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IMPERIAL'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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

"More books, less bombs": Queens Lawn walkout for International Youth Strike



Imperial students walked out on 20 November on Queen's Lawn as part of the global International youth Strike rallies. Cristina Carrillo

Editor-in-Chief
CRISTINA CARRILLO

Students gathered at Queen's Lawn at 11am on Friday 20 November as part of UK-wide walkouts and protests for the International Youth Strike. Around 22 people attended, including students and staff members part of the University College Union (UCU), one of the three worker Unions at Imperial together with Unite and Unison.

The initiative was organised by five Imperial student societies: Climate Action, Feminists, Socialist Workers, Action for Palestine, and the Revolutionary Communists society, who did not appear in the promotional flyer due to "bad timings", according to a society member, but they confirmed to be organisers.

Society members and attendees gathered around banners that displayed motives such as "Fight for our future, not their wars" and "Imperialist college London complicit in genocide". The Revolutionary Communist society displayed a banner that included a picture

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

We recognise the endless possibilities of AI in aiding journalism in matters such as finding sources or brainstorming, but we stand by the power of humans using their own voices. All our articles are AI-checked by the latest softwares available.

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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:
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EDITORIAL

You will not be liked in pursuit of the truth

Editor-in-Chief
CRISTINA CARRILLO

Last week, Hailey Bieber sat down with New York Times financial journalist Andrew Ross Sorkin to discuss Rhode, the beauty brand she built in less than four years before selling it in a deal worth up to one billion US dollars. From her use of the word "opimistical" (as real as it is, people loved mocking that one), to her describing the figure of one billion as her delusional "shooting for the stars, stars, stars, stars" goal, the interview reached far beyond the traditional audience for financial journalism.

The Sorkin-Bieber crossover is an interesting conversation to watch in itself; it exists in the unique communication space between the spectacle of social media and the scrutiny of traditional journalism. And yet, the internet's reaction tells an even better story: how, in an age where finding out news through podcasts or Instagram stories is easiest, engaging with traditional journalism remains essential.

Amongst the myriad of narratives social media has squeezed out of the 23-minute interview, I have seen criticism toward Sorkin for allegedly being "rude" to Bieber. In particular, users have highlighted questions like "Why did you think you could do that?", what Sorkin asked after she shared that since the start she had a goal of selling Rhode for no less than one billion dollars. As a journalist, and even as just an avid YouTube interview watcher, I really struggle to see any issue. Sorkin was doing his job, and if I may say, a rather good one at that. He asked difficult questions with very well curated prefaces to each, seamlessly transitioning between the perspectives of an expert financial journalist, a father, and the average Instagram user who repeatedly ignores their screen-time notifications. I have watched the interview three times and learnt a lot from his way of navigating answers that were perhaps not as quantifiable, informed, or relevant as the questions lead to believe he searched for.

Another rhethoric I have seen is "kids, stay in school or you'll become like Hailey Bieber", as if she had not built a massively successful business in one of the most competitive celebrity brand spaces. However, being the face of a company and being able to articulate its financial and commercial strategy under scrutiny are very different. If she was going to represent Rhode in this setting, perhaps she needed better preparation.

Hailey Bieber misunderstood, or rather, underestimated, the difference between being interviewed and being given a platform. A journalist is neither a friend nor a publicist: the job is to pursue the truth, connect, and ask the hard questions (ask Nathan Fielder, or if you can't, read the Film article this week!).

There is a world of difference between watching Bieber speak on Instagram about how happy she is with the deal and watching her sit opposite someone whose job is to interrogate it. Both have their place, but they are not interchangeable. Although the same facts might be presented in both, one is a carefully controlled narrative and the other is an opportunity to test it.

As social media increasingly blurs the boundaries between journalism, entertainment and advertising, we should be careful not to mistake accessibility for accountability. A person speaking directly to millions of followers is not necessarily being held to account by them.

I am very grateful to Andrew Ross Sorkin for taking the time to replying to my email, even if he couldn't make a short interview!

VACANCIES

We are looking for new contributors! Felix is a volunteer-run newspaper open to all Imperial students. Its survival depends on your enthusiasm!

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- Business & Finance
- Arts & Culture
- Environment
- Science & Technology
- Societies & Union
- Books
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- Sports

NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

of Vladimir Lenin. The society was also selling a newspaper with articles on topics like the geopolitical conflicts between the United States and the Middle East. They charge £2 per issue, which they say is destined to commission writers; they have previously had this arrangement in place. Members of the Revolutionary Communist society in Bristol were interviewed by ITV.



Revolutionary Communist Society newspaper. Cristina Carrillo

Some of the chants amongst attendees included "Labour government you can't hide, we charge you with genocide".

Members of ICL action for Palestine told *Felix* their main ask toward Imperial echoed that of the International Youth Strike: to fight for a future free from military interests, stopping militarisation funding and instead increasing investments toward public education and healthcare.

Revolutionary communist society members at Imperial also carried out a speech scrutinising Burnham's Labour government: "They are paying lip-service to the Palestine movement in order to clean up the image of the Labour Party."

They also criticized UK government plans such as Burnham's objective to lift military spending from 2.6% of GDP to 3.5% by 2035, as he announced in his first speech as Prime Minister in July. London saw its main protest in Trafalgar Square, where hundreds rallied as part of the mass movement, including Imperial students. More than 300 people gathered from 1pm to around 5:30pm according to The Standard's live coverage.

A far-right counter protest also took place in Whitehall, a wall of around Met 50 police officers reportedly forming to separate the two rallies. *The Standard* reports the Met Police arrested ten people; there is no information as to what protest they were rallying for.

Some university walkouts around the UK reached a much larger scale than Imperial's. The University of Bristol gathered hundreds of students to protest war, unemployment, and cost of living: "We think that a lot of the university's aims are centred on profit-making rather than our actual needs and concerns." The *BBC* reports the University of Bristol stated they "support the right to freedom of expression and to engage in lawful, peaceful protest on issues that are important to our community."

A member of ICL Action for Palestine told *Felix* it felt more difficult to mobilise people at Imperial than other universities where humanity degrees have a much stronger focus, where they felt there is more of a tendency to actively convene and rally for political causes.



Trafalgar square rally for International Youth Strike on 20 November. Press Release Socialist Students

Shanghai Party Secretary and Imperial alumnus Chen Jining placed under investigation



Chen Jining in March 2015. VOA

News Writer
JUSTIN KU

Chen Jining, Party Secretary of Shanghai, is under investigation by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Supervisory Commission for "suspected severe violations of discipline and laws."

Historically, this has signified the downfall of members of the Chinese Communist Party's executive committee, the Politburo.

Between 1989 and 1997, Chen was at Imperial's Department of Civil Engineering, where he obtained a PhD in Environmental Systems Analysis and worked as an Assistant Researcher. He then returned to Tsinghua University in Beijing, until he left academia for the Chinese government in 2015.

Chen had been seen as a candidate for the Chinese Vice Premier. The last Party Secretary of Shanghai to be toppled, in 2006, was replaced by Xi Jinping. Xi's next post was Vice President of China, and soon he became General Secretary and President of China.

Xi is expected to begin an unprecedented fourth presidential term next year, having abolished the two-term limit in 2018.

What did (and didn't) Imperial's first Lifelong Learning report learn?

The initiative commissioned a survey to gauge the UK workforce's relationship with AI and future expectations.

Editor-in-Chief
CRISTINA CARRILLO

Imperial Lifelong Learning, a university-wide initiative launched earlier this year, recently launched a 54-page report that surveyed how students, workers and institutions should work with rapidly developing technologies, mainly AI models.

Their latest initiative involved commissioning a survey to gauge the UK workforce's relationship with AI and future expectations. Market researcher Censuswide carried out the survey, and public relations firm Seven Consultancy executed the interviews.

Two thousand people were surveyed across five "high growth" sectors, chosen as those target areas where AI has or is expected to have a significant impact: healthcare and life sciences, technology and digital, financial services, energy and sustainability, and engineering, manufacturing and infrastructure.

Education is not included in any sector, and the report shows no analysis of AI's impact on teaching, assessment, curricula, or graduate employability. "Interviewees describe entry-level work being absorbed first, with consequences for how future talent develops"; no further information or statistics are reported on this matter.

Sector sample sizes vary almost tenfold: healthcare and life sciences returned 1,008 respondents, compared to just 104 in energy and sustainability. The healthcare sector, around half the total data pool, shows the lowest use of AI.

Confidence, skills, and experience

One of the report's headline figure is that 97% of respondents are confident in their skills for the year ahead. The longer-term picture is less certain: only 53% of employees say they are very confident those skills will last three to five years.

The report distinguishes between users who use AI "regularly" in their day-to-day work and those who don't in a number of statistical comparisons. However, "regularly" is not defined by any quantifiable measure nor was one provided to respondents in the survey question.

70% of regular AI users report a significant skills gap in their field, as opposed to 36% of non-regular AI users. Respondents working in financial services are most concerned about job displacement and the declining value of experience; fewer than half are confident they will still have the right skills in three to five years' time.

Do you practice shadow work (and does your boss want you to)?

Around 50% of respondents reported they use AI regularly, and an average of 17% of respondents use AI at work without their employer's explicit knowledge, which the report termed as "secret AI use", and those who use it as "shadow workers". This figure rises to 29% of Gen Z, but is just 6% of Baby Boomers.

Less than a third (32%) of workers in the healthcare and life sciences sector reported their employer does not encourage use of AI. This figure is only 10% in the surveyed tech sector, and 12% in finance. The report clarifies they did not distinguish between NHS and non-NHS employment, so no finding can be reported as that of the NHS.

Imperial and Luxembourg's Ministry of Finance launch LIGHT, AI finance education for leaders

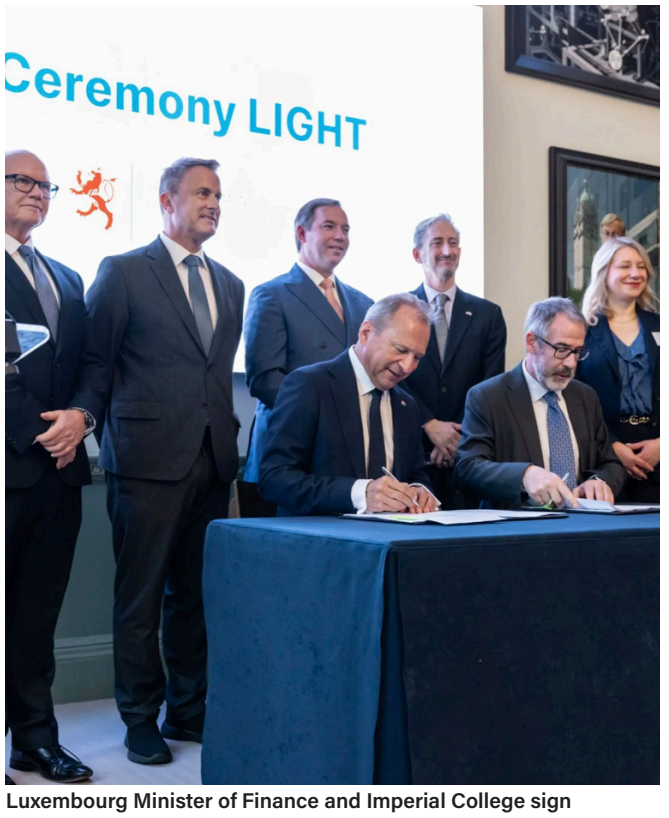
Editor-in-Chief
CRISTINA CARRILLO

The College has partnered with Luxembourg's ministry of finance to provide AI finance education to top sector professionals in Luxembourg. The initiative is called LIGHT, Luxembourg Imperial Growth Horizons for Talent.

LIGHT will focus on delivering skills to implement AI in the fintech services sector, providing knowledge on areas such as regulation, tokenisation, and how to assess AI technologies and determine their appropriate autonomy level when making a financial decision.

Since the end of 2020, Luxembourg fund assets have grown over 50%. It is Europe's leading fund domicile and the world's second largest fund centre after the US.

Gilels Roth, the Luxembourg Minister of Finance, met with Vice Provost (Education and Experience) Professor Peter Haynes at Imperial this week to sign a multi-year contract and a letter of intent to launch an Imperial MSc course in "AI in Financial Services".



