

THE HOURGLASS

COMMENT

TV needs to tell more human stories of the climate crisis



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MICHAEL EAVIS

The Man Who Built A World



INTERVIEW Page 6 >>>

MURDERS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS HAVE REACHED WAR-ZONES LEVELS

by SYLVIA KLIMAKI

More than three people are being murdered each week for defending the environment, according to 2018 data from Global Witness. There were 1,558 murders of environmental defenders between 2002 and 2017, of which Indigenous people make up the majority.

According to the UN, Indigenous people occupy 1 quarter of the Earth's land surface, which they share with most of the world's remaining biodiversity. About 65% of this land has not been developed, compared with 44% of lands owned by non-Indigenous populations. But there is a war waging between Indigenous communities looking to protect their lands, and those who seek to destroy it for profit.

Researchers have found that nature on Indigenous peoples' lands is degrading less than in other areas. Part of the reason for this is that most Indigenous people have a deep relationship with the environment: "for the Indigenous, the ecosystems are considered to be relatives and there is a relational accountability that comes with that, so destroying the environment is not just violence against the ecosystem, it is violence against a relative," says Michelle Montgomery, a Cherokee descendant and an associate professor of American Indian Studies at the University of Washington Tacoma.

More than half of the murders in 2018 of



Photo | Julian New

environmental defenders took place in South America, which has consistently ranked as the worst affected continent, with Guatemala being the deadliest country per capita.

Colombia is another minefield for environmental defenders. Within 2½ years, more than 700 indigenous leaders have been killed. The UN has documented 52 murders of Indigenous people in the northern part of Cauca in Colombia this year alone, with the latest killings taking place last month, where 5 Indigenous leaders were murdered. "There is never a focus on who the murderers are,"

Holly Gabriella, a student in Bogota says.

Brazil, the country with the world's largest tropical rainforest, has seen a correlation between recent spikes in deforestation and an increase in murders of Indigenous people in those areas. After a decade of supposed progress (according to Global Forest Watch, between 2001-18, Brazil lost almost 55 million hectares of tree cover at a rate of 5.7 soccer fields per minute), Bolsonaro's new government began ignoring environmental regulations and encouraging deforestation. There has been an 88% increase in

deforestation in June of this year, compared with the same month a year ago.

In Brazil, invasions of Indigenous people's lands also increased by 150% this year, according to the Indigenous Missionary Council. Paulos Paulino Guajajara, a member of the Guardians of the Forest, is the latest victim. "I knew he [Paulos] wouldn't last long the moment I saw his face all over social media. It is very dangerous out here. The government is encouraging this chaos", an environmental activist, who is based in the Cerrado area and wishes to remain

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CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

anonymous, told *The Hourglass*.

“Indigenous people lack secure rights for their lands and support from the state so they are often left to impose their own rights going against very powerful people,” Darragh Conway, Lead Legal Council of Climate Focus, says. In most countries, the lack of prosecution is astonishing: on average just over 10% of these murders are convicted. Yet research has found that granting formal land rights to Indigenous people living in the world’s forests is one of the “most underused and effective solutions to reducing deforestation that fuels climate change,” according to Peter Veit, director of the Washington-based World Resources Institute’s land rights initiative. This makes it a key factor in addressing the current Climate and Ecological Crisis.



Photo | Julian New

murders in 2018 alone. Murders in Africa are at a lower rate but defending national parks is now riskier than ever, with large numbers of game rangers being murdered.

The killings of environmental defenders have doubled over the last 15 years, reaching levels usually associated with war zones, according to a Nature Sustainability study. While many of these people are trying to defend their land and the ecosystems within them, in doing

so they are risking their lives to protect the future of all life on our planet. ■

The Guardians of the Amazon need your backing. Please visit www.survivalinternational.org/emails/guajajara_guardians to email the authorities in Brazil to urge them to help the Guardians.



It is not just South America. Under President Duterte in the Philippines, there was a 71% increase in the murder of environmental defenders, with 30

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

Here at *The Hourglass* we are feeling reflective, as this will be the final issue of the newspaper for 2019. It’s been a spectacular year in many ways; although there has been a lot of bad news, there have also been real shifts of positive change. Environment has become a top issue for the British public, and climate change is finally being discussed widely. These shifts have occurred over the course of a year, which shows how quickly things can progress when we push for them to. 2019 had many losses, but also many victories.

Still, many of us are feeling weary. People are feeling the burden of species decline, the grief of what we have done to the planet. There’s an election on the horizon, and many of us are clinging to some small hope that something significant might happen. Extinction Rebellion is urging people to vote for climate-related policies - to ask politicians, #WhereIsYourPlan?

However, should climate not lead the way when the results are in, let’s not give up hope or the struggle. We’re in this for the

long-run. We’re in it for all life on the planet, with no guarantee that things will get better. That can get exhausting. So although real change will come from structural change, it’s good to get stuck in and feel like we’re doing our bit as well. As Simon Bramwell often says, “there’s no map for the situation we find ourselves in”; there are no easy solutions. There is no clear way forward. With that in mind, in this issue we look at things that ordinary people are doing to address the emergency situation we are in, from composting, to founding a festival, to growing your own food. We hope they bring you inspiration.

As the astrophysicist Carl Sagan said almost 30 years ago, “Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity - in all this vastness - there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves... Like it or not, for the moment the Earth is where we make our stand”.

We stand on the cusp of great change. Whatever happens next, let’s stand together.

See you in the New Year. ■

The Editorial Team
of The Hourglass

ITALIAN SCHOOLS LEAD THE WAY WITH NEW CLIMATE CHANGE CURRICULUM



by RHYS HANDLEY

Children in Italian schools are set to take compulsory lessons on climate change.

Education minister Lorenzo Fioramonti announced on 11 November that children at all state schools in Italy will take part in 33 hours of lessons dedicated to climate change-related issues, equating to almost one hour per week, from the start of the next academic year in September 2020.

Other subjects such as geography, mathematics and physics will also be taught with a perspective of sustainable development.

“The entire ministry is being changed to make sustainability and climate the centre of the education model,” Fioramonti told Reuters. “I want to make the Italian education system the first education system that put the environment and society at the core of

everything we learn in school.”

Fioramonti hails from the populist Five Star Movement party for its adoption of a variety of policies from across the political spectrum. An economics professor at Pretoria University in South Africa, Fioramonti pledged to work with a group of international experts to advise the climate curriculum. He previously courted controversy among conservatives in the Italian opposition by encouraging students to take time off school in order to participate in the climate protests, such as Greta Thunberg’s school strikes, which have sprung up around the world.

His party is the largest in a coalition government that includes ministers from the social-democratic Democratic Party, the liberal Italian Viva and a number of independents, headed by independent Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte.

Italy felt the impacts of the climate crisis firsthand on 13 November when 85% of Venice was flooded. City mayor Luigi Brugnaro declared a state of emergency and called the floods, the second-highest on record, “the result of climate change”. ■

OVER 11,000 SCIENTISTS DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Photo | Guy Reece

by RHYS HANDLEY

A team of scientists led by Professor William Ripple of Oregon State University have authored a letter relaying the moral obligation of scientists to ‘warn humanity of any catastrophic threat’. The letter has been signed by 11,258 scientists from 153 countries.

