

ISSUE 53

20  
24  
December

# THE DEMON

Merry Christmas!  
from  
Demon Media  
x

Christmas Songs  
and Films  
and TV,  
OH MY!  
Tis the Season!

## WINTER FASHION

Best fashion pieces  
that work every year  
without fail!

## CHRISTMAS IN GREECE

All the traditions,  
desserts and customs  
of Christmas Overseas



Want some tunes?  
Come listen to DemonFM!



## WINTER WELLBEING

Top tips for staying safe as the  
darker nights draw in

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# Editors Message



Hello! Welcome to the first issue of the Demon Magazine for this year. I'm so excited for you all to get stuck into the brilliant articles that have been written.

The December issue is jam packed full of articles that are guaranteed to make you feel the Christmas spirit, if you aren't feeling it already!

Some of the articles include the best Christmas films to watch, ways to stay cosy in the cold weather and we have some exciting short stories for you.

Before you get stuck in, I want to thank everyone who has written, edited or designed for this issue. Without your help the magazine wouldn't be what it is! And an introduction to my amazing team of editors, I can't wait to carry on working with you throughout the academic year.

Here's to the Demon Magazine and I hope you all enjoy it as much as we have loved creating it! See you in the next edition!

**Jess Bourne**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

## Meet the Demon Editors



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# **Basic is Back: Winter Fashion That's Stylish, and Built to Last**

As we move into the colder months, the best thing you can do is pull yourself out of the fashion trends wormhole. They're ever-changing, often at alarming rates, and you shouldn't try to keep up!

Instead of mindlessly adding seasonal pieces to your wardrobe that won't last, why not focus on timeless, versatile staples? Pieces that elevate your style feel great and won't end up in a landfill once the weather warms up. Whether you're on a student budget or over the constant churn of "what's next," the solution is simple: a few carefully chosen, functional winter essentials can upgrade your look without breaking the bank.

## **The Problem with Chasing Trends (and how to avoid falling into the trap)**

We've all been there - scrolling through Instagram or TikTok and seeing influencers wearing the new "must-have" item. They'll often use phrases like "run, don't walk" to get the new item of clothing that you will likely only wear once.

We are thrust into a cycle of buying poorly made clothes, discarding them, and buying more.

This is what fast fashion relies upon—our need for what's new and trendy.

So, how do we break this? The solution is simple: focus on timeless essentials. Build a wardrobe of pieces you can wear yearly without stressing about the next trend.

No place does timeless winter fashion better than Scandinavian countries. They can be seen sporting the same pieces throughout many winters, still looking elegant and warm. They might initially seem like a uniform, but fast fashion trends make us all look the same anyway. Why not invest in pieces that will last for years instead?

This also saves you a lot of time in the morning, which you would otherwise spend trying to create an outfit inspired by last year's winter fashion trends. No more fashion brain freezes.

We're keeping things simple!

Now, let's discuss what you need to stay stylish this winter.

Here are the essentials that will stand the test of time:

## **1. A Cosy Wool Coat**

The wool coat is a classic for a reason. Sophisticated, versatile and warm, it's the piece that will elevate any outfit, whether you're heading to class or on a night out with friends. Wool is naturally insulating and breathable, making it perfect for cold weather. Stick with neutral shades like camel, grey, brown and black for a timeless look. You can even add a bright scarf or top to make the outfit more vibrant. Winter looks don't have to be neutral and monotonous all the time; feel free to explore and add some personality to your outfits!

Tip: Thrift stores and online second-hand shops like Vinted are great places to find high-quality wool coats at a fraction of the price. A second-hand gem could last you years.



## 2. Chunky knit jumpers

Chunky knits are soft, cosy, and endlessly adaptable. They're a must-have for chillier days and perfect for layering, whether under a coat or over a thermal. These comfy and stylish knits can instantly make any outfit feel more put-together.

Tip: For maximum versatility, choose neutral shades like cream, grey, or navy. If you're feeling bold, add a pop of colour with deep burgundy or green. Don't shy away from patterns either!

a unique and enduring wardrobe this winter.

## 3. Layering pieces: Thermals, Turtlenecks, and Cardigans

Winter layering with lightweight, breathable fabrics is the key to staying warm without feeling weighed down. Layers help regulate your body temperature, which is perfect for those days when it's freezing outside but warm indoors. Plus, layering means you don't have to wear a bulky coat!

Tip: Invest in high-quality thermals or turtlenecks for a solid base layer. Cardigans add a little extra warmth without committing to a bulky jacket.

## 4. Boots that last

Good boots are a winter no-brainer, but don't just grab any pair. Invest in something durable, weatherproof, and made to last. Spending more on a good shoe now can save a lot of money in the long run.

Tip: look for boots made from durable leather or quality synthetic fabrics. Neutral tones like black, brown or tan will go with anything. You can also add combat or ankle boots to add personality to your look.

## 5. A Versatile scarf

A scarf is the ultimate accessory. It adds warmth, texture, and flair to your outfit. It's practical, stylish, and adds that extra touch to elevate any look.

Tip: Go for wool or cashmere in neutral colours. But if you're already wearing a neutral coat, you have room to play around with patterns and colours for your scarf. Now that you've got your essentials down, let's talk about how to shop smarter.

### What have we learnt?

**Quality over quantity:** instead of bulk-buying cheap, trendy pieces that won't last, invest in fewer, high-quality items. Look for durable fabrics like wool, leather, and cotton that will withstand time.

**Shop second-hand:** Thrift stores, consignment shops, and pre-loved online shopping apps like Vinted are goldmines for affordable, high-quality pieces. Not only will you find unique items, but you'll also be contributing to a more sustainable fashion cycle.

**Avoid impulse buys:** Before purchasing, ask yourself, "Will I wear this next winter?" If it's just a passing trend, walk away. Save your money for pieces that will last.

**By choosing versatile and durable pieces,** you'll create a winter wardrobe that looks and feels great! Let's forget about trends and embrace



**Designed By:  
Evan Alexiou**



# Essential Albums for Winter

Winter's such a 50/50 time of year for many. It can be beautiful and joyous, and also very dark and saddening. And hopefully here, there'll be a record that fits your mood for this time of year.

## Pink Moon by Nick Drake (1972)

Genre(s): *Contemporary Folk, Singer-Songwriter*

It took decades after his death in 1974 for Nick Drake to finally have his work be acknowledged, which is a shame, because *Pink Moon*'s a minimalistic masterpiece, where Nick does a lot with a little. This record is gentle and cozy by nature, and beautiful. It may just be 28 minutes of a man and his guitar, but that's partially what makes it so magical. Perfect for those quiet nights in.