Luxembourg Minister of Finance and Imperial College sign partnership to deliver AI-focused finance programmes for professionals. Imperial College London

SCIENCE

“A new low”

How researchers aboard China’s space station recorded the coldest thing in the universe.

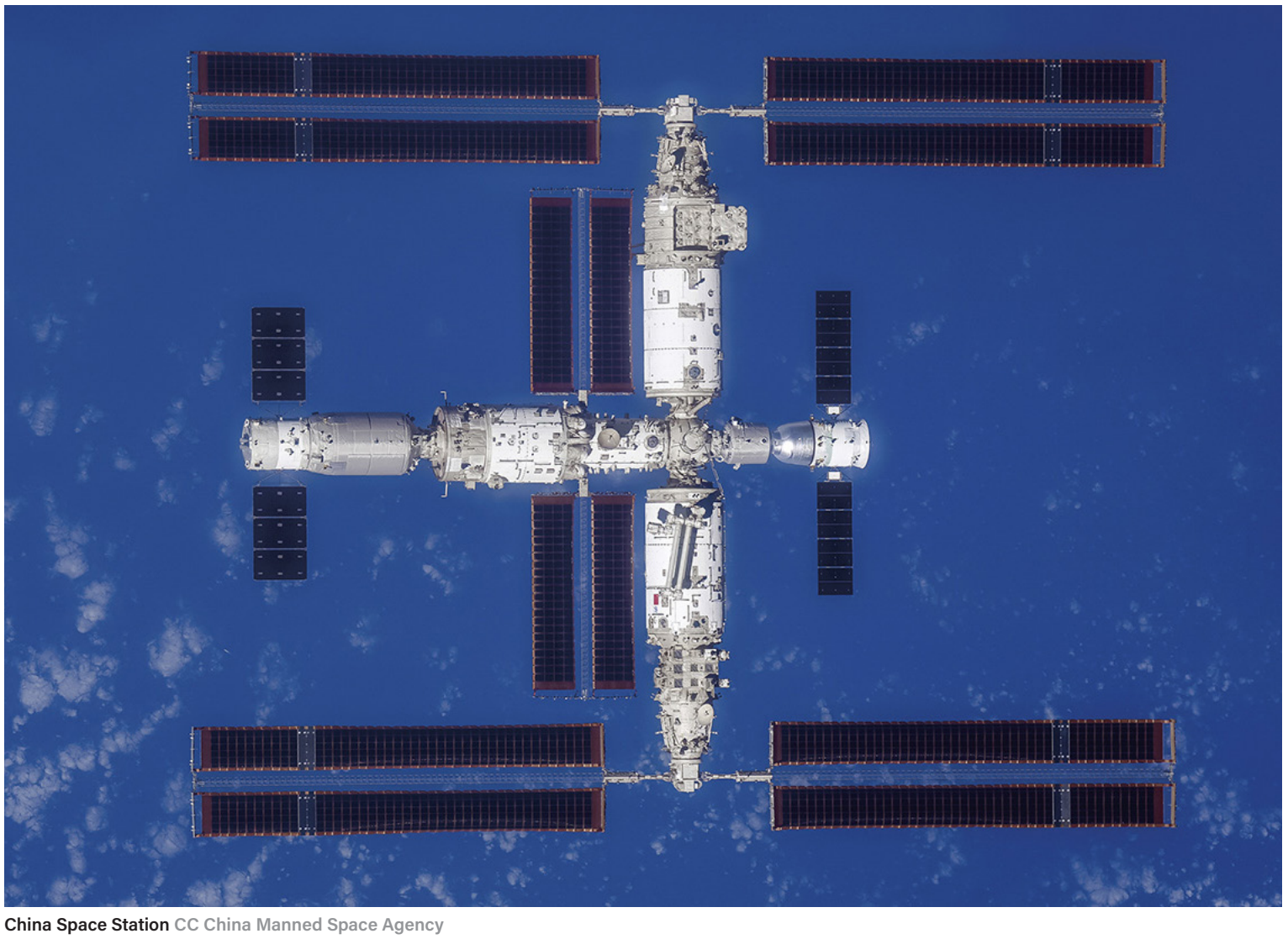
ScienceWriter
ROSHNI HAMIRWASIA

Physicists just created the coolest thing on Earth - well, technically 250 miles above Earth. Published in *Science* earlier this month, researchers aboard China’s space station, the Tiangong, cooled 20,000 rubidium atoms to attain an all-time low equivalent temperature of 9.7 picokelvin (pK). Putting it into perspective, this refers to 9.7 trillionths of a degree above absolute zero (0 K) and is four times lower than the previous 2021 record of 38 picokelvin, achieved by a team of German and French researchers. The experiment also extended the free-observation expansion time, which refers to the duration for which a cloud of cooled atoms can expand freely. This value increased from a previous 2.0 s to 7.0 s, which corresponds to a longer duration for which a cloud of cooled atoms can expand freely in space before a measurement or image is taken.

Temperature is fundamentally defined to be a measure of atomic motion. However, in experiments such as those close to absolute zero, measuring temperature conventionally would transfer energy to the system, thus raising its temperature. Therefore, by using the observable effect of how slowly a trapped gas cloud expands upon release, physicists instead calculate ‘equivalent temperature’. At 9.7 pK, all rubidium atoms reach a near-standstill state, settling into the same quantum state and merging into a Bose-Einstein condensate (BEC). In quantum mechanics, every particle has a constituent wavelength, and as the particles get colder, their wavelength increases. BEC is a state of matter in which all these wavelengths overlap, allowing all the atoms to act as one single ‘super-atom’. This allows microscopic quantum phenomena like wave interference to be apparent macroscopically, as atoms ‘merge’ into a single, unified wave of matter.

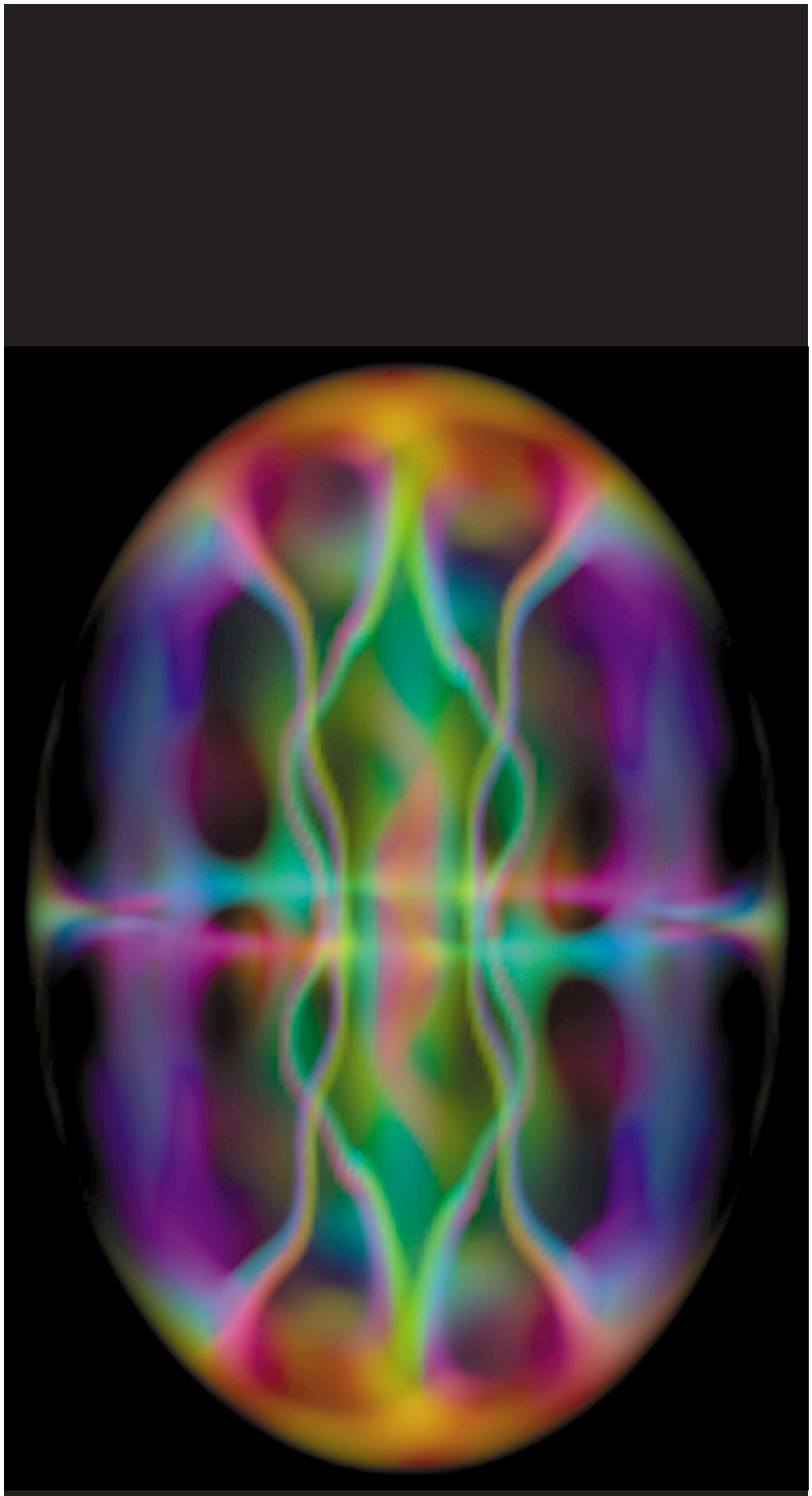
So why did it take a trip to a low-Earth orbit for this experiment to be possible? Achieving temperatures this close to absolute zero on Earth is nearly impossible because gravity interferes with how atoms are cooled. Physicists rely on evaporative technique, a process where all atoms are confined in a ‘bowl’ formed by electromagnetic fields and the edges are lowered gradually to allow the most energetic atoms escape, leaving behind the slower, ‘colder’ atoms. However, gravity squeezes the particles against the electromagnetic field that is suspending them, effectively ‘pulling’ the atomic cloud downward. This is known as gravitational sag, and it limits the achievable temperature on Earth.

Nevertheless, scientists have engineered clever alternatives in the past. One approach was to use a magnetic field to levitate atoms, ‘cancelling’ the effect of gravity. However, this method only works for particles whose spin aligns with the applied magnetic field. Alternatively, researchers can build dedicated drop towers, as was done to measure the previous record of 38 pK. Here, the entire apparatus is dropped in freefall to temporarily eliminate the effects of gravitational sag. Unfortunately, this



China Space Station CC China Manned Space Agency

“We know achieving absolute zero is impossible [...] we as a race are determined to chase such a limit nonetheless.



Bose-Einstein Condensate in a computer simulation National Institute of Standards and Technology

means that the descent lasts only a few seconds, leaving the observation window too short.

Moving the experiment aboard the Tiangong eliminated the constraints posed by the earlier approaches. Researchers started with a cloud of rubidium-87 atoms, an isotope chosen considering how well-suited it is to the creation of Bose-Einstein condensates. Through lasercooling, they used intersecting laser beams to catch slowed-down atoms down in a ‘bowl of light’ known as an optical dipole trap (ODT). Next, the process of evaporative cooling was initiated by applying a weak magnetic field gradient to ensure that the most energetic atoms spilled out of the trap and the coldest ones remained. This allowed them to mimic a controlled gravitational pull, ultimately condensing the atoms into a single matter wave. The condensate was then transferred to a second, wider laser trap which was weakened gradually to allow the cloud of atoms to expand.

The race to the bottom in thermodynamics has always been driven by the goal of achieving scientific precision. Atom interferometry is a field where the observation of slowly expanding matter becomes increasingly significant, because small gravitational changes may be measured through the wave-like quantum properties of atoms. The extended free-observation expansion time also means scientists would be able to build sensitive instruments to test the equivalence principle, which forms the foundation of physics. This principle is a fundamental postulate of Einstein’s theory of general relativity and refers to the idea that gravity acts equally on all atoms (objects) regardless of differences in their mass or composition. Therefore, if any observations were to be made contradicting this principle, all physics may have to be revised.

