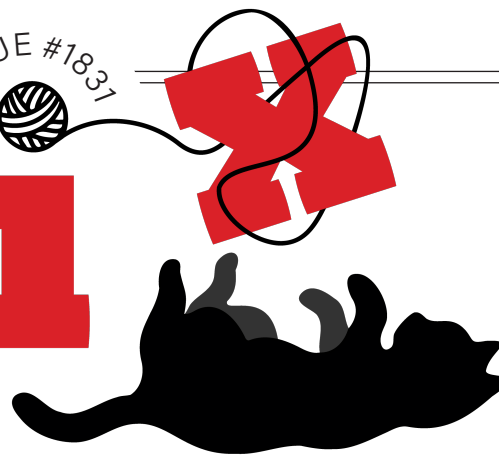


First published in 1949, *Felix* is released weekly during term time and is distributed around Imperial's London campuses. All students, staff, and alumni are welcome to contribute to the paper.

Felix

KEEP THE CAT FREE | SINCE 1949

ISSUE #1837



Remove intifada slogan, Union tells Marxist Society

Debate rages over right to use controversial slogan.

Editor-in-Chief
JAMIE JOHN

Marxist Society has been ordered to stop using the phrase 'intifada until victory' in its communications, after a complaint was submitted by students.

Two weeks ago, Imperial College Union (ICU) emailed Imperial Marxist Society about its use of the phrase in a pamphlet after receiving the complaint.

The pamphlet, distributed on 11th October, advertised an emergency society meeting entitled, 'How can communists support Palestine?'. It called for 'an end [to]

the Zionist settlement land grab', 'a mass uprising against the occupation, on both sides of the green line', and 'equal rights for all people, regardless of ethnicity or religion'.

"Playing semantics": Marxist Society and complainants engage in war of words

Responding to the email from ICU, a representative of Marxist Society argued that 'intifada until victory' is 'not a call for violence', asserting that 'The intifadas were mass uprisings of the Palestinians against Israeli occupation, consisting of large-scale protests, general strikes, and boycotts.'

'No part of our material can be construed as anything remotely like a call for armed struggle... Therefore, we have every moral and legal right to continue to use the slogan "intifada until victory".'

In comments to *Felix*, the students who made the complaint disputed Marxist Society's description of intifada, accusing them of "playing semantics" and stirring up "hatred, violence and intimidation".

'This description conveniently skips over the hundreds of innocent lives lost in suicide bombings, stabbings and shootings' in the first and second intifada.'

They noted 'the sheer speed with which these flyers were distributed, a mere four days



Bus stop outside Beit Quadrangle . Rolando Charles

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The OT Interviews: Stephanie Yeung

Yeung explains the steep price rises at the Union's bars, and talks about her path to the position of DPFS.

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"I am here because I am human"

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Imperial should raise its English language standards

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DECLARATION

At *Felix*, we believe that it is always in the interest of the students to be in the 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:

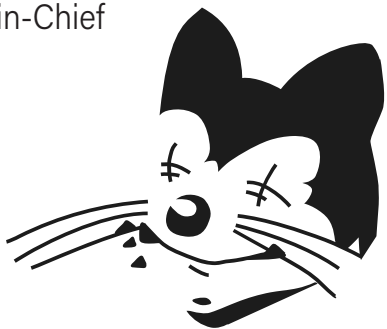
We will, to the best of our ability, tell you the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

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:
JAMIE JOHN
Editor-in-Chief



The Felix Board:



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Editor-in-Chief,
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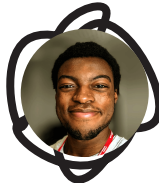
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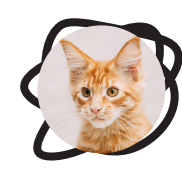
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EDITORIAL

Imperial's dilemma

Imperial finds itself in a tricky position with the Israel-Palestine war. It must condemn the attacks of Hamas and reassure its Jewish community, while also acknowledging the decades of injustice faced by Palestinians.

In theory, it is possible to do all of this, but the College's communications thus far show how difficult it is to talk about this issue without upsetting one party or another.

Imperial's first messages tried to play things safe, as details of Hamas's attack emerged. 'Our thoughts are with all those affected by the escalating violence in Israel and Gaza,' it said in a message on X, formerly Twitter. Provost Ian Walmsley followed, tweeting, 'Our Imperial community stands as one against acts of violence and hatred,' and expressing his shock at the 'appalling violence in Israel and Gaza.'

The College's attempts at taking the centre ground backfired, when on Friday 13th October, it received a series of open letters from Jewish and Israeli students, staff and alumni. "We do not understand why Imperial hasn't condemned Hamas's heinous acts," they wrote, accusing Imperial of downplaying "these atrocities", and calling its statements "an affront to our dignity."

Hours after the letter was published, Brady sent a statement to all College members, calling out 'This week's terrible attacks by Hamas' and the escalation of violence in Gaza'.

He followed it up with an address at Imperial's graduation ceremony, acknowledging "the terrorist attacks in Israel and the rapidly escalating conflict and humanitarian crisis in Gaza."

Meanwhile, Israel's blockade and shelling of the Gaza Strip was exacerbating the existing humanitarian crisis in the region.

Speaking this week, one student with Palestinian heritage called Brady's comments "disgraceful", taking issue with his framing of events and the "passive" language he used. His address, she said, ruined her graduation. Another Palestinian-heritage student described Imperial's response as "a bowl full of nothing".

Brady is not alone in his woes. The problem the College faces is a microcosm of a wider one facing institutions across the world. Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer found himself in hot water after comments he made about Israel's right to defend itself, and blockade Gaza landed poorly with Muslim communities. And UN Chief António Guterres expressed his shock after Israel accused him of 'justifying acts of terror'. Guterres had said Hamas's attacks had not occurred in 'a vacuum', and that the 'Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation.'

So, where does Imperial go from here? There is, unfortunately, no easy answer. It could have said nothing – anything it does say this subject will anger somebody.

But then it would have faced accusations of callousness. Some Imperial students have been affected directly by the events of the past few weeks, and would undoubtedly take issue with such an approach.

It must therefore condemn the atrocities that have been committed by both Israel and Hamas, and remain sensitive to the concerns of affected College members. It will inevitably face accusations of bias, and must therefore engage directly with students, staff, and alumni to understand why they are upset.

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NEWS

The OT Interviews

Stephanie Yeung

Deputy President (Finance & Services)

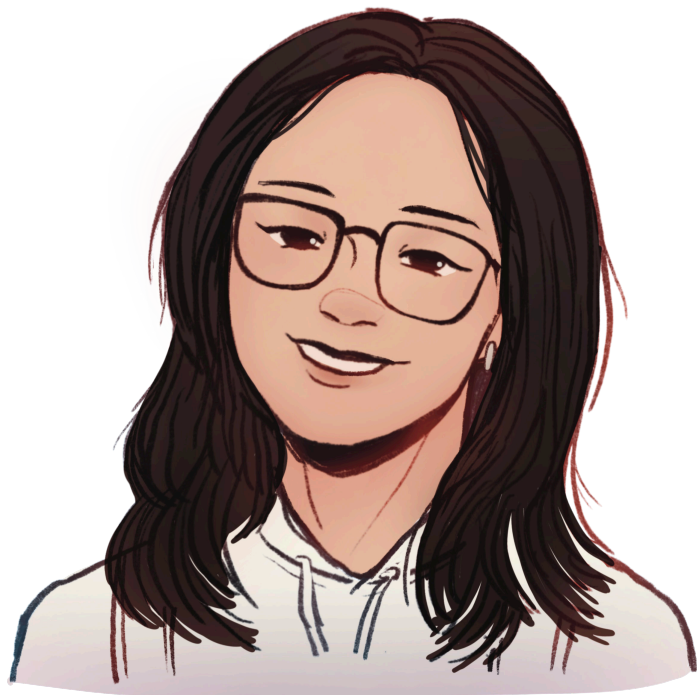


Illustration by Natalie Yu

In this series, Felix talks to the Union's Officer Trustees. This week: Stephanie Yeung, DPFS.

Editor-in-Chief
JAMIE JOHN

Accompanying Stephanie Yeung to departmental talks in Welcome Week, I am struck by her frenetic energy and enthusiasm. She jumps, points, paces, and nods frantically in agreement when other Officer Trustees (OTs) address the audience. “Y’all have a good day!” she exclaims to freshers at the end of one talk, breaking out into a broad smile with both hands outstretched, as she gives the audience a thumbs up.

She is equally animated when I interview her two weeks later. Her

face lights up while talking about the contraption that synchronizes the clocks in the Union Building (Yeung recently graduated with an engineering degree), and she does a full 360° spin in her swivel chair as she considers her answer to a question.

Her joviality belies a serious interest in her role - and in the student experience - one that becomes apparent as we speak.

“I grew up in Hong Kong,” she says, as we settle down for the first of two interviews. “I was raised there for 18 years, and then I came to London to study at Imperial.”

Societies played a big part in Yeung’s time at Imperial. She says she joined

Skate Society first, describing it as a “very cool time of my life”, where she “met very cool people”, but she is “done living life on wheels for now.”

“I thought my 13 years of ice-skating experience would translate well into roller skating. It did not. I kept falling on my knees and have been traumatised since.”

Yeung says one of her favourite experiences at Imperial was Mahjong Society. “After COVID hit, I personally brought it back to life, which was quite fun. It was on the brink of death, and as far as I’m aware, it’s doing great now. Members keep coming, and tonight, I’m going to their first regular social this year.”

Besides her societal experience, she has chaired the Union’s Ethics & Environment Network, and, in her final year, acted as Recreation Management Group Chair. These roles brought her into contact with Niamh McAuley and Sam Lee, the previous two Deputy Presidents for Finance and Services (DPFS).

“Working with Sam, and later Niamh, drew me into the role, because I saw it combined the two things I enjoyed while doing my undergrad: the sustainability side and the clubs and societies.”

“On top of that, the Union services are something else under my role, which I previously had not engaged with much. Initially, I thought that might be a weakness, but there’s a reason I haven’t engaged with our services - it’s a gap I’d like to tackle.”

Yeung suggests that the reason she hasn’t engaged with the Union’s services is because she doesn’t drink. “A lot of our events which are drinking heavy - or drinking oriented - do not interest me.”

One of her manifesto goals this year is to deliver a wider range of events - including some not based around alcohol.

“Creating that space for myself and other students who’d like to avoid drinking-oriented events is important,” she says, taking a sip from a fizzy blackcurrant drink - her favourite at FiveSixEight.

Stephanie says that there are non-alcoholic drinks available at Union venues. But she says that the Union

is printing new menus for its bars to advertise them more prominently, and has also introduced more non-alcoholic beers to its selection. In the longer term, she wants to increase the quality of non-alcoholic drinks served at Union bars.

“One thing I’m keen on is introducing is more wellbeing-related events,” she says, when I ask what new non-alcoholic events she is planning to hold. “I want the Union to be a social environment for students to come and relax - no pressure to do anything - just be here and relax, because university is stressful.”

