

# SHAKE SHACK AT ASTOR PLACE

## AFSHIN KHAN (CE '19)

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Shake Shack, in a 15-year lease agreement with 51 Astor Place, will finally be coming to the East Village in "the next few months" says Sarah Southerland, who is in charge of guest experience and an insights specialist for Shake Shack. Despite not having an official release date, the news of Shake Shack's arrival will undoubtedly change eating options for students at Cooper Union, NYU, and St. John's University. Other burger joints near Cooper Union include Paul's Da Burger Joint, Bareburger, and Five Guys. But Shake Shack is promising to offer an eating experience unri-

Previously occupied by Ian Schrager Co.'s sales office, the space boasts 3,000 square feet of Manhattan real estate. As part of Shake Shack's lease agreement, potential competitors are excluded from leasing the building so long as Shake Shack occupies it-something not uncommon in the competitive world of food establishments and eateries. Southerland stated how "Opening new Shacks are complex projects." Given the recent closure of Mc-Donald's after a 20 year run, it is hard to say that Shake Shack's arrival has not already changed the food dynamic for Astor Place.

valed by the current choices stu-

dents have, given Shake Shack's

high-end interior finishes.

Shake Shack's arrival brings with it another implication outside the

realm of giving students more choices. Student employment is a serious possibility as The Bean has recently shown this year with its grand opening. Although details are unclear, the possibility of working at such an establishment part-time may be of particular importance to current students at The Cooper Union.

However, the news is surprising considering the fact that sales for Shake Shack's second-quarter show a decline of 1.8 percent, according to Shake Shack's financial site. This decline begs the question of whether Shake Shack's expansion has hurt its sales. In other words, has Shake Shack opened too many stores that undercut other Shake Shack stores' potential sales? At least in the case of 51 Astor Place, the answer to this question is no. The nearest Shake Shack currently is in Madison Square Park, 15 streets, 1 mile, or 20 minutes from Cooper Union; a distance which, for Manhattan, is insurmountable.

As for student discounts, details are sparse, but if other Shake Shacks are any indicator, there may not be any. However, at roughly \$6 a burger, and \$6 a shake, the prices rival those of Chipotle, and Starbucks. In conjunction with The Bean at Cooper, it seems as if 2017 will be a good year for diversifying food portfolios and deciding where to eat after classes. ◊



"INSTINCT" FILMS AT COOPER

Last Thursday, the CBS show "Instinct" filmed scenes outside of 41 Cooper Square, it was the second time the show has filmed there since July. The building, designed by Thom Mayne of Morphosis, was as a police precinct; actors in police uniforms congregated outside along with mock police cars.

Because of its unique architecture, 41 Cooper Square seems to be an attractive filming location. "We usually try to accommodate them," said Christine Sarkissian, manager of rental programs at Cooper, referring to the TV shows and commercials that request to use the campus as a filming location. Ostensibly, the rent brings a sizable source of revenue to the school.

The TV show "Limitless" also filmed an episode in 41 Cooper Square; the building served as a science laboratory. Over the summer, IBM Watson filmed a commercial in room 705. The commercial featured a robotic arm controlled by Cooper lab technician, Doug Thornhill. ◊



# **ARCHITECTURE STUDIO RENOVATION**

#### KAVYA UDUPA (BSE '19)

This past summer the School of Architecture renovated the computer lab, formally known as the Paul Laux Digital Architecture Studio, on the seventh floor of the Foundation Building. The renovations were spurred by a \$2 million donation given to the school about ten years ago. The donor gave the money with the hopes that it would "have a significant transformation for the School of Architecture."

Originally, there was talk of creation of a new lab, separate from the computer studio, on the fourth floor of the Foundation Building. Said lab would be a fabrication laboratory, popularly known as a "fab lab," and would be adjacent to the already existing wood shops. Rather than making massive structural changes there, the seventh-floor studio would be expanded instead.

Few structural changes were made—only two walls were put up and two openings were created. The lab was expanded to include additional machines for the students. Now, there are rooms dedicated solely to plotters, laser cutters, 3D printers, and a CNC machine. A new 3D printer was bought to aid the masters' students in producing models of their work. C2 Studio, a startup in Brooklyn, donated a 4-foot by 8-foot CNC machine. The founders are Cooper alumni who bought the CNC machine when they were in their thesis year to help spearhead the launch of their company.