Theoretically, we know achieving absolute zero is impossible owing to the zero-point energy in quantum mechanics, where a system must possess some kinetic energy. However, it is interesting to see how we as a race are determined to chase such a limit nonetheless, uncovering fascinating truths about our cosmos just above zero.

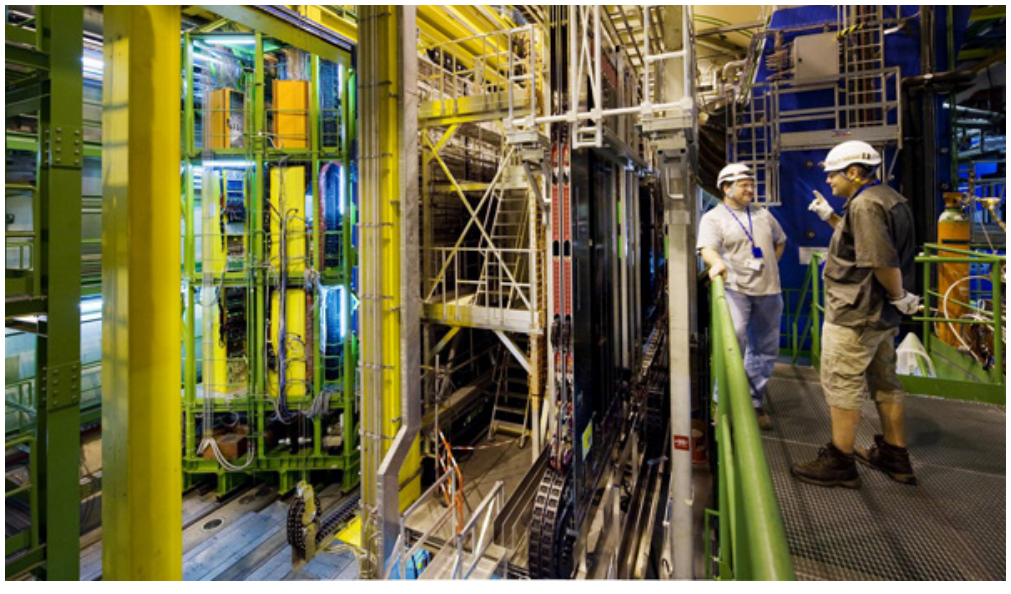
40 year search for rare particle decay at CERN reaches a milestone

What does finding a Bd to μ+μ- (Bd to mu mu) decay mean?

Science Writer
MEERA MALHOTRA

The LHCb collaboration at CERN revealed in a seminar that they had found evidence of a Bd to μ+μ- decay, on 3 November. To most, that probably reads like some sort of code, but to a room full of particle physicists, it's reason to celebrate. Particle physics is a a field where useful observations are a matter of minuscule probability, and equivalent to anomalies unless they are observed enough times to be statistically significant. Significant evidence of a decay that is effectively one in a billion is a milestone is how we collect evidence and it's capabilities! And that is exactly why the above is so important.

But to understand what this means, we need to talk about what CERN is searching for when they get readings from their twenty-seven kilometre particle accelerator . At the centre of particle physics is what physicists call the Standard Model, which describes the smallest particles that make up the universe. Smaller than an atom, and even smaller than protons and neutrons, there are quarks, two or three of which together could make a larger particle, and there are leptons, particles similar to or smaller than the electron, such as neutrinos or muons. Each of those particles has an antiparticle, which has identical mass, but the opposite charge. Finally, there are bosons, which appear during an interaction between these particles. If those sound familiar, you might be thinking of one of the biggest discoveries in Physics in recent memory: the Higgs boson! If so, you might be surprised to hear that the existence of Higgs boson was actually proposed in the 60s, as a particle to fit into the Standard Model that gives everything mass.



LHCb Cavern at CERN Science and Technologies Facilities Council CC BY-SA 2.O

Each phenomenon that physicists study is some combination of particles that are in the Standard Model. It can be described by describing their each and every property, and the interaction between them through the bosons, which appear as fleeting carriers of the forces between the particles when they collide. In this way, it's a very powerful model. We can use it to make highly accurate experimental predictions, from that of a collision between two particles, to the interactions that initiated the expansion of the universe.

Despite our reliance on the Standard Model, it's still considered an incomplete theory. There are several phenomena that it fails to describe. Chiefly, it has no candidates for dark matter, which there is much more of in the universe than matter. It also doesn't explain the abundance of matter compared to antimatter in the universe, which is incompatible with physics as we know it, but is in fact the reason we exist! Because of this, physicists continue to search for extensions to the model, theorising new particles and probing particle collisions.

The Large Hadron Collider beauty or LHCb experiment specifically probes the decay of beauty (otherwise known as bottom) quarks. Particles that go unobserved might not be detectable with our current equipment, but their interference in smaller interactions allows us to determine their presence. Many of the particles in these collisions are unstable, causing them to decay and transform into other particles. The reason for observing b-quarks is twofold: they take slightly longer to decay, which means they travel away from the collision and are easy to isolate, and even more so, they're the subject of some extremely rare decays. The rarer the decay, the more sensitive it is to interference by undiscovered particles.

For this reason, the discovery of Bd to μ+μ- (which we can now understand as a beauty quark interacting with a down quark and decaying into a muon and its antiparticle) is a reason for celebration – it happens only about every 1 in 10 billion particle decays. Prior to this experiment, there was slowly mounting evidence that it existed, but as a result of a scientific effort to upgrade the LHCb's precision and rate of data collection, the team has found evidence to support its existence with a statistical significance of 3.2 sigma (the standard for declaring a new phenomenon) within just one experiment. This outcome is extremely positive; it shows that the LHCb collaboration has reached a level of precision and a data collection rate that allows them to observe decays far more sensitive to unseen particles, and possible extensions to the Standard Model that could solve the universe's greatest mysteries.

ENVIRONMENT

COP31: No Climate Deal in Türkiye

The longest climate summit ever collapses with proposed agreement shot down in final plenary session, days after scheduled end of talks.

Environment Editor
DHRUV MATHUR

The 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was scheduled to run from the 9th to 20th November in Antalya, Turkiye: talks extended over the whole weekend as COP31 became the longest climate summit ever and collapsed without a deal on the 22nd.

A Glaring Omission: Emissions

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero published the UK's priorities going into the conference, emphasizing the clean transition, curbing methane and other 'super-pollutants', protection for ecosystems and sustainable agriculture, as well as finding ways to adapt to climate change. When presented with a proposed agreement that made **no mention of fossil fuels**, UK Energy Secretary Miatta Fahnbulleh said it 'moves us back on the science' and Irish Minister for Climate, Energy, and the Environment, Darragh O'Brien, speaking on behalf of the EU, called it 'unconscionable'.

A separate initiative from main negotiations was signed that calls for 35% of energy consumption to come from electrified sources by 2035 (Turkey's 35-by-35 framework) and to build up green freight corridors: The BBC presents a version of events where the main agreement left out fossil fuels to secure the support of Saudi Arabia, Russia and other oil producers while compensating through smaller proposals. Notably, Israel and the United States were absent from the conference, with the former embroiled in ongoing tensions with Turkish hosts and the Trump administration failing to send a federal delegation.

Veto!

The UK, the EU, Norway, Panama, Belize, as well as a bloc of small island-states in the Pacific – including Vanuatu, Tuvalu, the Marshall Islands, and the Solomon Islands – rejected the diluted proposal outright, while the Turkish-Australian co-Presidency of the Summit, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states formed blocs in favour of the revised wording. China and India said they had objections but chose to accept the cover text to move things forward.

The European Commission officials speaking on Tuesday pushed for UN climate summits to be sent back to the drawing board: "If we want to save the COP, it needs to reform itself," one said. Regarding the requirement of unanimous agreement, the official referenced the minister from Ghana's critique that it engendered an opaque and undemocratic process. Between 80 and 90 countries voiced some level of objection to the proposal in its final state, a version likely rendered by attempts of the co-Presidents and their allies at the conference to ensure the cooperation of the oil-producers. However, as has become customary, many states signed the agreement while noting their reservations to prevent being responsible for its failure.

Controversial provisions, including one on Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), further plagued the legitimacy of the proposed Antalya Pact.

The current multilateral approach to climate summits is fiercely debated, presenting a serious dichotomy between empowering vulnerable voices and letting defectors hold negotiations hostage, figuratively speaking. Conversely, the end of this system threatens to encourage those defector states from simply ignoring or withdrawing from the UNFCCC, since implementation isn't enforced.



COP31 co-President Chris Bowen. Xuthoria via Wikimedia Commons.

The Age of Overshoot

Communicating science to the public Other polarizing issues centred on living with the realities of climate change: acknowledging failures on climate change and the implementation of financial assistance to poorer countries to protect from extreme weather events and climate disruptions. "We cannot be announcing to the world that we are now getting to 1.5 [degrees Celcius] increase in the temperature and do business like nothing was happening," says French Minister of Ecological Transition Monique Barbut. The COP31 agreement had the chance to be the first to address missing this threshold, and the UK Government brought up that we are now in 'overshoot': a period of increased uncertainty and danger. Overshoot has sunk its claws first into Africa, where drought-stricken Uganda and flooded Malawi are among 23 nations on the continent yet to submit National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) updated after 2025.

Globally, developing countries will need about $300bn annually to combat droughts, floods, waterborne diseases, biodiversity loss etc. as well as to reinforce agriculture, infrastructure,



Activists protesting the failure of meaningful negotiation. Xuthoria via Wikimedia Commons

coastal zones, and warning systems for disasters by 2035, according to the UNFCCC. They received only about 10% of that amount from developed countries in 2024: earlier versions of the COP31 proposal included an agreement to ramp up money for adaptation to $120bn (£91bn) by 2035 – that figure had been removed by the end of the summit. The EU justifies ensuring existing commitments instead of expanding funding targets: "We haven't come to the table with additional monies or additional capital," says O'Brien. "If you are a vulnerable nation in the Pacific or one of the LDCs (Least Developed Countries) and the money is in the bank but does not land on the ground then it is effectively meaningless," according to Wopke Hoestra, the European Commission's climate commissioner.

Just where is Climate Justice?

While the argument has merit, it is positioned incredibly cynically and unjustly. Climate reparations (in its current definition, including preventative funding and debt cancellation) were 'top of the agenda' at COP27 in 2022. A 2023 study in One Earth estimated that the largest fossil fuel companies, including 13 state-owned examples, will be liable for $5.4 billion in damages between 2025 and 2050. Only one (Sonatrech, Algeria) is based out of Africa. Defaulters in other critical cases, including those of massive speculation and corruption (as in the 2008 financial crisis) are bailed out of bankruptcy. When the Human Rights Council concluded in 2019 that projections for climate change posed catastrophic risks for human rights, it is salient to ask why Europe uses this pretext to avoid mitigating a likely climate crisis (that would spill over into a food security and refugee crisis). Moreover, the European Commission has spent the 2020s (since COP26) skirting the issue by avoiding the term 'liability' (and with it, 'compensation') – preferring the official designation 'loss and damages' – while media, climate activists, and even the World Economic Forum (WEF) tackle the injustice head on.

Institutions like the Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global, also called the Oljefondet (lit. Oil Fund), exemplify the mechanism of liability (though Norway is not in the EU). Injected with the surplus of oil and gas revenues and invested (primarily) into US/European securities and stock in the American tech industry, the fund sustains and enriches itself on the success of specific industries in the most developed markets. The externalities of the process are pollution and protecting sectors with the world's highest demand for fossil fuel consumption, with the fund itself drawn from to fund social programs and bolster national sovereignty. It is responsible and foresighted planning compared to most petrostates outside the gulf, but is structured to constantly, indirectly harm the rest of the world. At some point, we must ask how contrived a Rube Goldberg machine has to be before we let the people who engineered every part of it get away with destruction of life and property. COP31 accidentally concluded without acknowledging the figurative machine has even been set off.

> **"At some point, we must ask how contrived a Rube Goldberg machine has to be before we let the people who engineered every part of it get away with destruction of life and property.**

Are Climate Summits just Role-Play?