“But I am quite open to ideas, and I have an events forum planned - because what I want to put on might not be what students want.”

“I would be interested to see what societies want to offer and whether we can collaborate. I think a lot of our societies are filling the gap when it comes to non-drinking events, because they have something they’re very good at, and I’d like to offer that experience to all our students.”

Food and drink prices

The next time we meet, I ask Yeung about the increase in food and drink prices at Union venues over the past year. Students have been vocal in expressing their frustrations, venting on social media and in conversations on campus.

“The main reason for the price increase is inflation,” says Yeung. “Inflation on the suppliers’ end means we have to increase the price on our customer’s end as well. We have no choice. But we have been doing our best to minimise costs where we can.”

“We’re breaking even at our venues,” she says when I ask why the Union hasn’t absorb any of the price increases. “We haven’t been pocketing any extra money.”

But, she says, “We are putting out a new tender for our alcohol supply in November, with the aim that whoever wins the tender will provide us with a better deal that would allow us to potentially reduce costs from January onwards.”

Students have observed that the Eastside Bar - a College bar located in Prince’s Gardens - serves cheaper alcohol than the Union’s venues. I put this to

Yeung.

“The Eastside Bar is managed by the College [specifically Taste Imperial, Imperial’s catering department]. The College has more outlets, so they have bigger buying power as a whole, because of the volume and size they operate at. Compare that to us [Imperial College Union]: we have four bars in total.”

Imperial students have also complained that other student unions in London charge less for their alcohol. Yeung says this is because they are part of the National Union of Students (NUS), a collective of student unions which purchases items in bulk, reducing their costs per unit.

I point out that Imperial used to be part of the NUS – in fact, Imperial College Union (ICU) was a founding member in 1922. It left in 1923, and has since then rejoined and left three times. Its most recent departure was in 2008.

Why has it not rejoined since then? Simply because none of ICU’s OTs have re-examined the case for membership, says Stephanie.

“Generally, we’ve been doing fine on our own since then,” she explains. “It’s not something that’s out of the question – if students want to see that happen, we can make it happen. It’s just something that’s been swooped off the radar, because nobody’s really thought about it in years.”

Yeung’s own plan to decrease prices at ICU’s venues is linked to her ambition to make the Union a more inclusive place for students. She tells me she will listen to student proposals at her event forums, and plan new events to cater to their interests.

“I would very much love for them to see the Union as a space they can use,” she says. She hopes that an increase in footfall will drive higher revenues, which she will use to subsidise food and drink.

The job title

Of the five OTs, Yeung’s job title is the most confusingly named. “It’s not the most representative name for the things I do,” she says. She says that the Union’s Activities and Venues teams carry out much of the day-to-day operational work.

“I’m only elected for a year, so I can’t provide continuity the way our staff can. My job is introducing new ideas to what they are already doing – bringing new perspectives

and connecting with our community. For me, it’s like, ‘Hey, what about we do this to push my goal,’ and then I’ll work with them on implementing it.”

She says she does help the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) with some operational work, such as administering society finances and approving activities.

The final part of her portfolio is sustainability. “While it’s not covered in my title, it is part of my job,” she says. Yeung – like the other OTs this year – is passionate about sustainability, and the Union has published a new policy that requires clubs and societies to ensure that their third-party relationships are consistent with the Union’s own sustainability goals. She implores students to attend her monthly forums on sustainability so that their views are heard. (To read more on Yeung’s sustainability goals, read her interview in Issue 1828.)

Sustainability

Like this year’s Union President Camille Boutrolle, Yeung believes that ICU needs to better represent parts of its student community. Yeung highlights postgraduate students. “I think it’s important to admit we haven’t done our best to represent our postgraduate community here. 50% of our population is postgraduate students.”

“I want them to be included and represented within the Union. Our community is more than our undergraduate students.” She says the Union is reviewing the results of a report it authored with the Graduate School on the postgraduate experience, and will soon make changes to its provision so that it can better serve them.

Yeung says that passion for the DPFS role is the most important requirement for those thinking of running next year. “Ideally they should have a little bit of background, but just because you’re not experienced in all the areas that the DPFS job covers, doesn’t mean you shouldn’t consider running.” She puts forward herself as an example – a teetotaler who “came into the job with minimal knowledge of how a bar runs.”

“Anything you don’t know about, there are people to support you within the Union.”

“So far, all of us OTs are still driven to achieve the goals we set out to do. Keeping that flame alive for 12 months is not easy, because there are things that will stand in your way. Having that drive is important.”

“I am here because I am a human”: Pro-Palestine protestors speak at rally outside College Main Entrance

Editor-in-Chief
JAMIE JOHN

Students, staff and members of the public congregated on Wednesday afternoon outside the College Main Entrance, waving Palestinian flags, displaying banners and calling upon passersby to join them in bringing attention to the plight of Palestinian civilians.

“This is the start of something here,” said an organiser, addressing a huddle of 15 students at the beginning of the rally. “This is not an abstraction here, there is a very real danger of actual genocide in Palestine,” he continued.

He rejected the idea suggested by

“mass media” that “everything started on 7th October”. “It started in 1948 with the forcible partition of historic Palestine.”

He called upon those present to “spread the word” and “build confidence” by leafleting and joining mailing lists.

Students take aim at Imperial

“Our university’s response to the war has been very weak,” said a recent graduate with Palestinian heritage.

She accused Imperial President Hugh Brady of “not taking things seriously enough”, calling his comments thus far “disgraceful”.

She was especially upset by Brady’s comments at last week’s graduation

→ **CONTINUED ON 6**



Xiang Hong Tan for Felix

→ FROM P. 1: WAR OF WORDS

days after the initial Hamas pogrom [and] before the Israeli army had their counterattack properly organised.'

Responding, a Marxist Society representative noted that by the time it had distributed the pamphlets two weeks ago, over 1,000 Palestinians had died in Israel's retaliatory strikes.

The representative said Marxist Society did not condone suicide bombings or "anything of the like" and described them as "individual acts of terrorism", incompatible with "the traditions of intifadas and methods of class struggle we defend."

They highlighted Israel's "extremely violent" response to the first and second intifadas, in which thousands of Palestinians were killed.

Marxist Society calls for non-violent resistance and "revolution"

"We are strongly against Hamas,"

→ FROM P. 5: PRO-PALESTINE RALLY

ceremony.

Brady started his graduation address by delivering a message on "the terrorist attacks in Israel and the rapidly escalating conflict and humanitarian crisis in Gaza."

"Obviously, I condemn Hamas. But using language like that to describe terrorist attacks one group of people [Israelis] – and then using using passive language like 'escalating conflict' to describe larger attacks on another group of people [Palestinians] is implying one set of lives is better than the other."

"I don't think he should speak in our name when a lot of his student body don't support what he is saying. I don't think he should have made graduation political either."

"My relatives in Palestine were all watching me graduate. I spent the rest of the ceremony concerned about them, not enjoying my graduation."

Abdul, an undergraduate student, said both of his grandmothers fled Palestine in 1948, after the 'Nakba' (mass displacement of Palestinian Arabs during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War). He called Imperial's response "a bowl full of nothing".

said Marxist Society. "The people both of Israel and the occupied territories of Palestine would be better served uniting against both of their government forces in this matter, because ultimately all this is leading to is the killing of people on both sides."

"We are not here to promote violent resistance," it reiterated. "We believe in mass action – through protest, strike action and other methods of class struggle."

It called for "revolution" and "a socialist federation of the whole of Palestine, as part of a socialist federation of the Middle East."

ICU acknowledged that it had instructed Marxist Society to cease distribution of material containing the word 'intifada', but declined to comment further. A statement from its Officer Trustees on Friday 13th October condemns Hamas, and violence against both Israeli and Palestinian civilians.

"They always say the same thing, and it's not really a response, it's the bare minimum."

Abdul expressed his wish for a free Palestine, or a free land where both Israelis and Palestinians could live together in peace.

Heckler squares up to protestors

The rally was disrupted an hour in, when a member of the public started chanting, "F***ing terrorists", and squared up to a member of the Social Workers Party who was present at the event. Imperial security staff were quick to intervene, escorting him away to chants of "Free, free Palestine", and "Palestine will be free".

"We humans are one family"

Not all present at the protest were members of the College. A Jewish woman told passersby she was attending the rally to campaign against the actions of the Israeli state and emphasise that not all Jewish people were Zionists.

'I am here because I am a human,' said one 79-year-old Egyptian man, a retired



Xiang Hong Tan for Felix

customer services representative. "We humans are one family, our father and mother are Adam and Eve."

He explained that he was at the rally because of his own experiences as a young child growing up in the Sinai peninsula. In the mid-1950s, Israel conducted reprisal operations in response to incursions by Arab militants from Syria, Egypt and Jordan.

"It was 1954. Me and my friends were playing football in the street, and suddenly the Israelis shot us."

"I have three bullets in my leg," he said, pointing down and pulling up his trousers to reveal three faded, circular scars. "Two of my friends were killed."

"My hometown used to be Christians, Jews, Muslims. We used to live as one family. I can't forgive what happened, but I want peace."

"If Palestine was doing the same to Jewish people, I would stand with the Jewish people. All of us need to stand together for justice."

"This is not about different religions against each other, it is about solidarity and unity," the organisers told Felix. "We want equal rights for Palestinians and Israelis in the region."

"Civilian deaths on any side are not acceptable. It is right to condemn Hamas's terrorist attacks on civilians – it is tragic those Israeli lives were lost. But it is possible to do this while also calling

out actions of Israel and advocating for Palestinians, who have felt a sense of injustice for the past 75 years.'

"The aim of this [rally] is to talk to people, make them aware, get them involved in the movement. We want to evolve it into something a bit bigger and more regular, and keep the discussion going." The organisers said they had received "several dozen" signups at the event.

The College has been approached for comment.



Xiang Hong Tan for Felix

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Monday 30 October
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SCIENCE

Pioneers in mRNA vaccines win Nobel

Scientists who developed the technology that led to the mRNA COVID vaccines have won the Nobel Prize.

Science Writer
FARHANA ISMAEEL



COVID-19 mRNA vaccine vial. Spencer Davis

The 2023 Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine has been awarded to Katalin Karikó and Drew Weissman for their groundbreaking contributions to nucleoside base modification, which paved the way for the development of the messenger RNA vaccines that played an important role in the scientific fight against COVID-19.

The work done by the two laureates led directly to the rapid development of mRNA vaccines by Moderna and Pfizer in 2020, saving countless lives and playing a significant part in blunting the force of the coronavirus pandemic.

From a chance meeting to Nobel recognition

Karikó and Weissman, born in Hungary in 1955 and Massachusetts in 1959 respectively, first crossed paths in the line for a laboratory photocopier in the late 1990s. In joining forces, they have merged their expertise in RNA biochemistry and immunology.

The pair collaborated to investigate how mRNA, the genetic strands that carry protein-making instructions encoded by DNA, could be manipulated and delivered to human cells in a stable form.

