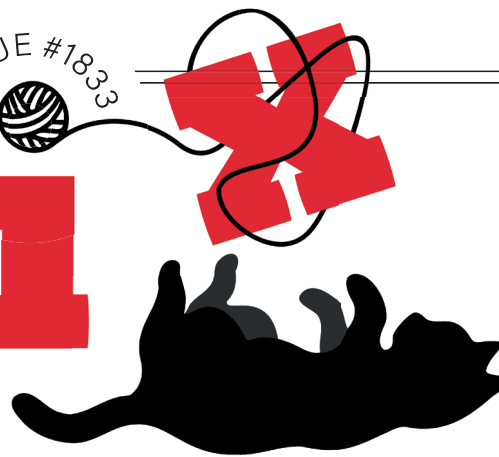




# Felix

KEEP THE CAT FREE | SINCE 1949

ISSUE #1833



# Ex-Imperial lecturer calls Jews

## “circumcised vermin”

Sen has since apologised for his remarks in an interview with *Felix*.

**Editor-in-Chief**  
**JAMIE JOHN**

**M**r Manoj Sen, former Honorary Clinical Senior Lecturer in Imperial's Faculty of Medicine, has apologised for making a series of antisemitic comments on Facebook, including calling Jewish people 'circumcised vermin'.

'Hope they hound you out from wherever you are Jewboy,' he told a Dr

Benjamin Zachariah.

Sen told *Felix* that he was very sorry for his remarks, calling them 'a lapse which I sincerely apologise and regret.' He said he had retired from clinical practice and relinquished his GMC registration in the wake of his comments. He vacated his honorary role at Imperial in 2020.

'I sincerely regret bringing the [medical] profession, Imperial and the NHS into disrepute.'

The comments, published publicly on the morning of 10th October, three days after Hamas attacked Israel, came in response to a Facebook post by Dr Zachariah criticising those 'calling for blood from the safety of their American Ivy League university offices.'

Sen initially criticised the Israeli Defence Minister for calling Hamas, the proscribed

terrorist group, 'human animals.'

But after Zachariah asked, 'Were you not a doctor once?', and questioned his sobriety, Sen wrote: 'Die Juden sind unsere Unglück' ('the Jews are our misfortune', translated from German).

'I happened to operate on your wretched father,' he continued. 'Hope they hound you out from wherever you are Jewboy.'

'Such rats do not belong to [sic] human society,' he said, referring to Jewish people as 'circumcised vermin'.

In a now-deleted post sent this morning on his own Facebook page, Sen said: 'I sincerely apologise to everyone for my unforgivable comments. I have since retired as a clinical doctor... I once treated this person's father.'

Talking to *Felix* on Wednesday afternoon, Sen apologised profusely for his

→ **READ MORE ON 4**

## NEWS

### Union set to condemn Israel's 'killing and targeting of civilians'

Decision comes after tense debate at Tuesday's Union Council session.

→ **READ MORE ON 4**

### An interview with Haider Nazerali

Medics' union president Haider Nazerali talks to *Felix*

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### Imperial research urges climate reality check

A paper led by Imperial's Dr Robin Lamboll suggests the climate time bomb is ticking faster than anticipated.

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### Photograph of the week

This week's theme: 'Limerence'. Rolando Charles discusses the winning entry.

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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:

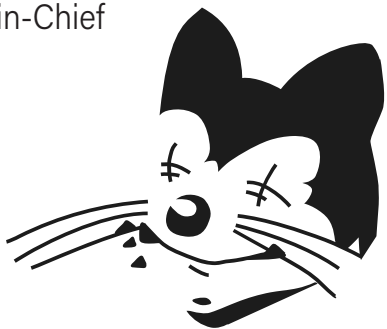
**We will, to the best of our ability, tell you the whole truth and nothing but the truth.**

**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



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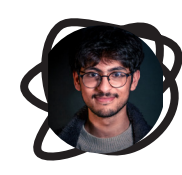
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## EDITORIAL

# It's Felix wot broke it

**U**nion Council – ‘the principle policymaking, scrutiny and accountability body of the Union and our democratic voice’, according to the Imperial College Union (ICU) website.

Or, to the more cynical observer, a rubber-stamping body in which a group of seven or eight engaged students (six of whom are paid to be there) engage in passionate argument over the minutiae of policy that the vast majority of the student body will never even hear about, while the remainder of Council zunks out for two hours.

Yes, Union Council passes important legislation (usually the work of the full-time Officer Trustees, but sometimes that of students), but often this is done with insufficient scrutiny. Students who have been elected to represent the interests of their voters instead stare glumly into the distance, and wish they were anywhere but here.

A paragon of democracy it is not.

This made Tuesday’s session of Council all the more interesting – two significant motions were passed, each of them of the type normally seen only once in a year. As usual, about half of Union Council’s elected had nothing to say, but for once, the student body itself decided to engage with Council.

Your Editor counted seven students who had turned up of their own volition to support a motion accusing both Imperial and ICU of ‘disregard[ing] the voices of the wider community of students on campus’. Whether or not you support the motion, which called on ICU to condemn Israel’s retaliatory attacks on Gaza, it was hard not to be impressed by the fact that for once, Union Council was alive.

The arguments presented by both sides were at times stilted. (For example, President Camille Boutrolle argued that condemning Israel’s retaliatory attacks “could have legal implications for the

Union”, but when pressed was unable to elaborate.) Nevertheless, there was, for once, some sensible debate, and ultimately, the motion was passed.

An equally noteworthy motion was presented by Imperial Climate Action (ICA), Imperial’s homegrown climate activism group. Seconded by Union President Boutrolle and three other ICU Officer Trustees, ICA convinced Council to back calls for Imperial to divest from fossil fuel companies.

This newspaper has covered the College’s existing policy extensively in recent weeks. Imperial continues to invest in oil and gas companies ‘that demonstrate they are actively moving towards meeting Paris Agreement targets’ – and it sticks to this line with an almost religious fervour.

Both of the motions above must be approved by ICU’s Board of Trustees.

If given the go-ahead, ICU will lobby Imperial to condemn Israel and to divest from fossil fuels. In the latter case at least, it will have some impact.

\*

**I**n any other week, the passing of either of these motions would have been front-page news.

But this just so happened to be the week that *Felix* broke a national news story, beating papers such as the *Daily Mail* to the scoop by securing a (then) exclusive interview with the subject, Mr Manoj Sen.

MailOnline lost no time stealing our thunder, scrambling to publish a ‘follow’ article, initially littered with inaccuracies. But when you see the story online or in print, know that it’s *Felix* wot broke it.



## NEWS

# Union set to condemn Israel's 'killing and targeting of civilians'

Subject to approval by its board of trustees, the Union will lobby Imperial to do the same

Editor-in-Chief  
JAMIE JOHN

Imperial College Union's [ICU] student council has called on Imperial to 'condemn the killing and targeting of civilians' in Gaza.

Imperial has so far steered clear of outright condemnation of Israel. It has criticised Hamas's 'terrible attacks' and 'the escalation of violence in Gaza'.

Its response has infuriated students. Imperial College President Hugh Brady has taken flak for comments he made at Imperial's graduation, in which he referred to "the rapidly escalating conflict and humanitarian crisis in Gaza".

Speaking to *Felix* two weeks ago, one Palestinian student called Brady's "passive" language "disgraceful", criticising him for his framing of Israel's retaliatory attacks on Gaza.

## Union votes to support motion

In a motion put to Council on Tuesday, a group of nine students led by Imperial medics' union (ICSMSU) president Haidar Nazerali accused both Imperial and ICU of 'disregard[ing] the voices of the wider community of students on campus, who have expressed solidarity for Palestine.'

They said that 'the absence of a statement' condemning Israel's actions in Gaza had left students 'feeling disenfranchised... losing confidence in the Union's ability to represent their views.'

Union Council voted to support the motion, meaning that, subject to the approval of the Union's board of trustees, ICU will 'take an official public stance' condemning Israel for its 'killing and targeting of civilians' in Gaza, and will lobby the university to do the same.

## Students argue over 'war crimes' phrasing

Over a fraught one-hour period, ICSMSU President Nazerali and ICU President Camille Boutrolle wrangled over the wording of the motion.

One point of contention was the characterisation of Israel's actions. The original motion brought to Council called Israel's retaliatory attacks 'war crimes'.

But Boutrolle asked for the phrase to be removed, arguing that it "could have legal implications for the Union."

Nazerali observed that Craig Mokhib-

er, upon stepping down from his post as the New York director of the UN's human rights body, had called Israel's actions genocide. Nazerali said that genocide fell within the definition of a war crime.

"I don't think the argument is about the definition," said Boutrolle, "but more that such language has not been used by any official government organisation, so we feel this could lead to big reputational costs."

After further discussion – and input from non-Council members present to support the motion – students agreed upon 'the killing and targeting of civilians' as a suitable substitute for 'war crimes'.

## "Saying nothing is louder"

Towards the end of proceedings, Silwood Union Treasurer Alex Auyang warned Council members to "be cautious about taking political stances, especially given Hugh Brady's comments – him having to backtrack and change his stance based on different student groups being upset at different times."

'I don't know whether this is going to upset more students than doing nothing.'

Auyang's comments incensed one student observer, who argued that in the light of Brady's "very evident bias" and support of "one side over the other", the Union had a moral imperative to condemn Israel's attacks on Gaza.

Bringing the discussion to a close,

→ CONTINUED ON P. 5

## → FROM P. 1: ANTISEMITIC TIRADE

comments, saying they were made 'in the heat of the moment', and calling them 'a lapse for which I sincerely apologise.'

He said he knew Dr Zachariah's family from his hometown in India. 'His father is still a good friend of mine.'

Sen said his comments were published on a private Facebook group of 'around 30 people', and later made public by Dr Zachariah – allegations which Dr Zachariah denies.

He said that he had made the antisemitic remarks in response to 'provocation' from Dr Zachariah. 'Ben



**He enraged me, blew my fuse. I've apologised and don't want this to go further.**

Zachariah called me an alcoholic... a very cruel thing. I then lost my cool – actually, I don't drink or smoke.'

'He enraged me, just blew my fuse. That's no excuse, but I don't want this to go any further, as I've apologised.' Dr Zachariah said he had not received a personal apology.

Before his retirement, Sen worked as a colorectal surgeon at Northwick Park Hospital.

'We do not tolerate hate speech or discrimination of any kind and take immediate action when such behaviour is brought to our attention,' wrote a spokesperson for London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust, which operates Northwick Park Hospital.

'We continue to work closely with our teams to make sure that all our people feel comfortable in reporting unacceptable language or behaviour.'

Dr Zachariah said: 'I shouldn't comment on a case that might come before the courts. My Facebook post and the comments of the gentleman concerned are public.'

Imperial College London has been approached for comment.



→ FROM P. 4: UNION COUNCIL

Nazerali said: "I do think there are rare occasions where it is important to make a statement. In some circumstances, saying nothing is louder."

## Union Council calls on ICU to lobby Imperial for divestment

Following the contentious debate on the Israel-Palestine war, Union Council members voted to support a motion calling on Imperial to:

1. 'Make a public commitment to exclude all fossil fuel companies from their investment portfolio(s).'
2. 'Introduce a publicly accessible ethical investment policy that explicitly excludes all fossil fuel companies.'
3. 'Fully divest from all fossil fuel companies within three years.'

