



PICOCON 40

TWISTED

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of Imperial College Science Fiction and Fantasy Society, I'd like to welcome everyone to Picocon 40: Twisted!

I have to say I love the theme this year! We didn't want to limit ourselves to Fantasy, or Science Fiction, so instead we have Twisted: a celebration of genre twists, media twists, and plot twists!

That being said, I think the biggest plot twist has been this convention coming together. It's hard to believe that at the start of this academic year, we didn't even have a Picocon Sofa or Beanbag, let alone a theme. But since being elected to these positions in November, Ernest and Riyah have gone from being first-time committee members, inspired by the single word 'Twisted', to running our 40th Picocon, the largest and most organised I've seen in my 3 years on committee! Special thanks should also go to our dedicated Picocon Cushions, Cliff and Irene, without whom all would be chaos.

I'd also like to thank the rest of the ICSF Committee, all of whom have pitched in to help make Picocon great and keep me from descending into madness. Luke, Sophie, Toby, and Anand have sent countless emails, made orders, orchestrated technical magic, and just generally been willing to volunteer as tribute to help with everything Picocon.

And what a Picocon it's turned out to be, with 6 incredible guests spanning the media of books, films, and podcasts, all here to talk to you about the twists and turns of their work! I could write multiple paragraphs about their great works, and how excited we are to have them here, in-person and online, but that's what the author description section of Wyrm tongue is for!

Now since I'm a final year student, this will technically be my last Picocon as a society and committee member (I mean, once an ICSF member, always an ICSF member, but I still won't be allowed on committee from the great beyond), which means it's obligatory for me to reminisce somewhat. I've loved running sci-fi events, first online for a year, and then back in glorious 4D, as the Chair of Vice, and now as Chairentity. It's always great to hang out in the library at lunchtimes and Fridays, to make infinite book and TV recommendations, discuss whether the latest films were actually good for hours on end, and even just to take a break from The Degree. I've (cliché proximity alert meep meep meep) definitely made friends for life through this nerdy little basement-dwelling club!

(Fun Fact: I'm not the only one leaving, so please please please come along to our AGM on Friday to vote in next year's committee or run yourself! Don't let democracy die to thunderous applause!)

Thanks again to everyone who's made this year at ICSF, and Picocon 40 in particular, more amazing than Spider-Man, and thank **you** for joining us today (and apparently reading the entirety of my rambling)!

Now go, be free, and enjoy Picocon 40: Twisted... **ΨΦ**

REBECCA ALLDAY
ICSF Entity of Chairs

THE SOFA'S RAMBLINGS

Greetings fellow friends, fans and fiends, and welcome to Picocon 40: Twisted!

To celebrate our triumphant return after the trials and tribulations of the pandemic, I hope to revive this historic tradition with a bang!

As cliché as it sounds, a core tenant of good Sci-Fi and Fantasy is the subversion of expectations but not everyone considers the melodrama and effort it takes behind the scenes to bring our beloved stories to life. As such, the theme of Twisted was chosen to be as open to interpretation as possible, celebrating the personal spins that creators impart both on and off the page.

I am very proud to present one of the most diverse cast of Guests of Honours yet, representing an unprecedented glimpse behind the curtain at some of our most beloved franchises. We have authors responsible for weaving entire universes, riveting podcasts and stunt choreographers breathing life into the silver screen. So, if you grew up on Worldweavers, want to explore the Broken Empire, get the scoop on Cocaine Bear, learn the intricacies of stage combat, debate the deep lore of the 41st Millennium or can't get enough of the Magnus Archives, Picocon 40 will blow your socks off.

Also, my eternal gratitude goes to the Picocon and Sci-Fi committee, especially to the incredible work done by Riyah and Rebecca in bringing all this to fruition. Of course, this event would be a far cry from possible without the efforts of the committee, from Sophie's minutes to Luke's budgeting to Anand's techno-wizardry! Nor would these words even reach you without the work of the Wyrm tongue team.

As is tradition, the scavenger hunt and Destruction of Dodgy Merch as well as a plethora of side games make their triumphant return. If an afternoon spent smacking cursed merch around with a sledgehammer doesn't sound like a good time, I don't know what will. In the spirit of twisting traditions, we have also morphed the unspeakable... ichthyic tradition into: BAGUETTE BASH. I sincerely hope that you leave with the fond memory of gluten-filled duelling on our historic campus while the sun dramatically sets behind you.

