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who run THE WORLD? Girls: the WINTER OLYMPICS 2026

With the winter Olympics defining 2026 pop culture, it's impossible to ignore the shining presence of the women in this global sporting competition.

From the skating talents of Alysa Liu to the ice hockey captain Hilary Knight, these leading ladies are setting a dazzling example for future generations.

This impressive influence is not just at the games; these women are inspiring young girls through the realms of social media too.

USA Figure Skating Olympian, Amber Glenn, has openly spoken out about being on her period whilst competing at the games and how it impacted her performance and mental state during her skating routine.

Glenn stated, "it's always really hard, especially when you have to perform in front of the whole world. It's scary, and it makes you extra emotional, and it's hard." Her honesty and transparency were praised by hundreds, congratulating the athlete for coming forward about the matter.

However, this praise was met with trolling and criticism. A handful of social media users claimed she was "sharing too much information." Amber took a step forward and responded to the critics herself, emphasising the need for more open communication and honesty.



Glenn's response to the criticism evoked pure joy in her fans and followers, with many saying she had inspired more women to start conversations surrounding periods and how they impact their life. Her stance against the trolls raised more awareness on the impact of menstruation in the Olympics.

Amber's honesty and truth is not the only incredible, female-powered event that occurred at the Winter Olympics!

Alysa Liu, American figure skater, chose to step away from competing after finishing sixth at the 2022 Winter Olympics, stating she was burnt out.

This year, she came back. Standing tall on her own terms, she won two gold medals at Milano Cortina!

Her strength, to choose to step away and return later, was applauded by her audience and following. Liu's shining performance taught all those watching a lesson - that stepping away, breathing and taking a break are sometimes the best thing we can do for ourselves and our work.

Although, it is wonderful to celebrate the women competing in the olympics, we must also celebrate those who can't.

In today's modern world, there is one sport that women are still not allowed to compete in - Nordic Combined.

This sport combines cross-country skiing and ski-jumping. The discipline has been a part of the Winter Olympics since 1924 yet is only available to men. Despite there being a Women's World Cup and World Championship Events.

24-year-old, Annika Malacinski has been dreaming of being an Olympic champion and has been campaigning for many years for women to be included in the sport. Her proposal to allow women to compete this year, in Italy, was denied.

On her Instagram, Malacinski has said, "My Olympic dream has been taken away from me, not because of my ability, but because of my gender."

Annika and her fellow campaigners have said they will not disappear and she is determined to one day be a champion in her chosen sport.
The ladies of this year's Winter Olympics didn't just shine, they're paving a bright, beautiful path for the young girls looking up to them.

Kailtin Mae

welcome to the Pitt: Gritty, Chaotic, Compelling

Ritchey Chesters

HBO Max's medical drama The Pitt has taken the United States by storm since its first season premiered in April 2025, followed by season two airing in January 2026. Until now, the series has been available only to American audiences, but British audiences are sitting at the edge of their seats with HBO's latest announcement.

Starring Noah Wyle, each 15-episode season follows a single 15-hour shift in the emergency department for the fictional 'Pittsburgh Medical Centre', also known as 'The Pitt'. The show explores the pressures of emergency medicine through its frontline staff with main issues including high staff burnout rates, extreme underfunding in medicine and mass overcrowding in hospitals. The series is often described as the most painstakingly accurate medical drama to date, and has "impressed real doctors with its accuracy", according to The New York Times. It is commonly praised for being intense and realistic, but also deeply emotional and gritty, unlike some more 'soapy' medical dramas. Think BBC-produced Doctors, but with American voices, more dramatic storylines, and all the action is 100 times more intense.