## Magdalene by FKA Twigs (2019)

Genre(s): *Art Pop, Glitch Pop*

This record got its name after Twigs felt inspired by St. Mary Magdalene, who's name was wrongfully dragged through the mud for centuries. Mary never got to speak her truth, but Twigs can, which is why among the cold isolated sound, *Magdalene* is cinematic and empowering, while staying raw and devastating at the same time. Twigs is a truly generational talent.

## Fleet Foxes by Fleet Foxes (2008)

Genre(s): *Chamber Folk, Indie Folk*

The modern folk legends' debut album sounds like it was specifically designed to be listened to by a fireplace, with a hot chocolate and blanket. It's heartwarming ear candy.

## White Tiger by zhollis (2022)

Genre(s): *Experimental Hip-Hop, Electroclash*

zhollis is the big underground success story of 2024, which felt inevitable, as he effortlessly fuses many different electronic sounds of the last 15 years into a new sound. This new sound he's created can be just as ambient and mysterious as it is loud and explosive. Winter can be weird, lonely and confusing for some, and this embodies that very well.

## Disintegration by The Cure (1989)

Genre(s): *Gothic Rock, Post-Punk*

Easily the most popular record on the list, 35 years later, *Disintegration* remains not only one of the most beloved albums of the '80s, but of all time. Robert Smith's melancholy is timeless and is backed with equally timeless ethereal ear candy. If you're dramatic and very emotional, you'll dig this album.



## Selected Ambient Works Volume II by Aphex Twin (1994)

Genre(s): *Ambient, Electronic, Drone*



Richard D. James' two-hour behemoth is stunning, containing long, looping & addictive tracks that leave you alone with your thoughts. It's feels as though it captures the whole spectrum of human emotion at times, with sounds that remain unfathomable 30 years later. Regardless of your state of mind, this records perfect for staring out at the cold landscape, which could be either beautiful or bland and lifeless.

## Kagayaki by Masakatsu Takagi (2014)

Genre(s): *Neoclassical, Field Recordings, Chamber Music*

This album feels like a fragment of life-esc dream that you don't want to wake up from. It's warming, and up-lifting. The field recordings sound as though Takagi was trying to reconnect with the beauty of nature in way, and it absolutely worked. Kagayaki is like a warm hug from an old friend who always knows how to cheer you up.

## Lil Peep Part One by Lil Peep (2015)

Genre(s): *Emo Rap, Cloud Rap*

The emo-rap legend's debut tape sounds like it was made by a teenager in his room who was absolutely done-in and exhausted, and that's because it was. It's gently sentimental and beautiful. It's evident Peep had a heart of gold and felt a lot – that's what makes him so beloved.

## Punisher by Phoebe Bridgers (2020)

Genre(s): *Singer-Songwriter, Indie Rock*

Songwriting comes off as Phoebe's sixth sense, and it's very down to earth which is what made her so well-liked and popular. Pair this with very gentle vocals and gorgeous indie production, and you're left with a truly lovely album that rewards several listens. Perfect for wondering the busy Christmas-rushed highstreets in the evening, acting as the perfect juxtaposition.

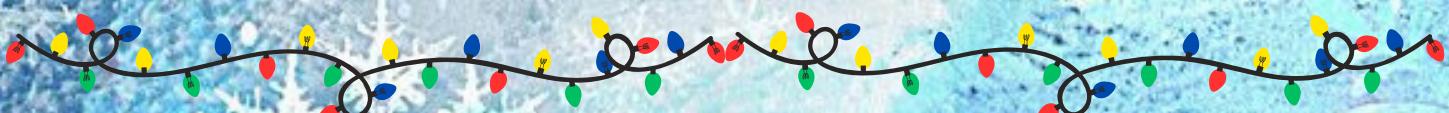
## Weatherglow by Asian Glow & Weatherday

Genre(s): *Noise Pop, Slacker Rock, Emo, Shoegaze*



The two discreet internet rock artists came together for six tracks of loud, distorted and stunning emo-shoegaze. These two sing their hearts out, and every word shouted and sang feels routed in nothing but absolute compassion, joy and sadness all at once. If you want to see the current state of left-field rock and feel overwhelmed with emotions, this EP is for you.

Written by Tom Cameron



# Ways To Stay Cosy This Winter

Written and designed by Molly Lee

It's officially wintertime which means it's getting colder. Who knows? Maybe we'll get snow this year. During the colder weather, it is so important to keep warm, cosy and comfortable. Here are different ways to stay cosy this winter.



## Warm drinks

Tea, coffee, hot chocolate- it's the perfect season to be drinking your favourite hot drinks. If you want to get really fancy, you can purchase some cheap flavoured syrups, squirty cream and marshmallows to make your hot chocolates deluxe.

## Hot water bottle

If you prefer a more traditional, old-school method, hot water bottles are still a go to way of keeping warm. You can also get some cool hot water bottle covers from Primark – such as, Disney characters, cute animals and more.



## Gloves, hats and scarves

Nothing is worse than having cold hands, ears or neck when you're walking to campus! Primark sell cheap matching sets to finish your winter look – looking good and staying warm!

## Blankets

Who doesn't love a nice cosy blanket to snuggle up to after a long day at university? If you don't want to put the heating on, blankets are a perfect solution. Sherpa, fleece, knitted, woollen...the types of cosy blankets are endless. You can pick up an affordable blanket from shops such as B&M, Home Bargains, Primark and more.



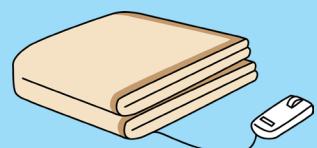
## Pyjamas and Snuddies

If you're anything like me, you have a massive collection of warm, soft, long-sleeved pyjamas that you get out as soon as the weather gets colder. Snuddies are probably one of the best latest clothing items! They're cosy, comfortable (and most of them have pockets – bonus!) – it feels like wearing an entire blanket. You can get them in a variety of different cool designs.



## Electric Heating Pad

Originally, I had one of these to help with cramps, but it is also very effective for keeping you warm without the need of a hot water bottle. They can come in different sizes and simply plug into an electric socket. Most of them come with various modes, heat intensities – and some even come with massaging options!





# Best Christmas Presents On A Budget

Written by  
Jess Bourne

Christmas is arguably the best time of the year. Christmas songs are playing, there's a festive feeling in the air and the shops are stocked to the brim with endless tubs of Celebrations. But despite the enjoyment that December brings, it can be daunting and a stressful time of year for people, especially for university students living on a budget. So, here are a few gift ideas that are cost effective but will still put a smile on your friends and families face when they open them on Christmas day.

