



The RGS Gazette

Issue 2 – May 2021

Major Star Wars film set in Little Marlow!



By Deven Pangrekar - Year 12

Late last year, construction for a film or television set was spotted in Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire. Due to the very Star Wars-esque look of the structures, it was initially presumed that the set was for the filming of the newly announced 'The Book of Boba Fett' spin-off TV series, which is expected to drop on Disney Plus in December of this year. However, some also speculated that the set was for the long-awaited 'Obi-Wan Kenobi' series which will see the return of Ewan McGregor as the titular character and Hayden Christensen as the infamous Darth Vader. The third, and most likely, guess is that it is for the 'Andor' show, a prequel to the fan-favourite 'Rogue One' that will revolve around the adventures of Cassian Andor, played by Diego Luna. So, which one is it, and why have they chosen Little Marlow of all places?

The set is situated alongside the Spade Oak Nature Reserve, Little Marlow. It is partly visible from the main road and drivers can catch a glimpse when passing through the town (whilst staying focused on the road of course!) Pedestrians may have better luck at getting a closer and more promising look at the set; that is if they don't mind hiking through a few fields. Even so, a vast amount of the set is hidden by the wooded area surrounding it, preventing strollers from unearthing any major secrets. Filming at a secluded and well-covered location such as this seems like a smart decision on Disney's part. Although, drones have been able to capture images that reveal the grand scale of the construction.

The studio is seeking permission to shoot on set between May 1st 2021 and November 1st 2021, which raises the question: what is actually

In this issue

p1 The News

p5 Features

p9 The Arts



The GameStop crisis

Dhruv Shah discusses the impact of the Reddit and GameStop crisis: will these amateur traders and their actions have repercussions for the future of Wall Street? ...page 3



What is Modern Pop?

Keshav Anand tackles the question of whether 'pop' music can exist in the modern music industry. Seemingly impossible to define, is 'pop' music itself outdated? ...page 9

Our editors

News	Ryan Massey
Features	Asad Tariq
The Arts	Kieran Leete
Sports	Ascanio Polotti

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going to be filming here? Well, inferring from information released by the studio as well as cast members, 'Boba Fett' and 'Andor' both began filming in December of last year and 'Obi-Wan Kenobi' is scheduled to begin filming in March of this year. 'Boba Fett' is expected to use the same 'StageCraft' technology used to film its parent show, 'The Mandalorian', which does not require the construction of massive sets such as the one in Little Marlow and certainly does not require any shooting to take place outside of the United States. Therefore, it can be ruled off the list of suspects.

The filming schedule for 'Kenobi' seems to line up well with the timeframe requested for shooting at Spade Oak. Furthermore, the galactic village being built closely resembles architecture from Tatooine, the established planet in a galaxy far far away with strong links to the Skywalkers and where the

series is believed to be, at least partly, set. From the large circular arches to the dusty colour tone, it certainly seems familiar, however, the village as a whole does not look like a location that has been explored in this universe previously. There is the possibility that this show will also use StageCraft to film scenes on Tatooine similarly to 'Boba Fett', which would probably be more cost efficient for the studio. However, if this set is not meant to replicate Tatooine terrain, it is still entirely possible that 'Kenobi' could shoot here as it has been strongly indicated that McGregor will travel off of the desert world at some point due to the "rematch of the century" between him and Christensen's Vader, promised by Kathleen Kennedy at the Disney Investor Day 2020 event.

"IT'S ELECTRIFYING TO HAVE A MAJOR PRODUCTION SET UP CAMP IN BUCKS!"

'Andor', as mentioned above, is confirmed to be currently in production in London. This is only one of many factors making it the most likely series to be utilising the Spade Oak Nature Reserve. As the show is filming in the United Kingdom, it would make sense that they would build sets in isolated areas around London. In fact, the official sizzle reel for the series,

released at the Investor Day event in December, revealed brief clips of sets being built with one of them closely resembling the one in Little Marlow. The bleak look of the set also matches the description of 'Andor' as a gritty espionage thriller. Further evidence comes from reports that suggest the set could remain at the quarry for up to three years which indicates that the show filming there will have multiple seasons. It is presently believed that 'Kenobi' will be a one-time limited event series, while Alan Tudyk, who played K-2SO in 'Rogue One', has hinted at the possibility of a season two for 'Andor'. Therefore, the new Star Wars adventure, filming so close to home, is almost certainly the Cassian Andor spin-off coming to Disney Plus sometime in 2022.

Disregarding my analysis of which series could be filming there, it is electrifying to have a major production set up camp in Buckinghamshire. Though a report by The Sun claimed that local residents were unhappy with such large-scale construction taking place in the countryside, a poll taken by the Bucks Free Press suggests that locals are just as excited as, if not more than, the rest of the world for this new tale in a galaxy far far away. More details pertaining to the set should be revealed as soon as the crew prepares to get cameras rolling this May. We even tried contacting Disney, but no word from them!



undemocratic management are exemplified in Putin recently amending the constitution enabling his continued level of power.

