelessness of Dior's designs.

This is a theme underscored by the final dress, a delicate confection of pleated silk tulle entitled *Eventail de vos hasards* (Fan of Your Chances). Created by Chiuri for the Shanghai presentation of her Summer 2018 collection, it was in fact inspired by a handpainted fan designed by Dior himself in 1950. Like the fan, the dress too bears his signature: a connection from past to present. From the iconic Bar Suit all the way to the halls of Shanghai, the Dior style has remained a classic in the ever-evolving world of fashion.

Dior: Designer of Dreams provides a beautifully curated, comprehensive look into the world of the renowned designer. The crowds flocking to the Sainsbury wing are a testament to his enduring legacy. With the V&A just minutes from Imperial, why not take a break from the dreary world of lectures? Step into Dior's dream world of elegance and glamour, if only for a little while.



The Dior Line // Adrien Dirand

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Dark Laughs from 'Pinter 7'

'A Slight Ache' and 'The Dumb Waiter' explore dark themes of fear and betrayal with a light-hearted humour that charms audiences.

ARTS



Where? The Pinter Theatre
When? Until 23rd Feb
How Much? From £15

Tesni Haddon-McMillan

Arts Writer

I write these first words at 10pm, having just made it back from 'Pinter 7'. It seems that I'd have to at least make a start on my article now, not for issues of time but to capture feeling while it is still strong, for what is the point of art if not to inspire feeling?

I've left with a sense of satisfaction and excitement. The current instalment of the 'Pinter at the Pinter' series is engaging and cleverly

humorous, complete with an all-star cast and unique narratives.

Without giving too much away, the conclusions of both short plays within this performance - 'A Slight Ache' and 'The Dumb Waiter' - were powerful and thought-provoking.

The performance begins with 'A Slight Ache', a radio play focused on a respectable couple, Flora (Gemma Whelan) and Edward (John Heffernan) and their different, emotional reactions to the appearance of a strange match-seller. As a radio play, the stage is set in a recording studio, but the audience is rapidly transported to the home of Edward and Flora, their flowering garden and their domestic lives. The play sits somewhere between the studio and this house, with Whelan and Hef-

fernan dipping between being Edward and Flora and simply reciting lines in the studio. The studio is a powerful tool throughout the story, with props being actively used. The use of sound props - like gravel for the garden path - is particularly immersive and, through contrasting tones and timely entrances, add a further comic element to that of the characters themselves.

Flora reacts with kindness towards the match-seller and this is in complete contrast to the paranoid panic of Edward, who goes as far as to invite him into confrontation. This fear comes with 'a slight ache' in Edward's eyes, a recurring issue in the play and source of constant tension.

Upon the disturbing end of this first performance, the stage quite literally

switches to a completely new setting, a bare, grey room. Within this place are two men, Gus (Martin Freeman) and Ben (Danny Dyer). Through various hints, we eventually learn that these two men are hired killers, waiting for a call that their target has arrived in the building.

The scenario quickly becomes comical when a dumb waiter begins to send down orders for various delicacies Gus and Ben are unsurprisingly, unable to source. This play, 'The Dumb Waiter', is in contrast to the first when it comes to dramatic technique: light and sound are used sparingly and there is a heavy reliance on the conversations between Gus and Ben. This pays off beautifully, delivering a captivating performance and building a true fondness for the



Calm down Dr Watson!// Marc Brenner

pair in a very short time. Where the two plays are similar is in their dissent into tension and chaos; as the hour grows later, stress boils over but still, throughout, the comedy is upheld; honestly, hearing Freeman angrily shout 'scampi!' in the middle of an argument is a highlight of theatre itself.

The contrast between the humour and dark

themes of 'Pinter 7' is masterfully delivered by talented actors and a real hit with audiences. The theatre echoed with the gasps of awed patrons as the curtain fell and that itself should speak volumes of the skill of both Jamie Lloyd's direction of the shows and, of course, Harold Pinter himself.

Folk tales of an anti-facist working-class hero

ARTS



Where? Southbank Centre
When? 8th- 10th Feb

Calvin Nesbitt

Arts Writer

Whilst living in Scotland I learnt that there are a few better ways to spend a cold Tuesday night than in one of the many folk bars dotted throughout the country. Here, in the warm atmosphere of ale and brown wood, musicians walk in and out, playing freely, supping from their pints, waxing lyrics and giving life to tales both old and new. Last Saturday night, I couldn't help but reminisce these jovial

nights as the Young'uns presented, sang, and recalled The Ballad of Johnny Longstaff. This is a tale in the most honest meaning of the word, one of oral tradition, the kind passed from generation to generation, kept as an heirloom to be repeated in pubs across the land. Teeside Folk extraordinaires the Young'uns keep true to this tradition, despite the formality of the Southbank Centre stage. Using little more than their voices, interview fragments, and the occasional instrument, they give life to the show's star: Johnny Longstaff.

Longstaff's story, which the Young'uns themselves heard from Longstaff's son at a show, is one that deserves to stand the test of time and be recollected again and again. A young man

walking from Stockon-on-Tees to London in desperation of something to eat and somewhere to work, Longstaff soon found himself in the middle of the unionised workers of the time. This is becomes the background for the show's central focus, that of Longstaff fighting against Franco during the civil war between the republicans and nationalists of Spain. It is a show that is remarkable in many ways. The first being the sheer variety of enthralling British interwar history that is recollected, all with Longstaff at the centre.

Upon your return home from the show you'll find yourself on your laptop looking up the Battle of Cable Street, Oswald Mosley, Hunger marches and "How can I learn to sing like the Young'uns?".



The Young'uns perform// Southbank Centre

For here, recollection is not just spoken word, but also ballads, chants and a hilarious ditty or two. The talent of the singing trio that form the Young'uns can't be understated. Whether it be acappella or with musical backing, their stunningly crisp voices echo and give warmth to Longstaff's story. In between songs or

narration, the stage centre lights up for Longstaff to give fragmental accounts of his past. These, along with the occasional projected photo, help ground the singing in reality which ironically leaves one in a further state of disbelief as the story unfolds. Moving moments are plenty here, so tissues for tears (both of joy and sadness) will

be needed. Longstaff, his friends, and the estimated thirty thousand volunteers who fought against fascism in the International Brigades need their story to be spoken - here the Young'uns have truly done it justice. My only regret being I wasn't able to hear the tale in the warmth of an Edinburgh bar.

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Surreal and beautiful: The Good Person of Szechwan

Brecht's political commentary, boldly executed

ARTS

**Where?** Barbican**When?** Ran 8-9 Feb**How Much?** From £15 with Young Barbican**Claire Chan***Arts Editor*

How can a good person survive in a world which is intrinsically evil? This is the question Bertolt Brecht poses to us in his play *The Good Person of Szechwan*. Set in Sichuan, it tells the story of how the gods reward a poor prostitute Shen Te, 'the only good person in the city', with enough money to buy a small tobacco shop. Unfortunately, Shen Te's kindness is immediately exploited by all and sundry, so that she is forced to invent an alter ego – her straight-talking, merciless cousin Shui Ta – to restore order and rescue the business. Despite her reluctance to bring out Shui Ta, 'he' has to stay for ever-increasing periods of time, eventually subsuming the virtuous Shen Te. There is, after all, no place for the good in a world such as ours.

For those unfamiliar with Brecht, the German playwright was best

known for his 'epic theatre', highly political theatre that aimed to get the viewer to think critically about contemporary issues. He popularised the *Verfremdungseffekt* ('estrangement effect'): by constantly breaking the fourth wall, audiences were prevented from immersing themselves in the events of the play, forcing them to think critically about what was being presented on stage. Brecht went so far with the 'V-effect' as to read stage directions out loud, hold up placards to indicate subtext, and rearrange the set and lighting in full view of the audience.

While highly influential in concept, his plays

"Ambitious in scope and buzzing with energy"

are rarely performed in full nowadays for obvious reasons – people aren't very fond of going to theatres to be lectured.

Yury Butusov's exuberant rendition of *The Good Person of Szechwan* breathes fresh life into Brecht's parable-play. Ambitious in scope and buzzing with energy, his direction has the talented actors of the Moscow

Pushkin Drama Theatre singing, dancing, and even riding bicycles across stage. The acting is at times hilarious, at times touching, but always fierce. Butusov achieves the V-effect not by stripping the play of its entertainment value, but rather by kicking it up to eleven and sprinkling on a touch of the surreal. A three-hour long play in German and Russian really shouldn't be this enjoyable. Part vaudeville act, part oratorical play, Butusov manages to make Brechtian theatre both entertaining and highly accessible.

In true Brechtian fashion, the set designed by Alexander Shiskin contributes to the sense of disconnect between audience and actors. Elements of the set are scattered loosely about the stage and picked up as necessary to play their part in different scenes. A single door stands in for an entire house; microphones stand ready for the cast to grab when they burst into song. Gigantic images, thematically related to what's happening on stage, are projected darkly on the back screen. A nod to Brechtian placard-holding, but so subtle that you don't notice till you look up and it's suddenly there.

This being a theatre company from Moscow, the play itself is in Russian, but the original German songs by Paul Dessau are kept. The German pronunciation occasionally leaves something to be desired, but thank goodness for English subtitles! Musical director Igor Gorsky has a lot on his plate: not just Dessau's German songs, but an entire soundtrack of jazz numbers, revues and rock music which all enliven the play.

Miss Mi Tzu (Irina



A cruel world requires us to be cruel ourselves // Viktoria Lebedeva

Petrova), Shen Te's upper-class landlady, has a hilarious theme song that plays whenever she minces across the stage, while the leather-clad policeman (Aleksey Rakhmanov) belts out his lines like a rock star from the '70s. Lively jazz sets the scene for wild cavorting by the local ne'er-do-wells, who all want a piece of Shen Te's newfound wealth; meanwhile, Ryuichi Sakamoto's aching 'Merry

"Lavish staging, awash with beautiful, surreal images"

Christmas Mr Lawrence' is played when Shen Te falls in love with her pilot (who sadly, like the rest, only wants to exploit her). This is all manfully carried out by a four-person live band who are a constant presence on stage throughout the play, and should really be credited in the programme.

The staging is lavish, awash with beautiful, surreal images. Wong, the water-seller (Alexander Matrosov), frequently and

symbolically makes use of dry sand. Rice rains from the sky as a god rides a bicycle through a forest of gaunt trees. Shen Te (Alexandra Ursulyak) converses with her alter ego Shui Ta who, improbably, is walking calmly on a treadmill in the middle of a forest. In one of the most dramatic scenes, empty cigarette packets rain down like gold, while Shen Te, alone on stage but for a full-length mirror, confronts her own reflected image.

Duality is a major theme of the play, and Ursulyak plays both sides of her character with aplomb. It is easy to see the conflict between her good-hearted nature and her inability to survive while being true to herself; the harsh reality of Brecht's world inexorably crushes the goodness out of her. Matrosov as the destitute water-seller alternates between a pitiful cripple and a sort of messenger to the gods. The three gods here are ingeniously replaced by a single actress (Anastasia Lebedeva) who appears thrice in different incarnations, all equally enigmatic.