## Gifts for Dads, Brothers, Uncles and Grandads

For some reason, I tend to struggle with finding gifts for the men in my life.

They always seem to have everything they want and when you ask the dreaded question: "What would you like for Christmas?", they give you the driest: "I don't know." But at least it makes two of you. But thankfully, I will be prepared this Christmas after doing endless scrolling and finding some perfect gifts for the men in your life.

### Slippers and Socks

No matter who I'm buying for, you best believe that every year without doubt, I will be gifting a set of socks to someone. You can never have too many, and the perfect pairing is slippers so they can keep warm in the winter. There are loads of budget friendly options on the market and it will no doubt satisfy them until next Christmas.

Other things that are guaranteed to make them happy is a cheese board (just leave out the smelly cheese, unless they like it), a jumper or even some alcohol.

### Aftershave

It's not just the women that want to smell good! Aftershave is a perfect gift for men, but as long as you reassure them that it's a thoughtful gift, instead of you secretly telling them they smell, it should be fine. Aftershave can get expensive, but shopping at the right places and at the right times, you will be able to find some great aftershaves.



## Gifts for Mums, Sisters, Aunties and Grandmas

I find shopping for the women in my life a little easier. I tend to know what they want more and what they would enjoy. Over the years, I've found some gifts that work a treat every year and won't be breaking the bank.

### Shower Sets

Everyone loves these, getting to try out new bath products always brightens up Christmas morning. They're a good, low-cost gift to the women in your life and they're dotted around in so many shops at this time of year.

Whether it's earrings, necklaces, bracelets or rings, they are always appreciated when given as a gift. If you're open to spending a little more money on the gift, it could have a special touch for the person it's being bought for, but regardless, they make great presents, or even a stocking filler, and there are many cost-effective shops to buy from.

Other things that could be considered for gifts are candles, skincare or makeup and framed photos.

Above all else, just make sure that you're buying gifts that they will enjoy and be thankful for receiving and don't just buy because you have to – even though retail therapy is self-care. Gifts aren't the most important thing during the Christmas season. It's all about spending time with your loved ones and eating your body weight in chocolates and biscuits.



# A Nordic Winter Wonderland

Written by Harry Pape

Designed by Amina Ali



As I settle back into the rhythm of university life in Leicester, I can't help but reflect on the unforgettable year I spent studying at Stockholm University. My time there gave me an invaluable opportunity to experience not just the academic culture of Sweden but also the magic of a Scandinavian Christmas. Now that I'm back in the UK, the festive season feels like the perfect time to share some of those memories.

If you've ever heard tales of Sweden's long, dark winters, let me confirm: they are entirely true. By mid-December, Stockholm only gets about six hours of daylight, and even that feels muted under heavy, snow-laden skies. At first, the darkness felt oppressive, a stark contrast to the more temperate winters back in Leicester. But slowly, I learned to embrace the Swedish way of life: turning to light, warmth, and tradition as a remedy for the doom and gloom.

The city comes alive in winter, its streets glowing with countless strings of fairy lights and warm lanterns. Every window in Stockholm seems to display an advent star or a candelabra, creating a collective glow that feels like a warm hug against the cold. This simple yet striking tradition captured my heart - it felt like the city had conspired to combat the long nights with shared beauty and optimism.

While Leicester winters often mean damp pavements and drizzle, Stockholm's are the stuff of fairytales. Thick snow blankets the city, softening the harsh edges of the modern buildings and turning its mediaeval old town, Gamla Stan, into something out of a storybook. The Baltic Sea freezes, allowing the locals to grab their skates and skis to participate in some seasonal fun.

Wandering the cobbled streets of Gamla Stan during Christmas felt surreal. I was constantly distracted by the sight of snowflakes twirling in the air and the sound of my boots crunching through fresh snow. The Christmas markets are among the oldest in Europe, and they are a feast for the senses. Imagine the smell of mulled wine (or glögg, as the Swedes call it) mingling with the scent of freshly baked gingerbread cookies. Stalls overflow with handmade crafts, woollen scarves, and carved wooden toys. I spent hours browsing for gifts and letting the festive atmosphere wash over me.

Now that I'm back in Leicester, Christmas feels a little different. I miss the crisp chill of Stockholm's winter air, the soft crunch of snow underfoot, and the comforting glow of festive lights in every window. While our Midlands winter has its own charm, there's nothing quite like a Stockholm Christmas - a city that transforms the darkest season into something magical.

I've found myself sharing stories of Sweden's snowy streets and festive traditions with friends who are curious about what it's like to experience Christmas there. The Swedes' ability to create warmth and cosiness even during the darkest, coldest days has left a lasting impression on me.

If you ever get the chance to visit Stockholm during the holidays, take it. The snow-covered streets, glowing lights, and festive cheer create a warmth that stays with you long after you leave. For me, those memories remain a reminder of how light and tradition can brighten even the coldest, darkest days.

# CHRISTMAS IN GREECE

**Written by Evan Alexiou  
Designed by Amina Ali**

**A**s the resident Greek person of the Demon Media society, I get asked a lot how Christmas and, to some extent, New Years is in my country. I usually answer with a few sentences as it is an in-person conversation. This time, however, I decided to go more in depth and write it down in an article. So here is how Christmas and New Years are in the sunny mediterranean country or Hellas.

## O CHRISTMAS SHIP

Yes, you did read that right. In Greece the tradition for many centuries was to decorate a ship. Because Saint Nick is the protector of the seas, the sailors and ships people chose to honour him by decorating ship replicas. The replica could be as big as anyone would want and yes, the traditional decorations like string lights etc would be placed around the sails. This is still alive today. A lot of public places in Greece like towns, villages and city halls still decorate large ships. Of course, this is still alive with lots of hipsters who want to make a difference. That includes me. I've done it multiple times in the past and I will keep on doing it to honour my roots.



## SUGAR AND HONEY

Let's talk food. Like every proud mediterranean country we take food seriously. Christmas is the holiday of desserts. More specifically Sugar and Honey. Both those ingredients take centre stage in all three holiday themed desserts: Kourampiedes, Melomakarona and Diples. Kourampiedes is biscuits doused in coarse sugar. Melomakarona are soft honey syrup dipped biscuits. Diples are like our version of crunchy flapjacks. It is customary to give them in gatherings and whenever

someone visits your house over the holidays. Yes, we don't only overfeed our family but also anyone who visits us over December.