Navalny became a noteworthy opponent to Putin's 'reign'. Consequently, on 20 August 2020, Navalny grew ill. As his condition worsened, he was rushed to a German hospital where they found traces of the vicious Novichok

Alexei Navalny: A Study in Red

By Oscar Panayi - Year 8

For years, Alexei Navalny has been a merciless and overtly outspoken critic of the Russian government. This has led to his poisoning, false arrest and imprisonment. As of now he is in prison for a crime he didn't commit, a crime fabricated by the Russian government to keep him detained and isolated. His supporters have rioted, met with extreme force. 5000 supporters have been forcibly arrested using batons and stun guns, simply for expressing their dissent. The arrest number is still rising. The only real hope for justice lies with Navalny's lawyers' appeal to the European

court of human rights on grounds of unlawful arrest.

But let's back up a bit. This whole affair began in 2011, when Navalny founded his non-profit organisation FBK, translating into Anti-Corruption Foundation, in Moscow, dedicated to finding and exposing the corruption in Putin's government. Since then, he has dedicated himself to criticising Putin online, gaining millions of young Russian supporters, all unhappy with the way their government is run. This is hardly surprising, as corruption and

poison. The poison disrupts nerve signals and leads to horrible convulsion of muscles, continued vomiting, breathlessness and loss of consciousness. In the long term the lasting nerve damage can lead to disability. Even with six months of specialist treatment, he barely survived. The perpetrators of this dreadful event were left in little doubt, after investigation revealed that only a few Russian government owned labs are able to manufacture the Novichok poison.

'1984' bells were tolling by this point, but Navalny remained resolute. After his treatment, he returned to Moscow to continue his work. He uploaded a video coinciding with his return called Putin's Palace. The world had no idea of the far reaching and

revolutionary consequences this video would have. It gave a timeline of the corruption that has occurred under Putin. Such insubordination would not go unpunished.

Within 24 hours Navalny had been arrested on a fabricated charge and imprisoned.

His supporters have rioted, but have been met with force. Despite condemnation from the rest of the world, Putin continued to defy practices of free speech and keep Navalny imprisoned, who has become a universal symbol of resistance to oppression.

In addition, Navalny's supporters have posted pictures of themselves wearing red clothing to show their solidarity and support for Navalny's

wife Yulia Navalnaya. Red is her favourite colour and the colour she wore during her husband's trial in the picture to the right. This has become a huge movement across the world with thousands joining in to show their support.

Succinctly, this censorship of free speech is atrocious to see, and disregards basic human rights. To help this cause you can go and look at Navalny's YouTube channel, sign a petition such as this one <https://www.change.org/p/us-state-department-and-congress-free-alexei-navalny->, write to your local MP (Steve Baker if you are in High Wycombe) about your concern, or make yourself heard in other ways such as joining in with the aforementioned red movement.

GameStop: A Rollercoaster of a Short Squeeze

By Dhruv Shah - Year 12

The global stock market has been taken hold of and throttled by members of the subreddit: r/WallStreetBets. A combo of lockdowns, low interest rates and cancelled sports competitions have fired up casual investors to give investing a shot. This rag-tag community has drawn international attention towards GameStop. The company's share price that was worth merely a few dollars in 2020 has spiked upwards to reach \$350 on January the 27th this year. The company's total value multiplied exponentially from \$200m to \$24Bn during this time frame. America's Treasury Secretary is on the lookout, "keeping a close watch on events". You might ask, why keep an eye on events?

Short selling is when a hedge fund borrows shares from a company that they expect will do poorly. They then sell these shares on the market and plan to buy them back at what they predict will be a lower price. When they return the shares to the lender, they would have made a profit. While short selling is common, a short squeeze is a once in a blue moon event. It occurs when the share price for a company rockets up, specifically a company that was a target for short sellers.

These short sellers are now forced to buy the shares back at much higher prices than they were purchased for. r/WallStreetBets cornered their enemy in this manner, hedge funds lost billions and Redditors made millions. The hedge fund Melvin Capital Management lost 53% after betting against GameStop. Total losses of all hedge funds amount to an astronomical \$12.5 billion. A Reddit user named Keith Gill originally invested \$50,000 and ended up with \$48 million. This does beg the question, what made the Redditors target Wall Street?