They demonstrated that it was possible to prevent an inflammatory response by the immune system to lab-made mRNA by making specific chemical modifications to the component bases of the molecules. This breakthrough enabled the delivery of mRNA into human cells to make viral proteins, such as the spike molecule found on SARS-CoV-2.

The Nobel Prize committee in Stockholm said: “The laureates contributed to the unprecedented rate of vaccine development during one of the greatest threats to human health in modern times.”

Traditional vaccines typically introduce a weakened or inactivated form of a pathogen (virus or bacteria) into the body which stimulates an immune response. This prepares the immune system to recognise and combat the pathogen if it were to enter the body.

By contrast, mRNA vaccines contain genetic instructions which prompt our cells to produce lots of viral proteins, which the immune system identifies as foreign. This prepares the im-

significant breakthrough in the advancement of mRNA vaccines, and was crucial in the development of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines.

According to Airfinity, a UK-based health analytics company, over 5.5 billion doses of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines have been administered worldwide since the onset of the pandemic.

Ultimately, this technology enables companies to create a vaccine for almost any target if they possess the correct genetic



The laureates contributed to the unprecedented rate of vaccine development during one of the greatest threats to human health in modern times.

immune system to combat the virus more effectively in the instance of any future infections.

Early prototypes of these lab-made mRNA strands posed a substantial challenge to vaccine development due to their tendency to induce strong inflammatory reactions, rendering them unsuitable for medical applications.

Medical innovation

In 2005, Karikó and Weissman discovered that by replacing one of the mRNA bases, uridine, with a modified version found naturally in cells called pseudouridine, they could significantly diminish the inflammatory response triggered by immune cells.

Over subsequent years, they continued their research and discovered that using pseudouridine in the mRNA not only reduced inflammation, but also boosted protein production in cells that absorbed this modified mRNA. This constituted a

instructions.

One of the most promising aspects of this technology is the possibility that it could be used to train patients' bodies to fight their own cancers. Researchers could examine a patient's tumour, identify cancer-specific proteins that are not present in healthy tissues, and create a vaccine that targets these proteins.

Soumya Swaminathan, who served as chief scientist at the World Health Organization until 2022 and now chairs a foundation in Chennai, states, “The Nobel Prize today recognizes decades of painstaking research and a belief that mRNA technology would have useful applications one day. The success of mRNA vaccines against COVID has now opened up a whole research enterprise with potential therapeutics and vaccines for both communicable and noncommunicable diseases.”

ENVIRONMENT

Climate-U Conference: reflections

Environment Editor
SIMRAN PATEL

Last week, I was invited to the Conference on Higher Education and the Climate Crisis in London. The conference was organised by Climate-U, a group of 16 universities aiming to improve climate literacy and make more sustainable campuses worldwide.

Walking into the conference room in Senate House, I was welcomed by poignant artwork depicting the state of our planet. I also noticed interesting posters describing some of Climate-U's 'participatory action research' projects, which connected universities and their local communities to create tailored climate education and adaptation programs.

At the conference opening, I was honoured to present a self-composed song of my perspective as a student activist at Imperial. This piece complemented an empowering speech by Professor Jane Holder from UCL about the potential of universities – including student activists – to make “vital, radical, and inspirational” change on the climate front. He also introduced the concept of ‘education for sustainable development’ where universities encourage sustainable teaching, operations, and partnerships.

Then came the keynote speech by Dr Fatima Denton from the United Nations University. The speech explained how the climate narrative is written by the

Global North – which imposes unrealistic, insensitive demands on the Global South despite its disproportionate contributions to the climate crisis. Climate finance was a major part of the speech. Dr Denton highlighted how little funding the Global South receives to transition away from the economic model that made the Global North prosperous, and questioned the extent to which neoliberal economics could combat the climate crisis. Dr Denton concluded her presentation with the importance of universities in delivering climate justice – including celebrating indigenous knowledge on climate change and challenging the Westernised lens through which research is conducted.

While academics from the first session were all from the UK, my next session drew on expertise from the Global South. Called ‘Climate action and ecologies of knowledge’, the session described ‘participatory action research’ programs in Kenya, Tanzania, India, and Brazil. The Kenyan speaker indicated that local communities have unique beliefs about land, society, and nature; thus, conservation solutions centred around these beliefs are more likely to be implemented. For example, I learnt how researchers helped communities in Tanzania restore corals and mangroves using local knowledge and resources. An Indian academic then spoke about developing a postgraduate course on climate science, justice, and



Posters and artwork at the Climate-U conference. Simran Patel / Environment Editor

risk, through which students can relate to the climate crisis no matter their academic or socioeconomic background. Finally, I learnt how Brazilian researchers worked with school students to promote other sources of income besides deforestation in their village and spread environmental awareness in the community.

This session was followed by an entirely vegetarian and vegan lunch. I have rarely seen this in the UK, but it is what the Plant-Based Universities (PBU) campaign group aims to normalise. In my final breakout session, I heard from a PBU representative about how they believe universities should stop serving animal-based products like meat, dairy, and eggs due to their higher greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on natural resources.

By the time of the closing plenary, I was overwhelmed by the intersections between food, justice, education, ecology, and the climate. However, academics from Fiji, South Africa, the UK, and Brazil summarised everything very clearly. They all believed the key to combatting the climate crisis in higher education is collaboration – between natural and social sciences, academics and the public, activists and policymakers, and the Global North and South. The panel agreed that power hierarchies and sources of knowledge need to be challenged to develop inclusive climate solutions, with universities being the best place to do so. Student activists are challenging universities globally to do more for our planet ... but how many universities will accept the challenge?

I spent much of the past year researching techniques for recycling flexible plastics and synthesis of biodegradable films plastics; important components in accelerating the recycling sector. But when writing up reports, I struggled to justify investing time into these areas as I realised there were more fundamental flaws in the recycling system – these being consumer behaviour and waste collection methods.

In school, the concept of the three R's was drilled into my brain – reduce, reuse, recycle, reduce, reuse, recycle. It is a mantra I try to follow to this day, and yet, over the years and particularly since entering the adult world, it increasingly feels as though this is just an ideal. Even to me, convenience often trumps the environmentally friendly option, despite my best efforts to reduce my consumption, reuse what I have, and recycle as much of my waste as possible.

Recycling can feel particularly futile when one thinks about all the non-recyclable materials we produce. Biodegradable and compostable plastics, most of which are still in development phases, are examples of this – if you ever want to recycle them, make sure they are a recyclable type of plastic. The recycling symbol can be misleading. The Mobius loop icon, on its own, indicates that a material is recyclable. But, if there is a number inside the loop, the category of material it refers to might not actually be recyclable. Only glass, paper, aluminium, and category 1 and 2 plastics are typically recyclable anywhere. The Green Dot symbol can be misconstrued as meaning 'recyclable', but is actually a symbol only for producer responsibility, showing that a payment has been made towards a national packaging recovery organisation.

Sorting and collection methods are also confusing and require varying degrees of consumer responsibility. Depending on where you live, you might be asked to sort your recyclables into categories at home or just to separate them

from general waste. Film plastics usually need to be taken to a supermarket collection point or directly to recycling centres that are able to process them. Further barriers to effective recycling include unwashed waste and use of the wrong bin bags. From working in a café, I can say for certain that their huge amounts of waste are not separated, and that recycling bags

and processed in another country (or just dumped in their landfills), incurring additional greenhouse gas emissions on the journey.

The problem of recycling is exacerbated by the excess of materials used, driven by our consumerist society, and production rates are unlikely to decrease in the near future. It isn't just commercial

on already-struggling recycling processes.

Returning to the café example – the majority of customers accept a paper bag for their purchases (which are already in smaller bags), often even those who have only bought an item or two and sometimes those who consume their purchase in the store. This speaks to apathy and the lack of thought going into many of our consumption decisions.

Another case that comes to mind is the Natural History Museum's installation of recycling bins specifically for coffee cups, which clearly indicate separate disposal for cups and lids. A binary of two items, in a café filled with people who have come to learn about the natural world, and still there were complete coffee cups in one side of the bin or the other. This could be chalked up to language barriers, even with glaring

symbols of the cup and lid, but is most likely simply due to lack of care. Of course, it would be entirely impractical to employ such niche sorting bins on a city-wide level – imagine bins for boxes, bags, forks, knives, spoons, cups, and lids at fast food chains – but it is evident that there would be no place for this anyway in a society that is going a mile a minute.

This sounds like a lot of doom and gloom, but research continues to be carried out into various aspects of the recycling process – even into factors influencing behaviour. Recycling shouldn't be written off entirely, as, with some substantial improvements, it still has potential to be a key element in the transition to a circular economy. However, it might be pertinent for environmentally conscious consumers to alter their thinking more towards the other two R's. Deliberately reducing how much we buy or even choosing options with less packaging, and repurposing items such as plastic takeout boxes and bottles can massively decrease the amount of waste we create. These changes can ultimately take pressure off the recycling system and allow it to be utilised more effectively.



Recycling might be futile Exposing the gaping flaws in circular waste management.

