

ICU Council meets again as membership increases



UCU picket line on the USS pension dispute on the last day of strike action (21st February 2022)

Imperial UCU members to strike on 24th, 25th, 30th

Ameena Hassan Editor-in-Chief

Imperial's branch of the University and College Union (Imperial UCU) has been called on to strike on 24th, 25th, and 30th November. This is a part of the national series of strikes being called by the University and College Union (UCU), and affects 150 universities. The UCU achieved a national mandate to strike on both of their disputes:

1. fair pay and working conditions,

and
2 the University Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme with 81.1% and 84.9% of ballot respondents saying "Yes" to taking industrial action respectively. These strikes are expected to involve 70,000 UCU members across the UK.

Imperial UCU members were only balloted on the USS pensions scheme, as Imperial College takes part in 'local bargaining' instead of

'national bargaining'. This means staff representatives negotiate pay on their own with the College. Staff representatives come from the three staff unions: Imperial UCU, Imperial Unite, and Imperial UNISON, and these make up Imperial's Joint trade Unions (JTU).

The UCU has also disclosed that strike action will "escalate in the New Year alongside a marking and assessment

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On 8th November, Imperial College Union (ICU) met for the second time this academic year in the Union Dining Hall. This meeting was much better attended than the previous Union Council, which had been called with shorter notice than usual. 19 members were present at the 11th October meeting. Seven members had sent apologies, but six members were absent. Low attendance at that meeting can also be attributed to the ten vacancies, as Autumn elections had been delayed from the start of term. However, the acoustics in the Union Dining Hall left Council members unable to hear each other accurately at some points.

Items discussed:

1. "Writing about Ethnicity" guide
2. Approving previous meeting minutes
3. Action Tracker
4. Amendments to the Standing Orders' Appendices
5. Scrutiny Committee Membership
6. Votes of No Confidence
7. Officer Trustee Objectives
8. - 11. Reports by ICSMSU, Felix, RSMU and Silwood

The College's Communications Division sent a representative to Union Council to obtain feedback on their updated "Writing about Ethnicity" guide, which is publicly available. After initial feedback was given to the representative, the Council was broken apart into smaller groups to "discuss feedback on the writing guide", as it appeared that at least a few of the members had not read the documents, which had been made available to them a week prior. Felix was live-tweeting during the Union Council meeting. Students are allowed to observe and speak at Union Council meetings but are not voting members, and the next one is scheduled for Tuesday, 6th December.

EDITORIAL

Other solutions

On the 9th of November, the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) announced the outcome of balloting nursing staff - all NHS employers in Northern Ireland and Scotland passed the legal threshold for taking industrial action. The mandate will run out in May 2023, leaving six months for disruptions in the nursing sector. There's no reason for them to not strike. In 2019, nursing staff in Northern Ireland won themselves pay parity with England and Wales colleagues. On the 4th, the RCN released a report that claims that "past, current, and impending governmental policies are causing severe nursing workforce shortages, with demand for staff vastly exceeding supply". Over the last ten years, between 8.8% and 10.9% of nursing staff have left the NHS England nursing register, with this percentage spiking at 11.5% in the last 2021/22 year (after the worst of the pandemic). 56.8% of nursing staff were considering leaving their posts in 2021. This would not be accepted in any other industry. 83% of shifts did not have enough staff to be able to meet patient needs safely and effectively in 2022, up from 73% in 2020. I realise that majority of us are in our prime, and may not necessarily require the same level of care as our parents and grandparents, but this just means that at the trend we are going, the NHS is bound to crumble before this generation needs the NHS dearly. The Earth's population is expected to reach 8 billion people on the 15th of November, and by 2050, the World

Retractions from 1810:

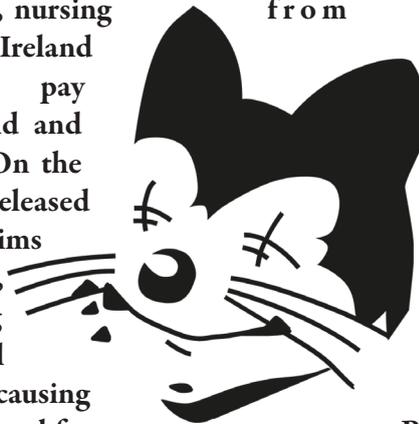
In the Editorial, it was claimed that the President and Provost (amongst other highly-paid earners at the College) would be given a £400 one-off payment to help with the cost of living crisis. This was not true, they are not eligible for this payment.

Updates:

1811 ~ CGCU President and Vice-President facing VoNCs: the CGCU President has resigned, and the by-elections for that role opened on Wednesday, 9th November. The Vice President has not yet resigned nor been voted out, due to some "Disciplinary proceedings".

Health Organisation expects that the population of those 60 and over will be 2.1 billion. The standard of living is generally rising (discounting the current cost of living crisis), and many countries are facing staffing problems for an ageing population. Staffing internationally is a solution to this problem, but not the best - it costs almost half as much to recruit a Nurse from overseas (£6,371.41, NHS) than it does to replace a fully-trained Nurse (up to £12,000, NHS), but it costs £8,477.80 to recruit 21 UK Nurses (NHS). They might not be fully trained, but they are nurses, and they can be trained.

Both the Conservatives and Labour parties are adamant that their NHS policy should be to "build five new medical schools", and "double the number of medical students". This is akin to increasing the pressure of the water flowing through a tap, putting a strain on the existing infrastructure, instead of just fixing the growing leak at the bottom of the bucket. Anyone in this economy would call this sort of tactic a waste of money. These strategies do have one thing going for them, though - training medical students takes time. Just about enough time, in fact, for the public to move on to greater and grander things, instead of finding solutions that have a direct impact, now. Nurses are looking for a pay rise of 5% above inflation, and have seen a real-terms pay cut of up to 20% in the past ten years, according to the RCN.



This issue was produced thanks to the work of

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Statement of Intent

At Felix we believe that it is always in the interest of the students to know. Transparency in the workings of the College and the work of your student representatives is key. Therefore I, the Felix Editor, on behalf of the team promise that:

We will, to the best of our ability, tell you the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

We will keep your confidence and will only publish something you say to us if you have explicitly said that we can.

We will work to expose unfairness and discrimination in all forms that it takes at the College.

We will treat fairly any article sent to us, regardless of point of view, and do our best to work with you to prepare it for publication.

Signed by Ameena Hassan
Editor-in-Chief

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Printed by Iliffe Media
Winship Road,
Milton, Cambridge
CB24 6PP

Registered Newspaper ISSN 1040-0711

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Bond Street nightmare ends for Elizabeth line's almost-full-open

Shrey Bohra News Writer

With the busy Christmas season approaching, TfL has expanded its Elizabeth Line operations through the opening of Bond Street Station and increasing the number of running trains.

The Elizabeth has been plagued by delays and overruns since its inception in 2001, under the name Cross London Rail Links. The concept of the line was not a new one, as the idea of linking Paddington and Liverpool Street was first discussed in 1941. However, approval for the current form of the railway was finally given through the Crossrail Act in 2008. Construction started in 2009, with an initial budget of £14.8 billion and a targeted opening date of December 2018. These were to prove optimistic; the budget was exceeded by more than £3 billion and the opening date was continuously pushed back, first to 2019, then 2021, and finally a 2022 opening date was achieved through the partial opening in May.