Butusov's compelling production makes us laugh, but also forces us to think. When Brecht wrote

his play in 1941, war was breaking out around the world. Just months after the first performance of *The Good Person of Szechwan*, the United States would formally declare war on Japan in response to the attack on Pearl Harbour. Events today are not quite as bleak, but it is a question worth considering in any era. Is our world so cruel that there is no place for a good person in it? Either they must go mad, as with Prince Myshkin in Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, or they must turn evil themselves, as with Shen Te.

When called upon, the gods prove to be useless, and Brecht turns to the audience to demand an answer for our paradoxical world. Butusov condenses Brecht's final call to action into a single, powerful word from Shen Te: 'help!'

While the Moscow Pushkin Drama Theatre has sadly left London, they will be back again in June, this time to perform Francis Beaumont's 17th century parody 'The Knight of the Burning Pestle'. As this brief visit has demonstrated, their irrepressible verve and energy are sure to make it relevant for modern times.



No room for love // Viktoria Lebedeva

ICHC Presents: Life on Mars
20th February 21:00 - 21st February 03:00



BOOKS

books.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Left Off the Shelf

Despite increasing diversity in many industries, the literary scene is still white-dominated. Books writer Rahul Mehta explores the reasons why and what we can do about it.

BOOKS

Rahul Mehta
Books Writer

Despite the power of prose and verse to drag us from our seat on the Tube (or grim university flat) to the Victorian slums or outer sectors of the Galactic Empire, British literature is still being held back. While the characters in books transcend time and space, the non-fictional people who write and publish the books suffer far greater restrictions in terms of diversity.

The data is damning. The 'Writing The Future' report into

diversity in the literary world was published in 2015, and it made for stark reading. At the time, only 4% of guests at literary festivals were from a black, Asian, or minority ethnic (BAME) background. Malorie Blackman, author of the young adult novel series *Noughts and Crosses* and co-author of the report, lamented a decline in representation at these events. Rianna Walcott is the co-editor of *The Colour Of Madness*, a literary anthology about BAME mental health. She speaks of a notable absence of people of colour on discussion panels at literary events. Perhaps that's unsurprising, considering that no books written by ethnic minorities were recommended for

World Book Day, nor World Book Night. It seems that the 'World' does not extend beyond the West's shores. In fairness, the event organisers complained that no publisher had put forward any books by writers of colour. No wonder, when BAME writers struggle to even start their literary careers, with 53% of this group without an agent, compared to 37% of white authors. Thus, the lack of diversity at literary festivals is really only the tip of the iceberg - the issue of diversity permeates every level of publishing.

So how do we respond to poor representation across the literary board? We can develop our own spaces. The Jhalak Prize for books by writers of colour offers such a platform for growth, offering a £1000 prize for the winner. The 2018 winner, Reni Eddo-Lodge, was shortlisted for other awards for her book, *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race*. For those not fortunate enough to win the prize, there are other funding options. Nikesh Shukla, editor and contributor to *The Good Immigrant*, a collection of essays by Brits from immigrant communities, reached 204% of his funding target through the crowd-funding publisher, Unbound. Whether it's recognition or resources, there is always the option of finding support through one's communities.

However, prizes and crowd-funding carry their own problems.



How do we increase diversity in an equitable manner that neither punishes white authors, nor fetishises BAME authors // Bad Blogger

Nikesh Shukla fears that his "skin colour is being seen as a trend and not something that's about a societal good". Are these initiatives performative virtue-signalling by newly 'woke' corporations, or affirmative action? For comedienne Shappi Khorsandi, the idea of attaching a price to one's skin colour led to her withdrawing her submission for the Jhalak Prize. Tokenism extends beyond concerns about perceived success. In the 'Writing the Future' report, several authors complained about being expected to write solely about their race, and specifically through a colonial lens. One author spoke of how, after refusing to write about the British Raj and racial deference of the governess-high maharajah dynamic, she resorted to approaching publishers in India. Her book was subsequently published and enjoyed

success. This dubious notion of authenticity perpetuates stereotypes and restricts the inclusion of new voices. But, how do we increase diversity in an equitable manner that neither punishes white authors, nor fetishises BAME authors, and still ensures that our society remains a thriving community of literature?

The report's recommendation sums it up best. The authors advocate for a greater recruitment drive, allowing people of colour to take up managerial positions. In doing so, the gatekeepers of the literary world would be more open to a diverse range of submissions. In the meantime, publishing bodies can undergo audits to identify cultural bias in their selection process. Beyond the recommendations, grants and interest-free loans can

help working-class ethnic minorities to pursue literary careers. Penguin Random House offers 6-month internships to ethnic minority applicants, with Faber, Harper Collins, and Hachette following suit. While only 4% of children books have BAME characters, there is still hope for improvement. In the last 3 years, BAME staff have increased from 8% to 12% in publishing spaces. Books can be a place of refuge, education, and solidarity. As the wise, ever-quotable James Baldwin said: "You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read". I can think of no better reason than that to bring more voices to the fore.

BOOKS

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The Colour of Madness - "This cannot be a conclusion. It is closer to a beginning."

Rianna Walcott, 24, is currently studying a PhD in Digital Humanities at King's College, London. Her work is on black digital identity formation across the diaspora. She is co-editor of *The Colour Of Madness*, a literary anthology about BAME mental health, alongside Dr Samara Linton. Here she chats to Books writer Rahul Mehta about her work.

BOOKS

Rahul Mehta
Books Writer

Rahul Mehta: Where did the idea for *The Colour of Madness* come from?

Rianna Walcott: I was giving a talk in Edinburgh about mental health in the creative industry, and I was the only black woman on the panel. People seemed interested in my perspective, and I was approached by my future publisher. She suggested an anthology dedicated to BAME experiences of mental health.

It was definitely a BAME-led project: by us, for us, about us. My co-editor, Samara, had written as a journalist and an academic about black mental health, so we came in with both personal and formal experience on writing about mental health.

How did you plan and organise your vision?

We started with seeking funding. It was largely crowd-funded, with some funds coming from the publisher and creative arts funding. Samara and I handled the publicity in BAME spaces. Most of the press about our book was by women of colour in their spaces: Media Di-

versified, gal-dem, *Black Ballad*. We also featured in *The Guardian*, the *Metro*, and the BBC. But first of all, we wanted it to be in the hands of people of colour.

We had Facebook focus groups with over 100 individuals. Samara and I held brainstorming sessions about the book's design and organised a large digital campaign to get submissions. We went beyond academic spaces: we went to service-user led charities, to find people of different backgrounds.

Were you informed by personal experiences of mental health?

Everyone on the team had some experience of mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety. This was not just an outside interest. In Samara's case, she was able to see things as a patient AND a practitioner. The reason we make such a good partnership is because she has the medical background while I have the literary background (*Rianna has an undergraduate and Masters degree in English Literature*).

I'm impressed by the diversity of voices in the book.

The book reflects who is most comfortable talking about their mental health. For example, we

had tons of submissions from black and Asian women, but barely any from black and Asian men. Male contributors tend to be practitioners (e.g. Asian doctors), or LGBT+. Most contributors were second or third generation immigrants.

But we have lots of people across different intersections. This highlights the diversity in spaces like the black community, e.g. the difference between those of African and Caribbean descent. It brings a lot of nuance that is missing from the conversation.

What was your biggest obstacle?

Money! We are all novices to this, and no one could have known the demand would be this high. We have had four print runs (unheard of in small print press). We have grown from our mistakes and learned a lot from the publishing process.

One funny thing is that a lot of white men submitted, some even pretending to be BAME. We'd respond by pointing them to our Patreon. If you're not going to support us with coin, then what are you doing?

What's your best memory?

People coming up to us at our events, in tears,



Rianna Walcott // Jessica Brough

because of how much it means to them. A contributor will be reading their piece at an event, and someone in the audience will begin to weep a little bit. This is the first time that someone has been able to say this out loud, the first time that someone has been seen. It's been an incredible privilege to facilitate that.

You recently said: "This cannot be a conclusion. It is closer to a beginning." What is your plan for the book?

We want to build on previous achievements. It's on a university's syllabus; someone even took it into Parliament!

We want to see it everywhere, so that everyone understands that our experiences are unique. The book is the tip of the iceberg though, with only 58 perspectives. Imagine how many millions more there are!

FILM

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Memory Loss, Chopping off fingers, and Erotic musical numbers: A Perfect Valentine Trio

After the dust settles from your Valentines dates, cuddle up with your new boo or alone with a tub of phish food and spend this weekend in front of the tv indulging in these slightly unconventional Valentines movies

FILM

Aidan Chan
Sung Soo Moon
Mikhail Demtchenko
Film Editors

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

of your life as a pair or just staying together for the kids.

Pushing the boundaries of conventional rom-coms, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* juggles romance, comedy and science fiction. We meet Joel and Clementine through an awkward but sweet meet-cute on a train. The pair immediately gets on, and romance surely ensues. But there's a snag. Although we've been introduced to all the

necessary ingredients for a blossoming romance, there is more to this recipe under the surface.

This is not your common-or-garden rom-com. What follows is a twisty drama framed like a psychological thriller, dealing with themes of memory and identity. The two leads, Jim Carey and Kate Winslet, are excellent and breathe life into the wonderfully written characters. Charlie Kaufman's imaginative script

embodies the energy of a five-year old, and is complemented by Michel Gondry's surrealist direction. All these elements come together to produce a perfectly balanced wholesome and insightful take on relationships.

Valentine's Day may be over, but be sure to check out *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. It'll make your latest date seem like your very first.

-SSM

Available on Netflix



Zzz... // Focus Features

This is the season of romance! Whether you're looking for a film for your next night in with your significant other, or to drown the bitter feeling of rejection, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* is surely the answer. It's a film that's suitable for all couples, whether you're on the first chapter



Oi! Did you wash your hands first? // Sony Pictures

The Handmaiden

Long time fans of Felix Film will no doubt have seen *The Handmaiden* crop up multiple times before, and for very good reason. It is hard not to find an excuse to recommend this movie. Especially at this lovey dovey time, singles, couples and more alike should look no further than settling into your comfy spots and diving in.

This movie is a myriad of achievements, one of Park Chan Wook's finest accomplishments: the stunning beauty portrayed by the camera work and editing, accompanied by a score which perfectly complements and accents every single meticulously-taken shot.

The four lead characters feel like the only four characters in the movie due to their on-

screen presence and scene-stealing emotion at every step, which works greatly to its favour. The power dynamics, the intricate relationships, the secrets, the deception, the love, the loathing are all so well presented throughout, with the body language really shining through. The romance in the movie is spectacular, with characters fleshed out into genuine human beings with real emotions for each other, which has recently been getting

harder to come by with romance.

This is wrapped up with a very tight plot, which never stops twisting, turning, and drawing you in, split into three acts. These make extremely good breathers, making the very intense plot and the longer runtime, less intimidating.

Seriously, this movie brings romance, thrills, dark humour, eroticism, twists, beauty and more, it is not to be missed. -MD
Available on Amazon Prime

Moulin Rouge!