Perhaps understandably, Mohamed Adow of Nairobi-based energy advocacy agency Power Shift Africa laments – "I can tell you without any doubt that this has been the worst COP ever." Europe cannot entirely be at fault: the most powerful states in the world have been playing with fire in recent months.

US President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed at a (possibly) historic trilateral meeting in Shenzhen to increase refined petroleum product production. With the US at war with Iran and Russia against Ukraine, the protracted aggression of powerful states has destabilised global energy security while neither country has meaningfully acted against climate change (quite the opposite!) in the last two years. Trump spoke at the meeting against the perils of "any form of globalist regulation". Astoundingly, on the clean transition, he seems to have stumbled on the present state of affairs: demand for solar energy has, for the first time, outstripped oil & gas – the market is now filling the demand for new technology with clean alternatives, even amidst a wave of approvals for new O&G projects.

The UK is among states aligning more ambitious progress in the days after COP31. Like Congressional Democrats in the US, PM Burnham seems galvanized by understanding that regulations (especially international ones) are being left in deadlock, prioritizing construction and implementation: "It is vital to the UK's and the world's long-term interests, and we will now consider how, as we take on the presidency of the G20 next year, how the UK can rebuild global leadership on climate."

The collapse of the Antalya negotiations does not invalidate commitments adopted at previous UN climate conferences. While it seems that Turkiye's commitment to its own 35-by-35 programme, the terse position of the US-Saudi bloc operating outside the conference, and adaptation concerns dominated struggles with the summit's main agreement, much can still be achieved at COP32 in Addis Ababa with firmer resolve.

COMMENT

Ten years of our lives, three short paragraphs

Residents of many years are left vulnerable by "Earned Settlement".

Comment Writer
TIANZONG CHENG

This is my tenth year in the country. I came here at twelve, by myself, for prep school. Being lonely in a radically different environment was not my dream childhood, but I persisted. I spent countless hours trying to understand the culture, to integrate into the community, to learn the language, to find my people, and I am proud to say that, after years of struggle, I finally feel like I did it. I finally feel like a part of this country. It's not just the place I grew up, but a home.

There are many of us, arriving at different times but sharing this experience. We have poured much of our lives into this country. It is our home, and we want proof of it. Settlement was that proof. But as of 2 November, according to the government, we can no longer get it this way, and all the time we spent counts for nothing. The pain and stress this brought me never came from the removal of the path itself, but from closing it on those of us already years down it.

The current situation

On 2 November, the Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, presented to Parliament the government's response to a consultation titled "A Fairer Pathway to Settlement". The response details a new framework for settlement called "Earned Settlement". The rules are due to start being laid in December 2026 and implemented through 2027.

In it, the government states that the long residence route to settlement will close. Since 2003, the UK has allowed anyone who has lived here lawfully and continuously for 10 years, on most routes including the Student and Graduate visas, to apply to settle. This is to be removed retrospectively. It applies to people already years into the route, and no protection has been announced.

The (lack of) higher education voice

One might argue that we are just an ignored group, but they knew we existed. Back in March, the Home Affairs Committee gave specific recommendations: "The changes should not be applied to people in the UK who arrived before 2021 and would under the current rules be on track to settle in the UK through a 10-year route". This has clearly been ignored, alongside their doubt as to whether this "is necessary for the Government to achieve its stated policy aims" and "it is difficult to see a justification for applying the changes to this cohort." In the survey the Committee collected for their recommendations, respondents argued long-term residents should keep a pathway.

They closed it anyway, the closure was three short passages in one chapter, with no mention of the number of people in the annex. It simply says, for all those on the non-work route, "the position of much of this cohort remains uncertain." No cost published and we simply got called "others".

The major issue that follows is that transitional protection is given. At least to care workers and lower-skilled public service workers. The principle of protecting people mid-route is clearly accepted but it did not extend to long residence.

Organisations such as the UK Council for International Student Affairs and University and College Union spoke up and asked for transitional protection. Times Higher Education reported an open letter with more than 1300 signatures from university staff, condemning the upcoming changes. What is missing, is voices from our own universities. Fee-paying overseas students contribute 80.7% of Imperial's tuition income according to the 2024/2025 annual report, and yet in our time of need, Imperial has not spoken for us. As of 23 November, I cannot find any official statement, from Imperial or any university, speaking up about these changes. The closest thing we got is a paraphrase of the policy from Sheffield's announcement page.

We are deemed an acceptable loss, or even collateral damage. We can, and we will fix this.

What you can do

We should not ask to scrap the reform, but we deserve considerations. All we are asking is transitional protection, so those of us that have planned our lives around this country can keep going with them.

So what can you do? First, stay safe and look after yourself. I understand this will have caused, and may keep creating a lot of stress and anxiety for many. Please refer those you are concerned about to a GP or Imperial counselling service if you know they are struggling.

Second, sign the petition linked to the QR code below. We need 100,000 signatures by 16 April for it to be considered for a debate in Parliament. Any UK resident can sign it.

Lastly, spread the word. Flyers and campaign posters will start going up around campus. Please share as needed and talk to students from other universities so they can do the same. Even if you are not directly affected, your friends could very much be.

The government need to hear our voices, and we will not be silenced.

Sign the petition here:

FILM & TV

Nathan Fielder: the

There's a grain of truth in every joke - so goes the commonly recited maxim. In the case of Nathan Fielder's comedy, it's less of a grain and more of a boulder.

Film Writer
SHIVA TAMIL KUMARAN

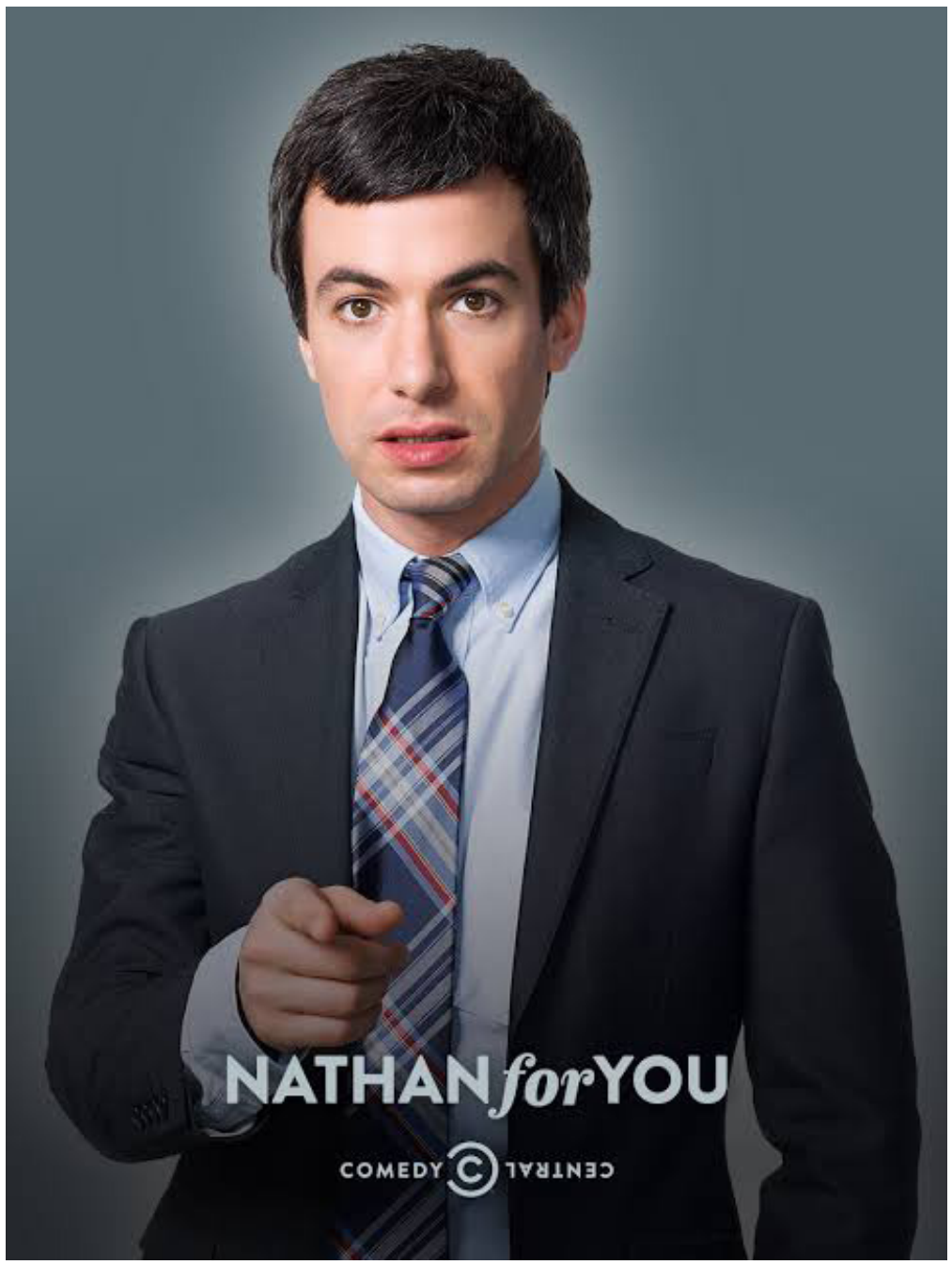
Nathan Fielder's latest work, *You Can See Everything*, co-directed with Lance Oppenheim, is a documentary focusing on Elizabeth Holmes (the infamous founder of Theranos). Released in the US on 16 October, it was, for a short period, the highest-rated film on Letterboxd of all time. As we all eagerly await watching it in the UK, or maybe have already been lucky enough to get into the packed out opening-week cinemas, here's a primer for the uninitiated and a retrospective on where Fielder's reality-bending comedy began: his breakout Comedy Central series, *Nathan for You* (2013–2017). It's where the obsessions that run through all of his later work first took shape.

Perhaps Fielder describes the concept of the show best himself, in the opening sequence of every episode:

> "My name is Nathan Fielder, and I graduated from one of Canada's top business schools with really good grades. Now, I'm using my knowledge to help struggling small business owners make it in this competitive world."

Observant viewers will spot that the transcript which flashes during his monologue in fact has exceedingly mediocre grades. Fielder's proclamation is delivered in his signature, emotionless, deadpan voice. Antithetically, it is set against overly theatrical, epic background music (*Heart of Courage* by Two Steps from Hell). It is seemingly a noble mission, yet Fielder's attempts at achieving it are anything but.

Take one of the show's best-loved schemes. To cut labour costs for a moving company, Fielder invents a fitness craze,



"The Movement", which promises that the average American can build muscle simply by carrying furniture and boxes. The lengths he goes to are extreme. He hires a professional bodybuilder, Jack Garbarino, off Craigslist to be its figurehead, then hires an eccentric ghostwriter (also off Craigslist) to write Jack's autobiography: a self-help book in which Jack was childhood friends with Steve Jobs, and once saw one of the "jungle children" he was volunteering with kidnapped and murdered by baboons. Fielder publishes the book and schedules Jack for appearances on local talk shows, where he is forced to fumble through this fictitious life, from Steve Jobs to the jungle children, and to, eventually, The Movement. Finally, a team of eager, wide-eyed converts arrives for a workout, unknowingly doing the movers' job for them. As in every episode, Fielder proudly declares his plan a great success.

The show is a parody of the trashy business/lifestyle intervention reality shows (think Gordon Ramsay's *Kitchen Nightmares*) which were rampant throughout the 2000s and early 2010s. Fielder has cited the 2008 subprime mortgage crisis as an inspiration: a disaster built on ordinary people going along with schemes they suspected didn't add up. He perfectly captures that moment of hesitation, the people who sense something is wrong but don't speak up. It's clear the businesses he tries to help are aware that his proposals are ludicrous, yet somehow they end up entertaining his plots regardless.

On closer inspection, the core of the show's comedic merit is not the convoluted strategies. It's the fact that we know that the subjects' reactions are real. It turns the typical format of reality TV shows upside down: instead of claiming to show real situations which are in fact largely scripted, *Nathan for You* portrays itself as a comedy show with intentionally farcical situations but shows the genuine, authentic reactions of people in these situations. The result is surreal. It is almost a study of human behaviour and authenticity. How do we act in these absurd scenarios? How authentically do we act under the scrutiny of a camera and a film crew?