## KINGS AND COINS

Vasilopita is the King's Cake. Although the direct translation will mean "Bill's Pie", that makes no sense in English! This is a New Year's Tradition. After the clock hits midnight and the fireworks stop lighting up the sky, it is time for some cake. So, this cake is cut into multiple pieces. The first few are for Jesus and other saints of the holidays. After that each family or friend member get a piece of that cake. In this cake there is a coin. Whoever gets the coin in their piece will have good luck and usually wins a prize. If it falls in any of the saints' slices, I believe people do give to charity. It's a fun tradition and yours truly won the coin last year!

## KIDS CAROLS

Carol singing in Greece is something kids do mainly. It happens on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. When kids come carolling, they use the triangle as the main music instrument. There are two different carols, one for each date - although people sometimes come up with their own. This works like trick or treating. With kids going from house to house knocking on doors and asking to sing. Once they are done with singing, it is customary to give them money and sweet treats. For a kid, Carols is not only the joyest of times but it's also an allowance for that present they want to buy!



Christmas and New Year's in Greece are quite special. These are but a few of the traditions taking place during the holidays in the land of the sun. People usually think of Greece when it comes to summertime travel. As they should! But when it comes to winter holidays the country is not that bad. I would argue that it is quite the underrated destination!

# Top 10 Christmas Films To Rewatch This Holiday Season (and some honourable mentions)

Written by Harry Pape

Designed by Jess Bourne

**A**s the holiday season rolls around, there's nothing quite like cosying up with a blanket, a mug of hot chocolate, and a stack of classic Christmas movies. The best Christmas films transport us to a world filled with laughter, love, and a bit of magic - perfect for both family gatherings and quiet nights in. Here's a look at ten essential holiday movies, plus a few honourable mentions, to make this Christmas movie marathon the best one yet. In no particular order...



## **Home Alone (1990)**

There's no Christmas movie lineup complete without *Home Alone*, the quintessential family comedy that has become a holiday staple. Kevin McCallister is mistakenly left behind when his family heads off on vacation, leaving him to fend off bumbling burglars with a series of clever (and hilarious) traps. With a perfect blend of humour and heart, *Home Alone* highlights the spirit of family and resilience. Whether it's the slapstick hijinks or Kevin's endearing journey from mischievous kid to resourceful hero, it's impossible not to feel a little warmer after watching this classic.



## **Elf (2003)**

Will Ferrell's Buddy the Elf is the Christmas character we never knew we needed. Raised by elves at the North Pole, Buddy grows up believing he's one of Santa's helpers, only to discover he's human and needs to find his real family in New York. *Elf* brings together quirky humour, heartfelt moments, and an infectious spirit of joy that make it ideal for any holiday viewing. Buddy's unabashed love for Christmas and childlike innocence can make even the most cynical among us feel the holiday cheer.



## **Love Actually (2003)**

For a bit of holiday romance, *Love Actually* is hard to beat. This British rom-com interweaves the stories of multiple characters - from a newly elected Prime Minister and his staffer to a couple navigating unrequited love - all set against a backdrop of holiday lights and love. With an incredible ensemble cast and plenty of moments to make you laugh, cry, and believe in love again, *Love Actually* is an essential feel-good holiday movie. While it has moments of sadness and longing, its enduring message is one of love, forgiveness, and hope, making it perfect for the season.



## **The Polar Express (2004)**

Adapted from the beloved children's book, *The Polar Express* is a visually stunning animated journey that captures the magic of Christmas Eve. The story follows a young boy who boards a mysterious train bound for the North Pole, along the way discovering the spirit of Christmas and the importance of belief. With Tom Hanks voicing multiple characters, this film dives deep into the themes of wonder, faith, and discovery. *The Polar Express* brings out the inner child in everyone, reminding us that there's magic in the holiday season if we only believe.



## **A Christmas Story (1983)**

This is the ultimate nostalgic trip for anyone who's dreamed of receiving that one special gift. Young Ralphie wants nothing more than a Red Ryder BB gun for Christmas, and his attempts to convince everyone (from his parents to Santa) that it's a good idea provide endless laughs. *A Christmas Story* brings together quirky family dynamics, exaggerated childhood memories, and timeless humour to create a warm, relatable look at the joys and woes of the holiday season. Ralphie's journey captures the spirit of Christmas past, making it a heartwarming must-watch.



## **Last Christmas (2019)**

If you're in the mood for a modern holiday romance, *Last Christmas* offers a blend of laughs, love, and a touch of the unexpected. Kate is a disillusioned young woman working as an elf in a London Christmas shop, where

she meets the charming and mysterious Tom. Inspired by the music of George Michael, this rom com offers a refreshing mix of humour, romance, and a twist that makes it one of the more thought-provoking Christmas films of recent years. With its catchy soundtrack and a heartfelt message, *Last Christmas* explores forgiveness, second chances, and the joy of helping others.



### It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

No holiday movie marathon is complete without *It's a Wonderful Life*, the timeless classic that reminds us of the true meaning of the season. Jimmy Stewart stars as George Bailey, a man struggling with despair who, with the help of his guardian angel, learns how deeply he has impacted the lives of those around him. Frank Capra's film is a masterclass in storytelling, filled with hope, redemption, and gratitude. Its enduring popularity is a testament to its powerful message that no life is insignificant, especially at Christmas.



### Die Hard (1988)

Is *Die Hard* a Christmas movie? For many, the answer is a resounding yes. This unconventional holiday pick follows NYPD officer John McClane as he battles terrorists who've taken over a holiday party on Christmas Eve. Packed with high-stakes action, a bit of holiday irony, and memorable one-liners, *Die Hard* has become a cult favourite for those who prefer a bit of edge in their Christmas fare. It's a thrilling break from traditional holiday movies while still capturing the theme of heroism and reunion - with plenty of action-packed Christmas spirit. Yippee ki yay!



### The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993)

Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas* is perfect for those who want a little Halloween mixed in with their Christmas. Jack Skellington, the Pumpkin King of HalloweenTown, stumbles upon ChristmasTown and decides to bring the holiday cheer back to his spooky world. Filled with Burton's signature gothic charm and Danny Elfman's hauntingly beautiful score, this stop-motion film explores the magic of Christmas through a darker lens. Its unique style and unforgettable characters make it a great pick for those who enjoy a whimsical twist on traditional holiday stories.



