

A close-up photograph of a stack of several donuts. Each donut is covered in a thick, dark chocolate glaze that drips down the sides. The donuts are topped with chopped hazelnuts. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

If viewing on mobile, please use the left and right navigation keys at the bottom of the screen instead of swiping due to a technical issue with Adobe

NOVEMBER 2017

FRIENDS OF WBGGS

NEWSLETTER

New: Friends special events, workshops and masterclasses

Big Raffle results

London Film Festival
Orla Smith reviews top films

Robots: an automated future

Appendicitis!!! The day that went wrong

FRIENDS OF WBGGS

New STEM Centre



The new Centre will allow the school to offer unparalleled STEM teaching

The new STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) Centre is near completion and will be officially opened on 9th November 2017 by scientist and TV presenter Lord Robert Winston.

The new three floor Centre includes science labs, an engineering room and a large CAD (Computer Aided Design)/CAM (Computer Aided Manufacture) suite, upgrading the School's current facilities significantly.

The building also houses additional teaching rooms for mathematics and computing and has a large conference area to allow for more STEM outreach work with young people in the area.

The school was fortunate to have the entire cost of construction of the Centre funded by grants from national and local government. However,

the cost of fixtures, fittings and equipment was not covered by our government grants. With generous donations from the Friends of the School and Old Fullerians' Association, as well as over 100 parent donors, the building has been kitted out ready for lessons to start before Christmas.



FRIENDS OF WBGS

New: Friends Special Events

Friends of school are arranging a series of special events for parents, carers and their families. This is a new initiative and is the result of a survey conducted by the Friends in June 2016. To view the survey please see [Issue 7 of this newsletter](#), published in July 2016.

This Autumn half term we have planned two events based on interests and concerns expressed in that survey.

Mental Health and Wellbeing



Dr Gunton will talk about the psychological and emotional challenges faced by boys in their secondary school years and what the Learning Support team at Watford Boys' can do to help them.

Dr Gunton is a psychotherapist and Head of Learning Support at Watford Boys. She is

deeply experienced in adolescent matters and has built up the Learning Support Department over many years. The LSC is open to all students at the school and it is renowned within the County for the exceptional work achieved there.

Sally Russell OBE will introduce the evening. She is a local mum, mental health campaigner and a founder of Netmums. Her family's experiences have led to a passionate interest in finding ways to help, both through improving local services and through the digital world.

The talk will take place on Monday November 27th at the Learning Support Centre at Watford Grammar School for Boys. Doors will open at 6pm in time for the talk at 6.30pm. Refreshments will be available and there will be an opportunity to speak with other parents and staff at the end of the event. This is the

first of a series of events on mental health and well-being.



Baking Master Class

In this class, participants will find out how to make perfect choux pastry. Helen will share her techniques while participants create their own cream filled choux buns topped with chocolate sauce.

Helen Zacharia is a teacher of Food Technology and Nutrition. She has a passion for food and has been teaching for over 30 years, first in a city academy in London and then at Watford Grammar school for girls. She now teaches at Watford Grammar School for Boys, where she has been impressed by the enthusiasm students have shown towards her subject.

Participants in the master class are asked to bring ingredients to make their own choux pastry: 50g butter and 60g plain flour for the pastry; 350ml whipping cream (med sized carton), 200g chocolate (Bournville is fine) for the filling and 1 small can of evaporated milk for the sauce. You will also need a container to take the pastries home. The school will provide the rest of the materials. Helen's recipe is in [this newsletter](#).

The class will take place between 6.30 and 8.30pm on Wednesday 13th December in the food technology department, which is upstairs in the Sixth Form Centre.

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Friends News

The Big Raffle 2017



Friends of school organised the Big Raffle this year to raise funds for new playground equipment, Mr Cooksey drew the winning tickets on Thursday 19th October in the school hall. The winners were:

iPad Mini 4

Aditya Bhagavatula

Fitbit Blaze

Justin Li

Flying Lesson in a 4 seater aeroplane

Mrs L Lam

Supercar Driving Experience

Mark Crucian

Family Warner Bros Studio Tour

Dylan Law

Top Golf Voucher

Bhavan Sathiyalingham

The Raffle raised around £3,000. Many thanks to everyone who took part.