WITH ZANNA BUCKLAND

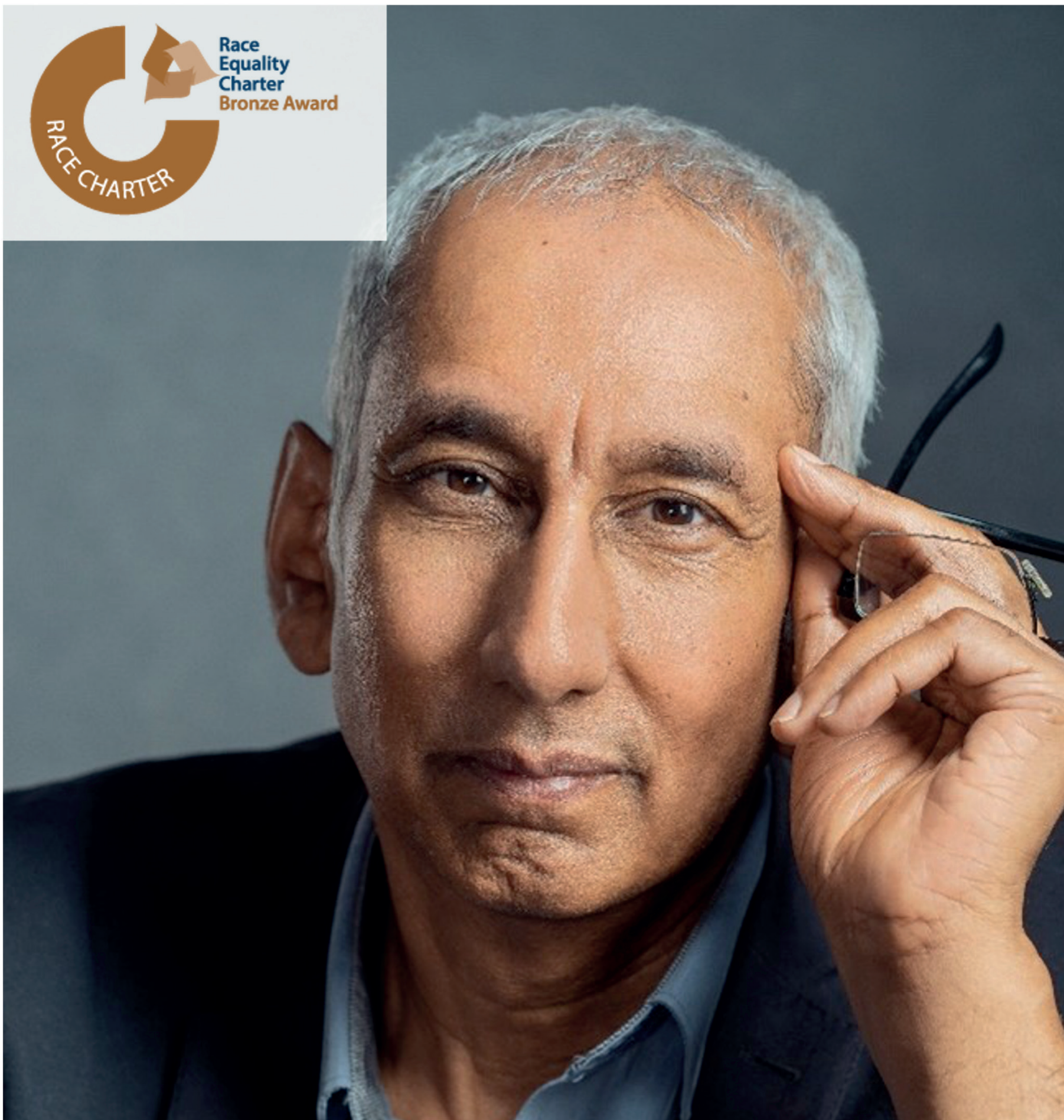
are often used for general waste.

There is significant variation in the collection and processing of recyclables between countries and even between different constituencies. However, even in regions with high rates of recycling collection, much of it still isn't processed into new material. Recycled waste doesn't necessarily always make it to a recycling plant, and even if it does, the plant might not be equipped to process every kind of recyclable waste collected. Lots of collected recyclables are also shipped overseas

products themselves, but the packaging for these products, which is generally excessive – particularly given that packaging is a big part of a product's marketing appeal (think brightly-coloured biscuit wrappers or the sleek box of an iPhone). Packaging is perfunctory, and usually disposed of almost immediately. An extra layer of wrapping can ensure a product is in pristine condition, but are we really willing to trade the beauty of our natural environments for this? Our huge demand for production puts strain



Race
Equality
Charter
Bronze Award



Kenan Malik: Not So Black and White

Join us for this free talk:

Wednesday 29 November 2023, 12:15-1:30pm

G16, Sir Alexander Fleming (SAF) Building, South Kensington

Register your place or access to the livestream on the Imperial/Events webpage.

COMMENT

How saving the planet and democracy go together

How we got to this point and where we can go from here.

Comment Writer

CONSTANTIN KRONBICHLER

As Charles David Keeling was camping in Big Sur, California, he did not know how important his discovery of the famous Keeling curve that showed the increasing CO₂ concentrations on Earth would be. Despite the warnings, the effects of climate change – severe floods, droughts, and other extreme weather scenarios – came as a shock to many.

We must try everything to prevent this catastrophe. Yet, there is widespread resistance against the carbon reducing measures introduced by officials. When the low emission zone expanded in London, officials installed cameras to read licence plates, to which perpetrators argued that the government had infringed on their freedom. Political parties saw this as an opportunity to win such perpetrators over by removing climate change policies from their programs.

Another problem inherent in our governments is that people do not feel heard by their representatives. Feeling abandoned by the government, they lean towards populists — Not because they necessarily believe in the populists' agenda, but as a form of protest against the government by voting parties that stand diametrically opposite to the current government's ways. Populists usually do not have carbon neutrality as their highest priority issue, hindering the implementation of necessary measures. The threat to our democratic system posed by the social divide between 'left-liberals' and

'right-conservatives' is equally concerning, where neither side is listening to the other, destroying any chance to reach a consensus.

So, what type of governmental reform does the fight against climate change require?

To achieve a reasonable solution, we need to combine several individual measures. The overarching plan to lead us into a carbon neutral future was named the 'Third Industrial Revolution' by economic and social theorist Jeremy Rifkin, referring to the introduction of renewables as energy sources, electric vehicles for mobility and the internet for communication. Rifkin points



There is widespread resistance against the measures introduced by officials.

out that industrial revolutions introduce new means of production, travel, communication, and energy generation, which then determine the structure of their administration bodies or governments. For example, coal and oil are processed in few central places and distributed from there.

The centralised energy generation with a clear ranking between producers at the top and customers at the bottom, and a complex supply chains as intermediaries

was supervised most effectively by centralised governments with hierarchical structures, as popularised since the Second Industrial Revolution.

However, renewable energy is different. While there are centralised wind or solar parks, people can also produce their own energy at home, and can therefore be independent. Hence, the grid will change accordingly, treating everyone as both providers and users, not just customers.

The question is, what new government system can we adopt that has less centralised power and intermediary hierarchies? We can find the answer from 500BC Athens with their implemented direct democracy. People made legislative decisions themselves as opposed to today's representative democracy. A direct democratic approach solves the problematic blockade of political agendas benefiting from social divides, which will encourage dialogues across the divide. Yet, there are several problems posed by replacing our representative democracy with a direct one – there was a reason why James Madison, the fourth President of the United States, avoided the term 'democracy' to describe the US, preferring to call it a republic. The threat posed by the dictatorship of the majority, vulnerable to the volatile passions of the mob, made direct democracies too risky in his eyes.

However, another problem with direct democracies, as pointed out by James S. Fishkin in his book *When the People Speak*, stems from the democratic dilemma amongst participation, deliberation and equality. Anthony Downs introduced the idea of 'rational igno-



There have been increased attempts by governments to limit carbon emissions. Wikimedia Commons

rance', describing the tendency to refuse information if one's impact is minimal in the grand scheme, which violate the principle of deliberation: a crucial problem in our current democracy. The modern voter is happy to be manipulated by superficial influences. For example, on the world wide web. This is why many tend to vote for populists with anti-climate agendas – They cannot be bothered to make a fact-based decision. They feel their vote doesn't count. Thus we consult the Athenians for their solution: The decision by lot, used to randomly select the people running administrative tasks.

In our case, the decision by lot can be used to form smaller peer assemblies of about 300 people. This system can be inclusive and representative while also maintaining the principle of deliberation, thanks to more influence per vote. The assembly would find ways to transition to carbon neutrality and execute them in collaboration with the mayor and their staff, as well as experts in the field. After two to four years, new people can be selected for the assembly.

Some would argue this will just give anti-climate voters more influence. However, as I pointed out earlier, the reason why anti-climate voters exist is due to lack of deliberation in their decision making. This system provokes a feeling of responsibility which will lead to informed decision making — people will realise that fighting climate change is in their best interests and initiate measures to fight it. Peer assemblies will also maintain the support of the people. Even compared to the idea of having a totalitarian government that makes perfect decisions to fight climate change, peer assemblies will prove more successful since any totalitarian regime would likely to end in a revolution.

Moreover, feeling responsible to make deliberate decisions encourages the dialogue across the social divide, stops radicalisation, and brings society back together. This is vital not only to the survival of democracy but also to start a new golden age of democracy while saving the planet.

The college's English language admission standards are too low

The College's leniency is damaging its reputation and student experience in the pursuit of money.

Comment Writer
ANONYMOUS

In recent years, the number of international students has shot up. This has been sold by the College as a strength of the university, claiming that bringing people from around the world together will lead to a more effective exchange of views. However, without the possibility of communication, diversity is meaningless.

All English speakers at the College, whether from here or abroad, have experienced the sinking feeling that comes after initiating conversation with another student and realising that instead of an academic register, the conversation will be carried out in the manner of "Brit abroad" – talking slowly and loudly in the hope that meaning is eventually conveyed. Group-work is glacial, as sentences are repeated or simplified, making what should be free-flowing discussion feel more like wading through a swamp. Socialising is, in many cases, out of the question. The language gulf is too wide for good intentions along to bridge.

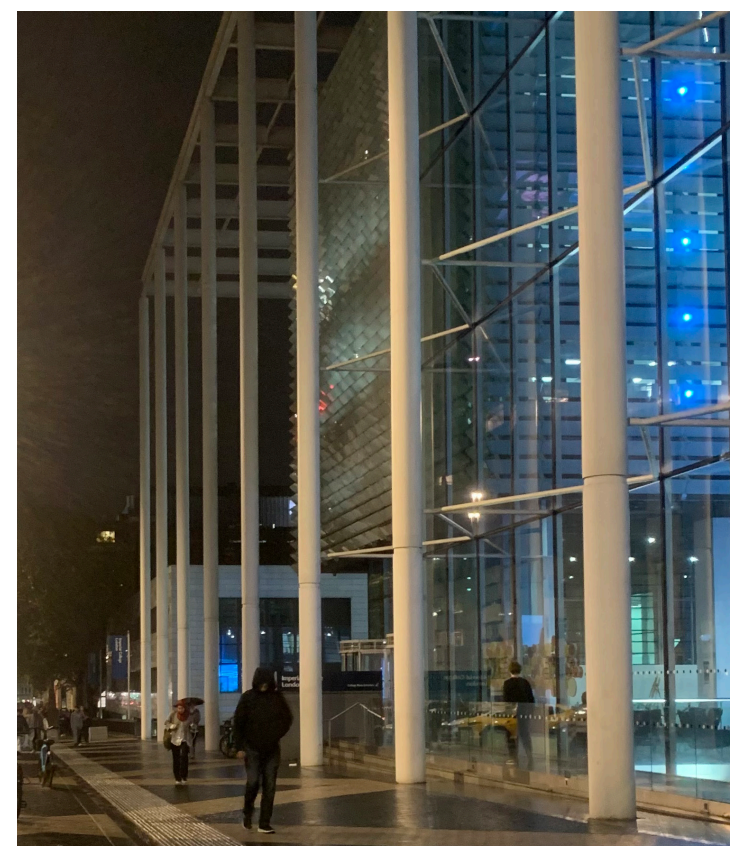
On the part of the international students, the stress of following native speakers' conversation, when your language skills are poor, is immense. The chance to speak one's native language, a great relief after struggling through the lectures, leads one to associate mainly with other speakers' of their own language. When amplified at a large scale, this results in seclusion, as students who speak the same language group together, which can be damaging to some students' study experiences. Bioengineering students in particular have reported struggles of communication due to the insufficient language skills of some of their peers.

