

WYRMTONGUE



ΨΦ IMPERIAL COLLEGE
SCIENCE FICTION &
FANTASY SOCIETY

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From the Editor

It's 2023. Your coursework's overwhelming. You take a stroll on campus and find a mysterious QR code lying on the ground. You scan it – lo and behold! – some pixels appear on your screen! Here's what those pixels say:

Wyrmtongue. That is the name of this newsletter, brought to you by the Imperial College Science Fiction and Fantasy Society. This issue contains society news, some book recommendations that *may* fall under one of two specific genres, and some information about an inconspicuous convention happening sometime in March...

In addition to this newsletter, the aspiring artists and writers among you might also like to know about our annual fanzine – we take short stories, artwork, poetry and the **rare** fanfic (send us a HP fanfic and you will be hunted for sport[†]). This year's theme will be revealed in the Picocon section. Contributions to the fanzine are always welcome; feel free to send a message to icsfwyrmotongue@gmail.com. Submissions will be open from the start of Spring term till the end of February.

Read on to find out more about our society, some future events and our collection in Beit's west basement. Have a great year, and if fate wills it, see you in the library! ΨΦ



Clifford Chan

Editor

[†]This is not a joke. We will slap you with raw salmon.

Captain's Log



Hazel Wright

Chair Entity

DENIZENS of Imperial College, greetings, and welcome to the Imperial College Science Fiction and Fantasy Society! I, your humble Chair Entity, extend a celestial welcome to both newcomers and seasoned travellers alike.

Our Fortress of Solitude (also known as the Sci-Fi Library) can be found in the West Basement of Beit, where we've managed to cram in a hoard of ten thousand books and three thousand DVDs. The proverbial gates are open every lunchtime during the week (Monday to Friday) from 12-2pm, and all are welcome to seek refuge within our sanctuary, whether it's to make use of our collection, socialise, or just relax before an afternoon of studying.

Our roster of events includes our typical gatherings on Friday evenings (movie marathons, game nights, the occasional seasonal event), as well as subsidised cinema trips to see the latest sci-fi and fantasy releases. Look forward to our upcoming trip to see *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*, and our Christmas Party / Dr Who double feature, promising seasonal merriment and time-travelling revelry. And let's not forget our own annual convention, Picocon, looming on the horizon.

You'll probably hear this a lot, but I must say again: Ten. Thousand. Books. If there's a series you're wanting to get into, chances are we already have it, and you're welcome to come lend anything we have (though you'll need membership first). And if not, feel free to submit a library request!

So, if you're searching for a community with a shared love of all things science fiction and fantasy, then look no further. We're a friendly bunch (I promise we're not a cult), and no one bites[†].
ΦΦ

[†]Usually.

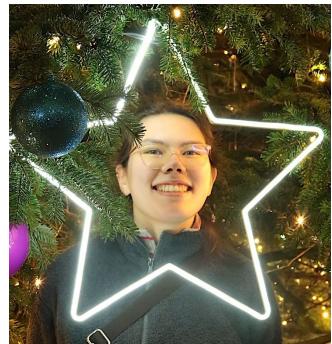
Welcome to the Library!

Hi everyone! I'm Hetty and I'll be your Head Librarian for this year. Did you know that our library holds over 10,000 books and 600 graphic novels? Not to mention our massive DVD collection! As a society we are proud of our library content, and I'm pleased to be your go-to person for any book borrowing or library-related queries for this year.

A bit about our library. We are located in the West Basement of Beit Quad. If you haven't been there before it might be a little tricky to locate - if you can't find it give us a shout! The door needs to be unlocked by a card with special access, so that's why one of our committee members are down there every lunchtime between 12 and 2pm to keep the library open. If you ever want to borrow books, or simply hang out in a nice space (might I mention with beanbags and a TV), come along during those hours. The library is also open when we have events (e.g. movie/game nights etc.), which are normally weekly on Friday evenings. We post all our events on our Instagram ([@imperial_scifi](https://www.instagram.com/imperial_scifi)) so make sure to follow us there!