Have fun and thank you for being a part of this chapter in our history. **ΨΦ**

ERNEST CHIN
Picocon Sofa

A WORD FROM THE BEANBAG

Twisted is a celebration of the subversive nature of tales spun by storytellers, through the loom of words, screen and anything in between. It's been a whirlwind to organise, but I enjoyed every convoluted minute of it and hope you do too. Between the GoH's twisty talks and a variety of loopy games and activities, you're sure to be entertained.

During the day, you might find yourself meandering on the curling complexities of life, from nautili to black holes. But be careful – if you spiral too hard, you might become aware of something more, coiling around the reality you know and waiting patiently with twisted intent for you to slip up. I'm afraid it may already be too late. **ΨΦ**

JUAIRIYAH RAQIB
Picocon Beanbag



icsf.org.uk

-  facebook.com/groups/ICSF.Imperial
Sci-fi talk, news and events, entertaining links.
-  [@Picocon](https://twitter.com/Picocon)
Announcements and hype for our annual convention.
-  [@Imperial_SciFi](https://twitter.com/Imperial_SciFi)
Our official Blue bird app account thing.
-  [@Imperial_SciFi](https://instagram.com/Imperial_SciFi)
Visions from the library.

WHAT'S ON

To both returning guests and the curious souls who have wandered into their very first Picocon... Welcome! By chance or fate, here's a quick summary for your exciting day ahead:

Throughout the day, we will be graced with the presence of several fantastic **Guests of Honour**, who will be giving us talks on various twisty tangents, as well as a **Guest Panel** followed by book signings. Be sure to pop in whenever you want!

In the afternoon, we continue with the **Destruction of Dodgy Merchandise (DDoM)**, where audience members can join a bidding war for the right to rescue misguided pieces of, you guessed it, dodgy merchandise. Or one could personally exact their destruction with nothing but liquid nitrogen and a merciful hammer. All proceeds go to charity. Additionally, there will be an event later in the afternoon involving long sticks of french bread.

Following tradition, we will also be having **Turkey Talks**, a twisted form of self-inflicted torture where some masochists go up to speak on stage, and the audience can keep them talking by way of donations which also go to charity.

Imperial Tabletop & Gaming returns once more in **Femtocon!** Many thanks to those who are running it and definitely check out their society as well. And of course, kindred spirits are always welcome to visit the **Sci-Fi Library**, open lunchtimes throughout the week in Beit's West Basement.

That's all from me. Enjoy the convention! **ΨΦ**

CLIFFORD CHAN
ICSF Editor

TABLETOP GAMING

Continuing our traditional close relationship, Tabletop gaming will be running Femtocon!!! An all day Board games session with a selection of our **very** expansive board game collection (almost 200 games !!!). If you wanna relax for a bit and play some boardgames, you will find us in the **Blackett Foyer** all day long!

We run weekly events for LARP, RPGs, Board games and MTG. so if you enjoy our session, or are interested in any of the other things we have to offer, please check out timings for our sessions on our union page or on our discord. 

LUKE CONMY
Head of Boardgames - Tabletop
Gaming Society

SCHEDULE

09:00	Front Desk / registration opens
10:00	Guest Talk: GAV THORPE
10:55	Blackett Building LT1
11:00	Guest Talk: TIM KLOTZ & ALLAN HENRY
11:55	Blackett Building LT1
12:00	LUNCH
12:55	NOM NOM NOM
13:00	Guest Talk: MARK LAWRENCE
13:55	Blackett Building LT1
14:00	Destruction of dodgy merchandise
	Queen's Lawn
	Baguette Bash
15:25	Queen's Lawn
15:30	Guest Panel
16:25	Blackett Building LT1
16:30	Guest Talk: ALMA ALEXANDER
17:25	Blackett Building LT1
17:30	Turkey Talks
18:25	Blackett Building LT1
18:30	Quizzy Quiz
19:00	Blackett Building LT1

GUESTS OF HONOUR

Alma Alexander is an internationally published (in thirteen languages worldwide!) and award-nominated novelist, short story writer, anthologist, editor and writing mentor. She was born in a country which no longer exists, has lived and worked in seven countries on four continents (and in cyberspace!). Her works include the **Worldweavers** series, **The Were Chronicles**, **The Secrets of Jin-Shei** and its follow-up **Embers of Heaven**, among many others. She lives with two cats.