The two head monitors of the lab are students Kevin Savillon (Arch '19) and Katherine Sullivan (Arch '18,) and both were heavily involved in these renovations. They oversaw everything from creating excel files of potential machinery and planning the electric wiring of the labs to the demolition and addition of walls. Kevin mentioned that when the walls were being removed, he could see the original bricks of the Foundation Building, seen to the right.



The Pioneer is printed on packing paper with soy-based ink by Victoria Sobel (Art '13), Jacob Jackmauh (Art '18) and others on their risograph in Brooklyn.

Morgan Wolfe (ME '19)

Questions? Concerns? Email The Pioneer at pioneer@cooper.edu or visit LL217.



Before these renovations, room 714 was the architecture library and room 715 was an unused classroom. The computer studios were rooms 712 and 713. The library was moved to room 712 and the unused classroom was moved to room 312 which used to be a thesis room. The new studio is now from rooms 713 to 715, a detailed floor plan can be seen above.

The lab is open to all three schools and the hours match building hours, the only difference being that the lab opens at 9 a.m. rather than 7:30 a.m. Over forty students have been hired from all three schools so that any student can get anything machined at any hour. ◊

*Top photos by Scarlett Chen (Arch '21). Bottom photo by Kevin Savil-lon (Arch '19).* 

The Pioneer reached out to Assistant Dean O'Donnell in regards to the renovations to which no response was received.

# **FACES OF COOPER: DOUG THORNHILL**

PRANAV JONEJA (ME '18)

Doug is the lab manager for the mechanical engineering labs on the seventh floor of the NAB. His role involves helping students with the more practical side of their courses, like fabricating things for ME-211 Design & Prototyping and assisting lab work for ME-352 Process Control.

### When did you move to New York City? How did you join Cooper Union?

I first came to New York to join my fiancée (and now wife), who moved here to get her Master's degree in theology and the arts.

My first job when I moved here was for a NASA project. I built a robot that tests glass to be used in a scientific satellite that's still operational in orbit today.

While I've lived here, I've also worked various other jobs: in labs at Columbia, at New York Designs (a startup incubator), and also at CUNY.

I first heard about Cooper from my work with an alumnus, Robert Stark (ME '80). Yeah, I know there are the immediate references to "Game of Thrones" (Robb Stark) and Iron Man (Stark Industries). Anyways, Bob was the lab manager at Columbia University's mechanical engineering department, and I worked with him there. He spoke so highly of Cooper all the time.

Once I learned more about Cooper, the richness of the practical side of engineering education drew me here. Other schools are heavy in theory, but when it comes to picking up hand tools and learning how to make something-that doesn't really happen at other places. Plus, it's amazing that undergraduates are deeply involved in academic research at Cooper. At other schools, you are fighting tooth and nail to maybe get on a research team, whereas here you're actually doing the research one-on-one with the professor.

#### How did you meet your wife?

I met her when we both worked in science outreach at the University of Florida. The program, Science Quest, was a pre-college summer camp, and we were both counselors for three years in a row. During my last summer there, we met and then within two-and-a-half months we were engaged.



Thornhill stands in front of a robotic arm in room 705. Over the summer, he controlled the arm for an IBM Watson commercial filmed in the lab.

The actual decision to get engaged was the most unromantic thing ever. She was here in New York already and I was still in Florida. We had made a decision that I would move to New York and we were on the phone one day talking about the logistics. I asked if we could consider living together and she said that her mom was kinda traditional and that she wouldn't go for it. We started looking for a way to say, "we're in this for the long term," so that her mom would be okay with us living together. Towards the end of this conversation, I say "I think we're um... engaged?" so she goes and asks her roommates that she's known about a week. She says to them: "I really like Doug and Doug really likes me. We kinda want to spend the rest of our lives together. Are we engaged?" And, so, it turned out that we were going to spend the rest of our lives together.

## You mentioned a NASA project. What was it?

It's a satellite called NuSTAR, which stands for Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array. It's an X-ray telescope that does black hole surveys, including looking at supermassive black holes. It's also looked at hard X-rays directly from the sun, too.