Ambitiously directed by Baz Luhrmann, *Moulin Rouge!* is one of the most extravagant musicals ever put on screen. Admittedly, the frequent explosions of music and colour might be too overwhelming for some. Especially, the first 30 minutes of the film, which is an assault on all senses, and does need

some time getting used to. However, afterwards, the film becomes a poignant, epic, and totally unforgettable love story between Satine and Christian, brilliantly brought to life by Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor respectively. *Moulin Rouge!* is a compilation of classic love story tropes: The beautiful girl, the poor boy, and the rich villain.

However, the presentation of these elements is utterly original. This is shown in its music as well. The *Elephant Love Medley* is a novel and romantic repackaging of the most cliché love songs, and *El Tango de Roxanne*, in my opinion, formulates one of the most captivating, striking and heart-stopping musical sequences ever made.

So, this weekend, sit back and relax, and witness the magnificence,

the romance, and the utter chaos that is *Moulin Rouge!* -AC

Available on for very cheap, or "unofficial" streaming.

For all inquires send your Valentines cards to ffilm@ic.ac.uk, or Felix office, Beit West Basement. For all complaints, see nearest bin. Happy Valentines from the Felix Film team and remember, "The truest love, is the love of film" -SK 2019



Only 128 minutes to learn "voulez-v..." // 20th Century Fox 24

Use your voice



#icuelections

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GAMES

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Resident Evil 2 Remake- Mr. X Gon Give It To Ya

Taking notes from the past two remakes of RE0 and RE1, RE2 remake is a true crowd pleaser that not only remasters the original spectacularly, but also adds more to the game to make it even more loveable!

GAMES

Connor Winzar

Games Editor

A love letter written to fans in gory detail, Resident Evil 2 remake makes the otherwise grim situation a brilliant beauty to behold. Taking the original game which was released in 1998 on the PS1, RE2 remake polishes it up for the modern era, with all new content, better camera angles and graphics that highlight the gory goodness that is Zombies tearing into people like they're candy floss. Straying very little from the source material, the game gives you the true Resident Evil experience of terror, fun and intense inventory management! So, allow me to be your guide in this not-so-wholesome tour of Raccoon City!

Taking place in said Raccoon City, your standard run-of-the-mill small city is situated in midwestern US. Despite going by the surprisingly nice name of Raccoon city, it isn't quite what you'd expect, as our unfortunate protagonists Claire Redfield and Leon S. Kennedy find themselves not enjoying their visit in what is apparently a zombie-infested hellhole. What could possibly bring them to the city? Well, Claire is searching for her brother, Chris, whilst Leon is enjoying his first day on duty as a Police Officer (which is a well-deserved FML situation).

Upon arriving, they find that things may not be going as well as expected, with zombie-filled streets

and abandoned fiery vehicles littered everywhere. Wandering around the city trying to find out what happened, our two protagonists attempt to investigate the city and try to make it out alive. The plot thickens more and more as details emerge about a pharmaceutical

“Straying very little from the source material, the game gives you the true Resident Evil experience”

company being responsible for the crisis that has befallen Raccoon City. Unfortunately, said company is inclined to not leave any survivors to tell the tale, leading to an additional dash of gasoline being added to the dumpster fire that is Raccoon city; in the form of BOWs (Bio-organic weapons) and other terrifying man-made monstrosities.

Overall, the story is quite simplistic...on surface that is, but, just like the story and its location upon digging deeper, it has a lot more going on than one would expect, with a tonne of details relating to other games and a plethora of themes and subplots including romance, betrayal and corruption. RE2 is a real mixed cocktail of emotions. The story strings you along and provides background information through the player finding

dossiers, documents and computer files throughout the game. This leads to a fantastic feeling of immersion and pacing as by the end you find all your questions answered (for the most part, you still need to complete all the campaigns to fully satiate your Scooby Doo mystery solving needs). You heard me correctly, there are multiple campaigns including Claire A, B, Leon A, B, Hunk's campaign and the legendary Tofu run, with the last being a gag campaign. Now you may be wondering what all this A and B nonsense is, and I can tell you it's something that makes the game all the better, with A and B denoting different campaigns where characters take an alternative path to the original; B is only unlocked after completing A and also includes its own secret boss.

Now onto gameplay, featuring Resident Evil 4 style gameplay but with considerably better graphics, the game plays exceptionally well. But be warned, if you're new to the Resident Evil series and are expecting some form of hack-n-slash shoot 'em up, you are poorly mistaken. A staple feature of RE2 remake is that ammunition is scarce and you don't have a full armoury of six or more weapons; gradually throughout the game you will upgrade your weapons and every so often acquire a new one (a maximum of 4-5 weapons per campaign). Just acting as General Hindsight yet again: don't expect to pop a cap in every single zombie you see, sometimes it's simply better to walk past or dodge them.



Mr. X's soliciting business has yet to receive any declinations//Capcom

This is because, unlike the classic action horror stereotype, it requires multiple shots to the head to take down a standard zombie. Putting aside the details of the action genre, the horror element of the game really comes into

“with numerous themes and subplots including corruption, betrayal and romance; RE2 is a real mixed cocktail of emotions”

play when running low on ammo or dealing with enemies that you're not necessarily well equipped for, i.e. a massive trench-coat-and-matching-hat-wearing brick shit-house combined with Arnold Schwarzenegger's Mr Freeze, minus the puns.

The game is a remake

after all, so how does it vary from the original you might ask? Honestly speaking, there are quite a lot of variations from the original, for example Lieutenant Marvin Branagh actively helps the player as opposed to being dead the moment you walk into the police station, along with a lot of other details that I cannot mention due to my desire not to spoil the game too much (you can't get me for the Lieutenant Marvin spoiler, that was in the demo!). But overall certain scenes play out somewhat differently from the original, with one minor boss fight being a welcoming variation from the original. Also, for all you arachnophobes out there they've taken the giant spiders out of the remake, so the game just may be palatable for you now, if you get past all the gore and footstep inducing panic. It may not have spiders included but for those wanting to intensify their feeling of nostalgia, Capcom currently has DLC that allows for the original game's music to play instead of the remastered soundtrack. The remastered soundtrack,

by the way, is fantastically well done and also includes some touching new additions.

Overall, Resident Evil 2 remake has my seal of approval, ditching the typical bad camera angles that plague the early games, RE2 really shines as a perfect example of how to remake a game and then just make it that much better. The only fault that I could possibly have with the game is that

“Capcom releasing upcoming DLC for free!”

there isn't more, however, this may be sufficed with the upcoming DLC that Capcom is adding for free! And if that isn't enough for you, mods and costumes are available on steam to customize your experience even more *cough* having DMX play every time Mr X appears *end cough*. So happy hunting for ammo as you have 'DMX- X Gon' Give It To Ya' playing as Mr Freeze chases you.

GAMES

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Smash Corner-Pokémon Trainer - Gotta Play 'Em All

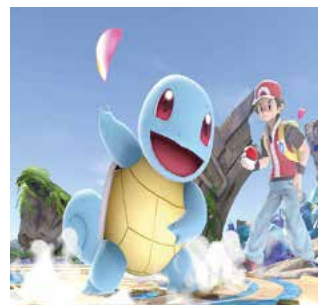
Did you have trouble choosing what to wear this morning? Or deciding what to eat for lunch today? Then we got the perfect Smash fighter for you, with characters #33, 34 and 35, Pokémon Trainer

Games

Michael Cognet

Games writer

Indeed, with him you will be able to play Squirtle, Ivysaur and Charizard, and switch between them at will during the match. These beloved characters are from the Pokémon franchise, appearing in the original games Red and Blue in 1996. They are all a different evolution of the first three starting Pokémon of the game: Squirtle is the first evolution of his line, Ivysaur is the second evolution of Bulbasaur and Charizard is the third and final evolution of Charmander. And this is masterfully represented in their gameplay in Ultimate, with each of them having a different fighting style. This makes Pokémon Trainer a very flexible and powerful character as a whole, by adapting to the opponent or situation in order to take the victory.



Our taunting turtle friend// Nintendo

To kick it off we have Squirtle, a light and very small fighter with extremely fast movement and close-range attacks. Each of his hits however doesn't do a lot of damage so he relies on a series of fast chained attacks. So as Squirtle, you need to continuously dance

around your opponent and avoid their hits thanks to your small hitbox, and punish them with all your attacks, especially your particularly fast aerials. To complete his kit, he has a few more tools he can use with his specials. Squirtle's neutral is his Water Gun, a charged attack to push opponents away without damaging them, useful to counter certain recoveries. His side-special is Withdraw, where he will hide in his shell, protecting him from any damage, and dash to the left or right, great for some safe damage. And finally, his up-special is his Waterfall, where he will rise diagonally, potentially taking enemies in the flow. This is a mediocre recovering tool but can be used at the end of an aerial combo as a finisher. Apart from that move, Squirtle has very few kill moves due to his weak smash attacks, making it hard for him to actually take the stock. So when the opponent's percentage is high enough, it's time to switch Pokémon with down-special, an ability all three of them share.



The middle child of the Pokémon trio// Nintendo

Then comes Ivysaur, an overall medium character in weight, speed and power, with a great mid-range combat. He relies on his vines to hit his opponent while staying at



The Pokémon trio// Nintendo

a reasonably safe distance. Ivysaur can harass easily with his forward- and back-air, which have an incredible range. His smash attacks and grabs also have an incredible reach, with some sweet power to go with it. Ivysaur's specials grants him even more ranged potential, even allowing some long-ranged pressure. His neutral is his Bullet Seed, where he rapidly fires seeds directly above him, to seriously damage any enemy coming from the air. His side-special is his Razor Leaf, a long range projectile which will damage and impair the opponent enabling a potential follow-up attack. And last but not least is his up-special Vine Whip, both a great finisher and recovery. Indeed Ivysaur can use these vines to whip an opponent overhead out of the screen or can use it to recover at a ridiculous distance only if there is a ledge to grab on. But if you're having some trouble to secure the kill or want an even better recovery, it's time to switch to the final Pokémon.



Pokémon's resident heavyweight blitzes the competition// Nintendo

To finish the trio, we have Charizard, a very powerful heavy weight fighter but with slow attacks. He does however have good mobility options with a decent move speed and a third available jump. You will need to take Charizard to end the battle with his attacks and abilities with ridiculous damage and knockback. Your best tools are your fast back-air and side-tilt or slow but extremely powerful side-smash and up-smash to knock them out of the park. But Charizard has even more dangerous weapons in his arsenal with his specials. Firstly his neutral is his Flamethrower, where he

will breathe fire onto his opponent, damaging and impairing them from a safe distance. Then comes the big guns, his side-special Flare Blitz, where Charizard winds-up a forward charge engulfed in flames, and explodes at the contact of an enemy. A great horizontal recovery that can kill at merely 60% but will damage Charizard by 6% at every use. To finish off, his up-special Fly is again a great finisher and recovery tool. Charizard will spiral into the sky covering decent vertical distances and will also hit any enemy above potentially killing them at 100%. This tool is of course less powerful than his side-special but much safer as opponents have less time to react to it.