The Elizabeth line was launched with great fanfare in May 2022. London's newest "line" saw visits from dignitaries including the eponymous Monarch, but it was not a true opening. The railway had been designed to run a service every 150 seconds, linking destinations in the West directly to those in the East, via 6 stations under Central London. Instead

of this, the service in May was effectively three separate lines – one running west of Paddington, one running north-east from Liverpool Street, and one running through Central London out to the east. The frequency of trains was half of the planned rate, and a key interchange – Bond Street Station – was not open to passengers.

Bond Street has been a particularly challenging problem for the opening of the Elizabeth line. The station was used as the exit point for the Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) that were digging through Central London. Work on creating the station was unable to start until tunnelling had been completed and the TBMs extracted. Due to the inevitable delays in tunnelling work, this was running behind schedule. Once work had begun, a geographic fault was found beneath the station, which resulted in the foundation design requiring significant changes. These delays had taken construction into the start of 2020, which then had to stop completely with the first coronavirus lockdowns. Restarting work on a site which had effectively been abandoned delayed construction even further, and coronavirus restrictions hampered productivity. Due to these complications, Bond Street Station alone was responsible for £550 million of the overspend on the entire project.



Imperial College Rail and Transport Society visited the Old Oak depot in 2020

TfL has finally opened Bond Street to the public, offering another route to one of the busiest shopping regions in Europe ahead of the Christmas season. As of last week, the routes the Elizabeth Line is offering have been extended significantly, with trains running through from west of Paddington – including Heathrow – into Central London and Canary Wharf, and trains from North East London also able to run into Central London. The full Paddington to Shenfield branch also saw services. The frequency has also been increased significantly, with trains every 3 minutes at peak times, approaching

the number promised at the start of the project. In the 6 months since its partial opening, 60 million journeys have been taken on the Elizabeth line. With the latest expansion in service, this number is expected to increase significantly.

While full operation (every train able to run through the full length of the route and the expected service frequencies reached) is not planned until May 2023, the service now is finally delivering on the mobility promises made during its inception.

Do you have an opinion you want to share?

What do you think about The Pantry?

What is your opinion on the strike action?

What should the College and Union be doing to support you?

Get in touch through our Instagram: @felix_imperial

P.S. We need writers, editors, copy-editors, illustrators, photographers and more!

Letter to the Editor

This letter mentions sensitive topics such as poor mental health. Please refer to <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/student-support-zone/>, or the Samaritans, if you need support.

Dear Editor,

I was excited about Imperial and London. Although it was lockdown time, as a south-east Asian student who never got the chance to study abroad, this was my time. As a mentally disabled person, it was not easy, especially securing scholarships with appeal after appeal. I survived Imperial and London with my friend's and family's money.

The excitement was short-lived when during the first quarter of my postgraduate study, I was busy with paperwork for my disability accommodation. Of course, I understand there are processes to follow. But I got overwhelmed and plunged into a deep depression again, and I isolated myself except for discussions I needed to attend with my course-mates.

My therapist, psychiatrist, and GP were all aware of my condition, as well as the Disability Advisory Service. I followed all the rules; I complied with every treatment. But Imperial's flawed system for a disabled person like me made me underperform during the pandemic, and I received terrible reviews from my classmates. Of course, I told the department about my disability. Yet I was never asked "what we can do for you so that this study process would be easier for you?". My tutor advised me to take a break instead of investigating what she could do as a tutor.

We had a Facebook Messenger group chat. One day the student representative presented the report from a meeting with the department. A girl asked about how her disability has made her study troublesome, and a member of the department answered, "it's not our job to...". Whatever was said, the department could use another word and not dismiss people like us.

50% of the study was online, so it was scary being disabled without sufficient support living in London. Then it came time to have an important meeting with our tutor. Each of us needed to present our proposal dissertation. I gave my presentation, where one of my platform studies was Twitter. My tutor candidly asked me, "Do Malaysia people see Twitter?". As much as my family and relatives thought I was smart, I was speechless and dumbfounded. How could she say something so offensive? It was 2020 and this is the social media era.

There were two modules I needed to be made aware I could have a re-sit for. Sadly, I was not aware of the rules. Of course, they will say, "You need to read the guidebook". If that is the case, I do not think they were sincere in helping the disabled person. As a disabled student, I had trouble reading and writing, let alone reading the guidebook. Were the college not supposed to be smart?

At that point, I gave up asking for any support from my department unless, for mitigating circumstances, I had to apply for modules I had to take. I did not trust my department anymore. Please be noted that I have issues with my department. Not my professors that have taught me. They were awesome!

When I received my official mark, my mark was borderline. I applied for appeal and uplift for classification (pass, merit, or distinction). However, this was a tricky thing to do. I did not have the strength to read the comments and reply to them. Not because I could not handle the truth but because I was traumatised by their template-robotic answers that are cold and do not show any care. Of course, my appeal got rejected. Which meant another long process of traumatising paperwork, which I only managed to get halfway through (this took six months) after I overdosed twice because of this appeal. I felt so burdened and overwhelmed that I needed to explain and prove myself and my sickness again and again, since even before I arrived at Imperial. I wish they could see me striving for my disability and always committed to studying. I wish they knew that I have trouble reading and writing. I wish they knew they had to do more to support me during the lockdown. I hope they know that I need to work 100 times harder.

It was not about the grades when I appealed. It was about justice. It was about why they did not want to be the ones who lent hands. Why people like me always had to ask first. I applied for mitigating circumstances for each module I took. Did they not realise I needed support? I seek Felix, not for revenge, but because I hope that by this reveal, they will realise that they need to work harder to support us, the students. Remember Imperial professor Grimm's death in December 2014? Imperial really does not get it.

Write for Felix!

Felix is a longstanding institution which has produced some of the finest student journalism in the country, won awards and broken stories that end up in national news.

Felix provides an outlet for all students and staff to review, read about and report on whatever they want. Anything you feel passionate about can be transcribed, honed to perfection with the help of our Section Editors and published both in print and on the website.

If you're interested in writing for us, get in touch with any of the section editors at their submissions inbox (e.g: if you want to write for Arts, email arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk), or the Editor in Chief at felix@imperial.ac.uk

We need writers, editors, copy-editors, illustrators, photographers and more!

...continued from page 1

Imperial's Joint Trade Union members to meet on pay and USS

boycott" if employers "don't act fast and make improved offers".

Imperial UCU has since called for an online meeting of all members of the JTU. This meeting will take place on 17th November at 1pm. During this meeting, it is expected that the JTU will be discussing their negotiation and striking strategy surrounding "a fair pay settlement", and might also include discussions about the USS pension policy.

The National Union of Students (NUS) is a union of student unions across the UK, and has backed the strikes. NUS UK President commented:

"Students have a rich history of standing shoulder to shoulder with university staff, who have seen their pensions, pay and conditions slashed in recent years, so I'm not surprised that they overwhelmingly support their campaign to secure a fairer settlement

... Staff teaching conditions are student learning conditions, and moreover many postgraduate students on casualised teaching contracts will be striking. The onus for minimising disruption for students lies with university bosses."

Imperial College Union (the student union of Imperial College London) is not part of NUS.

As the strike dates were announced after Imperial College Union Council's call for papers closed, there was no motion on the Council's position. However, it was brought up by the Deputy President of Education in the "Any Other Business" portion of the meeting, and it was decided that a position will be discussed over email. In 2021,

73.4% of Imperial students who voted in a referendum were in favour of strike action. In 2018, Union Council voted to support the strikes by passing a paper calling on "elected representatives of

ICU to support the UCU position".