The motion was brought by Imperial Climate Action, the student activist group. It was seconded by Union President Camille Boutrolle, three other Officer Trustees of the Union (all but Yi Yang, Deputy President (Education)), and Trinity Stenhouse, president of the Royal College of Sciences Union (RCSU, representing science students at Imperial).

'Imperial's public commitment to continue investments in oil and gas companies helps to provide these companies with credibility and a social licence to continue their current operations with limited scrutiny,' states the motion.



### Imperial helps to provide these companies with credibility.

Noting Imperial's 'world-class reputation for scientific excellence and evidence-based thinking', it argued that 'divestment will have a far more powerful impact on driving change within the fossil fuel sector than behind-the-scenes shareholder engagement.'

Under its Socially Responsible Investment Policy, Imperial says it 'will continue to invest in fossil fuels companies that demonstrate they are actively moving towards meeting Paris Agreement targets.'

The motion voted through on Tuesday means that the Union will now lobby against this position, subject to approval by its board of trustees.

# Imperial talks up AI credentials

## In the week leading up to the Bletchley Park AI summit, Imperial flaunted its expertise.

**News Writer**  
**AINI NOORALLY**

**Editor-in-Chief**  
**JAMIE JOHN**

In the leadup to the AI Safety Summit held at Bletchley Park last week, Imperial burnished its own credentials in the sector, hosting Science Secretary Michelle Donelan; announcing a £28m centre to train AI researchers; and releasing a statement outlining its position on 'AI-driven innovation.'

A week prior to the summit, Imperial partnered with think tank Onward to host Donelan's keynote 'Future of AI' speech, outlining the UK's 'safety-first' approach to AI.

On 31<sup>st</sup> October, Donelan visited the South Kensington campus to announcing 12 new UKRI AI Centres for Doctoral Training, one of which will be based at Imperial. The College has been given £28 million to train PhD researchers to develop AI systems addressing healthcare challenges.

"The plans we are announcing today will future-proof our nation's skills base, meaning we can reap the benefits of AI as it continues to develop," she said.

She also heard from Imperial professors about how Imperial is already integrating AI into healthcare.

Professor Ferdinando Rodriguez y Baena, Co-Director of the Hamlyn Centre, showed Donelan how AI is being used to aid knee replacement

surgery, and the Dyson School of Design Engineering showcased how AI can help teenage

cochlear implant users.

On the first day of the summit, Imperial issued its 'Statement on AI-Driven Innovation.' It welcomed the UK government's attempts to 'build a new global consensus on AI safety' and called upon the government to 'draw from' the UK's 'strong scientific and technical expertise in universities like Imperial' to make the country 'a global AI leader.'



Imperial President Hugh Brady with Science Secretary Michelle Donelan. Imperial College London

*An interview with...*

## Haider Nazerali

### Medics' Union President



*Illustration by Natalie Yu*

**In this series, Felix talks to the Union's sabbatical officers. This week: Haider Nazerali, ICSMSU President.**

**Books Editor**

**FIYINFOLUWA T. OLADIPO**

This is my first time being here," Haider comments. We are in the rear end of the library on the second floor of Reynolds Building, at a hub of student culture in the School of Medicine's Charing Cross campus based at Hammersmith. The doors of the Brian Drewe Lecture Theatre, capable of hosting entire Medicine cohorts, lie on its mezzanine level, and just two floors below us, the finishing touches are being made for the reopening of the Bar & Café, host to many a raucous Sports Night Sports Night, following its £1.6 million refurbishment.

This interview is scheduled to take

45 minutes – about the time it takes for Haider to arrive. When he does, however, he is apologetic and graceful in his excuse, related to the Union undoubtedly.

*Ice (verb). To take away the main ideas, concerns, and expectations from a conversation (typically used within a clinical context). Used in a sentence: 'Did you remember to ice that patient?'*

Haider Nazerali, having just completed an intercalated degree in Humanities, Philosophy and Law program at Imperial, is only two months into his role as the new Imperial College School of Medicine Student Union (ICSMSU) President. His journey to the role, however, was not as straightforward as you might expect.

The end of Spring elections in the last

academic year saw a notable position unfilled in the Student Union: the President. "I know they spoke to the current Deputy President," he reflects, "but he wasn't keen on taking a year out."

He persists in his use of the third person in describing an ill-defined role of the School of Medicine in prompting a candidate for position of President. He also, however, talks of conversations with previous presidents in making his decision. "I spoke to the most recent president when I was in fourth year when no one had run for it," he says, "and eventually came to a decision."

Now he sits before me. He is gentle but has precise affect, and I am tasked to draw the motivations or aspirations for the year in this interview, or ice him, as I call it.

Come summer, Haider is unopposed in his candidacy for President. His manifesto profile is saturated by a bright yellow hoodie and saccharine aura – one that pervades the air as we speak. He vows to create an environment where "[all students] feels comfortable and empowered to try new things", and to improve the efficiency of the student union's projects.

Having served as Sites & Services Officer for two years within the Student Union itself, he would be the first to admit the role of President represents a much greater level of responsibility. I am keen to understand some of the tenets behind these ambitions.

The School of Medicine is comprised of the Medical Biosciences BSc and Medicine BSc courses. Haider is responsible for representing all these students, and overseeing a 23-person committee across the six branches of the Union itself.

"It's about 2,500 students, between the six years of medicine, and the three to four years of BMB. And that also includes any external intercalators," he says, describing the scope of responsibility. Haider wears none of this, maintaining a calm demeanour despite the enormity his job entails. "We now have induction talks with them as well as with the medical students," he adds.

"Traditionally, a lot of our events have been medic-centric, so we're trying to include the [Medical Bioscientists] a lot more," he elaborates. "[The Reynolds Show] will now feature a more lab/science-themed

station, whereas traditionally they were all medical procedure-based," he mentions.

In all, Haider lists four goals for the year:

- Establishing a clinical skills lab for medical students for students to practise ad-hoc;
- Embedding environmental sustainability in all the projects undertaken by the Union;
- Developing an improved culture and identity at ICSMU for all students;
- Ensuring the recently refurbish Reynolds Bar & Café creates a space that meets the needs of ICSM students

We have time to delve into two of these. "One thing that is starting to become apparent is in doing things like including BMB is the lack of knowledge we have about certain finer details of the course," he says. "An example of such is how do we make freshers accessible to those students who are under-18, which isn't an issue in Medicine due to legal requirements to be above 18 to start the degree."

He is quick to move onto his next point: student spaces. "We'll be bringing some of the old memorabilia from the Saint Mary's Common Room into SAF," he begins, "we're redoing the Charing Cross [common room] later this year after the Reynolds refurbishment."

Only two days before this, in a joint email with Haider, the School's communications team announced: "Further improvements to the Reynolds Building have been made possible through the support of the St Mary's sale funds[.]"

The sale of the St Mary's Hospital branch of the medical school provoked widespread indignation among the student body. At the heart of the discontent was a lack of prior student consultation before its announcement. This followed a string of similar decisions made over the years. Though it took place during the tenure of his predecessor, it is now in Haider's role to handle the aftermath of the sale.

"How do you view yourself as being able to influence policy and decision-making of Faculty, as a result of the impact of the sale?"

Haider stops and pauses to think for a moment. "Now I have to answer



## → FROM P. 6: HAIDER NAZERALI

like a politician,” he whispers in a quiet confession. It is a discreet yet noteworthy response.

“The School of Medicine and the Faculty of Medicine do tend to be responsive to student feedback, and they often try and include us in whatever decisions they can,” he response, “I believe in the recent NSS we had one of the highest like marks as a faculty.” He is referencing data from the recent National Student Survey. Notably, the School of Medicine achieved a score of 78% for its ‘student voice’.

“That is thanks to the Faculty really listening to us and taking what we believe and want on board. There are always student consultations when it comes to anything. So I think we do have a very large scope to influence these decisions.”

I ask about some of the challenges he expects to face.

“We have the upcoming general election,” he mentions, “what’s interesting is to see is how the Junior Doctor and Consultant Strikes are a big issue and are affecting our students quite heavily. The stance and advice from Faculty is constantly shifting regarding that because as the strikes continue, as will its impact on education continue to be seen,” he goes on.

I want to know if a significant challenge for the student body in the past, namely the COVID-19 pandemic, still raises any concerns. “Have we got past the pandemic as a student body?” I ask him.

“We are returning closer to a pre-pandemic level of resits and exam-fails, I do believe there are still sentiments of people struggling with their mental health.” He highlights the key relationship that the Student Union has with the Welfare Office

in being able to help students. “We are still supporting people.”

It is now just past 1pm, and I am wary of not extending the interview past its scheduled end. The last part of taking ice from him – asking him for his expectations – is one I am unable to accomplish in the short time we have. If anything, it is a question directed towards the wider student body as much as it is towards him: what are our expectations of Haider as medics union president?

Though he does appear hesitant to challenge the School of Medicine, his existing bank of experience built throughout his time in the medical school inspires confidence.

“I think the last two months have highlighted that I have actually learned a lot over the last four years of doing society positions. I do actually know quite a lot about different things students are experiencing.”

As our conversation draws to a close, I manage to ask one final question:

“I look forward to this one thing waking up every morning as the new ICSMSU president?”

“You get a free glass of Coke from FiveSixEight!” he shoots.

“I will take that!” I laugh in equal response. A certain balance between comedy and truth that I have yet to full placed.



A protestor at this week’s pro-Palestine protest outside the College Main Entrance. Xiang Hong Tan for Felix

**This week saw another pro-Palestine protest on campus.** At 12:30 on Wednesday, around a dozen students waved Palestinian flags and beckoned to passersby on a megaphone. Felix was not able to send a reporter, but we leave you with the photo on the left, taken by our photographer Xiang.

# NEWS THREADS

## Weekly bulletin



### Ex-Imperial lecturer calls Jews ‘circumcised vermin’ in antisemitic tirade

**Mr Manoj Sen**, former Honorary Clinical Senior Lecturer in Imperial’s Faculty of Medicine, has apologised for making a series of antisemitic comments on Facebook, including calling Jewish people ‘circumcised vermin’.

Mr Sen told Felix that he was very sorry for his remarks, calling them ‘a lapse which I sincerely apologise and regret.’ He said he had retired from clinical practice and relinquished his GMC registration in the wake of his comments. He vacated his honorary role at Imperial in 2020.

### Union Council passes Israel and divestment motions

Imperial College Union’s (ICU) **student council** passed two significant motions this week. A group led by medics’ union president Haizer Nazerali succeeded in convincing Council to condemn Israel for its ‘killing and targeting of civilians’ in Gaza, and to lobby Imperial to do the same.

Imperial Climate Action, the student activist group, also saw its motion calling for Imperial to ‘exclude all fossil fuel companies from their investment portfolio(s)’ passed by Council.

If approved by the Union’s board of trustees, the motions will be made the official policy of ICU.

If both are approved, the Union will lobby Imperial to divest from fossil fuel companies, and to condemn the Israeli government.

### Delivering “ongoing geopolitical commentary” would compromise Imperial’s mission, says President Hugh Brady

“As an institution of higher education, our mission is to provide an open forum for debate on and exploration of all topics, in which everyone can participate in a respectful manner within the law,” said **Imperial President Hugh Brady**.

“Delivering ongoing commentary on geopolitical events would make it difficult to deliver this.”

Brady also called out “the way in which some views have been expressed”, saying it is “clear that some of our members now feel unwelcome or unsafe on campus”.