New arrivals: welcome

Hollie Rendall has been appointed as the new link person between the Friends of School Committee and the school. She has been in post for a few months now and recently took time out to talk about herself and her role at Watford Boys'.



"I started in the role of Development Director in January this year and went straight in at the deep end with a fundraising campaign to run for the STEM Centre! My role broadly falls into three categories: marketing, fundraising and alumni relations. As well as being the main link between the Friends of the School and the school itself, I also have a similar link with the Old Fullerians' Association and attend meetings of the Watford Fuller Foundation which deals with financial matters relating to the school.

Alongside the largely parent and alumni-focused fundraising campaign for the STEM Centre, my major project this year has been to update the database of former pupils and staff. I've started a twice-yearly alumni newsletter, Fuller News, with a circulation of around 3,500 alumni and growing. This is focused on the present and future, rather than the past, and the intention is to have more events for alumni.

Our first such event was in the summer and was a tribute to two long-standing former teachers who passed away earlier in the year, as well as a number of teachers who retired at the end of last year. My long-term plan is for students to feel like their relationship with the school doesn't have to end after year 13 and for the school to have something to offer

FRIENDS OF WBGS

Friends News

after that. This relies on Old Fullerians being willing to come back and offer their time and expertise, and so far the evidence is that lots of boys leave WBGS with a great amount of affection for the school.

While this is my first job in a school, I do have experience of the Watford Grammar way of life, having studied at Watford Girls' and taken one of my A Levels at the boys' school. After studying at Sheffield University, I spent a decade working in public relations for big financial brands, charities and public sector clients (with my last client appropriately enough being the 'Get Into Teaching' campaign for the Department for Education).

I'm always very open to ideas or indeed offers of help! Having a close relationship with the Friends of the School helps us all achieve our goals and it's been great to see the financial support the Friends can provide because of their fundraising efforts."

Departures: thanks and good luck

Archana Singh will step down as Chair of the Friends of School Committee on Wednesday 1st November at the Friends Annual General Meeting. Archana is a great communicator who made helping at Friends' events fun for everyone. She was the inspiration behind the Bollywood Barn Dance in November last year, which brought school families together for a marvellous evening in the main school hall.

Jeanette Mcleod has also stepped down from the committee after several years. The Friends will miss her independent views and her willingness to get in involved in all of Friends' activities, from organising Fun Days to serving tea at parent nights.

Thanks

Thanks to everyone who helped organise and run events this year. The Friends would also like to thank people and organisations who kindly sponsored or made donations to our events. These include: The Taste of Lahore restaurant, The Prince of Bengal restaurant, Sewell & Gardner, Warner Bros UK and Top Golf UK.



FRIENDS OF WBGS

Friends events coming up

The School Quiz Night

The school Quiz will take place on Saturday 24th February at 7pm in the main hall of the school. The quiz master will be Mr Cooksey and teachers, parents, carers, families and friends are invited to come along and take part. The Quiz night is organized by Danielle Wright on behalf of the Friends of School and is always a great success. Early bird tickets will be available towards the end of term. All money raised is for the benefit of the school.



School Quiz Night November 2016

Football Tournament

Friends of school are planning a football tournament to take place near the end of Spring term. This five a side tournament will be open to teams from years seven, eight and nine. Entry will cost £20 per team and all money raised will go to the P.E department. Parents and carers are invited to help on the day or stay and watch the games.



Calendar

15/11 · 4:30 - 7	Year 11 Parent Evening
20/11 · 6pm	Talk by Dr Gunton
23/11 · 4:30 - 7	Year 13 Parent Evening
28/11 · 7:30	Friends Committee Meeting
29/11 · 7pm	Autumn Concert 1
30/11 · 7pm	Autumn Concert 2
05/12 · 7:30	School Play 1
06/12 · 4:30 - 7	Year 9 Parent Evening
06/12 · 7:30	School Play 2
07/12 · 7:30	School Play 3
13/12 · 6:30	Choux pastry masterclass

Choux Pastry Recipe



Ingredients

150 ml water
50g butter
60g plain flour
2 eggs
350ml whipping cream (med sized carton)
200g chocolate (Bournville is fine)

For chocolate sauce:
1 small can evaporated milk

Method

01. Measure/weigh all ingredients. Sieve flour onto greaseproof paper or a plate

02. Switch on oven – gas mark 6 or 200 C

03. Bring the water and butter to a rolling boil in a medium saucepan remove from heat.

04. Quickly add the flour to the boiling liquid. Beat vigorously until smooth and cook for half a minute on low heat. The mixture should have come together and should have left the sides of the pan clean and be very thick and stiff.