As you can see, Pokémon Trainer covers a variety of fighting styles that can theoretically be played separately, but it is by combining them that you bring out his true potential. With three times the amount of tools and abilities in his kit, Pokémon Trainer has many creative combinations to discover. But

the general tactic is to start off with Squirtle to get some quick damage, then to switch to Ivysaur to zone them in the mid-game, and finally to take Charizard to finish the job. Nonetheless, you can play only one Pokémon to try to counter your opponent's fighting style. Finally, a crucial trick to know as Pokémon Trainer is his switch dodge, which takes advantage of the invincibility frames of your down-special instead of a shield or roll to avoid your opponent.

In conclusion, if you manage to combine masterfully only the strengths of Squirtle, Ivysaur and Charizard, you get a very powerful overall character. Furthermore, with three different fighting styles, Pokémon Trainer can be particularly hard to master but allows him to have no real counter pick, bringing him up to a higher tier. So even if you are not particularly indecisive, I highly suggest you pick up Smash's 3-for-1 special as he is not only strong but also loads of fun.

TRAVEL

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A Kabylie wedding: stories of volunteering abroad!

This week Felix Travel features Marco, who is sharing some experiences he was lucky enough to have, all due to his volunteer work in Algeria! There's more to travel than just century old monuments!

Travel

Marco Rodrigues

Travel Writer

I found myself in the middle of an AIESEC reunion, right in the heart of Alger, when this tall Algerian man approaches me in Portuguese. I was not expecting that at all, as the spoken language at this meeting was either English, French or Arabic. A week had passed since I left Portugal to do volunteering in Algeria for one and a half months, and I must say, I really felt nostalgic when I heard a random “Olá” and “Obrigado”. It was the perfect way to break the ice, we started chatting and this man shared about his time in Portugal (with AIESEC as well) and about his visits to Lisboa, Porto and Sesimbra.

His name was Rabah, he gave me his contact and proposed a trip to the Kabylie area - at the time I was in the Arabic region of Algeria.

Some weeks had passed and I had not seen Rabah in a while, my volunteer experience was coming to an end soon, so I figured I should either join another project or perhaps travel. While thinking about my future weeks in Algeria, Rabah came to mind and I texted him. For my surprise he kindly replied saying that he was going to Tizi Ouzo – a Kabylie area in the middle of the mountains - and proposed once again for me to join. I gladly accepted his invitation and not even a week after finishing my

volunteer work, I was on my way to Kabylie.

Rabah and a friend picked me up in a two-seat van, so I took this journey in the back of the van, with no windows. Luckily, the van had a side door I could open, so my five-hour journey was spent legs hanging outside the van just contemplating the view on my way to the mountains.

When we reached the Kabylie region, all women wore colourful and flowy beautiful dresses. Rabah tells me that his village and the others nearby, are located in a zone called Portugal. Being told such a coincidence while I was taking in all the magic of this place, I felt stuck in a moment of immense joy.

Rabah introduced me to his cousins and then more

“It seemed to me as an experience I couldn't say no to”

cousins and even more cousins after that, and then we finally headed to his house. It was a house with no electricity and no water, with a fountain just half a mile away. It was summer, so none of it mattered. That night we went to see some friends that turned out to be great musicians; they also lived in the mountains and they even had their own tobacco farm. We spent a really pleasant night drinking wine, smoking homemade shisha and listening to great music



Cape Carbon, Bejaia // habib kakion Flickr

(even *bossa-nova*), all while under a sky full of stars so clear it felt unreal - not easy to find nowadays.

Another night had passed and I moved back to Alger, spent some days exploring there and moved to Bejaia, also in the Kabylie area, for a week. Bejaia is a port city by the mediterranean sea. I spent four incredible days there, mastering the art of preparing shisha, so much so that by the end of it, I couldn't even stand the smell of it anymore.

At this point, Rabah called me for one last trip to the Kabylie mountains, a wedding he said. It seemed to me as an experience that I couldn't say no to. I found myself again in Portugal away from Portugal (meaning that Kabylie area), where the people dress with colourful, flowy, dancing clothes. On this day there seemed to be more people than before, an explosion of colour. We were near this shop where I bought

some “Cheema”, which is pure tobacco powder that you put right in your gums and wait until you feel this hit of nicotine rushing through you.

Rabah had left to greet some of his cousins, so I found a quiet staircase near the shop and tried some more “Cheema”. More and more of these colourful dressed woman seemed to keep gathering, and the more they appear, the more I felt the nicotine rushing. The colours, the smells, the nicotine and adrenaline rush, it all seemed like one beautiful Pollock's paint right in front of me.

Less than 10 minutes had passed, Rabah returns and we go for the greatest couscous meal I've ever had – I have been trying to copy this same kind of couscous but I am light years away of achieving it! During the meal, I had the opportunity to meet more of Rabah's cousins, communicating using my very limited French and improvised sign language.

It is impressive how much we can learn from others even when we don't speak the same language!

At night time, after the wedding, there was this big dance competition. The woman, dressed with colourful yet barely-there clothing, were now singing and dancing in a very seductive way, while the man were sitting, chatting and very much enjoying each performance.

While I was as well, Rabah invited me for some “Haraam” (which is the Arabic word for breaking the Islamic rules). Cousins and drinks appeared out of nowhere, and we drank in a hidden place while hearing the women singing and clapping their hands. I don't actually remember what happened after that, but Rabah tells me I spoke about mathematics with a cousin that could only speak Arabic and Kabyle. Somehow we understood each other at that time and

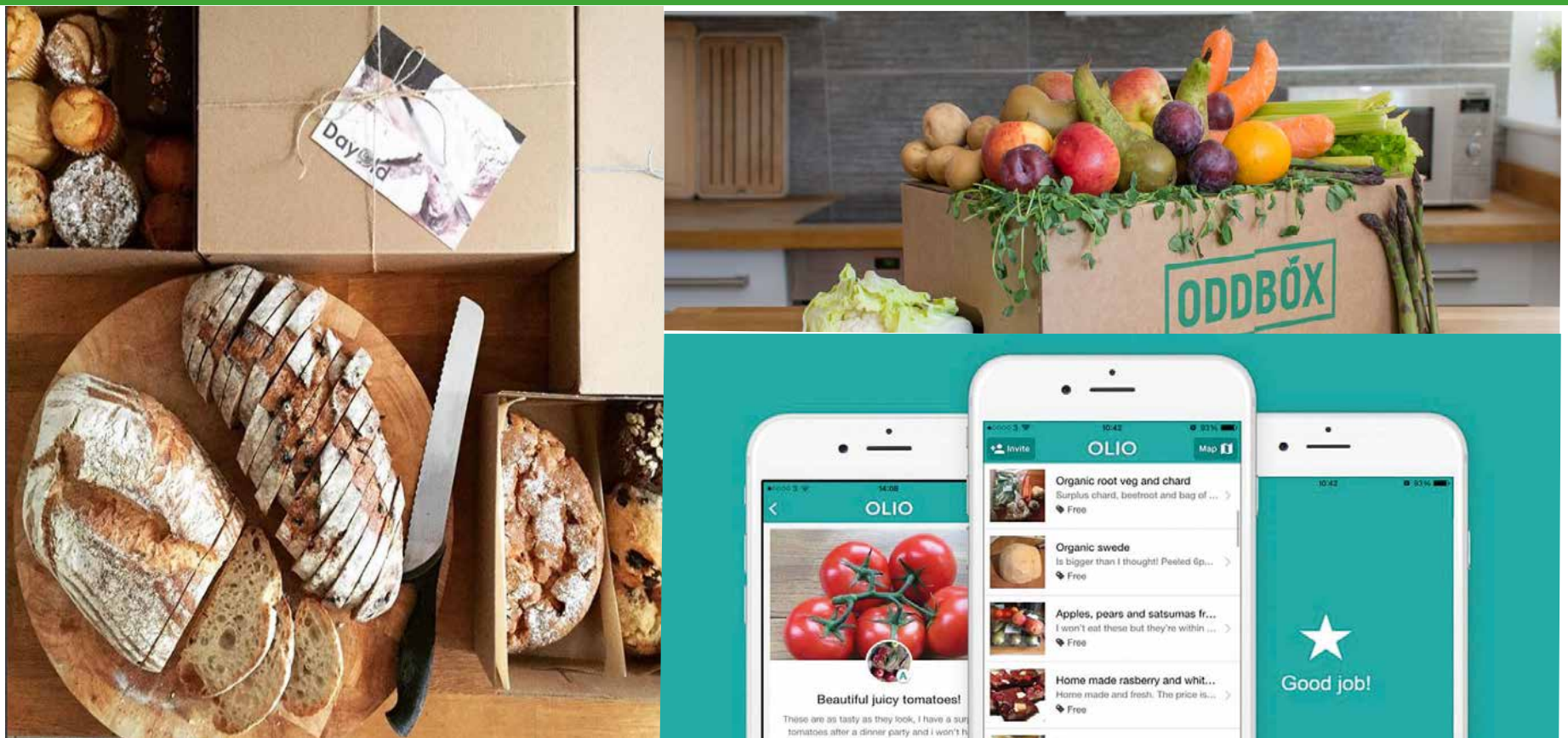
this was definitely one of the best experiences I have ever had!

The following day I moved back to Alger, two days after that I moved back to Portugal (this time my country), and now, almost four years later, I can still feel the intensity of those magical, soul-filling, colourful mountains painted by women, by simplicity and a few drops of Kabylie madness.

Do you have great stories you would like to share about your experience volunteering, taking a placement or while on Erasmus abroad? Send them our way!

SUSTAINABILITY

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Start-ups tackling food-waste: DayOld (Left), ODDBOX (Top right), and OLIO (Bottom right) \\\ DayOld, ODDBOX, OLIO

Tap Here to Stop Food Waste

Three entrepreneuring startups come together to discuss tackling food waste. Monami Miyamoto reports

SUSTAINABILITY

Monami Miyamoto
Sustainability Editor

On February 11th the Social Innovation Academy at LSE (London School of Economics) hosted a talk titled ‘The War on Food Waste’, with 3 entrepreneurs from start-ups tackle food waste. These companies included *ODDBOX*, *DayOld*, and *OLIO*, each represented by their founders or board members.

Food waste is becoming an increasingly hot topic, especially in the UK where there is growing societal awareness about its consequences on the planet. In fact, if food waste was a country, it would be the third biggest contributor to climate change just after the United States and China.

A brief introduction to

the three companies:

ODDBOX aims to reduce food waste from the farm, by sending produce that do not live up to supermarket standards to its subscribers across London.

DayOld collects artisan pastries from bakeries, that would also otherwise get thrown out. These are then provided as catering for company events or given to people suffering food poverty. It’s shocking to think that bakeries such as *GAIL*’s were throwing out up to 20 perfectly edible loaves of bread each day, before *DayOld* decided to aptrner up with them.

Finally, *OLIO* is a “Food tinder” app, as their business development manager Liam Jones put sit. Individuals and supermarkets list foods in their homes/shops that they no longer want, so that someone else in the neighbourhood who may want it can have it.

Interestingly, all three

companies are tackling food waste, but at different levels of the food supply chain: *ODDBOX* on the farm, *DayOld* in the stores, and *OLIO* in the homes.