NuSTAR was launched on a Pegasus XL rocket from Kwajalein Atoll in the middle of the Pacific. What's interesting about the Pegasus is that it launches by dropping from the belly of an airplane like a weapon and then kicks off into orbit by accelerating ahead of the plane. The launch happened in the middle of the night so that by the time it reached orbit, it could unfurl its solar cell right as the sun was rising.

During the launch, all we could see was a video feed of the rocket attached to the bottom of the plane and another feed of mission control. It was especially tense for my team because the project had 10 years of development, including my job which was 4 years of scanning tens of thousands of pieces of glass for use in the telescope's lens. It went on for what seemed like forever.

So the countdown starts and we're watching and all we can see on the grainy, night-vision video feed is the rocket drop from the plane and then fall out of frame. And then, we could sorta see the belly of the aircraft light up very bright. We had no idea what to expect, I mean did it explode?! Then, we learn that it was just the first stage of the rocket kicking off. So we couldn't even see it directly, we just saw the flash from the ignition on the bottom of the airplane.

## Did you see the solar eclipse this year?

I wanted to go to Charleston, but unfortunately it turned out to be pretty expensive for my wife and I to go down there. We still made plans to see the eclipse from here in New York, but by the time our plans came together, all the eclipse glasses were sold out. So, I made my own glasses using the laser cutter here at Cooper. I got some solar film, which I had from my days as an astronomer, and mounted it between a couple of layers of birch plywood I lasercut. I attached this to a pair of binoculars and it worked very well. Our friends got together in Central Park and we made playlists with "Total Eclipse of the Heart" and had space-themed food like my wife's homemade moon pie. My friends and I like to do themed stuff for our get-togethers.

### How did you start working on astronomy and satellites?

Well, it was a long road. It actually took me 15 years to finish my undergraduate degree, but I finally got my Bachelor's degree in Astrophysics from Columbia University in 2013. That was a big year for me because it was actually the same year that the satellite was launched, and it was also the year I got married after being engaged for seven years.

Anyways, the reason it took me that long to get my degree was because I was working a job, sometimes two jobs, while going to school. And they were bad shifts, like midnight to 8 a.m. But I was still always taking classes and I did whatever I could to keep the torch lit.

### Do you have any plans to continue working on similar things?

I do! I actually moonlight right now on a project to make a high-altitude balloon experiment. It's a collaborative effort between MIT and Columbia. The mission is to float a gondola around the South Pole to detect dark matter by looking at specific radiation given off by antimatter products of a particular reaction. My work is to help make the testing platform for the array of detectors. The difficulty is that the test platform also needs to simulate performance at very low temperatures and a high altitude above the Antarctic.

### Do you have any advice for Cooper students?

"Always get a second textbook." That's academic advice and also life advice. ◊

# **AFTER TUITION PART I: QUESTIONS AND A BRIEF HISTORY**

## EVAN BUBNIAK (ME '21) | MATTHEW GRATTAN (ChE '19)

Since the announcement in 2013, The Cooclasses. That is to say: Barring fifth-year architecture students, every undergraduate at Cooper pays tuition, and the first-ever class of tuition-payers in Cooper's century-and-a-half history will graduate in the spring.

Hewitt Building, which housed the School part of the school's new business model. of American higher education? of Art; Engineering classes were, prior to the construction of the NAB, held at 51 Astor Place. (That building too was reconstructed in 2013 and now houses, among others, St. John's University, IBM Watson, and soon Shake Shack as its tenants.)

president of The Cooper Union from July consequence, all four-year undergraduate better? And if we've lost something, what per Union has admitted four tuition-paying 2000 until July 2011. The NAB replaced the students at Cooper, beginning this fall, are can be said about the tuition-based model

Cooper is not-and never has been-the typical American college experience. Yet, is it possible that tuition has changed our institution? Have we lost something beyond the full-tuition scholarship? Or conversely, have we gained anything?

In 2013, The Cooper Union was suffering from a massive hangover. The school was saddled with a \$175 million mortgage after a poorly-timed gamble in the stock market with its endowment and the construction of a new, ultramodern academic building. Cooper was struggling to keep up with the interest payments.

The New Academic Building was the brainchild of George Campbell, who was the Because of Cooper Union's charter-which cemented its philosophy of providing a tuition-free education to all its studentsthe school's financial crisis was an identity crisis. The Board of Trustees, which had approved the construction of the New Academic Building and the mortgage from MetLife needed to finance it, was overly optimistic about their ability to make up the difference with the increasing value of Cooper Union's real estate holdings in the city and an ambitious fundraising campaign.