05. Allow the dough to cool slightly – this can be accelerated by placing the pan over cold water.

06. Meanwhile beat the eggs together in a small bowl or jug.

07. Add a little of the egg (1-2 tablespoons) to the pastry and beat very well, either with a wooden spoon or an electric mixer. Continue adding the egg in small amounts and beating the mixture well. The choux pastry should remain fairly stiff throughout. It should never get runny so all the egg may not be needed.

08. Either pipe the mixture in finger lengths (for éclairs) or pile the mixture in heaps (for choux buns) onto a greased baking tray. Alternatively you could make a choux ring using all the mixture.

09. Bake at gas mark 6 or 200 C for 10 mins. Turn oven down to 170 C and cook for a further 20 minutes. 5 minutes before the end of cooking remove from the oven, pierce to release steam and place back in the oven for 5 mins to dry out completely.

10. Remove from the oven, split and leave to cool. Fill as desired.

11. To make chocolate sauce: Melt the chocolate in the evaporated milk over a double boiler.

Automation: what does the future look like



As humans, our deepest need is to get things as easily and as quickly as we can. We do not want to hustle. And technology is making it all possible.

In today's world, "luxury" has taken on a whole new dimension. For both businesses and people, "time" is the most valuable luxury item. Therefore, global technology giants are constantly finding new ways to simplify and automate. Automation, as we know it, has traditionally been confined to the assembly lines of a large manufacturing plants. However, we are now seeing automation across multiple sectors like retail, transportation and in most of our day-to-day activities.

Just 60 robots run the entire warehouse of Alibaba, a Chinese e-commerce company and they have increased productivity by 300%. When someone places an order with Alibaba, a robot locates the product and picks it out from one of the 32,300 shelves. Humans pack and dispatch it. The robots can carry up to 500 kilograms. Each one has a laser system to prevent crashes. The robots take themselves to charging stations when their batteries run low. They now do 70% of the work in the warehouse.

A self-driving truck operated by Otto (a start-up owned by Uber), has already made its first commercial 190 km delivery run in the US, carrying over 50,000 cases of Budweiser beers. The technology fitted in Otto's trucks uses sensors to read the road ahead. Data from

the sensors is then fed back to a computer which analysis it and makes adjustments to the speed and steering.

Labour costs account to 75% of shipping costs. While drivers are restricted by law from driving more than 11 hours per day without taking an 8-hour break, a driverless truck can drive 24 hours per day. This means it can effectively double the output of the country's transportation network at 25 percent of the cost. In addition, these autonomous vehicles prove to be much more fuel efficient by maintaining optimal cruising speeds.

Trucking represents a considerable portion of the cost of all the goods we buy and therefore this would mean lower prices for consumers. But where does it leave the large number of truck drivers who would lose their jobs in the process?

It is an ongoing debate if automation creates more jobs or just causes mass unemployment. Industry leaders like Alphabet's Executive Chairman Eric Schmidt are, however, optimistic. They believe that:

"the future is you with a computer, not you replaced by a computer".

With less complex work being increasingly automated, what does the future of work look like? Work will increasingly become about adapting to new challenges that artificial intelligence and robots will be less good at. Future skills are all about having a growth mindset, where lifelong learning becomes a norm. We will have to prepare for a future where we have more than 6 jobs over the course of our careers.

Success has always favoured those who have constantly striven to identify human needs and solve them. While our grandmothers waited in long lines at the post office, they wanted email. They just didn't know it. Therefore, our education must fuel exploratory thinking so we can envision future human needs and finding fresh ways to address them.

Devi Sujathaa Sekar

References

1. McKinsey Analytics – Where is technology taking the economy
2. TechCrunch – The driverless truck is coming and it is going to automate millions of jobs
3. World Economic Forum - <https://www.weforum.org/>

Devi Sujathaa Sekar works for CISCO and is a STEM ambassador. CISCO has recently launched an initiative called Little Big Futures. This programme allows students, aged 11-14 to access five one-hour lessons across the breadth of STEM subjects. CISCO are also working on a 5 new hour project in each of the STEM subjects and will pay for entries to the CREST awards.

