



CSG SIXTH FORM MASTERCLASSES



SPRING 2023 PROGRAMME

TENTH ANNIVERSARY SEASON OF THE CSG SIXTH FORM MASTERCLASSES

CSG SIXTH FORM MASTERCLASSES

No exams.

No grades.

Just interesting speakers and stimulating discussions.

- Masterclasses are extra-curricular lessons delivered by teachers from CSG or visiting experts in various fields.
- Each masterclass will either provide an introduction to a subject which is not taught at A Level – or explore a new aspect of a subject you are familiar with - taking you beyond the confines of the A Level syllabus.
- Most sessions should be accessible and of interest to students who study the subject in question, as well as those who do not. We hope that a student who is studying sciences would still be interested in poetry and music, and a student of the arts would be interested in scientific questions.
- Hopefully attendance will encourage students to read further and perhaps inspire some to pursue a subject at university.
- Aim to arrive at S5 (Sixth Form Hall) soon after 3.30pm – usually there will be tea, coffee and biscuits – the session will begin at about 3.40pm and finish by 5pm at the latest - **but watch out for occasional exceptions.**

Unfortunately, due to government cuts to the funding of state education since 2010 (and particularly of post-16 state education), it is with regret that we feel we have to make a charge for certain extra-curricular opportunities such as these.

- **Attendance is free for students on bursaries or free school meals.**
- For students who are not on free school meals or a bursary the cost is £10 for a 'season ticket' to attend as many masterclasses as you like in one term – so if you come to all 10 that is only £1 per session!
- Parents/guardians will be sent an invitation to pay through ParentPay by email.

We hope that you will find something of interest in these masterclasses - and that you enjoy them as much as we enjoy preparing and delivering them.

Jon Stubbings

CSG Masterclass Programme Co-ordinator

Thursday 23rd February - 3.30pm - S5

THIS IS NOT AMERICA - WHY WE NEED A DIFFERENT CONVERSATION ON RACE WITH TOMIWA OWOLADE

Across the West, racial injustice has become a matter of urgency; workers are being re-educated about 'unconscious bias', statues toppled, art galleries re-hung and curriculums 'de-colonised', while euphemisms such as 'affirmative action' employed to justify new forms of racial discrimination. But arguably much of the debate around racism in Britain is viewed through the prism of American ideas that don't always reflect the history, challenges and achievements of black communities in the UK. In this talk, journalist (the New Statesman and Unherd), author ('This is Not America' will be published later this year) and cultural commentator, Tomiwa Owolade will give his take on the similarities and differences between the USA and the UK and suggest ways in which we might work towards equality and racial harmony without inflaming the current culture wars.



Monday 27th February - 3.30pm - S5 and online

THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR WITH PAUL PRESTON

Professor Sir Paul Preston is the foremost British Historian of modern Spain - and particularly the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939 - on which he has written many highly acclaimed books. In this masterclass he will give a very brief introduction to the origins of the war in Spain before answering questions and discussing various aspects of the conflict, according to the interests and prior knowledge of the audience. Why and how did the military coup led by General Franco challenge and defeat the democratically elected republican government? What part did foreign volunteers (including Eric Blair, aka 'George Orwell') and foreign politicians (Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin etc.) play in the fighting? How did it end and what was its legacy - for Europe and Spain? Come along to find out.



Thursday 2nd March - 3.30pm - S5

ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT AND THE INVENTION OF NATURE



WITH ANDREA WULF

In this masterclass author Andrea Wulf will talk about the subject of her award winning book 'The Invention of Nature' (Costa Biography Award 2015, Royal Society Book Prize 2016) - the geographer, naturalist, explorer, proponent of Romantic philosophy and 'hero of science', Alexander von Humboldt. Come along to find out how von Humboldt's extraordinary travels and investigations laid the groundwork for modern ecology and environmentalism.