Jan. 10, 2018 will be the four-year anniversary of the Cooper Union Board of Trustees' vote to ratify tuition for new students. As a

Peter Cooper founded this school on the basis of merit and equality, education irrespective of class or wealth. Now, we students pay for our education in one way or another. Does that change the relationships between students, instructors, and this school? Do we-should we-expect more from this school? After all, we are paying to go here. We're not paying to fail classes, or get poor critiques, right? If our education is no longer just an enrichment but a financial investment, is it wrong to expect a financial return? But then again, is it wrong to apply economics to education?

Cooper's recent history can serve as a source of introspection and as a case study. Cooper was tuition-free but now no longer. Could a comparison be made between Cooper Union and other universities in the United States? If we've gained something from tuition, does that mean our financial woes have inadvertently led us somewhere

There's an answer that most of us would prefer to hear: We were better off tuition free. But perhaps it's more prudent to assume the worst, and prove ourselves wrong.

Over the coming weeks, The Pioneer will write a series of articles detailing how, since the introduction of tuition, the Cooper Union has, or hasn't, changed, qualitatively and quantitatively. This series aims to investigate how tuition has changed the makeup of the student body, how it has altered students' expectations from the school, and how it has affected Cooper itself.

The point of this article is to raise questions. The following articles will attempt to answer them in some capacity and ask more. Ultimately, what can we learn about ourselves as students, as faculty, and as an institution? We owe that much to ourselves. ◊

# FACES OF COOPER: JENNIFER WEISER

#### AMAL BUKHARI (ME '21)

# Cooper this year?

Right now, I'm teaching material science for chemical engineers which is a sophomore class. I also teach the senior separation process principles class. In the spring, my plan is to teach a graduate-level drug delivery class and the second semester of the senior lab.

### I noticed you have a lot of teaching experience, including at other universities. What brought you to Cooper?

I'm from the area, and I know The Cooper Union. It's just one of those places that leaves you in awe. The faculty and student community really contributes to that. This is like a dream, and I never thought I'd get to be here. It's great to have students who are so passionate.

#### So, what do you feel is different about Cooper compared to other places?

It's a school that really values education, which is a rare thing nowadays. Finding faculty and students who are so invested in education is great. To be able to engage with students and them with my background and experiences is really exciting.

#### Speaking of your background in teaching, could you tell me about the "scientist in residence" program you participated in at Cornell?

There used to be a program run by the National Science Foundation called the Graduate STEM Fellows in K-12 Education. schools would apply for grants and get graduate students to spend the summer working with a local elementary, middle or high school teacher. The teacher would work in my lab at Cornell, and we would do a project throughout the summer and then they would present it. I also got training on how to be a more effective communicator for younger generations. In graduate school you engage with people around your age and who know the same vocabulary. It's harder to convey ideas to people who aren't versed in your knowledge base. The program helped me express scientific ideas at a different level.

During that school year I would drive to a high school in Elmira, NY. I went to a biology class and brought experiments with me every week. Since I do biomedical projects, I would be able to present them a pacemaker and say, "Maybe one of your relatives has one. This is what it looks like and this is how we make it." I was able to enhance their education, but it also enhanced mine If you can't effectively articulate your stories, you're not going to be an effective educator. So, it was a really great experience for me.

What classes will you be teaching at me to talk to his professor to help me figure out my next step. I thought I would go to graduate school for pharmacology, make drugs, and work with drug delivery. Instead, that professor told me that I could stay in engineering and be a biomedical engineer. His lab was actually biomedical and chemical. It's possible to do this biomedical research in engineering while tackling other areas, too. You use your expertise in engineering to do the whole set-up, not just to make one miniscule molecule in the lab. It was really cool to be able to go back and marry my chemical engineering experience and the experience I had as a chemist in a pharmaceutical company to solve medical problems. I fell in love with it. I loved the opportunity to help people more directly than I had been able to previously.

### Wow, so do you think you'll be doing any research projects here at Cooper?

I actually have some interesting stuff going on right now. I have a collaboration going on with the Yale School of Medicine Otolaryngology Department, working on a device to help with post-surgical complications. I'd love bringing in Cooper students on that. If any students have ideas about drug delivery, wound healing, or anything like that I'm open to collaborate.