One of the major issues discussed in the talk was the complex reality of managing both social and economic welfare in these businesses. *DayOld* mentioned that their company is too commercial to receive social enterprise funding but is also not economically profitable enough to attract large numbers of investors. To combat this, they are currently relying heavily on their extensive volunteer network. The benefit is that this enables nurturing of close inter-personal relationships as well as encouraging commitment from volunteers. The speaker from *DayOld* acknowledged that this element of their business is appealing to customers (such as the companies they cater for).

Personally, what I found more shocking was the fact that 16 of the full-time staff at *OLIO* have little to no pay, because it is currently a free app. Their representative speaker made clear that eventually their business will have to be monetized in order to expand. Another issue *OLIO* faces is the maintainence of a high standard of risk management, because food exchange happens at a very local scale, so people have to be responsible with what they give/take. When they work with supermarkets such as *Sainsbury*’s to take their unwanted food, a business donor agreement is used to ensure food safety. Thus, it seems appropriate to conclude that managing a start-up involved in social welfare has its fair share of difficulties.

However, the main point of the talk was to show that with the right business strategies it is possible to overcome the

hardships and slowly, but surely, grow like these three companies.

All three speakers made a very inspiring point on the power of having multiple food welfare social enterprises at different levels of the food supply chain. As the representative of *DayOld* put it, “All three of our companies are not competing against each other. Rather, we are competing together against food waste”. This statement was followed by the importance of small start-up companies with a similar mission, to collaborate effectively in order to raise awareness.

Of course, it must be acknowledged that the lack of competition and scope for collaboration is more specific for *ODDBOX*, *DayOld* and *OLIO* as they focus on different stages of the supply chain. For example, *OLIO* did state that “Too good to go”-another app that provides consumers with food that

is about to go bad (for a cheaper price than the original), is one of their competitors. But generally, because these companies are not motivated purely by economic gains, they are more amenable to working together.

Furthermore, the co-founder of *ODDBOX*, *Emilie Vanpoperinghe*, optimistically pointed out that consumers are increasingly beginning to take interest in sustainability conscious companies. This leads to a positive feedback loop wherein businesses gradually adapt to these needs, providing sustainable products, which further raises awareness amongst consumers.

Overall, the talk was fairly casual, yet informative and inspiring. I believe there is still a lot of potential for more start-ups to take their place in the expanding niche of sustainable business, and act as a driving force for societal good.



Debt and Equity: 2 sides of the same coin

INVESTMENT

Xerxes Chong Xian

ICIS
Investment Co-editor

Just as a plant needs water for growth, so does a business require capital to expand. Debt and equity are two sides of the same coin. A company may choose to finance itself with debt or equity or a combination of the two. The company approaches banks or investors for a loan and/or to sell a stake of the company to raise capital.

Debt in simple terms, refers to the amount of money borrowed by the borrower from the lender. The debt agreement usually involves the repayment of the amount borrowed plus interest to the lender. Interest is charged on debt as compensation to the lender for taking on the risk of the loan while also incentivizing quicker repayments to reduce the borrower's overall interest expense. The risk of a debt refers to the probability of the borrower defaulting, i.e., the borrower being unable to repay the loan and/or its interest payments. We are familiar with debt in the form of student loans, auto loans, mortgages and credit card debt. Businesses also use debt to finance the acquisition of assets, e.g., machinery, real-estate and raw materials. In both cases, the business and the individual issue debt while the bank takes on the (carries the risk of) debt in return for interest payments.

Individuals, banks and other institutions can also take on the debt of a business by purchasing its bonds. Bonds are loans

issued by companies, municipalities, states and sovereign governments to finance operations. They have variable or fixed interest payments. They are an asset class known as fixed-income securities as they provide periodic interest payments at pre-determined interest rates. Bonds can be traded (bought and sold) publicly on a stock exchange or privately between private parties.

Debt is found on a company's balance sheet under the section of liabilities. Liabilities are split between current and non-current, differing in their settlement date.

Those due to be settled within a year or less are classified as current while those due later are non-current. Current liabilities are useful for gauging a company's short-term liquidity. Debt can be found in a plethora of vehicles as such bank loans, notes (short, medium and long term), bond payables and lease agreements on assets the company is utilising but does not own. These are listed and elaborated upon

"... one is wary of lending money to a consistently indebted friend, a company with too much debt is seen as risky and financially unhealthy and termed highly leveraged"



Debt and equity feed the growth of a company at all stages of its life cycle // Freepik

in quarterly and annual reports to allow investors to gauge a company's short and long-term financial health.

Like how one is wary of lending money to a consistently indebted friend, a company with too much debt is seen as risky and financially unhealthy and are termed highly leveraged as debt is leveraged to finance operations. While not every highly leveraged company is a bad one, leveraging makes future debt more expensive as potential investors will expect a higher return in exchange for lending money to a risky company.

Instead of issuing debt, a company may choose instead to sell a portion of the company in return for capital. Equity often refers to a share or any other form of investment vehicle that represents an ownership interest. If one purchases a single share in a company that splits and sells 100% of its ownership into 100 shares, one owns 1% of the company. While debt represents an obligation to repay a loan, equity represents ownership. This definition differentiates holders of debt as the

debtors of the company while holders of equity as the owners. Holders of equity are entitled to a portion of profits as well as voting rights on matters pertaining to the company. Shareholders are eligible for dividend issuances and voting rights at general meetings. Dividends are excess profits distributed as cash-handouts per share to reward shareholders and incentivize their continued vested interest in the company.

The characteristics mentioned above are those of common shares. Companies can also issue a form of equity known as preferred shares. Preferred shares also represent ownership of the company. However, preferred share-holders are entitled to a fixed dividend payment whilst common share-holder dividends are subject to the company's performance and approval by the board of directors. Dividends on preferred shares are pre-determined and often larger than those of common shares. In times of insolvency, the proceeds from the liquidation of the company first go to bondholders, followed by preferred shareholders and finally

to common shareholders. Hence, preferred shares represent a greater claim to a company's assets and earnings. As such, preferred shareholders, like bond holders, are not given voting rights as they are viewed as "less risky" investments. The primary means of issuing equity is

Other financial liabilities

Non-Current:
Bank loans (Note 26A)
Finance leases (Note 26B)
Medium term note (Note 26D)
Redeemable preference shares (Note 26E)
Non-current, total

Current:
Bank loans (Note 26A)
Finance leases (Note 26B)
Medium term note (Note 26D)
Bill payable (Note 26C)
Current, total
Total

The non-current portion is repayable as follows:

Due within 2 to 5 years
Due after 5 years
Total non-current portion

Liabilities come in different forms // Q&M Group, AR17, 30



Debt and Equity: 2 sides of the same coin

company, which will be recorded as an asset known as "share capital" on the balance sheet. Companies will employ the services of an investment bank to structure the intricacies of the IPO, including pricing, size and even its

"The big question remains, which is better for financing a company, debt or equity? The general rule is; debt is cheaper than equity."

timing. Companies may also re-purchase their own shares from the market for a multitude of reasons. It is viewed favourably by investors as a sign of "future value" of the company, i.e., the board of directors by virtue of running the company, expect the future value of the shares to be higher and purchases them for re-issuance at a higher market value in the future via a secondary offering. This allows the company to increase its share capital without having to dilute shareholder ownership by issuing more shares.

The big question remains, which is better for financing a company, debt or equity? The general rule is; debt is cheaper than equity. This is best understood with an example. If a company requires £30,000 pounds to finance its business operation, it could issue £30,000 in bonds paying an annual 5% interest or

Equity

| | | |
|--|----|---------------|
| Share capital | 18 | 490 |
| Share premium | | 5,163 |
| All other reserves | | 3,854 |
| Retained earnings | | 4,887 |
| Equity attributable to owners of the parent | | 14,394 |
| Non-controlling interests | | (21) |
| Total equity | | 14,373 |

Sale of common shares are recorded as share capital on the balance sheet // Tesco PLC, Interim Results 2018/19

it could sell a 10% stake in its business. If the company performs well and makes £100,000 in profit in a year, the bond interest will be £1,500 while the 10% stake will represent £10,000 of profit owed to shareholders. The company will have saved £8500 in profit by issuing debt instead of equity. In this situation, the cost of equity is more than the cost of debt.

The key idea is; debt repayments represent a fixed-expense liability, that is removed once the debt is paid but equity is a long-term obligation to the shareholders and a dilution of ownership as the company is split amongst more shareholders. These could represent a boon or a curse depending on the company. Start-ups, small players in large industries, highly leveraged firms and other young companies with unstable cash flows will find accessing cheap debt, i.e., issuing debt at low interest rates, near impossible as investors are not willing to part with their money for a proportionately higher return. As a result, most turn to venture capital for financing, selling stakes in their company in return for capital. Larger, more established firms have predictable and reliable cashflows that grant them access to cheap debt and are unlikely to issue new equity.

Another aspect that

influences a company's method of financing are the wider market forces. A roaring bull market, where equity (stock) markets are achieving new highs makes issuing equity via an IPO attractive. If the companies in question are creating a buzz on the street, the like of ubiquitous companies like Snapchat or Uber, the public will be clamouring to get a piece of their equity. As the saying goes, a rising tide lifts all boats; even if the company isn't generating hype or has uncertain prospects, the general "good mood" of the stock markets provides a base for the IPO to perform well. Bull markets are therefore synonymous with an increased appetite for risk amongst investor, where issuing equity is

attractive. Discount rates of the central bank will influence the use of debt. The central bank requires financial institutions to hold a portion of money in the reserves at the end of each business day. This reserve requirements ensures banks have enough money tucked away to meet customer withdrawals. The discount rate is the interest rate central banks charge banks and other financial institutions for loans to meet the overnight requirements. Fluctuations in the discount rate will affect the interest rates bank charge on loans to companies. If the economy requires stimulation, the central bank will lower the discount rate. Since banks can now loan money from the central bank at a lower

rate, it encourages them to lower their own rates for customers, making the debt market more appealing. During times of inflation, when the economy needs to "slow down", the reverse is true and a company may find the interest rates on their debt increase, thereby increasing their cost of debt. Debt and equity, representing capital obtained from different means, form the capital structure of a company. The optimal capital structure is one that achieves the lowest Weighted-Average-Cost-of-Capital. Capital structures vary largely by industry. Cyclical industries such as mining and airlines are unsuited for high amounts of debt as the unstable

revenue streams creates uncertainty surrounding debt repayment. Banking and insurance, however require large amounts of leverage, hence high debt is the norm. The role of monitoring and optimising the capital structure falls on the Chief Financial Officer. This role is often used interchangeably with the title Chief Investment Officer, though responsibilities may differ across companies, industries and countries. It falls on this individual to strike a delicate balance between each side, taking into account internal and external factors, to finance a company throughout its life time.



The right candidate for Chief Financial Officer will ensure financially sound decisions are made // Dialogue Review, 31

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

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The Bhangra Showdown 2019

Taking place on 2nd March 2019, The Bhangra Showdown (TBS), an interuniversity Bhangra competition, is back for its 12th edition. This time, it returns to the prestigious Eventim Apollo in Hammersmith.