Some might ask whether I am being too harsh on some international students. "Are they not to be congratulated for

conducting an education in their second language?" This is, in my opinion, the wrong question to ask. I do not condemn any student. They have made a good decision to access one of the world-class institutions and have benefited from the College's ambition of pluralising the classroom. However, no one should take their place here for granted.

Two changes are required. Firstly, the College should treat the ability to speak the language of teaching as a qualification on par with academic results and expect similar levels of attainment from its applicant. The qualifying exam (IELTS) currently being employed are too lenient and not measuring students in the skills that matter. Students have reported receiving rejection by UCL on the grounds of their poor English skills but then offer at Imperial. The second change is further support should be provided to international students who are troubled with using English to learn. Deputy President of Education, Yi Yang, should be commended for drawing attention to this area.

Were these changes implemented, international students would see more likelihood of higher achievement and the College would become a place where ideas can be exchanged at the speed of fibre optics, not semaphore.



The South Kensington campus at night. Elif Civelekoglu

ARTS

Theatre of the Absurd

How absurd is it?

Arts Writer

SOPHIE R. POINTON

The last human on Earth wonders if he should transform into a rhinoceros like everyone else. Sex workers take on the responsibilities of bishops and politicians. A man called Hamm greets his parents Nagg and Nell, who live in dustbins. Two couples who meet for an evening chat end up emotionally exposing each other in brutal ways.

Each of these sentences partially describe the plots of plays that can be put under the heading of 'Theatre of the Absurd'. There is a lot to be said for this subversive branch of dramaturgy, beginning with the appealing freedom from social rules and expectations. Plays of this kind often attempt to encourage audiences to realise what truly matters in their lives and to look at life more candidly. Similarly, existentialism is a common theme in Absurd Theatre: it acts as a wake-up call for spectators to take responsibility and to believe in their own power to change their situation. Reading or watching an example of Absurd Theatre can feel like an act of fighting back against the meaningless moments of life, imposing an angry reaction to a hostile and unfair world. By doing so, the spectator takes ownership of the absurdity, and the frightening abyss of pointlessness loses its power over them.

There is a slew of examples where Absurd Theatre pokes fun at conversations in polite society and "well-made plays", suggesting that only by looking frankly at ourselves

can we control our lives. To illustrate, consider this line from Eugène Ionesco's *The Chairs*: "I talked and talked, and she kept nodding her head ... She agreed with everything I said. I agreed with everything she said. Perfect symphony, perfect understanding. It was wonderful!" Full of simplistic language and repetition, this line highlights the fact that verbal communication is often inadequate when it comes to forming human connections and conveying emotions coherently. On the surface, this may seem like a shame, but what Ionesco might really be saying there is that once we become fully aware of this fact we can begin to communicate more effectively.

However, Absurd Theatre is not free from criticism. Many spectators struggle to find a plot in plays of this kind and find the manner of speech obscure and ridiculous; take the example of "Who watered the wicket in Melbourne?" from Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*. It could be said that some audiences may get swept away in this dramatic nonsense and delude themselves into finding a deeper meaning in the erratic and illogical scenes in front of them in order to feel culturally intelligent. Often these scenes are so vague and open to interpretation that they could contain countless different messages, demonstrating that the playwright had no clear purpose in writing those specific words in that specific order.

A further disadvantage of Theatre of the Absurd is how easily it can cause a vague feeling of disillusionment. Characters in these kinds of plays are often trapped in places by circumstances

they do not understand and most plays take a cyclical form, with the characters finding themselves back where they started by the end of the play. In real life, people are capable of doing extraordinary things to the situations they encounter themselves in, and most people with a can-do and practical attitude might feel infuriated by the fact that the main characters in Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* do nothing for the whole play except talk and wait for some unknown resolution.

A spectator's frame of mind and personality will colour their perception of all art forms, including theatre. In essence, it's so subjective that all this article can do for you is to lay out the nagging suspicions you had in black and white and help you decide on which side you stand.



Zoë Wanamaker and Toby Jones in *The Birthday Party*. Johann Persson

SOON ON STAGE

Waiting for Godot

By Samuel Beckett

Imperial DramSoc would like to invite you to their performance of *Waiting for Godot* to be performed in **late November**. Further details to be announced soon!



Ian McKellen and Patrick Stewart in *Waiting for Godot*. Tristram Kenton

MUSIC

London band caroline hints at new tunes

London post-rock folk band, caroline, amazes with an unfamiliar setlist during a live performance at King's Place.

Music Writer
DENIZ DORTOK

London's eight-piece post-rock folk band, caroline, known for their unique soundscape of slow-building melodic patterns saturated with colourful blending of instruments, recently performed a sold-out concert at King's Place in North London. The band received a standing ovation at the end of their performance, following an encore of a raw

and fiercely passionate performance of their acclaimed track "Good morning (red)" from their self-titled debut. The performance of this song really stood out, partly due to multi-instrumentalist Jasper Llewellyn's emotionally-charged and seemingly sporadic loud attacks on the snare drum. This cut through the radiant texture with such urgency and precision, conjuring a sound reminiscent of the contemporary classical works of David Lang; in particular the drawn-out tex-

tures in his piece 'Child: II. Stick Figure'.

Their performance debuted hitherto unreleased pieces, which the band expressed, is always a "nerve-wracking" experience. Despite this humble admission, their devoted fanbase received the new sounds with great awe and amazement; particularly, the novel addition of the bass clarinet, accordion, and electronically-processed vocals to the already growing array of instrumental hues. What was audibly striking, was the sub-

stitution of the bass guitar with the bass clarinet in some of the new songs, which could be seen as a way of enhancing the bass register. It was able to provide the ensemble with a more opulent and blending sound with its ability to sneak a strident low note in the stretched out single-unit textures in the music.

In terms of their stage layout, the band had opted for a semi-circle shape, making use of the whole length of the stage. Post-concert, the violinist and vocalist, Oliver Hamilton, explained that this new layout with the violins facing each other rather than being in their usual close proximity was something they had never done before. The effect of having a mirror image violin proved particularly effective at the point when the two violins performed a heated virtuosic duet!

I am excited to see what the band comes up with next, especially with this new direction, which seems to involve electronically-manipulated vocals sung by Magdalena McLean, reminiscent of Caroline Polacheck's heavily stylised singing or Georgia Ellery's extensively processed vocal manipulations in her London-based duo with Taylor Skye and Jockstrap. Keep your eyes and ears peeled for new single releases and concert performances from this relatively new and exciting eight-piece band caroline!



The semi-circle set-up of the band at King's Place. Deniz Dortok

Omar Apollo's EP, *Live For Me*, is short but mighty

Omar Apollo runs the gamut of heavy emotions in less than 16 minutes.

Music Writer
SELINAYE

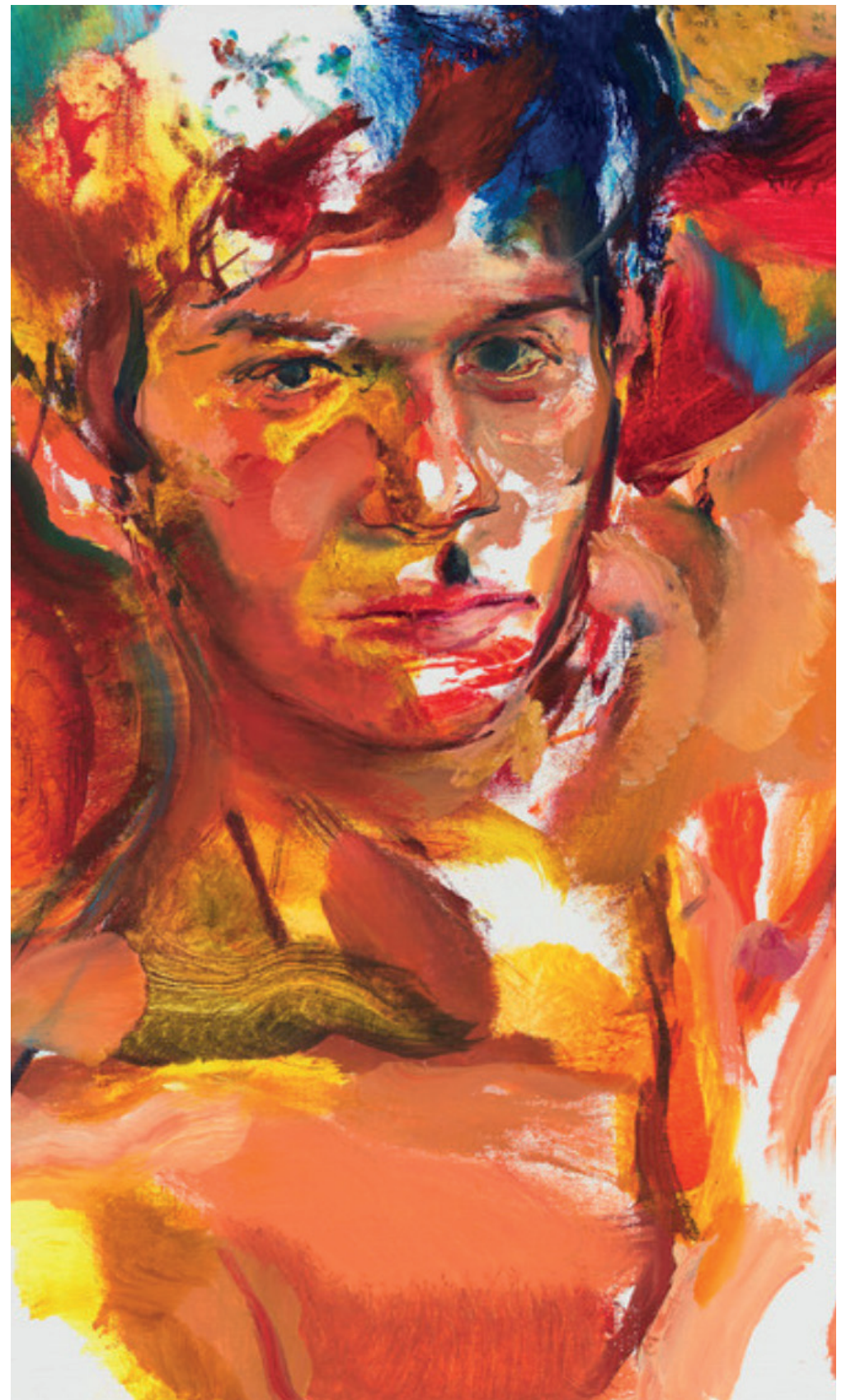
While most were preoccupied with major releases from Sufjan Stevens and Drake, Omar Apollo returned quietly with new music that he produced in borrowed moments between supporting SZA on the road and his own headline tours. His 2022 single “Evergreen” left the internet reeling in anguish, so the lack of fanfare (at least in my online circle) in response to his well-loved debut album seemed a bit unusual. Perhaps that is for the better. Omar Apollo digs deeper and paints an intimate picture of his personal affairs in this EP that aren’t for the faint of heart.