I hope you enjoy our library and make use of our grand collection. Additionally, if you have suggestions for even more library content do let us know as we have grant money which needs spending :)). Have a superb year, and GET READING!

ΨΦ



Hetty Symes
Head Librarian

Recommendations

If you're looking to dive into the library's collection but are having trouble deciding where to start, here are some recommendations from the committee:

Hetty Symes

— **The Mistborn Saga** by Brandon Sanderson

What a fantastic magic system, I feel like I can actually understand it. Great character development and world-building. If you want to try out Brandon Sanderson's works, this is a great starting place for you.

Clifford Chan

— **Children of Time** by Adrian Tchaikovsky

Theory of evolution but with spiders. Won the Arthur C. Clarke Award in 2016. Best sci-fi book I've read in ages.

Hetty Symes

— **Piranesi** by Susanna Clarke

I started this because it was trending on Audible at the time. Absolutely loved it. The highlight for me was the ethereal descriptions of the labyrinth the MC lives in. Don't expect a fast-paced plot line but rather an ongoing, scenic adventure with hints of mystery.

Juairiyah Raqib

— **Discworld** by Terry Pratchett

Only 41 novels – if you read 1 book a month you might finish the series before you leave university.

Hetty Symes

— **The Lord of the Rings** by J. R. R. Tolkien

You know what this is. It's long, but if you like beautiful passages describing nature and meticulous world-building then this is the trilogy for you. I read this after watching the films, and safe to say it did not disappoint.

Clifford Chan

— **Yumi and the Nightmare Painter** by Brandon Sanderson

A fantastical, body-swapping romance inspired by Your Name, set in the Cosmere. One of the most emotionally impactful Sanderson books so far.

Sam Shanker

— **Worm** by John C. McCrae (Wildbow)

A superhero web serial about cataclysmic events and a girl who controls bugs.

Hetty Symes

— **Circe** by Madeline Miller

Finished this one last week. If you like learning about Greek mythology (which was me as a Percy Jackson fan) then I would recommend. Experience mythological events from a

minor goddess' POV!

Hetty Symes

— **The Wandering Earth** by Cixin Liu

*Will this be my one Sci-Fi rec? I read it amongst a collection of other Liu Cixin short stories. He's most well-known for his series *The Three-Body Problem* (which I still plan on reading, though I did watch its C-drama that released this year - would recommend).*

Clifford Chan

— **Project Hail Mary** by Andy Weir

*From the author of *The Martian*, a delightful hard sci-fi with some very fun ideas. The one book I'm certain both beginners and veterans of the genre will enjoy.*

Hetty Symes

— **The Priory of the Orange Tree** by Samantha Shannon

Is this the time to boast that I met the author at Comic Con in my first year? (and I was reading this book at the time!) Such a great fantasy book. There's a lot of world-building so prepare to be confused in the beginning. Has everything from pirates to dragons.

Clifford Chan

— **Gideon the Ninth** by Tamsyn Muir

Lesbian necromancers in space solve a murder mystery. If that sounds like your thing, you're in for a treat!



Events Timetable



Sam Shenker

Chair of Vice
(Events Officer)

THIS should give you a taste of what kind of things we have in store this term. To keep yourself up to date, join our mailing list or whats-app (or both I'm not going to stop you).

Lunchtime Showings — If you didn't know already, we have a library in the west basement of Beit!! Every lunchtime, it is kindly opened to the general public by whichever member of the committee happens to placate the machine spirit in the door card reader. It consistently opens between 12 and 2pm, so if you want to check out the massive collection of books and films (over 10000 books and 3000 films!! And any that we don't have you can request using the form on our whatsapp, as long as you have membership) or just hang out with a group of nerds and chat feel free to show up! No need to have membership, so you can try before you buy. Follow the instructions on the last page to get here.