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Sonika Sethi
Imperial College Punjabi Society

What is The Bhangra Showdown?

The Bhangra Showdown has been organised by Imperial College Punjabi Society since 2007. Various universities across the country, with students from different courses and years, train for months to compete in front of an audience of 3000.

Previously, it has taken place in both Birmingham and in London, in venues such as Wembley Arena, NIA Birmingham and Resorts World Arena.

The high production stage set up, quality of teams and high profile Punjabi artists are reasons why students, families and Bhangra lovers look forward to this competition every year. Moreover, the funds for this event go towards charitable causes.

Following the competition, some of the teams' Youtube videos have crossed over 100,000

views, making it a globally followed competition.

Anisha Malli said, "TBS is the biggest student run show in the UK, so its size alone does give it a different atmosphere to other Imperial shows. Also, it is entertainment not just for students, but also for families. The show attracts people from so many different backgrounds and is enjoyable for all."

What can we expect from this year's competition?

Nothing less than a night of entertainment should be expected. This includes a star studded line up of Punjabi artists and the most elite university Bhangra teams competing.

Bhangra is a colourful and vibrant dance form originating from the Indian subcontinent. Over the last few decades, it has attracted undeniable popularity worldwide with its high energy performances, fluid movement and formations, and music that will want to make you dance!

Artists include high profile names in Bhangra music, such as Punjabi MC, Raxstar, Surinder



"Previously it has taken place in both Birmingham and in London, in venues such as Wembey Arena, NIA Birmingham and Resorts Wrold Arena" //Punjab2000

Shinda and The PropheC. Expect to hear the famous 'Mundian Toh Bach Ke', which is the synonymous Bhangra song you hear at every night out!

University teams competing include Aston University, Brunel University, Hertfordshire University, Imperial College London, Kings College London, Leicester University, Loughborough University, St. George's and Royal Holloway University. All of the teams will be co-ed, which usually consists of eight male and eight female dancers.

Who organises The Bhangra Showdown?

Our very own Imperial Punjabi society, a small committee of less than a dozen, organises this competition year on year.

Aman Ghataura, a 4th year Physics student, from the committee, said: "The Punjabi Society has been working round the clock to bring the most modern

and exciting TBS to date. We have one of the best teams this year and are super excited to bring TBS back home to the Apollo"

Anisha Malli, a 2nd year medical student, also from the committee, said, "Despite how stressful running a show of this size has been for its main organisers, it is definitely worth it because TBS is amazing to watch and we get to raise money for some incredible charities."

What drew me to PSoc was its inclusivity and how the whole society felt like an extension of my family. I'd never been part of anything related to my culture whilst at school so it was exciting to learn more about being Punjab at university."

Whilst The Bhangra Showdown is now world renowned, these Imperial students over the last decade have worked to make it a success story. This was considered unexpected in the words

of Hardeep Dhanjal, founder of The Bhangra Showdown – an imperial student back in 2007!

"It started as an idea between good friends, with a view to replicating the successes of well-known shows in the US and Canada, which were gaining traction on YouTube at the time.

We were fortunate that the Millennium Dome had just been purchased by O2 and so an amazing venue was available for a

relatively good price and we managed to convince the student union that Bhangra would be the next best thing after Britain's Got Talent!

Unfortunately, up until the night before the show, we had only confirmed 250 tickets, leaving most of us disappointed. However, we were then pleasantly surprised to hear that the phone hadn't stopped ringing all morning on the final day, pushing our debut



"The next best thing after Britain's Got Talent!" //Punjab2000



Jessica Gar-Lai Cheung leads Team Loughborough//Punjab2000

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

felix.clubsandsocieties@imperial.ac.uk



numbers to 1000! This was the beginning of Bhangra in the modern era for the UK and the competition space has now expanded significantly beyond our wildest imagination."

The Imperial Team

Imperial College also has its own Bhangra team, which has competed every year at The Bhangra Showdown. It has generally been quite successful – winning the competition three times and placing in most.

However, one of the most special things about the Imperial team is how inclusive the team is to new dancers and giving them this opportunity. Dancers from the team tell

"What drew me to PSoc was its inclusivity" //Punjab2000

us more:

Maya Satheeskar, a 1st year medical student from Southside hall said, "one of my mates took me to a free bhangra session. Even though I was bad at it, I went to more sessions as I really enjoyed it and going to more helped me improve. Then, luckily, I was selected when auditions came around."

I think it's nice for the team to change every year so that new people can meet each other. I look up at the older dancers as I'm starting up on the bhangra journey, but I hope that I continue it in future years potentially."

Annanya Menon, a 3rd year medical student said,

"over the years I have come to appreciate the different styles of dance, even the difference in technique within a dance form. Bhangra has been more about technique and fitness."

Having danced a lot at university, Bhangra was a different dance form I wanted to try to push myself. It is a very different process and experience and provides a physical challenge. I have enjoyed picking up new technique over the last few weeks and bettering my skills as a dancer with the use of various props as well as enjoying the variation in dance style within Bhangra."



"It is entertainment not just for students, but also for families" //Punjab2000

Many of the dancers have done multiple shows during their time at Imperial. For example, Maya is also currently choreographing for East Meets West and Annanya was captain of Imperial's winning Just Bollywood team. However, it is clear that, for these dancers, there is something unique about TBS that makes months of difficult training so worthwhile.

Lakshi Selva, a 5th year medical student and captain of the team this year said, "Bhangra has taught me a lot about time management and being efficient. Bhangra makes a good break from 5th year medicine which can

otherwise be quite monotonous and repetitive. The challenge of The Bhangra Showdown keeps me on my feet and gives me something new to look forward to everyday."

The Cause

The Bhangra Showdown will be raising money for two charities; Mehar Baba charitable trust and Nishkam Sikh Welfare and awareness team (SWAT).

Mehar Baba aims to bridge the urban-rural gap in education, healthcare and employment opportunities whilst SWAT works on projects to transform financially disadvantaged

communities and improving their long term prospects.

How can I get tickets?

The 12th edition of The Bhangra Showdown is set to be an exciting one that you should not miss on 2nd March 2019.

Tickets for the competition are selling out fast and can be purchased from the Eventim Apollo website (<https://evntm.uk/bhangra19fb>). For more details about it, visit the Facebook and Instagram pages.

Contact the Imperial Ticket Rep, Karman Bhullar, on Facebook for student priced tickets.



"Imperial College has its own Bhangra team, which has competed every year at The Bhangra Showdown" //Punjab2000



"It has attracted undeniable popularity worldwide with its high energy performances, fluid movement and formations" //Punjab2000

The Leadership Elections 2019

#icuelections

STAND

imperialcollegeunion.org/elections

Lead the change

Could you be a leader of change at Imperial College Union? Stand for President or one of the four Deputy President positions, and you could help shape College and the Union. You can also be the voice for underrepresented groups of students as a Liberation & Community Officer, or you could represent students in your department as an Academic or Welfare Departmental Representative. Part of a club or society? Stand for a committee position, or sit on the committee of your Constituent Union.

There are over 700 roles available in the elections - that's how many ways you can truly make a difference to the student experience at Imperial. You will also gain skills which will make you stand out to potential employers, develop new networks and help improve Imperial. Go to imperialcollegeunion.org/elections to read about all the positions and find the one that suits you. Nominate yourself by **Friday 1 March**.

Develop & grow

Imperial Plus

Challenge yourself and get inspired to invest in your personal and professional development while you study at Imperial.

Learn and implement key skills in leadership, management and self-awareness.

Sign up now: imperialcollegeunion.org/ipworkshops



imperialcollegeunion.org/imperialplus



Get your tickets for the Summer Ball

Tickets for Summer Ball 2019 are selling fast! The huge end-of-term celebration will be on **Saturday 22 June** at the South Kensington Campus.

The **Red Carpet** themed event will feature big headline acts, student performances, a fun fair, a silent disco, fireworks display, a fun photobooth and food & drink vendors.

With Early Bird tickets almost completely sold out, standard ticket prices are now available for 'Ball & Afterparty'. Prices will continue to rise so get in quick for your chance to be a part of the biggest night of the year.

Buy your tickets at imperialcollegeunion.org/summerball

Make great memories



Friday 22 February | Beit Bars | 20:00 - 02:00

15 February, Friday

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

Wolf Rocks
h-bar | 19:00 - 23:00

20 February, Wednesday

CSP Wednesday
Beit Bars | 19:00 - 01:00

18 February, Monday

Wine Tasting
The Union Bar | 17:30 - 20:00

21 February, Thursday

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

Battle of the Bands: Heat 3
Reynolds | 19:00 - 23:00

19 February, Tuesday

Super Quiz
FiveSixEight | 20:00 - 22:00

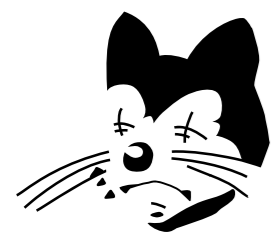
22 February, Friday

Good Form
Beit Bars | 20:00 - 02:00

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

Battle of the Bands: Heat 4
Reynolds | 19:00 - 23:00

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



Hangman



If I was told I'd be here one more year, I'd be riding in one of these too... // Imperial College

Felix Editor left in coma-esque state after being informed of re-appointment

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

Disgruntled Felix Editor Bambi Djibouti was reported to have succumbed into a coma-like state late last night, NegaFelix has learnt.

This comes after an apparent decision by the College Over-

lord to keep him in his role for another year.

Mr Djibouti was seen wandering blank-eyed around Queen's Gate Wednesday afternoon, delirious and unresponsive to his own name.

He was consequently admitted to the nearest hospital, where doctors were confounded by his apparent state, given his otherwise good physical condition.

It was discovered that Mr Djibouti had met with College Overlord Yannis Bast earlier in the day.

Further confusion abounded when he was found sprawled in the

middle of the room with various undecipherable words along the walls of the ward.

Sources from within the hospital remained silent on the matter, however NegaFelix has been sent an anonymous letter containing pictures seeming taken on a shaky phone camera from within the ward.

Regrettably, the Geophysics intern who handled the mail (and as a result viewed the images) was found in a similar state to Mr Djibouti.

Careful analysis of the images and deciphering the moans of the intern,

NegaFelix has determined part of the writing on the wall.

Ed. note: We take this moment to inform our readership that we are not liable for any effects that they induce in the reader and would advise you to carry on reading only if you are of a strong constitution.

Phrases deciphered so far include "She is risen", "the horror" and "you are reinstated as Felix Editor".

NegaFelix is as yet unsure as to the meaning and are in conversation with experts. All that can be assumed is that this

is one more page in the ongoing saga of Sandy and Yannis Bast.

Regarding the future of NegaFelix, Bambi has been re-installed at his desk by the team. It has been reported that he carries on much as he

"Phrases deciphered so far include... 'you are reinstated as Felix Editor'"

did before the incident. Experts have warned to take close examination to notice any difference between his before and after behaviour.

"Bambi has been re-installed... he carries on much as he did before the incident.."