ALMA ALEXANDER

Joining Games Workshop at the age of nineteen, Gav Thorpe was a staff writer and games developer on the Warhammer and Warhammer 40k universes for fourteen years, and has written numerous novels in those universes including **The Sundering Trilogy**, **The Path of the Eldar**, **Deliverance Lost** (from the Horus Heresy series), the New York times best-selling novella **The Lion** and the Age of Sigmar novel **Warbeast**, which won the 2017 David Gemmell Legend Award for Fantasy. He also wrote the epic sword-and-sandals saga gathered in the omnibus collection **Empire of the Blood**.



GAV THORPE

Gav is also a designer, writer and world creation consultant for various tabletop and video games, including **For Honor**, plus Warhammer titles such as **Mark of Chaos** and **Deathwing**. He regularly appears at conventions like FantasyCon and delivers workshops at writing events such as the Derby Literature Festival.

Mark Lawrence is an Imperial alumni who started a Ph.D in Physics back in 1990. He spent the next twenty years as a research scientist in both the UK and US, working on a range of topics such as image processing, decision making and tracking - all rooted in statistical analysis.



MARK LAWRENCE

He became a fulltime writer in 2015 when BAE shut down its Advanced Research Facility. Since then, Mark has written 16 novels, such as **The Broken Empire Trilogy**, the **Red Queen's War** series and an upcoming 17th novel **The Book That Wouldn't Burn**.

He owns two David Gemmell Legend Award axes, and was short-listed for a Nobel Peace prize. He lives with his daughter.

Tim Klotz is a Master at Arms with the British Academy of Dramatic Combat and was resident fight director at The Drama Centre from 2005, training actors such as **Emilia Clarke**, **Regé-Jean Page** and **Alexander Dreymon**.

Tim has worked as a special consultant to British Fencing, and devised SabreLite, an intuitive swordplay system which has been delivered at over 30 UK universities. As a fight director, he has created fights for theatre, ballet, opera, film, video games and television. He has worked extensively in Motion Capture for Video Games such as **Medieval 2 Total War**, **Spartan Total Warrior**, and **ShellShock Blood Trails**.

His credits include Shakespeare's Globe, Channel 4, BBC, Sega, Sony, HBO and many others.

Allan Henry is a former student, and now fellow practitioner, of Tim Klotz. He has worked on numerous movies such as **Mulan**, **The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug** and **Mortal Engines**. Allan is also the mocap performer in the title role of **Cocaine Bear**, which is out now!



TIM KLOTZ



ALLAN HENRY

QUEST OBJECTIVES

In a twist of fate (get it?*), you have been assigned to one of the following teams: **The Cyclones**, **The Fractals**, or **The Helix People**. If you have not been allocated a team (and want to be (why wouldn't you though (we're all nice people here))), then please go back to the desk you obtained this magazine from and kindly berate the receptionists until they give you one.

On the next page, you will discover a list of potentially dangerous, maybe evil, and definitely surprising items and/or subversive concepts. Find any of these items, bring evidence to the front desk and win fabulous prizes... such as points for your team (and uh...nothing else...†)! Whoever earns the most points gets to go home proud knowing they managed to spot as many convoluted concepts this committee managed to squeeze from our brains.

Enjoy scavenging, for good fun and tumultuous delight :)

This year's teams are (drumroll):



THE CYCLONES

How can you win if you
can't spin?



THE FRACTALS

Absolutely cracked.



THE HELIX PEOPLE

ACGT ftw

- Items can be submitted to the Front Desk for Fun Points™ after 11am.
- Pictures are (usually) not admissible.
- Objectives involving people must only be undertaken with the person's permission.
- The front desk reserves the right to keep the submitted items.
- Unless otherwise noted, each faction may claim an item on the list only once.

*This is terrible

†What a twist amirite?‡

‡Why do you look so disappointed?