### Can you tell me about the startup company you joined, iFyber?

My adviser in graduate school worked with Robert Langer, a Professor from MIT, during his postdoctoral fellowship. He's well-known for doing start-ups, and my adviser had a start-up with Dr. Langer. I wanted a chance to work in small industry since I had experience in big industry. I had a year to work on the project, so I built up a lab in a strip mall in Ithaca. There was a fume hood and very limited lab equipment. I was the chemist and had to make it happen. I drilled the safety chain for the nitrogen tank into the wall, when I needed ice for a chemical reaction I had to go down to the gas station for it, and I was also responsible for my own environmental health and safety concerns. For all the organic waste I had to figure out how to remove it regularly. It was DIY organic chemistry that married my organic chemistry background with my chemical engineering knowledge. It was a really formative experience, and because of it I'm comfortable setting up a lab and doing it all myself.

### Just to clarify, your undergrad was in chemical engineering and your graduate work was in biomedicine?

Yes, my Master's, PhD, and postdoctoral re-

students alternate techniques and how that can improve a lab procedure is really enjoyable. For material science, I love showing students that the subject doesn't have to be a cut-and-dried experience. Materials are physical, so let's make things and touch them. I want to help students see how this can help them in the future. I am also a very tactile person so sometimes I want to see and feel materials before I work with them.

The separations class is a fun challenge because that was a class I loved in undergrad, so that's really great to teach. I'm excited for the drug delivery class because

and it was a class I took with my adviser. I would love to build on these concepts because a lot of students don't know all the fundamentals to the different types of drug delivery. The senior lab will be really fun because I love working in labs. I can't pick a favorite! I love them all.

#### You and Professor Simson are both new hires, and are both women. How do feel about that?

It's incredible. I remember having a conversation with some undergraduate friends about a month ago and someone asked me, "How many female professors did you ever have in undergrad, for anything?" and I couldn't even think of one. I think I had one female professor for half of a lab class senior year. It was incredible to realize that now almost half the department is comprised of women, and a lot of classes are going to be taught by women. Hopefully there's no difference between a male and female professor but it's nice to see. I never had the experience of thinking "I can't do this because I'm a woman" because my mother became a biochemist at a time when being a woman in science wasn't looked well upon.



It never dawned on me that I wouldn't be able to do this.

## What was your favorite thing about your undergraduate experience?

I really loved doing the chemical engineering car. It's an annual student competition as a part of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. It's about being able to master a chemical reaction based on the parameters you're given. You build a vehicle and they tell you about 30 minutes before the actual competition the distance it has to go and the weight of water it has to carry. You have to figure out how to calibrate your car. I joined it in sophomore year and by junior year I was captain of the team. We won regionals and placed fifth in nationals. Every four years they have an international chemical engineering conference where the competition is hosted. That year we got to compete in Scotland. In the international competition we placed sixth, which was great! Working with people in different grades than me, getting to travel around, being very involved and responsible for a project was really good. I hope to help with the ChemE car here, if they're open to it. ◊

# UPCOMING EVENTS

I've noticed a lot of your interests lie in the biomedical realm. At the outset of your career did you always plan to combine chemical engineering with biomedical applications?

My family is a bunch of doctors. My father is a radiologist and my mother is a professor of biochemistry. My brother, who is now a surgeon, went into biomedical engineering for his undergraduate degree. I was thinking, "I can't do the same thing as my brother!" Instead, I decided on chemical engineering because I loved chemistry and I thought it would be a great marriage of my interests. I wound up becoming a chemist but I always liked medicine. I actually spent ten years volunteering in an Ambulance Corps. It was actually my brother who encouraged

search were under biomedical engineering and my undergrad was in chemical engineering. Although, biomedical is somewhat a catch-all word that really attracts any major that wants to help in medicine. My peers in graduate school included mechanical engineers and electrical engineers, and maybe only one of the 12 of us had done biomedical engineering in undergrad. It's an interesting world to be in since it's truly the field of helping people. I still feel like a chemical engineer, and an organic chemist. You never have to lose your roots; you just keep adding to them.

You have so many interests, what's your favorite thing to teach between chemistry and all the biomedical material?