It declares ‘clearly and unequivocally that planet Earth is facing a climate emergency’. The letter lays out the key factors contributing to the climate crisis and criticises global society’s failure to address them, calling for the replacement of fossil fuels, cutting pollutants, conservation measures



to protect ecosystems, plant-based diets, and converting the economy to one that is carbon-free.

The letter concludes: ‘We believe that the prospects will be greatest if decision-makers and

all of humanity promptly respond to this warning and declaration of a climate emergency and act to sustain life on planet Earth, our only home.’ ■

IN OTHER NEWS



received compensation or an apology from the British government.

■ Venice has experienced its second-highest levels of flooding since records began. Two people have died, with an elderly man struck by lightning as he operated an electric water pump.

■ Bolivia’s new interim president has pledged to hold fresh elections after taking the place of socialist Evo Morales, who resigned his post after 14 years and took refuge in Mexico following protests over alleged election rigging.

■ Hubert Howard, a Windrush generation immigrant who arrived in the UK 59 years ago, has died only three weeks after finally being granted British citizenship. Hubert, who was three when he left Jamaica, never

Answers on Page 4

WHO SAID IT?

“The people will hold our governments and corporate powers accountable for the destruction you are allowing to our environment”

“This isn’t climate change - it’s everything change”

HOURGLASS MEET THE TEAM



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The Hourglass has made every effort to report the truth. We take great care to ensure that statements of fact are correct, but mistakes do sometimes happen. If you spot anything, please email hourglass@rebellion.earth with the article title and page number.



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WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO
Amanda Palmer, Arwyn, Charlie Waterhouse, Girl Band, Matt Zeg, Michael Eavis, Peter Kennard, Psychadelephant, Raven, Ronan McNern, Stig, Tori Dee
Everyone who sent in letters and emails (yes, even the trolls!) and all the rebel distributors





KEYSTONE PIPELINE OIL LEAK IS WORSE THAN FEARED

by MEENA RAI

In October 2019 a major oil pipeline suffered a leak that covered half an acre of wetland in North Dakota, USA, in crude oil. The pipeline carries oil from Alberta, Canada, to southern Texas. This is its second largest spill in two years.

Latest news indicates that the amount of land impacted by the oil spill is almost 10 times larger than initially reported, which has not been acknowledged by TC Energy, the company that runs the Keystone network. Under their website FAQs the company states that the original estimate of leakage is correct.

The incident began on 29 October, when about 383,000 US gallons (1.4 million litres) of crude oil leaked near the town of Edinburg, less than 50 miles from the Canadian border. The pipeline was shut down when the leak was discovered, but returned to service on 10 November following government approval.

Environmental organisations, Indigenous communities and Native American groups continue to oppose the extension. "It has never been if a pipeline breaks, but rather when," Joye Braun, of the Indigenous Environmental Network, told CNN. The extraction of crude oil from oil sands releases 17% more greenhouse gases than other extraction

techniques, prompting concerns about increasing global emissions.

Karl Rockeman, director of North Dakota's Department of Environmental Quality (DoEQ), told The New York Times that it was "one of the larger spills in the State".

Commissioned in 2010, Keystone 1 suffered twelve spills in its first year of operation, and spilled more than US 400,000 gallons of oil on to farmland in South Dakota in 2017.

The Keystone network is set to be extended after US president Donald Trump undermined his predecessor Barack Obama's decision to reject TC Energy's application for Keystone XL, a line that is planned to span

1,179 miles from Alberta, Canada, to Nebraska, US. Senator Bernie Sanders, who is running for the Democratic presidential nomination, tweeted that as President he will "shut down Keystone Pipeline".

Reacting to the latest spill, Sierra Club associate director Catherine Collentine said: "We don't yet know the extent of the damage from this latest tar sands spill, but what we do know is that this is not the first time this pipeline has spilled toxic tar sands, and it won't be the last."

"It becomes clearer and clearer that this is not safe," he told The Washington Post.

Construction of the Keystone XL pipeline will begin in March. ■

WHO SAID IT? ANSWERS

1

Jason Momoa

2

Margaret Atwood



Illustration | Peter Kennard

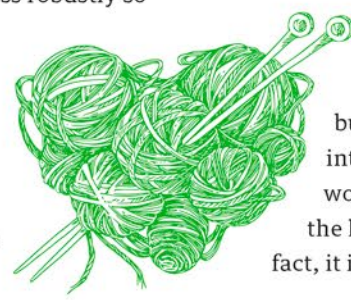


Photo below and right | Ben Darlington



by LAURA KRARUP FRANSDEN

We are drowning in clothes, producing more than ever and using them for much shorter amounts of time. While fashion companies send 'surplus' garments to incineration and consumers send tonnes of discarded clothes to landfill every year, most of us still do not consider the land, water, pesticides, chemicals,

'The current fashion system is, at large, the embodiment of consumerism and built on the same grounds of exploitation'

emissions and human labour required to make our clothes.

Built-in-obsolence is at the core of the fashion industry, when the clothes are made less robustly so that they will be replaced, and when new trends are introduced to make what we already have

FASHION SPECIAL

What's wrong with our clothes?

seem undesirable.

The current fashion system is, at large, the embodiment of consumerism and built on the same grounds of exploitation that allows for capitalism to flourish. The planet is pushed beyond its limits while we spend planetary overdraft, and the workers are held hostage in a system of systematic exploitation, working long hours without safety regulations or a living wage overseas. Allowing this system to continue enables us

to maintain high consumption and for CEOs to get richer but it is not in the interest of either the workers themselves or the health of this planet. In fact, it is sacrificing both. ■



by ALICE WILBY

The entire fashion industry is on hyper drive. Fast fashion no longer just refers to cheap mass-produced clothing, it highlights the speed at which social media encourages and facilitates our consumption and disposal of all types of fashion. No sooner have we purchased something new than brands are ramming the next offering down our throats, allowing us no time to

savour our style choices. Couple this with constant bombardment of celebrity and influencers in an ever revolving wardrobe of different looks, and the average 'consumer' is left with 'Insta anxiety'. The result is a never ending stream of the purchase and disposal of clothing that is, in the end, both emotionally damaging to ourselves and environmentally harmful. ■

by BEL JACOBS, @BEL_JACOBS

We are in an ecological emergency, and fashion - specifically the pattern of rapid production, consumption and disposal that wealthier countries have adopted in the last fifty years - is making the problem much worse. According to a report published by Oxfam this September, 53 per cent of British adults don't have a clue about the destructive impact of fast fashion.

In the UK, we buy two tonnes of clothing every minute, producing more emissions over the course of a month than those from flying a plane around the world 900 times. Meanwhile, we have 11 years left of the UN deadline to mitigate against catastrophic climate disaster - to get to net zero carbon emissions. Yet fashion

production is set to rise by 63 per cent by 2030. So that's more pesticide use on conventional cotton, more water pollution, more desertification, more biodiversity loss, more worker poverty - and way more climate emissions. It's crazy. We're throwing away our futures and our children's futures for the sake of a few pairs of jeans. The present and future suffering is immeasurable. We are shopping our way over a cliff. ■



Photo | Terry Matthews

WHAT CAN WE DO?