LIST OF DANGEROUS, POTENTIALLY IMPOSSIBLE ITEMS

15	A Good Cow	100	A hecatomb for the committee
1	Hugs (per person)	15	A twisty Pokémon
10	A terrible cosplay ^{FD E}	10	The perfect plan to kill a geologist
30	Picocon	50	A comically large spoon ^{FD}
20	A non-ICSF fresher at Picocon	TBD	A dramatic cliffhanger
Age+5	Ex-ICSF Chair ^M	20	The answers to the quiz – cannot be submitted after half 6
Age+5	Ex-ICSF Librarian ^M	300	A freaking dragon
Age+5	T-shirts from Picocon's past ^M	2	Two wormholes
10	Previous Guest of Honour ^E	10	A gleeman's cloak
50	Five people playing Twister	25	The head of a xenos
20	Twisted snacks/chocolate for the committee ^{FD E}	10	A hunska
-15	Twisted snacks/chocolate for yourself ^{FD E}	-20	A very awkward moment ^{FD}
10	tbh, just any food for the committee ^E	5	A book ICSF lacks (and wants)
10	Uzumaki by Junji Ito	-5	A book ICSF lacks (and does not want)
-5	A twisted wire	-10	A book ICSF owns (and does not want)
35	A chainsword	2	Famous first words.
100	The Picocon Sofa, frantic	3	Famous last words (subject to checking)
50	The Picocon Beanbag, calm	20	Spite
25+10	A barbershop quartet (bonus if the song has "Twist" in the title)	15	A dragon curve
3	A good hat ^{FD}	10	A healthy obsession
-2	A hat with holes	-10	An unhealthy obsession
15	A wizard's pointy hat	20	The Erlking himself
-30	Possession by Chaos	5	A Shard that bypasses the Manton Effect
1000	£100 ^E	10	An inductor
2	A funny joke ^{FD E}	-30	Induced scoliosis
-2	A bad pun ^{FD E}	-40	A suspicious imposter
5	A twisted and funny joke ^{FD E}	50	A thorough, and comprehensible explanation of vorticity to a non-physics/math student
765	The Andromeda Galaxy	20	A curly moustache
n	n blood red roses ^M	70	A lost Doctor Who episode
30	A fairy wand	55	A working C-to-RISC-V compiler (demonstrated)
45	A portal to the Feywild	3	An understood reference ^E
12	A Red or Black Marker that looks like a helix		
-10	A necromorph		

-3	A misunderstood reference ^E	5	The high ground
-10	A misunderstood scientific reference ^E	-5	Sand
30	Invitation to the Seelie/Unseelie Court	413	A working copy of sburb
25	A shoggoth ^E	10	A Möbius Strip
15	A sleeping editor (wake him up(violently))	35	A Celtic spiral
50	A sandworm	30	A black hole's accretion disc
20	Spice Melange	10	A copy of your own DNA
15	At least three creme eggs	15	A fairy ring
50	Correctly guessing all the ducks on a later page	10	Rupert's drop
Fib(N)	N examples of twists ^{FD M}	20	A correctly arranged Buffy boxset
30	A twisted magnetic flux tube	5	A missing board game piece ^E
10	A doomed time clone	10	Braaaaaaiinsss
30	A death spiral	-10	A life spiralling out of control
5	Something Unexpected ^{FD}	500	Dead committee member ^E
50	A homemade Parker spiral	2^N	N ouroboros
± 20	A justified/unjustified financially irresponsible action ^{FD}	-69	Induced syphilis
20	A bear	0	Proof for Euler's identity
40	A cocaine bear	3	A wise man's fear
1000	Jonathan Sims	1	A unicorn
-10	Complains about Homestuck references ^E	100	Winds of Winter
223	A reincarnated Archimedes	5	An Ed ^E
15	A full reenactment of Duel of the Fates	10	A wild Ed ^{E FD}
		10	A completed nonogram
		15	A completed crossword

