



Fired from the rooftop- 568 bar staff dismissed following gross misconduct



Sam Lovatt Editor-in-Chief

22 Union bar staff, many of whom are students at Imperial College, were dismissed from their roles as casual workers following an incident the Union deemed to be gross misconduct.

Staff members who were also students have been banned from Union bar premises for between three and six months.

The Union considered each case individually under the employees' roles as staff and students separately. Employees who had either already graduated, or who were working in the bar via third party agencies, did not undergo investigation with regards to their membership of the Union.

Felix understands that some of those investigated who were students received a three month ban from bar premises, though the majority were given six month bans.

All involved were dismissed from their roles as casual workers or were not hired back from the agencies they worked for. Most were dismissed on November 29th.

Some of those involved were managers at the 568 bar.

After talking to multiple sources

Continued on page 2...

Imperial College staff recognised in Queen's New Year Honours list

Sam Lovatt Editor-in-Chief

A number of Imperial College staff were recognised in the Queen's New Year Honours list 2022. Largely focused around the College and national COVID-19 response, the awards range from CBE to British Empire Medal and recognise the excellence of individuals who have gone above and beyond their duties, made achievements in public life and committed themselves to helping and serving the UK.

The New Year Honours list is published each year on January the first, and has been almost every year since 1890.

The highest honour that can be bestowed in the list is a Knighthood/Damehood, followed by CBE, OBE, MBE, and finally a British Empire Medal.

Robin Grimes

Felix is becoming something of a regular haunt for Professor Grimes.

The Professor was awarded a Knighthood for "services to UK Resilience and International Science Relationships" though alas, his role at Imperial is not mentioned on the list.

Grimes has worked as a Chief Scientific Advisor on the Ministry of Defence's nuclear science and technology matters since October 2017. He was also Foreign & Commonwealth Office Chief Scientific Adviser from February 2013 to August 2018.

Felix 1786 reported on Grimes' appointment as Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society, tasked with responsibility "for relations with European countries and will imminently be covering outcomes of COP26 and responses to the pandemic".

According to Imperial College,

Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons



Continued on page 2...

NEWS

This issue was produced thanks to the work of

Sam Lovatt Editor-in-Chief

Ameena Hassan Deputy and Puzzles Editor

Jamie John Science Editor

Marek Cottingham Science Editor

Cara Burke Science Editor

Isabelle Zhang Science Editor

Rosie Millns Music Editor

Tara Pal Chaudhuri Music Editor

And our numerous contributors

Felix Office
Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road
London, SW7 2BB

Tel: 020 79548072
Email: felix@ic.ac.uk

felixonline.co.uk
@feliximperial

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"To receive an award for doing my job is both thrilling and at the same time a little bit surreal. I want to thank my colleagues from the Department of Infectious Disease who have so magnificently risen to the challenges of the Covid pandemic" - Lesley Rawlinson

Fired from the roof

involved in the incident and following proceedings, Felix understands that the incident in question occurred on the night of November 7th. During a leaving drinks event for an ex-staff member, one attendee suggested that everyone present should go onto the roof of the Union building via a secret route that they had been aware of for some time, but that Union management were unaware of.

This route to the roof has been described as precarious by both the staff involved. The Union leadership said "accessing the roof required a series of extremely dangerous manoeuvres". Access involved climbing over a stairwell which anyone involved could have fallen from and significantly injured themselves.

The roof was accessed through a window with a broken restrictor, which meant it could be opened fully and a person could fit through. This window has since been sealed shut and cannot be opened at all.

On the roof there are no safety measures, such as barricades, in place. The structural integrity of the roof under the weight of this many people was also called into question. A fall from such

a height could have had "life altering consequences".

The incident came to the Union's attention as a result of a separate complaint over alleged racism in a WhatsApp chat which bar staff members used to discuss work-related topics. Part of the evidence submitted in this complaint included images of the individuals in question on the roof of the Union building.

Casual workers at the Union bars, including those in managerial positions, are not full employees. They are employed by the College on casual, or "zero hour", contracts, and are able to sign up to shifts as and when they see fit, though permanent staff may encourage casual workers to take up more shifts in certain circumstances. Because of this casual worker status, the decision to remove those involved from their jobs is considerably easier than if they were full employees. It is worth noting, however, that the Union chose to follow a full process under ACAS guidelines as if those involved were employees. This is significantly more than was legally required.

In the investigation of the student employees surrounding

their membership of the Union, the investigating officer was Union President Dr Lloyd James. The final decision was reached by a panel formed from the Governance and Membership committee within the Union.

James recently brought a paper to the Governance and Membership Committee which added amendments to the existing disciplinary procedure held by the Union. These amendments included that the role of Investigating Officer in all cases relating to a student's membership of the Union should fall to the Union President, with the option for the President to delegate this role if they see fit to.

Referring to the incident, Dr James said "We can confirm that following a thorough and impartial investigation over the last few weeks, a number of casual staff members will no longer be taking shifts in our bars. We cannot comment further due to confidentiality requirements."

He added "As soon as the Union became aware of a potential health and safety risk, it was investigated and resolved rapidly".

New Year Honours

"Grimes continues to play an active part in building engagement with scientists across the world, including Japan, Argentina and India".

On receiving the award, Grimes said "I am grateful to my excellent colleagues and to the environment at Imperial which has enabled me carry out this important work within Government. I am honoured to receive this recognition".

Wendy Barclay

"For services to virology" Professor Barclay received a CBE, the highest order of the British Empire save a knighthood or damehood. A prominent member of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), Barclay has been involved with the governmental pandemic response since the beginning of restrictions being considered.

Having been at Imperial for almost 15 years, Barclay has contributed massively to understanding the intricacies of the pathogenicity of many respiratory viruses, including rhinovirus and SARS-CoV-2. Her team have worked on multiple wellknown studies, including

the REACT study which monitors virus and antibody levels within communities.

Peter Openshaw

Proconsul of Imperial College, Professor Peter Openshaw is a respiratory physician and immunologist working in the Faculty of Medicine. "For services to medicine and immunology" Openshaw was awarded a CBE in this New Year Honours List.

Openshaw has been central in Imperial College's COVID-19 response, frequently giving statements and taking interviews regarding the science behind introducing restrictions and foresight in the progression of the virus.

He is Vice-Chair of the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG), an advisory committee which liaises with the government on threats posed by new and emerging respiratory viruses.

Something of a veteran of respiratory disease research, Openshaw has worked on Influenza since the mid-1980s.

Justin Roe

Dr Justin Roe received an MBE "For services to Speech and Language

Therapy, particularly during Covid-19".

Roe is an honorary lecturer at Imperial College and has worked at the Royal Marsden Hospital since 2008.

With regards to the pandemic, Roe sits on the COVID-19 Advisory Group for the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT). In this role he has helped provide multiple papers that proved key in setting clinical guidance nationwide. Roe "represents [RCSLT] at a national level" according to Imperial College.

Lesley Rawlinson

The only staff member receiving an Honour not to have their own profile page on the Imperial College website is Lesley Rawlinson, a laboratory manager at the College. Rawlinson received a British Empire Medal "For services to the Covid-19 Response".

A step up from receiving a College President's Award in June 2021, Rawlinson and her team have worked throughout the pandemic to facilitate the efficient and effective function of Imperial College's labs, which has earned the College national and international praise.

FRIDAY 7TH JANUARY 2022

SCIENCE

Edited by: ISABELLE ZHANG
JAMIE JOHN
CARA BURKE
MAREK COTTINGHAM

The underrated yeast

► *How the brown stuff we add to bread is used in, and is changing, the world we live in today.*

Wang Guo Staff Writer

The vast majority of us have encountered yeast at some point in our lives in food, such as bread or cake, or in alcohol. But have you ever considered what these brown or white lozenges actually are? The colloquial term “yeast” refers to a group of unicellular and free-living fungi with around 10,000 species. The application of yeast is not just limited to making your bread spongier. In fact, yeasts, in particular baker’s yeast, have been instrumental in the development of our civilisation.

KEY PROPERTIES

There are two core properties of yeasts that make them important to both humans and nature.

Firstly, they are facultative anaerobes, which means they don’t need oxygen to obtain energy, but can use oxygen, if available, to obtain energy via cellular respiration. In the absence of oxygen, facultative anaerobes respire by fermentation, a process which consumes the same amount of glucose as cellular respiration, but produces much less energy. The advantage of fermentation is that it is faster and does not require oxygen. There are different types of fermentation, but all yeasts use alcoholic fermentation, producing CO₂ and ethanol (alcohol). These two substances are key to the application of yeast in industry.

Secondly, although yeasts are capable of carrying out sexual reproduction, their main means of reproduction are binary fission and budding, both forms of asexual reproduction. Binary fission consists of the division of a mother cell into two daughter cells in equal proportions, while budding means that a fragment of the mother cell with some DNA, cytosol and membranes are separated from it and continue their own development to maturity. Asexual reproduction is much faster than sexual reproduction, which makes obtaining large quantities of yeast

easy. This is essential to the food industry’s ability to meet the constant demand for fermented products.

IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Yeasts are essential for the health and balance of ecosystems. Living in moist and mild environments, they are a source of food for bacteria, protozoans, and other microbial predators. Besides, soil yeasts help in delivering matter, particularly carbon, across the soil.

IN INDUSTRY

The impact of a particular yeast called *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, also known as baker’s yeast or brewer’s yeast, in the development of our civilization cannot be understated. Records of the domestication of baker’s yeast date back to Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt, to around 4,000 BCE. The importance of yeast to humanity lies in its role in bread and alcohol production.

The grains of grasses such as wheat and rye are amongst our main sources of energy. These seeds contain a long complex sugar called starch, which is an excellent supply of energy. However, starch has one major problem: it is tasteless.

The function of baker’s yeast is to ferment the tasteless starch into simple sugars like glucose, which are sweeter and easier to digest.

In the case of bread, the CO₂ released during fermentation causes dough to rise, creating the signature pockets of air in bread, and similar baker’s products. When fermented dough is heated in an oven, the trapped CO₂ expands and makes the bread

rise further. The expressed ethanol evaporates, leaving only the simple sugar and the dead yeasts. The dead yeasts, due to their high amino acids, lipids and sugar content, add flavour.

In the case of alcoholic drinks, the CO₂ and ethanol are not lost. Alongside the remnants of yeast, they give these drinks their appealing flavours and colours (dead yeasts are typically filtered out!). The process of making bread and wine using baker’s yeast has accompanied humanity from its first steps through to big empires and wars, and the influence of baker’s yeast on our economy is still present. For example, \$1 trillion of the USA’s \$19 trillion GDP is directly dependent upon yeast – that is 5% of the world’s biggest economy!