Credit: UCU



UCU have achieved over 81% "Yes" votes in all their ballots on taking industrial action over the UK

FRIDAY, 11TH NOVEMBER 2022

COMMENT

For the last half-century, London Nightline has been a port in the storm for university students

Anonymous Writer

London Nightline is an anonymous listening and information service run by students, for students. The service was founded under the name “West London Nightline” in 1971 by Imperial College students in response to the suicides of three of Imperial students the previous year, with the goal of expanding available wellbeing support.

Uniquely, the service is open all through the night, when no other university welfare services are available. The London service was the second of its kind; the first had been established in Essex a year earlier by a former Samaritans volunteer. The founders realised that students may prefer to talk to fellow students than to approach other welfare services, as their peers would have better understanding of the challenges that university life was presenting.

Whilst Nightline was established with a clear focus on mental health, the founders recognised that moving to London in itself can be daunting, and therefore also promoted themselves as an information service. Even in the age of search engines, we remain an invaluable information source - throughout my time volunteering I have fielded a variety of information requests, from student financial support to the opening times of sexual health clinics. Crucially, volunteers do not offer advice - we instead answer every call with an impartial, non-judgemental and empathetic ear.

From no. 8 Prince's Gardens, volunteers provided confidential support to students from a growing number of universities across London. The service became affiliated with more and more institutions as its value to students became recognised. Eventually, the office relocated further into the city and was renamed ‘London Nightline’ to reflect this. Today, London Nightline is affiliated with 53 institutions.

Nightline was set up in the hopes to reduce the number of student deaths by suicide. Whilst this remains a priority, listeners are committed to providing

Do you want to talk to someone?

Nightline is open most nights of term between 6pm and 8am. We are available to talk via phone, instant messenger, or email.

For more contact information, use the link below:

<https://nightline.org.uk/contact-us/>

non-judgemental emotional support on any topic the caller wishes to talk about. In fact, the majority of calls received are not of a suicidal nature, but instead encompass a wide variety of topics from academic stress to relationship problems. It is the service's hope that through having an outlet to openly talk about their feelings without threat of judgement or repercussions, fewer students will have their education compromised by emotional and mental difficulties.

This is especially important as access to education has widened. Not only is there now a greater number of students across London, but the diversity of student bodies has increased as well. This is inevitably accompanied by a greater variety of individual struggles. Nightline listeners are trained to provide a safe space for these conversations by employing core principles of confidentiality, anonymity, and non-directionality.

Although university welfare services have advanced over the past half-century, complimenting them with charities such as Nightline remains as important as ever. In fact, the service even seems to be picking up the slack as universities suffer the repercussions of having not increased their welfare budgets and provisions at the same rate at which their student bodies have expanded. The provided services are consequently underfunded and understaffed, causing long waiting times and occasional reports of a lack of empathy from their thinly-stretched employees.

This is certainly the case at Imperial. In the 2021 National Student Survey, a student asserted “I found the College mental health services to be lacking, with long waiting times and limited services offered.” Indeed, the current

waiting time for an initial discussion with the College counselling service is a month. The first counselling appointment will then not take place for at least another month after that.

Admittedly, Nightline volunteers do not offer the guidance which trained counsellors can deliver. However, for many, just talking about the problem itself can be a form of therapy. Our conversations are directed by the caller who, having been able to describe and reason through their feelings without interruption, often concludes the call with a greater sense of clarity. Even when they don't, it can be comforting to

know that in the middle of the night when things seem bleak, we are here to pick up the phone.

The service has of course had to adapt to the times. Looking back over our 50 years of calls, some of the themes serve as time capsules for the era. When the service was starting up in the 1970s, the big anxiety was nuclear war. For me, I took my first call when the world was first slipping into the grips of the pandemic. Nightline promptly transitioned online, enabling us to remain open. Some of the toughest calls I've ever taken were taken from my home bedroom in those few months - but the harder the call, the more glad I was that Nightline had been able to adapt and be there for students

in such challenging, lonely times.

Meanwhile, some things haven't changed. The service's 50 years of success is a testament to the underlying belief that students can find solace in open, non-judgemental conversations with other students. Furthermore, despite the reduction in the stigma surrounding mental health, Nightline's aim to expand the quantity of wellbeing support available to students also unfortunately remains as relevant as ever. In the face of austerity and university cuts to welfare budgets, Nightline is still a much-needed refuge for struggling students.

Throughout my 500+ hours of volunteering for Nightline, every call I have taken matters. Our 14 hour shifts can be exhausting both emotionally and physically, but every time I put down the phone I am left with a feeling of relief - and even pride - that I was there to listen that night.



SCIENCE

Edited by: JAMIE JOHN
ANGIE LO
TAYLOR POMFRET

The missing point in the GM crops debate

► *Advocates and detractors continue to debate whether GM crops are "good" or "bad". Staff Writer Wang Guo says we should instead consider each crop in its own unique context.*

Wang Guo Staff Writer

Climate change, COVID-19, and the Russia-Ukraine war have caused great damage to global food production and supply networks, increasing not only food prices but also the costs of fuels and fertilisers that are essential for producing food. While developed countries are suffering through historical levels of food inflation, people in developing countries are dying of hunger and malnutrition. In this critical situation, GM crops have the potential, if applied correctly, to solve the current food crisis in a relatively short period. The genetic enhancements are plenty and highly attractive, from pest resistance to increased nutrient content. However, there is also lots of controversy surrounding GM crops, which caused them to be under heavy law regulation for their development and commercialisation.

A specific example of risk assessment in GM crops

Bt crops (e.g., corn, cotton) can produce crystal proteins that are toxic exclusively to certain pest insects, and, in theory, not to other living beings. This ability came from the insertion of the gene encoding the crystal protein from a soil bacterium called *Bacillus thuringiensis*. The usage of Bt crops since 1996 has saved us 400,000 tonnes of insecticides, which are expensive and polluting. Furthermore, in contrast to conventional insecticides, Bt crops do not harm non-target insects like bees as the crystal proteins are only toxic if ingested. However, there are issues associated with the consumption safety of Bt crops. The crystal proteins are in a latent stage and only become activated after being metabolised in the basic environment of the insect gut. The active crystal proteins then break down the walls of the gut, which allows the liberation of the alkaline gut juices into the hemolymph (the "blood" of insects).

This increases the hemolymph pH, which causes the paralysis and ultimately death of the insect. There remains concern about potential harmful effects of the crystal proteins on humans, as there are some studies pointing out damage to the human gut epithelium by the crystal proteins. However, this is a controversial topic with different views even within the scientific community. As human and insect guts are different from each other, the crystal proteins do not have the same effect: the gut of the human does not get

“

THERE IS ALWAYS A RISK OF NEGATIVE EFFECTS – WHAT WE MUST DO IS ASSESS THE BENEFITS AND RISKS OF EACH GM CROP

perforated nor does its blood become alkaline. There might be unknown long-term effects, but these are quite hard to spot due to time issues. It is important to remember the idea that there is no such thing as a universal toxin because toxins need to be metabolised in a particular way to become toxic, and the metabolism of each living being is different. Now, it would be naïve to believe that the crystal proteins do not have any effect in humans. Chemical compounds always have an effect inside living organisms; we just do not know the effect very well yet. However, the following point I am going to make can be applied to any type of discussion regarding not only GM crops but almost anything in science:

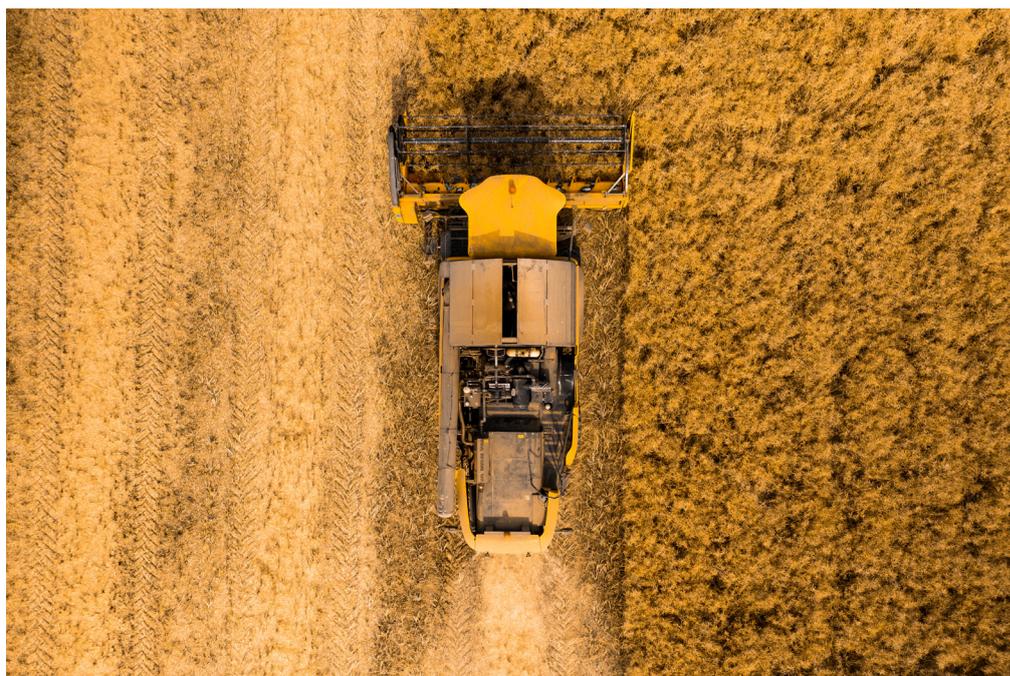
there is always a risk of negative effects—that is unavoidable—but what we must do is assess the benefits and risks of each GM crop to conclude whether it is worth it or not. The reason is that the genetic modifications of each GM crop have different pros and cons, and also have different contexts. Sometimes, the pros will outweigh the cons in a particular context and vice versa. If we want to solve the food crisis, we should analyse the pros, cons, and context of a particular GM crop instead of tagging it as bad or good.

Plant breeding is not enough

Farmers have been modifying the genome of crops through selective breeding almost since the invention of agriculture. Some environmentalists advocate for relying exclusively on selective breeding rather than genetic engineering or a combination of both because the "natural way" is the best one and we should not underestimate nature. However, they do not usually consider the biological limitations that selective breeding has, which cannot be overcome except with genetic engineering. First of all, genetically crossing different plants over and over again to obtain a desirable variety is time consuming mainly

because plants take time to grow—time that we do not have if we want to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe. Secondly, selective breeding is not a precise enough method, as the transmission of genes from generation to generation does not occur one gene at a time, but in chunks of genes that are often passed altogether. This means that we could get non-desirable genes that make our crops grow slower or taste worse apart from the desired gene.

Current debates are centralised on whether GM crops are bad or good, not leaving space for grey areas. In my opinion, we should instead focus on the risk assessment of each GM crop in particular according to scientific data and implementation challenges. I have also explained why limiting ourselves to the traditional method of plant breeding cannot solve the current food crisis. Ultimately, advocates of GM crops should not criticise the negative points of detractors without also taking the positive ones into account. This same reasoning also applies to the detractors. The day we start opening discussions between both sides, and analyse each GM crop according to its unique context, is the day we can potentially solve the current food crisis.



PUZZLES

Easy Sudoku*

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

Normal Sudoku*

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

Difficult Sudoku

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

*: According to Imperial standards

Minesweeper

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1			1	1	3			
							2	
3	3	1						1
		1		1		2		2
				1			2	
	1		2	1		1		
	1					1	1	
			1	1				

Puzzles Notices

Puzzles Editor: Lito Chatzidavari
 Leaderboard: Raluca Constantinescu
 Special thanks to Duncan White for the wordle puzzles, and Stanley Scott, for the crosswords.

Leaderboard QR code:



Points

Easy, Normal, Difficult sudokus	2, 3, 4 pts each
Wordles	2 pts each
Nonogram	3 pts
Cryptic, regular crosswords	5, 3 pts

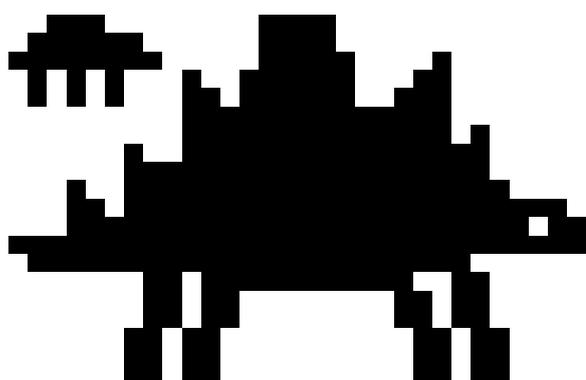
1	2	*						
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8	5	7	1	2	6	3	4	9
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3	7	5	9	6	4	8	2	1
6	9	4	2	8	1	7	3	5
2	1	8	5	3	7	4	9	6
5	3	1	7	9	8	2	6	4
7	4	6	3	1	2	9	5	8
9	8	2	6	4	5	1	7	3

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

C	T	P	R	O	O	F	E	U					
P	A	T	R	O	L	U	I	G	N	O	R	E	
N	I	A	N	T	I	C	T	G					
A	N	T	M	A	N	C	T	A	R	R	E	D	
E	M	S	T	A	S	I	E						
S	L	E	E	P	S	C	O	R	P	I	O	N	
L	D	T	I	T	A	N	R	U					
P	O	S	T	W	A	R	R	A	R	E	B	I	T
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CATNIP

Swap your Meat Free Mondays for Minibeast Mondays: Government Plans to Feed People with Bugs

As the UK enters a recession the government have announced cost cutting schemes to save money. However, the limited time to come up with the plans has led ministers to skip over the usual consultation with the public and experts. A government spokesperson, Feb Senton, told NegaFelix "Ministers have used their own extensive life experience to come up with policies that will help normal Britons".

The flagship policy of this new raft of measures is the promotion of insect based meals. Regarded as a cheap and nutritious source of protein, ministers see insects as a way of combating the cost of living crisis.

Beginning with prisoners and those on free school meals, the government will provide cricket, ant and worm based meals.

When challenged on the public's reaction to being asked to eat worms, Tory Health Minister Beve Starklay told reporters "I ate plenty of insects as a child. Nanny forgot to feed us so often that we started farming them. I still have a few every now and then these days for old time's sake." In fact, enthusiasm for the initiative is so high among Tory MPs that it has inspired a burst of nostalgia for their youths living in old, abusive homes and boarding schools. Matt Hancock was reportedly so overcome with memories of his childhood that he resigned the Tory whip and joined

'I'm a Celeb' where he would be able to eat as many insects as he desired.

Critics of the policy have expressed shock at the government's statement. Jowen Ownes, a prominent left wing commentator, said on his podcast "I am usually against everything the Tories come up with but this just makes me feel sad for them."

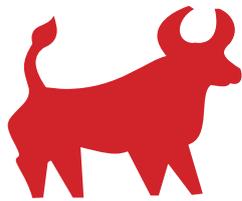
Resistance to the policy has coalesced around Kpyle. F. Bugs (the K is silent) an enigmatic figure that has already collected 78 billion signatures for his petition to drop the policy and never takes off his trench coat.