To find out more go to: <https://www.stem.org.uk/little-big-futures>

In Your Garden

Autumn is pretty well upon us now. The clocks have gone back and daylight is getting shorter. Leaves are turning from green to glorious yellow and amber, before falling to the ground or drifting into windblown piles.

In our garden, we will be mowing the grass for a few more weeks more although fewer cuttings will appear each time in the collection box. The process of dead heading the dahlias continues, along with the removal of spent golden rods and peonies. We have trimmed

back our lilies and removed the last of the rose buds. The hanging baskets are still quite vibrant; the more delicate plants are clinging on and our wallflowers and sweet Williams are still doing well. Autumn is at it's glorious height now but there is sense of the winter to come.

In my next article, I will outline the work that needs to be done over the winter period.

Happy Gardening,
Nick Horscroft



Undercover Parent: Jobs in the Brave New World

As parents we all want our children to be happy, although most of us would admit to a link between happiness and paid employment. What jobs, therefore, should we suggest to our teenage children for consideration? The undercover parent has been doing a bit of sleuthing...



could be automated by 2055, and the Bank of England suggests that 15 million UK jobs could disappear or be re-engineered through automation.

Martin Ford, futurist and author of *Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of a Jobless Future*, suggests jobs, resilient to automation, can be split

into three main groups:

1. Those requiring genuine creativity (such as artists, scientists, developing new business strategies)
2. Occupations that involve building complex relationships with people (such as nursing, business, religious or spiritual advisers)
3. Highly unpredictable jobs (such as an emergency plumber).

Tom Davenport, author of *Only Humans Need Apply: Winners and Losers in the Age of Smart Machines* (these books do have rather scary titles) has some strategies to suggest. One is to find work in the field of monitoring what computers do and deciding what to automate next. Another is to focus on areas that are hard to automate. Many new jobs depend on programming ability, but not all. Examples of “new” jobs include Body Part Maker, Nano-Medic or Avatar Manager as well as Climate Controller, Waste Data Handler and Digital Architect.

So maybe the advice to our kids should be “do something you love and are really good at”... and that may be something we adults don’t even think of as a proper job.

[Complete University Guide](#) says the current top ten degrees for full-time professional employment six months after university ends are:

Dentistry (94%)
Nursing (94%)
Medicine (93%)
Physiotherapy (91%)
Veterinary Medicine (91%)
Medical Technology (90%)
Occupational Therapy (86%)
Optometry, Ophthalmology and Orthoptics (85%)
Land and Property Management (80%)
Building (79%)

Salaries, prospects and required skills for these and many other occupations can be checked out on www.prospects.ac.uk.

However, the future is inherently difficult to predict. Current advice seems to be to foster agility and diversification. This means, expect a portfolio of work, rather than a single career to last a lifetime.

Increased automation is also a major factor to consider. McKinsey & Co management consultants, warn that half of today’s jobs

Meanwhile, have fun checking your job risk of automation on www.willrobotstakemyjob.com

Technological problems and natural solutions

Mobile phones, computers, Fitbits, social media ... in our modern, technology-fuelled world it can be hard to escape the endless pressure to go, go go. For some of us nightfall does not even offer a reprieve. We reach for our phones or computers to answer emails, check Twitter or Facebook and this keeps us awake long into the night.

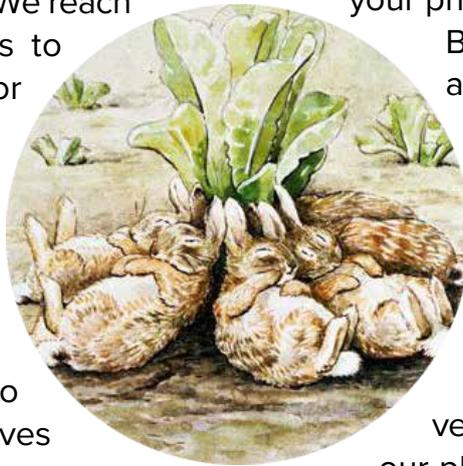
As creatures that evolved to stare into the distance for predators, sleep with the dusk and rise with the dawn, we should not be surprised to find that the fast pace of our lives takes a toll on our health

Research suggests that we are more stressed and anxious than ever before and this seems to affect all age groups from children and teens to pensioners.