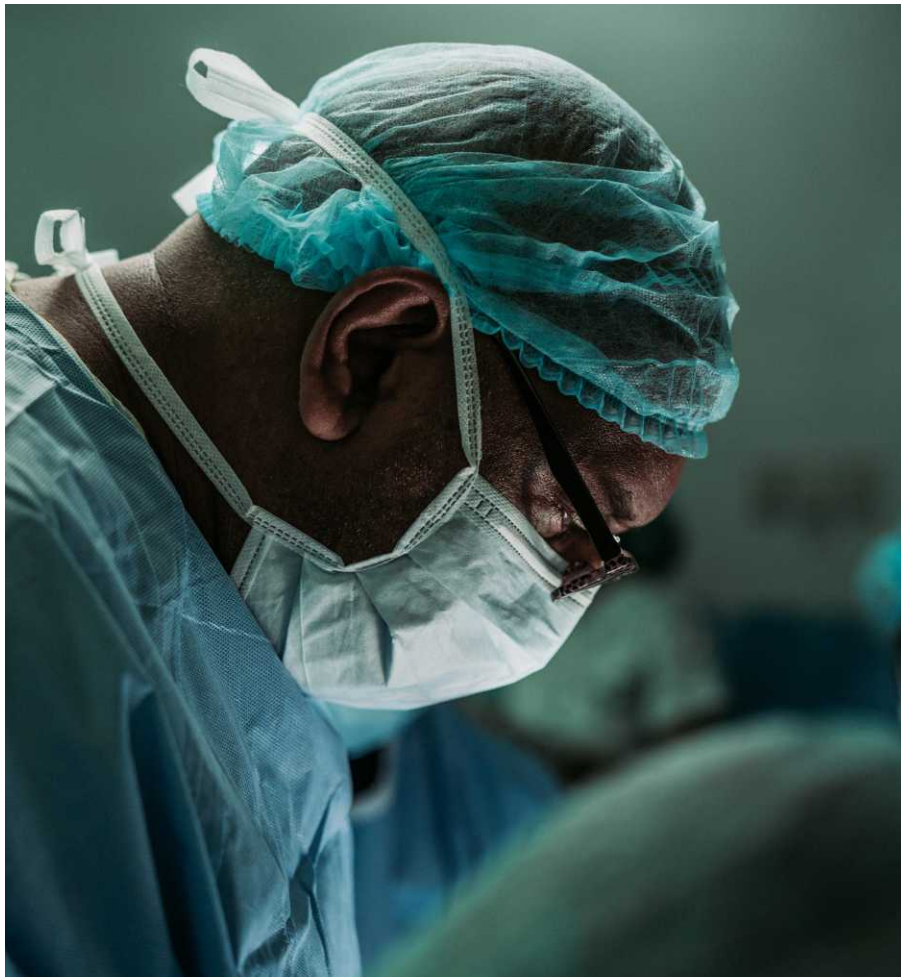
As many readers will know, the 2008 Financial Crisis was the worst economic shock America endured since 1929. Approximately 9 million American workers lost their jobs and were left to fend for themselves. The government did however assist hedge funds and banks with financial stimuli. The emotional driver behind this attack has been rage. The people investing are driven by a justified anger about how banks were bailed out without having to pay legal penalties. The attack is fuelled by the frustration surrounding rising excruciating poverty and inequality. A surprising fact, the squeeze isn't led by



impressionable youngsters with online trading accounts, no, it is an army of veterans who are constantly recruiting new traders that lead the herd. This short squeeze marks a paradigm shift, 12 years ago short sellers were the heroes who brought down the exposed status quo and revealed the rotten parts of Wall Street. There was even a movie about them: "The Big Short". Now that the role of short-sellers is reversed, the hedge funds are seen as corrupt establishments, their alienation has deepened. Anger has the ability to make people throw caution to the wind, even more so than greed. While people have plenty to be angry about, if these short squeezes carry on to bigger targets than a video game retailer then the consequences of the 'angry bubble' bursting may be devastating.

How will the Decade of Health (2021 to 2030) help to improve both our futures and the future of society?

By Ahmed Raja - Year 10



The Decade of Health is a UK-only collaborative project that aims to bring many different companies and organisations together to achieve one goal by 2030: to become an improved nation. The UK will work with many organisations for the next ten years to improve the lives of people in society. At the moment, their priorities lie in innovation and the eradication of certain health challenges, such as the pandemic and some preventable diseases. Many well-known charitable organisations are part of this national scheme, including Save the Children, UNICEF and the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation.

With the main focus of the Decade of Health being an improved UK nation, it first aims to eliminate COVID-19. The pandemic has been a problem throughout the world and

it has been damaging both the UK's economy and the healthcare sector. After the elimination of COVID-19, the organisation will mainly be trying to focus on areas such as nutrition, equal starts in life, the potential of young people, and attempting breakthroughs in science and innovation. Nutrition is a particularly important area to consider in the Decade of Health's mission. Good nutrition is an essential need for all humans. By allocating large amounts of high-quality food many illnesses can be prevented which in turn puts less stress on the NHS. Another area the UK is focusing on is allowing all young people equal chances in life and ensuring that coming from less affluent backgrounds will not negatively impact any child with the potential to flourish. Breakthroughs in scientific research and innovation

are always known to positively influence society with many labs in the UK's Decade of Health project developing solutions to some types of preventable disease, including wild polio and drug resistant infections that are able to withstand pharmaceutical antibiotics.

This nationwide project has the opportunity to positively impact us and our nation as many of the UK's top organisations collaborate together on arguably one of the largest projects in UK history, something that has the possibility to improve our futures and help society flourish. While many of us are fortunate enough to live in households where food and the high quality nutrition is available many others do not have these same privileges. Providing good nutrition to all will benefit other people's quality of life. While improvements in the research and cure of diseases do not always directly affect us, for others it can mean the difference between life and death. Even



The organisation deems nutrition a key factor towards world health, though not everyone has easy access to healthy foods.

helping those few extra children have equal starts in life could result in new ideas and new leaders. The Decade of Health (2021-2030) has the possibility to result in national progress and game changing ideas which is why supporting their mission is something we, as young people, should endeavour to do. Particularly, when it positively affects OUR lives.

Features

The Dyson Institute – an alternative to oxford?