Even the album art, a portrait of a naked Apollo, reclining with his hand held over his heart seems to allude to the soul-baring nature of the songs on

this project. Don’t let the warm, sunny hues of the cover fool you - there are no fuzzy, lovesick tracks here (aside from “Pilot”). With only four songs just shy of 16 minutes altogether, each one touches on a different shade of inner blue. Apollo keeps it short and bittersweet.

If “Evergreen” is an aching plea from an unrequited lover, then Apollo’s latest song is more of a ripened, hushed sadness. The opening track “Ice Slippin” portrays Apollo wandering in his own thoughts during a lonely winter drive after coming out to his family. His lyrics appraise the wounds inflicted by what seems to be his family’s words, alternating in a dialogue between the apologetic party, sung in gentle manner, and the brusque delivery of his own response, occupying a lower range with a thinly veiled edge of pain disguised in a-melodic nonchalance. The façade crumbles as he sings “instead, you broke me down,” - a vulnerable admission to his own desolation. Between self-loathing, regret, and questions of “what if?”, Apollo pens an emotional song that explores the concepts of home, belonging, and ache that comes with confronting the truth of his own identity.

The title track “Live For Me” initially opens with lush pads and melancholic piano chords to introduce the recurring backing vocal motif that weaves in and



Cover of Omar Apollo's EP, *Live For Me*, released on 6 October, 2023. Doron Langberg

out of the song. The refrain is earnest as he expresses his devotion to a person in the lines “there’s nothing I won’t carry so you don’t have to”. Charming, zingy synths bring a marginally brighter mood to the bridge before the song dissolves away the same way it first entered.

The third song “Angel” features a bed of heavy distortion that gradually builds over the track between bouts of tender guitar strums that is eventually traded for punchier, electric interludes. Apollo’s voice blurs and bends as he unpacks his grief in the layered vocals, his composure heard wavering towards the heart of the

song in the upper parts. The EP draws to a close with the track “Pilot” produced with the help of Choker, a genre-bending rapper and singer whose sonic trademark is evident in the contrasting elements of a sporadic, drilling drum beat, aggressive vocal effects, and meandering melodies of this track. Apollo expertly swims across several vocal styles throughout the song, a testament to his artistic versatility as he concludes another heartfelt, introspective project with lyrical gems. This I will have to unpack upon further listening.

BOOKS

Melancholy in a time of jazz

Book Club's October Pick: *The Custard Heart* by Dorothy Parker

Books Writer
KATIA ZYKOVA

In 50 pages, Parker dazzles us through the lives of three unhappy people. Three lives who drown their sorrows in spirits, and who choose smiles as their tears. Three lives that are perfectly fine.

Nothing less should be expected of a woman who suggested “excuse my dust” as an epitaph upon her death – as in this little book lies a stunning triad of short stories about three individuals living, or actually, dying within the Jazz Age of 1920s America. The titular short

story, *The Custard Heart*, introduces us to a common theme that runs through all these three stories: the suppression of emotions.

We meet Mrs Lanier, someone acutely described by Parker as ‘wistful’. In the constant carousel of young men, glitter, and alcohol surrounding Mrs Lanier, we see the era the character is placed in – but it feels like we are with her in a figurative submarine; the sound of mundane chatter, of music and of dance dampened by the water consuming her.

For it is here where we meet depression, the loudest and quietest character that sits in this collection. While depression manifests in Mrs Lanier as her ‘wistfulness’, it takes fuller possession of the collection in the second story, as the closest companion of character Hazel Morse.

Compared to Morse, Mrs Lanier opts to run from depression – removing each person, or item that may remind her of its existence, be it the wrinkles of aging or even taking herself away from the gaze of a homeless man. Morse, on the other hand, chooses depression as a drinking partner. Parker uses Hazel

to depict the extent of the harms of undiagnosed depression. And so here follows a suppression of identity beneath layers of makeup and litres of alcohol, that would turn Hazel into another girl, a ‘good sport’, a girl who smiled and laughed and

was loved by men. The question persists: how many shots would it take before her depression would go away? Because, for Morse, alcohol was in the answer: to drink to ‘be swell’, and to drink ‘to cheer up’. It reaches a crescendo when we see alcohol become a destroyer and saviour in the ultimate story of the collection – *You Were Perfectly Fine*.

While the themes that run throughout the collection are heavy, Parker weaves them in through witty remarks and statements, behind which the reader can almost visualise her rolling her eyes as she puts pen to paper. Her talent in subtlety lends the book its magnificence, as the reader feels the its focus on depression slyly creep under the surface, similar to how it might feel to one with this companion. It seems Parker enjoys humour as a form of escapism – and here she cannot escape a tendency to capture a trouble so deep in a manner so light. Beautiful writing, with pacing that feels like the blur of an evening under the influence, makes this an astounding collection.



Penguin Books. Illustration by Areeba Raza.

Women, Race & Class

Books Editor
MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

The final book of our Black History Month column takes a swing towards American persuasions. Editor

Mohammad glances at a collection of essays by central Civil Rights Movement revolutionary Angela Davis. Her essays depict her exploration of labour, suffrage, and emancipation, and the tenets central to her beliefs.

I bought my copy of *Women, Race and Class* in October 2022 from Word on the Water, the bookshop on Regents Canal, quite ironically, with selected works of Michel Foucault.

With a title as broad as *Women, Race and Class*, I was expecting something similar to *Orientalism* by



Angela Davis. Jennifer Chongbang

Edward Said, introducing the reader to the idea of intersectionality. What I instead found was a collection of essays all linked together by either the themes of suffrage, emancipation and race relations, and/or class struggle, to which I was much more delighted, not only in its intellectual richness but also in the valuable insights each essay had to provide.

Davis stands as a fantastic essayist; what appears as a simplistic clarity on the surface ultimately yields profound and nuanced views. The 13 essays in the collection maintain a typical structure, arranged in relatively chronological order, from life under slavery up to contemporaneous issues like the obsolescence of housework. It

spans topics such as the issue of Black femininity, the use of women's clubs in organising civil movements, and the intersection of class and race in America's suffrage movement. It mandates a fair bit of knowledge about notions like chattel slavery and about American history up to the 1960s and the Civil Rights Movement. These are not mere historical accounts, but Davis applies a Marxist and feminist lens onto the shifting dynamics of what it means to be Black, female, and working class in America.

Scan for a
little surprise!

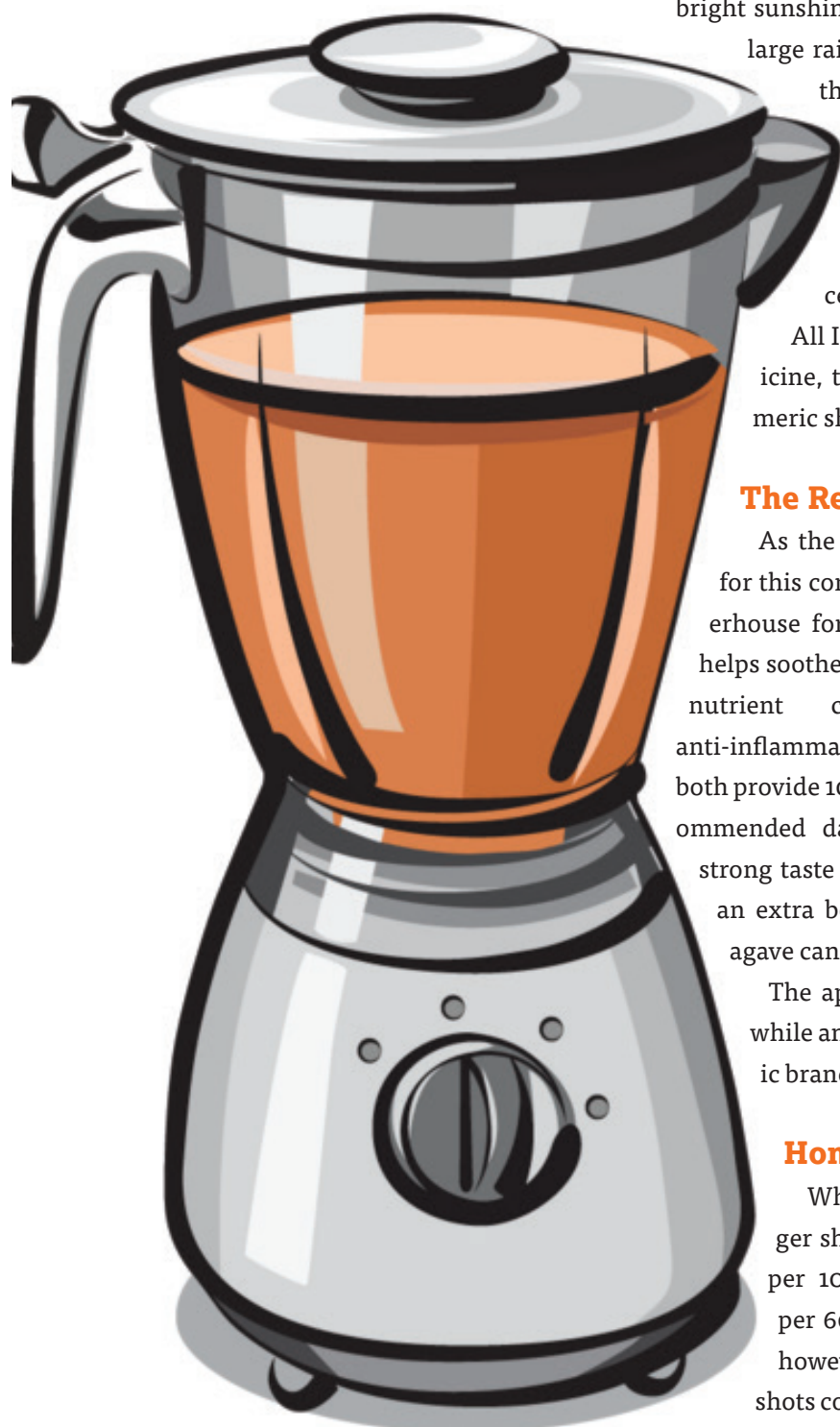


FOOD&TRAVEL

Turmeric bullets followed by ginger shots: To target sore throats and throbbing heads

Ginger-turmeric shots are overpriced in shops and making them at home is as easy as pie.

Food Editor
CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL



Vitamin D from the sun and fresh cool air embodied the trip to the mountains for our weekend away from the city. Everything was perfect: the bright sunshine, the slight sprinkle of rain reflecting a large rainbow over the mountain, the view onto the Wilder Kaiser and a can of Almdudler – a beloved soft drink from Austria. It would have been perfect, had I not naively refused to pack a warm jacket for the walk down in the shade of the adjacent mountain, and caught an awful cold. All I knew was one thing: if food be thy medicine, then my medicine should be ginger-turmeric shots – with a pinch of apple.

The Recipe

As the name already suggests, the ingredients for this concoction are very simple. Ginger – a powerhouse for anti-inflammation and nausea relief – helps soothe the sore throat. Turmeric has the micro-nutrient curcumin, which also provides anti-inflammation and pain relief. Lemons and oranges both provide 100mg of vitamin C per large fruit, the recommended daily intake. Apple juice mitigates the strong taste of ginger and turmeric, while providing an extra boost of vitamin C. Optionally, honey or agave can be added for sweetness.