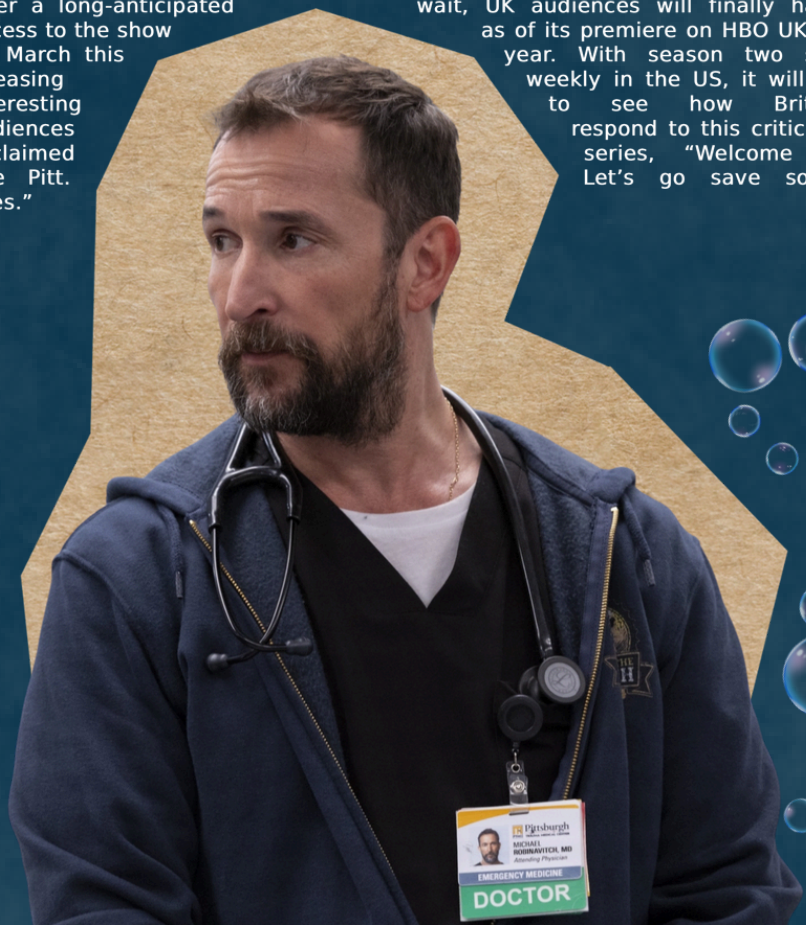


Wyle talks about creative decisions of realism in an interview with GQ. He mentions how the idea for the show came to him during the COVID-19 pandemic as a desire to accurately portray frontline staff in times of emergency. The show fulfils this aim with the creative decision to use real emergency doctors and trauma nurses as advisors both on set and off; these emergency physicians guide the rest of the cast through medical procedures, correct terminology and drug use, as well as help with realistic emotional reactions of doctors in correspondence to their level of experience in the field.

Noah also discusses how the on screen mass casualty in season one and the way that the hospital dealt with this were taken from real life events and all protocols were taken officially from licensed doctors from hospitals all around the USA.

The Pitt secured 13 nominations at the 77th Primetime Emmy Awards 2025 and won five, most notably Outstanding Drama Series, Outstanding Lead Actor, and Outstanding Casting for a Drama Series. This month, Wyle made television history by becoming the first male actor to achieve all 5 major television acting awards in a single awards season for his role as Dr Michael Robinavich, intense and high-tempered. The acting is so phenomenal that you don't expect Wyle's hugely contrasting, lovable and tame persona.

After a long-anticipated wait, UK audiences will finally have access to the show as of its premiere on HBO UK on 26 March this year. With season two still releasing weekly in the US, it will be interesting to see how British audiences respond to this critically acclaimed series, "Welcome to The Pitt. Let's go save some lives."



Top ten SUMMER concerts in Yorkshire and Manchester in 2026



Emma Eldridge

1. **Parklife – Heaton Park, Manchester, 20-21 June 2026**
   Headliners: Calvin Harris, Sammy Virji, Skepta, Zara Larsson
   Manchester's biggest outdoor festival returns to Heaton Park offering a range of dance, electronic, and pop music, including chart-topping artists. Parklife is where you'll find bucket hats, glitter, plenty of traders and the excitement for the first festival of the summer.

2. **Pulp – Wythenshawe Park, Manchester, 28 August 2026**
   Only a few bands truly capture the essence of being Northern and that is Pulp, expect a set filled with Britpop classics delivered with their usual style. Picture the sun setting over the stage and 'Common People' is being sung by thousands of people, that will give you goosebump for years to come.

3. **Rick Astley & Madness – Scarborough Open Air Theatre, 5-6 June 2026**
   Scarborough's Open Air Theatre is the perfect venue for massive songs by both artists. Rick Astley brings the pop charm and strong vocals while Madness brings rhythms and stage presence. Both are guaranteed to bring joy where every song feels like a summer anthem with the crowd singing and dancing along.

4. **The Weeknd – Etihad Stadium, 11-12 June 2026**
   The Weeknd's concert is a visual spectacle. Expect crazy visuals and a stadium crowd lit up by thousands of lights. From R&B to his chart hits like 'Blinding Lights', 'Starboy' and 'Can't Feel My Face', the production is impressive. This show will turn Manchester on its heads for two unforgettable nights.