### Bad Santa (2003)

For those looking for a darker, irreverent comedy, *Bad Santa* is the perfect antidote to the usual holiday fare. Billy Bob Thornton plays Willie, a cynical con man posing as a department store Santa to rob stores on Christmas Eve. Filled with crude humour, sharp dialogue, and an unexpected dose of heart, *Bad Santa* is best enjoyed by those who appreciate an unconventional take on holiday themes. The film's humour may not be for everyone, but its underlying story of redemption makes it a fitting, if unconventional, Christmas watch.



### Honourable Mentions

*The Muppets Christmas Carol (1992)* - A delightful adaptation of Charles Dickens classic tale, this family-friendly film features the beloved Muppets, with Michael Caine as Ebenezer Scrooge.

*The Holiday (2006)* - This charming rom-com about two women swapping homes for the holidays explores love, heartbreak, and starting fresh, all wrapped in cosy holiday scenery.

*The Bishop's Wife (1947)* - A lesser-known classic about an angel who comes to Earth to help a troubled bishop and his wife, offering a lovely message of faith and humility.

*How the Grinch Stole Christmas (2000)* - Jim Carrey's unforgettable performance as the Grinch, combined with Dr. Seuss' enchanting story makes this a Christmas must-watch for fans of whimsy and redemption.

That's it! These films capture everything we love about Christmas: joy, family, laughter, and a touch of magic. Whether you're gathering with family or watching solo, these holiday classics - and a few unconventional picks - offer the perfect escape into the warmth of the season. Merry Christmas everyone!

# VIDEO GAMES to play during the

Written by  
Evan  
Alexiou



Designed by  
Bronze  
Sparks

Ah the holidays! It's the most wonderful time of the year to enjoy a hot drink and some quality entertainment. It's the best time to enjoy movies, tv shows, music and plays. One of the most overlooked entertainment mediums is video games, which is odd if you ask me. Video games are a bigger industry in terms of success and earning than all other mediums. Unfortunately, there are not many Christmas/Holiday themed video games. However, there is a plethora of winter holidays adjacent games. Here are my picks for all the gamers out there that want something that hits differently when the snow is falling.



My absolute favourite classic to play over the winter period has to be the Xbox 360 acclaimed RPG adventure Fable II. First and foremost, you don't need to have played the previous Fable game to understand what is happening here. This is a standalone adventure with some references that do not hurt the storytelling. This is a classic hero's journey story. You play the "Little Sparrow". You are an orphan that lives on the streets of a medieval town with your little sister. After a fatal encounter with the game's villain, you awake in your own heroic power that always resided inside you. You now will travel the land and unite with other heroes to fight evil and save the land. In the meantime like other Fable games, you will get to fall in love, marry, have kids, get a job, buy a house and land. It's a classic in all the right ways and a glowing recommendation from me.





Speaking of games, you don't need to play previous instalments to understand - Batman Arkham Origins is the prequel of the Arkham universe, so you will be starting from the beginning. Hence the origins name. Everything is better with Batman. Including the holidays. The game takes place in Gotham during Christmas eve. The atmosphere of the game's open world is immaculate. This is coupled with the always incredible feeling combat of the Arkham games. Sending goons to the hospital with life threatening injuries never felt more festive. The story is incredible as well. The main villain is black mask with a cameo from Deathstroke. There are also plenty of twists that I am not going to spoil. This is a strong recommendation to all the fans of the caped crusader.



This one is purely about the atmosphere and vibes. Once again you don't have to have played the previous game. This is its own story. It's about a Sicilian American war veteran caught in between the mafia rivalries and wars that plague the game's fictional city of Empire Bay. The game is set between 1945 and 1951. Everything from the city to the clothes, cars, weapons and outfits is very vintage. A major portion of the game is set in the snowy time in the city. Driving around listening to the old timey music is so nostalgic. This game brings the old timey whimsy, and the story delivers on the feels as well. It also had a remastered / enhanced edition that released in 2020 for all consoles and PC which makes it very accessible as well.





This is purely childhood nostalgia. Bully is the most underrated game Rockstar Games have ever made. Unlike Red Dead Redemption and GTA, this game does not get the recognition it deserves. Is it a holiday game? Not really. But it has a Holiday themed mission and open world. It is a really good one and it involves buying presents. And the story is very heartfelt. The game's story is not about bullying trust me. It's a cheesy American high school story. But sometimes that's what you need - a reminder of simpler times.



Live service games are very popular right now. If you want to feel festive, your favourite ongoing competitive, casual multiplayer games have got you covered. Either with appropriately themed cosmetics, weapons, battle passes and even maps. If you are into 3rd person shooters, Fortnite has got you covered. If you prefer 1st person shooters, like me, I suggest Call of Duty. Their Christmas remake of the infamous map Shipment was amazing last year. Sports enthusiast? EA FC has special cards around the festive time of year and NBA 2K has them too. Sims literally has a full-blown expansion named 'Seasons' that includes the option to make your own holiday with your customs and traditions. No matter what you are playing: Rocket League, Among us, Halo, or anything other. Multiplayer live service games are always a great shout.





What about something coming out this Holiday season? December 6th sees Machine Games and Bethesda's new Indiana Jones game releasing. This unique 1st person perspective takes on the titular hero will be the big game release of December 2024. This game looks incredible with puzzles, sneaking, fighting bad guys, using your whip to full effect and confronting and fighting cartoony over the top bad guys. This game seems to have it all. It will also be on Xbox Game Pass, so you do not have to buy the full price game if you so wish. Not holiday themed but a great way to spend the holidays.



There aren't as many games as there are movies or music or books to when it comes to the holidays. However, that doesn't mean that nothing exists for gamers. Or that the video games that do exist are not of high quality. All the games in the list above are quality and will help get anyone in the festive mood. Of course, it goes without saying that all of the above games would make fantastic Christmas gifts for the gamers in your life. Let's help spread some cheer and play some amazing video games. Game on!



# Winter Wellbeing

*Written by Louise Kiernan and Designed by Jess Bourne*

I don't know about you, but I cannot believe we are back in winter again! Did we even have a summer? This time of year has a lot going on, and not all of it is full of Christmas cheer. Prices have gone up, wages haven't, student loans run out pretty fast - yet we still need to eat, get presents, go out with friends, see family, meet deadlines, get trains home and all the rest. There's so much pressure! Unfortunately, I can't fix any of that. But I can tell you that it is so important to look after yourself and prioritise your needs. Self-care and taking time out for you is a necessity- do not let anyone tell you otherwise.

The way I see it is if you can take time out, even just for half an hour, you revitalise yourself, regain some energy and can give more back to your situation.

If you are struggling with any wellbeing needs, contact your student services or check out the Money and Pensions Service website. Especially the page titled 'What is financial wellbeing'?