The impact of prolonged stress on our bodies is significant. It can cause long-term changes in our hormone levels, as well as in our immune, heart and digestive systems. This means our health begins to suffer. We come down with flu and colds more often; we develop high blood pressure, become anxious or have difficulty sleeping; we feel pain and fatigue, struggle with fertility or develop digestive issues. Prolonged exposure to blue-light from electronic screens can also do harm to our bodies as it interferes with natural sleep patterns and melatonin production.

So how can we protect ourselves from stress in our busy 21st Century lives? Some of the changes we can make are straightforward and we can put them into practice straight away.

Tech hygiene can help. This means avoiding electronic devices in the hours before sleep, installing something like f.lux on your computer, or enabling Night Shift mode on your phone.



Medicine from wild lettuce, Californian poppy and passion flower can help with sleep disorders.

Being outside is also beneficial and nothing beats a walk in nature for invigorating your body, reducing stress and helping you to sleep. You don't have to record it with your Fitbit either for it to be any good for you.

What we eat and drink is also very important. Making sure half of our plate at every meal is composed of vegetables, ideally with at least half of them raw, perhaps in the form of fruit or salad, will promote our bodies resistance to stress. Cutting down on coffee, tea, alcohol and sugary foods is also a very good idea.

Nature can help in other ways. A particular group of plants called "adaptogens" contain compounds that help our hypothalamus and adrenal glands withstand all sorts of stress, from work and emotional strain to the impact of illness and old age. Medicines are made from these plants all over the world: ashwagandha and holy basil in India; liquorice and asparagus in England; ginseng in Asia; rhodiola in China and reishi in Japan.

We can also take comfort in the fact that unlike our new technologies, these medicines have been in use for thousands of years.

Victoria Kearns

Victoria Kearns is a professional herbalist practising in West Watford at Kearns & Meiring Medical Herbalists kmherbalists.co.uk / 07864 945 086

Appendicitis!!! The Day that Went Wrong



'Mum!!! I need money on my lunch account!'

I groaned, inwardly, knowing that this would not be simple. It involves a computer for one thing, and I was supposed to be going to work. In spite of a huge amount of forward planning, my four teenage boys

continue to spring 'surprises' on me just before they leave for school every day.

Eventually, I arrived at work; I am a health professional but that morning I felt like someone had dragged me through a hedge backwards. All my colleagues, who are at 'different' stages in their lives, arrived looking fresh faced and well, professional.

My manager said, 'Good morning You *do* look flustered!'

I consoled myself by thinking it takes a lot of effort to achieve this look.

I settled down to the sanity of my work place, where people appear to respect my opinion and actually listen to me, unlike my boys who tell me:

'Mum, don't smile or wave at my friends ... it's weird!'

All went well for a while, until I got a call from my husband. He sounded concerned when he told me that number two son had just arrived home doubled up in pain. He put our second child on the phone:

'Where is the pain?' I asked.

'Starting at my belly button and going straight downwards'

'Ok,' I said. 'Tell Dad, you need an emergency appointment with the GP. They'll give you a letter to go straight to the paediatric ward.'

I met them both outside our local hospital. Our second son looked grey; I took one look at him and asked if he felt sick,

'Yes,' he said and vomited into a flower bed behind a queue of people waiting for a bus.

I was impressed with how discrete he was and the flowerbed was just in the right place and just at the right height ... most convenient.

Once in the paediatric ward we sat in a side room until a nurse appeared. She commented on his grey complexion and his sunken eyes and in my distracted state, I said:

'Oh, he always looks like that.'

She began to roll up his shirtsleeve, and it suddenly dawned on me ... this is the son who hates to wash!

'Look at the state of him!!!' I thought. 'And that shirt is *filthy!*'

At that point, I decide not to confess to being a health professional, who supports and advises parents about parenting and childcare. I kept an eye on the care he was receiving, all the same, and when the nurse left and a clerk came to book him into the ward, I asked:

'Is a doctor going to see him?'

'When we have finished the paper work,' she replied.

I frantically clutched for the words to convey to her, sensitively, that the paper work might have to wait. I said:

'I'm wondering whether his appendix is about to rupture?'

At that, the clerk left the room and two nurses arrived. They took his blood pressure and tried to get a venflon into his vein, which promptly collapsed; they tried three times with no success. I asked one of them:

'Do you think he's going into shock? Is a doctor coming?'