HANGMAN

negafelix@imperial.ac.uk

Valentine's Day sees surge in applications to Student Hardship Fund

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

The College reported a record number of applications to the scheme due to a surprising number of students getting Valentine's dates.

The fund, which allows undergraduates to apply for a

short term loan of up to £300 from the College, for the small price of one's soul, noted over 30 applications submitted in the week before Valentine's Day, NegaFelix has learnt.

"We generally only get like 10 applications a year because no one knows we exist," said Sherry Walkman, Head of Student Support, "most years we just get to blow the rest of the money on a staff BBQ. How were we supposed to guess that any Imperial students would have relationships this year?"

Sonia Rockafellow,

Deputy President (Free-lance & Sermoning) expressed distinct surprise at the news. "Wait, not all the students are virgins?," she exclaimed. "No one ever uses the free condoms in the office - we thought we'd have to use them as balloons for the Elections Results afterparty!"

Meow Thatherson, Central Frisky Organiser (CFO) for the College, was notably irked at the revelation. "All that money I saved with Meat-Free Mondays," he was heard grumbling, "and now these kids just want to get some? Not on my watch - we need a new pool in the Faculty



Money for grabs on level 3 // Imperial College

Building!"

In separate but related news, the Health Centre

has reported a spike in incidents of carpal tunnel

amongst students in this week.



ARIES

This week, you scout around for your first one night stand.

Might have had better pickings if it weren't at Metric on a Thursday night.



TAURUS

This week you walk in on your housemate getting it on in the kitchen.

How awkward - you just thought that was the washing machine again.



GEMINI

This week, you're the Opportunity Rover.

You don't want to go through another Valentine's day alone so you finally switch yourself off.*



CANCER

This week, you're Cupid, here to spread love around Imperial.

Problem is you're a guy. The balance is delicate enough as is; don't upset the sausagefest.



LEO

This week you establish a dick rota to keep you satisfied.

Sadly, this is Imperial, so you're basically on a carousel of disappointment.



VIRGO

This Valentine's Day, even the foxes outside your window are getting more action this than you are.

They've shat in your bin again.



LIBRA

This week, you find out your MCM claps when the plane lands.

Is this your king?



SCORPIO

This week, you're Donald Tusk.

This woman keeps sliding into your DMs non-stop. You can't wait to fuck her over.



SAGITTARIUS

This week, you're Deputy President (Clubs & Societies).

Good idea to go on holiday during Valentine's - you wouldn't want security interrupting your 'meetings' again.



CAPRICORN

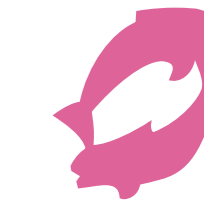
This week, the only D you manage to get is on your lab report.



AQUARIUS

This week, you've run out of Vaseline.

Good thing you have your tears from crying alone.



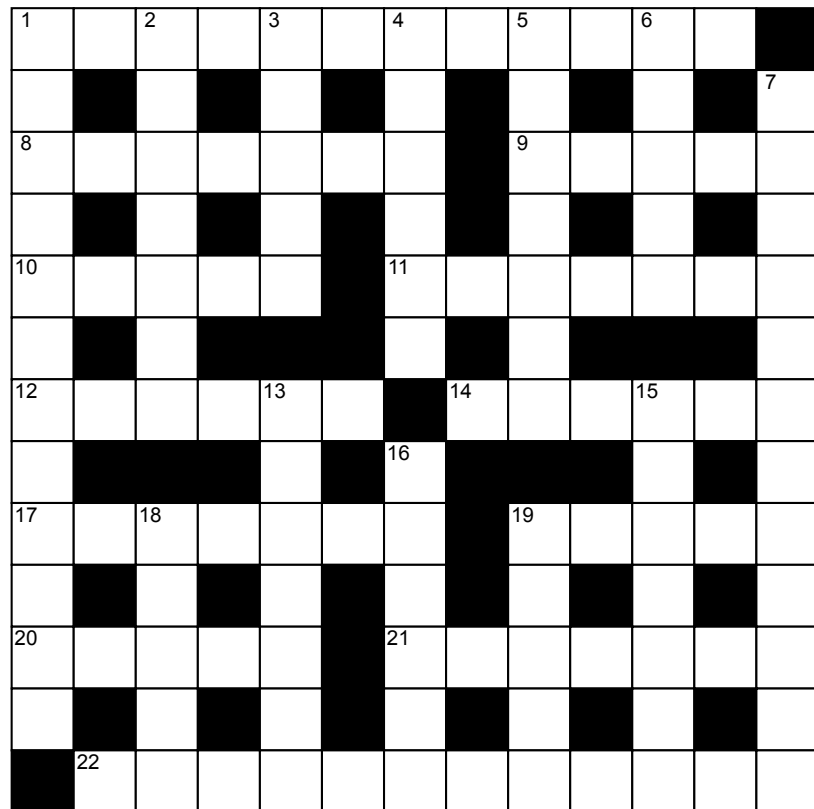
PISCES

This week, you remember there's plenty of fish in the sea.

Problem is they're all the wrong species.

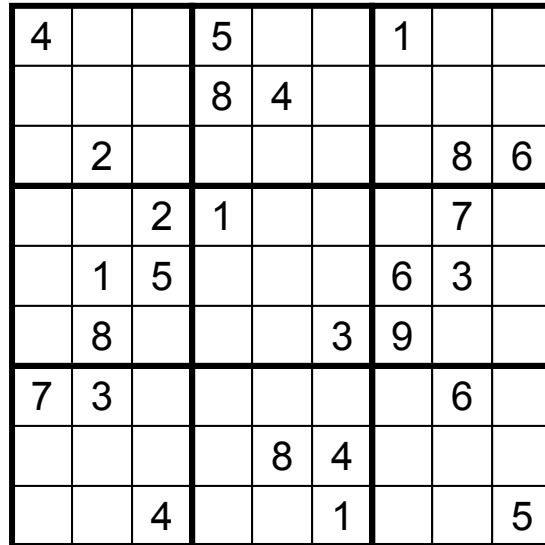
PUZZLES

fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk



SUDOKU

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



FUCWIT

| | | |
|----|-----------------------|----|
| 1 | Maxiane | 78 |
| 1 | Trollheim | 78 |
| 1 | Wooloomooloo | 78 |
| 4 | DQ | 77 |
| 5 | Shark | 74 |
| 6 | Yeet Infection | 72 |
| 7 | Big H's Boys | 69 |
| 8 | Flesh and the tooters | 68 |
| 9 | KBLB | 67 |
| 10 | S. B. S. | 60 |
| 11 | O1G | 59 |
| 12 | Rock, Flag & Eagle | 54 |
| 28 | when will, then wei | 15 |

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

Points available

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| Crossword | 5 |
| Sudoku | 3 |
| Slitherlink | 4 |
| Minesweeper | 3 |
| Total | 15 |

CROSSWORD

Across

1. Sends a Member to Westminster (12)
8. Roman ones are good for counting (7)
9. Brown and sticky (5)
10. Donate (5)
11. Largest ocean (7)
12. Don't tell anyone (6)
14. Music-speak for slow (6)
17. Spicy sauce (7)
19. Pic (5)
20. Layered and sophisticated (5)
21. Raw fish (7)
22. Secondary consideration (12)

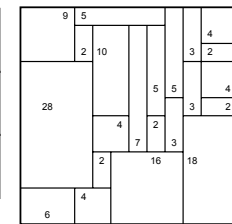
Down

1. Where steam and windows meet (12)
2. Wandering lifestyle (7)
3. Chuck away (5)
4. They litter the Dutch landscape (6)
5. Lured into (7)
6. The most thrilling type of hangers (5)
7. Fixes the brain (12)
13. Concentrated extract (7)
15. Radiant (7)
16. County on the Jurassic coast (6)
18. Short (5)
19. Amazing green pasta sauce (5)



| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 2 |
| 2 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 7 |
| 5 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 4 |
| 4 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 3 |
| 1 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 6 |
| 8 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| 7 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 9 |
| 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 8 |

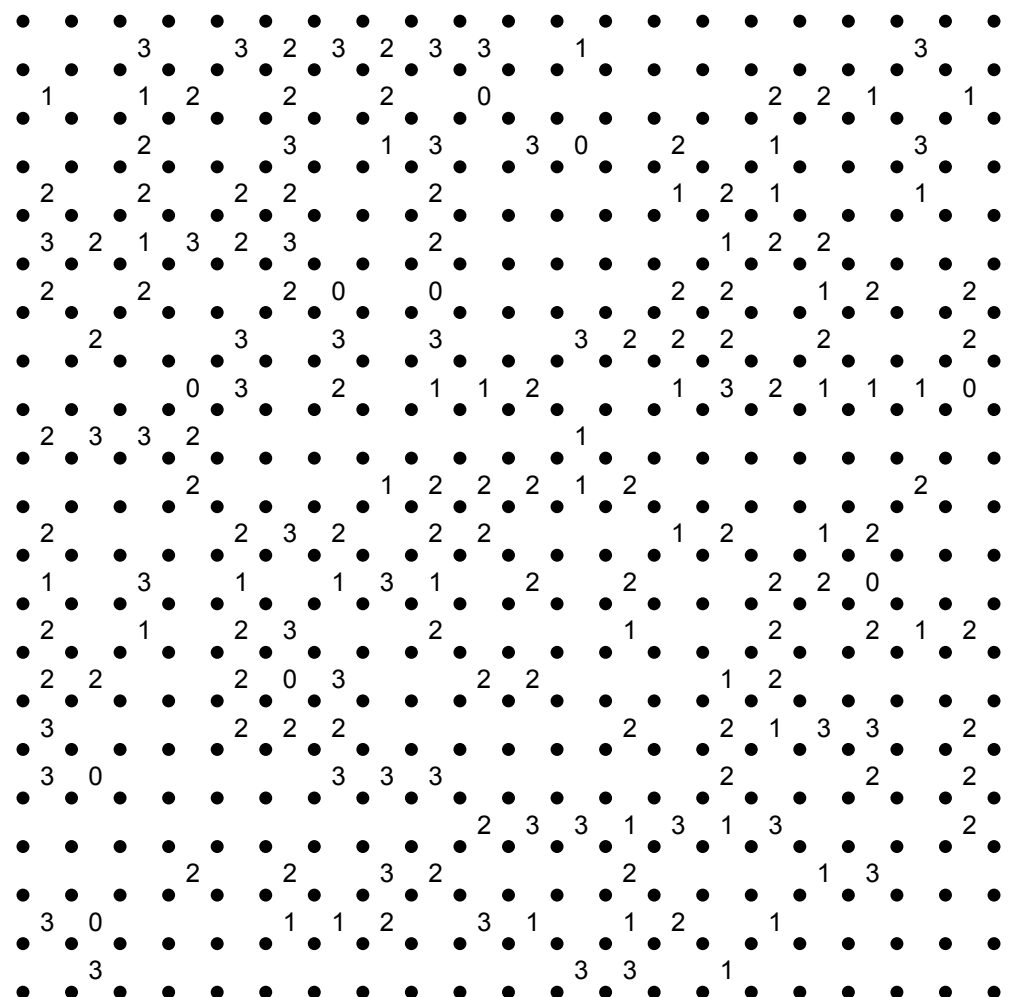
Last week's solutions



| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H | A | U | N | T | E | D | T | A | S | E | R |
| A | L | Y | R | O | H | H | | | | | |
| R | E | C | A | P | O | T | O | L | O | G | Y |
| V | E | H | O | L | W | M | | | | | |
| E | R | R | O | P | P | O | S | A | B | L | E |
| S | O | Y | | | | | | | | | |
| T | R | U | A | N | T | A | M | A | Z | O | N |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | W | E | E | T | E | N | E | D | T | E | A |
| O | A | E | C | U | L | A | M | A | | | |
| A | E | S | O | A | I | R | | | | | |
| R | I | N | S | E | G | O | R | I | L | L | A |