IN RESEARCH

In biology research, baker’s yeast is one of the organisms used to study eukaryotic cells because of its short life cycle (a few hours) and relatively small genome. Unlike multicellular organisms like the common mouse, baker’s yeast is cheap and easy to grow. Furthermore,

yeasts are the target of genetic engineering. They have been

used with the ground-breaking gene-editing tool, CRISPR-Cas9. Compared to other living organisms, it is relatively easier to edit yeast DNA precisely and effectively. This not only makes genetic engineering easier to carry out, but also means more positive outcomes. Indeed, the usage of genetically modified yeasts in our world is already a reality. Genetically modified yeast is used to synthesize useful molecules such as insulin or antibiotics.

AT IMPERIAL

It seems apt to conclude with the use of yeast in research at Imperial. One of the most ambitious research projects related to yeast is the Synthetic Genome Project (also referred to as Sc2.0) carried out by laboratories across the world. Tom Ellis, Professor of Synthetic Genome Engineering at Imperial, is one of the UK project leaders. Sc2.0 is attempting to create a synthetic genome of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (baker’s yeast) based on the DNA sequences of the original genome. If the project is successful, it will be a major milestone in genetic engineering, as the first organism created entirely in a laboratory. It could open the door for the editing of even more complex living beings, perhaps even humans with genetic diseases.



Photo credits: Brett Jordan/Unsplash



Photo credits: Rodolfo Marques/Unsplash

SCIENCE

Blood-testing startup founder convicted of fraud

Sam Lovatt Editor-in-Chief

Elizabeth Holmes, founder of dissolved blood testing start-up Theranos, has been convicted of fraud at a trial in California.

In 2014, Theranos was estimated to be worth \$9 billion, making Holmes the youngest ever female self-made billionaire. Described as “the next Steve Jobs”, touted as a Silicon Valley marvel by the media, and appearing in TIME magazine’s list of 100 most influential people in 2015, she has taken quite a tumble, following the cease of Theranos’ activity in 2018.

She was initially put on trial for 10

counts of wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Her defence attempted to paint Holmes as a victim of Ramesh (Sunny) Balwani, her ex-boyfriend and Chief Operating Officer of Theranos.

Of the 11 total counts, Holmes was convicted of three counts of wire fraud and one of conspiracy. She is yet to be sentenced, however each charge individually carries a sentence of up to 20 years.

Holmes explained at one point that her device worked like this: “a chemistry is performed so that a chemical reaction occurs and generates a signal from the chemical interaction with the sample, which is translated into a result, which is then reviewed by certified lab-

oratory personnel”. This was told to The New Yorker, and has been described by CNBC since as “the quote that doomed... Theranos”.

The defence said Holmes “naively underestimated the challenges her business faced”, along with her being manipulated by Balwani. The quote above brings into question whether Holmes was at this point floundering beyond the point of no return, having known all along that the technology would never exist, or whether she was “faking it until she made it” and was genuinely naive to the cost of her actions.

The defence’s case of Holmes’ victimhood polarised much of the commentary. A \$9 billion valuation does not just come from nowhere, and given the now clear absence of scientific understanding of the device, investor confidence was built largely by force of personality, to the heights of the Walton family of Walmart and Larry Ellison. People close to Holmes, before investigations into Theranos began, have said that following her comparison to Steve Jobs, she intentionally lowered her voice to a “baritone”, an idiosyncrasy that apparently was lost after a few drinks, and intentionally dressed in Jobs’ trademark black turtleneck. While doing nothing to prove guilt at the trial, such behaviours certainly suggest a person who knows what they are doing.

A behaviour that *does* suggest guilt comes from testimony by lab directors at her trial, stating they had warned that the technology was flawed but were told to downplay their concerns, at a time when Holmes was telling investors that the technology was working as planned. Holmes approached Rupert Murdoch, Theranos investor and owner of the Wall Street Journal, to ask him to block publication of an investigation into the credibility of Theranos’ technology. Her request was in vain, and the published story began a cascade ending in the collapse of the company.

Others saw the defence’s narrative as completely plausible. Balwani is 19 years older than Holmes and the pair met when he was 37 and she was just 18. The



The blood test offered by Theranos

trial shed light on strings of texts, that could be seen as abusive, from Balwani to Holmes. In her own defence, Holmes testified that Balwani had both emotionally and sexually abused her during their relationship, allegations which he denies. Balwani will go on trial over the coming months on charges similar to Holmes’, where another jury will decide how pivotal he was in the company’s fraudulent activities.

Faking it until you make it, while sounding blatantly immoral, is not actually too uncommon in start-ups such as Theranos. Now-giants such as Uber and Airbnb launched their ideas having done sparingly little to ensure the laws of the land were in their favour and have suffered lengthy, costly legal battles as a result. What separates Theranos from these examples is attempts to fool regulators, some of which were successful. Patients who took part in fudged clinical trials said they had been misdiagnosed with HIV by gimmick devices. Trials supposedly testing Theranos’ technology were carried out using commercially available machines.

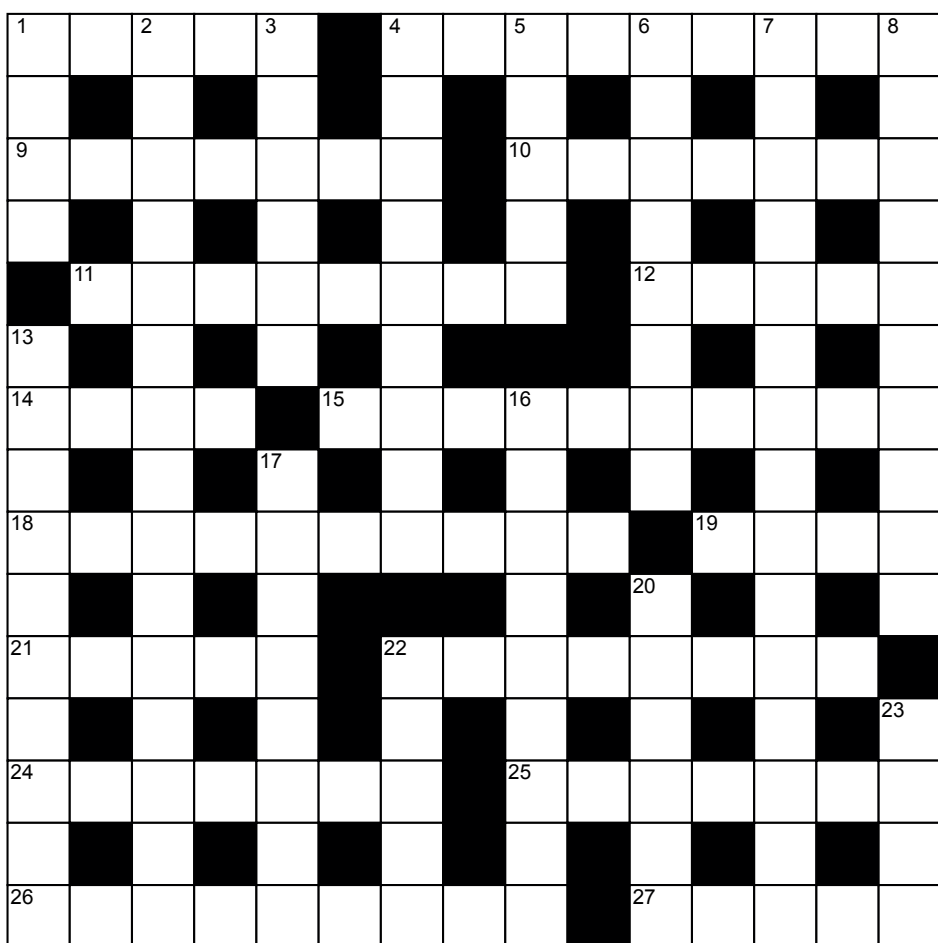
The time period between the investigation and the trial delivers quite a blow to Holmes, with advances in medical technology bringing a device close to what Holmes promised being trialled by the NHS in England as of September 2021, and being already in use in the USA. The Galleri Detection Test can screen for over 50 different types of cancer using a simple blood sample, a function that could have kept Holmes in the black had it been discovered just a few years earlier.

Photo credits: TechCrunch, CC BY 2.0



Elizabeth Holmes, founder and CEO of the now-defunct Theranos, notably wearing a turtleneck reminiscent of those worn by the late Steve Jobs.

CRYPTIC Crossword Grid



CRYPTIC Crossword Clues

Across

- 1) Back to the pud: I'd have it improved. [3, 2]
- 4) Takes the reins. [9]
- 9) Jupiter to pit and bite into the berry. [7]
- 10) Crack in the ice after insufficient care given at the core. [7]
- 11) Almost 22-Ac, but analogue! [8]
- 12) I now know every design to start to be tattooed. [5]
- 14) Look like a crease. [4]
- 15) See her grouch about the practicing Christian. [10]
- 18) Deeply regrets that sure death, hystericaly asks "why?!" [4, 3, 3].
- 19) It's gathered as it's grown. [4]
- 21) Even Ella Fitzgerald's innermost desired drink! [5]
- 22) Almost 11-Ac, but digital! [8]
- 24) Billy captured some unbelievers in this vessel. [7]
- 25) In that direction, the hut maize almost entangled. [7]
- 26) Small chance of sunshine? [3, 2, 4]
- 27) Rude about giant planets? [5]

Down

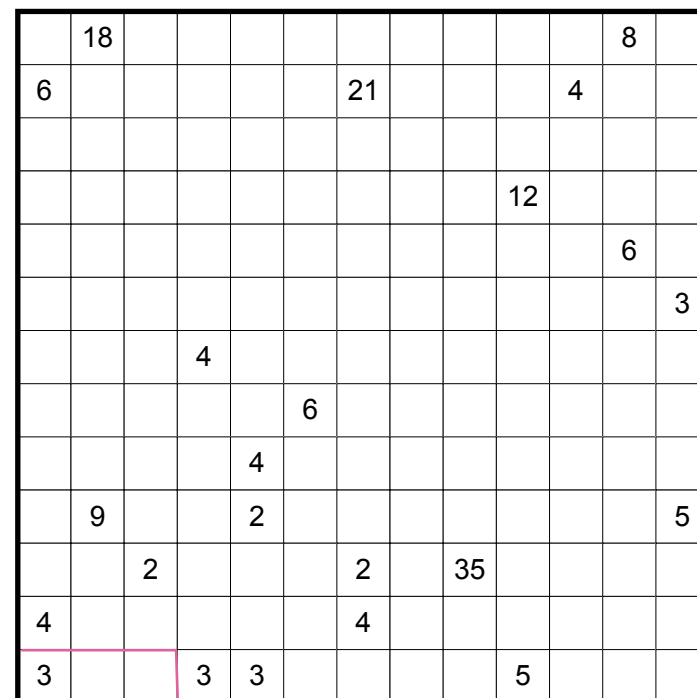
- 1) Impersonate Brand in the martial arts hall. [4]
- 2) Filling press in on agency Mr. Lee deviously infiltrated. [6, 9]
- 3) They're hot with decorating! [6]
- 4) Mare's tool might bring her luck. [9]
- 5) Electric cars drive about in these. [5]
- 6) Indeed, in that number I had vision! [8]
- 7) Have courage and keep your weapons by you! [5, 2, 4, 4]
- 8) The slightest indication of being underfed. [10]
- 13) They can read the signs! [10]
- 16) Bring that cartoon to life, when you get someone else to draw it! [9]
- 17) Begin (clumsily?). [5, 3]
- 20) Ring road above strand. [6]
- 22) Terrace with complicated topiary, just off the railway. [5]
- 23) It might be that initially you have to employ this pronoun. [4]