Monday 13th March - 3.30pm - S5

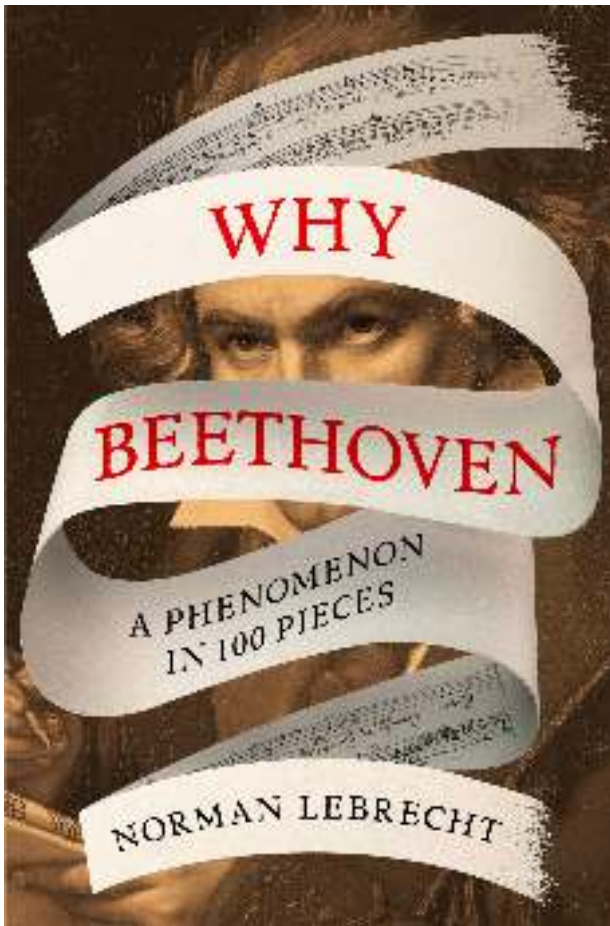
ANALYSING DYSTOPIAN FICTION

WITH JOANNA KAVENNA

The writer Joanna Kavenna is the author of a number of acclaimed novels - some of which could certainly be classed as 'dystopian' in their thematic concerns. 'Zed' (2019) imagines a world completely dominated by the algorithmic tyranny of a single tech giant called Beetle Corp - while in 'The Birth of Love' (2011) she explores the abiding utopian/dystopian interest in questions of human reproduction. In this masterclass she will talk about her work and we will analyse an extract from 'The Birth of Love' in close detail.



Monday 20th March - 3.30pm - S5



WHY BEETHOVEN?

WITH NORMAN LEBRECHT

In this masterclass, world renowned classical music journalist and author Norman Lebrecht will talk about the life, work and cultural significance of the composer Ludwig van Beethoven. He will bring the controversial, unruly, rude and revolutionary composer to life through some of the 100 pieces that feature in his new book 'Why Beethoven', giving a sense of how Beethoven overcame the affliction of deafness to create some of the most enduring music ever written, and why that music is still very much worth listening to today.

Thursday 23th March - 3.30pm - S5

CLASSIC RUSSIAN LITERATURE - A VERY SHORT INTRODUCTION

WITH JON STUBBINGS



Despite the restrictions imposed by censorship and a backward looking autocratic regime, the century between the defeat of Napoleon and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 produced an extraordinary flowering of great writers in Russia, including Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Chekhov. Come to this masterclass for a very brief introduction to the novels, short stories and plays of these and other great writers from 19th Century Russia - before beginning your own reading journey through classics of world literature such as 'War and Peace', 'Anna Karenina', 'Crime and Punishment' and 'The Brothers Karamazov'.

Monday 27th March - 3.30pm - S5

FINDING FUTURE CLASSICS - THE BOOKER PRIZES WITH GABY WOOD



Literary critic and journalist Gaby Wood was formerly head of books at The Daily Telegraph before being appointed as literary director of the Booker Prize Foundation in 2015. In this masterclass she will talk about her career in books, the history of the Booker Prize, and about the challenges of choosing a winner from the hundreds of new novels that are published each year in English.

Thursday 20th April - 3.30pm - S5

MATHS, COSMOLOGY AND BLACK HOLES WITH BETTI HARTMANN

Black holes are a theoretical prediction of the theory of General Relativity, but even Einstein himself did not believe in their actual existence. However, we now have a huge number of observations indicating that black holes of a wide variety of sizes and masses do exist in the universe. Since black holes are invisible these observations can only be done "indirectly". In this Masterclass Betti Hartmann (UCL Mathematics department) will discuss what black holes are and what we know about their existence to date.



Monday 24th April - 3.30pm - S5

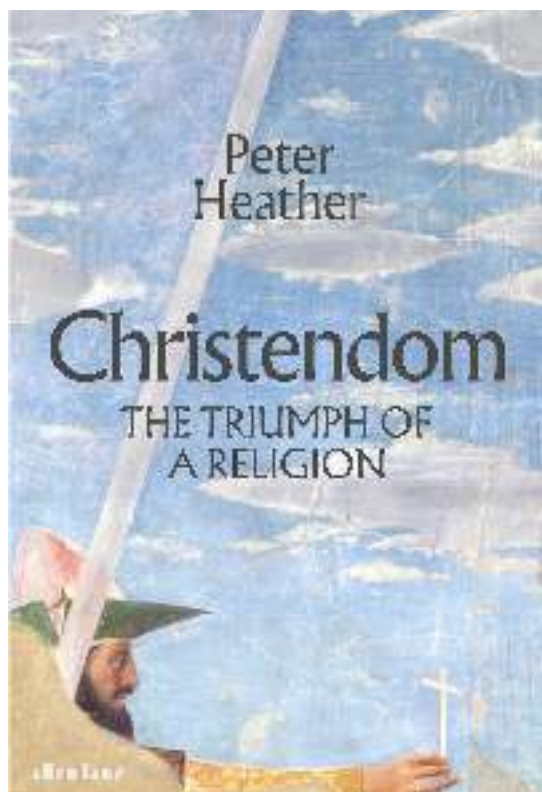
MACHINE LEARNING AND FINANCIAL MATHEMATICS WITH DANIEL BUSSELL-ARNOLD

The field of Machine Learning is fast becoming popular in Mathematics and Computer Science and is being used successfully in finance to make stock predictions, price options contracts and determine optimal algorithmic trading strategies. In this masterclass Daniel Bussell-Arnold (UCL Mathematics department) will talk about his research involving the use of Deep Learning, a branch of machine learning relying on neural network algorithms that are based on neurones in human brains, to solve partial differential equations that appear in the above mentioned financial problems.