If you are looking for something to do over the holiday period, don't forget that there are loads of Leicester charities who would benefit from your time. Check out VAL online for opportunities. Helping others and giving back is great for your own wellbeing.

There's also a cool website called JAAQ (Just Ask A Question). Check it out, there's millions of questions related to mental health and way more!

## Keeping safe...

With the darks nights starting earlier, here are some top tips on staying safe:

Stick together: Whether you're going to a friend's house or heading home, try to avoid walking by yourself.

Know your route: Decide the route you're going to take before you set off.

Plan ahead and arrange to get home and also stay in touch with family and friends and keep your location updated.

Be alert: Be aware of your surroundings and keep your valuables close by you.

Keep your distance - remember, someone in front might feel threatened by you if you walk too close.

Keep your friends in line and keep any unwanted comments to yourselves.

Be an active bystander. If you see an issue, don't just stand by and watch. Intervene if it's safe. If things go too far, call 999.

Wear high visibility clothing, apply reflective stickers to backpacks and coats.

Shout for help! If someone suspicious approaches you, shout help as loud as possible and keep repeating it.

Ensure to immediately give up any valuables if someone tries to mug you. Valuables can be replaced, but you can't.

## Some simple ideas to improve your wellbeing

Look out of the window and see what's there - nature is fabulous!

Move away from your desk and walk around - moving works wonders!

Arrange to meet a friend - talking is good for you!

Whatever may bring you joy - do that!





Creative  
Writing for  
the December Issue

We hope  
you enjoy!

## Romeo and Juliet

Romeo stared at Juliet, eyes twinkling with love as his ears wiggled in worry. There was no way his family would ever accept her, after all, she was an immigrant in their eyes. He knew that their culture was strange, and their appearance was stranger, but the new and unknown was drawing him closer to her. The longer he spent with her, the more he fell in love. It was getting harder to defend her people to his family and harder still to get out to see her without being caught, everyone in the village knew everyone and it was obvious to them when he was hanging out with the immigrants due to their appearance and he did not need his family finding out about his relationship with her. He was hiding in the basement of her house, but little did he know that suspicion was growing back home.

"I bet he's just hanging out with his friends." His ever-hopeful younger sister commented. His bed was found empty last night, and he hadn't been back since and it was well into the next evening. He had been known to go out for a while, but never for this long before and never without permission.

"I think he's up to no good. The community has really suffered since those filthy immigrants came here!" His mum hissed in frustration and disgust. Everything had been perfect before they moved into the community, most of them hadn't bothered to learn their language and they spent most of their time stealing and being a menace to their society. She knew that she was supposed to refer to them as refugees, but she didn't understand why she should, they ruined their place and now they were coming to destroy her family's home.

"What if he's spending time with them! Think about it, he's never snuck out before!" She continued, shuddering in disgust.

"You can't think like that, Mary!" said Joseph, Romeo's father.

The door opened as Romeo walked in and everyone turned to stare at him, but he was in a world of his own, grinning to himself. As he walked into the living room, his smile dropped as he noticed his family staring.

"Why is everyone staring at me?" he asked curiously. They all turned around, pretending that they hadn't been staring at him, looking around the room, finding the furniture and decorations strangely interesting. He shrugged it off, he was too old to be dealing with this kind of behaviour, especially from his family who was too old to be acting like this in the first place. He went to his room and went to sleep, hearing hushed whispers from the living room.

The next day everything had returned to normal, until Romeo was about to leave. "Where are you going Romeo?" His mother asked, suddenly appearing, popping her head around the corner from the front door.

"Out," he responded, confused and irritated by the sudden shift in behaviour from his family. He left and slammed the door behind him. "Maria!" His mother yelled, summoning his little sister from the living room. "Follow Romeo for me please my darling, he is changing, and I want to know that he is being safe but obviously he isn't in the mood for talking." His sister turned around and grabbed her keys before walking out of their house. She followed him from a distance, making sure that he couldn't see her. He continued walking around in circles for a while, occasionally checking whether he was being followed.

He ended up going to the shabbier part of town which was littered with rubbish and covered in graffiti. Her face screwed up in disgust at how ruined her community had become since the refugee crisis. She began to wonder whether the refugees in other communities had been so disrespectful to their environment and started to question whether her mother was right about them. She continued to follow Romeo deeper into this part of town before walking out the other side, still looking shady as if he was guilty of something. Maria muffled a whimper at the sight of her favourite town having been devastated by the refugees, with trees being chopped down and the river, which was once clear as crystal, now a murky brown. He continued around the forest until he reached a cave, Maria had to duck behind a bush quickly as he turned around, making sure nobody was around before he entered the cave. Maria waited for a while before following him into the cave. Once she was in, she was shocked to see Romeo with one of the refugees - kissing her!

She slowly backed out of the cave and walked out of the refugee part of town before running back to her house and explaining to her mother what she had just seen. What Maria didn't know was that Romeo had known she was there. But he didn't care anymore, if his family didn't accept Juliet, he would leave. Nothing mattered more to him than being with her. He asked Juliet to come to his house with him, warning her what she could expect when she got there. He answered her questions, and she answered his for hours before they left, not caring about people finding out anymore. They walked to his house hand in hand not bothered by the stares or comments from the townspeople.

He walked into his house and found his family waiting in the hallway with his mother staring at him angrily, his dad looking at him pitifully and his sister looking at him with a mixture of hurt and disgust.

“How dare you sneak out, lie to me and start kissing a filthy immigrant!” His mum yelled making everyone flinch.

“A refugee, mum,” Romeo stated calmly, watching her start to turn red.

“They ruined their own planet and decided to come to ours and ruin that too! Look what they’ve done to their part of town!” She continued to yell. Maria added quietly “And my forest.” Before she looked down sadly again.

“They don’t bother to learn our language; they leave their rubbish everywhere and ruin everything that we built! The fountain in the square was built by your father 50 years ago to commemorate my pregnancy with you and they’ve ruined it! How could you care so little about your family and your culture!” His mum continued yelling. But then it was Juliet’s turn to speak up. “Some of us have taken the time to learn the language, and not all of us act like that! If you made a better attempt to welcome us as one of your own and

taught us your language maybe we’d learn your language! As for the damage to your community, I understand that this is upsetting and I do not condone their actions, however, I am working on a way to educate my people about this and show them that their behaviour towards Earth was similar and look how it ended up, along with the fact that we would now be having to relocate two planets worth of people and to be more considerate!” Juliet had said before her voice rose as she became more passionate. Mary was surprised by Juliet’s behaviour.