“This runs contrary to our values and is an unacceptable situation. Any form of racist or hateful behaviour, including antisemitism and Islamophobia, will not be tolerated and all incidents will be taken extremely seriously”

### Paintings stolen from Blyth Centre

Two paintings have been stolen from the **Blyth Centre Gallery** in the Sherfield Building, according to Naomi Anderson-Eyles, the centre’s administrator.

“We are offering an amnesty to whoever took the paintings. Could you please return them to security, the police or myself?” she said.

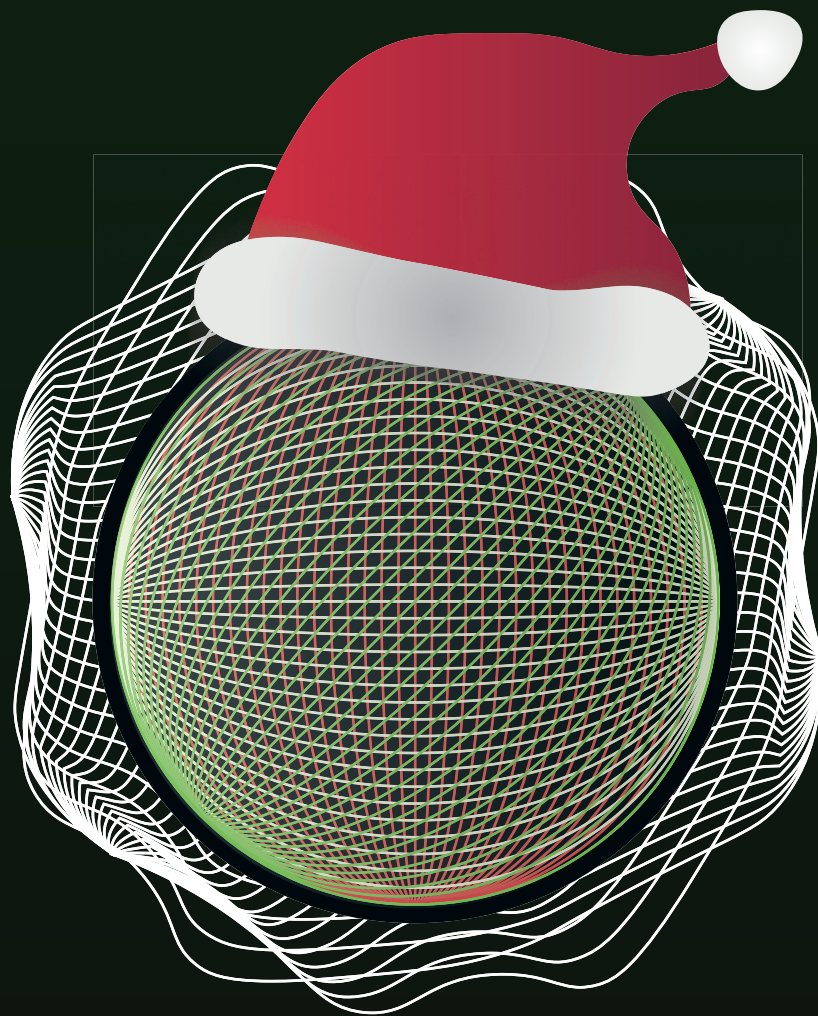
Anderson-Eyles urged students to notify security if they “saw anyone suspicious inspecting or removing paintings from the walls”.

The Metropolitan Police have opened a report to investigate the crime. The centre can be reached at [blyth-centre@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:blyth-centre@imperial.ac.uk).

*We are always looking for story tips. You can contact us by emailing [felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:felix@imperial.ac.uk).*



# DECIREL DOES CHRISTMAS!



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## SCIENCE

# Imperial research urges climate reality check

Science writer Emily Wentworth covers the release of novel climate research from Imperial.

Science Writer  
EMILY WENTWORTH

Almost eight years have passed since the signing of the Paris Agreement; 196 parties vowed to make collaborative efforts to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The treaty united governments across the globe and provided a sense of optimism that the imminent climate disaster could be

averted by bringing emissions to net-zero before 2050. However, the recent study led by Imperial College London's Dr Robin Lamboll, and published in *Nature Climate Change* under the title "Assessing the size and uncertainty of remaining carbon budgets", has suggested that this climate time bomb is ticking faster than initially predicted. The emissions thresh-



Smoke stacks from a greenhouse gas-emitting mining facility. Tony Webster

old could likely be exceeded by the end of this decade.

## Climate budgets redefined

It has been known since early 1896 that the acceleration of carbon dioxide emissions after the Industrial Revolution had a possible threat to our climate when Svante Arrhenius published a paper titled "On the Influence of Carbonic Acid in the Air upon the Temperature of the Ground". Even so, it wasn't until the mid-twentieth century that global warming began to gain traction and measurable public interest. Today, climate change is regarded as one of the most pressing areas in scientific research. With ever-changing global dynamics and the constant emergence of new scientific models, perpetual evolution became an intrinsic property of the field of climate science, as illustrated by Lamboll's research.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicted that in order to have a 50% probability of achieving the goals set out by the Paris Agreement, a remaining carbon budget of 500 billion tonnes was available. The remaining carbon budget serves as a representation of the amount of carbon dioxide which can be released into the atmosphere without causing the temperature limit to be exceeded.

Lamboll's study made several key adjustments to the methods used in these predictions. Such adjustments incorporated newer emission data, updated climate models, and adding non-carbon dioxide emissions into the data. Green-

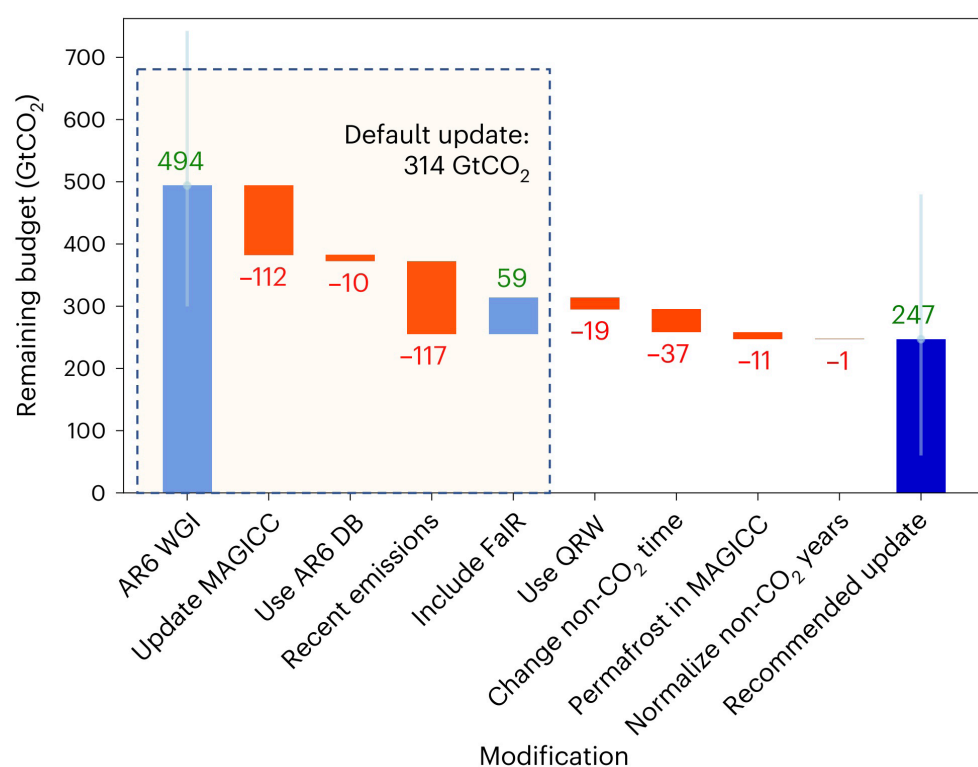
house gases encompass a range of compounds that have a similar blanketing effect on the Earth's atmosphere, so considering the amounts of other gases like methane and nitrous oxide simultaneously being emitted will reduce the remaining carbon budget.

Additionally, the study incorporated the impact of aerosols, small particles which can be released into the atmosphere during combustion. The majority of these particles reduce the Earth's temperature by scattering and reflecting sunlight, and provide seeds for cloud formation. Both reduce the amount of energy that reaches the Earth's surface. As the global energy landscape shifts from fossil fuels to renewable sources, fewer aerosols will be released into the atmosphere, diminishing this cooling effect, and further shrinking the remaining carbon budget.

Consequently, this has dramatically accelerated the timeline, pushing the net-zero deadline forward to 2029, based on a remaining carbon budget of 250 billion tonnes and current emission rates of approximately 40 billion tonnes per year.

## Looking ahead to COP28

With the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP28) in Dubai approaching at the end of this month, research like Lamboll's intensifies the pressure on world leaders. It amplifies the call for reconstruction of sub-par climate efforts before the window of opportunity to limit temperature increase to 1.5°C is rapidly closed.



Changes to the carbon budget following modifications. *Nature Climate Change*



**T**ransportation is a divisive subject in climate change discourse. The need to continue using oil for fuel; use of private versus public vehicles; how privilege lessens the impact of taxation; and electrification as a sustainable transportation model, for example. These points are all intertwined, but my focus for the next couple of weeks will be on pedestrianisation and public transport as sustainability solutions.

In 1977, Groningen in the Netherlands implemented their Traffic Circulation Plan, that effectively created a no-car, pedestrianised zone overnight, centred around

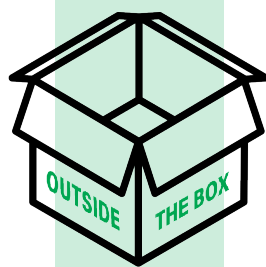
pedestrian zone is centred around Ban Josip Jelačić Square, enclosing many of the city's biggest tourist attractions and shopping outlets.

There is another example of this much closer to home: Bute Street, just down the road from South Kensington station. The street has been restricted to vehicles since summer 2021 and is now officially being redeveloped into a fully pedestrianised avenue, where car access will be limited to delivery and emergency vehicles.

Of course, there are multiple steps that must be taken for such a pedestrianising project to be approved. Locals

shopping and attending university.

The '15-minute city' is an urban-planning concept in which all essentials are available to every citizen within a 15-minute walk or cycle. Proposed by Carlos Moreno – a French-Colombian researcher in city planning – in 2015, the concept has unfortunately been met with resistance, with some seeing it as paving the way for large-scale gentrification. It would also be challenging to extend the plan to suburban areas, where accessibility is already much lower than in urban areas. Conspiracy theorists even believe it to be a method for governments



# On foot or by car? The choice should be simple

WITH ZANNA BUCKLAND

Vismarkt square, by redirecting and restricting cars to a one-way inner circle road. The move was implemented by Max van den Berg - a young politician with a vision of a car-less city - with support from the public, and other young and like-minded politicians. Given the Netherlands' current reputation as the cycling capital of the world, this kind of forward thinking might come as no surprise now, but in the '70s, citizens were flummoxed by the sudden inconvenience in taking their car to run errands, and local shopkeepers thought that the lack of cars would harm their businesses.

On the contrary, footfall, sales, and employment increase in such pedestrianised areas. The reduced number of cars directly benefits citizens through significant decreases in air and noise pollution, which creates a more pleasant atmosphere. Additionally, a sense of safety and community is nurtured, and this pedestrian-centric experience is particularly beneficial for children and older people.