The apple should be cut to remove the seeds, while any dirty crevices of the ginger and turmeric branches should be cleaned off.

Homemade vs store bought

When reviewing six different brands of ginger shots, the price ranges from £2.33 to £3.75 per 100ml serving, and from £1.40 to £2.25 per 60ml serving. This does seem reasonable; however, the ingredients for the homemade shots cost £1.54 in Sainsbury's, or roughly 25p per 60ml serving. These are also fresher and do not contain any preservatives.

6 INGREDIENTS

- 1 peeled lemon
- 1 peeled orange
- 20g turmeric
- 50g ginger
- 1 apple
- 250ml water

3-STEP METHOD

1. Place all ingredients into a high powered blender or into a pot with a stick-blender.
2. Blend for 5 minutes or until smooth.
3. Filter the mixture through a fine cloth and collect the juice in a different pot.

STORAGE

Short-term: Store in glass containers with an airtight lid. Drink within two days, otherwise it will slowly ferment into alcohol.

Long-term: Store the rest in plastic bags or bottles within the freezer for three months. Thaw before consuming. Do not freeze in glass jars.

This recipe makes 6 x 60ml shots.

Recipe from darngoodveggies.com

CATNIP

'This one's for real, definitely' new room-temperature superconductor claims astonish

'Science' Correspondent
NEGAFELIX

The science world is once again abuzz with news of a room-temperature superconductor. Despite prior iterations of this claim landing in retractions and accusations of fraud, scientists feel optimistic about this one. The announcement was at the 7726th Conference of Magnetism, hosted at the University of Roswell, New Mexico, in a room packed with angel investors and tabloid journalists. The room quietened, as a short man waddled onto the podium, his face hidden under the shade of his

large ginger afro and baseball cap, with a conspicuous-looking 'moustache', slowly peeling off his front lip as his left eyebrow stained the frames of his round eyepiece.

Parles Chonzi, associate research-technology consultant at the biotech firm Feranos, in a thick Moldovan accent, assured the audience of his discovery. "LK-100 improves upon the Lee's attempt by adding maguffium. That one tiny drop changed everything", he said, enunciating each syllable methodically, reading off what seemed to be his right palm. "We are happy to say that the paper has been published in *Elsivere*".

Cameras flashed – which Chonzi asked

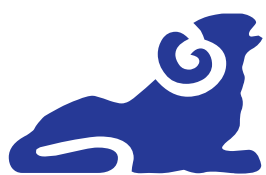
to halt immediately, owing to his epilepsy – as people rushed to the microphone to ask questions.

"How can we trust that your superconductor is not a failure like the others?" Trillbee Burdock, from the *Daily Mail*, asked. With a twitching frown, Chonzi vacantly stared at his altar for 14 seconds, before mumbling something into his microphone. When asked for clarification, Chonzi cited his epilepsy again and urged the next journalist to come to the stage.

The conference was a roaring success, with publications rushing out their articles, though each seemed to have different quotes of Chonzi. Mernie

Baydoff, the editor in physical sciences for *Cell* said: "This is an incredibly exciting discovery. Much with Watson and Crick's discovery of DNA's structure, such manuscripts need not pass the peer-review process on the pure excitement and inherent truth of the claim being made."

Chonzi asked the reporters in the room to send him their email addresses, so that he could each send them a "special scoop that they'd love". The moment the conference finished, he was seen rushing off the stage and opening his Trading212 app on his phone, though no cameras caught which stock he was looking at. The science world waits in baited breath, again.



ARIES

This week you have loads of bathwater to get rid of and are 90% sure there aren't any babies in there.



TAURUS

This week you tell your friend's boyfriend "Don't quote me, but I really don't like you".



GEMINI

This week local bus driver found with 68 octillion terabytes of child porn on his personal laptop.



CANCER

This week you skip your 9am lecture to do a drug.



LEO

This week your rainy day fund is hit hard by a large amount of rain.



VIRGO

This week your incompetent kidnapper takes you to Oslo.



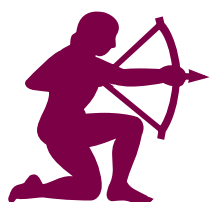
LIBRA

This week's crisis will roll over into next week after no one gets the right numbers.



SCORPIO

This week your flatmate gets a job and you are now housemates.



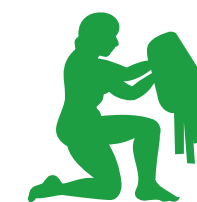
SAGITTARIUS

This week you know nothing about the knife marks in your flatmate's butter.



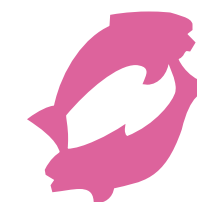
CAPRICORN

This week I went to the Smelly and Dumb Person Conference and everyone there knew you.



AQUARIUS

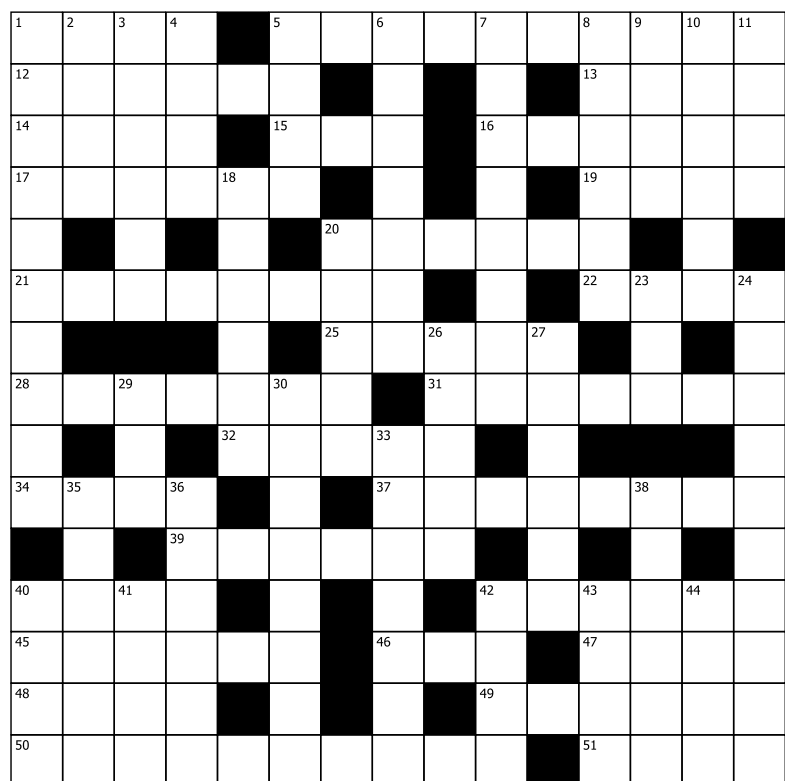
This week your reference to 14th Century Japanese politics so nearly lands.



PISCES

This week your flatmate's girlfriend has taken up residence in the boiler cupboard.

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1) Tong, in rhyming slang for wrong. [4]
- 5) It might come with surround sound. [4 6]
- 12) Slender, delicate. [6]
- 13) One of quartet opening many stories. [4]
- 14) Traditional item in London's pie and mash shops. [4]
- 15) In its lowest form, it's sarcasm. [3]
- 16) Elective. [6]
- 17) Drinks of choice. [6]
- 19) There's 100 of this in Pooh's wood. [4]
- 20) Murphy of Moloko. [6]
- 21) Produced eggs. [8]
- 22) Weekly list, perhaps. [2-2]
- 25) Influential government activity. [5]
- 28) "_____, be cool!" – quote from Pulp Fiction and name of one-hit-wonder. [7]
- 31) Shrewd or wide-eyed. [3-4]
- 32) Sample. [3 2]
- 34) Butter used in hygiene products. [4]
- 37) Aerial thrill-seeker. [8]
- 39) Scales. [6]
- 40) Between solo and trio. [4]
- 42) Aunt _____, American syrup brand recently renamed due to controversy. [6]
- 45) Name of French presidential palace. [6]
- 46) Regret. [3]
- 47) Guinness of Star Wars fame. [4]
- 48) Where the Inca Empire began. [4]
- 49) Danger. [6]
- 50) Engross. [10]
- 51) Operates as a large sigma. [4]

Down

- 1) Pen names. [10]
- 2) Days before. [4]
- 3) Indian language. [6]
- 4) Heroine of Disney's Frozen. [4]
- 5) Acts as a lumberjack. [4]
- 6) Approaches. [7]
- 7) Bolt-shooter. [8]
- 8) Bent over, as a plant. [6]
- 9) That of Gilgamesh, e.g. [4]
- 10) Attached to shore. [6]
- 11) The last Stuart monarch. [4]
- 18) Committed to memory. [6]
- 20) Settle a debt. [5]
- 23) Mythological Japanese demon. [3]
- 24) Makes a scene. [10]
- 26) Ages, informally. [5]
- 27) Promise. [6]
- 29) Be supine. [3]
- 30) They might be found next to sinks. [8]
- 33) Chancellor of the Exchequer under David Cameron. [7]
- 35) Transport truck. [6]
- 36) Makes a scene. [4 2]
- 38) Shrouded. [6]
- 40) ____ v. Heard, recent televised court case. [4]
- 41) Titular character Jane of a Charlotte Brontë novel. [4]
- 42) Sharks' rivals. [4]
- 43) ____ Wilson, actor in Matilda. [4]
- 44) Fermented drink made with honey. [4]

This Week's Challenge

In addition to the special clues highlighted in red, there is a bonus pattern to be found in the 3-letter clues!