1 The most sustainable item of clothing is the one you already have. Go through your closet, dig out unworn items and see just how creatively you can use them when you put your mind to it.

2 Re-embrace the arts of making and mending, repairing and re-using. Once you get into this, it's really rewarding to wear something that you've resurrected yourself.

3 Explore the joys of secondhand and vintage shopping. We have enough clothes on this planet to last us three or four lifetimes, and some of them are in a charity shop near you.

4 Once you've got that under your belt, try to stop buying new clothes! We are losing our planet, its beautiful wildlife, and its extraordinary people to over production and mass consumption. Although you might think that it won't make a difference, by limiting your purchases you're sending messages to brands that you want things to change.

5 Speaking of sending messages to brands, tell them about the journey you're taking and the choices you're making.

6 Get out on the streets, write to your MP, share your discoveries on social media. Galvanise!

INTERVIEW



Michael Eavis | The Man Who Built A World



by SUE WHEAT

As action heroes go, Michael Eavis is one of the most amiable, non-threatening, well-loved you could find.

The Somerset dairy farmer who went to Bath Blues Festival in 1970 and loved the music so much he decided to set up his own festival on his family farm in Glastonbury, has created something so big, so special, and so well-loved, that even 49 years later he still seems surprised. This year, a quarter of a million people made the journey to Worthy Farm to enjoy a vast array of music, performances, talks and creativity at Glastonbury Festival. Covering Stormzy to The Cure, yoga classes to comedy, it's one of the most loved and successful festivals on the planet.

Eavis's favourite band in 1970 was the Kinks, who inspired him that day at Bath Festival. "I played their single 'Lola' to the cows every day through a sound system I'd rigged up through a sewer pipe wired into an amplifier with no knobs, just wires - it sounds crazy, doesn't it? But to this day I'd say there's never been a better sound than that."

John Martin in 1979 was his absolute favourite, though: "I Couldn't Love You More". Oh, it was a real tear jerker that one."

Like any good action hero, Eavis is fearless, but in a gentle way. He loves

telling the story that Michael Heseltine (nicknamed Tarzan at the time) evicted 30,000 people from Stonehenge in the 80s "because they were a threat to the nation -

"I feel like I've got to do as much as I can do for humanity. That's what keeps me going. I like to invest in society. I don't want to be a moron."

can you believe that? And he was Minister of Defence! Then they all promptly came down the road to Glastonbury Festival, made themselves incredibly useful, and helped me make the festival into the success it is today.

"So Tarzan turned it around for me really," he laughs.

"The lesson from that is I had trust in people, and I've kept the Stonehenge people on ever since. And how much did that cost do you think? I don't care.

Because they've got the talent and can deliver and

want a new car or yacht or anything. My dear mother said the best thing I'd done was to buy 50 houses in Pilton village and make them into social housing, never mind the festival. They'll never be sold, they'll always be affordable. I like to invest in society - local clubs, Oxfam, WaterAid and Greenpeace. I don't want to be a moron."

This year, driven by his daughter Emily who now co-runs the festival with him - "We're a dream team, we each do what the other doesn't want to" - Glastonbury Festival threw itself behind the new movement campaigning on the climate and ecological emergency, Extinction Rebellion (XR). "All the best people I know are involved in it," he says.

Environmentalism is in Eavis's bones. I ask what he's most proud of in terms of site management and he talks about simple things like letting the hedges grow into trees, or improving the drainage, but then divulges something much more exciting - that they're

turning 80kw of methane from the cow's slurry into electricity every hour with a biodigester all day and night.

they were so skilled and so able. I learnt a lot from those kids actually. I owe them a huge debt."

His love of, and faith in people comes through constantly. He reels off people who have worked with him through the years.

Arabella Churchill, granddaughter of Winston and a wild-child of the 70s, worked with him for 34 years managing the theatre field. "She brought all the hippies with her and left me with a footprint that's lasted all through the years which was the green, ecology message."

Paul Charles was the only agent that phoned him back and he rewarded him with a life-long commitment to run the Acoustic stage. "He believed in me and got me Van Morrison and Jackson Browne on the same bill in 1982 - that was a real miracle for me."

But the music, he says, "is the least important part of the festival - it's all the stuff that goes on around the edges." Over 3 million people try to book to come here, he says, which is seven per cent of the entire UK population. People come to us because they trust us, plus they like what we do with the money." [Glastonbury donates to numerous local and international charities every year.]

"I feel like I've got to do as much as I can do for humanity. That's what keeps me going. I don't

"That's a lot of electric from the methane in the cow dung and it's all going into the national grid. There's a future there isn't there? And it's cut my electricity bills down from £3,000 a month to £21," he laughs. This helps confront the elephant in the room: the impact of being a dairy farmer, but it can't quite resolve it, given the contribution of livestock farming to the climate emergency.

"I don't know what to do about that really. My family has been doing it for 200 years and we provide food to people in all corners of the Earth. We're feeding millions of people with essential food - that's got to be a good thing right? But Emily's not really into it, so it will probably die with me. People haven't got long to go!"

When I tell him how many people have told me that he - and the festival - have inspired them into environmental activism, he takes the compliment happily.

"Yes, it does seem that way doesn't it? I must have done something right!"



Comment is Priceless



DONNACHADH MCCARTHY

Transport emissions are the largest source of UK direct emissions, at 33%. They have remained stubbornly high since 1990, while emissions from electricity dropped 60%. Parallel to the climate and ecological emergencies the UK is also has diabetes, obesity and asthma crises. All three conditions have transport related contributory factors.

The loudly trumpeted switch to electric vehicles (EVs) is not the solution to these crises. The embodied carbon of the manufacture of both EV and fossil fuelled cars is equal to the average annual electricity emissions from a UK household for seven to forty-five years! Luckily, there

CYCLING IS CORE TO CLIMATE CAMPAIGNING

is an alternative..

The single most effective solution to all these crises would be the annual investment of £6 billion a year in the creation of a national cycleway network by 2025. This would equal the 20% of the UK transport budget, which the UN says we should be investing. Over 70% of trips are under five miles and 80% under ten miles.

Research by Glasgow University showed that cycling to work is associated with a staggering 45% lower risk of developing cancer and a 46% lower risk of heart disease. We can end the war by the motor-car lobby on humanity. We can create beautiful car-free towns and city centres. Our kids can be freed, able to play on our streets again, and through them we adults can learn to know our neighbours again, re-establishing our lost communities. ■

Donnachadh McCarthy has been arrested four times peacefully protesting with Extinction Rebellion. He is the author of 'The Prostitute State - How Britain's Democracy Has Been Bought, and is a newspaper eco-columnist. @DonnachadhMc'



CHASE IRON EYES

Here in the U.S., Native communities continue to stand on the front lines of the climate crisis. A couple weeks back, the Keystone pipeline leaked more than 383,000 gallons of oil onto our homelands, because as surely as pipelines carry oil, they end up spilling.

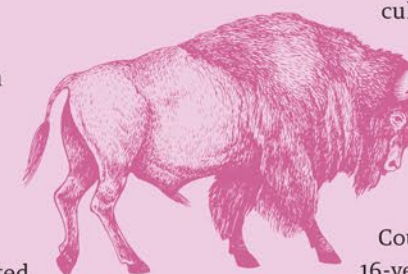
What timing. As federal regulators temporarily shut down Keystone because pipelines can't be trusted, many of my relatives were gearing up to attend a public hearing this past Wednesday on whether the North Dakota Public Service Commission should allow a dramatic

NATIVE AMERICAN PIPELINE RESISTANCE

increase to the flow rate through the infamous Dakota Access pipeline (DAPL).