By Oscar Panayi - Year 8



Entering university has become all but essential nowadays. Yet the system for this has become increasingly competitive and demanding. For example, to be a GP in the UK it takes 5 years without pay and incurs debts of £46,250. Practical work is also very limited with graduates entering a ruthless job market that values experience more than anything else. The system also results in a lack of applicants to fields perceived as difficult. One crucial field that is facing major problems in the UK is engineering. The UK is facing a massive shortage today needing a staggering 1.25 million engineers by 2025. Apprenticeships have been long held as the saviour of all practical professions, yet they hardly receive applicants on the scale that universities do. However, a university in Wiltshire helmed by the famed British Inventor, James Dyson, is looking to solve all the problems mentioned in one go.

In the Dyson Institute, students spend two days a week studying a

curriculum, much like that of a standard university, and the other three days working practically for the company as an employee. This comes complete with a salary of £18000 and there are no tuition fees involved allowing people to graduate with no debt whatsoever. This system gives them the perfect balance of practical experienced and focussed learning.

An RGS student called Drew Padfield was fortunate enough to be selected for the Institute. "Being able to learn a new formula or principle one day and then put it to use at a company [Dyson] at the forefront of new technologies just seemed amazing to me." His words were also echoed by James Dyson himself who frequently spoke about his idea to the media stating that *"The Dyson Degree is more than a job and more than degree - academic learning is immediately applied and made real, demonstrating the thrill and excitement that comes from inventing."* This solves one of the

most common concerns of all students at all levels, worldwide 'How is what I'm learning useful in real life?'

Another concern that the Dyson Institute helps solve is the over-reliance of experience present in the industry, even in entry-level jobs. As Drew puts it, *"I will have completed my degree while having 4 years of work experience."*

Drew was also in the unique position of having applied to both Cambridge and Dyson for engineering. "They were both as stressful as each other however, for Dyson, I had to complete three online tests, a CV, a tailored personal statement (not my UCAS one), a telephone interview and a technical interview." While this process is highly rigorous, the student still highly recommends the experience to any student looking for a more experience-based education for a career in engineering.

Combining an apprenticeship style learning programme with a university experience of having dozens of people in a 'year group' has raised a lot of eyebrows across the country. There is no doubt that the idea has a lot of potential. A Dyson Degree which guarantees you a job with no debt at 18 is to a certain demographic more attractive proposition than the standard degree. Students are no longer in the situation where their only choice for higher education would be to go to a university particularly for a practical profession such as engineering. Although there is a long way to go with tackling the shortage of engineers, James Dyson has taken a step in the right direction.

What if other major technological companies copied his idea? What would happen if other, larger STEM companies such as Apple, Google or Microsoft decided to establish their own institutes to craft their ideal employees from a young age? These companies make forty times what Dyson makes in a fiscal year and

Are you my teacher?

By Bilal Raja - Year 8

Mr Travi:

What made you choose a career in teaching?

When I wasn't much older than any of you, I had the opportunity to go to Mali, West Africa where I discovered the power of teaching and it motivated me into doing my degree.

What is your best teaching moment?

It wasn't necessarily a best moment, but it was when I got Computer Science set up as a main subject at not only just at the RGS, but part of a computing organisation called "Computing In Schools". We are now a big company and are looking to move ICT forward in schools.

Why did you choose Computer Science?

Well, I'm not a Computer Scientist and I don't have a qualification in the subject I'm teaching. When I graduated, the economy wasn't as good as it is in today's world, there weren't as many jobs or good sources of money. I taught myself how to program and soon ICT Teachers were in high demand, so I took a job.

What are you most looking forward to in the future?

I want to get extracurricular trips back up and running again. Last year I helped plan a trip to Japan but it was very dramatically pulled at the last minute because of Covid-19. So, I'm just looking forward for things to go back to normal. Even small trips would be good.

If you won the lottery and decided to give up teaching, what would you do instead?

I wouldn't quit teaching. I would probably give the money to charitable causes or travel the world, but I wouldn't want to quit teaching. You can have all of the money in the world but life still needs a purpose and for me that would be teaching. I don't play the lottery anyways.

Dyson Institute cont.

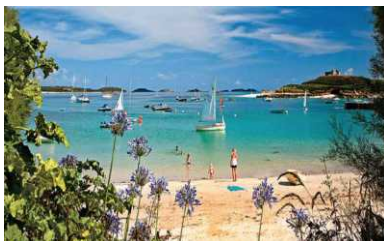
can use the considerable resources at their disposal to set up Institutes that instantly rival Oxbridge as the most desirable places to study. Imagine the experience and skill taught from simply being around actual employees from some of the biggest companies in the world. While this idea seems far-fetched currently, Dyson has recently been

allowed to give out its own degree becoming the first alternative provider in the United Kingdom with this function. Institutes like Dyson could soon become commonplace over the world helping solve problems such as the engineering shortage in the UK. As Robert Halfon (Chairman of the education select committee) puts it:

“The Dyson Institute of Engineering and Technology is the future — it's how all universities should be run. They really are ground-breaking and should be congratulated on their understanding of the future of education.”

(see next page)

The following Great British Adventures are set to take place:



Tall Ships – Taking place over a week, boys will come to grips with the stark reality of managing a ship. They will manoeuvre between the 140 isles working as part of a crew of 16 along with a professional skipper and deck hands.