Horoscopes



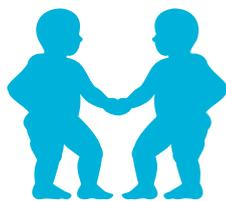
ARIES

This week you discover his name was just Binyamin Netan until the bottled milkshake company sponsored his first bid to the Knesset



TAURUS

This week you realise that pulling your pants and trousers all the ways down to your ankles when you're at the urinal might not make you look as cool as you thought it did



GEMINI

This week you send everyone from last week's threesome a feedback form



CANCER

This week you eat the lint from your belly button as a tasty little treat



LEO

This week your heartfelt message to the CGCU president is left on read



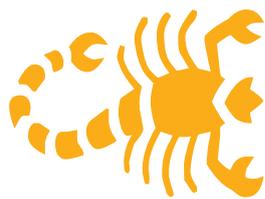
VIRGO

This week you question your sexuality when you ask for a little more froth on your cappuccino



LIBRA

This week ROBBER27 kicks off



SCORPIO

This week you tell a 27-year-old they've aged gracefully to establish dominance.



SAGITTARIUS

This week you ask a student one year older than you whether they remember the war to establish dominance



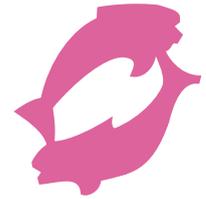
CAPRICORN

This week your article on crop rotation is too long, requiring it to be serialised



AQUARIUS

This week you discover a new kink when you take the phrase 'ironing out the kinks' literally



PISCES

This week you receive a feedback form from your threesome last week.

Imperial Impresses Prince of Wales: Climate Initiatives Awarded in Prestigious Earthshot Prize

The Earthshot prize, brainchild of the Prince of Wales, has announced its winners for its second year running. The prizes go to projects that have made major contributions to sustainability, climate change resistance and renewable energy. Winners are chosen in five categories and praised for their meaningful contribution. The projects that won this year are as follows:

Protect and restore nature:

A house of third year Mechanical Engineering students living in Fulham have received this prize for their astonishing rewilding project. In under a year, the four boys were able to turn a reasonably small and neat back garden into a wild-life hotspot impenetrable to humans. The judges commented on their unique 'sense of the sacred', saying that none of the boys had stepped foot into the garden since they had begun the project and that their philosophy of unmanaged decline was an inspiration to others. Ecologists exploring the site reported bird species thought to be extinct in the UK but were not able to find the Converse shoe that got thrown in there after a particularly good sports night.

Clean our air:

During the announcement ceremony for

this category a so called 'coven' of witchy girls interrupted proceedings and claimed the prize and money for themselves. They had, they claimed, improved the atmosphere of planet Earth by 500% through their chanting and crystals. They were, they said, going to spend the prize money on a huge quartz crystal, that when fully charged in a lunar eclipse would get rid of all carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, as well as making everyone "a lot queerer".

Revive our oceans:

Despite allegations of greenwashing, this prize was awarded to a consortium of pharmaceutical companies. The group claims that by dumping Viagra into the oceans, they will be able to increase the fertility and fecundity of the fish populations, undoing the damage of years of overfishing. Alongside the Viagra, the consortium is also dropping leaflets on topics such as responsible fatherhood, how to give back massages, and childcare options in the local area.

Build a waste-free world:

This prize was awarded to the group of mindfulness and meditation experts behind a newly-founded educational YouTube channel. Through videos, the group has been teaching the general public to retrain their perceptions around waste: encourag-

ing them to regard it instead as part of the 'Dharma' or 'oneness of the universe'. Tragically, since onboarding this philosophy, many of the group have begun to suffer from cholera or leukemia. Sceptics suggest that - whilst they have no wish to undermine the group's pure intentions - perhaps some things really are meant to just be regarded as disgusting or useless. It is hoped that a risk assessment for the group's daily activities based at their headquarters (situated on top of a nuclear disposal site, downriver from a Thames Water outflow pipe) may shine a light on these unforeseen occupational health hazards.

Fix our climate:

The climate award has been awarded to my dad. He won by default as there were no other submissions, the problem being so large that no one wanted to even try to tackle it. Although his approach (stare at the broken thing, shake it a bit, give it a light kick and walk away) has not yet been verified by credible scientists, it is the best we have got at the moment so will have to go with it.

The Earthshot Prize reopens for entry as soon as the Royals next need to virtue signal.



FILM

Edited by: JONAH HEWETT
MIKE BUZADJI

FilmSoc Screening Review

Hereditary: A modern day masterpiece

For their Halloween special screening, FilmSoc watches the film that changed the horror landscape forever

Caleb Eferakorho FilmSoc Writer

Prior to *Hereditary* being released in 2018, my view of horror films was not very positive. I was tired of stereotypical plots, predictable jump scares, and stock characters lacking any substance or depth. That being said, it does not mean I did not enjoy films like *Scream* or *Insidious*, I enjoyed them for what they were and appreciated the work put into them, but they only reaffirmed my belief that horror films were becoming more and more predictable as time went on, as if there were some unwritten code for how all horror films should be.

Then one late night in 2018, I watched *Hereditary*, and my mind was changed forever. This film single-handedly broke all my conceptions about the horror genre and redefined what a horror and thriller film could be. *Hereditary* is a family driven psychological horror and thriller that is even scarier than your standard horror film because it feels closer to reality. It deals more with complex human emotions with a focus on how we all grieve differently, as well as focusing on the horrors of unresolved transgenerational traumas. I find that scarier than continuous jump scares and predictable plots to invoke fear.

When watching *Hereditary*, you don't feel far removed from the characters because you can see yourself in them. We all have dealt with grief or know someone who has, so we can see how it can disrupt your actions

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A METICULOUSLY ACTED AND EXCEPTIONALLY WELL-DIRECTED CINEMATOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCE. COLLETTE DELIVERS A POWERFUL PERFORMANCE, WHICH ASTOUNDS VIEWERS UNTIL THE VERY FINAL SCENE. PROBABLY MY FAVOURITE HORROR MOVIE OF ALL TIME!

- Marcello Mastronadi
FilmSoc Member

and mess with your mind. *The A.V. Club* stated when talking about *Hereditary* that “it grips you with the real horror, the unspeakable kind,” and I believe those hor-

rors are the horrors that arise from unresolved issues

within us, and that is the scarier kind. However, don't get me wrong, *Hereditary* is still laced with lots of supernatural elements and jump scares that still freak you out. They are layered throughout the film, and these el-

“

VERY CHILLING WITH AN UNABASHED SENSE OF DREAD THROUGHOUT; YOU FEEL EMPATHETIC BUT HELPLESS.

- FilmSoc Member

ements are key for the plot of the story, but they are not the story; the supernatural elements work in line with the way the different family members handle their grief and how this grief leads to generational supernatural horrors being unveiled.

Saxophonist Colin Stenson's musical score creates a sense of uneasiness throughout the film, as if there is some evil lurking around waiting to show itself. In an interview, Colin Stenson avoided the conventional use of certain instruments to invoke evil, such as “strings” and “synths,” instead using clarinets or his voice, all to follow the theme the director and writer wanted, which was for the music to “feel evil.” Stenson also mentioned treating the music as if it were “its own character” that has relationships with the other characters, and as the narrative unfolds, the sense of evil continues to unfold, all the way to the explosive final act.