Other cities hosting similarly pedestrianised urban areas include Zagreb in Croatia, Brussels in Belgium, and Almaty in Kazakhstan. Brussels boasts the largest pedestrian-only zone in Europe, located near many of their historic landmarks and unveiled in 2015. Zagreb's

had to advocate for it and gain support from the relevant stakeholders (local council, stores, and residents), and, most importantly, it actually has to be feasible.

It's unfortunate that these kinds of initiatives haven't taken hold on a larger scale, but the barriers to their implementation are considerable. But imagine somewhere like Oxford Street or Exhibition Road being fully pedestrianised (the latter is already halfway there!) and what a difference it could make to the experiences of

to repress or restrict communities to a particular radius.

Despite this opposition, the idea has been adopted in a few places around the world. Melbourne, Australia has devised a plan to create 20-minute neighbourhoods throughout the city between 2017 and 2050, and Ottawa, Canada has proposed a similar plan for developing a network of 15-minute neighbourhoods over the next 25 years.

These projects can only be executed if the general populace show the engagement and initiative to carry them out. Governments need to follow suit, as well as ensuring, through targeted regulations and development, that such neighbourhoods will be effective in meeting the needs of their citizens. Informed decision-making and consultations are crucial for establishing safe environments and protecting the poorer people in these communities. Willingness of people to advocate for radical ideas only comes if the systems in place encourage and facilitate them.

Is it possible that the only way to put people off driving cars is to completely cut them off from being able to use them? The alternative for longer distance travel – public transportation – is another widely-debated subject, and one that I'll look into in next week's issue.







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# BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL 2023 with **FILM&TV**



**T**he BFI London Film Festival is an annual celebration of cinematography and the world's finest new films and series. In its 67th edition, the BFI LFF 2023 ran from October 4th to 15th. The event, as always, was open to the public, offering a wide array of screenings, talks, workshops, and more. Across 11 bustling theaters throughout the city, the BFI showcased 252 titles from 92

countries, including 29 world premieres and 30 European premieres.

The honor of opening the festival was bestowed upon Academy Award winner Emerald Fennell with her film *Saltburn*, while *The Kitchen*, the directorial debut of Oscar-winning actor Daniel Kaluuya and Kibwe Tavares, brought the event to a close.

This year's selection was exceptional, and despite the challenges currently faced by the industry (as of the time of writing: the SAG-AFTRA strike was suspended on November 9, 2023), each of these films deserves your attention. In the following article, our team will present reviews of six films from the LFF. We hope you will enjoy reading it and discover something to plan to watch.



## Film Editor MIKE BUZADJI

Nothing could have kicked off LFF 2023 better than a provocative British drama that delves deep into the abyss of wealth. And, no, it's not your typical Romeo & Juliet tale; it's actually quite the opposite – obsessive, unsettling, and deeply disturbing. The original screenplay of *Saltburn* by Emerald Fennel, is an R-rated psychological thriller drama primarily set in the mid-2000s at an English country estate.

It opens with a confession of love, albeit a rather creepy one, like the words of a secret stalker. The mysterious man behind this voice remains unknown at this point, but we come to know him as Oliver (played by Barry Keoghan), a fresher at Oxford. Oliver is your quintessential nerdy guy with a scholarship, coming from a working-class background. From the first day, he's recognised by his kind, forming a bond with a fellow nerd. However, we aren't able to grow too attached to this character, as Oliver soon abandons him for Felix. Who is Felix, you ask? Unfortunately, this is not a story of our newspaper's origins. Rather, Felix is the subject of the earlier confession, who is exceptionally hot and filthy rich. Regardless of gender or sexuality, a single glance from a guy like Felix quickens the heartbeat of everyone who meets him.

So how do two such different classmates even start talking? As it turns out, a flat tire is all it takes to join the cool kids. After offering his bike to a stranded Felix,

Oliver is invited for drinks with him and his entourage. One thing leads to another and – no, they don't fall in love – they become best mates. Not everyone supports their friendship, suggesting that Oliver is another one of Felix's 'charity cases': "He will get bored of you ...".

Upon hearing news that Oliver's dad has died, Felix invites him to his family estate in Saltburn for the



**You're like a moth:  
harmless, drawn  
to shiny things...  
desperate to get in**

summer, since Oliver is devastated and can't bear the thought of returning to his troubled family. That's where it all begins, and you're in for a ride. Secrets, drama, lies, and questionable decisions are the bones of the film.

Emerald Fennel did a great job at comically portraying

the most upper class and how detached they are from the real world: "Pamela died... she'd do anything for attention!" Although the movie sometimes takes dark turns, its bizarre events and witty one-liners evoke a wide range of emotional reactions from the audience. Fennel clearly knew what she was doing and aimed to capture our attention with something viewers are not used to seeing on the big screen.

The sound, cinematography, production, and cast's performances, especially Rosamund Pike's, were all exceptional and contributed greatly to the movie's quality. I confidently recommend you watch *Saltburn*; however, I can't call it among the best. Don't get me wrong; it was a wild ride, but the final drop of the rollercoaster was too

steep. The ending felt rushed and somewhat too fictional without significant consequences, as if the character had written his own dream ending. Despite all this, a few scenes in the movie will forever be etched in my memory.



**Directed by** Emerald Fennel  
**Written by** Emerald Fennel  
**Produced by** Emerald Fennel, Josey McNamara, Tom Ackerley, Margot Robbie

**Starring** Barry Keoghan, Jacob Elordi, Rosamund Pike, Richard E. Grant, Alison Oliver, Archie Madekwe, Carey Mulligan, ...



**Release Date** November 17, 2023  
**Running time** 131 minutes



**Deputy Editor-in-Chief**  
**ZANNA BUCKLAND**

Introduced by the London Film Festival (LFF) Director Kristy Matheson as “the sexiest couple you will see at the festival”, Andrew Scott and Paul Mescal thrill as two of the four main characters in *All of Us Strangers*. They are joined by Claire Foy and Jamie Bell to form the appropriately intimate cast for this second film adaptation of Taichi Yamada’s novel *Strangers*.

In equal parts haunting and romantic, the film, directed by Andrew Haigh, opens with a shot of the sun rising on screenwriter Adam (Andrew Scott), who lives alone in a block of flats in London. We follow him as he goes about his day, performing mundane tasks and occasionally dozing off. Cut to the evening and the building’s fire alarms ring, forcing Adam to vacate the comfort of his home.

He appears intrigued by the sight of a neighbour who has blatantly ignored the alarm, silhouetted in one of the building’s windows. This exposition builds up to an eventual meet-cute between Adam and the younger man he learns is called Harry (Paul Mescal), prompting the early days of a relationship.

Alongside the couple’s blossoming romance runs alongside Adam’s regular visits to his parents (Claire Foy and Jamie Bell), who are still living in the suburban



**Queer is polite, like all the dicks were taken out**



but the two have amazing chemistry regardless, as does Scott with Foy and Bell. This allows Haigh to really sell the relationships as being deep and true, which is particularly important given that the film is partly inspired by Haigh’s own experience of growing up queer in the

‘70s - he even filmed scenes in his actual childhood home. He ties in the feelings of guilt and anxiety among the queer community at the time, especially due to the prevalence of AIDS. Adam’s relationship with his parents mirrors the interactions between many young people and their families who were in a similar position, with his mother showing concern, rather than anger or enthusiasm, upon learning about his new boyfriend.

*All of Us Strangers* is a maze of a narrative, facilitated by impressive sound engineering, an intense score, and a knack for framing poignant shots of the characters’ emotions. Despite closing out on a nice scene of the couple, Haigh does a brilliant job of leaving the audience feeling ill at ease and uncertain about the

neighbourhood where he grew up. However, through the countless hours we spend with Adam as he travels back and forth on the train, there is a sense that things aren’t quite right.

Andrew Scott is as in real life whilst Paul Mescal isn’t,

events that took place. I would definitely recommend the watch, especially since this review doesn’t do the film justice; just be prepared to feel a little strange afterwards.

**Directed by** Andrew Haigh  
**Written by** Andrew Haigh  
**Produced by** Graham Broadbent,  
Pete Czernin, Sarah Harvey

**Starring** Andrew Scott,  
Paul Mescal,  
Jamie Bell,  
Claire Foy



**Release Date** January 26, 2024  
**Running time** 105 minutes



## Film Editor MIKE BUZADJI

While I am decidedly not a motorcycle enthusiast, the captivating plot of Jeff Nichols' *The Bikeriders* drew me in from the very beginning. This film is a gritty exploration of the Chicago Vandals motorcycle club set during the rebellious 1960s and early 1970s, delving into themes of companionship, trust, and intricacies of biker subculture's complex relationships.

As director Jeff Nichols explained before the screening, this story is based on the work of Danny Lyon, a photojournalist at the time, who plays a crucial role in the film's storytelling. He doesn't serve as a narrator, but his interviews control the flow of the story.

The Chicago Vandals may appear to be a typical motorcycle club, but they're more than tough guys in leather jackets; they're a close-knit group, even a family. As viewers, much like the photographer portrayed by Mike Faist, we are gradually initiated into the club.

The journey begins with Jodie Comer's character, Kathy, recalling her first encounter with Benny, one of the bikers, portrayed by Austin Butler. Their meeting takes place in a local bar, the Vandals' residence, where Benny's silent intensity immediately captures her attention, but the atmosphere is intimidating for her, and she leaves the place in distress, with her white pants covered in handprints. Soon after, Benny follows, and they spend the night riding around on his

bike.

He's not a character of many words, and we barely hear his voice at first. Benny possesses a silent intensity, that speaks volumes without him dropping a single sentence. He even manages to divorce a married couple by

describing his character. Yet, beneath his rugged exterior lies a sense of vulnerability and inner turmoil that adds depth to his character.

Along with Benny in the first scene at the bar, we're introduced to other members of the Chicago Vandals,

including the man himself, the leader of their pack, Johnny, played by Tom Hardy. Don't be fooled by his strong manly appearance – his voice will surprise you. Similar to Benny, this character looks tough, but is soft and vulnerable on the inside. The club is his family, and he will die to protect it. The bond between him and Benny is much stronger than family, eventually forcing Benny to make a choice between the two.

Kathy, as Benny's partner, navigates the chaotic waters of life as the love interest of a biker. Through her stories, we gain deeper insight into this wild world of *The Bikeriders*. Comer's performance was nothing short of outstanding, I wouldn't be surprised if it earns her a nomination or two.

Jeff Nichols captures the essence of the biker family and their unbreakable bonds. After leaving the theatre, I felt I was lacking that kind of feeling. We, as the audience, become emotionally invested in their world, immersing ourselves in the dynamics of their relationships, and that connection is the true strength of *The Bikeriders*.



**Directed by** Jeff Nichols  
**Written by** Jeff Nichols  
**Produced by** Sarah Green, Arnon Milchan, Brian Kavanaugh-Jones

**Starring** Jodie Comer, Austin Butler, Tom Hardy, Michael Shannon, Mike Faist, Norman Reedus, Boyd Holbrook, ...



**Release Date** December 1, 2023  
**Running time** 116 minutes



## Film Writer

## IOANA ESANU

A star-studded cast, a legendary director, and a story so intricate it takes 3 and a half hours to tell. Martin Scorsese's new film, *Killers of the Flower Moon*, promises a lot; and it absolutely delivers.