That's a really hard question because I love teaching it all! Each class is a unique challenge. I love teaching organic chemistry because I have real-life pharmaceutical chemistry experience. Being able to show

#### BRIAN FROST (EE '19)

#### **Daniel Libeskind: From Zero to Infinity**

This coming Tuesday at 7 p.m., renowned Polish-American architect Daniel Libeskind will be speaking in the Great Hall. Libeskind is a Cooper Union alumnus, most famous for his work as master plan architect for the World Trade Center. This talk is part of this fall's Art & Activism series, and is free and open to the public. Seat reservations are available through Eventbrite.com.

#### Ai Weiwei at Great Hall

To mark the opening of his new Good Fences Make Good Neighbors exhibit on Oct. 12, multimedia artist and activist Ai Weiwei will be speaking at the Great Hall. The exhibit, presented by the Public Art Fund, will consist of more than 300 sites throughout New York City, and is inspired by the current global migrant crisis. This event is also part of the Art & Activism series, and will be at 6:30 p.m.

Uzma Rizvi: Decolonizing Archaeology As part of the Intra-Disciplinary Seminar Public Lecture Series, Pratt Institute Professor of Anthropology Uzma Rizvi will be speaking in Rose Auditorium this Tuesday at 7 p.m.. In this lecture, Professor Rizvi will be highlighting the sociopolitical shortcomings of the field of archaeology, and arguing for its decolonization as a solution. This talk is free and open to the public.

#### **Imagine Science Film Festival**

Imagine Science Films is hosting its 10th annual film festival from Oct. 13 to Oct. 20. As part of this festival, there will be an event titled Immersive Science Storytelling at 41 Cooper Square on Oct. 19 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. The event is focused on virtual and augmented reality as media for storytelling, featuring interactive demos. This is a free event, and reservations can be made through Eventbrite.com.

# THE BREAKDOWN: TRACKS **UNDER THE RADAR**

## BRIAN FROST (EE '19)

With the start of the new school semester, it gets significantly harder to keep up with new music releases outside of our well-defined comfort zones. These past two weeks have seen incredibly lackluster album and single drops in the pop music universe, so with that in mind, I've compiled a list of a few excellent tracks that may have flown under the radar. Whatever your tastes may be, here are a few songs to try out while studying this week.

#### Björk - "The Gate"

For nearly three decades now, Björk has brought her incredibly unique talent to several genres of music, making it very challenging to read the direction of a Björk album before it's released. "The Gate" is the lead single for her upcoming Utopia album, and it sets the stage for a slow-paced and vocals-focused project. The lack of aggression and direction to the track's production, coupled with elegant, repetitive vocal melodies give the song a fantastic and atmospheric quality, which is well supported by the song's sensorily overwhelming music video. This track is wonderfully psychedelic and avant-garde, and anybody with a taste for trip-hop or atmospheric music should definitely give it a listen. Likewise, if you have a taste for experimental fashion, definitely check out the music video.

#### **BADBADNOTGOOD** - "Confessions Pt III (feat. Colin Stetson)"

BBNG is one of the most powerful forces in popular jazz music right now, and for good reason. Having provided instrumentation for contemporary hip-hop artists like Kendrick Lamar, Danny Brown and Earl Sweatshirt, even if you don't know them by name, you've likely heard BBNG's music. Albums and singles under their name tend to stay well out of the mainstream, but these projects are exactly as excellent as their production material. This new (unofficial) single, "Confessions Pt III," has a perfect balance between flashy solo performance and solid backing instrumental. Colin Stetson, impressively, starts the track off with these dynamic, high-tempo arpeggios that he plays continuously for the first five minutes of the track. All the while, a strong rhythm, bassline and sub-melody saxophone develop, creating a sense of adventurous progress to the song. If you like jazz music, or if you simply enjoy listening to instrumental music while studying, this song is definitely worth streaming; it's available for free on SoundCloud.