Cinema Trips — Come along as we go out as a group to see the latest fantasy and sci-fi hits in cinema, with tickets often discounted for members. The final one this term will be to The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes, the new Hunger Games movie, where I am assured that people are hungry and gaming, there is a ballad, songbirds may feature and snakes are decently likely to show up. We will get pizza beforehand, so if you want pizza and a cinema ticket for just £4, follow our instagram or our mailing list, linked here or there are QR codes in the library (see above).

Secret Santa! — We are running a secret santa! Enter your name into the hat by the 1st of December, and you will be assigned to buy someone a gift under £10! Someone will also be assigned to you, but you will not know who. So normal Secret Santa rules, really. And they will be given back in...

Christmas Party Dr Who day!! — This year, the Christmas party has happened to fall upon the anniversary of the ambiguous doctor! This double feature will span the length of Saturday afternoon, the 9th of December, starting at 4pm and going til late, so come if you like Christmas, Dr Who or any combination of the above! We will have christmassy snacks, Cthulhu-based carols, Dr-Who related TV and between 15 and 25 other nerds. ΨΦ

Picocon

GREETINGS! Welcome to the *important* part of *Wyrm-tongue*. I'm your host, The Sofa, and will be responsible for this year's Picocon event along with our Beanbag, Kai Lam. Picocon is our society's annual convention, celebrating science-fiction and fantasy that's been running since Orwell's most famous book title, and this academic year will be the 41st in the series. Picocon serves multiple purposes: bringing a spotlight to authors in the genre, raising funds for both the society and charity, and just being a fun event where current members can socialise and meet alumni.

The theme of Picocon 41 is *The Menagerie!* That's magical creatures and beasts existing only in the imagination, all humanely caught and trapped for your entertainment some time in March 2024. We're talking big scary reptiles, mysterious sea creatures, slightly unusual mammals, chickens on fire – and is that an alien!? Well, you'll have to keep up with us on social media and check out the Picocon fanzine to learn the names and faces. If you have your own addition to the menagerie, contact us electronically or in the library at lunchtime and we'd love to meet your own magical pets.

Picocon 41 doesn't yet have an official date – for now. Expect a definite date by January 2024, and until then development will all be behind the scenes to create a fun and unique event. You can still expect the Picocon classics: Guests Of Honour giving presentations and speeches, Destruction of Dodgy Merchandise with a comically large mallet, and Turkey Talks where money *really* talks. As of *Picocon 40: Twisted*, Baguette Battles are replacing the notorious Fish Fights of yore. Same silliness, but lighter on the biological warfare. So be there – you won't regret it!

Enjoy the rest of term, and try not to get mauled by a gryphon on your way to lectures. ΨΦ



**Juairiyah
Raqib**
Picocon Sofa[†]

[†]Like a chair, but comfier™

Picocon Sneak Peek!!



We also publish a collection of short stories[†], artwork and poetry in conjunction with Picocon! As mentioned, this year's theme is *The Menagerie*. If you wish to contribute to the fanzine, submit your work to icsfwyrmtongue@gmail.com. Submissions will be open from the start of Spring term until the end of February.

[†]These should be around 1000-3000 words.

Getting Involved

Mailing Lists

ICSF maintains the following mailing lists, to which all members are welcome to subscribe:

- `icsf-list` is the society's core mailing list, which communicates announcements of ICSF events and important news about the society. This list does not generate an overwhelming amount of traffic, and subscription is a must if you would like to hear about film trips and other activities.