The film is based on the eponymous book which tells the true story of the Osage Nation. A Midwestern Native American tribe, the Osage eventually settled in Oklahoma, where – as luck would have it – the land was rich in oil. Owning the mineral rights on their land, many Osage natives became wealthy, but their luck would soon turn as unscrupulous businessmen tried to profit off them. The film focuses on the so-called 'Reign of Terror' of the 1920's, when many of the Osage saw their headrights taken away through legal loopholes and, more heinously, murder.

Leonardo DiCaprio plays Ernest Burkhart, a down-in-the-dumps WWI veteran with a perpetual frown and little to look forward to in life. That is until his uncle, William Hale (Robert De Niro), self-proclaimed 'King of the Osage Hills', proposes a business opportunity. Long-time friend and sponsor of the reservation, Hale points out the benefits of marrying into Mollie's (Lily Gladstone) wealthy Osage family. But the fewer descendants in the family, the more money there is to go around for the Hales... the conclusion is, as Im-

perial professors would say, trivial.

The three leads all do a fantastic job of depicting the intricate interpersonal relationships and power dynamics on the reservation. DiCaprio is believable as the adrift young man who falls deeper and deeper into corruption,

in the 'Roaring 20's'. Instead of the glamorous community of white party-goers that you would expect from that era, the upper class in *Killers of the Flower Moon* is made up of the Indian Council, a group of tribal chiefs, elders and family heads speaking out for the needs of

the Native community. As local and state sheriffs turn a blind eye to the murders of the rich Osage, the Indian Council reach out to the newly-founded Federal Bureau of Investigation, led by J. Edgar Hoover, to finally crack the case.

As you can probably tell by now, this is a story of corruption, betrayal, greed, race, family, and, strangely, even love. There is so much to unpack and explore that I would be tempted to suggest it would have been better suited as a 4-part mini-series, to allow the viewer some breathing room between the intertwining intrigues. Nonetheless, the script is expertly crafted and never feels like it drags on for too long. Despite its behemothic length, the film manages to keep your attention throughout, in large part thanks

to the incredible directorial work. I would call *Killers of the Flower Moon* a veritable Hollywood classic: the perfect storm of great actors and a great story. Go watch it now, or for the sake of your bladder, wait until it comes to streaming; it's produced by Apple TV+.



HEADLINE GALA

## KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON

raising interesting questions about the true nature of evil. The real scene-stealer for me was Lily Gladstone, quietly observing the horrors around her and finding herself in an inescapable bind. But what truly strikes the viewer is subverting the expectations for a story set

**Directed by** Martin Scorsese  
**Screenplay by** Eric Roth, Martin Scorsese  
**Produced by** Dan Friedkin, Bradley Thomas, Martin Scorsese, Daniel Lupi

**Starring** Leonardo DiCaprio, Robert De Niro, Lily Gladstone, Jesse Plemons, Tantoo Cardinal, John Lithgow, Brendan Fraser, ...



**Release Date** October 20, 2023  
**Running time** 206 minutes



## Deputy Editor-in-Chief ZANNA BUCKLAND

Seeing *The Book of Clarence* made me want to watch Jeymes Samuel's first film, *The Harder They Fall*, which also made its debut at the London Film Festival (in 2021). Evidently a cultural phenomenon, the Black comedy attracted masses of London's Black community to the Southbank Centre with its promise of Samuel's signature mix of humour, drama, and an incredible score.

Setting the film in biblical times, Samuel inserts a character named Clarence (played by LaKeith Stanfield, who was also in *The Harder They Fall*) into the story of Jesus's crucifixion. Clarence is a cynic, and has little reverence for the Messiah, who has adopted Clarence's twin brother as one of his disciples. The story follows his journey through seeing the opportunity to profit from performing so-called 'miracles' for crowds, to understanding the need to have faith and believe in things other than simply what's in front of him.

For pretending to be the Messiah and scamming people out of their money, and then for not giving up the real one, Clarence is ultimately crucified by the Romans, along with many of his brethren.

The residents of this altered Jerusalem, who are mostly black, are constantly at war with the white Romans. This seems to overtly represent the disparity between white cops and marginalised Black communities in cit-



**I'd never overthrow Rome  
- my good friend is Roman.**



Oyelowo, Anna Diop, and Omar Sy. Notably, on IMDb the supporting actors who feature most heavily in the project are much lower down in the credits, while James McAvoy and Benedict Cumberbatch, who probably only have about 20 minutes of screen time or less, are sec-

ond and third on the list. The real Messiah is played by black British actor Nicholas Pinnock, subverting the audience's typical image of God's son.

What stood out the most throughout the film was the music, co-produced by Jay-Z, that nicely complemented the plot. Samuel's own background as a music producer gives him a leg up in this department, and he even claims to "see music and hear the film when writing the soundtrack". The costumes were also stunning, which can be credited to Antoinette Messam, who was also Samuel's costume designer from *The Harder They Fall*.

This was one of the best films I've seen in a long time, and I can't think of any criticisms for it - I wouldn't be surprised to see it recognised in the next awards season. Sam-

uel's visions are spectacular, and his hope is that people will watch his films and see stories they can relate to, as well as to "reintroduce innocence and hope". For him, filmmaking is "not a dream; it's an aim, intentions, plans", and *The Book of Clarence* is a plan he has managed to execute to perfection.

The long list of actors in the cast includes RJ Cyler, Caleb McLaughlin, Alfre Woodard, Teyana Taylor, David

**Directed by** Jeymes Samuel  
**Written by** Jeymes Samuel  
**Produced by** Jeymes Samuel, Shawn Carter, James Lassiter, Tendo Nagenda

**Starring** LaKeith Stanfield, David Oyelowo, Omar Sy, Anna Diop, RJ Cyler, Micheal Ward, Alfre Woodard, Teyana Taylor, Caleb McLaughlin, ...



**Release Date** January 19, 2024  
**Running time** 136 minutes



## Film Editor MIKE BUZADJI

Yorgos Lanthimos's *Poor Things* offers a bizarre re-imagining of the classical Frankenstein tale, which you wouldn't know if you haven't watched the trailer or read any other promo material. When we first meet Bella, her speech, walk, and actions are confusing. Just like the professor's assistant, we find ourselves wondering why she behaves this way and what led to her current state. However, it doesn't take long to discover that she's Godwin Baxter's (Willem Dafoe) experiment, along with the goose-headed pug, duck-headed goat, and other peculiar creatures. It is important to note that Bella Baxter, played by Emma Stone, calls him "God", perhaps based on his teachings. As we delve into Bella's world, we see research assistant Max, played by Ramy Youssef, fall in love with her, despite her weirdness and unclear origins. But, unfortunately for him, right after their engagement, a solicitor named Duncan Wedderburn visits Baxter's mansion, seduces Bella and convinces her to join him in his grand and, apparently, sex-filled adventure.

Duncan is a hilarious character who goes through many emotional stages with Bella. Mark Ruffalo's performance was truly elevating for the character and was a perfect casting for the role.

Throughout the film, we witness Bella's transforma-

tion, as she explores her senses and desires. This story is truly fascinating to watch, as a once unconscious being discovers taste, pleasure, fear, disgust, and a variety of other feelings and emotions. The film also doesn't shy away from the explicit elements of her awakening and

ing into a world unlike any I've ever seen. The Baroque stylistic choice perfectly complements this unique tale and demonstrates Yorgos Lanthimos's technical and imaginative prowess. Some locations even depict Biblical imagery, such as the Tower of Babylon, suggesting possible sources of inspiration for the director.

The production team and costume designers deserve a special mention for their brilliant use of shapes and colors. The vivid thematic elements of the world held me captive, as I eagerly sought out every intricate detail on the screen. Together with Jerskin Fendrix's exceptional score, *Poor Things* assembles all the essential ingredients for a tale that will keep you gasping at every turn of the way.

Emma Stone's performance as Bella is nothing short of divine. She skillfully portrays Bella's transformation from a childlike innocence to a self-assured woman. Every move, emotion, and reaction from Stone captures the essence of Bella's character, and this performance is a testament to her acting skills.

*Poor Things* is undeniably a beautiful and memorable film; a must-watch for anyone craving a unique and enchanting cinematic experience. It captivates with its one-of-a-kind exploration of beauty and the grotesque, delving into complex themes of human nature.

features multiple scenes of full nudity in sexual scenarios labelled by her as "furious jumping."

While the film initially adopts the classic black-and-white cinematography associated with many Frankenstein reprises, as Bella's journey unfolds colors gradually grace the screen. She escapes the eerie mansion, ventur-



**Directed by** Yorgos Lanthimos  
**Screenplay by** Tony McNamara  
**Produced by** Ed Guiney, Andrew Lowe,  
 Yorgos Lanthimos, Emma Stone

**Starring** Emma Stone, Mark Ruffalo,  
 Willem Dafoe, Vicki Pepperdine,  
 Ramy Youssef, Christopher Abbott,  
 Jerrod Carmichael, ...



**Release Date** January 12, 2024  
**Running time** 141 minutes



## Film Editor MIKE BUZADJI

The BFI London Film Festival 2023 this year was an event to remember for years. This year's exceptional selection of pictures left a craving-more aftertaste. However, the issues within the industry couldn't pass by the festival. One of the big hits LFF had to experience this year was the SAG-AFTRA strike, which left the red carpet of the event starless. Throughout the span of the festival, we only saw directors, producers, some of the production teams and only a couple of writers, since their strike was over by September 27, 2023.

Other than that, the festival organisation was spectacular, all thanks to the amazing team at BFI, all the volunteers, the Pace Prestige security team and the new festival director Kristy Matheson. We will most definitely hear more about the films and series presented at LFF in the upcoming year. Make sure you don't miss any of the releases, some of which you can already find on streaming services, like *The Killer* produced by Netflix.

And if you are interested in early premieres, industry talks, Q&As, workshops and much more, don't for-

get to check out BFI What's On. 25 & Under? You can sign up for membership and get a discounted price for all the BFI Southbank and Festival tickets. Find out more by scanning the QR-code:



# Snapshots from BFI London Film Festival 2023





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## BOOKS

# Madame Bovary, sitting on the Victoria Line

To quote Gustave Flaubert: “She wanted to die, but she also wanted to live in Paris.”

## Books Editor

FIYINFOLUWA T. OLADIPO

If Gustave Flaubert had begun his beloved *Madame Bovary* with, as one might have thought, Madame Bovary, it would not be strange to imagine the first words (albeit in a very 18<sup>th</sup>-century manner) coming across like the opening of an Old Hollywood romance. It would describe our eponymous protagonist, perhaps peering over a balcony, with a hopeless longing on her fair face. It would brim with a sentimentality accustomed only to emotion obscured behind the heavy grain

of film. And the rhythm in Flaubert’s sentences would move only by the sounds of a loud and lonely string orchestra.

But a question to myself: why *Madame Bovary*? And why now?

The title cemented itself as one of the greatest to hit the literary industry, but picking it up from a forgotten pile of books on my bedroom floor was nothing more than a fateful means to pass time on my 50-minute commute. Innocence and naiveté were good qualities to come into reading it with. Reading *Madame Bovary* under such mundane conditions shrunk Flaubert from literary giant to simply another writer, and opened me up to a series of small revelations that emphasised the importance of fiction. But back to the novel.