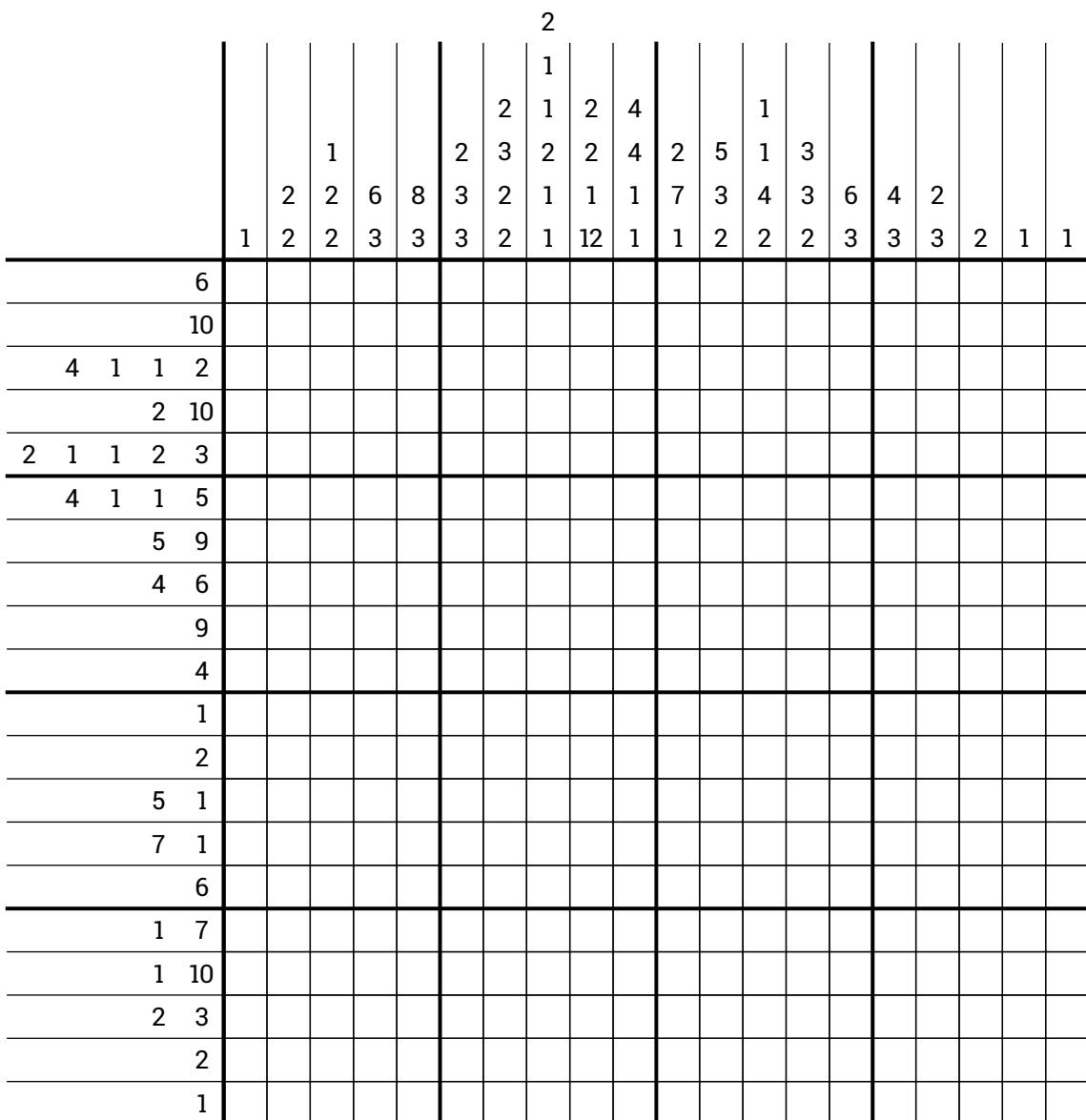
^{FD} Front Desk Person's Discretion[†]

^E This item may be claimed multiple times per faction ("each")