Hereditary is an A24 film and was written and directed by Ari Aster, with it being his directorial debut. Toni Colette (an Oscar-worthy performance) plays Annie Graham, an artist, who is grieving the loss of her difficult and complicated mother (played by Kathleen Chalfant) while trying to keep the family together amid their grief, as her daughter (an eerie and chilling performance from Milly Shapiro) was especially close to her grandmother. As Annie explores more about her ancestry, strange things start to happen.

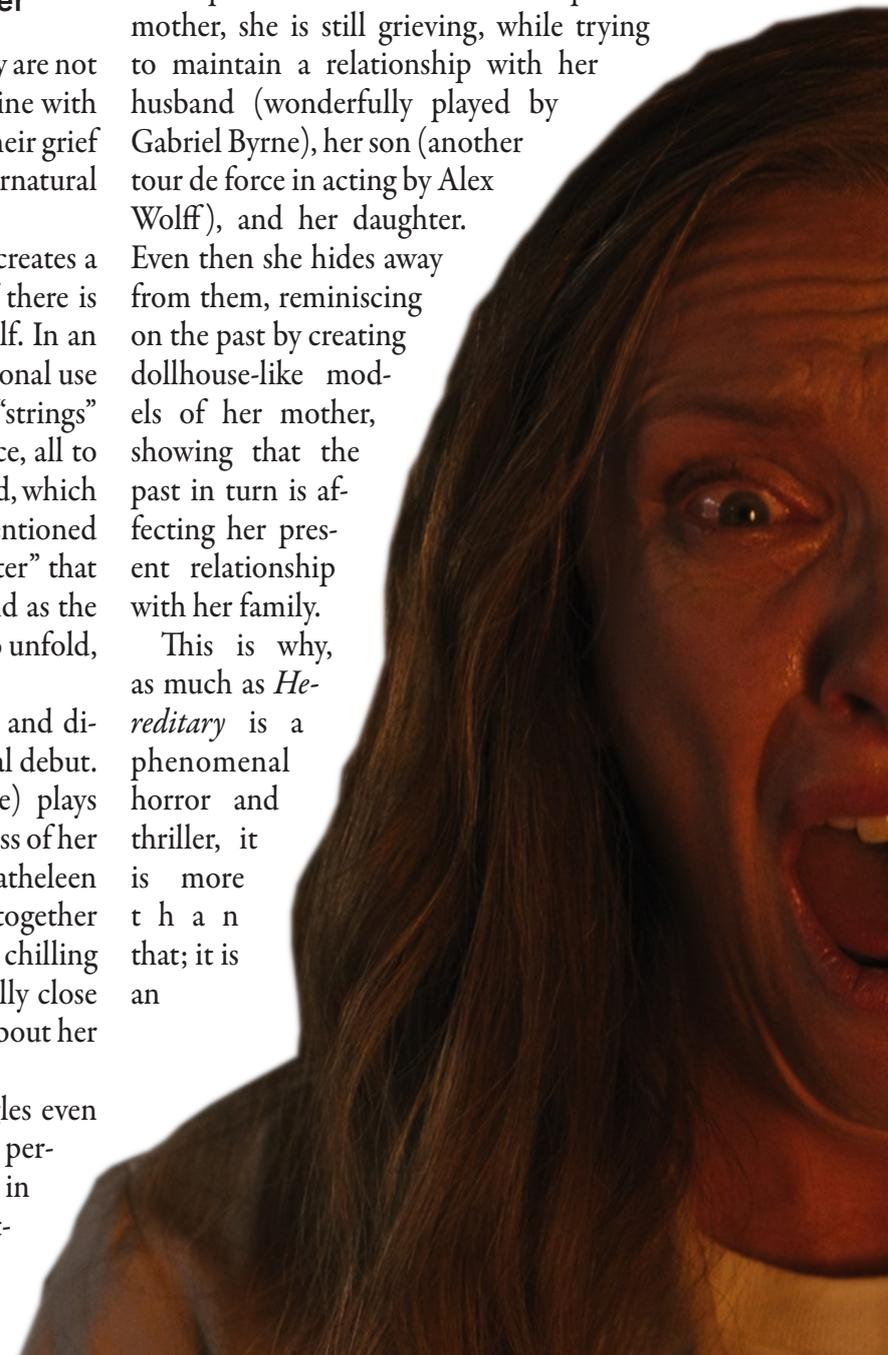
After another family tragedy, Annie struggles even more to keep her family together amid their personal grief, which leads to a search for answers in her own grief that rattles her family tree, inviting more supernatural horrors and leading to a terrifying and phenomenal final act.

Toni Colette delivers a tour de force in

acting, a literal masterclass in acting as Annie Graham, and she is terrifyingly convincing at portraying a conflicted mother, wrestling with complex emotions upon the death of her own mother. It is amazing how Collette can make you feel so much in one scene, from empathy to fear to solidarity with her as she is dealing with the experience of grieving for someone who you are not sure you really loved, and the complexity of emotions that Collette portrays only gets deeper throughout the film. She portrays Annie flawlessly, and Annie remains my favourite horror film character and is one of my favourite roles that Toni Colette has ever played (if it's not clear yet, Toni Colette is one of my favourite actresses).

Despite her strained relationship with her mother, she is still grieving, while trying to maintain a relationship with her husband (wonderfully played by Gabriel Byrne), her son (another tour de force in acting by Alex Wolff), and her daughter. Even then she hides away from them, reminiscing on the past by creating dollhouse-like models of her mother, showing that the past in turn is affecting her present relationship with her family.

This is why, as much as *Hereditary* is a phenomenal horror and thriller, it is more than that; it is an



amazingly crafted film on its own. Even when you remove the supernatural elements, at its core it is a family drama centred around the consequences of not dealing with unresolved generational traumas, as it is clear that the conflict felt by Annie towards her mother is seeping into her struggle to maintain a healthy relationship with her family.

Toni Collette herself, in an interview with *Vulture*, said, “It’s a very honest, natural portrayal of a family experiencing a lot of pain and how it changes them.” Producer Lars Knudsen added: “The film still works as a family drama. At its core, that’s what it’s about, and I feel that the horror movies that stand the test of time are the ones that have something to say about the human condition.” I believe both statements are true. What makes this film not only a phenomenal horror film, but a brilliant film regardless is that it does not cling to a genre and refuses to deviate from it. The film has something to say about how a family grieves, how grief can bring together or break a family down, and yes, how it “changes them,” almost representing the grief and loss as the real terror, the real horror:

One scene in particular that pulled at the heartstrings was an emotional scene at the dinner table where Annie and her son relay all of their feelings after the tragedies the family has faced up to this point. The scene

reveals the anger Annie feels towards her son at times, which she tries to repress because it is her son, and the guilt

her son makes her feel for tragedies that have taken place. The emotions felt by them finally reach a

boiling point, and my goodness, that scene consisted of some of the finest acting I have ever

seen. Both actors made you feel and cling onto every word they were saying as if you were there at that dinner table. This,

along with the lack of non-diegetic sounds as they both speak, made it even more chilling and real. Both Toni Collette and Alex Wolff deserve all the awards for that scene alone.

That was a very emotional, chilling scene that



felt almost too real, but that’s the point, as Ari Aster said: “It’s related to certain things that happened in my life and things that my family and I went through together, But the movie itself is all invention. The feelings behind the film are personal.” The film is meant to speak to families about not allowing grief to break a family apart, but to bring them together. And that dinner scene only accentuates that message; as even Annie herself says in the film that if only the grief they were all feeling could have “brought us together.”