Challenge Wales – Also focussed on the water, this trip will be headed to Wales where students will work with the North Wales Wildlife Trust doing marine conservation activities.



Survival Scotland – A challenging expedition involving Escape and Evade exercises where RGS boys will be hunted out in the harsh Scottish wilderness.

The RGS Extracurricular Programme

By Asad Tariq - Year 10

How well is RGS's extracurricular system coping with the rigours of Covid-19? Features Editor, Asad Tariq, finds out by interviewing Mr Clatworthy, the head of the extracurricular programme.

The RGS extracurricular system has always been heavily involved in almost every student's time at the school. From DofE to the vast number of clubs available at RGS, the extracurricular programme is an often underrated but very important component of school life. The RGS curriculum is broad and expansive however it cannot cover everything that there is to know, particularly things that no teacher could ever teach you. Character and useful life skills are built up during these varied excursions. As Mr Clatworthy put it: *'Memorable experiences lead to memorable learning'*. Many of our fondest moments related to RGS have happened outside of the classroom. Whether it was a trip to the other side of the world or just around the corner, every co-curricular trip at RGS builds up character traits such as perseverance, integrity or responsibility. These all link directly to the RGS's ethos of learning and explain why the extracurricular system is such a crucial component at this school.



With this in mind, Mr Clatworthy has swiftly stepped up to provide some alternatives to the usual trips abroad. He calls them: The Great British Adventures.

"Many people rarely spend time getting to know the country they live in. We often holiday to some Greek island than explore the vast opportunities that make the UK one of the most visited countries in the world."

The exact logistics of each of the following trips have not been confirmed yet but Mr Clatworthy assures me, 'they are all definitely taking place as soon as it is safe to do so... most likely in the Summer term but otherwise in the 2021/22 academic year'. (see previous page and below for the 5 trips)



Climbing Snowdon – Snowdon is the highest mountain in England and Wales offering a challenge to both experienced and novice mountaineers.



Wild 24 – A powerful 24hr coaching journey with the Wild. The journey sees students explore the open moor, high rocky tors, ancient forests, rivers, and sites of human spirituality. Students are encouraged to be immersed in a human journey with the wild for 24hrs (including sleeping on the ground) returning feeling awake, connected, and ready for whatever comes next.

In addition to these five trips, the current extracurricular clubs are booming. The limited opportunities outside of school has meant that many boys are instead opting to spend their evenings with their friends at school doing activities from Greenpower to Debating. In fact, this very newspaper you're holding right now (or viewing online) is the product of the burst of new clubs created by the lockdown. The sheer number of clubs leave people spoilt for choice, so I asked the head of the entire extracurricular system at RGS for his opinion. *"The sporting facet of RGS receives a lot of attention... as it rightfully should, however there are many boys who are interested in other things. This is where clubs such as Warhammer or Photography can help foster that interest in an easy and hassle-free manner. Very few state schools have the breadth of clubs that RGS does and the vast majority of these clubs are available free of cost."*

The Beauty Quest: Cosmetic Dentistry

By **Adi Sachdeva - Year 12**

Cosmetic dentistry. Perhaps the most well-known type of body deforming after plastic surgery. Yet, cosmetic dentistry is more common than you think. How many of you reading this article now have braces or some form of teeth-straightening device? Around 200,000 people get fitted with braces in the UK alone every year. In previous years, the thought of metal in your mouth would have scared many children off for fear of being ostracised by their classmates. Yet nowadays, the rows of flashing metal or ceramic fill the halls of every school in the country. Braces are not the only form of this. Veneers and teeth whitening treatments are used by thousands of people despite their well-documented dangers and high costs. What has caused people to change their attitude towards cosmetic dentistry?



Celebrities, influencers and social media are actively setting the bar higher for what is deemed to look good. Clothes, hairstyles and body shapes that might have passed unnoticed in previous years now make us jump up and judge someone. Now when it comes to teeth, they follow us in just about every situation possible. Bad teeth can damage your self-esteem and make you less confident. It can affect first impressions at a job interview. They can give off a sense of bad cleanliness and hygiene. 40% of the UK are currently unhappy with their teeth with nearly half of them planning to undergo cosmetic dental work. These statistics are mainly driven by the popularity of dental work by celebrities. Just look at Millie Bobby Brown on the left

versus the right. Little touches such as teeth whitening and a short stint with braces has completely transformed her smile and her appearance. With a personality as influential as hers, many people will undergo similar or more invasive procedures to keep up with what society deems are good-looking teeth. Veneers, perhaps the most common cosmetic dentistry procedure after braces, have become more and more popular in recent years and are said to create the “perfect smile”. But the untold truth behind these is absolutely grotesque. Just to improve the visual appearance of their teeth, people let their teeth be shaved down into tiny little stubs ruining them forever. Then they place artificial porcelain caps over these damaged stubs and call it an ‘improvement’. The procedure is not cheap at all; people spend thousands of pounds on this but is it really worth it? Tom Cruise has spent £30,000 on his teeth since the picture on the left, in order to gain the botched smile on the right. He paid thousands to some of the most skilled cosmetic dentists in the industry to completely destroy his genuine teeth and cover it with tiny porcelain caps which haven’t even been aligned correctly. Despite this, many people will follow in his footsteps damaging their natural teeth at a cost of around £1000 per tooth.