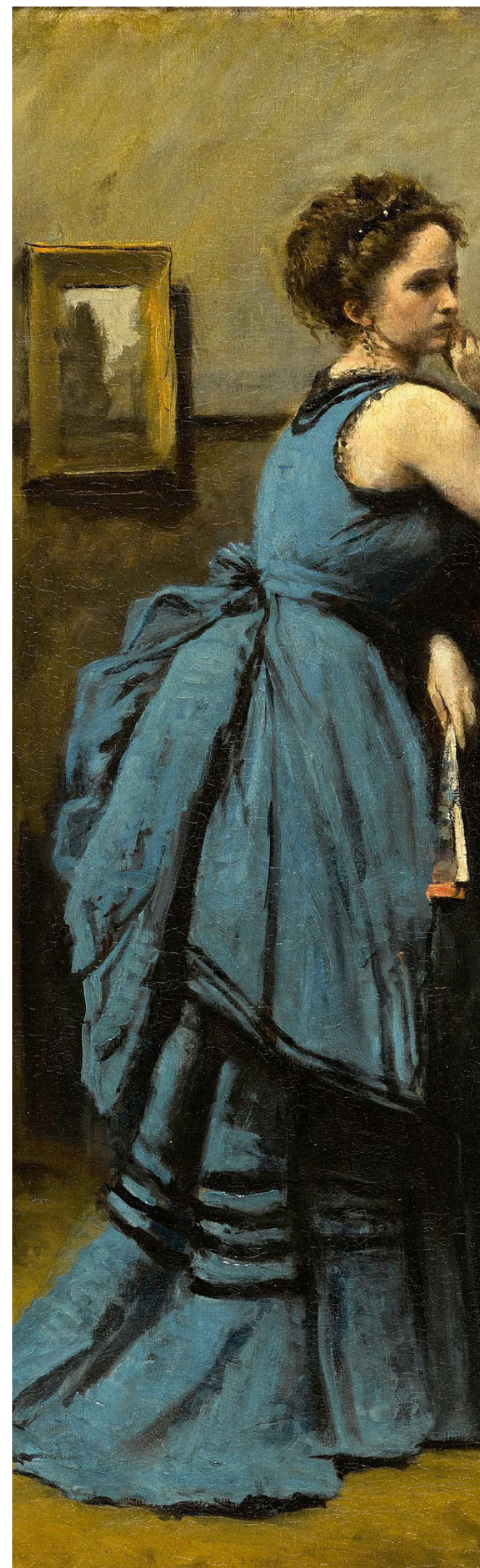
Say dramatic irony were a disease; then *Madame Bovary* is down bad. In this 1856 novel, Flaubert depicts the mind of Emma Bovary – his protagonist – with a narrative voice that neither casts judgment nor offers defences for her, but is there to merely, solely, depict her character. But there are also instances of carefully crafted disconnect, one in which our knowledge of the hopes and motivations of one character become shattered by the actions and beliefs of another, and this piece of French realism begins to unfold with a sort of didactic, almost theatrical quality. Do not be deceived – *Madame Bovary* is a novel on and of romance.

Flaubert portrays Emma through her many woes in love. But fret not reader, through these overlapping and interweaving stories of a hopeless romantic, the story is deeply involved in the ideas and psychology of romance; questioning the exact origins and intent of desire and what it means to romanticise. To this effect, the language of Flaubert carries the grandeur and exuberance of the ideas that he captures, mimics, and sometimes mocks, effectively building these themes up across his magnum opus.



**Say dramatic irony were a disease; *Madame Bovary* is down bad.**

The novel tells the story of a woman married to a boring man called Charles. It is this life of boredom that Flaubert uses to set the stage for Bovary’s many acts of escapism – balls, clothes shopping, affairs – to avoid the inescapable, inevitable dread attached to her married existence. Is this whetting your literary appetite? If not, then that’s exactly the point. Flaubert targets the



*Lady in Blue*: an oil painting of the eponymous character. Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot



things we do and the way we do them to exchange the life that is for the life that ought to be. As he writes: 'deep down [...] she was waiting for something to happen. Like a sailor in distress, she kept casting desperate glances over the solitary waste of her life, seeking some white sail in the distant mists of the horizon.' *Madame Bovary* emerged at a time when the romantic genre was being shown the way to the exit, and writers were reaffirming their right to be real (hence: the genre of realism), and thus genuine.

It was upon reading this novel that I understood what Flaubert meant when he said, 'Madame Bovary c'est moi' (translated 'Madame Bovary is I'). That is to say, he himself was as much the inspiration for *Madame Bovary* as anything else, and the tale starts to make even more sense.

These notions of romance, ambition, and desire have been rebirthed over and over in literature and in society, and especially in an environment like Imperial's. Emma goes to extreme lengths to achieve the sort of image she envisioned for herself, based on the fickle aspirations born in her childhood. Not unlike Emma, many of us often build our lives around these things – our jobs, our friendships, even our future aspirations. Moreover, just as how Flaubert shows Emma's desires for love and affluence as fuelled by the cheap romantic literature she read in childhood, our own desires in life can equally be fuelled by what we've seen in the media, and our pride, semblance of reputation, and expectations from others and ourselves.

It is only after reading *Madame Bovary* that I began to truly appreciate that indeed there is indeed a line to be drawn between loving – which is active, where we embark on uphill battles for things and people out of a true appreciation for them – and being in love – where we sometimes act on an infatuation with an imagined, and therefore impossible, ideal, often to our own detriment. With *Madame Bovary*, Gustave Flaubert advocates for the former, the harder option: the effort of deciding to actually love.

*This is the first in a series discussing literature as read while on the London Underground.*

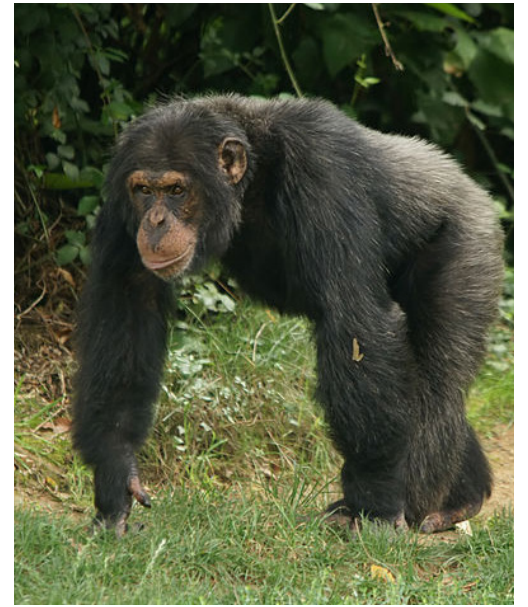
# Tom Slemen and Strange Liverpool

—  
**One of our new Books writers explains their attachment to Slemen's writing.**

**Books Writer**  
**NATALIE LEWIS**

I met author Tom Slemen, best known for his *Haunted Liverpool* series, while in high school, when he visited to talk about the unusual history of Liverpool. His visit to my school in Knowsley, a borough within Liverpool's city region, was dedicated to sharing the city's unusual history. The captivating way he told his stories left a lasting impression on me in how he spoke with a deep sense of pride for his Liverpool roots. This was particularly meaningful considering some of the stereotypes associated with Liverpool. His positive influence shaped my perspective of my city. This passion has once again been captured in his new book, *Strange Liverpool*.

Born and bred in Liverpool, Slemen provides informative and convincing evidence on mysterious events that have hap-



A chimpanzee going about its day. Hans Hillewaert

pened in his hometown, from the past to present, that will make you question your perspective of it. It encouraged me to view the city from a slant angle, one that goes beyond conventional perceptions and reveals a mysterious and sometimes darker side to the city.

With the support of extensive research, Slemen has written a book that documents strange, but true, occurrences throughout Liverpool's history. Delivering some truly bizarre tales, the book creates an interesting new perspective on the history of the city through his enthralling narrative.

A quick read, *Strange Liverpool* consists of a collection of short stories detailing unusual incidents such as the story of 'Wild Animals at Large', which details a chimpanzee's frequent escapes from Liverpool Zoological Park in 1938.

Slemen also writes about unsolved mysteries like the 'Mass Graves in Old Swan'. Old Swan is an area in Liverpool where 3,561 unmarked coffins were found under a plot of land. No records were found of the graves in the church beside the mass burial site, so some suggest they have been there since before 1840.

This book offers a broad overview of the strange beauty and history of Liverpool, that allowed even a local like myself to learn something new about my hometown. I would definitely recommend this book to anyone, as it introduced to me events that would have seemed thoroughly unconvincing without Slemen's deft storytelling.



A view of Liverpool from the Anglican Cathedral. LivingOS



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## FOOD&TRAVEL

# Berenjak, a not-so-secret spot in Soho

Read as Delia discovers a culinary moment worth to wait four months for.

Food&Travel Writer  
**DELIA GINCU**

On the 19th June, my boyfriend and I finally decided to make a dinner reservation to celebrate our then-approaching one year anniversary. I proposed *Berenjak*, a Persian-style restaurant that had been collecting dust on my want-to-try list. We checked availability for our preferred date - no luck. We tried the day after, the weekend after, and the one after that. None of them were available either. Succumbing to the “want what you can’t have” trope, we determinedly booked the first Saturday evening table we could find. For the Soho branch, this happened to be on 7th October, and throughout July, August, and September, we avidly glanced over the *Berenjak* menu in an effort to gear up for the meal that was to come.

Waking up on 7th October was not far from waking up on Christmas morning; months of anticipation had built up to a child-like eagerness to sit down at the dinner table. As we impatiently bided the time until the evening hours, we couldn’t help but wonder: would this be the meal to change our lives?

With our table booked for 20:15, we dutifully arrived five minutes earlier. Tucked into a bustling side street of Soho, *Berenjak*’s open counter design manages to ac-

count for what feels like the large majority of the alley’s footfall. After sneaking our way through curious crowds eyeing the restaurant, we managed to inform the staff, not without a hint of pride, that yes, we had a booking. While waiting for our table to be prepared, we couldn’t help but grin at the two-hour waiting list announcement to passers-by. We were incredibly glad that we had our four months old booking.

Despite arriving at *Berenjak* early, our table was ready only 15 minutes after our booked time. We sat in the back room of the restaurant where dim lights and mellow music made for a warm welcome, and we cozied up on the corner table. After careful examination of the menu, which was more of a cross-check with our memorised version, we were diligently explained the menu and portion sizes before placing our order. The service remained great throughout the meal, though we were asked to leave at the end because the next guests were waiting outside.



### Would this be the meal to change our lives?

For starters, based on the recommended quantity, we went with the Sangkak (flatbread, £4), Hummus (£7.50), Mirza Ghasemi (cooked aubergine dip, £8.50), and Panir Sabzi (feta and herbs, £8). All in all, very good options with the aubergine dip being my personal favourite. Coal cooked and nicely spiced, it had an almost meat-like flavour that was perfectly complemented by the bread. The hummus came in at a close second. Made with black chickpeas, its deep flavour carried us through our whole meal and went nicely with the fresh herbs accompanying the feta dish. Personally, this was more than enough to take me through the night. But as so often, we were criminally betrayed by our empty stomachs’ greed, and the big bulk of the order was still to come.

For our mains, we ordered the Jujeh kabab (chicken, £19.50), the Koobideh kabab (minced lamb, £18), and the house rice (£6), all recommended by our waitress. Both meats were incredibly well flavoured and tender, leaving us remorseful about our earlier indulgence. The



Hummus and Flatbread Delia Gincu

rice, though good, was nothing to write home about.