#### **BROCKHAMPTON - "GOLD"**

This year has seen a lot of ambitious, underground hip-hop artists make their way to the mainstream through viral music videos and SoundCloud drops, but few of these artists are as consistent or talented as BROCKHAMPTON. This single, along with the much more aggressive "STAR" and "HEAT," preempted the collective's first major project, Saturation, back in May. It makes this list, however, because the group is currently as relevant as ever; they have released two full-length projects this summer alone, and are slated to release another entire album by the end of the year. This track is a great sample of their music if you haven't heard of them yet, featuring exciting synthy production, an incredibly catchy hook from frontman Kevin Abstract, and palpable group cohesion from the other members of BROCKHAMPTON. If you like hip-hop music and haven't heard these guys yet, you should definitely start with this track. If you're interested in hearing more of their material, they're constantly releasing high-energy, colorful music videos on their YouTube channel. ◊

# **MILES OF MOVIES: "KINGSMAN:** THE GOLDEN CIRCLE"

#### MILES BARBER (CE '18)

"Kingsman: The Golden Circle" is about Eggsy (Taron Egerton), who was taken off the streets and turned into a spy disguised as an English Gentleman in the Kingsman: The Secret Service. But when they are practically destroyed by Poppy (Julianne Moore), a drug queen, the surviving Kingsmen need to find other spies to help them take down Poppy.

Now, there are some fun moments in this film. The film opens with a car chase which was a lot of fun. Mark Strong has some great moments in the film, and the cast seems to be trying their best. And the film has a lot of fun exploring the American counterparts to the Kingsmen - The Statesmen. But the problem is that this film just doesn't have much of a story. In the first film, Eggsy's story about being made into a gentleman and realizing his potential was what really made the story compelling. Even throughout all of the action, you had somebody to care about. He develops this great friendship with Harry (Colin Firth), who shows him the ropes. Right there, you have two characters you care about that are trying to figure out the villain's plan. It's focused, at least narratively.

This film has no characters you care about and no focus to its story. It feels like scenes were shot separately and then played backto-back with no justification. There are robot dogs in this movie and Elton John makes appearances in like, ten scenes. Why? Julianne Moore plays her villain with no edge whatsoever. She speaks in this overly cutesy voice while ordering people to do disgusting things. The problem is that you can never take her seriously so she never feels like a threat. I have no idea what the writers were thinking! To make things even worse, she has no real motivation to attack the Kingsman except for wanting them out of the way. Who thought this character would work? The only character in this film that has any growth at all



Image source: IMDb

is Merlin (Mark Strong), the weapons expert of Kingsmen. He never really got to go out into the field and Mark Strong makes you feel this character's yearning for field service, giving the strongest performance in the film.

There are some other problems with the film. It uses a ridiculous amount of computer generated effects. It gives one of its characters a disability that comes and goes at the plot's convenience. It's just tonally uneven everywhere. The music is a rehash of what was in the first film and even copies a piece used in the "X-Men: First Class." As I said, there are some fun moments here and there, but given the length of this film (2 hours and 21 minutes) and just how pointless it all seemed without a story or good characters, I can't help but feel like this is a disappointment across the board. ◊

Grade: C-

# FOURTH ANNUAL PETER **COOPER BLOCK PARTY**





# **CULT: COOPER ULTIMATE** LETTUCE TEAM

#### JOSEPH BENTIVEGNA (EE '19)

As many who attended Cooper Union's Fall Festival this year know, a new and unique club named Cooper Ultimate Lettuce Team, or CULT, has taken the student body by storm. The club, founded by Luka Lipovac (EE '19) and Ostap Voynarovski (EE <sup>(19)</sup>, amassed huge interest for a seemingly unknown activity and over 35 people have already signed up to take part in this year's festivities.

So, what exactly is CULT? Cooper Ultimate Lettuce Team is a group of individuals who meet annually to take part in a club-wide lettuce eating competition. At this gathering, members compete to see who can finish an entire head of iceberg lettuce in the fastest time possible. The first person to finish their lettuce becomes the new "Head of Lettuce" and thus the new president of the CULT. The new president is responsible for facilitating the competition for the next year. In addition to the title, the reward for being "Head of Lettuce" is adding your face to a t-shirt containing a picture of lettuce and pictures of all the previous winners.

tion. Currently, there is no official date set for this year's competition but a JAC email will be sent out to the student body when the founders determine a date and time. The current facilitators of the CULT urge all interested to RSVP to the event for lettuce-buying purposes. To sign up, head over to the JAC website and sign in with your Cooper credentials, or contact Luka Lipovac, Ostap Voynarovski, or Joseph Bentivegna via Facebook to learn more.