The same demons and spirits that the film mentions are there not only to inject the horror element, but as metaphors; they represent the demons that plague families across all generations, leading to transgenerational trauma, with these demons being specific to the unresolved issues being passed down or weaponized further down the family tree, for example, leading to individuals dealing with grief in unhealthy ways. May-

be because that is all they have known from their parents.

No words could fully express how much I loved and appreciated this film. One of the many reasons I am appreciative is because it restored my hope in horror films and their potential, by not using stereotypical supernatural horror tropes as the main plot driver, rather by making those elements almost secondary to the real-world messages the film has for the human condition, and I believe that is how it should be.

Ari Aster, the producers, Toni Collette (it is very unfortunate that she did not get an Oscar for her role), Alex Wolff, Milly Shapiro, Gabriel Byrne, and all the actors and the team truly created something special with this film, and I 100% believe it will and should stand the test of time, as to me no other horror or thriller film comes close to this. This is truly a masterpiece and a must-watch!

NETFLIX Recommendations from the Editors

Cast aside your courseworks, dear readers; here are some film recommendations from the editors for you to watch on UK Netflix right now!

In Bruges

From the same director and basically the same cast as *The Banshees of Inisherin* (see Ioana’s review), this is a brilliant dark comedy about Irish hitmen in Belgium that will have you shamefully chortling to yourself throughout.

Princess Mononoke

Studio Ghibli’s back catalogue being put on Netflix is the best thing to happen to streaming since groundwater springs. You can start anywhere, but few capture the majesty Ghibli brings to a story better than *Princess Mononoke*.

Guillermo del Toro’s Cabinet of Curiosities

An eight-part horror miniseries in the style of *Black Mirror*, with each episode presenting its own tale of spine-tingling spookiness. del Toro himself features as a co-writer on two of the episodes, with the rest being written and directed by a menagerie of talented horror veterans. If you’re a fan of any other Gothic horror, you’ll certainly be a fan of this.

FILM

Film Review

The Banshees of Inisherin

or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Ennui

Director: Martin McDonagh
Starring: Brendan Gleeson, Colin Farrell
Country: Ireland
Release: October 2022

Ioana Eşanu Film Writer

As seasonal depression is upon us, you might be looking for a film to cosy up with. Some of us turn to Harry Potter, while others indulge in fluffy rom-coms. Writer-director Martin McDonagh has other plans: a stark depiction of life on a remote Irish island, with its daily meaninglessness, dull residents, and miserable weather.

But perhaps it's not all that bad. The film teeters between two fundamental views on this lifestyle: either a grey limbo in which one patiently awaits death, or a peaceful oasis with green pastures, gentle animals, pints at 2PM, and not a care in the world. The two lead actors are almost

personifications of the two views. Colin Farrell plays Pádraic Súilleabháin (I dare you to try and pronounce that), a happy-go-lucky guy whose serene existence gets shaken to the core as the story unfolds. On the other side is the morose Colm Doherty (Brendan Gleeson), long-time friend and fiddle enjoyer. The premise of the film, according to IMDb, is: "Two lifelong friends find themselves at an impasse when one abruptly ends their relationship, with alarming consequences for both of them". Despite its many qualities, the film fails to deliver on this mysterious intrigue, leaving something to be desired.

The performances are stellar, with memorable appearances from Kerry Condon (of *Breaking Bad* and *Better Call Saul* fame) and Barry Keoghan (the latest *Joker*). All in all, the film creates a fascinating tapestry of life in rural 1920's Ireland, from the deeply-ingrained moral values of the village, to the interpersonal relationships and daily struggles. The level of detail and sensibility is commendable, but I wish I could say the same about the plot. Questions of loneliness and depression are raised, as well as the eternal "meaning of life" debate, as the seemingly simple characters reveal their secrets and aspirations. Thought-provoking, moody, and very Irish, *The Banshees of Inisherin* is a potential Oscar contender, but not the most exciting you'll watch this year.

FilmSoc Screenings

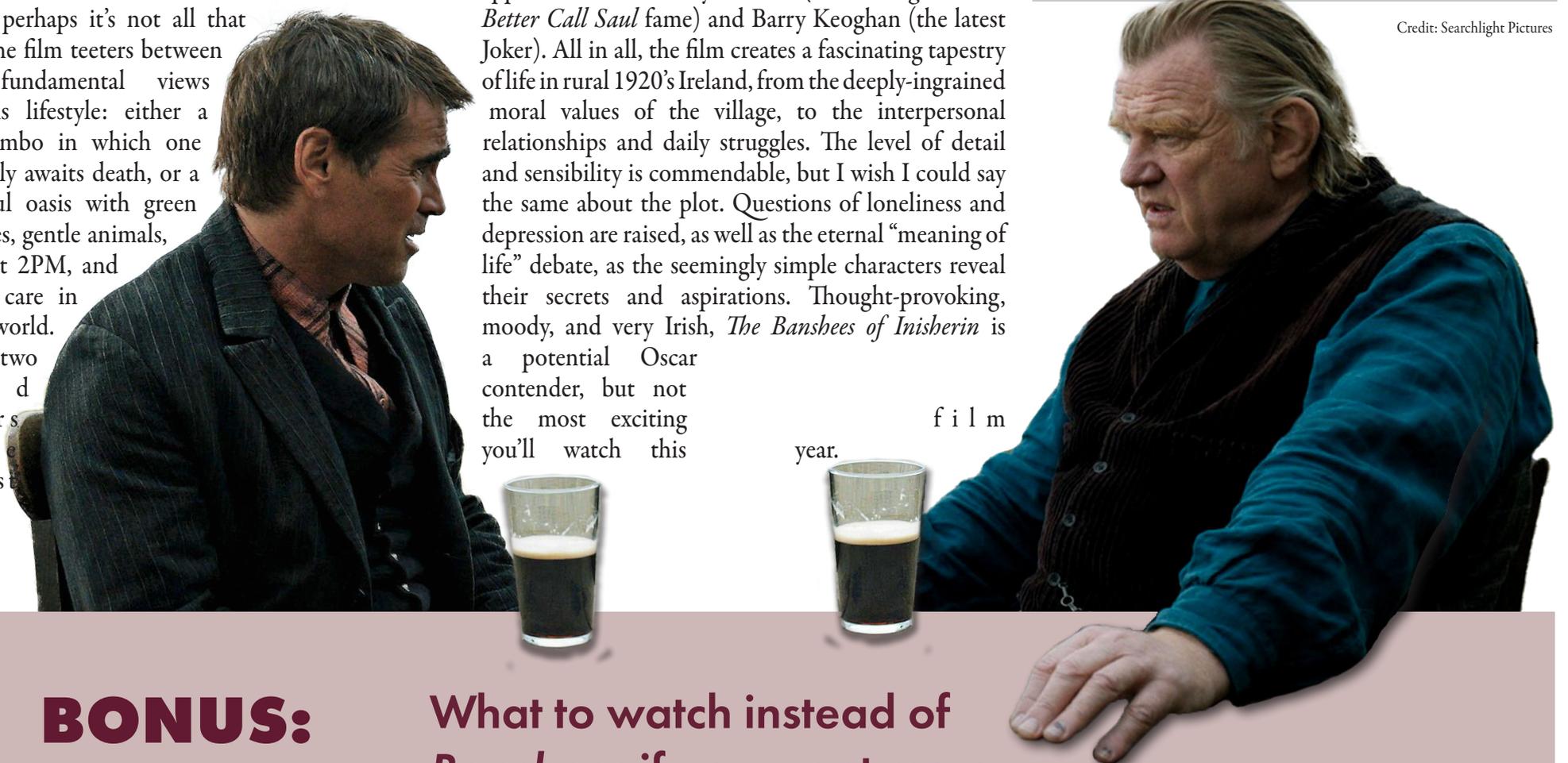


Don't forget to check out IC Film Society's weekly Thursday film screenings... See this week's section for a review of their Halloween special from their in-house film journalist! Find more details on their instagram.