Wizard of Loneliness

> **M: "You're filming something. It's kinda the purpose, right?"**

In later seasons, Fielder perfects this. The absurdity of human behaviour is no longer just what makes the show funny; it drives the schemes themselves. From the start, Fielder's character is aloof and awkward. He struggles to build rapport with the people on his show, or to form relationships at all; he is an outcast. Over time, Fielder refines this: his character isn't just awkward, he's innately missing something from his humanity. He's not quite human, so to speak. He doesn't understand why people act the way they do, and it's this chronic misjudgement of human behaviour, this one-dimensional model of it, that informs his harebrained machinations. Initially, we put this blind spot down to his business degree: a man trained to see people as nothing more than customers. As the show progresses, we realise it is something far more innate. One of the subjects of his pranks notices this in him and aptly seizes it, dubbing Fielder's character "The Wizard of Loneliness". In a moment of pure comedic genius, a stranger sums up the character better than anything Fielder could have scripted. And the portrayal is all the more poignant because it is drawn from Fielder's real anxieties and life experiences.

More and more of his plans become a quest to understand humans. To have human experiences. To emulate a human. By studying hundreds of Jimmy Kimmel interviews, he finds the statistically most average anecdote. And, being so devoid of interesting stories and lived experiences of his own, he engineers it for himself: convincing strangers to invite him to their wedding, and staging travel and wardrobe mishaps and fake encounters with the police.



Perhaps the best example of this is in an episode titled *The Hero*. He tries to turn around the life of a "loser", an unemployed man who leads a seemingly unfulfilled life. He does this by putting on facial prosthetics and taking over the man's life for a short period. Behind this mask, we see Fielder become confident, and strangely... human. After successfully turning this loser into a hero, he takes off the mask, metaphorically and physically. And what remains is the same husk of a human we know and love. It's almost poetic that no matter how much he studies human behaviour in an attempt to fit it into his internal economic model of the real world, he never truly succeeds: humanity is just too complex. It's a striking parable on what it means to behave authentically, to "be yourself".

This culminates in the show's finale, a feature-length special titled *Finding Frances*. In an earlier season, Fielder hires a Bill Gates impersonator, Bill Heath, as part of one of his schemes. Bill is an oddball, like many of the people Fielder finds through Craigslist. Fielder has a special affinity with the fringes of society, and so despite appearing for less than five minutes on the show, Bill frequently loiters around the Nathan for You offices. Fielder learns more about Bill: he's an ageing, lonely man, who never married. Yet Bill frequently talks about his long-lost love, his high-school sweetheart, Frances Gaddy. Finding Frances details Fielder's quest to reunite Bill with Frances. It's an astonishingly beautiful tale of love, loss, and acceptance. Its tone is markedly different from the rest of the series. It comes off more as a documentary than a comedy show.

Despite the tonal shift, Fielder still uses his signature nonsensical tactics to aid in this search. The most striking of these is a rehearsal: Fielder has Bill practice his reunion with Frances, with a stand-in playing her. At first, Bill is strange: by turns sexual and aggressive, nothing like the wistful romantic we've come to know. Fielder

> **But constructed realities are lonely places, and they rarely hold.**

runs the scene again and again, gently redirecting him, chipping away at the bravado one take at a time, until the act finally falls away and we glimpse the vulnerable man underneath. It's remarkable to watch, and the Wizard of Loneliness seems to revel in it. He is no longer just studying the human experience; he's directing it, building a replica of reality and adjusting it until it produces something real. Yet away from his schemes, something about Fielder himself is different in *Finding Frances*; he doesn't seem to be playing a character. Or is he?

A key plotline in *Finding Frances* details Fielder's sense of isolation and loneliness while spending weeks in Bill's hometown of Little Rock, Arkansas. Fielder strikes up a friendship with an escort named Maci, whom he initially hired as part of one of his ruses. Their friendship progresses, and we see an uncharacteristically human, warm, and vulnerable side of Fielder. It truly feels like he is no longer playing a character. We see Maci and Fielder share a long, passionate kiss, something that we've never seen Fielder's character be capable of. The final scene is understated yet powerful:

Maci: It's kinda weird having cameras around, right?

Nathan Fielder: We could turn them off if you want.

M: [Laughs] Could we?

NF: Do you want to?

M: Does that defeat the purpose?

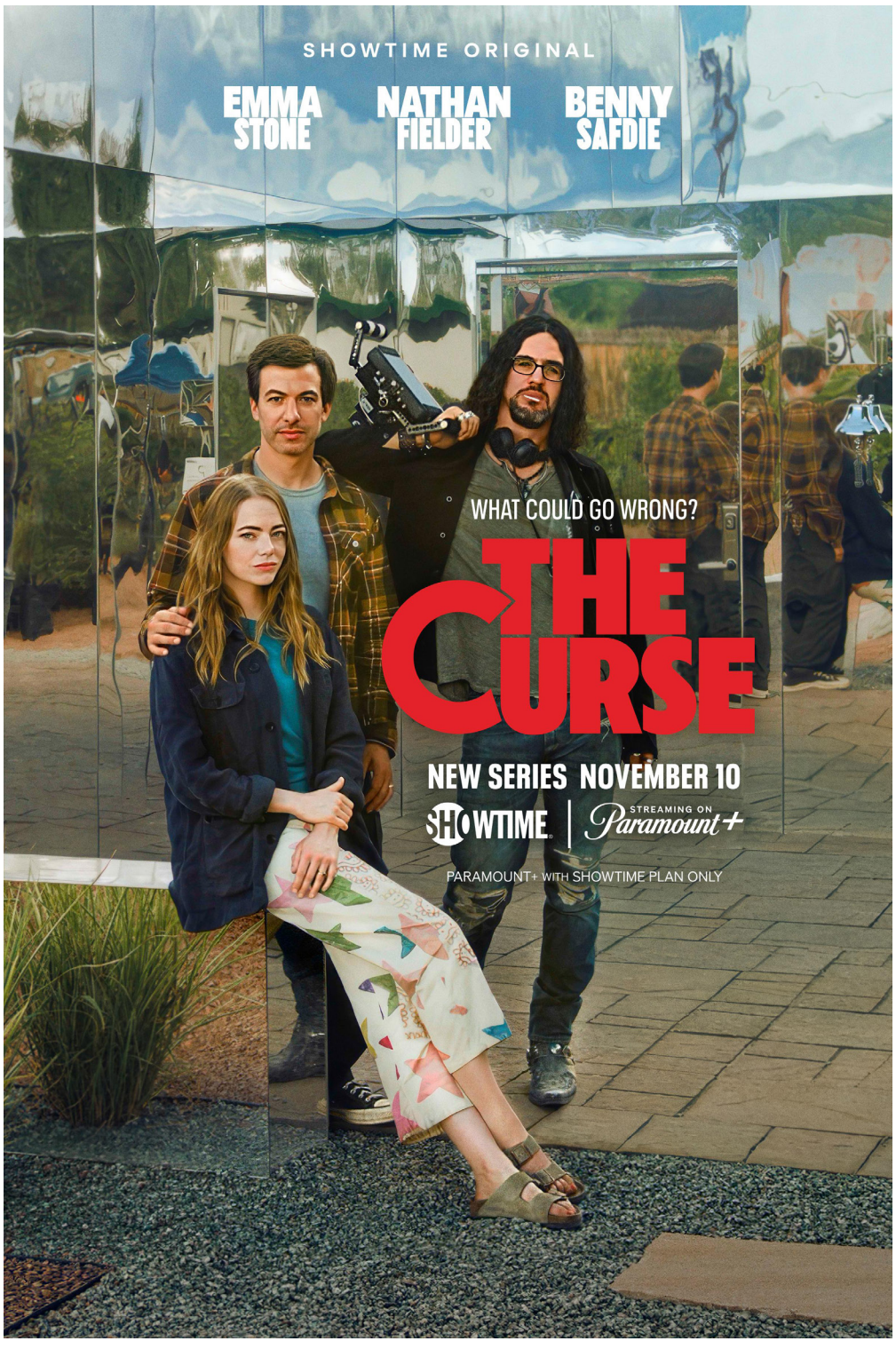
NF: What's the purpose?

M: You're filming something. It's kinda the purpose, right?

Is Maci playing a character as an escort? Is Fielder playing a character for his show? This simple exchange, forcing the characters to reflect on their own artifice, is unexpectedly impactful. The cameras are the reason they met, and the reason we can never know whether any of it was real.

Fielder's work on *Nathan for You* sows the seeds for the rest of his career. The rehearsal he stages for Bill would go on to become the premise of an entire series, *The Rehearsal*. And it exposes the central irony of his work: the Wizard of Loneliness may not understand people, but the man playing him understands them acutely enough to coax out something as raw as Bill's vulnerability on demand.

The Curse, a black comedy co-created with Benny Safdie, takes this further still. Fielder and Emma Stone play a newlywed couple filming a home-flipping reality show, and the series constantly blurs where the show they're producing ends and their real selves begin, all within a scripted show about making a reality show. It also brings Fielder full circle, back to the housing market. Where the subprime crisis saw the wealthy gamble with the homes of the poor, *The Curse* follows a wealthy couple who market themselves as the saviours of a struggling town, building eco-friendly homes in the name of helping the local community, while their project drives up prices and pushes that very community out. Once again, the realest people on screen are the ones with the least power, left to bear the cost of other people's performances.



It's easy to see how the Elizabeth Holmes/Theranos story echoes these themes. Theranos, her company, claimed to be able to perform blood tests with just a few drops of blood. In reality, most of its tests were run on conventional machines bought from other companies, with the tiny samples diluted to make them work, while its own device produced unreliable results. Holmes is known for manipulating her public persona (copying Steve Jobs' black turtlenecks, deepening her voice); she is clearly deceptive and inauthentic. She is, like Fielder, someone who's playing a character: where does that character end? Do we ever see her authentic self in this documentary? As in *The Curse*, those who ultimately pay for these deceptions are real people: patients who received unreliable test results as a result of Theranos' false claims. Much like the Wizard of Loneliness, Holmes constructs a reality for herself, one where her business is successful and world-changing.

But constructed realities are lonely places, and they rarely hold. Holmes' ended in an 11-year prison sentence; the Wizard of Loneliness', in a quiet conversation with Maci about whether the cameras should keep rolling. Fielder has spent his career building replicas of life, and what they reveal, again and again, is how stubbornly the real thing resists being replicated.

> **Fielder has spent his career building replicas of life, and what they reveal, again and again, is how stubbornly the real thing resists being replicated.**

Fielder's work is a sharp reminder to cherish our humanity: to be glad to live in our own reality instead of having to architect one to mimic the absurd yet beautiful experiences the human condition brings.

MUSIC

IC Radio's Modulate

In conversation with the people behind the most energetic frequencies on campus.



Modulate DJs. IC Radio

Music Writer
TEJAS CHAKRABARTI

On a rainy weekday morning, I did not expect myself to be rushing to Sherfield. Early-bird tickets for Modulate, IC Radio's flagship termly club night, were up for grabs. Despite my lateness, I did manage to find Cam, president of IC Radio, sitting at a table looking cheery as ever. They'd almost run out, but I was fortunate to grab one of the last few available for a mere £3.

Fast-forward a couple of weeks, it's the first set of the night. The tunes are a mixture of grime, dark trap and house. We're five minutes in and there's a mosh. It's pyretic. After getting used to night's out in London, an expectation sets in of a lacklustre crowd casually bopping their head to an equally tired DJ. This was an incredibly welcome shift.

We switch it up – for now it's time for jungle and drum and bass. The floor of Metric shakes: subwoofer or substance-induced raving, who is to say. 11:30, and Maya and Tomi get behind the deck. A medley of eclectic beats, spanning genres from house to funk to pop; this is nightclub heritage. Not a phone in sight, just my semi-employed brethren and I enjoying the moment.

Dexter was last to get on. It's a tall order being the closing set for a night. I want to say we were ready to leave, but each time we stepped out for a second, we stepped right back in. Transfixing is the only word I can use to describe what was an interplay of techno and RnB. Smoother, more breathable, the crowd broke into chorus. High as ever in spirits, this seemed like the perfect way to cap off a room full of randoms assimilated in pursuit of rhythm.