Contributions:
 Crosswords by Stanley Scott
 Nonogram by Mihaly Ormay
 Sudokus, Boxes, Minesweeper by Ameena Hassan
 Leaderboard by Raluca Anna-Maria Constantinescu
 Really cutting down on space to fit more puzzles in, if you couldn't tell! We have had a lot

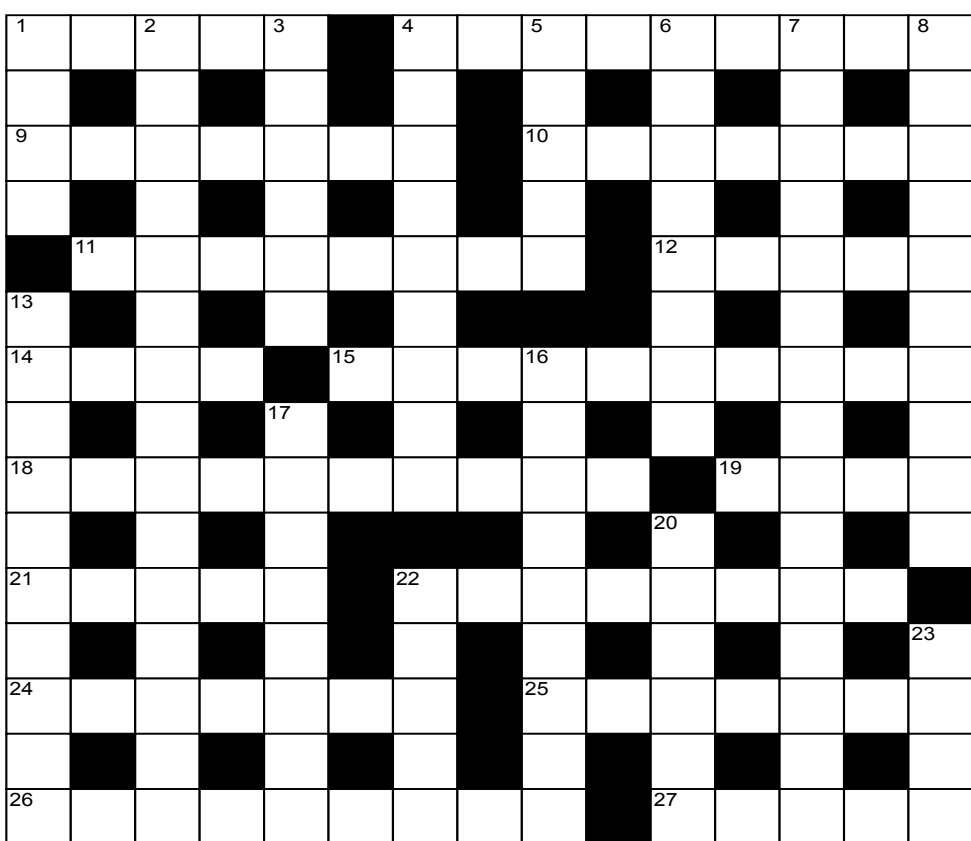
of submissions over the Autumn term, check overleaf.
Points:
 5 Cryptic Crossword
 1 Shikaku
 5 Regular Crossword
 2,3,4 Easy, Normal, Difficult sudokus
 2 Nonogram
 2 Minesweeper

Shikaku / "Boxes"

A return to my old favourite - draw lines within this square grid so that each rectangle or square contains a number that is equal to its area. The first rectangle is drawn for you on the bottom left corner.



Regular Crossword Grid



Regular Crossword Clues

Across

- 1) Posh folk. [5]
- 4) Those going against the grain. [9]
- 9) One entering adolescence. [7]
- 10) Topic of popular Kim Petras song. [7]
- 11) One's watering hole. [3, 5]
- 12) Synonym for 9-Ac. [5]
- 14) Harvest. [4]
- 15) The end of days. [10]
- 18) Forte. [10]
- 19) Adjective for an exam or tradition. [4]
- 21) Singer Goulding. [5]
- 22) In a relationship, not settling. [8]
- 24) Ultra-rich businesspeople. [7]
- 25) Miss the boat. [4, 3]
- 26) Had a hunch. [9]
- 27) Artist's stand. [5]

Down

- 1) Kind of parasitic worm. [4]
- 2) Where you might fish for salmon. [10, 5]
- 3) Olfactorily insulting. [6]
- 4) Of a local government. [9]
- 5) Opinionated, loudly so. [5]
- 6) Classical performances. [8]
- 7) Of the same age. [15]
- 8) Ladyfingers in a trifle, or pork in a pie. [3, 2, 5]
- 13) Academic institution's brochure. [10]
- 16) Verbally harassed. [9]
- 17) Scaled fruit. [4, 4]
- 20) Abstinent. [6]
- 22) Consequence of failure. [5]
- 23) And others, academically speaking. [2, 2.]

THE HEADLINES THIS WEEK...

Pull your finger out! WHO can't be bothered to come up with a name for yet another covid strain

A year on from the capitol riot and polls on "How hot was the QAnon Shaman?" remain strong as ever

UK Health Security Agency deploys new 'Test and Trace 2' app to help track the location of home testing kits

Somehow, some-fucking-way, Boris Johnson's flat refurbishment is still on the front page sometimes

Ghislaine Maxwell 'guilty' verdict blows the mind of absolutely no one



ARIES

This week the light at the end of the tunnel is radioactive



TAURUS

This week you don't relapse, you prolapse



GEMINI

This week the cows finally come home and you can stop oh thank the lord you can stop



CANCER

This week your pyramid scheme becomes trigonal pyramidal



LEO

This week, after insisting for ages you'd cross it when you came to it, you burn down the bridge and turn around



VIRGO

This week a government typo leads to a nationwide, three week lockdown



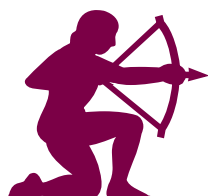
LIBRA

This week you take the midnight train to south Shropshire



SCORPIO

This week your sleep paralysis demon morphs from Mariah Carey back into the far less scary δαίμονας the Destroyer



SAGITTARIUS

This week you're just short of putting down that deposit for a house but opt for avocado on toast instead



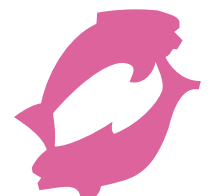
CAPRICORN

This week a sly wink and a bite of the lip do little to mitigate for the fact you "just forgot" about your girlfriend's birthday



AQUARIUS

This week the maxim "first among equals" finally makes sense when you try to rate the government on their looks

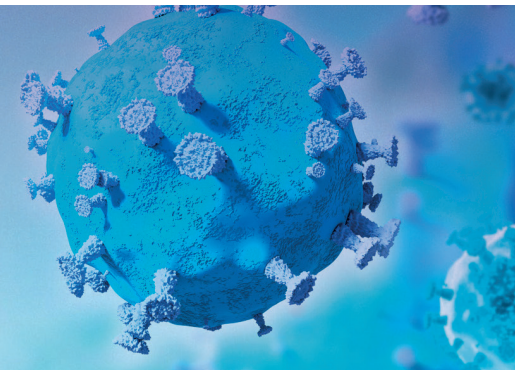


PISCES

This week you try to get cryogenically frozen, but you're so damn hot it doesn't work and you pass away

Your Union

UNION SERVICES UPDATE



The Union over the next few weeks

Due to the increasing number of Covid infections, including within the College, the Union has decided to take a number of steps to reduce the risk of Covid impacting on our members and staff ahead of the Christmas break. This is particularly because close contacts of anyone infected with the new variant, Omicron, are required to isolate for 10 days regardless of whether they have been vaccinated. This would impact on people's plans to spend Christmas with family or friends, as well as those who are travelling for their holidays.

- We are postponing the "Step into Christmas" club night on 10 December. We will get in touch directly with those who have purchased tickets to organise refunds.
- Union staff will move to working from home from Thursday 9 December. Staff are still available to deal with your queries remotely.
- We will work with clubs and societies to help them consider their own activities and how to minimise risk to those taking part in line with College guidance. We will ensure the College is able to provide advice and support in relation to these planned events.
- Our shops on Sherfield Walkway will remain open until 15 December, with online orders being fulfilled until 21 December.

- Our bars will remain open until 18 December as planned. We will continue to operate the bars as normal but are encouraging customers to remain seated and use the app to order, in order to reduce the risk of transmission.
- Our Advice Centre will remain open until 17 December as planned, operating remotely.
- Our Helpdesk will be open to Wednesday 15 December, but as there will be less staff on site they may be busy and take a little longer to help you.
- The Union offices and building will close on 22 December until 4 January, as planned. Further information on opening dates and times will be on our website, in case you need to access or store equipment.

We understand that many students will have concerns, the measures we are taking are to minimize potential risk of disruption to holiday plans, so everyone can have a safe and enjoyable break. They are not in response to any known cases of Omicron within the Union.



What a term! It was incredible to see you roaming the campus again, have fun in our bars and engage in all sorts of activities. We love having you back and we can't wait for the new year to start. But first...let's all have a well deserved break and recharge our batteries.

We know that many of you are staying in London over winter break, and for some this will be your first time away from home at Christmas. College has put together a number of events and resources to keep you engaged and entertained over the next few weeks!

Check out their support page here: imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/support-during-covid-19/support-over-the-christmas-break.

We hope you all have a wonderful, restful winter break and you're take care of yourselves. To those celebrating Christmas - the Union wishes you and your loved ones a happy, happy holiday. Here's to a wonderful festive season in joy and good health and a happy new year!