You remember DAPL. In 2016 and '17, you undoubtedly read stories about tribes, celebrities, veterans and environmentalists all joining together for the protests against it near the Standing Rock, the reservation where I was born and raised. Now, once again over our tribal objections, the pipeline's operators want to increase its capacity - and its danger to Unci Maka (Grandmother Earth).

Based on a recommendation from the pipeline's hired, militarized security firm, North Dakota authorities arrested me at the protests,



subsequently charging me with "trespassing" on my own tribe's ancestral lands and starting a riot (which consisted of a small group of us standing in a prayer circle on an isolated hill). Those charges were later dropped.

This resistance is not just about us; it's about everyone. Indigenous cultures

'Indigenous cultures protest because we believe all living things are related and must be respected.'

protest because we believe all living things are related and must be respected. Recently, Swedish teen climate activist Greta Thunberg accepted our invitation to visit Lakota Country. She led - with my own 16-year-old daughter, Tokatawin - three days of climate action in the

COMMENT

LESS POLAR BEARS, MORE PEOPLE: AN IMPERSONAL CRISIS



TAY AZIZ

When you search the words 'climate change' online, the images are of melting glaciers, polar bears stranded on sea ice, disturbing graphics of an Earth on fire, and fossil fuel power stations. These images have come to represent climate change, but where are all the people?

Imagery and videos are a huge part of how we understand climate change, depicting some of the catastrophic impacts on our planet. In Natural History documentaries, landscapes characterised by ice - or lack thereof - usually take centre stage to tell the story of the global climate crisis - remember THAT walrus scene from Seven Worlds: One Planet?

Polar bears and pandas have become much-loved symbols with climate change and wildlife conservation, but this highlights a problem - a lack of human stories. When humans are depicted, they're normally politicians, scientists or activists and these images, like the polar bear, reinforce the belief that climate change is a distant problem. For us to truly grasp the urgency and complexity of climate change and its solutions,

we need films and images which show importance to individuals, covering issues like the impact on food, the agricultural industry and access to clean water.

By focusing on personal stories, we can tell new narratives from new perspectives, such as the 370 million Indigenous people around the world who will be affected the most by environmental degradation and pollution. We need everyone to feel empowered and, more importantly, included in the conversation to find solutions. By moving the focus to environmental justice, community leaders who are inspiring hope on a local level will be able to take up the spotlight they rightly deserve. ■

Tay Aziz is a science communicator and Researcher at the BBC with a passion for the natural world. @tayaziz

Dakotas. She said that KXL is "not morally defensible."

Government is supposed to care for society. Instead, here in the U.S., from the White House on down, it often prioritizes profits over people - especially communities of colour.

It's so easy to focus on the things that divide us. It's harder to change the way we live. It's harder to stand and speak, in unity with those who may have wronged us or with whom we disagree. But that's the solidarity of Standing Rock, which reminded us how local action can have great, global impact. ■

Chase Iron Eyes serves as lead counsel for the Lakota People's Law Project, a subsidiary of 501(c)(3) law and policy organization the Romero Institute, and as Public Relations Director for Oglala Sioux Tribe President Julian Bear Runner. @ChaseIronEyes

YOUTH VOICE



GRACE SHELDON Age 18

HOW I USE ART AS A FORM OF ACTIVISM

I am a full time student and I am not specialised in anything yet, I feel like I am always learning but am still trying to work out what I could ever teach beyond the obvious impacts and causes of climate change.

I know I love crafts and so I recently began a type of embroidery called punch needling. My materials were funded by a charity called the Mark Evison Foundation who give grants to students looking to

learn something new or go on an expedition planned by themselves, but most of it was made with reused materials that I found.

After nailing linen to a wooden frame, I started creating my turtles, filling one side of the piece (the past) with shades of green and blue. The further towards the right is the moving of time into the

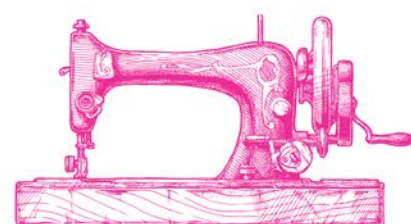
“Reducing plastic consumption is not just about avoiding glitter.”

potential future where colour fades into pieces of plastic. The page cuttings of skeletons are from a book I found. The diagrams reminded me of the fact that readers could be viewing existing ocean life in this way sooner than we think; it is supposed to raise awareness for the creatures dying out right now as you read this.

Reducing plastic consumption is not just about avoiding glitter. Because our waste processing is so much more efficient than other countries, we need to put pressure on UK companies that fund plastic production and waste systems globally to invest in biodegradable plastics, but also new pipe networks and more intelligent



Photo | Grace Sheldon



technology that can cheaply make used plastics raw materials again.

If you are interested in punch needling I would love to teach it, so please email me at grace.xyouth@googlemail.com



JAMES 'IGGY' FOX Age 25 @Wilderlost.Fox

Climate justice is about social justice

For decades, science has been met with silence. That era is over. Scientists for XR are refusing to be scribes of the apocalypse. For people to act on science's warnings and apply its solutions, its message needs shouting from the rooftops.

XR Snowflakes affinity group, and on 13 August, six of us were arrested at London's Brazilian Embassy for taking non-violent direct action to highlight an ecological and human rights emergency. We did it as two thousand Indigenous

Fogo, when thousands of fires were lit to clear deforested land in the Amazon.

I'm Rebelling because I love this world and the wild. When the forest is ablaze in a valley, sometimes all it takes is a few extra Snowflakes on the mountainside to trigger an avalanche that will put the fire out. Will you be one of them? ■

“I realised that my voice could be far more influential as an activist than as a scientist”

women marched on Brasilia to defend their lives and lands, and three days after the Dias do

After seven years of studying, researching and protecting nature as a wildlife conservationist, I gave up fieldwork and deferred an MSc to become a full-time Rebel. No matter how many surveys I ran, how many turtle nests I protected, or how many young people I educated in 'sustainability', the seas kept rising, forests kept burning, plastic kept clogging the beaches, and our data kept showing that wildlife was being decimated.

I realised that as an activist my voice could be far more influential than it had been as a scientist, so I joined the



Arwyn | Age 8



Raven | Age 6



GROW YOUR OWN FOOD WITH INDOOR GARDENING

by **KIM STODDART**

No matter where you live, whether you have a garden, balcony, fire escape or windowsill, growing some of your own fresh produce can be a positive action against climate change. There are no food miles from pot to plate, no plastic packaging or chemical sprays involved, just lovingly tendered home grown organic produce that is as fresh as fresh can be. You'll perhaps be surprised by the variety of fare that can realistically (and easily) be grown in even the smallest space at this time of year. Plus, the joy of germinating a seed into a plant into food provides a magical connection that is simple yet hard to beat.