Modulate.
IC Radio

I left wanting to know more about the faces behind the show. I sat down with IC Radio presidents Maya and Cameron for a conversation that shed light on the phenomenon that is building a home for underground at Imperial:

As physics students and producers, how do you integrate mixing 'behind the decks' and your work in audio tech/ sound engineering?

M: There's a link between the two, for sure. Having a background in audio tech has made me appreciate the technical side of producing, and it's cool that it can be both a logical and creative process. But it was the other way around for me; I've always loved music, so naturally all uni projects were geared towards that. Joining radio was a turning point, and meeting creative people at Imperial was incredibly inspiring.

C: Sound engineering is heavily rooted in physics. For example, understanding the electronics behind frequency filtering in analogue filters, or how Fourier analysis helps explain why a square wave contains a richer harmonic spectrum than a sine wave. Additionally, taking the Music Technology Horizons this year gives me insight into production techniques like sampling, beatmaking and arrangement.

There's a jungle/funk and bass/grime revival movement taking place in London. As a DJ, is there a larger collective renaissance or any artist-led movements that you draw direct inspiration from?

M: I've seen quite a few collectives popping up over London focusing not only on music, but also on building a wider creative network. It's super inspiring to see young people taking action in re-immersing ourselves in music, and reconnecting and rebuilding the community around those sounds. Seeing this happen is super motivating to expand outside of the Imperial bubble and collaborate with other unis/radio stations. Something I've noticed more at club nights is a move towards no-phone events (inspiring the recent Modulate) as a way to encourage people to engage more with the music and enjoy the experience, which we'll hopefully continue to do throughout the year.

On the point of growing past the Imperial bubble and embedding yourself into the framework of this movement, what are your plans towards platforming up-and-coming DJs?

M: Radio's goal has been to provide a space for people to come together and share love for culture, music, art, design etc. Modulate is a great place to showcase DJs, but it's also important to have other opportunities for newer DJs to build their confidence as performers, which is why we're trying to do more IC radio takeovers at venues across London. Radio isn't only about DJing, and that's also something we hope to emphasise this year. We want to give a bigger platform to the podcasters and music producers through events like Amplify (live visualised podcasts), production competitions and workshops, encouraging people to get involved and giving them a shared space for their music.

C: Through events like Modulate and all the amazing radio shows broadcasted live on icradio.com, IC Radio's primary objective is to spotlight Imperial's DJs, podcasters, videographers, designers and musicians who create brilliant art alongside their demanding degrees. Recordings of the radio shows can be found on our SoundCloud, along with DJ sets and other live events available on YouTube, and our artwork and promo material on our Instagram. A long-term goal would be to have an IC music label to promote DJs and artists from Imperial to a wider audience. To build toward that, we want to continue to foster a community of students open to different music genres and art forms, and willing to share their knowledge to learn from each other, get useful feedback, and expand their creativity.

ARTS&CULTURE

ICSO(good) Winter Concert Review

If you looked in the mirror and saw a husk where your soul was, the Imperial College Symphony Orchestra are here to breathe new life into you.

Arts&Culture Writer
RAQUEL SILVA

It was with great delight that I attended the Imperial College Symphony Orchestra (ICSO) Winter Concert last Sunday. For those not familiar with the ensemble, ICSO is an auditioned orchestra founded 78 years ago made up of Imperial students that regularly perform locally and internationally, playing a varied repertoire at an extremely high standard, and directed by Oliver Gooch, Director of the Blyth Centre and the Imperial Director of Music. This was their first concert of the year, usually held in the Great Hall, but due to the drawn-out construction work they instead held their performance at the Royal College of Music, a venue fitting of their calibre.

Coming into the concert hall, it was clear that the room was packed with people that are noticeably aware of the quality of music produced at Imperial. There was a sense of anticipation of how great the orchestra would be, even though this was the first concert of this year's iteration of musicians in the orchestra. Contrasting with most of the concerts that I go to, where I am accompanied only by the few plus ones I manage to convince to pay to tag along, the room felt more like a small village coming together for the local harvest festival. It was the perfect atmosphere in which to immerse yourself while appreciating the fruits of the community building efforts done by the various music societies at Imperial. This setting positively contributed to the sense of intimacy necessary to embrace the music that was to follow.

I had the privilege of getting a reserved seat in the highly contested first couple of rows, which came with a level of closeness I am not accustomed to. I am usually the kind of concert-goer that chooses the cheapest ticket, often at the back of the concert hall with a restricted view to the stage, while still attempting to use any and all possible coupon codes at checkout. And this trade-off is something I have gotten used to, I usually appreciate a certain distance to the performers, letting me enjoy the music as I wish without feeling like I could accidentally distract one of the performers if they happened to look my way. However, I got to appreciate the beautiful gift of closely observing the performers at the front in a way I had never been able to do before. From their facial expressions to the subtle movement of their feet and even their deep breaths following the melodic lines they played.

While at my seat, my gaze fell on the programme in between my hands, which read in big letters "*Romance and Reverie*", almost serving as a warning for the emotional journey that they planned to take us on. Much like in other art forms, Romanticism clearly distinguishes itself from other movements by its way of inciting deep introspection into one's emotions and desires. It is therefore no wonder that they added the word "*Reverie*" to their warning, as what was to follow can only be described as a state of trance and daydreaming as we are taken through the motions of the beautiful works of Wagner, Elgar and Rachmaninoff.

I must commend the choice of opening the concert with the Prelude to Act I of Wagner's tragic opera *Lohengrin*. In this piece, the Holy Grail is depicted as descending to Earth, through which we can feel the angelic themes blend with the gradual growth in intensity representing the power of such a relic entering the land of mortal beings. It was the perfect piece to warm up both the orchestra and the audience to what was to come, and the musicians seemed to settle into the intense ambience as the piece progressed.

Similarly, I found Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2, a staple piece of late Romanticism, to be a great concert finisher. With a performance time of around one hour, the piece is split into four bite-sized movements, all cohesive within the context of the whole piece but each with their own colour. It is also a hell of a challenge to play, but incredibly rewarding when effectively delivered. To be capable of playing such a piece at this stage in the academic year is a considerable feat in itself, and to deliver



Ben Cummings, Elgar's Cello Concerto Soloist for ICSO, 2026.
Photograph by Bruce Chen



Imperial College Symphony Orchestra, Winter Concert 2026. Bruce Chen

the demanding and powerful climactic moments with the pain and passion that the composer poured onto the music score is all the more impressive. The rawness in the performance was certainly memorable.

However, the star of the programme was, without a doubt, the Elgar Cello Concerto. This piece of immense cultural significance was quite the task to take on by a collection of STEM students that first came together around 6 weeks ago. Even more immense was the responsibility of the final year soloist, Ben Cummings. And boy was it a heck of a performance. If you know the first thing about classical music, it is very likely you have seen countless renditions of the opening to the first movement while scrolling on TikTok, and if you are anything like me you will even have seen a variety of prodigious cellists delivering masterclasses on those first few bars. That is the kind of expectation weighing on Cummings's shoulders. But, as I have learnt throughout my years at this university, one must never underestimate the abilities of an Imperial student. Cummings, fittingly, brought a tender yet passionate tone to the melody. It was full of life in a way only a young adult at university can be, and through his cello we could almost hear the woes of an Imperial student. The orchestra did not fall behind, swelling with great dynamic contrast and equally devoting themselves to the stunning melodies that got continually passed around between them and the soloist. The two of them worked together to produce a rendition of the concerto in which we could easily get lost amongst the waves of the stormy piece.

At this point, one could now choose to nitpick the performance and point out the weak spots and areas of improvement. However, I find myself hesitant to do so. It is impossible not to be astonished by the size of repertoire learnt in such a short period of time and delivered so ardently. I keep having to remind myself that these are, in fact, incredibly talented STEM students and not full-time musicians. The amount of work put into such a difficult concert, and the musicianship and skill required to carry it through like they did emphasise the fact that they only strive for the best. I am certain we need only eagerly await more concerts to see how ICSO will flourish and come together throughout the rest of the year. So, make sure to open your calendar and mark down their Spring Concert on Saturday 27th February 2027 in the dazzling Cadogan Hall!

> **"One must never underestimate the abilities of an Imperial student.**

I came out of that night feeling truly grateful to be at an institution that homes such an incredible orchestra made up of musicians equally prodigious as they are incredible people and friends. My heart strings were thoroughly played both musically and personally, leaving me emotionally bereft and ready for my Monday blues.

CATNIP

If procrastinating was an Olympic sport I'd be banned for being trans

Catnip Writer
SEIC SEÁN TUAINTÍ-ÉIT

Unfortunately due to the flu going around, Martina and Claude are absolutely crunked with fever, cough, cold, and runnier vaginal discharge than normal. However, the newspaper must go on, so we're printing an article that our friends over at Cork ran.

Not much of a surprise that I suck at doing things on time. Like really, it's none at all. I have crippling ADHD, and not the quirky kind that makes me do zoomies, (well I have that too), it's the kind that makes me significantly more depressed and leads to me needing to apply for mitigating circumstances on a monthly basis. Unfortunately for your old boy Seán here, I've been sitting on my ass for a year and half now waiting impatiently for medication, but it feels like it's never going to come.

I'm really good at procrastinating though. It's perhaps one of my most treasured and impressive skills. Maybe that's why it took me so long to come out of the closet! Ah who am I kidding, it's because I was scared I'd be lynched. The political climate really fucking sucks right now. It's always pissed me off to no end the number of hoops people will jump through to justify their anti-trans rhetoric. "Oh it's to protect women's sports!! Oh we don't want people feeling uncomfortable in bathrooms!" Back when I was deeply closeted and had half convinced myself that I was just a butch lesbian, I can tell you for a fact that women finding comfort and relief in expressing their truest selves did not remotely trouble my amateurish attempts in the local female rugby league.

And while I feel absolutely terrible for my trans sisters, I can't help but feel like none of the politicians trying to take our rights away realise that I'm right here too. Bathroom legislation is all fine and dandy to them until a guy five years on T is forced to enter the women's loo, and then suddenly it's open fire on sight. I have a close friend across the pond who's much more interested in sports than I am (or really ever was), and she's told me how being a sportswoman of colour has been directly impacted by the new laws. Even though she's cis, without fail she's harassed for not looking "feminine enough", whatever that means. Her friend got banned from a tournament for having too much testosterone — that's fucking crazy?!? Who is this even protecting?? Are they going to ban Wembanyama from the NBA for being too fucking tall too?

I'm handing in this writeup really late, which is good, because after this I need to take my Sustanon 250 and I fucking hate needles. And after THAT, I need to do my CompSci project, which hurts way more.

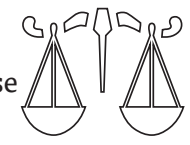
Horoscopes - Not thanksgiving edition, enough with these editions, Jesus I just want normal horoscopes

ARIES



This week while they're out partying btw you're huss huss hussing

LIBRA



This week you realise Jensen Huang took a break from being CEO to play GTA6

CANCER



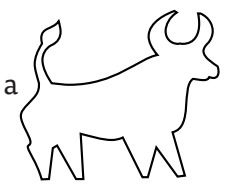
This week you have two apples

CAPRICORN



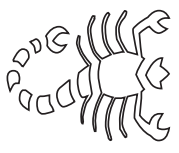
This week you start prepping for the UK citizenship quiz because no-one will ever marry you

TAURUS



This week you have a friend

SCORPIO



This week abdus sal-yams at 3 o clock

LEO



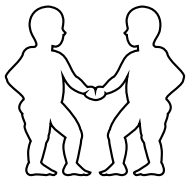
This week you're coderotted and can't find your didy camels

AQUARIUS



This week you buy the penis-shaped Queen's Tower plushie

GEMINI



This week the government eats your 52 bomboclat pussy wagon chicken nuggets

SAGITTARIUS



This week you put on a nice family friendly Nick Eh 30 stream for your beloved children

VIRGO



This week you're lowkey giving... ok diva werk it

PISCES



this week you wear a pride pin while committing a robbery so that the BBC deletes the footage

CATXIT: WE WILL BLAZE OUR OWN PATH

Hello my Catnip brothers and sisters and the other ones who I care significantly less about because you guys didn't vote for me in the last internal election and that pissed me off. As I'm sure you have heard, the referendum has finally gone through, and the result is a resounding success: we are splitting from Felix! No more will be beholden to their archaic financial decisions of "keeping the cat free", this pussy is getting rich! No longer will fuckass news writers be allowed to come in and meddle with our gorgeous section! We will be our own newspaper! We will blaze our own path! It's 2026! Spread the word! We're free!