On the other hand, in some cases cosmetic dentistry can retain the health of the teeth, not damaging them at all whilst still give a visually appealing smile. This is where braces come in. They correct any jaw or bite misalignments without removing or altering any teeth leaving a more visually appealing



smile after a couple years of wear. In the majority of cases, this is done so that a person has the ability to be able to chew better, speak better and bite better in the longer run. If celebrities and influencers are to promote cosmetic dentistry, it should be through non-invasive procedures like these which are beneficial for the health of the teeth rather than causing them damage purely for the sake of beauty.



The increase in cosmetic dentistry is partly due to the image-conscious society we live in today. On one hand we could see cosmetic dentistry as something done for the betterment of the health of teeth whilst making them look good. On the other hand, many cosmetic dentistry procedures are done purely just to look more visually appealing, similar to plastic surgery.

The Arts.

The 'Popular' Dilemma – The Madness of Genre

By Keshav Anand - Year 12



When I say pop music, what goes through your mind? Perhaps the sound of sonorous ballads typical from Adele or the bewilderingly high-pitched vocals of the Bee Gees. Or perhaps your mind jumps to the genre-bending music of Billie Eilish or iconic performances by Freddie Mercury. When posing this question to myself I began to wonder... What really is pop music?

Derived from “popular music”, the term pop has been used interchangeably with “popular music” since its inception as a genre in the 1970s. With a definition as simple as this, it should be easy and decisive to say who is making pop music and what a pop song is. Yet, whilst most people would class Ariana Grande as a “popstar”, artists such as Drake and Post Malone aren’t as clear-cut. Equally, sub-genres further add complication. “Indie-pop” artists such as Conan Gray aren’t often held in the same light as those aforementioned, despite making music which arguably sounds more “poppy”. But, seeing as I can describe it as “poppy”, it begs the question whether there’s more to pop’s definition than simply being what’s popular.

Following this train of thought, it’s clear that the sound of “pop music”

has at least changed over time. Comparing Prince to Justin Bieber makes this wholly apparent. In addition, The Beatles, who at one point were the biggest group in the world, are now deemed creators of “Rock Classics” by Spotify. If we follow our original definition that “popular” and “pop” are the same, this classification is rather confusing. Regardless on your thoughts about this, it does show a dissonance between how songs were considered past compared to present.

Further discord can be found from Lil Nas X’s *Old Town Road*. Despite winning a Country Music Association Award, it was taken off Billboard’s country charts for “failing to embrace enough elements of today’s country music.” If we pick apart the song in question: it has the southern drawl and cowboy motifs found in country, the bombastic backing track and braggadocious tone found in hip-hop and all the popularity necessary for our current definition of pop, with a chorus that’s both catchy and has extreme replay value for radios. As a result, the song has been controversial as to whether or not it’s country, pop or hip-hop... Or an amalgam of all three.

Finally, there are songs that definitely don’t fit the mould of

what a pop song should be but become extremely popular regardless. An example of this would be CORPSE’s ‘E-GIRLS ARE RUINING MY LIFE’. The gritty rap song undoubtedly is unlike anything that would have charted many years ago. But, given CORPSE’s monumental rise on YouTube, the song’s pop culture references and TikTokers frequent usage of the song, it inevitably became a hit.

Especially now, in an age where music is easily streamable and apps like TikTok can propel a song from niche to mainstream, the lines have really been blurred for what constitutes a pop artist or song.

But what does this all really mean? Whilst this article has focused on pop, the principles can be applied to essentially any genre of music. And, ultimately, I think it means... Nothing. Or, that it should mean nothing. Genres are not as black and white as they used to be. Recently it has become increasingly more difficult to define exactly what makes one genre different to another and most songs will be a blend between multiple, taking inspiration from several sources. By attempting to assign genre to artists and music, many artists feel as though they are being forced into a box. By labelling artists work, one inevitably detracts from the

outreach of the song or, indeed, the artistry itself. Equally, the over-classification of music is frankly infuriating. When asking a friend what type of music they like, I'm personally not expecting them to answer with "post-hardcore-experimental-bedroom-indie-rock". And, perhaps more importantly, by getting too specific, it caters to a niche which hardly exists and further unnecessarily isolates the artists' audience.

Despite all this, are genres really all that bad? Well, they're certainly not the spawn of Satan and they can particularly help people trying to open their eyes to a new field of music. I, myself, have often perused the premade Spotify playlists when looking for something new. Saying this, the notion of artists feeling the need to conform to a predetermined style of music from the pressure from fans and declining sales is worrying. By limiting artists to such a shallow field, it hinders

experimentation and leads to artists failing to reach the standards set by previous albums, with so-called fans holding onto a sense of nostalgia.

To conclude, the continual change in style is what makes music one of the most inventive and addictive art forms. It's an outlet which continues to break boundaries beyond the confines of genre. So... What is pop music? Who cares?

The Catcher in the Rye: A Book that Kills?