'Oh, he's just stressed,' the nurse replied but at that moment a whole team of doctors descended upon us and guess what, my son's symptoms suddenly subsided; isn't that just so typical. Son number two was now as cool as a cucumber and I even began to wonder if he was suffering from trapped wind.

They decided to operate, however, and that evening we went down to the anaesthetic room. The young surgeons looked like they have just taken their GCSE's but they were so helpful and jovial to mother and son, putting us at our ease. They commented to my son as he breathed in gas and air:

'You'll soon feel how your mum feels after she's had two glasses of Prosecco'

To which he replied, 'Prosecco... morphine, more like.'

Where did that come from? Morphine is not a mealtime topic of conversation in our home.

I just said: 'This isn't the place to share the family secrets.'

Thankfully, the operation was a success and my son received marvellous care from all staff in the NHS.

If you would like to know more about the symptoms of appendicitis, please refer to [NHS Choices](#), an excellent source of well researched and evidence based information.

As a mother of a teenager, I would definitely advise parents and carers to be familiar with the symptoms of appendicitis and insist you teenage boys wash ... just in case.

London Film Festival: Top Films Reviewed

The 61st London Film Festival showcased new cinema from some of the world's leading filmmakers, and introduced exciting up-and-coming talent.

I saw 36 films on the programme and found myself attempting to process that overwhelming volume by looking for patterns to connect them.

Coming-of-age narratives dominated the festival (as they often do). A pair of films (*Summer 1993* and *The Florida Project*) viewed traumatic events through a child's innocent gaze. Both of these films, and several others, (*Call Me by Your Name*, *Ava*), took place over a vividly captured summer.

I saw two films in which nosebleeds were induced by desire, and unpleasantly I witnessed more equine fatalities than anyone should in the space of 11 days.

At festivals, the lows are excruciating and mediocre films are quickly forgotten, but those that are truly outstanding feel like much needed gasps of cool, crisp air. This time, eight films made LFF worthwhile. They will be among the best cinema to look forward to this year and next.

Ava

Léa Mysius' debut, *Ava* uses the onset of blindness as a metaphor for growing up. Ava (astonishing newcomer Noée Abita) is 13 when she is told that she will soon lose her sight. Her response is not self pity, but rather a steely determination to banish her innocence and inexperience while she can still see the world around her.

Ava is a coming-of-age narrative in fast forward, shot with dizzyingly rich colours and



infused with ceaseless, invigorating energy. Mysius has announced herself as a director with a bold and unique vision. Along with recent debuts *Raw* and *Divines*, *Ava* assures us that the future of French cinema is in good hands.

Ava does not yet have a release date

Call Me by Your Name



Call Me by Your Name is destined to be a classic. Luca Guadagnino's gorgeous Italian summer romance centres on the relationship between 17-year-old Elio (Timothée Chalamet) and his father's 24-year-old American apprentice, Oliver (Armie Hammer).

It was not until watching *Call Me by Your Name* that I realised how rare it is to see a relationship depicted like this on screen, where cinematic pleasure comes not from conflict or anguish, but from watching two people take joy in each other's company. Eating food, swimming, riding bikes and playing music take up most of the screen time, but the actors' chemistry is so compelling that you would happily watch them doing nothing for hours.

Chalamet is the standout, bringing his character's arc of self discovery to a heartrending, life-affirming end point. Both Guadagnino and his lead actor are uncommonly wise about the long term impact that a passionate first love can have on a person's life. *Call Me by Your Name* is special because it captures both the intensity of being within that love, and the perspective gained when you are without it.

Call Me by Your Name will be released on October 27th

The Florida Project



The Florida Project is Sean Baker's child's-eye-view of the hidden homeless. Living in a dingy motel just outside Disney World, precocious six-year-old Moonee (Brooklynn Prince) sees her bleak situation in bright colours. Baker occasionally allows the adults to lead the narrative: Moonee's young mother Halley (Bria Vinaite) and the stern but kindly motel manager Bobby (Willem Defoe).

Their story is darker than the innocent lens through which Moonee filters it. When seen through that lens, *The Florida Project* is a funny, feel-good film; when it confronts reality, it is devastating.

Though rough around the edges, *The Florida Project* fills you fit-to-bursting with an emotion that is best described as happiness and heartbreak made one.