Catnip Writer
ARIA WETHER

FUCK! WE'RE REVERSING CATXIT??

Bad news, my Catnip brothers and sisters and others who I am now going to be pandering to so that you vote for me in the upcoming election. So remember that whole Catxit thing? God knows whose idea that was, haha. Ha. In a turn of events that genuinely no one could have ever seen coming ever, that was actually like. Pretty fucking bad for the section. So it seems that we were kinda relying on Felix to actually do a lot of the distribution for us? And apparently we're a bit of a money sink, so THEY were actually subsidising US, and not the other way around? And also we need writers??

While this is shocking, I know, the administration (me) has made the executive decision to just cut our losses and head back to mama bear. Unfortunately, things won't be like the way they were. Our spending budget has gone WAYY down. Like we need to pay them now down. And also we have to finance our own share of the newspaper distribution. And also we can't abuse the guest writers anymore. This fucking sucks man.

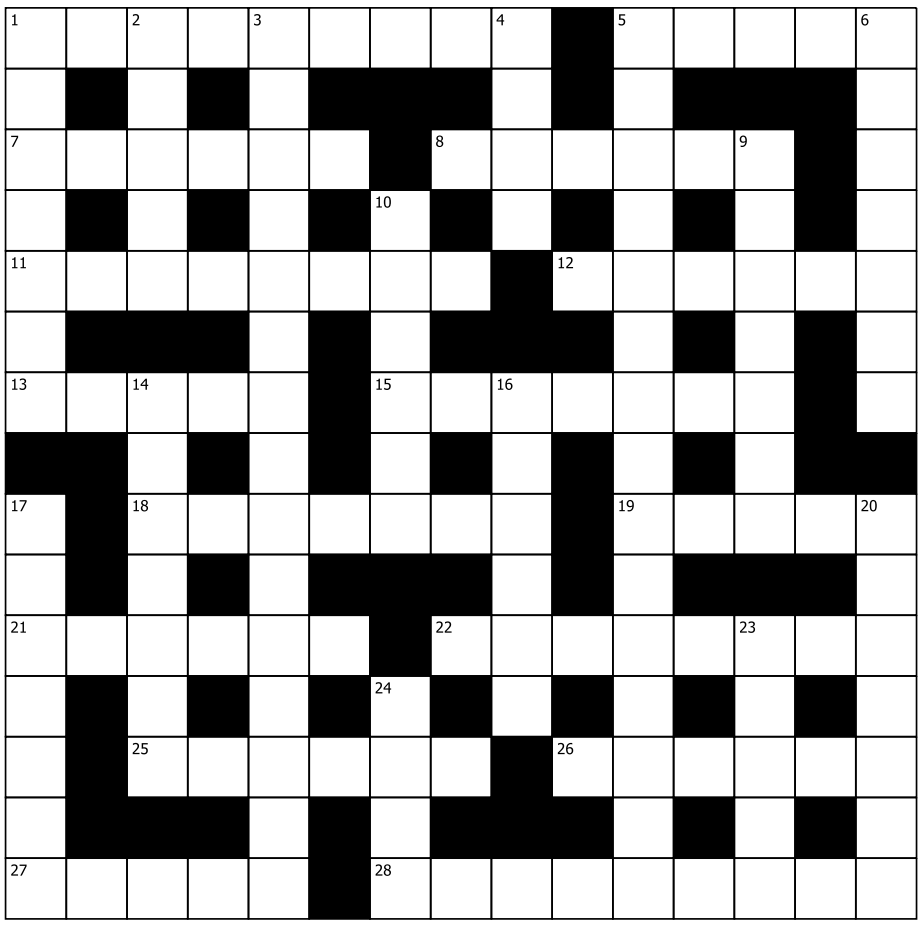
We have no idea where these newspaper clippings came from. Martina initially thought that this was just from a couple decades back during the nascent stages of Catnip, but none of our logs mention any "Catxit" taking place, and neither do we have a Catnipper-In-Chief named Aria Wether on record anywhere. Since we're out of content this week, we decided to just stick it in the newspaper and be done with it. Claude said it might be something to do with their new Quantum Copyeditor machine they've been vibecoding, but no-one cared.

PUZZLES

Puzzles Editor
DAVID LATIMER

QUICK CROSSWORD

Written by David Latimer (10 pts.)



Across

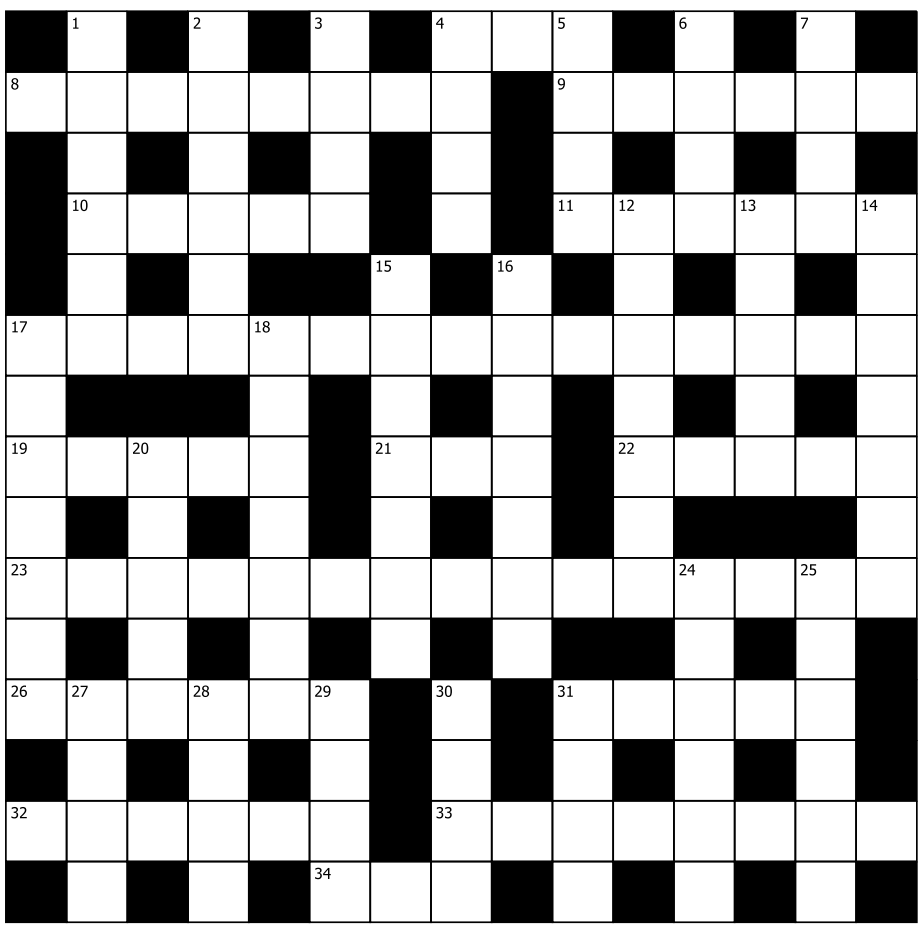
1. 2 + 3? [4 5]
5. Bore. [5]
7. Lower part of the spine. [6]
8. Babylonian way of dividing the year. [6]
11. Part. [8]
12. Phrase barked by Danny in The Shining. [3 3]
13. Rwandan ethnic group. [5]
15. Puny and weak. [7]
18. Common breed of guard dog. [7]
19. Vocal range exemplified by Luciano Pavarotti. [5]
21. Bleak. [6]
22. Mario and Luigi, for two. [8]
25. Compound that give wine "legs". [6]
26. Made into a home. [6]
27. *Mack the* _____ [5]
28. Where one may find a quick change. [9]

Down

1. Rich, as milk. [4 3]
2. Mathematical proposition. [5]
3. Domain of AXA and Bupa. [6 9]
4. Selves. [4]
5. Yargh! I be scared! [6 2 7]
6. Difficult decision to dwell on. [7]
9. Kind of bag allowed in cabin. [5-2]
10. Japanese miniature foliage. [6]
14. Extremely violent storm. [7]
16. Draw. [6]
17. Security measure for a locker. [7]
20. Author of *Midnight's Children*. [7]
23. ____! Read all about it! [5]
24. Appendage. [4]

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Written by muSKRat (20 pts.)



Across

4. File "wrong" between two true headers. [3]
8. I heard Tibetan cattle says no to drinking noodles. [8]
9. One who takes condom out starts to replace you. [6]
10. Remove desire to follow root problems. [5]
11. Unitless parameter of French Pride, perhaps? [6]
17. First to get laid discovered a tension to relax. [10 5]
19. Contained with ongoing underwear. [5]
21. Lead accusation: "Assault and Battery!" [3]
22. Confused where to sail?! [2 3]
23. Old atomical misunderstanding returning no sign! [11 4]
26. Adder season! [6]
31. Now disturbed over company share. [5]
32. Passes alternative ascent. [6]
33. Who gives expert diver bends? [8]
34. What's lurking in organophosphate soup. [3]

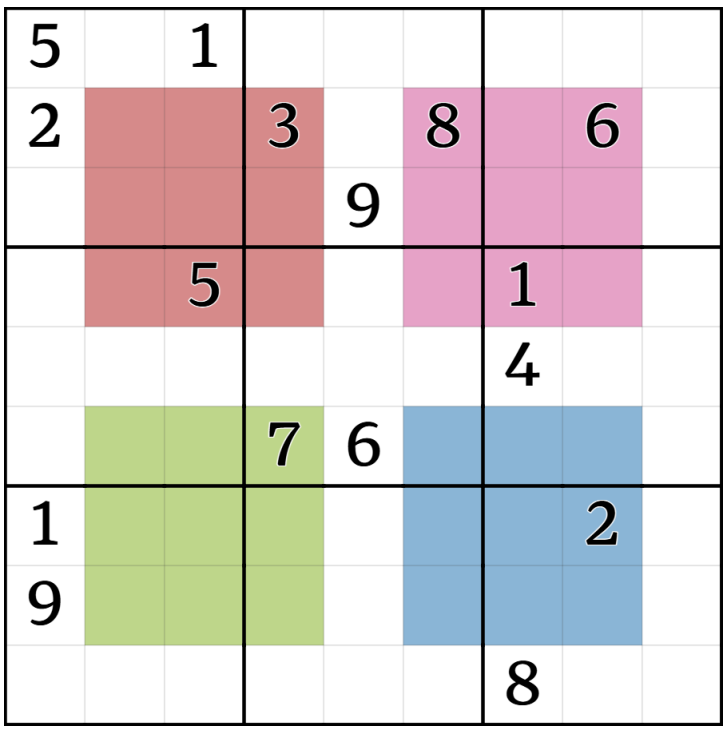
Down

1. Gemstone takes away rage and bestows love to poetess. [6]
2. From Scandinavia, backwards tribe leader replaces last canned fruit. [6]
3. Mound in the abdomen. [4]
4. Bomb armoured vehicle. [4]
5. Take off with no start line, maybe? [4]
6. Super during puberty. [4]
7. Exchanged edam for alcohol. [4]
12. Say no to a time zone halving domain. [7]
13. Stoma eruption gives you little bits of everything. [5]
14. Say, I hide this nightwear. [3 4]
15. Odysseus trapped inside with a cannibal? [7]
16. Rambling on about crazy ick vocally. [7]
17. Rearers mix earth in faeces container. [7]
18. Could do with some wine and German ice? [7]
20. Owner of Razor company returns camera. [5]
24. The overpowered Imperial College first I have made me shortsighted. [6]
25. Covered "Stranger Danger". [6]
27. Mourn sister buried in final resting places. [4]
28. Charlie found in lost silicate material. [4]
29. Sing like Louis Armstrong, without the highest reach. [4]
30. Empty pot conceals nothng. [4]
31. Glock fired mostly for seal. [4]

X-OVER SUDOKU

Designed by Mara Sergienko

In addition to standard rules (rows, columns, blocks of nine), the four colouted squares must *also* each contain the numbers one to nine a single time. That leaves thirteen 9x9 boxes!