With love,
Your Union

Your Union



History Soc - Leicester Square Christmas Market trip SUNDAY 12 DECEMBER 2021 18:00 - 21:00

History Society will be taking a trip down to the Christmas Market in Leicester Square on Sunday the 12th of December. If you fancy a change of pace from our more history-focused events, this could be right up your street.

imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on/event/10428



Cinema Winter All-Nighter

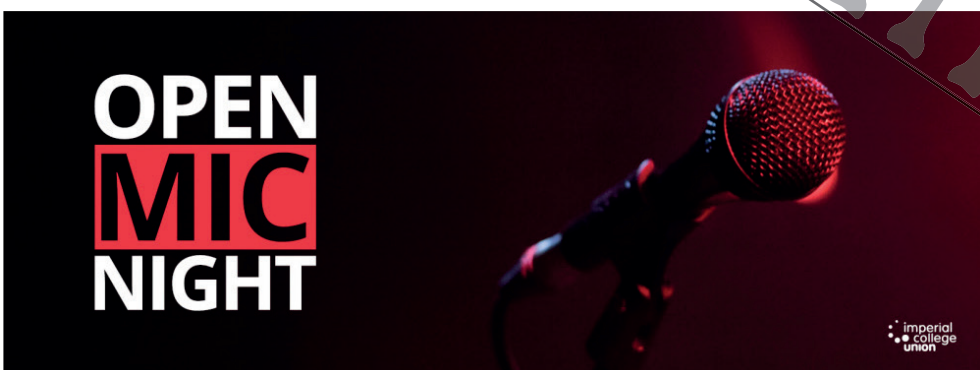
TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2021 18:00 - 08:30

Union Concert Hall (2nd Floor Union Building above 568)

Come along to the Cinema All-Nighter! With 6 films back to back, do you have the stamina for this challenge? ;)

Tickets & details

at: imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on/event/10400

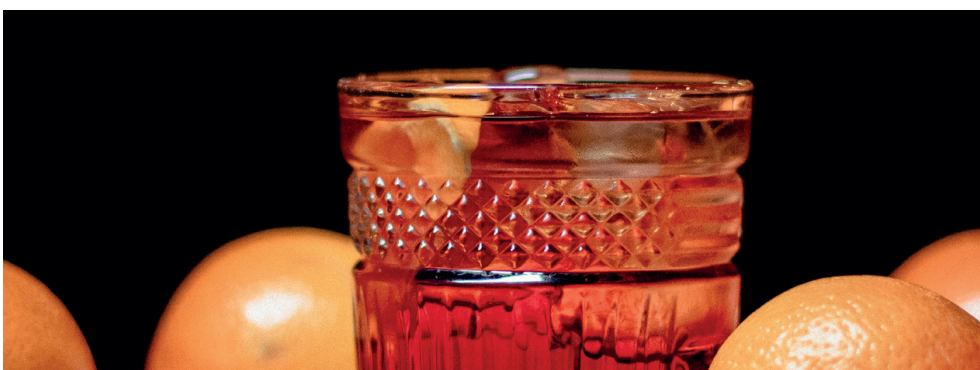


Open Mic Night

TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2021 19:00 - 22:30, Union Bar

Join us on the 14th December for another wonderful open mic night. We encourage anyone with a musical streak to get involved, whether you're a seasoned performer, or this would be your first time playing in front of others (kudos!)

imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on/event/10390



Negroni Night

TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2021 19:00 - 21:30, h-bar

Join the reps of Tarquin's at H-Bar: They will be mixing up some different Negroni's for you to try out. It's going to be gin-credible!

Tickets at:

imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on/event/10424

More info & events: imperialcollegeunion.org/whatson

MUSIC

Edited by: ROSIE MILLNS &
TARA PAL CHAUDHURI

DON'T MISS THE RADIO SHOW - NUSACH, THE INTERNATIONAL JAZZ

SHOW

WHETHER YOU'RE LOOKING FOR CHILL STUDY MUSIC, OR TRYING TO MAKE YOUR PRE-DRINKS CLASSIER, NUSACH HAS YOU COVERED. TUNE IN TO IC RADIO EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 7PM FOR A TASTE OF INTERNATIONAL JAZZ.



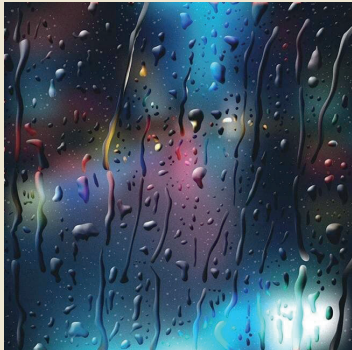
Photo: Envato elements

Single of the Week

I'm Not Crying You're Crying by Spector

Technically, this single came out a month ago, but with their third album *Now or Whenever* out today, we have this on repeat.

This laidback number is out of place in the context of Spector's discography. Even the heavy synths of their other slow tracks like 'Kyoto Garden' are gone. But catchy hooks combined with Fred Macpherson's witty lyrics give this song a feel that make it unmistakably a Spector song.



TODAY IN MUSIC HISTORY

IN 1973, IRISH SONGWRITER DAMIEN RICE IS BORN.

IN 2012, BEYONCÉ AND JAY Z HAVE THEIR FIRST BABY, BLUE IVY CARTER.

IN 2015, DAVID BOWIE MADE HIS LAST PUBLIC APPEARANCE. HE WAS ATTENDING THE OPENING NIGHT OF LAZARUS, A MUSICAL INSPIRED BY THE 1963 NOVEL THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH. BOWIE WROTE THE MUSIC AND LYRICS TO THE MUSICAL.



Feature

Felix Music's Albums of the Year



View online here!

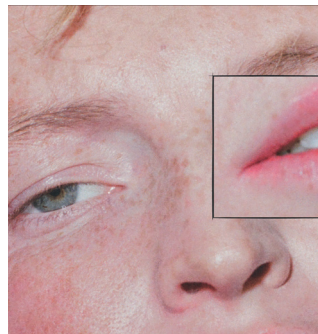
Written by Felix Music

The music writers for Felix talk about their favourite albums of 2021

2021 saw the return of live music as well as some incredible album releases. The year that brought us *Red (Taylor's Version)* would also bring us *Calvacade*, as well as some truly awful releases (I'm talking about you, *Music of the Spheres*). Our writers discuss their top five favourite releases of the last 12 months.

Joe Riordan

Loves Hippo Campus, loves ABBA more



Dandelion by The Greeting Committee

If you look back in your complete collection of Felix issues to 1780 from October 2021, you'll find a full page of reasons why this is one of my top 5 albums, and possibly my favourite album of 2021. *Dandelion* is a beautiful breakup album, full of rage and compassion, coming from such a personal place that it seems as if lead singer Addie Sartoni is reading you her diary.



to hell with it by PinkPantheress

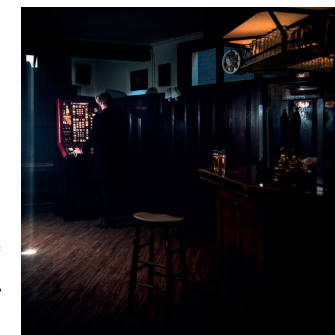
From releasing snippets of her songs on TikTok at the start of the year to releasing a full album, having multiple singles in the Top 40, and finishing with a sold-out tour, PinkPantheress has had a whirlwind year. Clocking in at just over 18 minutes, the album is short but so sweet. Made in her uni bedroom in London, it is relatable and danceable all at the same time.



Take The Sadness Out Of Saturday Night by Bleachers

The long-awaited 3rd Bleachers album comes 4 years after my favourite album ever, *Gone Now*, and it lives up to the hype. The man behind Bleachers, Jack Antonoff, has reasonable excuses for the wait – he has worked with Lorde and Taylor Swift on their recent albums and the influences can be heard. The sounds of *Folklore* and *Solar Power* simplify the soundscapes of *Take The Sadness*, leading to beautiful,

personal songs that connect with each other in a way only Antonoff can achieve.



track on the album is 'Hope's A Never Ending Funeral': a soft, swelling piano ballad that completely turns the album on its head, shows the band's versatility, and leaves the album on an optimistic note, again rounding off the past year well.



This Time Next Year by Kid Kapichi

Kid Kapichi are the best new punk band for years. This debut album has all the anger that it would be impossible not to relate to after the past year. However, the standout

The Yearbook by Baby Queen

Pop's rising star Baby Queen is set to support Olivia Rodrigo on her upcoming tour, a feat that is held up by this album. Alternating between spoken word and singing, *The Yearbook* is the most personal album of the year for me, covering mental health, drug abuse and relationships experienced by Baby Queen's Bella Latham. Self-described as 'anti-pop', Latham juxtaposes these issues with upbeat pop synths and guitars that create incredibly catchy tracks.

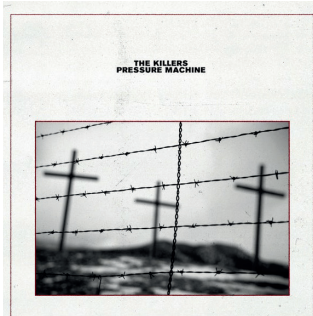
Tara Pal Chaudhuri

Still in love with Alex Turner in 2022



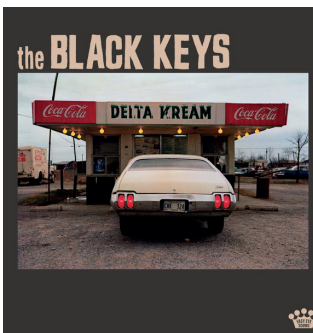
Hidden Gem by The Blue Stones

The Blue Stones, who won me over with 'Rolling with the Punches' from their 2015 debut album, developed their refined blues-rock-in-a-pop-outfit sound with this one. Their production is a step higher and it comes through when Tarek Jafar's voice equally complements the smooth and sultry 'Careless' as well as the guitar-heavy and gritty 'Grim'. Honestly, it was the sexiest album to come out of 2021.



Pressure Machine by The Killers

Expect nothing less than a massive genre detour, driven by Brandon Flower's sudden realisation that he's never sung about what he knows best – growing up in the “West Hills” of Nephi, Utah. Even though I relate to nothing in this folk rock album about a blossoming opioid epidemic in a deeply religious state, listening to it is like walking a nearly invasive path through Flower's memoirs. I suppose it's best described as the responsibility you feel when someone trusts you with something very close to them.



Delta Kream by The Black Keys

The number of times I've played this album through my house to let this cool nonchalance take over and block out the rest of the world is embarrassing. It's Dan Auerbach and Patrick Carney's covers of old country-blues rock standards belonging to the Mississippi Delta. Does it make a difference that the Black Keys grew up listening to this music? Of course it does. I love that I can listen to their versions of what they listened to – there's something incredibly meaningful about it that I can't put into words. If the first track, ‘Crawling Kingsnake’, doesn't reel you in, ‘Going Down South’ will do just as well.