Pick and come again salad leaves

are one of the easiest plants with which to work, and one packet of mixed seed will go far. Herbs are also excellent and many (like parsley, thyme, rosemary and sage) will stand firm against the cold if grown outside. They are also excellent for attracting pollinating insects in the summer. Inside, in a warm spot you can also widen your culinary reach with micro herbs like coriander, mint, dill, fennel and basil for a tantalising taste of sunshine in the darkest depths of winter. Just choose a sunny spot on a windowsill, keep harvesting your leaves and more will grow.

To get started, you can also do your bit by making use of salvaged materials as planting pots, such as

plastic containers, old wellington boots, drawers or boxes. Then it's just a case of picking up your seed of choice, some peat free compost, and you are good to grow.

It really isn't hard to do. Nature knows best and your seeds will want to grow. It's their natural predisposition to burst into life, before flowering and setting seed of their own. In fact it was common for gardeners to complete the natural cycle in this way before we all became so reliant on buying everything. In the case of salad leaves, coriander, rocket, radish and parsley, you can realistically also save your own seed with little to no fuss at all. Isn't nature marvellous? ■



WHISTLE-STOP WALKS Hadrian's Wall Path

by **GARETH HUW DAVIES**

The frozen path booms dully under my boots. On my right a burn runs the colour of Bisto. Oak leaves corkscrew limply down.

In Whistle Stop Walks, I take the train to a station, walk on, and pick up the train home somewhere down the line. As close as I can get to a zero carbon day out.

I am in a little green valley just north of Haltwhistle in Northumberland. On a craggy summit like a crusty loaf is Hadrian's Wall. I fill my notebook with hopeless artists' impressions. But even their amateurish

inexactitude cannot obscure this fact: the Romans couldn't lose.

Hadrian's Wall Path, one of Britain's premier league long distance trails, shadows the wall, or its original line, for 84 miles, from Wallsend to Bowness. I'm on the grandest central section, where the wall plunges and rears through a wild and ravishing landscape.

At one point I follow a minor road to the wall's north side. By rights you should come here first and behold the frowning face of the Roman Empire. After all, you don't see a great cathedral for the first time from the inside.

One of the most spectacular



surviving sections is at Walltown Crag, where the views stretch as far as Scotland. Strolling down to Brampton station, I salute the shades of Legio II Augusta, who

built this wonder of the world. Then the train back to Newcastle. ■

Thames and Rainham Marshes walk

Murder comes with a sudden pounce under a clear blue sky out in the marshes. The victim struggles, wriggles and flails, but its assailant has clearly killed before. With one gulp the heron swallows the marsh frog whole. The nearby cows don't even look up.

A reed bunting lightens the mood with a joyful "lets-all-move-on" aria, at about 100 notes a second.

I am on Rainham Marshes, one of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds' (RSPB) most unlikely reserves. Its setting could not be busier. On one side, a sinuous Eurostar glides past to

Paris. Swivelling west, I see Canary Wharf, nine miles away.

Google Maps' algorithms are



not programmed for poetry. Its preferred route to Purfleet Station (four miles) is through dreary light industrial suburbia. I opt for the beautiful saunter along the north bank of the Thames (a mile longer).

The National Trust's Rainham Hall elegantly bookends this walk. It's a mile to the entrance of the reserve. I pay the £6 and take the two mile circular walk. It's an irony that we have war to thank for the survival of this flat grazing land. In 1906 it became a military firing

range. Many a doomed First World War infantryman learned to shoot here. The government kept it on its books, repelled developers, and

sold it to the RSPB.

The performance by 800 species (birds, beetles, amphibians, moths slugs and flowers) changes daily. The wheatears, and a chorus of blackcaps, are just as glorious.

Then pure indulgence back at the visitor centre. Scrumptious home-made cakes. There's even a sticker saying who made them. ■



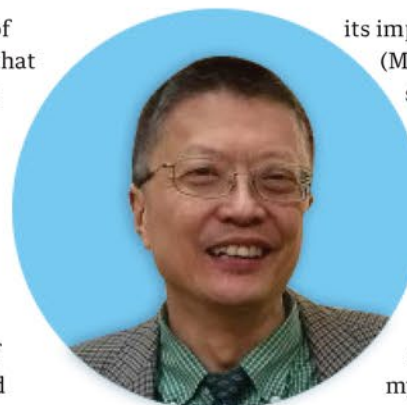
LAW OF THE LAND



Why did a 61 year old Chinese man decide to get arrested?

by YEN CHIT CHONG

The stereotype of Chinese people is that we keep our heads down, steer clear of authority and are quietly successful. This stereotype has some truth to it. However, for me, the urgency of climate change and



its impact on the country I come from (Malaysia), has created an unshakable sense of duty to act. Many people of colour feel more vulnerability since the country voted for Brexit, which makes the idea of arrest much more daunting for us than before. So as well as carrying a 'bust card' with phone numbers of solicitors, I also took along photos of my citizenship, and my passport to prove that I am British.

The officer who arrested me did it by the book, and with respect. Our ancestral lands and our relatives still living there are already suffering the impacts of climate change whether through searing heat waves, rising sea levels or repeated hurricanes. For me, the urgency of climate change and its impact on the country I come from (Malaysia) has created an unshakable sense of duty which overshadows my core reticence to take action. ■

STAYING WARM IN A HOUSE ON FIRE

by SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

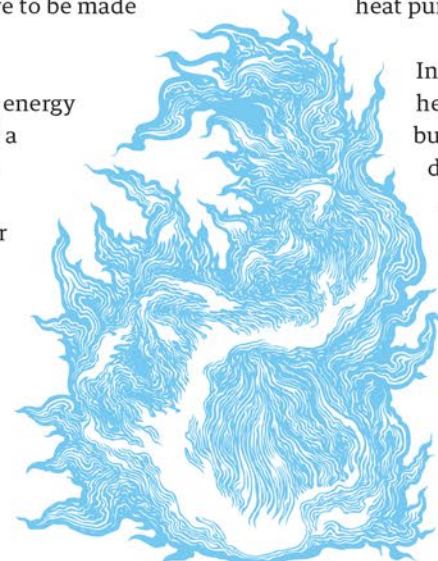
Paradoxically, global heating is likely to result in colder winters in Britain, as the temperate Gulf Stream falters, and disruption to the polar vortex unleashes the Beast from the East. At the same time, burning more fossil fuels to stay warm is the last thing we need. We can do a little to help reduce our

fuel use (and bills) by putting on warmer clothes instead of turning up the thermostat, shutting doors and windows and blocking up draughts, but personal efforts can only help marginally. The big changes have to be made at government levels.

Heating consumes over half the energy we use in our homes, and about a third of what we use nationally, and most of it is fossil gas and oil. How can we decarbonise our heating?

New houses could - with improvements in building regulations - be built requiring practically no heating (or cooling) at all, but currently most of our housing is built to far poorer standards. Adding insulation and draught-proofing can make

significant improvements, but nowhere near enough to eliminate the need for heating at all. Could we replace oil and gas boilers with electric heating - perhaps using heat pumps?



In France a lot of heating is electric, but they practically decarbonised their grid decades ago with cheap, low-carbon nuclear electricity, whereas in Britain we're not even on course to replace our existing, ageing, nuclear power stations, let alone expand our fleet. Wind provides useful amounts of clean electricity

(although solar is little use in the winter, when demand is highest), and we can also decarbonise our fossil- and biomass-fuelled power stations using carbon capture and storage, but we still have a huge job to even decarbonise our existing electricity supplies. Generating lots more clean electricity for heating (and upgrading the grid to handle the extra power) would add hugely to the challenge.