@filmsoc.ic

Credit: Searchlight Pictures



BONUS:

What to watch instead of *Banshees* if you want more...

...Colin Farrell

Thirteen Lives (2022) dramatizes the story of the mission which saw the rescue of a group of young boys and their football coach from a cave in Thailand. The mission was covered heavily on the news back in 2019, so even though you know how it ends, every minute of its nearly 150min runtime keeps you on the edge of your seat. Farrell delivers an incredibly moving performance as the unlikely mission hero. Catch *Thirteen Lives* on Amazon Prime Video for a thrilling evening full of tears.

...Irishness

Belfast (2021, Academy Award Best Picture nominee) depicts the life of an Irish working-class family, as seen through the eyes of their youngest son. The contrast between his innocence and the absurd violence of *The Troubles* is very powerful. Watch this film if you want to be reminded of the beauty of childhood and how to recapture that excitement and lust for life.

MUSIC

Gig Reviews

Crawlers Are... Surprisingly Good Live

I accepted to go to a concert by a band which clearly does not target my demographic...

Written by [Giovanni França](#) Music Writer

Last Wednesday, I was sent on an emergency mission. Crawlers. O2 Academy Islington. Our writer and Crawlers fan, Amanda, was supposed to attend the event in the first place, but she had a last-minute schedule clash – making our editors hunt for a replacement spectator as soon as possible.

Enter me, accepting to go to a gig by a band which has that very characteristic post-My Chemical Romance aesthetic that caters to edgy high schoolers. Indeed, that is a weird phenomenon I have noticed during my past couple years living in the United Kingdom: a wave of emo-adjacent bands which show up left and right with gigs open to ages 14 and over. But a free gig is a free gig, and you have got to step out of your comfort zone sometimes.

I arrived at the venue and immediately noticed the apprehensive teenagers, by the stage, juxtaposed by a barrier of skeptical moms and dads, leaning against the wall with their arms crossed. I strategically chose to be in-between both parties, rather off-centred, as I knew that if I went to the middle, this kind of crowd would yell at me for being too tall.

I caught a couple songs from the first opener, Hannah Grae, a singer from South Wales who gained a large following on TikTok and YouTube – and wow, what a voice! Along with a power trio, the quartet had a strong

presence, which is quite rare for a smaller support act. Their cover of 'What's Up?' by 4 Non Blondes was a highlight, getting everyone warmed up with the crowd favourite.

Next up, we had Daisy Brain, a project led by Will Tse, a singer-songwriter-producer-and-blue-haired-romantic based in London. The band came with a sound much harsher than Grae's, and even more energetic. With grungey guitars and heartfelt vocals, Daisy Brain put on a contagious, cathartic atmosphere with their anthemic choruses, and actually made me wonder if they planned on stealing the show from Crawlers.

But I was wrong! The Liverpoolian 4-piece came on stage with a 13-song setlist, with great sequencing and incredible stage presence. The effervescent Holly Minto, lead singer and occasional guitarist (and trumpetist!), had amazing chemistry with the crowd, even getting me, then unknowledgeable Crawlers-wise, a bit emotional when listening to the band's story. They were accompanied by a sharp Liv Kettle on the bass, a Cobainesque Amy Woodall on the lead guitar and an explosive Harry Breen on the drums, the first two also providing backing vocals. Each of them put on an grandiose performance, dominating the stage akin to hall-of-fame rockstars, delivering a performance much more abrasive than their studio recordings.

The setlist was composed of songs from their 2021 self-titled EP, tracks from their freshly released mixtape *Loud Without Noise*, and even unreleased material. Indeed, the track sequencing was divided into three acts: the first presenting some of their older songs; then the middle one with their newly released records, even the unreleased 'Loveless', and a final leg with their most popular singles. They closed the concert with the relentless but purposeful 'I Don't Want It', which gets on your face with a message of frustration about how Generation Z is often self-aware of its bad habits but struggles to change them nonetheless. These "heavier" subjects were present in multiple songs performed during the night, which explains Crawlers' dedicated fanbase (excluding their fascinating social media presence): the lyricism is always meaningful, with not a single track composed of impassive filler. Holly always has something important to say, and her bandmates complement her crystalline vocals with solid rock instrumentation.

So, yeah - thank you, Amanda! My Wednesday evening was interesting, to say the least. Make sure to check Crawlers' new mixtape, *Loud Without Noise*, if you like that heavier branch of alternative/indie rock – be it Nothing But Thieves, Airways or Pinkshift.



View online here!

Cassia: Live at KOKO

In their biggest headline gig ever, Cassia returned to London to end their UK and European tour in style at Camden's KOKO.

Written by [Amy Smith](#) Music Writer

With their own special brand of Mancunian calypso pop, Cassia's tropical vibes were just the right antidote for a cold October night.

With Eli Smart as the opening act, we were treated to some good vibrations straight from Hawaii from the get-go, warming up the audience with some hazy indie pop that felt like a blend of '60s rock, jazz and sun-baked Tropicana. While there was nothing particularly groundbreaking in his set, Eli eased the crowd into a steady sway, setting the scene for what would later be whipped up into a whirlwind of arms.

After an impressive introductory light show set to the dizzy opening song of their second album, Cassia came onto the stage at KOKO to a crowd screaming with excitement. Even after playing 27 venues in 7 weeks, Cassia certainly weren't lacking energy. I always felt that Cassia produced the sort of joyful music that would come alive in front of a large, receptive audience, and I was so right. Right from the first track, 'Drifting',

the band had everyone in the room jumping with every beat and dancing together.

Cassia gave a particularly captivating performance with a setlist full of fan favourites from across their discography. Though the gig leant primarily on Cassia's honed musicianship, it was really impressive to see the progression of their sound as they played fan-favourites from both their easy-going debut album, *Replica*, and through to their more pop-leaning second album, *Why You Lacking Energy?*. Whilst it's true that this evolution means the band has lost some of their original uniqueness and flair, the crowd reception at KOKO proved their sound is still solid and their hooks are still just as watertight. 'Moana' and 'Do Right' were particular crowd favourites, with Rob Ellis' acrobatic guitar riffs cheerfully running over Jacob's simmering bongos, curating a carefree, sunkissed sound that made it easy to feel like you aren't actually caught in London's drizzly autumn.

As the night progressed, Rob, the lead vocalist and guitarist, showed us all just how humble this band are, almost stopping in a moment of awe at how far they've come in just a few years.

Towards the end of the set, Rob and Lou (bass) took up positions on either side of Jacob's drumkit and launched into an impressive, near-tribal drum interval that lead into the delightful reggaeton of 'Small Spaces', the opening track from their debut album. All of a sudden, keeping both feet still on the ground was very difficult indeed. The moment was visually breathtaking as the band were backed by incredible lighting, playing as silhouettes against a colourful backdrop and several tropical plants.

Cassia managed to leave the room buzzing after delivering an uplifting, magical performance at KOKO. Their songs were playful and full of character, creating an exceptional set for their biggest headline show to date.

A PLAY BY MIKE BARTLETT

An amateur performance by arrangement with Nick Hern Books

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