When it comes to drinks, we went with Les Trois Domaines Blanc, Guerrouane, Morocco 2021. Albeit admittedly not a wine connoisseur, I did quite enjoy our selection. To our surprise, it was the cheapest bottle on the menu, though prices seemed to be set rather arbitrarily, with 500ml costing £20 and a whole 750ml bottle, £32. Not to say that this discrepancy threw us off from ordering the bottle.

Did we overpay for a meal that another London location would’ve offered at a fraction of the price? Maybe. Still, the food was great, service was lovely, and the Soho location made for a great ambience during and after the visit. Slight minus points for having to wait for the table and then being rushed out, though I do understand it gets busy on a Saturday evening. I would definitely return, and, although maybe not life-changing, it was very good food that certainly increased my appetite for Persian cuisine. 8.5/10.



Jujeh Kabab and Koobideh Kabab Delia Gincu



Check out *Berenjak*’s Instagram Account



# It is not a place for drugs, even if it is called Dopamine Land

*Dopamine Land on Brompton Road is a fun once-go, always-love museum just a hop away from campus.*

# DOPAMINE LAND

dopaminelandexperience.com

Food & Travel Editor  
CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL



No doubt, little kids go wild in Dopamine Land, the established fun exhibition on Brompton Road, near South Kensington station. Rooms filled with bright lights, mirrors left and right, a ball pit as large as a bathtub and a room dedicated for pillow fights all define the



and running around does not make the experience worth the £17 ticket. My key advice is to visit during school hours - then it becomes a wonderful experience

amusement park.

As an adult, the story looks a bit different. Yes, there are plenty of photo opportunities with funky backgrounds and some rooms offer a creative escape, as shown in one where visitors are encouraged to write on the walls. However, the smell of bubblegum is choking and the multitude of children crying



listening to the calming soundtrack and enjoying the sweet smell that they added to the room.

with friends.

The best exhibit, one which I will definitely use as design inspiration later on in life, is the room with the floating lanterns. Similar to floating candles in the Great Hall of *Harry Potter*, the lanterns were slightly swaying at various heights. I lied down on the carpeted floor and stared at the ceiling for 20 minutes,

The last room was a large open area



with a few photo-stages. They also had a bar with alcoholic or non-alcoholic bubble tea. While neither me nor my friend were in the mood to drink, the idea definitely sparked our interest.

Pictures left to right: Floating lanterns and calming music, colorful projections, customers could sit on a directors chair, mirror room Charlotte Probstel

# Tea and biscuits, but no proper bread!

*Where, in this land of sandwiches, is there good bread?*

Food & Travel Editor  
CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL

It is Marie Antoinette's response of "Let them eat cake" to the news that her starving people no longer had any bread to eat, that I always think of when I see any bread or brioche laying around. Bread is available in most countries in various forms and they all contain the same ingredients: flour, yeast and water. The recipe seems simpler than cake - so why is it so difficult to find proper bread in London, a capital filled with international cuisine?

The question answers itself in grocery

stores. The French students understand that fresh baguette can go stale within the same day and Germans keep bakeries open even on Sundays. On the other hand, bread from the grocery store is sold in bags with roughly 20-24 slices, lasting a single student for perhaps six days. That, is not bread.

If we define bread to be a mixture of flour, water and optionally some yeast, many types of bread would instead be considered cake. There is nothing wrong with that - but then toast should not be considered bread.

Making bread at home is not too difficult. Obviously, there are millions of recipes online, but the little secret in-

volves bread-mixes. They require roughly 500ml of lukewarm water, a few hours for sitting and 1 to 1.5 hours of baking in the oven to produce the bread that you want. No kneading, surprised?

A typical breadmix comes as a dry-mix, hence it can be portioned to produce smaller loafs of bread at different points during the week or the month. Consumers can also choose to add whatever nuts or dried fruit they desire into the mix. In my last loaf, I added chia seeds.

The outcome is a dense slice of goodness without

any added sugars or preservatives. My preferred brand is "Bauckhof", which sell their "Wunderbrod" pack for £4.35 to £5.23. The breads are not only filled with fibre and protein, but are also vegan and gluten free.



Three types of mixes are available; nuts, pure and gold bauckhof.de



## PHOTOGRAPHY

# Limerence

To love, to be loved, or is it love at all?

Head Photographer  
**ROLANDO CHARLES**

The concept of limerence sits somewhere between philosophy and psychopathology.

It is a state of involuntary obsession with somebody – the limerent object or ‘LO’. The ‘limerent’ describes the person afflicted with limerence. It manifests itself as intrusive thinking, idealising, the fear of rejection, and dependence of mood on the LO’s actions. It is neither love nor lust, as it relies on the doubt or absence of reciprocity.

In arts and photography, limerence is not widely discussed. It’s hard to imagine how the concept might present itself naturally in the compositions of light and shapes that can be captured on camera or canvas. I think this might be because limerence does not have a definite object. Or rather, limerence is not about loving the LO, it’s about the want to be loved by them, as Jean-Paul Sartre notes. In other words, limerence is not about who one aims these feelings towards, but about oneself.

Well, if the LO is not important, then there’s no picture to take, you might think. It’s logical then to assume we can only describe it visually by presenting the limerent and the environment that surrounds them. Can we portray the subject to fit our intuition of limerence? Maybe, but I think it’s far easier to have the environment speak for the limerent.

According to my own interpretation of what limerence would look like through a visual medium, Owen used what I think is the perfect combination of colours for

the background: purple, or the sum of blues and reds. These become the vehicle of the limerence, as ‘I’m feeling blue’ and ‘blushing’ are two great representations of the concept’s characteristics. Thus, in viewing the purple haze of a Hong Kong sunset we might find ourselves wondering if the limerent girl wishes there was somebody there to share it with, possibly a person who had become the centre of her world a few days prior.

I also propose an alternative, more ambitious interpretation. Maybe it is the viewer that is the limerent, and what we

are looking at is in fact the LO. We could even imagine anybody we want as the subject of Owen’s photo and transfer our own idealisations onto it. As such, the photo becomes but a mirror of the LO hidden in our own minds. *Look my way* is the photographer’s thought as they take the picture and, by extension, the viewer’s thought.

‘Limerence enters your life pleasantly,’ writes Dorothy Tennov, the psychologist who first coined the term in 1979. And it is a pleasant, limerent experience looking through Owen’s lens.



Look my way, Owen Wilkinson

Scan the QR code to submit for the next theme ‘City Silence’:





## CATNIP

# BAE announce new JEDI policy

### Morality Correspondent NEGAFELIX

Following pressure from peace activists, a major defence company has announced their new 'Death Zero' scheme. Named Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI), CEO Feb Senton told investors and the press that "For every baby killed by a BAE missile, the company will feed one hungry child." Speaking to NegaFelix, the company's chief ethics officer Wourtney Callize described the scheme as "revolutionary" and argued that it will lead to a "positive redistribution in infant mortality rates". She further announced that the compa-

ny hopes to achieve a quarter-on-quarter growth in the number of children fed of at least 10%. Imperial data scientists have raised concerns about the reliability of the company's data, arguing it would be trivial to underrepresent the number of children killed, therefore reducing food costs, and have published an open letter calling for independent oversight of this data. In response to this, Wourtney stated that these allegations are unfounded as the company would never seek to "undermine the efficacy and quality of their market-leading products".

This announcement has since incited a mass migration, with families currently in war-torn areas heading for areas that suffer with drought and food scarcity. The

UNCHR has warned against this, stating that this will tip the ratio of hungry to bombed children too far in the hungry direction. Peacekeepers have since been dispatched to enforce this.

This scheme has so far received mixed reviews from politicians and the media. Appearing on BBC News, the UK Minister for Human Rights publicly praised the scheme, saying "If we're being honest, those kids were getting bombed either way." The interviewer Banna Zuckland appeared shocked by this statement, responding that "This scheme is nothing short of disgusting" and berating the minister for "saying the quiet part out loud so audaciously". Jimmy has since been placed on unpaid leave and

declined to comment when approached by NegaFelix.

The TUHCC (Trade Union for Hungry Children Charities) have called on the company to reassess the scheme, arguing that its successful implementation would greatly hurt their ability to fundraise. The Chair, Zisabelle Hane, told NegaFelix "many of our members may have to sell their second homes following the inevitable pay cuts and redundancies. Who else is going to hire so many pencil pushers on doctors' salaries. Just think of their children!". In response, the company has assured TUHCC members that there will likely be many new vacancies in the now booming war charity sector.



### ARIES

This week the government bans strikes after a single mother is made late to a crystals convention



### TAURUS

This week the mould in your flat is sleeping with the fishes



### GEMINI

This week the eighth dwarf launches his solo career



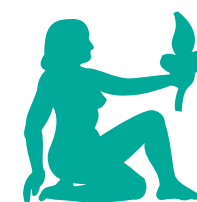
### CANCER

This week the government launches a consultation on banning single use men



### LEO

This week wokeness has gone too far. Your brother becomes a lollipop lady



### VIRGO

This week Prevent want to have a word about how much hummus you're eating



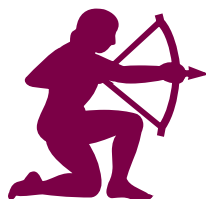
### LIBRA

This week you let your mum down, you let your dad down, but worst of all, you let the GCHQ agent listening in down



### SCORPIO

This week you renew your leaky umbrella insurance



### SAGITTARIUS

This week wealth and a good life will be yours if you do roughly 35 years of work



### CAPRICORN

This week you throw caution to the wind and buy the full fat milk



### AQUARIUS

This week feels not dissimilar to the last



### PISCES

This week a trenchant phone call will remind you of the consequences of your actions