An approach being tested in the North of England is to decarbonise our gas network. Natural gas coming ashore from the North Sea will be split into hydrogen and carbon

dioxide (CO2). The CO2 gets pumped back into depleted gas reservoirs deep underground, while the hydrogen is fed into our existing gas pipes to run modified cookers and boilers. It would require a massive conversion effort, but



Photo | Talia Woodin

we did similar between 1968-1976 when we converted from town gas to "North Sea Gas".

Whatever approaches this country chooses, it should be for a citizens' assembly to decide, informed by the science, engineering and economics experts they call upon to advise them. ■

An extended version of this article, with references, can be found at is.gd/xrsfs



Photo | Gareth Morris

DEAR POLITICIANS
 OUR HOUSE IS ON FIRE
 PLEASE DO SOMETHING
 RIGHT NOW
 YOURS, HUMANITY

Illustration | Alistair Hall

Making a buzz



NATURE CONNECTEDNESS:

A new relationship with nature

by PROFESSOR MILES RICHARDSON

The emergencies of the warming climate and decline in wildlife show that the human relationship with the rest of nature is broken. To fix it we need a new relationship. A relationship that moves beyond use and control of nature to one that recognises that we are part of nature.

People differ in many ways, some have a closer relationship with nature than others. Similar to other differences like being



more outgoing or shy, we can measure how close a person is to nature. 'Nature connectedness' is the term used in psychology to describe that relationship between a person and the rest of nature. This focus is helpful to understand and improve our relationship with nature. People with higher levels of nature connectedness are more likely to do more for nature. Both in reducing their impact on the environment through using fewer resources and taking positive actions to help wildlife. This closer relationship with nature also tends to help people feel good and function well. This should come as no surprise. Looking back, we evolved to make



Illustration | Tori Dee

sense of the natural world and spent eons deeply embedded in our natural habitat. Nature helps manage our moods and research has shown that something as simple as placing a hand on a piece of oak, or looking at flowers, can have a positive effect on our physiology. We are part of the wider network of nature and we

should recognise and celebrate that. Sir Bob Watson was the lead scientist of the IPBES landmark health-check of life on Earth - the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystems published this year. The report showed that nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented



technology and 'more stuff' isn't the ultimate 'good life'. The answers lie, not in looking back, but forward to a new relationship where the health of nature is integrated into business, agriculture, social and cultural life - into every part of our lives, because nature is our lives. ■

Wash away stress with Forest Bathing

by CHRIS GOWER

'Forest bathing', or shinrin-yoku, is the ancient Japanese art of walking in the woods.

I've struggled with anxiety for most of my life at varying degrees of strength. According to the NHS it affects 5% of the population, especially those between 35 to 59. On my journey towards mental resilience, I have been focused on connecting with nature.

Research shows that doses of nature can improve mental and physiological health. The benefits of forest bathing were scientifically shown in the 1980s by Japanese physician and immunologist, Dr Qing Li. The Japanese government later introduced it into their national health programme.

The Woodland Trust has suggested that 'Forest Bathing should be among a range of non-medical therapies and activities recommended by GPs to boost patients wellbeing'. According to

Dr Li, just two hours in the forest once a month can give notable beneficial changes.

The constant destructive onslaught of our natural world is not only affecting our planet's ability to absorb carbon, but will ultimately have an effect on our collective wellbeing as a species.



As author Clarissa Estes says in The Faithful Gardener, "To be poor and be without trees, is to be the most starved human being in the world. To be poor and have trees, is to be completely rich in ways that money can never buy."

After reading this article, plan to find a quiet forest and spend a few hours sitting and breathing in it. Experience your surroundings with all five senses. You'll feel much better for it, even more so if you make it a regular thing. ■

For more information about Forest Bathing, visit the website for the Forest Bathing Institute <https://tfb.institute/>



Illustration | Tori Dee

Composting our way to a better world

by JOHN 'COMPOST' COSSHAM

Everyone knows what compost is, but few people understand how important it is, and the part it can play in building a truly sustainable world.

Nature makes compost naturally

- any plant or animal matter that falls on the surface of the land is used by bacteria, fungi and other organisms as food, and this process of breaking materials down means the nutrients are returned to the soil. Plants then take up these chemicals and the cycle begins again. Additionally, carbon is sucked out of the air

with photosynthesis and some is laid down in soils, sequestering it away.

Many modern societies have left this cycling of nutrients behind, which doesn't make sense.

Compost wants to happen. It's very easy to have a compost system in your garden, or community allotment site, and with a bit of effort local authorities can collect food 'wastes' and convert them into valuable fertiliser.

Home composting not only provides wonderful rich soil for healthy plants for wildlife and our garden crops, but also a habitat for a multitude of invertebrates and the things that eat them. Worms are one of the most obvious compost dwellers, but a garden compost bin will support beetles, flies, mites, woodlice, millipedes, centipedes and molluscs; and then toads, newts, hedgehogs, rodents, bats and birds feed off these.

We need to use our food and garden waste better, for the benefit of our crops and wildlife, to reduce our reliance on unsustainable resources, and to help us trap carbon in the soil. Humans have recycled our 'waste' this way for countless generations, and now we need to rediscover composting as part of creating a low carbon society. ■

CHRISTIANITY AND PROTEST

by **NADIRA CLARE WALLACE**

Cullan Joyce, lecturer at the Catholic Theological College in Melbourne Australia, one day realised that all his years of 'trying to live like Christ through connection to God, would become irrelevant if future generations were so threatened that pursuing a spiritual life would be impossible for them'.

Joyce disagrees adamantly with those Christians who view the climate crisis as

either 'God's Will' or a sign of the 'End Times'. Such Christians are a minority but some occupy key political positions, at least in the US. Joyce's argues that the End-Times-outlook is almost certainly a grave misinterpretation: 'if these are the end times, but humans are agents of these changes, then we must be acting against God's Will by destroying our world before its time'.

The eco-theologian Sallie McFague has argued in a her book, Blessed Are

the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint, that the planetary predicament we find ourselves in demands a kind of change that perhaps (most) religions encourage, if you take their core messages seriously. Such a change would need to involve what McFague calls 'kenotic love'. Kenosis, in the Christian tradition, means self-emptying i.e. you have to transcend the ego, curb the pursuit of personal satisfaction, and instead make love for one's neighbor - which includes all living creatures - the priority. ■



Photo | Ben Darlington

RECONNECT WITH EACH OTHER FOR A BETTER WAY OF LIVING

by **DR ADRIAN HARRIS**

Humans are communal creatures, and our ability to thrive depends on the community that holds us. Good mental health is founded in appreciating that we're part of a larger whole that we can take pride in. A strong community nurtures us though the good times and the bad, creating spaces where we can share positive experiences and get emotional support when things aren't going so well. Researchers found that people in neighbourhoods with a stronger sense of community experienced fewer mental health problems. It didn't matter how deprived or affluent a neighbourhood was - it's the community that counted.