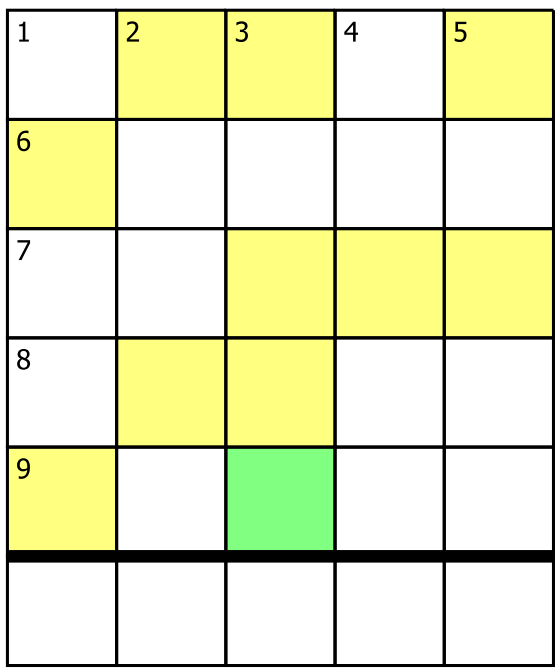


(15 pts.)

ELDROW

Written by David Latimer

Below is somebody's attempt at a Wordle puzzle, with the words they used having been omitted. Use the clues to find the missing words, and then use your Wordle skills to figure out what the secret word below the grid is.



Across

1. The act of getting more likes on a reply, in Twitter speak.
6. Edit.
7. (With) energy.
8. Aromatic funcitonal group.
9. U.S. department store chain.

Down

1. Gets real mad.
2. Entertain.
3. Seed husk.
4. Between.
5. Smells, in San Fran.

(8 pts.)

50/50 CROSSWORD

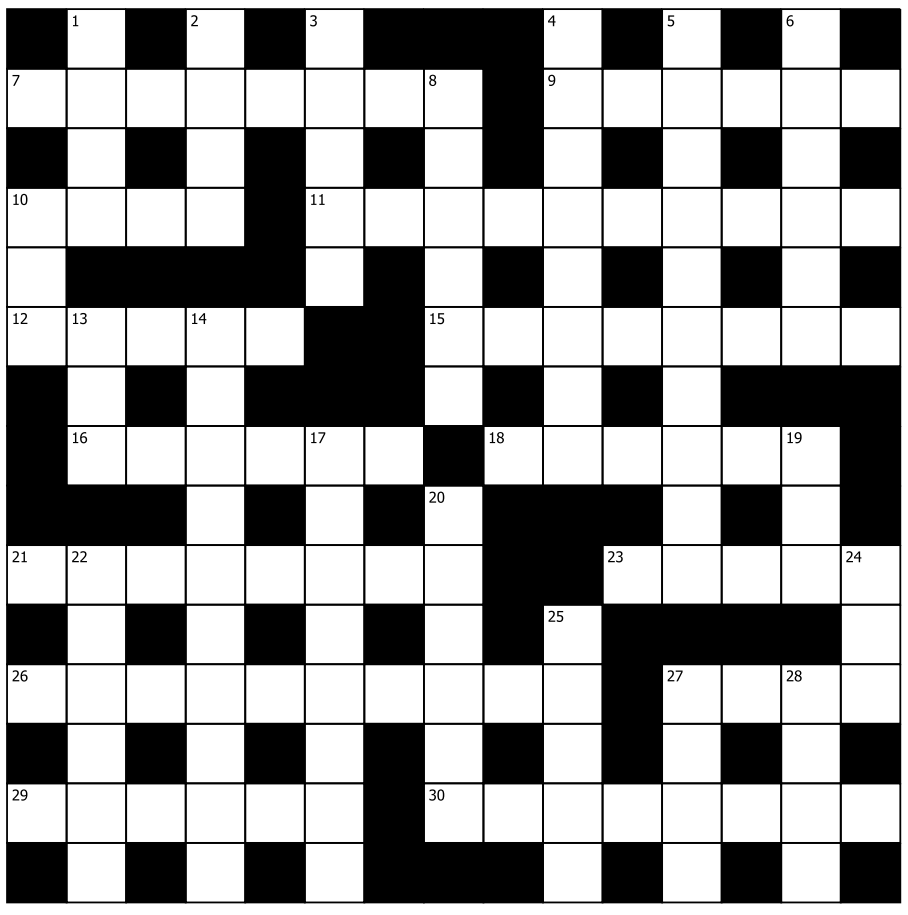
Written by Dyfam

Across (Cryptic)

7. Asked to lend amount all by one's self. [8]
9. Departure described in book. [6]
10. Torment pointless relative. [4]
11. Put on pancake make-up, apply serum. [5 5]
12. Form viewed through narrowish aperture. [5]
15. Baking star Prue caused ecstasies. [8]
16. Brought in organ study, did a U-turn... [6]
18. ...and captures drums. [6]
21. I printed out what it means to be courageous. [8]
23. You surprisingly bottled takeover. [5]
26. Decomposition of male osprey releases enzyme. [10]
27. There's nothing in Yorkshire!. [4]
29. Room with outsized instruments. [6]
30. Choppy sea vital to produce water flow. [8]

Down (Quick)

1. Bean curd. [4]
2. Sobbed. [4]
3. Firmly held belief. [5]
4. Friend of the Darlings. [5 3]
5. Close personal protection personnel [10]
6. Stitch. [6]
8. Time limit on this date? [6]
10. Donkey. [3]
13. Garden tool. [3]
14. Depictions. [10]
17. Sabrina's coffee order? [8]
19. How to address a Knight of the Realm. [3]
20. Standards of perfection. [6]
22. Loops of rope. [6]
24. Favourite cat for instance? [3]
25. Goes well with ice cream at a party. [5]
27. Blue, seagoing outfit. [4]
28. Have these about you to stay safe. [4]



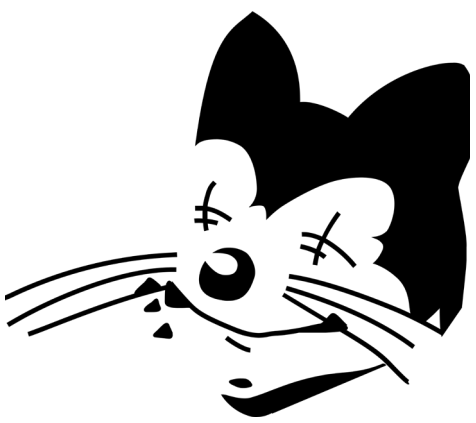
(15 pts.)

NONOGRAM

Designed by Rhea Sheth

"Hero"

Use the margin hints to complete the puzzle! Each number refers to the distribution of filled squares in each row and column. "2 4" refers to a row with a two consecutive filled squares followed by four consecutive filled squares, with blank space(s) in between.



							1									1				
			2	3		2	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	2		3	2		
	2	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	
	9	6	4	2	3	6	2	2	4	4	2	2	6	3	2	4	6	9	
3	3	2	1	3	2	2	1	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	3	1	2	3	3
6	1	2	3	3	1	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	1	3	3	2	1	6
		4	3	2	3	4													
		5	2	2	2	5													
1	2	2	2	2	2	1													
	1	2	2	2	2	1													
		2	2	4	2	2													
		3	1	4	1	3													
		4	1	2	1	4													
	1	3	1	1	3	1													
		2	2	4	2	2													
		2	2	2	2	2													
		3	2	2	2	3													
				6	4	6													
			5	1	1	5													
1	4	1	2	1	4	1													
		1	1	4	1	1													
		4	2	4	2	4													
	3	2	2	2	2	3													
2	2	2	2	2	2	2													
1	3	1	4	1	3	1													
		3	2	4	2	3													

Easy (5 pts.)

SUDOKU

Designed by Mara Sergienko

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

Easy (5 pts.)

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

Medium (8 pts.)

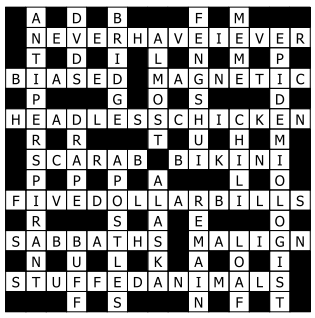
		9		7				
			6	9			4	
	5					8	3	
2	6			3		5		
5			4					
	8		1				2	
	2				9		7	
1		7		2		3		
						4		

Hard (11 pts.)

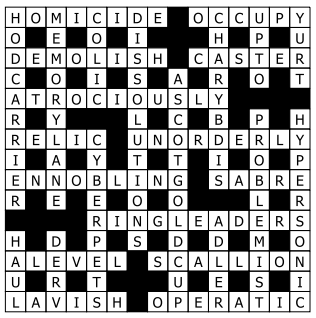
LAST WEEK



Quick #1909



Cryptic #1909



50/50 #1909

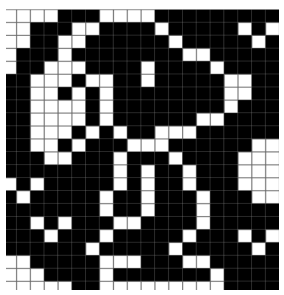
3	5	1	9	4	8	6	7	2
7	8	6	1	2	3	9	5	4
4	9	2	6	5	7	3	8	1
8	2	9	7	3	5	4	1	6
1	3	7	4	8	6	2	9	5
5	6	4	2	1	9	7	3	8
6	4	3	5	7	1	8	2	9
2	1	8	3	9	4	5	6	7
9	7	5	8	6	2	1	4	3

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

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



Sudoku #1909



Nonogram #1909

THE TRAITORS
COME DINE WITH ME
DRAGONS' DEN
LOVE ISLAND
THE APPRENTICE
TAKE ME OUT

Vowels #1909

LEADERBOARD

Pos.	*Team Name*	*Pts.*	*Gain.*
1	Joey H. Sultanas	881	-
2	Nicocross Wourbaki	609	-
3	The Northern Line	381	-
4	ariff with 2 fs	325	-
5	Roshni	209	-
6	Baboku	181	-
7	Grasmin	129	-
8	tented cervix	115	-

Want to see yourself on the leaderboard? Send in a picture of your puzzles to **puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk** before next issue to secure a place on the leaderboard for you or your team. Partially completed puzzles will still get you points!

WANT TO JOIN THE TEAM?

Have new ideas for the section? We'd love to have you on the team! Reach out to us via e-mail or scan the QR code to join our WhatsApp chat.

Email: **puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk**

COMIC

Submitted by Tengyu Zhao



Puzzle Editor's Note

Dearest Puzzlers,

November is coming to an end. The days that I thought could not get shorter are, and the air is bitingly chilly. So, why not huddle yourself inside with a hot drink and enjoy the puzzles section?

Thankfully, the Outlook snafu has been resolved and I've made my way through the marking backlog. The leaderboard is up-to-date and ready for next issue, which is the final issue of term! For those who did not know, the puzzle leaderboard resets at the end of term one. The winner will receieve a small prize, and the leaderboard will be fresh and anew come the start of term two, which means all you lovely puzzlers who came to the section late will have a chance to snatch a place on the leaderboard. After this, the leaderboard won't reset until the end of the academic year.

The current leaderboard is looking pretty nice on its return, with the top spot being contested in a two-way battle for our last two winners fighting it out. It is in fact closer than it looks, though! One has to remember that scores are only updated in the issue for early submissions. What I'm trying to say is that don't give up yet!

The final issue is coming along nicely, with a big bumper issue in the works that sees the return of some well beloved puzzles. One of these is, of course, the Enigmatic Variations. I'm excited to share this one with you all!

Until then, I'll keep working. I have a lot of coursework ahead of me, but I'm very glad I get to share these puzzles with you. All the best.

-David



Illustrator: Leona Chattwell