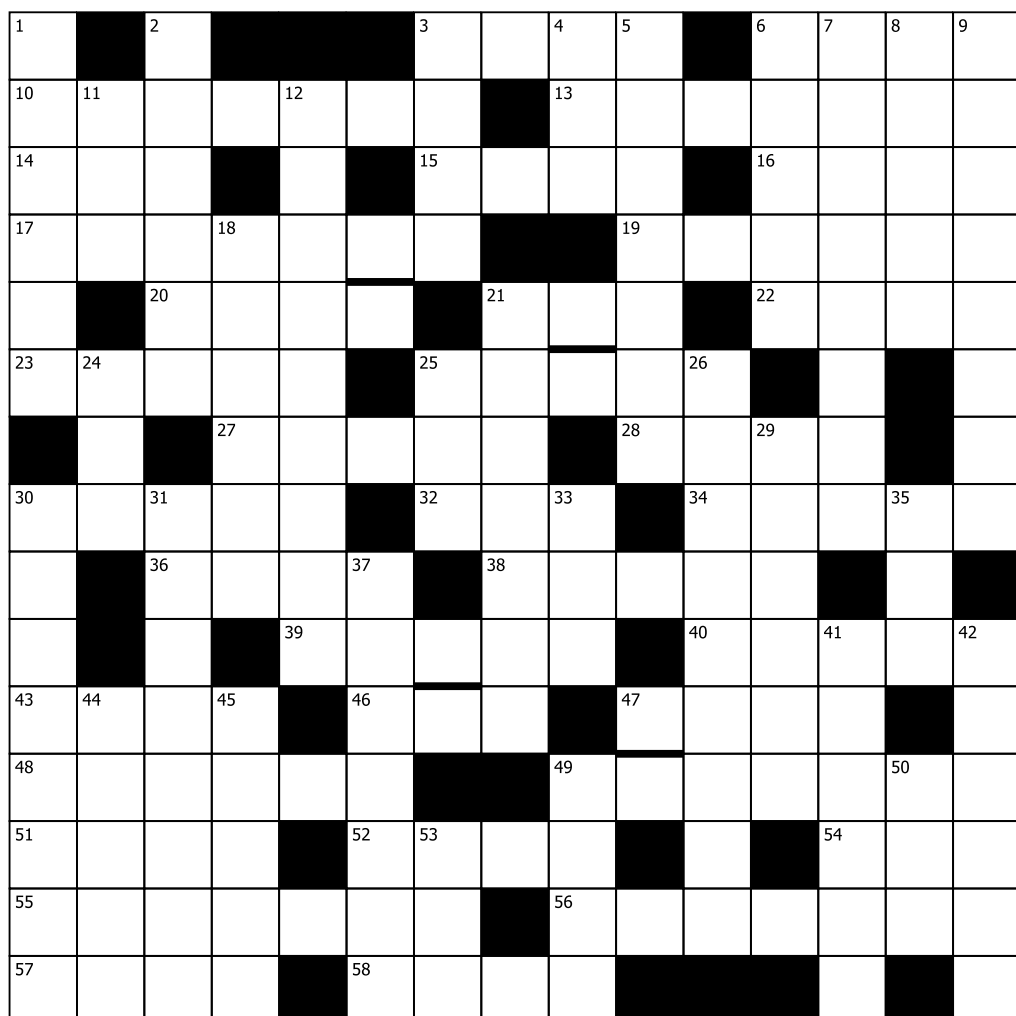






Puzzles Editor  
ISAAC WINSON

# CROSSWORD



Crosswords by Stanley Scott

## Across

- 3. Cat in Madrid. [4]
- 6. Russian emperor. [4]
- 10. Rosa Parks' state. [7]
- 13. Lloyd-George's predecessor. [7]
- 14. You might do it after a Hoover. [3]
- 15. Take a dip. [4]
- 16. Cranberry's partner in a current seasonal Tesco Meal Deal sandwich. [4]
- 17. Accumulation. [7]
- 19. Italian opera based on Shakespeare play. [6]
- 20. Beget young. [4]
- 21. ABBA's cry for help. [3]
- 22. Star Wars film abbr. [4]
- 23. Andantino, e.g. [5]
- 25. Mythical Greek shield. [5]
- 27. Ohm symbol. [5]
- 28. Shaped a narrative, as a political actor. [4]
- 30. Respond with abuse in a chatroom. [5]
- 32. Rocket launchers in Paris. [3]
- 34. A day off school, but only for the kids. [5]
- 36. Act headed by Helen Folasade Adu CBE. [4]
- 38. \_\_\_\_\_ Delano of Ru Paul's Drag Race. [5]
- 39. Saxon's partner. [5]
- 40. \_\_\_\_\_ Paul of Breaking Bad. [5]
- 43. Capping. [4]
- 46. The "Boy King". [3]
- 47. Elisabeth alternative. [4]
- 48. No spring chicken. [6]
- 49. In need of iron, perhaps. [7]
- 51. UK Government crisis aides. [4]
- 52. Bellow. [4]
- 54. Author of 'Masque of the Red Death'. [3]
- 55. Put into law. [7]
- 56. One of many found underneath the like bar. [7]
- 57. Unit of medicine. [4]
- 58. Caves. [4]

## Down

- 1. The royal pieces have them in chess. [6]
- 2. Loyalty to the Bishop of Rome. [6]
- 3. Noise made when shocked. [4]
- 4. \_\_\_ chi. [3]
- 5. Crossing of a membrane. [7]
- 6. Potato, e.g. [5]
- 7. Particular cuts of beef. [8]
- 8. Ready to fall. [5]
- 9. Box with intersecting arrow, in a circuit diagram. [8]
- 11. Bega of 'Mambo No. 5'. [3]
- 12. An example of the object this puzzle's shape approximates. [9]
- 18. Target of Youtube's Dr. Pimple Popper. [6]
- 21. Thalassic ingredient. [7]
- 24. Fish often set in jelly. [3]
- 25. Iron or bronze, e.g. [3]
- 26. A feature of the object this puzzle's shape approximates. [9]
- 29. Hesitation. [6]
- 30. Viewing the right thing, as a camera. [8]
- 31. Provided that. [8]
- 33. Fuss, worry. [3]
- 35. Skill metric named after its inventor. [3]
- 37. Typed in. [7]
- 41. Sloped. [6]
- 42. Subtle intricacy. [6]
- 44. Formulator of nine axioms for natural numbers. [5]
- 45. Female nibbling. [5]
- 49. Travels as a fired arrow. [4]
- 50. An-, on- and un-follower. [3]
- 53. Beethoven had one "an die Freude". [3]

# SUDOKU - EASY

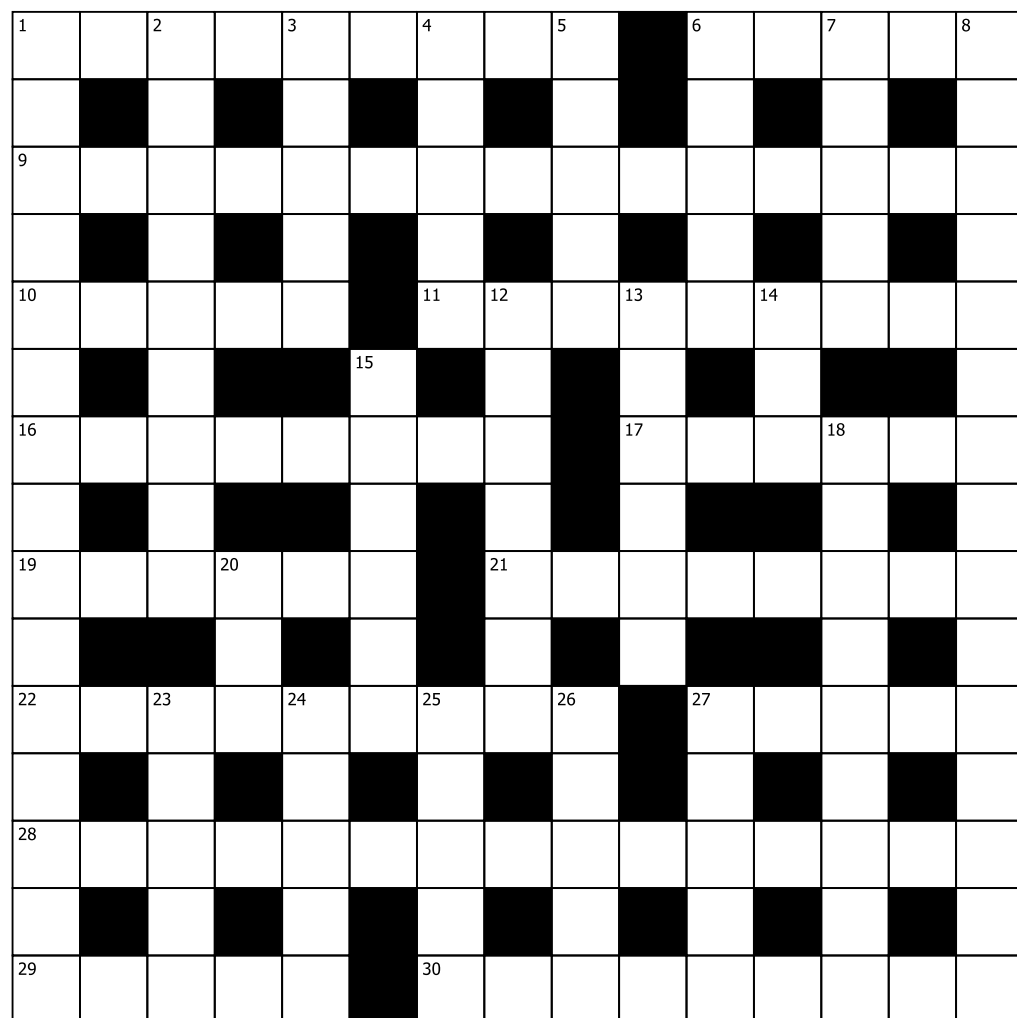
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3	4						7	
				5	8			
	5					2		



# CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



Crosswords by Stanley Scott

## Across

- 1. Bag whole fifty, with no points, in lively games room. [5, 4]
- 6. Dedication in making multifunctional start-signal equipment. [5]
- 9. Police in Nova Scotia? [3, 8, 4]
- 10. Is at the beck and call of the young ones. [5]
- 11. He wrote music about Attila's crossing but cut it short. [9]
- 16. City heard of in Second Book of Timothy? [8]
- 17. "I'm rubbish!" said as the mischief-maker would. [6]
- 19. Mudguard provider. [6]
- 21. Intimidating company metric even I have reduced. [8]
- 22. Central pylon done yet, for the attraction? [6, 3]
- 27. Draw gun in duel, but not in a cool way? [5]
- 28. Рулетка! [7, 8]
- 29. Yellows collars, I hear. [5]
- 30. Almost all went in twos to cross the connected cities. [4, 5]

## Down

- 1. The day off on Sunday? [7, 2, 6]
- 2. She reports primarily on my cygnet huddles. [9]
- 3. Gold, calcium and sulphur found in these animals. [5]
- 4. Australian swerving drunk in a car. [5]
- 5. Los has Angeles, Nepal has...? [5]
- 6. Fuse ring to structure in the design. [5]
- 7. Outline the conscription. [5]
- 8. Sleeper train to Turkish prison? [8, 7]
- 12. It's no smooth process to calculate the dependent variable! [7]
- 13. Brings up the hikes. [6]
- 14. Snake that has poison? [3]
- 15. Are you in your shell on the trail? [3, 3]
- 18. Sunak's mad to upset the West - he's gonna eat it! [5, 4]
- 20. Include funny family member. [3]
- 23. Sodium salt for the nose. [5]
- 24. Leaves overhead with almost all insects. [5]
- 25. Stern German? [5]
- 26. One strangely cut kind of mushroom. [5]
- 27. Blow until there's no fire. [5]

# SUDOKU - MODERATE

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

# How to publicise your society's events with Felix!

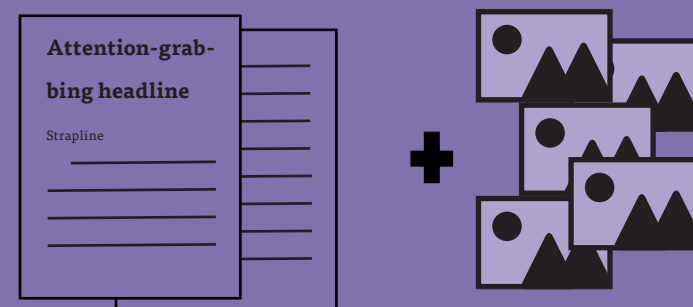
## 1 Host your event

Dance night, sports match, trip, competition, sale, presentation, fire-side talk, special guest lecture, the list goes on!



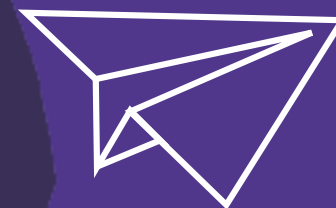
## 2 Write about it

or ask the *Felix Societies* team to attend and cover the event. Submissions should be roughly 400-600 words with pictures.



## 3 Send it to *Felix*!

at [felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:felix@imperial.ac.uk)



## 4 Published!

Issues come out every Friday. The deadline for submissions is every Sunday night.