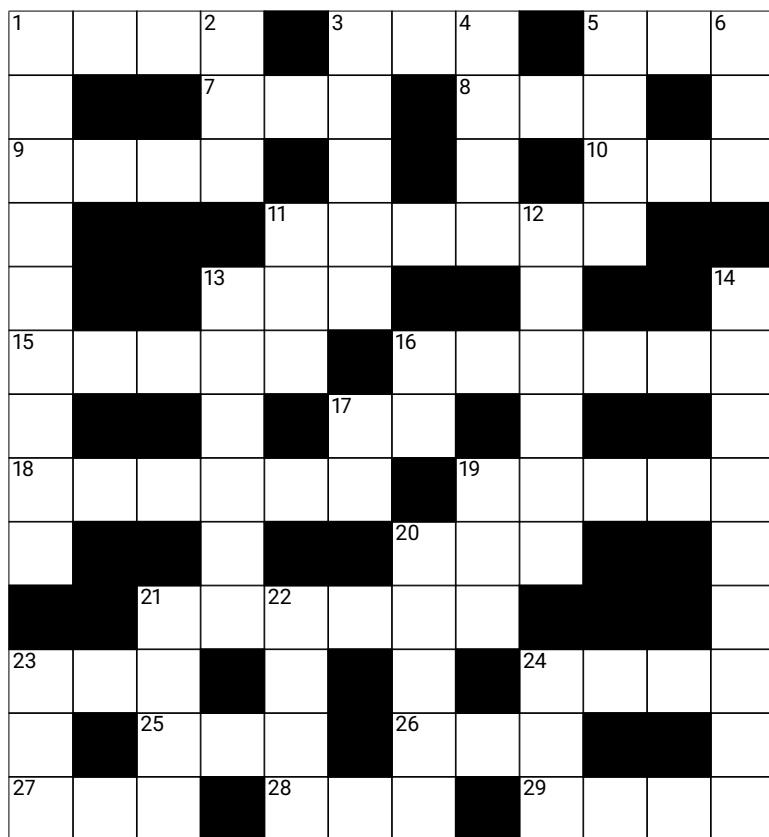
^M For each faction, the highest of their scores will be used

[†]This actually applies to everything; where it is noted, it indicates that you're unlikely to change anyone's mind with your cunning arguments.

NONOGRAM



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Following Robin, writer of 15 fantasy books set in and around the six Duchies. (4)
- 3 Times two plus Binks. (3)
- 5 In the Lord of the Rings, a grown up 9 Across. (3)
- 7 Japanese for 'come on' oft shouted by muscular men beating each other up. (3)
- 8 Common Sci-Fi cannon ammo. (3)
- 9 In Warhammer, a younger 5 Across. (4)
- 10 Abbr. for a wizard's key trait. (3)
- 11 Thufir Hawat is one example. (6)
- 13 Where the newest Spiderman was rejected from. (3)
- 15 A turtle upon whose sex lies the fate of millions (5)
- 16 Godfrey, the First Elden Lord's other name. (6)
- 17 An immortal Viking met by the Doctor. (2)
- 18 What early Sci-Fi authors thought were on Mars. (6)
- 19 Wooden furniture fasteners, the Sci-Fi Library may have a few. (5)
- 20 The world was young and magical a few of these ago. (3)
- 21 The ever controversial arachnid from Homestuck (6)
- 23 Mario's brother's letter. (3)
- 24 Arrakis' truly most abundant resource. (4)
- 25 (Acronym) Form of YouTube horror closely associated with conspiracy (3)
- 26 Mr. Anderson's other, true name. (3)
- 27 Tentacled enemy of the Doctor. (3)
- 28 Vader does this to the destruction of Alderaan. (3)
- 29 A 2004 American TV show inspired by Cast Away (4)

DOWN

- 1 Discworld's most popular Holiday (9)
- 2 Asimov's specialty (3)
- 3 A soon to be Mrs. Majors from the Rocky Horror Picture Show. (5)
- 4 Setting in which League of Legends' battles occur. (4)
- 5 Where a Sci-Fi book is kept in relation to its bookshelf. (4)
- 6 What many fans wish to do to George Lucas' various changes to Star-Wars. (3)
- 11 An abbreviation for least (I tried but I couldn't think of a sci-fi related clue) (3)
- 12 Island of magic, where Caledfwlch was forged. (6)
- 13 The setting for the movie Airplane (6)
- 14 The slaver kingdom in 1 Across' series. (9)
- 16 Followed by Man, fights the evil forces of Skeletor. (2)
- 17 Followed by paint, a webcomic artist's easel. (2)
- 19 Acronym for the 3D fighting game of '96. (3)
- 20 Creatively named slimy Pokemon (5)
- 21 Romania's famed impaler, Whitby's famed blood-sucker. (4)
- 22 Agrabah's famous Parrot, owned by Jafar. (4)
- 23 The Lord of the stars' Father. (3)
- 24 Our Sun's name (3)