The Block Party is an annual neighborhood celebration hosted by the Cooper Union Alumni Association. Various Cooper student organizations like the Engineering and Art Student Councils, Queer & Allies, and Cooper Rad.io set up booths at the event. From left to right: President Laura Sparks and her daughter, Victoria Sobel (Art '13), Professor Sam Keene, and Kiersten Mercado (Art '19) and Professor Toby Cumberbatch. Photos by Kelly Occhiuzzo.

Cooper Ultimate Lettuce Team is an official Cooper Union club and will receive JAC funding for the lettuce required for the competi-

Poster by Luka Lipovac (EE '19).

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# HIP OR HYPED: FRYGUYS

ISABELLA PESTOVSKI (ME '19) | MORGAN WOLFE (ME '19)

It is common knowledge that New York City is the hub of many famous food trends such as rolled ice cream, cronuts, edible cookie dough, over the top milkshakes...the list goes on. With all these wondrous concoctions, you really wonder: is the food is truly hip or just hyped? We can't always trust Insider videos on Facebook or our favorite food bloggers' Instagram posts, so we are offering you an unbiased report on the food itself. How it tastes, the a e s t h e t i c, and how we feel being there. In the moment, we decide if this food trend is HIP or HYPED.

The first place we tried: FryGuys. Located at Second Street and Avenue A, this new joint boasts loaded fries of varying styles, but also offers plain fries with the option to customize with your choice of sauces. The most popular orders are: Drunk Guy and Southern Guy. We decided to try Drunk Guy, classic thick-cut fries topped with bacon, queso, and guacamole. We were

initially intrigued by the delicious combination of toppings but were ultimately disappointed. The queso coagulated as the fries cooled and the guacamole was made with unripe avocados giving an off-putting texture. The bacon was good though! The fries were well seasoned, but otherwise average.

The fries were good enough that we could see ourselves craving them, as well as going back to try other flavors or combinationsespecially after a night out. It's definitely made for sharing as each dish is loaded with two pounds of fries. While not the largest establishment, FryGuys is very colorful and plays fun music, providing a cool atmosphere where small groups can hang out. Ultimately, however, it seems FryGuys places style over substance and the fries make for a better Instagram post than a satisfying snack.

Final verdict: Bella and Morgan both say HYPED.◊

**FryGuys** 150 E. 2nd St. Sunday-Thursday, 12 p.m. 2 a.m. Friday-Saturday 12 p.m.- 4 a.m.



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# **OLI'S SWEET MESS: ODDFELLOWS**

#### OLIVIA HEUIYOUNG PARK (ME '20)

Malt Maitake Peanut, Raspberry Pink Peppercorn "sorbet," Miso Peanut Butter, Red Velvet and Beet, Kirin Cherry, and more. This unlikely list is actually part of the rotating flavors of the homey ice cream parlor-OddFellows. Originating from Brooklyn, this ice cream parlor is founded by three friends: Sam Mason, Holiday Kumar, and Mohan Kumar. Their goal is to bring nuance and depth to flavors, which results in anything from delicious classics to unconventionally unique flavors.

Although they have three scoop shops in total, they do have various pop-ups and collaborations with other restaurants, and the one in East Village is special in that its full name is "OddFellows:The Sandwich Shop." Not only do they serve delicious ice cream and Grady's Cold Brew on tap, they also have various menu items like the "Odd Pocket"—a warm brioche filled with ice cream and toppings of your choice-and cookie ice cream sandwiches.

Although I've been so often that the scoopers all recognize me now. I always check their website to see the flavors that are on for the day, and rush over to ensure that the flavor I want isn't sold out. Their fresh home-made waffle cones are amazing, and

you can try as many flavors as you want, so that you can try some of the unconventional flavors before being adventurous and getting a whole scoop.

They have a stamp card, and for every 10 stamps you get a scoop for free! They also donate 5 cents for every serving of ice cream they sell to Food Bank of New York City, so treat yourself with some delicious cold treats while also supporting a good cause! ◊

**OddFellows** 75 E. 4th St. Sunday-Thursday, 2 p.m.-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday, 12 p.m.-12 a.m.



There aren't that many places that offer fries with toppings so in that respect, FryGuys is unique. However, if you are looking for excellent plain fries, you'd be better off checking out Mamoun's or Pommes Frites.

Photo by Isabella Pestovski (ME '19).



Photos by Lydia Li (ME '21).