“Ok, I will help you work on this. I will admit, I was wrong, and I shouldn’t have judged you so badly.” Mary said apologetically, gesturing to Juliet to hug her. Juliet was sceptical of the offer but cautiously accepted, after a few moments, she gestured for Romeo to join in the hug which he happily accepted. Mary had given her blessing for them to be together and had started working on plans to educate the other humans with Juliet. Things were improving between the two races, and everyone was more friendly to each other. Romeo and Juliet continued dating and became the first couple to be an inter-race couple before marrying and eventually having children, bringing in a new era of co-existence and peace.

# **YOU WILL LIVE THROUGH WINTER**

I find myself, as life draws colder, thinking about survival.

To fridg a character in a story means killing them to advance the plot. It means ending their story prematurely for the sake of another's narrative. A story and a world that wasn't made for them, they only exist to die. The wife's corpse, the father's grave, the child's tombstone. I tell you that the world around us is frigid. I do not mean that I am cold. I am writing this late at night, by the light of a candle I lit in my little luck-shrine, wrapped up in blankets. The air around me is frozen, crystals of frost tangled in my lungs. I tell you about the frigid air. I am telling you about the fridged lover. I don't mean either. They aren't the point of this narrative - you are.

A fridged character has no story. So, I am writing this one for you. Not a specific you. I have someone in mind, of course, but if you are reading this, it's for you.

If you are reading this, I am asking you to live.

Cryogenic revival describes the act of bringing someone back from the dead following their body being frozen. People around the world buy into it, they ice their bodies in hopes of a future revolution. They put the corpse in the freezer and hope against hope that there's a chance to live again. It's all hypothetical, of course, but is that enough? The frozen body of the fridged character, thawed out and filled with volts, with magic, with luck, with nanobots. With whatever it is that the story says will save them. I'm not sure I believe in that. I'm not sure we can bet on it.

The wax on my candle is melting. If I go outside, I will be able to see my breath, but the wax melts anyway. Somewhere, in the night, while I am writing this, there are snowdrops. Flowers that bloom even as the snow falls. Fir trees are green even in the winter months. There are deer running through the ice, there are fish swimming in a frozen lake.

What I am trying to tell you is this.

You need to live. Please. I know this is a story you stumbled upon, the ramblings of a stranger late at night. You do not know me, but I know you. I know everyone who needs to hear this, because I have been you.

You have a space within this narrative. I wrote it just for you. It's small, and ambiguous, you have to fill in any details yourself. I don't know how it ends yet, but I know what happens next.

There will come a day, in months or in years, when the snow will thaw. You will be there to see it. You will feel the warmth on your face again, the blood in your veins won't feel so alien. There will come a day when you sit and watch the stars, and the fog of your breath will barely be visible. You will survive this. There will be a future waiting. I hope it's beautiful, I hope I see you there.

If you need a sign, here it is.

You will live through winter. You will see the sun again. I don't know your name, but I know you, I see you, I love you.

I am asking you to trust me. I am asking you to live. The future is waiting for you and me, we have to get to it.

**Written By: Lanton Worley**

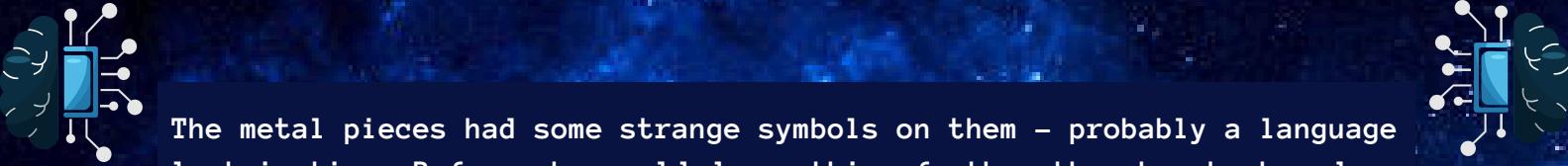
**Designed by: Evan Alexiou**





# ENCOUNTER OF FATE

Cold – the planet Rosen was always cold. Each and every corner of the planet's surface was covered by snow. The black sun radiating this distant planet was not powerful enough to warm up the land. The people of Rosen lived in walled, isolated cities. The buildings were windowless and only had one entrance. The insides were modern and technologically advanced. Colourful. Full of warmth. The colours of the outside, however, were grey and white. The colours on the outside blended with the snow providing camouflage. You see, Rosen's surface was ravaged by wild creatures during the night. The days were short, and the nights brought the Tingas – creatures so fearsome that not many who encountered them lived to tell the tale. Saef was a young Rosen who lived in a remote village. She hated her little community and always wanted to move on with her life. She grew up alone with no parents. She spent every day at her orphanage dreaming of adventure. Saef wanted to travel and explore the universe. There was a burning fire inside of her to venture forth. Unfortunately, that meant leaving the walls and the safety of her village. So, she accepted that her burning passion would forever be a dream. Until one day when fate intervened. Saef was working as a fish catcher in the local fish yard overlooking the river. As she was catching fish with her echo catching gun, she noticed something in the distance. It was just on the horizon of her view. A creature was drowning in the river. She dropped everything to help the poor creature. The animal was tall. It had four legs and a long body. It was black in colour and had a nice coat. It looked like something someone could ride on to travel great distances. Saef pushed the animal ashore which exhausted her completely. As she was catching her breath the creature neighed. She saw the creature had a saddle on its back. The intrusive thoughts won and Saef mounted the animal. Saef noticed that it had a name tag around its neck: Norn. The nametag started glowing turquoise. Norn's eyes widened and it started galloping. Saef was taken back but she was shocked, and Norn was riding so fast. All she could do was hold on. Norn took her far away, further and further from her village until she couldn't see her home anymore. Norn rode far and wide for hours, over snowy valleys and peaks. It even started climbing mountains. Saef was scared but also in awe. The planet had never looked so beautiful in her eyes. Unfortunately, the sun was setting. Norn took her to a forest next to some ruins that looked like old rusty technology. The creature stopped and Saef finally dismounted. Before she could even say a word, Norn disappeared into the forest. "Hey!" she screamed at it but to no avail. She decided to take a look at the ruins. In her eyes, the place looked like a junkyard. Old rusty pieces of technology and metal that had not been used on this planet for decades. She took a look and realised there were strange writings in this junk.