By Jake Brown - Year 10

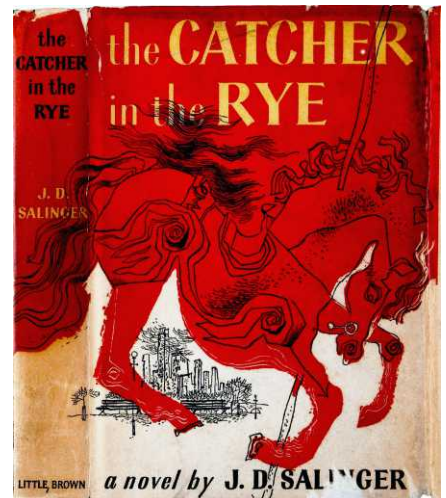
On the eve of 8th December 1980, John Lennon was tragically shot as he made his way out of his apartment building in New York. The killer, Mark Chapman, was found unphased a block away, and of all things reading. The book he clutched he claimed was the motive for the crime, so much so he had tried to change his name to match the main character's. Could a book truly taint someone so drastically - and what was this book?

This so-called corrupting novel is 'The Catcher in the Rye', written in 1951 by J.D. Salinger. It's set in 1950's America and depicts sixteen-year-old Holden Caulfield's journey into adulthood. Expelled from prep school, he decides to take the train to New York where the book tracks him over three days whilst he attempts to avoid a confrontation with his parents. While some refer to 'The Catcher in the Rye' as a bildungsroman (coming of age novel), it however opposes many of the tendencies which normally see the embracement of adulthood in these novels, instead depicting Caulfield attempting to escape it. He drastically attempts to save his sister and other children from growing up, distraught to the idea they will one day have to face the adult world. The novel contradicts the mindset that when you grow up you need to conform and fit into society, but instead advocates being

free and independent from the monotonous cycle of adult life.

However, these beliefs voiced by Caulfield created controversy in 50s American culture, a time overshadowed by Cold War tensions and consequent patriotic conformity. Whilst most contemporary ambitions were to chase the American dream through finishing school, getting a job and raising a family, Holden is depicted in stark contrast. 'The Catcher in the Rye' directly contradicts this conventional mindset, arguing against becoming 'yes men' but rather suggesting thriving as individuals. Caulfield particularly despises the "phonies" of the world, a title he prescribes to the superficial population around him.

Consequently, due to this antagonism of contextual class values, the novel has been banned countless throughout history. Yet is this fair? The main themes seem to particularly resonate with the teenage audience that stand with him on rejecting conventionality and conformism. The modern reader naturally seems to carry a cynicism for society, and to limit such ideas seems a form of orthodoxy that the book so passionately rallies against. Literature is indeed a powerful force, but to restrict a book for messages universally felt is



obstinate. The story of Mark Chapman is tragic, but in no way can the book be blamed for the killing when considering the extraneous mental health conditions he had. If anything, the book offers an outlet to safely explore contrarian ideas. The restriction on literature only serves to push people towards more dangerous outlets to express their angst in comparison to exploring through the safe space of a book.

Inevitably the radical attitudes of 'The Catcher in the Rye' are what endear such a large audience to it. This, as well as spawning a love of reading in many, has helped many teenagers break away from the production line and find alternative lifepaths of self-expression. The deconstruction of adult conformity still holds poignancy sixty years later, and for that it should be remembered and read by all who find themselves questioning the "phoniness" of those around them.



The 1980s gave us some of the most memorable moments in filmmaking history with its array of classic movies: 'Back to the Future', 'The Goonies' and 'ET' all still hold up as firm family favourites today. One of my top picks is 'The Karate Kid', a wholesome story about a young underdog, Daniel LaRusso (Ralph Macchio), standing up to his bullies through the means of karate. Not

How the Karate Kid is still kicking in 2021

By Eli King - Year 8

only is this film a classic in its own right, but it also features one of the most iconic characters in film history, a humble Okinawan gardener, Mr Miyagi, portrayed by the late Pat Morita.

It may surprise you to know therefore that in 2018, YouTube Red commissioned a television series following up the 'Karate Kid' movies. Set in the present day, it revisits Daniel LaRusso and his former bully, Johnny Lawrence (William Zabka). Daniel is now a successful car dealer, enjoying local celebrity status and a happy family. Johnny, on the other hand, is divorced, has an estranged son and can barely keep a job. However, after an encounter with his old rival, he decides to reinstate his old karate dojo, Cobra Kai. Meanwhile,

Daniel reflects on his past and begins teaching others the more mindful side of karate, the same once taught to him by Mr Miyagi.

With the same actors as the original franchise, this follow-up series treats fans to a sentimental revisitation into the world of karate and classic comedy. 'Cobra Kai' cleverly navigates the stories of two grown men stuck in the past, delivering an insightful look towards the problems of growing up whilst showing how the pairs dynamic has changed in time.

If you need a fix of 80s nostalgia, check out 'Cobra Kai' with Season 3 now on Netflix. It's both touching and funny, presenting a fabulous modern day take on the enduring legacy of the 'Karate Kid' franchise.

What does Hollywood have in store?

By Devan Pangrekar - Year 12

After a lengthy drought of films last year, 2021 seems promising, with an extensive line-up of highly anticipated movies assuming there are no more substantial delays.