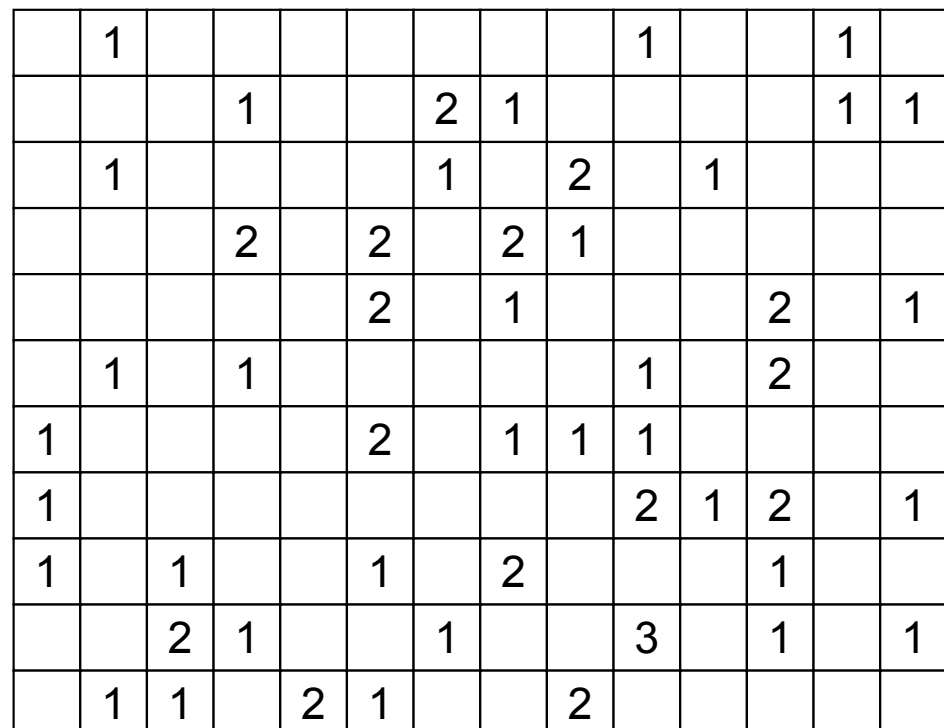
(A slightly inflated) SLITHERLINK

Connect horizontally and vertically adjacent dots so that the lines form a simple loop with no loose ends. The number inside a square represents how many of its four sides are segments in the loop.



MINESWEEPER

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



SPORTS

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

IC Squash: It was a Roller! (coaster weekend)

Great Expectations were weighing heavily on the shoulders of IC Squash as they returned to this year's Roehampton University Cup as the defending champions.

SPORTS

David Newman

Men's 1st Team Captain

Seigo Masuda

Men's 1st Team Captain

The Roehampton University Cup attracts the best university teams in the country, each of them competing for the prize of a year's membership at Roehampton and their names on the prestigious trophy.

Imperial's 1st team, who were also defending champions, had a tough draw during the group stage with local London rivals and many's pick for the title this year, LSE. Meanwhile, Imperial's 2nd team would attempt to forge their way to the final on the other side of the draw in the hope of setting up an all-Imperial clash.

The group stages took place on Saturday, with Imperial 1st opening their campaign with a closely fought 3-2 win over LSE, but there were worrying signs. String 1 and PSA pro, Seigo "top shot knot" Masuda suffered a defeat at the hands of Singapore number 5 and fellow PSA pro Chua Man Chin in a closely contested match. IC's Patrick "The Tree Chopper" Brandl succumbed in a closely fought match at string 3. So while Dave "nudeman" Newman, Pam "the merciless" Hathway and James "The Hound" McCouat serenely swept their opponents aside, IC squash knew that, were they to meet LSE again in the knockout stages, victory

was far from certain.

Imperial 2nd also had their share of success. Their campaign involved no shortage of drama with team captain, Tom "Yorkshire" Readshaw suffering from a serious case of gender-neutral flu. However, this only spurred the team on, with third string Cam "it's a roller" Morrison securing some especially crucial victories for their spot in the knockout stages.

Saturday evening was spent fraternising with the enemy over a Roehampton home cooked lasagne and a special treat for the dessert: a Q&A session with world number 6 and Commonwealth silver medallist, Sarah-Jane "The Markswoman" Perry. It was truly inspiring to hear from a professional athlete with similar academic background to many of IC squash students (S-J completed an engineering degree before turning pro).

Sunday began with both IC teams competing in the quarter-finals. The 1sts against a strong Durham team and the 2nds against last year's semi finalists Leicester. Leicester proved too strong for the 2nds this time round. But a quarterfinal finish alongside other 1st teams certainly shows that IC Squash has strength in depth to be proud of.

As for the 1sts, they brushed Durham aside with a resounding 5-0 victory. Revenge was then swiftly enacted on Leicester in the semi-finals with another convincing 5-0 win. Then came time for the Final everyone had been talking about, not least the LSE team who



#Winning // IC Squash

were overheard in the dressing room plotting our downfall – they had sussed us out. They thought Seigo stood no chance against the "dragon slayer" from Singapore, "The Tree Chopper" had been felled once and would be again. James, Pam and Dave had got lucky in the first round,

and now the mighty LSE would expose our one-dimensional games...

Well, Dave, Pam and Seigo were up first. Inspired by S-J the evening before, Dave and Pam hit their targets with poise and precision, imposing themselves without even dropping a

single game. Seigo, recovering from his earlier loss, deployed a tactical masterclass. The slaying of the slayer ensured the title was once again in IC Squash hands. Two strings remained – dead rubbers? No chance. Enter "The Tree Chopper" and "The Hound" to ensure there

was no silver lining for the LSE. A 5-0 emphatic championship victory! All credit to LSE for their fighting spirit and they will certainly be back next year to challenge us again for the title. In the meantime though... IC squash is on fire!

The designer baby debate

The Power To Control Your Own Evolution, with Robert Winston, Tom Whipple, Gunes Taylor and Inga Prokopenko.

Sir Alexander Fleming Building, G16
Tuesday, February 26, 2019
5pm - 7pm
Food and drink included

Book your space via the Imperial College website.

THE TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES
Know your times

Robert Winston, Gunes Taylor, Tom Whipple, Inga Prokopenko

SPORTS

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk



On your marks, get set, GO!: The 70th Hyde Park Relays gets underway // Hussain Al-Jabir

Hyde Park Relays returns with aplomb

SPORTS

Henry Hart & Aymeric Regnier

Hyde Park Relays Organisers

On Saturday 9th February, the much anticipated 70th annual edition of the Hyde Park Relays, hosted by Imperial College Cross Country and Athletics, smashed onto the scene.

With over 80 teams and nearly 500 participants, it was once again a roaring success for the club.

This event holds a special place in Imperial runners' hearts, with the first edition dating back to the late 1940s and the organising committee determined to make this year's edition as memorable as possible to vanquish last year's demons as the 2018 race had to be cancelled due to the notorious Beast from the East.

As January drew to its end and the final details had been arranged, the weather forecast was looking good and hopes were high for this historic

event.

After an intense week of food preparation, h-bar decoration, race-pack making and coordination with all attendees, the big day arrived at a frightening pace. With an early start from the organisers to set up registration and bring the food, the crowds started arriving at 10 in the morning to Metric so they could sign their teams in.

Soon enough, all teams had registered and made their way to the Bandstand in Hyde Park where the race would soon begin.

As the clocks struck 1pm, the recently retrieved Hyde Park Relays Horn was sounded, as per tradition, to mark the start of the race, as the first runner from each of the 85 teams stormed off in a stampede with cheers of teammates spreading across the park. The course was newly certified as officially 5km, meaning many runners were eager to set personal best times.

As the first runners made it to the end of their leg, Daniel Mulryan from Imperial Men's A team was leading the race with

what would earn him the fastest leg of the day in 15:16, followed closely by the Cambridge team, as he gave the baton to Mihaly Ormay. In the third leg of the Men's A team Niki Faulkner ran a pacey 15:40 leg, winning him the prize baton for 3rd fastest leg of the day.

“The recently retrieved Hyde Park Relays Horn was sounded to mark the start of the race”

The lead was lost in the final lap of the day but Imperial's A team still ended in an outstanding second place against very worthy Cambridge opposition, with the whole team putting in smashing performances as Mihaly finished in 17:02, Charlie McFadzean in 17:16, Daniel Garcia in 17:03 and Club Captain Fergus Johnson in a rapid 16:54,

coming ahead of all the other London Universities.

Imperial Men's B team come home in a terrific 7th place, led by Men's Captain Jack McKeon, which served as a good motivation boost before BUCS Indoors Athletics and the last London Cross Country League of the season.

On the ladies' side, new PBs were ran by Stephanie Hewitt with an awesome 19:24 who is also going to compete in BUCS indoors this weekend, star fresher Alix Vermeulen who ran an absolutely incredible 18:52, improving her 5k PB by 40 seconds, Social Secretary Jessica Eichel with 21:34 and Pati Santos with a speedy 24:32.

The Imperial Women's A team of Stephanie Hewitt, Inga Van den Bossche, Chloe Baker and Alix Vermeulen won themselves the bronze baton as the 3rd fastest Women's Team behind Cambridge and UCL who ran crazy fast legs, whilst Imperial Mixed A team finished as the fastest Mixed Team with

James Millet, Duncan Ingram, Tom Binnie, last year's Club Captain Alex Mundell, Social Secretary Liv Papaioannou and Euan Bell. Massive congratulations go to everyone!

Once all the runners had crossed the finish line, the masses headed back to Metric for the prize ceremony and sandwiches.

After the much needed showers and a quick dinner, the Imperial crew headed to h-bar for the final decoration installations and some early pints, with the after-party ready to start at 8pm featuring beer pong, drinking from the HPR Horn and tankard by the organisers,

and ICXCAC's favourite DJs - Niall Woodward and Dema Ushchapovskyy - who were absolutely fantastic and made the night a girthy one.

Overall, the day was a huge success from all points of view; the organisers would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone from ICXCAC and beyond who helped throughout the organisation process and during the day. The Club would also like to congratulate the Hyde Park Relays Organisers Henry Hart and Aymeric Regnier for all their hard work in planning the Relays (and also writing this article!) – the race could not have happened without them.



Feeling horny: Runners pose with race icon // Hussain Al-Jabir