Sadly, strong communities

are uncommon: almost a fifth of us say we always or often feel lonely. Loneliness is worse for your health than obesity, and lonely people are more likely to suffer from dementia and depression. Researcher Frances Moore Lappé wrote that community 'isn't a luxury, a nice thing; community is essential to our wellbeing'.

So how can you help create a better community locally?

Taking positive action to help other people supports your own mental wellbeing. Research by the New Economics Foundation found that even simple acts of kindness - a friendly smile or a helping hand - can make a difference. Start small and maybe you'll be encouraged to do more, like volunteering for a local community project.

Making a contribution to your community feels good as it helps create a sense of belonging and strengthens self-esteem.

According to psychologist Jamil Zaki, kindness is contagious, so your single good deed can send ripples through your community a like a pebble thrown into a pond. We sometimes think of ourselves as self-contained islands who need to focus only on our own needs. The reality is very different: we are part of a social ecosystem and your wellbeing is inextricably tied in with that of everyone else in your community. By sharing, helping people and building richer social connections we can improve our own wellbeing and nurture the community of which we are a part. ■

WHY I PROTESTED AT MY GRADUATION CEREMONY



by **SARAH GREENFIELD CLARK**

This October I graduated from Anglia Ruskin University with an MSc in Sustainability, achieving Distinction; but instead of feeling overjoyed, I felt numb.

I had hoped that 18 months of study would guide me toward climate solutions and a lucrative career, but instead it left me grieving in a world that no longer makes sense to me. I fear for the future my children face, and am overcome by a magnified sense of duty to do all that I can to highlight the crisis.

My graduation ceremony provided a perfect platform to demonstrate the sobering irony of the weight we give to higher education juxtaposed with willful ignorance toward climate academics who have spent decades studying their field.

A talented hat designer helped to create a mortar board with the Extinction Symbol on it, and a cloak from second-hand bits. Standing out in alarming bright pink against a sea of navy caps generated a few odd looks but I had prepared a placard that read: 'Stand with me. Acknowledge our privilege and use

our education to right the wrongs in this world and act on hard truths with courage and compassion'.

This small gesture won't make much of a difference on its own, but I hope it might inspire others to use all platforms to share this knowledge and help steer humanity toward a different path. It has also defined a need for me to help deliver climate and ecological education for all, through the not-for-profit I founded, Climate Emergency Action. To support this new program text **EDUCATE** to 70970 to donate £5. ■



WHAT ARE TIPPING POINTS?

by **AARON THIERRY**

Perhaps the climate change metaphor which has stayed in my mind most strongly is that of a group striding out into a minefield without a map or guide. In the analogy the mines represent tipping points in the climate system, primed to go off, but we don't know where they are, only that the further we go the greater the chance there is of setting one off.

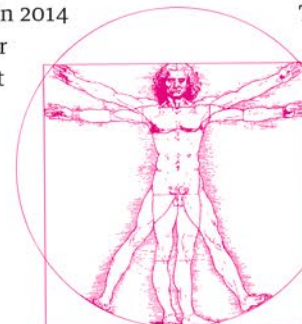
Nature is full of tipping points, often sudden and catastrophic. Increase the level of nutrients in certain lakes just a little bit too much and they can tip from being crystal clear to being full of green algae. Hunting sea otters for their pelts led to the collapse of underwater kelp forests, as herbivorous sea urchin populations exploded following the loss of their key predator.

The climate system also displays such tipping points, both sudden and subtle varieties. In fact



Photo | Guy Reece

according to some researchers the warming we have caused may have already triggered certain tipping points. In 2014 NASA researcher Prof. Eric Rignot published a paper with colleagues which he said presented "observational evidence that a large sector of the West Antarctic ice sheet has gone into irreversible retreat" locking in perhaps a meter of sea level rise.



The system is now set on a course towards a new state.

The scary thing is that we do not know where that tipping point lies. As Prof. Stefan Rahmstorf of Potsdam University warns "The IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] estimates anywhere between one and four degrees of global warming. We are already at one degree warming, so we may well cross that tipping point in the next

decades."

Just as there are tipping points in complex physical and ecological systems, it is understood that complex social systems can also exhibit tipping points. Might we be on the verge of a massive shift and social transformation towards a nonlinear decarbonisation and just not realise it yet? Perhaps all that is needed to reach such a juncture is one gigantic push by a mass movement of non-violent direct action? We won't know until we push past it and find out. ■



How does it work? Ecosia uses the ad revenue from your online searches to plant trees where they are needed the most.

Ecosia was founded in 2009 by Christian Kroll, a German man who travelled the world searching for inspiration for a business model that would have a positive social impact. He learned about reforestation projects in the Atlantic Rainforest, and that planting new trees could neutralise CO2 emissions on a large scale.

So all you have to do is add the Ecosia app, and start using it to search the internet. They'll do the rest. ■

How far will you go to #TELLTHETRUTH?



Send your photos to: hourglass@rebellion.earth



Find your local XR group at www.rebellion.earth

LETTERS



YOUR QUESTIONS AND THOUGHTS
EDITED BY THE HOURGLASS TEAM

ARTS & CULTURE



Hi Readers,

Thank you for your many letters offering support and suggestions for The Hourglass newspaper. Here's a selection of some of the comments you've sent in.

■ Greetings you wonderful people.

My name is Terry, and I'm 77. For health reasons I'm unable to attend your events but get regular emails from you and get updated by a lady who is very active and meets me every two months or so. Yesterday she gave me a copy of The Hourglass.

I am fearful for my grandchildren's future and have encouraged them to get involved.

Keep up your hard work as it is only through the love of our planet and its people that you will prevail.

Terry
Cambridge

■ Hello Hourglass team,

I was pleased to find, for the first time, a copy of Hourglass on Weymouth streets last Saturday.

I found it very interesting and challenging in giving me more insight into the huge issues involved in climate change and into the views of active supporters of Extinction Rebellion and other concerned people.

I too am very concerned and indeed anxious about the negative change occurring. And, I bear in

mind that all this has been happening in my lifetime: "on my watch" as it were.

I have only one reservation about the paper. It is the word "Crusties" used to group and describe elderly people, of which I am one! I think your editorial team would not use such a term for any other group in our society.

Penny Ovenden
UK

Dear Penny, please accept our apologies. The term 'crusties' was used in reference to rebels, after Prime Minister Boris Johnson called Extinction Rebellion activists 'uncooperative crusties'. We would never use the term to label any particular group ourselves, and intended it as a tongue-in-cheek use of the word.

-Ed

■ Thanks for the newspaper- it's excellent.

Thought the piece from the doctor was particularly important.

Very best wishes to you all.

Anne Garrett
Brighton

■ Thank you!

The second issue of The Hourglass is even better than the first. I particularly liked the articles about the "strategies used to undermine the scientific consensus", the art gallery oil protest and the law of the land section.

James
UK

■ Hola, I love what you are doing, I respect it, and I have a few ideas that I would like to suggest for readers to consider.

The main problem is that the government isn't responding sufficiently to the climate crisis, obviously. Rather than only making deals with such a corrupt entity, it would be best to rid ourselves of this eternal-seeming nemesis. One idea how to do it non-violently is to demand a referendum to change the structure from vertical to horizontal, which is virtually incorruptible. But one might question the feasibility of this; would the government acquiesce to this? Would voters pass this? How would it be implemented and function without disrupting the commerce of everyday society?