THE FINAL TWIST...DUCKS



A super normal hobby. Credit - Sophie Appleyard

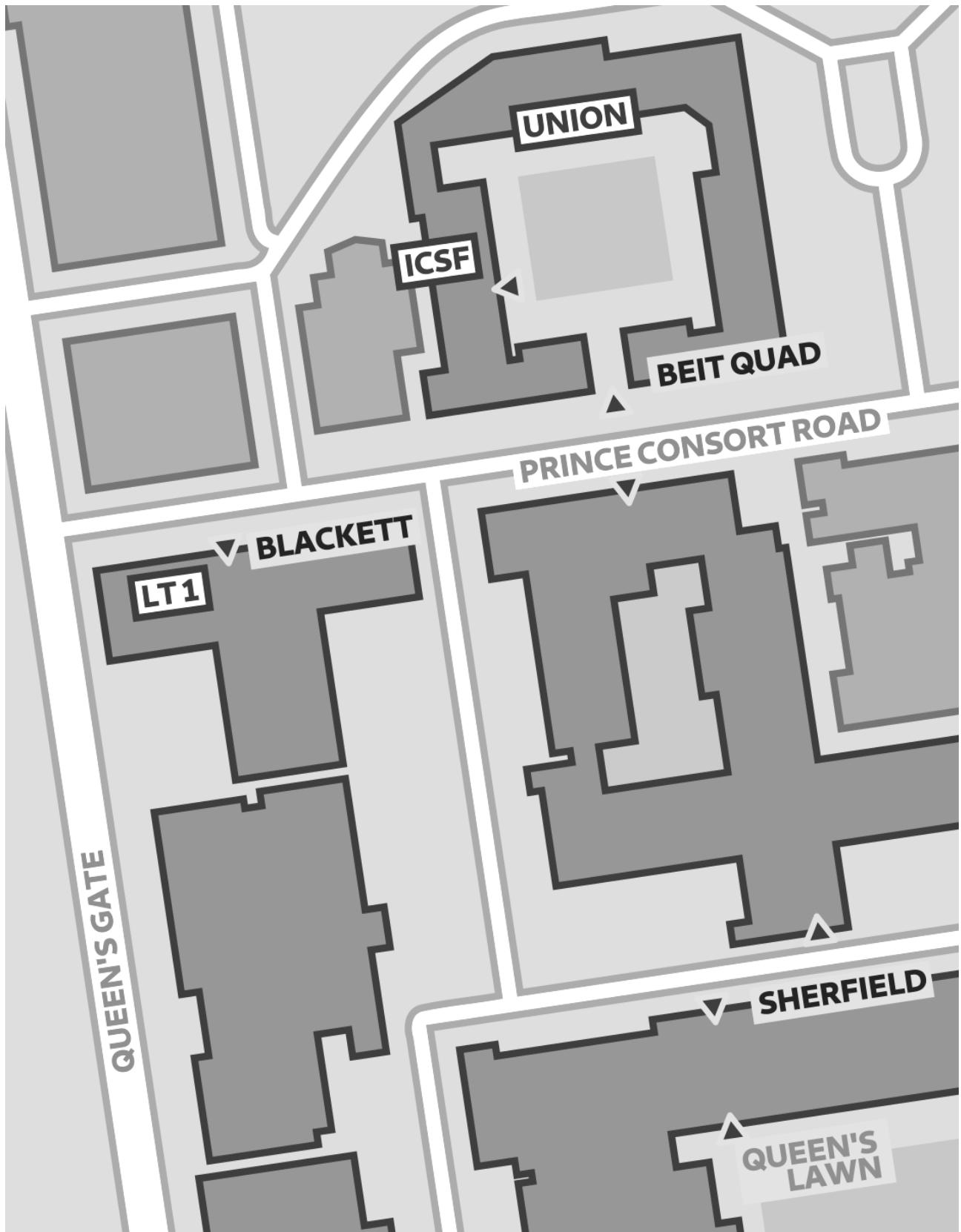
See if you can guess who everyone is (there may be scavenger hunt points to gain)! **ΨΦ**

FANZINE



Not had enough of a sci fi & fantasy fill? Check out our Fanzine! full of submissions by members of our society, and full of surprises (one might even say twists) ΨΦ

DIRECTIONS



NOTES AND STUFF

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