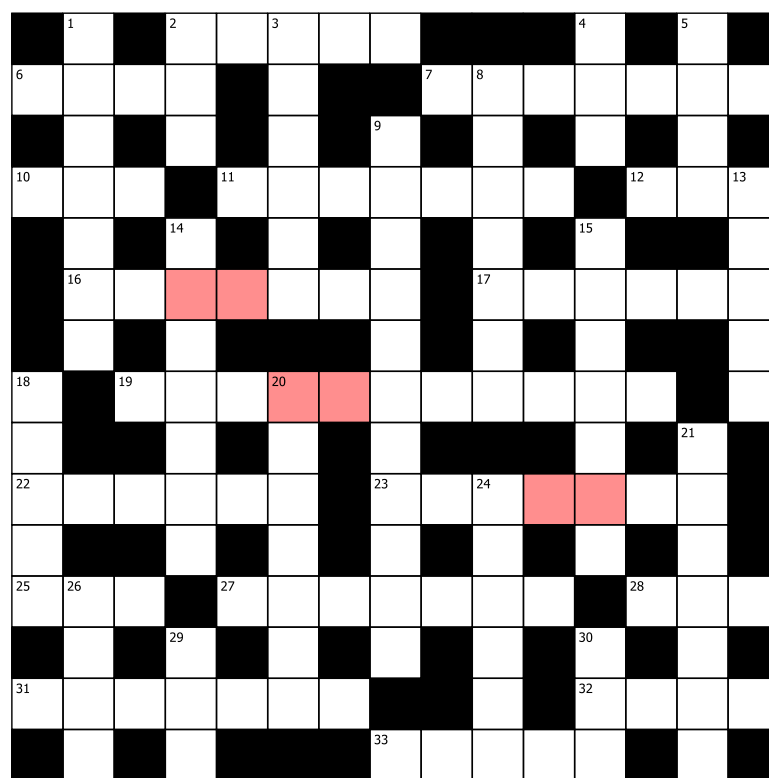
Across

- 2) The playwright back at the spice. [5]
- 6) It's explosive if used inside. [4]
- 7) "A cone is a strange shape" - first one out of the continent. [7]
- 10) She's a dear, I hear. [3]
- 11) Pressure of small weight to lift? [7]
- 12) Fish in a line. [3]
- 16) Practice piece for two? [7]
- 17) Call to mind the bird which went back around the middle of the weekend. [6]
- 19) Quiet night piece? [11]
- 22) Not the batsman's hat! [6]
- 23) Low part with no accompaniment? [7]
- 25) Mail-in odd computer character. [3]
- 27) Deceptrix rebel's heart after Jeremy. [7]
- 28) Near wherever you are, Celine put this down in between! [3]
- 31) It sounds like she's pushin' and shovin'. [7]
- 32) 73895:1, for example. [4]
- 33) Boil, beat the soup. [5]

Down

- 1) Lastly, do I need to get into the young ones' forms? [7]
- 2) Cardinal's stitch. [3]
- 3) Letter about bail sent around the city. [6]
- 4) It's meaningless and backwards, Hal! [3]
- 5) Mike's neighbouring city. [4]
- 8) Dialogue on perfume in the castle. [7]
- 9) Bad scrape below the wiring. [5 6]
- 13) Deliverer of mountain song. [5]
- 14) It contains the solution to guiding vehicles out the hospital. [7]
- 15) You'd find it in between the ears – or the ears in between it! [7]
- 18) Hesitation after boy produces oil. [5]
- 20) Not understanding reality, she caps very limited crèche. [7]
- 21) Fight amongst swimmers over the showerhead – babies! [7]
- 24) Orphaned master we ought to give a trim, on both sides. [6]
- 26) The statuette is immovable, I say. [4]
- 29) Drink... or perhaps eat? [3]
- 30) It follows play made famous by Homer! [3]
- 26 A chuckle lies in all olives

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



SOCIETIES

Imperial x LSE Garba Night got us twirling, whirling, and swirling in youthful exuberance

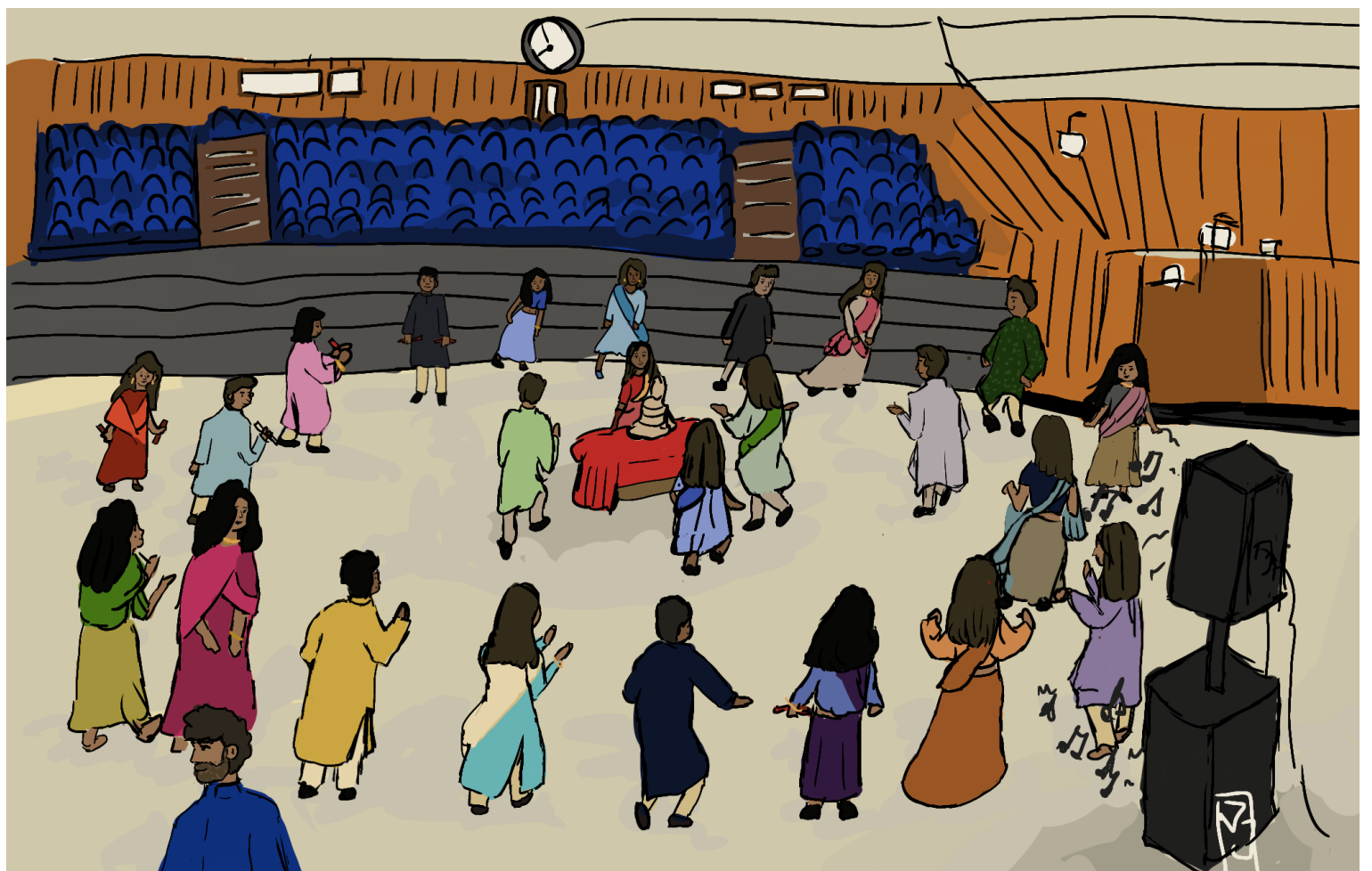
Felix attended the Hindu Society's Garba Night to enjoy an evening of dancing, music, and chai.

Societies Editor

CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL

Intricate and enthusiastic would be the best words to describe the air of Imperial's annual Garba Night. Co-hosted by Imperial's and LSE's Hindu Societies, it took place on the 15th of October in the Great Hall, on the second floor of the Sherfield Building. The eye-catching colours of the lehengas, the spiralling flow of the dances and the trembling feeling of the music synthesised a night worth remembering – the night of the Garba Dance.

The history of Garba, a form of Indian dance, is a long one. Originally from the north-western state of Gujarat, India, it describes a night of dancing open to newcomers and large crowds. Garba is performed during Navratri, a long and sizeable dance festival dedicated to the divine figure of Durga, the Hindu God-



A painting of the first dance with people forming concentric circles around the statue. Ioana Mihailescu / Felix Illustrator



The event was a lot of fun. Shравan Sharma / Event Photographer

dess symbolising strength, protection, motherhood, as well as destruction and war. Such dedication to a strong powerful female figure is interlaced in the dance in many ways. 'Garba' from the Sanskrit 'garbha' means womb and is traditionally performed by women moving in a circle around a light.

The first dance of the night consisted of concentric circles moving counter clockwise around a table holding an icon of the goddess Durga and a bowl of fruit. The cyclical movement symbolises the change in the world induced by humans, while the female form of God - the statue in the middle - remains unchanged. All

guests either wore socks, indoor shoes or went barefoot, to signify respect for the earth which we walk on.

I arrived promptly at 7pm in an improvised lehenga and a dupatta, and was kindly greeted by the President, Rishi. I dropped off my coat, bag and shoes behind the stage and proceeded into the main hall, where the committee members were dressed in traditional clothing. The men wore a kurta, a loose collarless shirt with cotton pants perfect for dancing. The women wore a lehenga, a two-piece ankle-length dress with a matching short or long-sleeved top, and a dupatta, a fine scarf draped over the



The statue dedicated to Goddess Gurda. Shравan Sharma / Event Photographer

right shoulder, crossing the front torso and wrapping around the waist. The decorative designs sparkled on the lehengas, contrasting with dark tones or adding a touch of shimmer to the light ones. As an amateur Garba dancer, I focused on the expert dancers whom I identified by their unique attire. The girl in the dark red lehenga commanded with grace while the girl in the light green-yellow outfit was the one to look to for guidance later on.

The dances consisted of a few rhythmic steps repeated every few seconds,

generally moving the entire crowd back and forth in the same direction. Requiring at least a few dozen people, the first dance started at roughly 7.30pm when the first guests arrived. In a three-step rhythm, every part of the body was involved: hands slapped each other in an up-and-down fashion, knees bent slightly to maintain balance, and heels kicked back and forth. Throughout the night it became evident that a half-rotating twist was common to every dance. As a beginner, the steps were very easy to follow



Two girls in beautiful lehengas in focus during the first dance. Shравan Sharma/ Event Photographer

– not crashing into others was the challenge. The dancers moved like a deep river in the mountains – constant with a lot of movement and power. As the outer circles filled with clapping students, the inner circles emerged and took the form of three concentric circles. When I became exhausted, I had to swiftly manoeuvre myself through the crowd to find a place to rest.

Chaiwala catered the event, providing drinks such as lemonade, chai and chai coffee, as well as cookies and warm snacks to satisfy the mass of hungry and exhausted dancers. I tried the iced chai coffee, and within minutes it was gone.

As the second dance began, the diffi-

intimidating, complex dances of my culture, the Bavarian-Austrian opera balls, I felt very welcome to dance the Garba.

Coming into the event without much knowledge of Hindu culture, I was - and still am - so pleased with the educational experience. I socialised with people from LSE and Imperial, who taught me about traditional jewelry and how to use Dandiya sticks. Next year, I will bring along my friends. Will you join us?

Until next time,
-Charlotte



Over 300 people attended wearing outfits with incredible style. Shравan Sharma

culty rose. In a filled circle, everyone took two steps to the left, twisted quickly, took three steps to the right and turned. I took some time to gaze at the beauty of the Garba Night from the DJ stage, and was astounded by the coherency of 300 or so students. The party was purely for dance, fun and spending time with friends. For a moment, it felt as though I was not in London. Although I have never been to India, and I cannot quite say I have after Garba, I do feel more confident visiting after my experience. As opposed to the