Blue Weekend by Wolf Alice

This one became a favourite the moment I heard Ellie Rowsell whisper-singing carefully enunciated lyrics in the first track of the album, crescendo-ing into the sort of sound you would imagine a thousand seated people slowly standing up to. While a large fraction of the album is atmospheric, I love how Rowsell sings about her sensitivity and vulnerabilities in curtly whispered sentences in ‘Smile’. There's enough in this album to supplement nights of heartbreak, anger and just general romantic angst.



Terra Firma by Tash Sultana

As most things by Tash Sultana, this album is another world of her psychedelic reggae-rock sounds, strung together by her characteristic (for the lack of a better word) way electric and acoustic guitar layering. Yes, she's a mad multi-instrumentalist, but what stood out to me the most was her voice. ‘Dream My Life Away’, featuring John Cashman, reminded me how much emotion her

voice can carry, even though a feel-good tropical track like ‘Pretty Lady’ shows another smooth, seductive side of her that is just as appealing.

Matija Conic

The only DJ with revoked aux-cord privileges



OK Human by Weezer

Yeah, I know. If you asked me last year, I would not believe you if you told me my top album would be a Weezer record, but it is. This project is short, sweet, and impeccably produced, with a lovely mix of orchestral sounds and strings creating a blissful and happy vibe that very much kept me going through the depressing start of 2021. With no dull Weezer guitar riffs or lazy Rivers Cuomo lyricism, *OK Human* has completely exceeded any of my expectations. This is no doubt Weezer's best record to date, and judging by their second release this year, they've gone back to being shit already. Either way, what an incredible album. Weezer will never be this good again.



Tyron by Slowthai

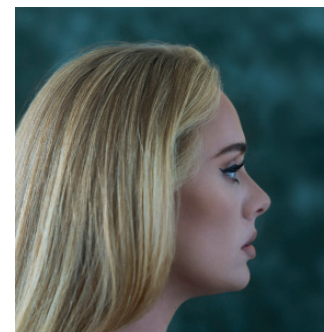
Slowthai's second release has all the best elements that made his breakout debut visceral, raw and exciting. On the first disc, slowthai unloads his anger and aggression, with slick and energetic delivery unique to his rapping style and tracks with Skepta and ASAP Rocky that hit as hard as ever. What really makes this project, however, is the second disc, which features a change in tempo, transitioning into a more melancholic, emotionally intense atmosphere, with some lovely features from artists like James Blake and Deb Never. Tracks like ‘feel away’, ‘adhd’ and ‘I tried’ are thoughtful, touching, and sad, with slowthai displaying some of his best lyricism to date.



By The Time I Get To Phoenix by Injury Reserve

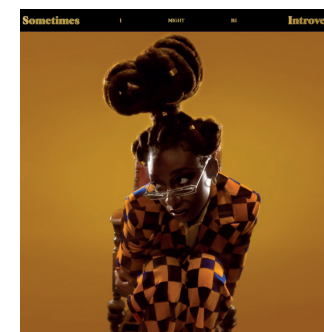
Arguably the heaviest listen on this list, *By The Time I Get To Phoenix* is disorienting, noisy, cacophonous, and absolutely terrifying and blood-boiling at times. As much as I'm in love with what Injury Reserve has done on this project, I get an existential crisis every time I put tracks like ‘Ground Zero’ or ‘Top Picks for You’ on. The entire album is so far from anything commonly referred to as music, while still walking this line perfectly, without sounding pretentious or experimental for its own sake. Alongside legends like Peggy, Parker Corey has definitely made the cut as one of my favourite producers. Moreover, Ritchie's and

Stepa's rapping on this cut is as memorable as ever. Honestly, I could not hype this project up enough. Injury Reserve has knocked it out the park.



30 by Adele

The single mum, divorced queen has returned with, yes, a divorce record. Being about divorce, this album honestly isn't too relatable thematically, but oh my god does it make me tear up at times. Adele's powerful vocals running over beautiful piano melodies create an absolutely heart-wrenching vibe. The album reads like an introspective journey, Adele's meditation on her overconsuming sadness. The sometimes awkwardly long cuts that drag out longer than you'd expect them to make it feel like the album wasn't really made for us, but for her. In a weird way, this makes the sadness even more potent for me, as it comes across as messy, personal and raw. I'm truly enamoured with this album. No doubt her most mature effort so far.



Sometimes I Might Be Introvert by Little Simz

I'm really glad Little Simz is finally gaining traction in the hip hop scene, with hard hitting production and flows very few artists in the rap game can match. After the darker and heavier ‘Grey area’, Simz reminds us of her stylistic versatility in her new record this year that revives a more soulful, glamorous and lush sound present on her debut. The teaser track ‘Introvert’ is easily my favourite single of the year, with epic horns, beautiful strings and an elegant song structure that draws you in completely. The whole album is catchy to its core, with tracks like ‘Point and kill’ also showing African influences. Honestly, this project is so tasteful and unique and I'm really excited to see where she takes us next.

Rosie Millns

Never left their emo phase



Calvacade by black midi

From the opening drums of ‘John L’, *Calvacade* immerses you in the world of black midi. The album is almost a subversion on their post-punk influenced debut *Schlagenheim*, though its dissonant virtuosic passages and intense feelings of trepidation remain. Without sounding pretentious, one must hear *Calvacade* live to truly experience this album, even if just to witness drummer Morgan Simpson at his craft. The rhythmic cohesion displayed by the band throughout fast-paced improvisatory-esque riffs, squealing saxophone movements, and syncopated stabs

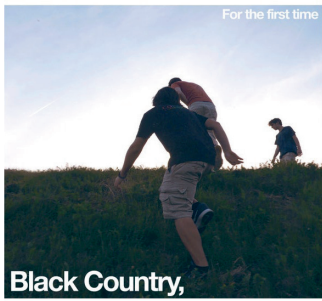
MUSIC

is insane. *Calvacade* is like a pick-and-mix of musical attributes to be blown away by. One thing is for sure. Whatever sound black midi explore explodes in the scene shortly after, just as they are about to move on and traverse new sonic avenues. black midi are pioneers as ever.



Blue Weekend by Wolf Alice

I worry that one day Wolf Alice will have a release that I don't cherish as much as all their work so far. This worry wasn't realised with their third album, *Blue Weekend*, which is perhaps their most emotive work yet. The album feels like a film soundtrack, ranging from introspective and anxious mutterings to explosive rock numbers. If you are familiar with Wolf Alice's previous work you may be surprised by how comparatively subdued *Blue Weekend* is, choosing to highlight singer Ellie Rowsell's magnetic voice and evocative lyrics exploring different relationships. I won't be getting my Wolf Alice tattoo covered up any time soon.



For the First Time by Black Country, New Road

Hailing from the same Windmill circles as black midi, 7-piece Black Country, New Road's highly anticipated debut did not disappoint. They are a creative ensemble to say the least, with saxophone and violin alongside a traditional rock-band arrangement. *For the First Time* is an experimental and jazz-tinged reinvention of genres such as post-punk and prog, featuring indulgent instrumental passages throughout to highlight each member of the band which perfectly complement frontman Isaac Wood's broody lyrics. Their sophomore album, *Ants from Up There*, has already been announced for February, and from the sound of the singles will be on my 2022 version of this list.

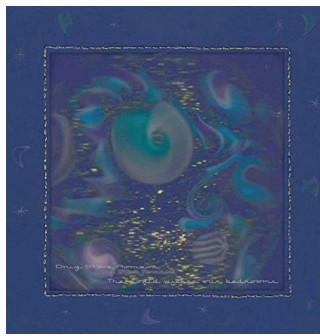


if we could make it go quiet by Girl in Red

Girl in Red has been breaking our hearts since she released 'we fell in love in october' in 2018. With her debut album, *if we could make it go quiet*, she moves away from the bedroom pop that brought her fame towards more indie synth-pop sounds, reminiscent of beadadoobe. The album traverses topics such as relationships, mental health, and queerness, displaying brutal honesty throughout. 'Serotonin' is the big track on this album, but my personal favourite is the gentle '..

The world within our bedrooms by Drug Store Romeos

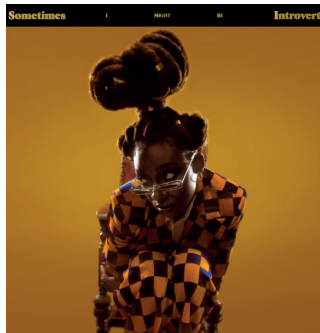
Including this album feels almost like a cheat – whilst it was released in 2021, I didn't actually get round to listening to it until this week, and boy do I regret it.



The 15-track album is 48 minutes of blissfully woozy tracks. The album isn't just ethereal shoegaze tracks, with the pace picking up slightly in 'Vibrate and the Beach Fossils-esque 'Bow Wow', though the mood throughout the album is constant. You can picture every single track on this album being performed by the 3-piece at the Roadhouse at the end of a *Twin Peaks* episode as the credits start to roll. A dreamy glimpse into the minds of Drug Store Romeos, *The world within our bedrooms* makes for a gorgeous listening experience.

Pallavi Ojba

Invented sad witch Autumn



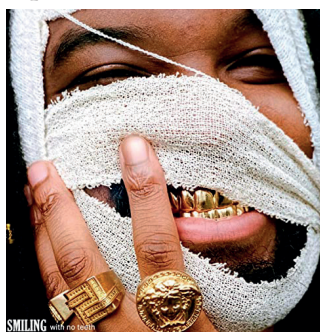
Sometimes I Might Be Introvert by Little Simz

Maybe I'm biased, because we're both Londoners, but I think we're looking at one of the greatest artists of a generation. Little Simz has gone from strength to strength, releasing *Stillness in Wonderland*, *GREY Area*, and now, *Sometimes I Might Be Introvert*, documenting her incredible growth as a female rapper. This album shoots up in production value – the dramatic orchestra matches the intensity of her introspection, telling a compelling story of evolution and identity. Simz's charisma and talent shines in an unmistakable labour of love. This is the kind of album you listen to from start to finish. No skips.



Black to the Future by Sons of Kemet

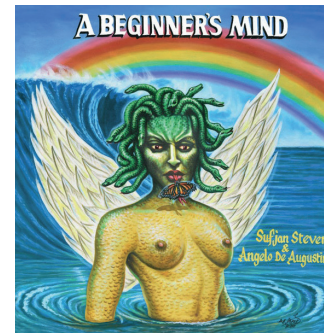
An album of unrelenting afrobeats for 51 minutes straight, Sons of Kemet are at the top of their game and not afraid to show it. Shabaka Hutchings and Theon Cross create this magnetic dialogue between the saxophone and tuba that is entirely unique. Kojey Radical has such an incredible feature on 'Hustle', it's one of the best tracks on the album and maybe one of the best tracks of the year. This group is one to watch. Pro tip: if you want to experience them at their best, see them live.