Fans of the action and adventure genre should strap in for a non-stop thrill ride kicking off on July 8th when the ninth instalment of the 'Fast and Furious' saga will finally be out in all its physics-defying glory. More action follows when Ryan Reynolds and Samuel L. Jackson team up again on August 20th in the sequel to 2017's 'The Hitman's Bodyguard' and are sure to deliver another comedic yet violent film. What's more, audiences may finally get to see Daniel Craig's final outing as James Bond on September 30th in 'No Time To Die'. Then comes the newest addition to a series that has only improved over the years;

'Mission: Impossible 7' is scheduled to release on November 19th. Finally, finishing off the year on December 22nd is the prequel to 'Kingsman': 'The King's Man', set in the early 20th Century; it promises to deliver the origin story to our favourite umbrella fighting spy service.

Following from the warm reception of 'Zack Snyder's Justice League', the rise of comic book films also continues in 2021. Marvel Studios will return to the big screen on July 9th with the release of 'Black Widow', finally giving Scarlett Johansson the MCU spotlight. On August 6th, James Gunn's 'The Suicide Squad', a sequel and soft reboot of the film series, will be in



theatres and seems to be a whole lot of R-rated fun. Spider-Man will also be swinging back into cinemas on December 17th with 'Spider-Man: No Way Home'. Tom Holland will be back as the web-slinger in his third solo film and, rumours suggest, he may be joined by Andrew Garfield and Tobey Maguire reprising their respective portrayals of Peter Parker.

2021 also has plenty of terrifying treats sprinkled over the year. John Krasinski's long awaited 'A Quiet Place Part II', is set to release May 28th, offering a follow up to the game-changing 2018 film. On the same date 'The Conjuring 3', is set

to release, the third entry in the Conjuring Universe that focuses on paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren. Also highly anticipated is the Jordan Peele

produced 'Candyman' reboot that will be out on August 27th with Yahya Abdul-Mateen II in the lead role.

With multiple big releases almost every month, the movie-going experience this year may be wallet-draining but is also sure to be greatly gratifying.

The Death Of Cinema

By Kieran Leete - Year 12

Cinema is dead, and no line up of films no matter how star studded can save it from its Covid-19 grave. With such an abundance of films to look forward to, proclaiming "The Death of Cinema" to some would seem sacrilege, how dare I cast out cinema in what seems to be its golden year. Yet, although indeed the film line-up is exemplar, it is clear the once mighty cinema is on its last legs. But why is this, and what does it say about the audience's evolving digest of movies. It is clear that Covid severely impacted the cinema industry, but it is my belief that rather this was the straw that broke the camel's back, and in reality, the fall of cinema reflects a far greater changing age of the viewer.

The deathliest blow to cinema has been the growing abundance of streaming platforms, gifting an on-demand supply of films to each and every couchgoer. The mega giants of Netflix, Amazon Prime, and the latest addition Disney+ to name a few, have seemingly inspired a new revolution of film. The most detrimental introduction by these platforms is the new "straight to streaming" feature, enabling a major blockbuster to appear on the platform simultaneous to its theatre premier. With the ability to enjoy the latest from your couch, why bother braving the shoppers in Eden shopping mall to fight your way to Cineworld. The latest bombshell was dropped when HBO Max announced the biggest move in this direction, promising all Warner Bros films to be on their service when in cinema. This statement promises would be blockbuster giants 'Matrix 4', 'The Suicide Squad' and 'Dune' delivered straight



to your television, and it's hard to imagine wanting to pay more money for something you can readily watch at home.

What's more, cinemas are fighting a losing game, having lost the ability to draw audiences on the appeal of gimmicky tricks. The once sought after 'big screen' experience no longer can draw crowds with technology hot on their tail. With TV's getting bigger, thinner and better quality how long will it be before we all have a 4K UHD Panasonic 70". Additionally, nor will cinema's outdated stunts of 3D draw in any takers, those glasses are enough to drive away any viewer not wanting a severe headache. Rather, the cinema can offer nothing not now accessible at home. The one attraction cinemas could possibly have would be the 'shared experience' which whilst true in some respects, is dampened by the inconsiderate popcorn munchers, phone scrollers and constant chatters. Besides, if one still craves the 'shared experience' technology now facilitates this, allowing direct contact with friends through social media whilst still at home.

Furthermore, the evidence to cinema's fall lies in the numbers. Firstly, take note of 'Trolls: World Tour' released in April last year. Solely debuting on streaming platforms as a 'buy' option, it scored 5 million digital rentals just in the US and Canada in the first 3 weeks, equating to the staggering \$100 million. In three weeks, this digital release achieved what its predecessor 'Trolls' took five months of a theatrical run to produce for Universal. With more money also going to directly to studios via home rental, it seems to be the favourable option for studios. What's more, watching from home is also an all-round cheaper experience for the viewer. The small fee of rental seems a pleasant alternative to being extorted out of your life savings for a small popcorn and bottle of water. If studios can perfect the digital release of films, it seems cinemas cannot fight back.

Perhaps it is not that we will be saying goodbye to films, but it seems cinemas could go under unless they find some way to stay afloat. Even then, it begs the question is it already too late?