The metal pieces had some strange symbols on them – probably a language lost in time. Before she could do anything further though, she heard a very loud noise. Saef turned around and came face to face with a Tinga. The monster was forty feet tall. Rotten flesh. Sharp teeth. Multiple eyes. Tentacles and claws on its body. It was the stuff of nightmares. Two more showed up. She was surrounded. She grasped her mouth so as not to scream.

Tears started streaming down her cheek. She started walking backwards in fear. As she backed off, she hit her back on a large metal object covered in snow. She turned around and saw one of those strange symbols. She felt compelled to put her hand on it, so she did. The moment her skin touched the symbol a loud noise was heard. Lights started sparking up the writings. And she felt the ground move. The junk was moving by itself. Not only moving but assembling. Like being pulled together with a magnetic gravitational pull. Objects start attaching to other objects creating what looked like a giant metal man. Twenty feet tall. With a muscular build. A large beard and wearing what looked to be giant metal armour. Saef was shocked. The giant man turned his eyes and looked at Seaf. Then, he turned around to look at the Tingas. He launched himself on the first one and started punching it repeatedly. The others tried to gang up on him, but he kicked them away. He grabbed a tree, ripped it from the ground and impaled one of them. He grabbed the other one and tore them in half. But the third one jumped from behind and took him down. Seaf wanted to help, she was looking around for objects she could hurl to help the giant man. As the Tinga was biting and scratching the man his eyes turned red. “Cover!” he shouted to Saef. She ducked inside a cave. Then the man turned his head towards the Tinga, opened his mouth and let out a wave of electric energy. It looked like thunder. With the Tingas now dead, the man offered a hand to Saef and placed her on a hill so they could look into each other's eyes.

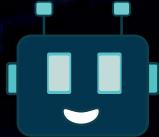
“What’s your name?”

“Saef,” she answered.

“Thanks for waking me up, Saef. I wouldn’t have taken so much of a beating if I had had my weapon. I need to find my hammer.”

“Wait what? Who are you?”

The giant metal man smiled. “My name is Thor. I slay Tingas. And I need my hammer.”



# windows to winter

By Mariana Cardenas Gaviria



# windows to winter

By Mariana Cardenas Gaviria

It is during winter that one feels the serene outer atmosphere, and somehow, it is all so melancholic too. Days become shorter, the cold begins to bite more, and often one feels that the night descends way too early. This is the season when many of us bear a strange emptiness; the silence in the air gets deeper into our psyche, and, at times, it makes us feel alone. Still, if we look closer, winter has its own windows allowing beauty and warmth to shine through.

These windows allow us to see what is often overlooked: the peacefulness of a snowy night, the comfort of a cozy living room, or the simple pleasure of holding a nice, warm mug. The closer December gets, the more colour and warmth is brought to these windows by Christmas lights and the festive spirit.

End-of-year celebrations light up the streets and fill our days with gatherings, hugs, and a warmth that no blanket or hot drink could produce. The time spent with people who become a safe place, even though we don't get to see them throughout the year, brings new ways of connecting with them. The laughter, the never-ending conversations, and the moments of shared joy remind us we are not alone.

Here, winter shows its other side. A side where connection, nostalgia, and love come together and help us to turn sadness into hope. This is when we notice that even the coldest season can be beautiful, provided one allows oneself to peep through the windows of winter and feel its silent warmth.



# Icicles

## A Winter Poem



Icicles form and drip  
into shape. I snap one  
off and let it melt in my hand.

Water slips through  
my fingers and hits the snow.

I look up, to the avalanche  
coming my way. Torrent  
and languid, you make your  
way. 67 miles, or 88 south.

No matter the direction,  
or a thousand more, you're in  
the wind, and a season before.

Back inside, in the small of  
night, I will only hear you, after light.

As I sulk, step by step.  
I will see you, in remains of  
unmelted candle wax.  
Could I survive such a

high temperature?  
Out of the window, you are  
a robin in the wild,  
and a sparrow from the north.

If I never see you through  
my binoculars again, know that  
all my love is deep within.

Buried beneath the snow of York,  
through the dark of winter and the  
warmth of spring; I love you, from  
before my birth and here until  
the end of all things. I love you.

Written by

Lauren Sadler

Designed by

Charlie Dowey



**Un-Bear-Able Music**  
**By Evan & Trifon Alexiou**

# The Adam Redfern Memorial Fund



The Adam  
Redfern  
Memorial  
Fund



## Run for Redfern

Take part in our annual 5km run on Sunday 9 March 2025.



## Memorial Football Tournament

Held every May. Male, female & mixed competitions.

## Check out our Social Media



@RedfernFund on X

@redfern\_fund on Instagram

EMAIL - adamredfernfund@gmail.com



RAISING AWARENESS OF CARDIAC RISKS IN YOUNG ADULTS



OFFERING MEDIA SCHOLARSHIPS & PRIZES



AWARDING GRANTS TO SPORTS CLUBS & OTHER SOCIETIES

## Heart Safe Campus

An exciting new initiative, on which we are delighted to be working with DMU.

Cardiac arrest and heart attack are terms often used interchangeably in the media, but they are two very distinct medical conditions, which require different intervention.

When an individual is a victim of cardiac arrest, the heart has stopped beating and other vital organs are at immediate risk of closing down. To give the patient any prospect of survival, CPR should be administered without delay and, if necessary, a defibrillator used to restart the heart.

**This major initiative features a student produced awareness video, which we commend to everyone as essential viewing when it is released in mid-October. Please look out for it.**

The project also includes ensuring that there are sufficient defibrillators in place around campus, checking that signage is clear, so that the devices can be located quickly in the event of an emergency, offering face-to-face CPR training sessions & in due course, heart-screening days.



## Scholarships & Prizes

### Supporting Media School Students

Each year, we provide a Scholarship to a third-year Media undergraduate, chosen via a robust application process. Such was the quality of applicants in 2023/24, that we were delighted to exceptionally grant 2 additional bursaries in Adam's memory.

Look out for details of the 2024/5 application process, due to be published very soon.

We also award an annual Prize for Extraordinary Commitment in Journalism, presented to the successful student during their Graduation ceremony.

## GROUP GRANT SCHEME

We offer grants of up to £500 to all recognised clubs and societies at DMU, who wish to undertake projects that carry legacy benefits, serve to enhance the university experience of their members and, which would not ordinarily be funded by DMU or DSU.

Full details for the application process will be published across our social media soon. Please keep a look out.

Previous beneficiaries include, DMU Rowing (to purchase sliders for off-water training), DMU Swimming (to support a Learn to Swim programme), DMU Midwifery (guest lecture) & DMU Equestrian (to provide additional opportunities for students new to the sport).