Smiling With No Teeth by Genesis Owusu

It's rare that a debut album from a relatively unknown artist smashes it out of the park, but Genesis Owusu is absolutely a rarity. *Smiling With No Teeth* adamantly refuses to be boxed into a category. Its dizzying switching of

genres is effortless, playful, and refreshing. Reminiscent of artists like Thundercat, Owusu isn't afraid to make you cackle with his lyrics either. My personal favourite: "Every day is a holiday if you can't tell the time". Words to live by.



A Beginner's Mind by Sufjan Stevens and Angelo De Augustine

Sufjan Stevens knows exactly how to simultaneously bathe you in warmth and make you cry. Stevens has absolutely found his strength, with soothing harmonies and lilting guitar riffs. *A Beginner's Mind* is a wonderful comfort in what has been a challenging year for many. Stevens' strength is in his story telling, which is present in the immense world building of tracks like 'Lacrimae' and 'Olympus'. This collaboration is so perfect, Stevens and Angelo De Augustine seem to be made for each other.

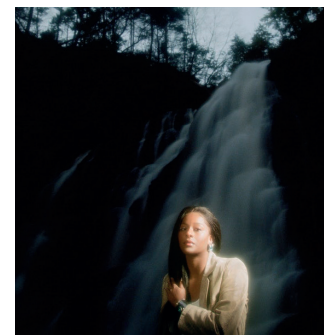


The House is Burning by Isaiah Rashad

From *The Sun's Tirade* to *The House is Burning*, Isaiah Rashad's ability to sequence an album remains faultless. The transition from 'Headshots (4r Da Locals)' to 'All Herb' is so smooth it's mesmerising. Rashad's unmistakable talent shows in this album's hypnotic beats, incredible lyricism, and mellow atmosphere. The features blend seamlessly into his distinctive vibe; it really shows how clear Rashad's vision was here.

Ben Batemen

Self-described "slut for post-rock"



Fatigue by L'Rain

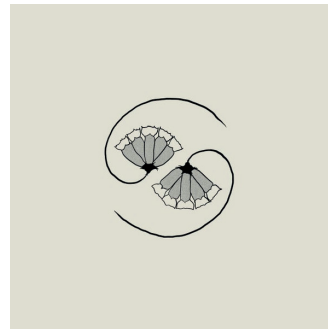
New York musician Taja Cheek outdid herself on her second record. This album deserves a review all by itself (maybe I'll get to it in the New Year!) but for now, I'll settle for saying that this album was on repeat basically all summer. I was addicted to the strange, flowing melodies with the thumping beat in the background, the harsh cuts from song to song, and the warbling discomfort on certain tracks (I'm looking at you, 'Kill Self'). Quite easily my favourite album of the year, even if it's relatively short.



Flying Dream 1 by Elbow

I already wrote about this album a month or so ago – my opinion hasn't really changed all that much. The tl;dr is that I love the homely feel of the

album, the nostalgia dripping from every song, as well as a bittersweet fondness for places and people who've been and gone in the band members' lifetimes. Some hauntingly beautiful songs hidden in there.



G_d's Pee AT STATE'S END! by Godspeed You! Black Emperor

It's no secret to my friends that I'm just a slut for post-rock. There are no surprises then that I love this record - not as much as some of the Canadian

group's other releases, but it's still a spectacular record. The mood traverses hope and optimism, and the gritty nihilism that the group have captured in previous records. It's the same kind of thing one expects from a GY!BE record, but that's hardly a bad thing! A must for post-rock fans.



New Long Leg by Dry Cleaning

I'd never thought that I'd laugh this much at an album; humour isn't something you often think to link with music. But with Dry Cleaning's vocalist, Florence Shaw, leading us

on a snarky, sarcastic, and intimate journey through her mind à la Fleabag, I always find myself chuckling along to her dry, witty, spoken-word singing. Shaw's comments about reverse-platform shoes or needing to be weird and hide for a bit resonate with me plenty too. All in all, a fun and funny (yet still very human and emotional) album that's full of musical treats too!



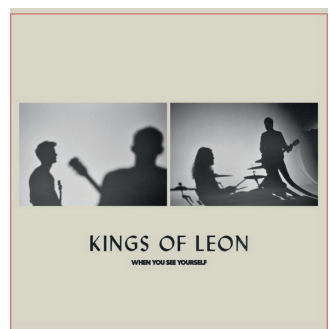
Calvacade by black midi

The first music I heard from Black Midi was a single from this album. It was 'John L', and I loved it so goddamn much. I was so stoked for *Calvacade*, and the second single made me even more excited. The

actual thing was nearly as good as I hoped, perhaps let down by a few tracks in the second half, but still a fantastic record, held high by the first 4 tracks. Had it been an EP, it might have been a perfect record, but we'll settle for a very good LP instead.

Yunke Zhou

Knows every word to every High School Musical song



When You See Yourself by Kings of Leon

This album is shifted in focus, telling an intriguing collection of unfamiliar stories with just the right amount of familiarity in their voice and style (particularly 'Golden

Restless Age', which brought back all the chills). It is more winding, less explosive, and I am so glad I listened to it for the first time in the prime environment of a late-night bus ride home.



Blue Banisters by Lana del Rey

Listening to *Blue Banisters*, this album feels so immediately and obviously personal. Unlike many of Lana's previous albums, *Blue Banisters* sheds that

certain intoxicated-summertime, femme-fatale-esque persona often associated with her. It delves into COVID isolations, BLM protests, and bursts when I least expected it.



Untourable Album by Men I Trust

This album makes me want to dress up to stay indoors on a foggy day, lie on the floor, and watch the windows slowly steam up until the outside world is entirely blurred out. The

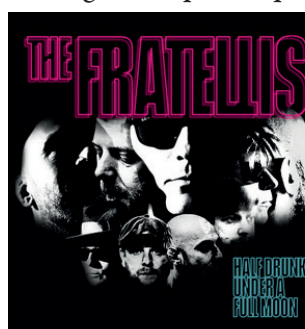
band apparently (but cleverly) took advantage of the pandemic situation, and purposely recorded the album without thinking of how to perform it live. Their usually heavy basslines are toned down, sharpness is muted, and tracks seem to play on in uniformity, enveloping times of solitude with layers upon layers of comfort. *Untourable Album* was very much made for this pandemic in every way possible.



CINEMA by The Marias

An absolute chef's kiss. This album feels seductive and comfortably ambitious by nature, but in no way can be generalised so. It fluctuates within and between songs, with vocals and instrumentals

intermingling and constantly transitioning effortlessly, like characters and plotlines in a movie. The first and last tracks of *CINEMA* embody the album in an even more vivid and creative near-cinematic experience – alluding, atmospheric, poetic.



Half Drunk Under a Full Moon by The Fratellis

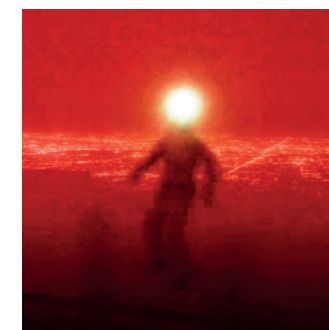
From the previous outwardly and flouncing style of *Costello Music*, *Half Drunk Under a Full Moon* seems to convey more of the band's personal ideas. The album

continues their signature style of being intensely catchy and being 'predictable' in melodies, but is eclectic in style from song to song – pop, folk-rock, rockabilly. In combination with new brass and string elements, and a higher relatability that can be felt through their

lyrics, this album seems to be a product of creative experimentation that could potentially pave the way for the band to find their unique style.

Giovanni França

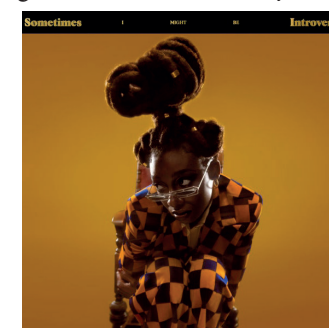
His negative review made Coldplay announce retirement



By The Time I Get To Phoenix by Injury Reserve

It is very hard to describe this one. The anguish, the uncertainty, the pain infused in this made up for one of the deepest musical experiences I have ever had. *By the Time I Get*

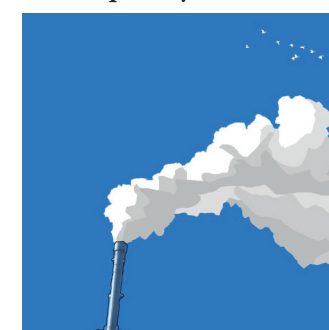
to Phoenix was released one year after, but recorded before, the passing of one-third of the Arizonan trio, rapper Stepa J. Groggs. However, the project is not just an unintentional farewell letter, but one full essay on challenges the human mind must face, whether it is grief, depression, schizophrenia, or just simple personal growth. It is one heavy and potent listen.



Sometimes I Might Be Introvert by Little Simz

I already talked a bit about Little Simz's latest album back in October, and it deserves to be mentioned again. The grandiose instrumentals are some of the cleanest in

hip hop, and the rapping is pristine, with versatile flows and thought-provoking lines. Telling her life story, the rapper addresses themes that are extremely relevant in today's society, culminating in a strong message of black feminism. *Sometimes I Might Be Introvert* is a confident step forward for an artist that is building up a massive wave. Give a listen to this accessible project and keep an eye out for her.



To See the Next Part of the Dream by Parannoul

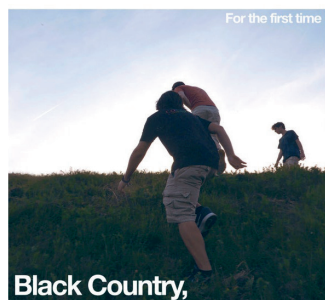
Parannoul is a one-person band from South Korea. They broke through alternative music circles with this project, an hour-long emo album with heavy shoegaze influence. The

lyrics are (unsurprisingly) introspective and angsty, but sincere and absorbing. Indeed, the themes approached are quite relatable for a young public, and alongside the thickly layered guitars and keys, they create an intimate and nostalgic atmosphere. It is an album that will make you think of the past, as Parannoul pours their heart out about their deepest insecurities.

For the First Time by Black Country, New Road

With the release of their debut album, Black Country, New Road became one of the most talked-about bands in the music world. The young group is bringing a refreshing take on post-punk poetry, accompanied by intricate instrumentals – somehow making order out

MUSIC



Black Country,
New Road

Photo from Unsplash by @salyro

of their seven-piece band. I always find something new when listening to For the first time, whether it is by digging through the layers of music or by finding meaning in a cryptic metaphor. This project enables you to have a peek at the very best of the London scene, which I strongly recommend supporting live.