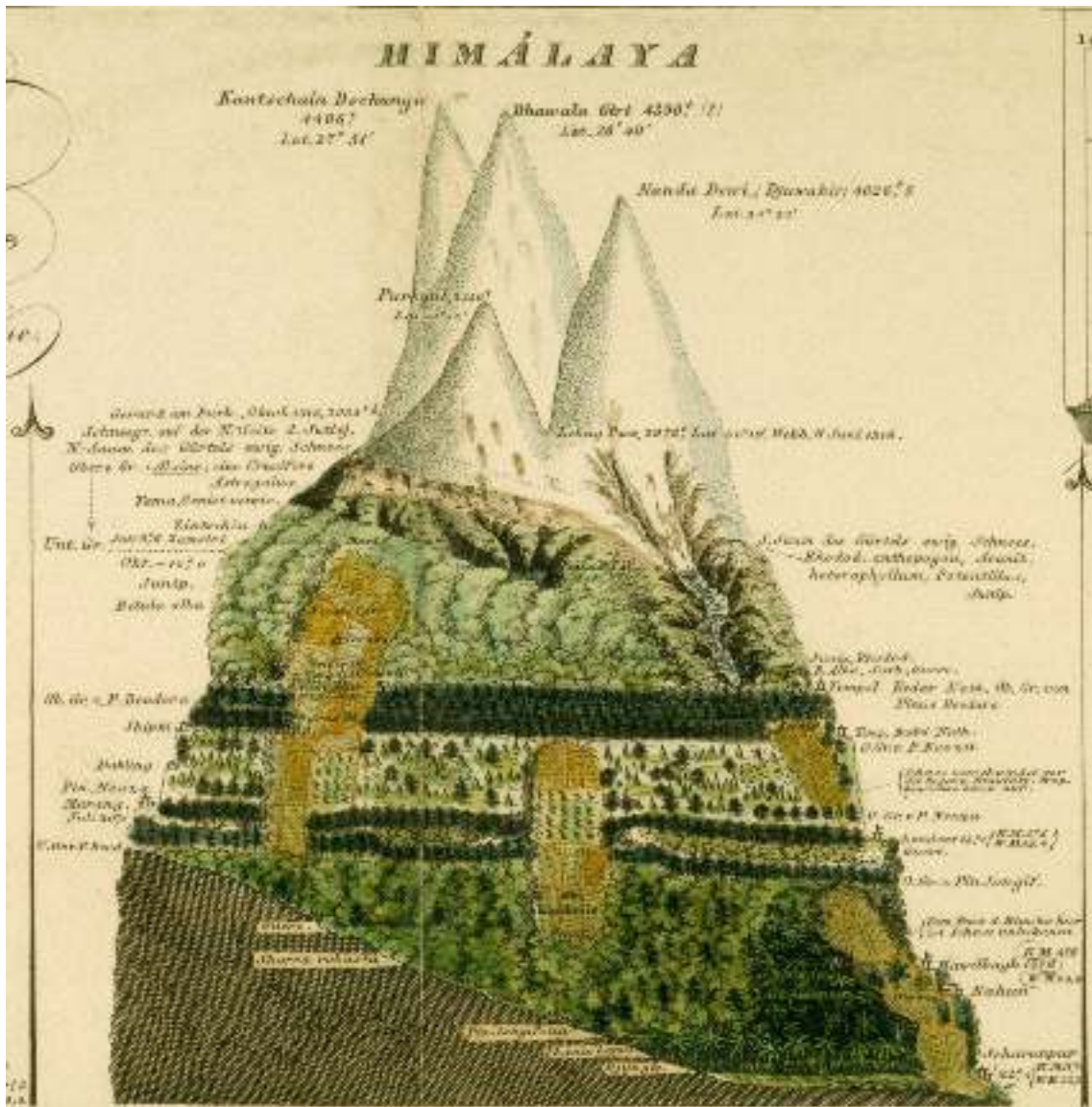


Thursday 27th April - 3.30pm - S5

CHRISTENDOM - THE TRIUMPH OF A RELIGION WITH PETER HEATHER



The religion we now call Christianity - the world's largest - began as a small Jewish sect centred around the teachings of a holy man called Jesus in the Roman province of Judaea. His early followers, many of whom were persecuted and killed by the Romans as they began to spread the message throughout the Empire, could not have imagined that within 300 years their beliefs would overwhelm the paganism of Rome, and convert the Emperor Constantine in the process. Christianity survived the collapse of the Western Roman Empire; almost a thousand years later, all of Europe was controlled by Christian rulers, and the religion dominated almost every aspect of culture and society. But, as renowned Historian of Late Antiquity Peter Heather will show in this masterclass, there was nothing inevitable about Christendom's rise to Europe-wide dominance.



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