The Florida Project will be released on November 10th

Lady Bird



Greta Gerwig's solo directorial debut *Lady Bird* is an intensely personal and specific account of a Sacramento teen's last year of high school. Saoirse Ronan plays Christine "Lady Bird" McPherson, a girl who gives herself a new name as she tries to forge a new identity. Lady Bird

is desperate to leave Sacramento for a big city – and desperate to leave behind her fraught relationship with her mother (Laurie Metcalf).

Gerwig has noted that she drew heavily from her own adolescence when writing the film. The perspective and wisdom she has gained in the years since informs the way Gerwig tells Lady Bird's story: never demonising the young woman for being stuck in her own head, but still keeping a knowing distance.

Through episodic storytelling, *Lady Bird* paints a remarkably comprehensive portrait of its protagonist's scattered life and various relationships. It is bound to be an important film for young girls who will see themselves in Lady Bird's escapades. It will also mean a lot to those who can look back on when they were in Lady Bird's position, unable to see how much they would miss home until they were gone.

Lady Bird will be released on February 16th 2018

Person to Person

Set over the course of a single day in the lives of several New Yorkers, *Person to Person* is a delightfully sweet and funny ode to the everyday. A series of amusing vignettes poke fun at the foibles and anxieties of various characters, and all these observations build to something profound.

Director Dustin Guy Defa shoots on grainy 16mm film and dresses his actors and set in retro design, giving the story a sense of timelessness that is only interrupted by the appearance of mobile phones.

Engaging in record sales and hands-on work, they are characters out of time, with internal clocks that tick at a more patient rhythm than the rest of us.



LONDON FILM FESTIVAL SPECIAL

Similar to Jim Jarmusch's *Paterson* last year, *Person to Person* is a micro-sized delight – a joyful little film about being decent to each other. It will get you noticing all the things you love about life.

Person to Person does not yet have a release date

Summer 1993



Summer 1993 was one of the most exciting debuts I saw at LFF this year. Carla Simón's film is told through the eyes of six-year-old Frida, who is processing the deaths of her parents, while unable to comprehend what death means. Frida doesn't understand that they're gone forever; she still expects her mother to answer the phone when called.

Simón immerses us in her perspective through subjective sound design and camerawork. She is able to track Frida's arc of processing grief to its natural end – finishing the film on a swift but impactful note.

Simón's film suggests that a happy ending doesn't have to involve Frida moving on from her grief. Finding a way to express it is enough.

Summer 1993 does not yet have a release date

Thelma

Joachim Trier's *Thelma* is his latest captivating mix of formal and experimental filmmaking. It has been called a riff on *Carrie*, but *Thelma* takes that film's concept to new and exciting places.

The eponymous Thelma (a brilliant Eili Harboe) is a deeply religious college student whose guilt over falling in love with a woman (Kaya Wilkins) manifests in seizures and



supernatural episodes.

Trier is a sensitive filmmaker and while his stylistic choices are refined, he is emotionally intimate with his characters. As in his last feature *Louder Than Bombs*, he sets aside a few sequences to let himself loose to experiment. The result is both moving and chilling, with a score and horror imagery that is harrowing on a molecular level.

Thelma will be released on November 3rd

You Were Never Really Here



You Were Never Really Here is Lynne Ramsay's most brutish film, and her most experimental. With *Ratcatcher*, *Morvern Callar* and *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, Ramsay has already proved herself to be one of the world's leading filmmakers.

You Were Never Really Here pares back and intensifies her images and sounds more than ever before, with the resulting visceral impact of a sledgehammer. Joaquin Phoenix won best actor at Cannes for his portrayal of a withdrawn hitman on a mission to rescue a young girl from sex trafficking.

Ramsay's film is violent in more ways than one: both the physical violence on screen and her stylistic violence are overwhelming. Intentionally, there is a thudding lack of subtlety. Everything you see or hear means something,

LONDON FILM FESTIVAL SPECIAL

and Ramsay makes no attempt to disguise that meaning – which you'll have to decide for yourself whether to admire or deride.

Measuring the extent of its quality on a single viewing would be doing a disservice to *You Were Never Really Here*, given how challenging

it sets out to be. It is impossible to shake.

You Were Never Really Here will be released on March 9th 2018

Orla Smith

[View Orla Smith's portfolio here](#)

This newsletter was put together by the newsletter group and designed by Nicholas Bush.

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