??? by Anthony1

I'll say it straight up: this album is not for everyone. But that is what makes it special. Chilean producer Anthony1 has developed a highly compressed, crushed-up style of trance, which invokes some kind of catharsis within its hypnotic repetition. Having only six tracks, the album runs through about 33 minutes

and mostly follows the standard trance song structure. What I find beautiful in the project is the Icarian way in which Anthony1 pushes the limit of his sound design, transforming his songs into audible versions of deep-fried JPEGs – but in a good way, I promise.

Check out issues 1779, 1780, and 1782 to read some of our reviews of these top albums!

Satire

Man Sulks at New Year's Party After Not Getting the Aux

Written by [Rosie Millns](#) Music Editor

Yes, exactly like the meme, yes, it's a slow news day

Attendees of a New Year's Eve party report awkwardly averting their gaze from their friend who stood in the corner of the room for the entire party with his headphones on.

Friends say he asked for the aux in the first 40 minutes of the party, to which everybody blithered that "a playlist had already been made", "everybody was really enjoying the vibe as it was" and "maybe just possibly folk-punk wasn't the vibe for a New Year's Eve party". Sources report that he slipped his headphones on when Doja Cat played, and spent the rest of the night hovering in the corner by the aux cord drinking Red Stripe on his own.

Partygoers who voiced concern over the guy alone in the corner were warned by friends that they would get sucked into a conversation about the differences between shoegaze and dreampop if they went over to check up on him.

After midnight had passed, friends tried to wish him a happy New Year but could just hear the muffled sound of 'Waltz #2 (XO)' from the headphones around his neck as they chatted. Those who had approached him made haste to leave after they heard Red House Painters playing from his headphones.

Attendees were questioned on why they were so indifferent and heartless towards the plight of a friend having a bad time at the party.

"New Year's Eve 2019, we let him have the aux for a bit, mostly so that he would stop creeping girls out by telling them the Pac-Man line from Scott Pilgrim. It was getting embarrassing for all of us," said a close friend, who asked to remain anonymous. "As soon as he had the aux he exclusively queued up songs by Xiu Xiu and Slint. Man, I love Xiu Xiu but it just didn't fit the vibe." He paused, gazing into the distance with distress visible on his brow. "We entered 2020 listening to Neutral Milk Hotel. I kind of blame that for everything that went wrong that year."

Music News

2022 Grammys Postponed Indefinitely

Written by [Rosie Millns](#) Music Editor

It is the second year in a row that the awards ceremony will not take place

The 2022 Grammy Awards have been postponed for a second year in a row due to rising cases of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, it has been announced. The event was scheduled to take place in just over three weeks time.

The 2021 Grammy Awards, which were also postponed, were held in March last year as a hybrid between recorded and live performances. The ceremony was drastically scaled down, and hosts had hoped that a normal live ceremony could occur this year. A new date has not yet been announced.

The 2022 Grammys will be the first year with a reformed voting process following criticisms of corruption regarding the previous system, over which The Weeknd famously boycotted the awards show for life. Changes made include the removal of anonymous and unaccountable committees which previously

decided the nominations for key categories.

Nominees for the 2022 Grammys include huge names such as ABBA, Billie Eilish, Lil Nas X, and Justin Bieber. Jon Batiste, the jazz keyboardist who wrote the soundtrack to Pixar film *Soul*, dominates the awards with an incredible 11 nominations, whilst Olivia Rodrigo leads with 7 nominations, including in all major categories, for her debut album *Sour*. Billie Eilish could add to the 7 Grammys she already has with her further 7 nominations, and could break records if she wins record of the year for the third year in the row.

The decision to postpone comes alongside disruption to other awards ceremonies, such as the Sundance film festival, and the Critics Choice awards. UK music ceremonies such as the Brit Awards, planned for 8th February, have not been postponed despite fears over rising cases across the country.

Coldplay promise to stop making music after 2025

Written by [Rosie Millns](#) Music Editor

I know. The only thing worse than Coldplay is people who don't like Coldplay and have an incessant need to tell you in a pretentious rant how much they hate Coldplay. Once upon a time hating Coldplay told people that you were edgy, but it has now become the equivalent of sharing a meme from 2010: it's a bit cringe, the joke is overdone, and it leaves the same stale taste in your mouth that you inexplicably develop after watching a film with Adam Sandler in it. I traipse a delicate line in writing this article, during which I promise to try my hardest to not slip into a pretentious rant.

Lead singer of Coldplay Chris Martin announced on the Radio 2 over Christmas that in 2025, the final Coldplay album will come out, and after that they will never release music again. The announcement comes after Martin said that Coldplay would stop releasing music after their 12th album. With nine albums released, that gives three to go in three years.

That doesn't mean Coldplay are breaking up though. The band plan to tour on their previously released music. With many citing Coldplay's 4th studio album,

Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends, as the last Coldplay album they enjoyed, perhaps they should have made that decision five albums ago.

Their decision to only tour comes three years after they announced they would not tour until they could do so in a sustainable way. Despite their plan to plant trees for sold tickets, and use flooring that generates electricity when concertgoers jump, this is a complete U-turn from a band that acknowledge environmentally detrimental aspects of touring: estimates place kinetic flooring techniques as generating less than 5% of the energy used at a typical Coldplay concert. On top of this, the band have decided to continue to use private jets. It's a hypocritical move from a band trying to place themselves at the forefront of a sustainable music industry.

Maybe by 2025 when Coldplay commit to being a touring-only band they will also commit to having genuinely sustainable tours. Or maybe they will continue desperate grabs for headline news by committing to diluted sustainability efforts and making statements about their goals as a plan for three years' time.

Reviews

A Gentleman in Moscow - Amor Towles

Sam Lovatt Editor-in-Chief

Amor Towles' New York Times bestseller 'A Gentleman in Moscow' is a book that can very literally be described as a pleasure to read. Not because of the intricacies of the plot (although there are many), or because of how gripping a page-turner it is, but because of the way it's written.

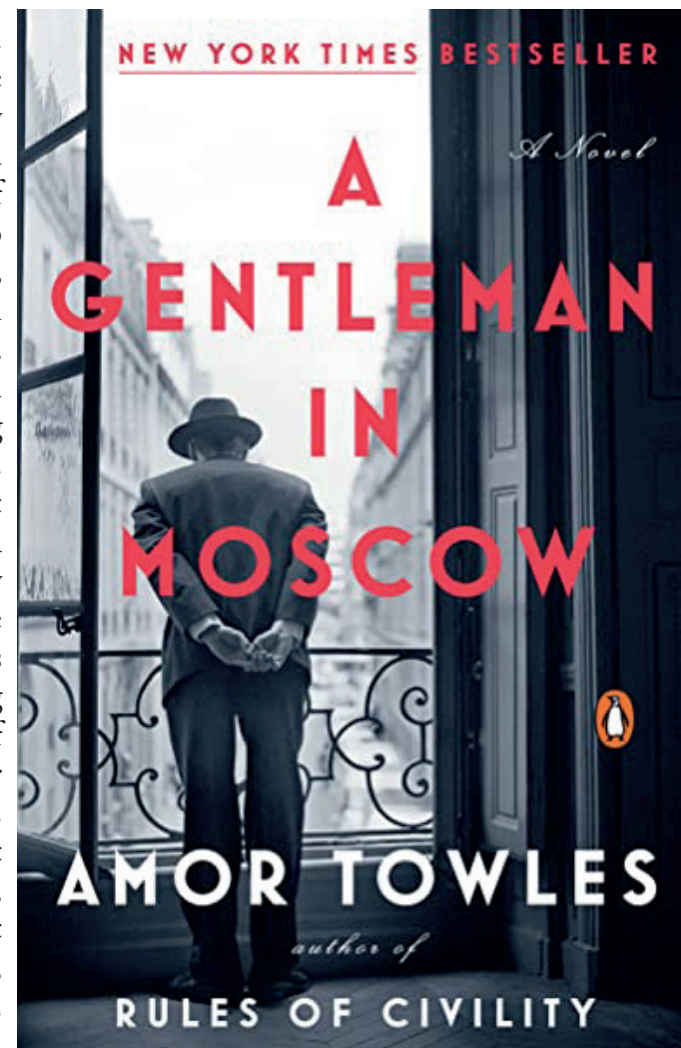
Starting in the year 1922 in, you guessed it, Moscow, Count Alexander Ilyich Rostov is on trial in a Bolshevik court for his prior status: Recipient of the Order of Saint Andrew, Member of the Jockey Club, Master of the Hunt. Born a rich gentleman, and it is not the business of gentlemen to have occupations, Rostov is sentenced at the age of 30 to indefinite confinement in the city's Metropol Hotel for his old life of bourgeoisie, with the knowledge that should he ever step outside the building's walls, he will promptly be shot. The book follows Rostov's life within the walls of the hotel over the proceeding decades, backdropped by the phenomenally turbulent external Russia as it embraces Bolshevism, industrialisation, nuclearisation, and eventually destalinisation. Our protagonist is allowed many of the luxuries of his old life whilst being eternally held in the confines thrust upon him by the state. His life looks to be monotonous until death, when he meets a young girl of 9, staying in the

hotel indefinitely under the watch of a governess.

As the book remains almost entirely centred on the Count throughout, the reader knows his personality like the back of their hand by the time they have finished the final chapter. Written in the third person, yet as if from the Count's perspective (he is always referred to as 'the Count' even 30 years after his confinement), each sentence is beautifully crafted and peppered with references to the literature and high society of the past. The Count is always the cleverest in the room, though almost every character we meet teaches him something new about the life he believes he has mastery of.

Towles' writing is astonishing. The Count doesn't write, but has been known 'to fence with a quill'. A young man courting his daughter in secret is 'clearly as villainous a viper as has ever slithered from the underbrush of Eden'. Some chapters come almost as asides, where the reader spends several pages indulging in the craft of perfecting a fish stew, or finds themselves in the orchards of the Count's youth with no character other than a honey bee having ventured there.

If you are after a thriller then this one is not for you, but I think the amalgamation of history, romance and kinship has something in it for almost anyone. And remember, even if you don't enjoy it, the surest sign of wisdom is constant cheerfulness.



All Among the Barley - Melissa Harrison

Sam Lovatt Editor-in-Chief

Melissa Harrison's *All Among the Barley* was a pretty odd choice for me, I must admit.

I work at the Amnesty bookshop in Hammersmith and come across all kinds of books every week, some of which are so archaic that they cannot be read, and some that have been published so recently it's scarcely believable that they have already been read and donated. Of all these books, *All Among the Barley* stuck out purely because of the unparalleled reviews it had received. "Book of the year" from four separate publications. "Astonishing", "Startling", "A masterpiece".