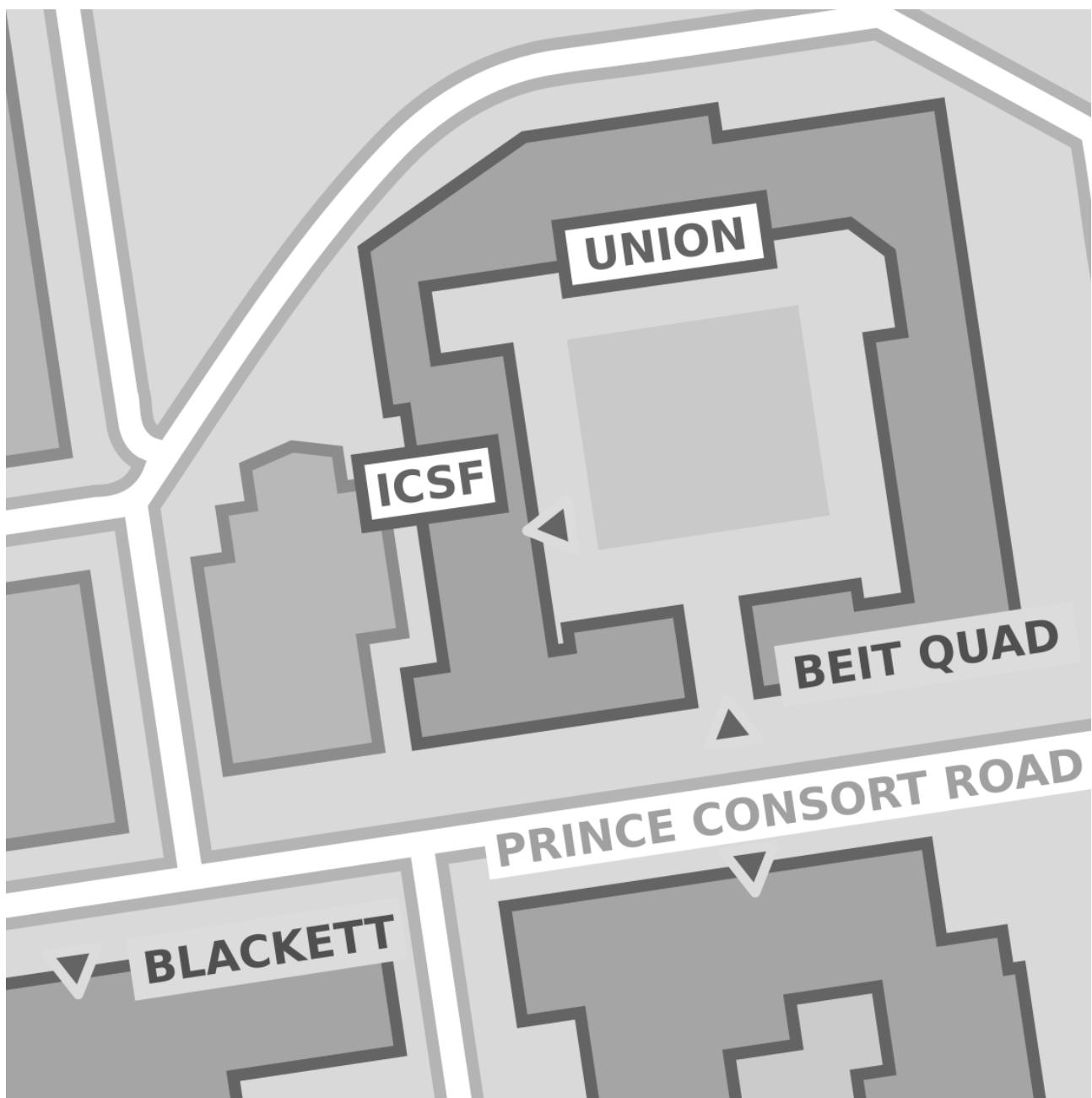


Join our mailing list by scanning the QR code. Alternatively, subscribe automatically by signing up for membership at:
www.imperialcollegeunion.org/activities/a-to-z/science-fiction-and-fantasy.

Social Media

For those who welcome our social network overlords, behold continuations of the Library into the realms of cyberspace:

-  facebook.com/groups/ICSF.imperial
Sci-fi talk, news and events, amusing links.
-  [@Imperial_SciFi](https://twitter.com/Imperial_SciFi)
Sci-fi and fantasy, 280 characters at a time.
-  [@imperial_scifi](https://instagram.com/imperial_scifi)
Visions from the library, visions from the future (event announcements).



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