All these questions can be answered with a little work: The first question however, cannot be answered, because no one can know how the government will react. But to make it more likely, with the pressure of millions protesting, is to coordinate this with all protesting countries to

make this demand on the same day. This would give seriousness to this request, if all the other countries protesters would agree to this.

It will help the fight against irreversible systemic collapse immeasurably, I am sure to have a just and honest way of governing or organizing

Abrazo
Mofwofoo

■ In response to Daisy Sage, aged 10.

I totally understand her anxiety about the effects of methane gas emitted by Cows. However, the answer to the current crisis on our planet is not simply to give up eating meat. The knock on effects of eliminating cattle farming on the ground is enormous. This means not just giving up cattle farming for meat production but also dairy farming too?

Currently, I am more concerned about animal welfare and husbandry. I fear the future of our meat products in the UK if Mr Johnson gets his way and we leave the EU. Our farmers cannot compete against cheap and dangerous and thoroughly disgusting products which will inevitably arrive on our supermarket shelves from the US.

I do of course applaud a young person with a conscience like



Daisy. And hope that she and all humans will learn to 'Live in Nature'.

Yours hopefully,

Karen Rennie
UK

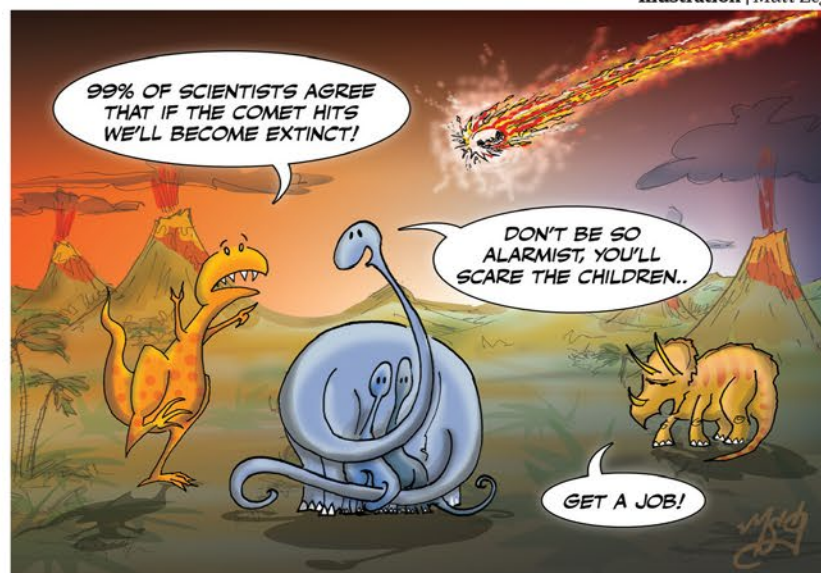
■ Dear Hourglass team,

Congratulations on another fantastic issue of the newspaper. I would just like to say that I have noticed a real change in the way that mainstream papers are reporting the climate crisis now - it seems that you have rivals! I look forward to seeing what you have next in store for keeping journalists on their toes when reporting the climate emergency.

Keep up the great work.

Mindy
Suffolk

Illustration | Matt Zeg



Amanda Palmer

SOLO PIANO TOUR AT THE CORN EXCHANGE IN CAMBRIDGE, 20TH OCTOBER 2019

by GARY LLOYD

Amanda Palmer took her solo piano tour There Will Be No Intermission to Cambridge on 20th October, performing a show for almost 4 hours with an intermission. This wasn't so much a gig as a performance; part stand-up comedy, and part intimate confessional, interspersed with songs from both her solo career and her band The Dresden Dolls.

“Palmer is brutally honest about her life; sharing far more than you would expect from an artist. Palmer's gift is her honesty, openness, and her affinity with her devoted fan-base”

probably more talking than singing, and Palmer is brutally honest about her life; sharing far more than you would expect from an artist. Palmer's gift is her honesty, openness, and her affinity with her devoted fan-base.

One song, A Mother's Confession, which was about feeling guilty as a parent for various reasons, is one of the funniest songs I have ever heard. Other songs deal with internet hatred, abortion (this was the song that led to her being 'uninvited' from an Irish TV chat show recently), and of course, an old Dolls classic. Palmer explains the apparent dark nature of her material by saying that the duty of an artist is to lead their audience 'into the darkness, but to provide some light'.

The show was billed as an evening of piano, pain, and laughter, and it didn't disappoint. There was



Amanda Palmer: Piano, pain & laughter

Palmer succeeds tonight, ending the show with the Disney ballad from the popular children's animation, Frozen - Let it Go! It's a clever way to end the performance, and appropriate to lighten the emotional load of the preceding four hours. Palmer will be back next year with her old band The Dresden Dolls and a new album. I can't wait. ■



Girl Band
all about feeling and emotion

GIRL BAND

ELECTRIC BALLROOM IN CAMDEN, 5TH NOVEMBER 2019

by GARY LLOYD

Dubliners Girl Band dropped in to Camden's Electric Ballroom on Bonfire Night for a sold-out show on their first tour for two and a half years. They arrived on the music scene in 2015 with their remarkable debut album Holding Hands with Jamie, and I was lucky enough to see them perform one of the best gigs I have seen (supported by Goat Girl) at the Hare & Hounds in Birmingham.

Singer Dara Keily has suffered with his mental health during the writing of their debut album, and his health is the reason that the band have been dormant for two years. He is now recovered and has used his experiences to write the pronoun-free lyrics to their new album The Talkies, which was launched unexpectedly in September. The band are keen to let the music do the talking now, although the music that they deliver doesn't so much talk as scream in your face

whilst grabbing your throat.

Girl Band look like a regular band, with guitar, drums and bass; but they don't sound like one. There are no conventional song structures of verse and chorus; instead there are metronomic drums, wave-form bass produced with a beer bottle slide, and squalls of effects-laden guitar that sounds more like a demonic siren than a guitar. Over this aural assault, Dara Keily yelps his stream of consciousness vocals that initially sound like nonsense poetry, Lear-Like, but on repeated listens these words reveal layers of popular cultural references and speak of his experience of mental illness.

When I saw them three years ago, Keily was loquacious and witty, with much banter between songs. Tonight, he is almost silent, letting the lyrics do all the talking. It is an uneasy listen, but a brutal, primal experience to witness live. The packed crowd don't care that there aren't really any 'tunes'; this is all about feeling and emotion, and the audience

bounces along in a joyous sweaty mosh-pit. The whole thing is over in a tight hour and a quarter, and there is no encore. The whole experience is so intense that there could be no more. There is no-one who makes music like Girl Band. They are utterly unique, and we are lucky to have them. ■



OUR DEMANDS

TELL THE TRUTH

*Government must tell the truth by declaring
a climate and ecological emergency,
working with other institutions to
communicate the urgency for change.*

ACT NOW

*Government must act now to halt
biodiversity loss and reduce greenhouse gas
emissions to net zero by 2025.*

BEYOND POLITICS

*Government must create and be led by
the decisions of a Citizens' Assembly
on climate and ecological justice.*



**extinction
rebellion**

Join the rebellion www.rebellion.earth