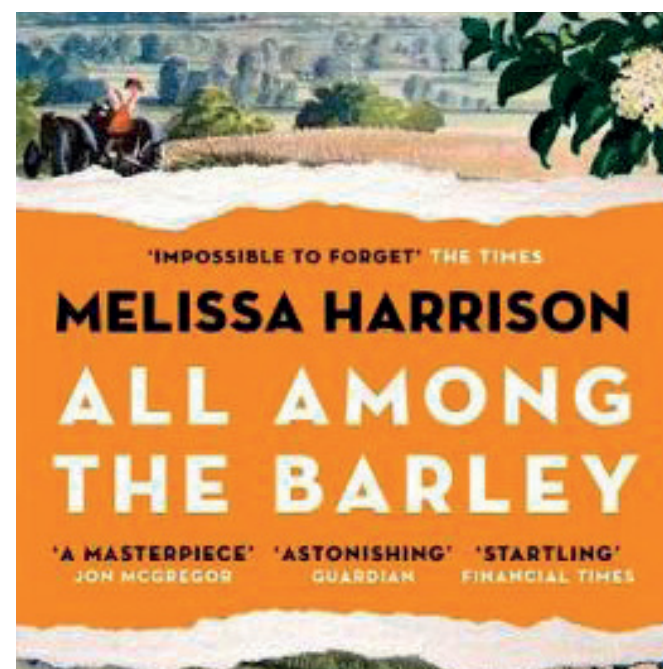
Set in 1933, the story is seen through the eyes of 14 year old Edith (Edie) Mather, daughter of a farmer in rural England where the Great War still casts a lengthy shadow. Living the normal inter-war life of a child, Edie has always struggled to make friends and spends as much time as she can reading, in between her mandatory duties of helping mother with housework or father in the field. The first interruption to this monotony is seen when the tall, beautiful, androgynous Constance Fitzallen turns up out of the blue from the city, intent on writing about the ways of

rural communities and the wholesome aspects of life that she believes city folk have lost. Breaking many of the norms seen as fundamental to being female, the impressionable Edie feels a cocktail of emotions towards Constance from the first time she meets her.

The cocktail shaker is shaken even harder when Edie interacts with Alf Rose, a boy three years her senior and son of the far richer neighbouring farmer.

The book provides a fantastic insight into the true patriarchy of communities in the '30s. Edie's mother is told she will only vote the way her husband tells her to, and the family spend great swathes of time tip-toeing around an untouchable, drunken father who only gets away with his actions because he is "head of the house". Through the whole book the only character we see undertaking a task not befitting their gender is the metropolitan Fitzallen.

Harrison does a fantastic job of maintaining the sense that things may be turned upside down at any moment without ever actually saying it. The book follows Edie's attempted to make her own opinions on the world around her through the impacts of the war that she never saw, the changing politics of the



time and a revolution of labour leaving many behind as the tractor overtakes the horse-drawn plough.

Outstanding descriptions of the English countryside and excellent historical insight of the times lead to a crescendo that few will see coming. Probably not for everyone, but definitely worth a read.

BOOKS

V2 - Robert Harris

Sam Lovatt Editor-in-Chief

I began this book a Robert Harris virgin and so I am perhaps not the best qualified to review this novel. Everyone I have spoken to about it has instead recommended either the Cicero series, or Fatherland, or both. Nevertheless, in the interest of remaining succinct I will have a stab anyway.

V2 tells two alternating, opposing narratives that run side by side over the course of five days, often to the second. It's the winter of 1944 and the Germans have all but lost the war in Europe. Desperate for anything flashy that may strike fear into the allied hearts, Hitler throws colossal amounts of money at the Nazi's ballistic rocket programme, headed by Wernher von Braun, a non-fictional historical figure who also appears in the book. We join the German story with Dr Rudi Graf, a rocket engineer whose dream since he was a little boy has been to go to space. To much internal conflict, Graf's dream has been hijacked by the Nazi party and he finds himself launching his life's work from Scheveningen, Netherlands towards London in the form of Vengeance 2 (V2) rockets, the most powerful ballistics in the world that travel at three times the speed of sound. Graf is not a member of the Nazi party and never had dreams of causing anyone harm, and is forced to grapple with this moral dilemma ever more as the Nazi's hopes become bleaker by the day.

We first see London through the eyes of Kay Caton-

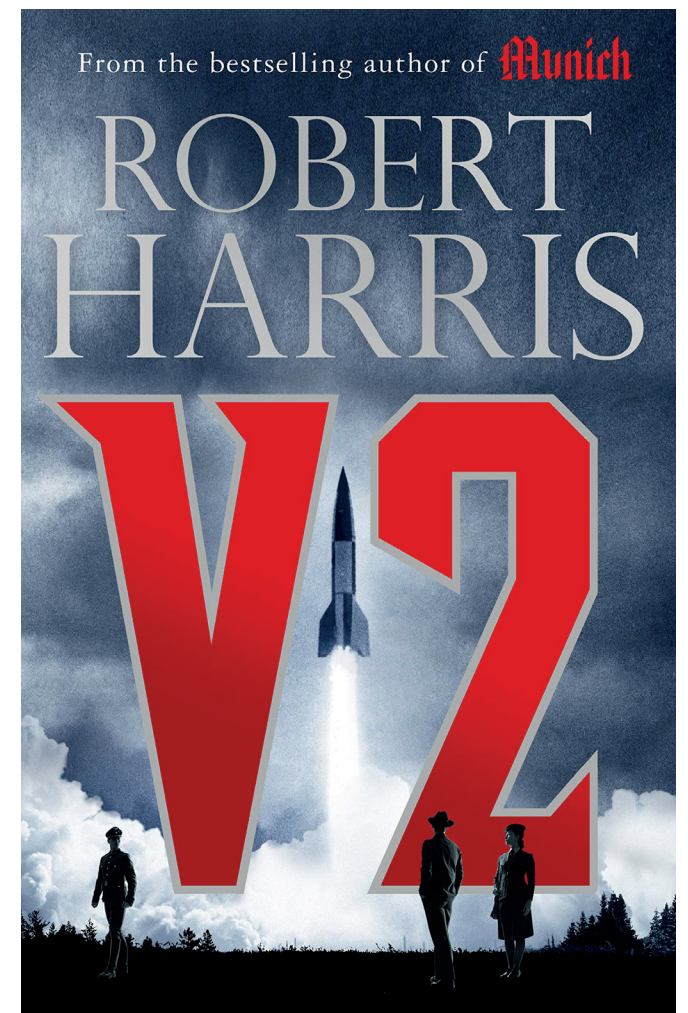
Walsh, an officer in the Woman's Auxiliary Air Force. At just 24, Kay has been plucked straight from Cambridge university and is working in intelligence at a stately home in the English countryside, studying the minute discrepancies between ordinance imagery for signs of enemy activity. All of a sudden, the announcement of a secret, urgent mission and her adulterous connections land her in a select team of WAAF officers tasked with stopping the carnage being wrought by the V2s, the likes of which the world has never seen and which London currently has no hope of stopping.

Despite being relatively short, the book at some points seems like it's trying to be longer than it needs to. Whether to attempt very subtle character development, or floundering to increase the word count I'm not sure, but both main characters go off on narrative arches that have no real impact on the storyline and could easily have been omitted with nothing of the tale lost.

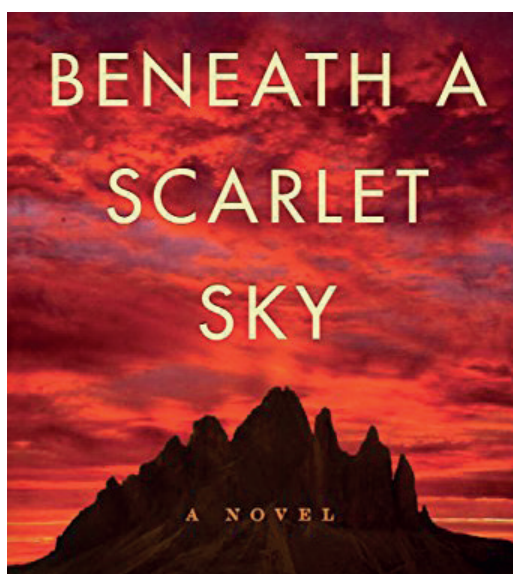
That being said, and famed for his historical accuracy and diligent research, Harris delivers a thriller and history lesson wrapped into one. Did you know that there was a potato shortage across the Germany occupied states towards the end of the war, as so many had been taken to be distilled into rocket fuel? Facts are given throughout the novel, highlighting the atrocities of famine and forced labour committed by the Axis powers even in their dying days.

I've certainly read better thrillers, though I don't think there are many who would not enjoy

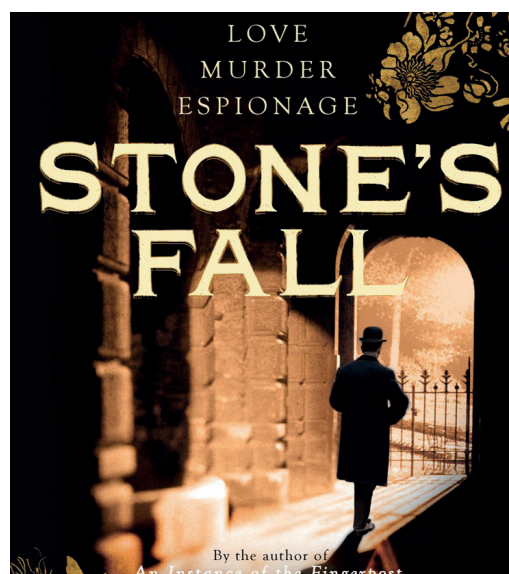
sitting down and giving this tome a wide-eyed read.



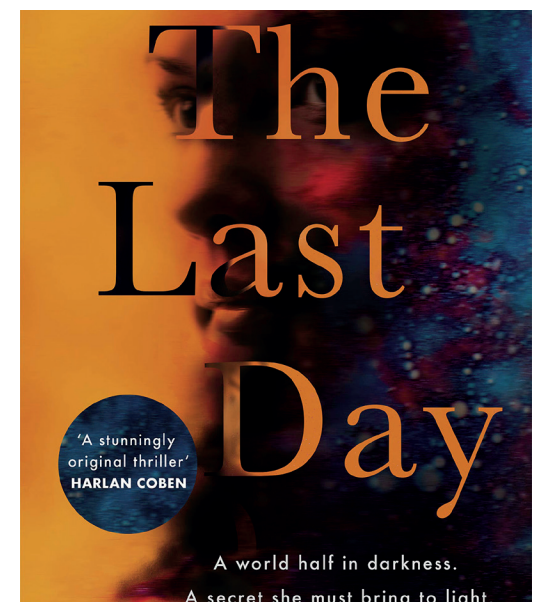
What we're reading next



Mark Sullivan



Iain Pears



Andrew Hunter Murray