5. **Let's Rock Huddersfield – Accu Stadium, 30 May 2026**
   Headliners: Marc Almond, Matt Goss, Tony Hadley, Kim Wilde
   Get ready for Let's Rock Huddersfield, a vibrant trip back to the 80s and 90s for one incredible night. With a packed lineup and a guaranteed sea of fancy dress, it will be a joyful and nostalgic summer evening.

6. **Tramlines Festival – Sheffield, 24-25 July 2026**
   Headliners: Fatboy Slim, Courteeners, Wolf Alice
   If there's one weekend that truly captures Yorkshire's modern spirt, its Tramlines. What began as an inner-city festival has evolved into a full-scale outdoor phenomenon at Hillsborough Park.

7. **Self Esteem – York Museum Gardens, 10th July 2026**
   Bold, creative and unmissable, Self Esteem's festival style show with an outdoor backdrop is the perfect summers evening. Expect art-pop anthems with soaring harmonies and striking visuals that will transform the garden into a lively celebration.

8. **BAFTA Games in Concert – Aviva Studios, Manchester, 7 June 2026**
   For a different experience, BAFTA Games in Concert features a live orchestra playing iconic video game scores. This immersive event blends culture and emotion. Whether you're a gamer or a fan of cinematic music, this concert offers a twist on traditional summer gigs.

9. **When Rivers Meet – Parish, Huddersfield, 3 September 2026**
   This dynamic blues/rock duo delivers powerful vocals and guitar work with soulful songwriting to one of Huddersfield's most loved live venues. Expect sing along and moments that feel like a conversation between the band and audience.

10. **Bastille – Scarborough Open Air Theatre, 11th July 2026**
    Indie pop heroes bring their unforgettable anthems to Yorkshire's most scenic outdoor venue, perfect for a summer evening by the sea. With sing along and an electric atmosphere it will be a night to remember.

Special mention!

CMAT – Halifax Piece Hall, 17th July 2026
One of the most exciting voices in modern music, CMAT brings her witty storytelling and powerhouse vocals to Halifax's iconic Piece Hall, the historical courtyard venue provides a stunning open air backdrop creating the perfect intimate atmosphere despite the large crowds.

CHILDREN OF HEAVEN:

A story of patience and the beauty of the Human spirit

Misbahuddin Danwer

Children of Heaven is a Persian-spoken, Iran-based movie which narrates story about two siblings, Ali and Zehra. They live alongside their parents in a small house. The story narrates innocence, determination of brother and Sister and their enthusiasm to cope up with daily life challenges.

Nine-year-old Ali misplaces his sister Zahra's recently repaired shoes, before Ali collects his Zahra's mended shoes from a cobbler. As he buys potatoes at a nearby grocery store, he discreetly places the shoes in a bag beside a vegetable stand outside. A homeless man, mistaking the bag for trash, takes it without realizing its contents. In a panic, Ali accidentally topples the stand while trying to find the shoes, but the grocer quickly chases him away.



Understanding the financial difficulties his family is facing, Ali advises Zahra not to mention her lost shoes to their parents. Later that evening, they reach an agreement to share Ali's shoes and make an arrangement where Zahra will wear them to school in the morning and then return them to Ali at lunchtime, allowing him to afternoon classes.

Ali achieves the highest score on a test, and in recognition of his accomplishment, his teacher presents him with a gold-coloured pen which he decides to give his sister as an apology. Meanwhile, Ali's frequent late coming into class catches attention of his principal, who instructs him to come back to school accompanied by his father. However, Ali's teacher, acknowledging his academic performance, vouches for him and convinces the principal to reassess the situation.

One day, Zahra notices her missing pink shoes worn by Roya, another student. After class, Zahra follows Roya home and later brings Ali to recover her shoes. Upon seeing Roya's blind father, they leave without further action. To reward her school performance, Roya's father buys her new shoes and throws away Zahra's. Zahra is dismayed when she finds out.

Ali's father, eager to increase his earnings, takes out a loan for gardening tools and proceeds with Ali to a more affluent neighbourhood in Tehran in search of employment. He eventually finds a job with Alireza, a six-year-old child, and his grandfather, who compensates him well for his efforts. However, a mishap occurs when the brakes on Ali's father's bicycle malfunction, resulting in an accident that leaves him injured and unable to continue working.

Ali discovers a local long-distance race for children, where the reward for coming in third is a week at a vacation camp along with a new pair of sneakers. Motivated to win the shoes for Zahra, Ali decides to participate in the race.

The move is rated 8.2/10 on IMDB, 83% on Rotten Tomatoes and is originally in Iranian language but available in Dubbed version with Subtitles in English and other languages as well and is available on various platforms such as Amazon Prime and Apple TV.

"Who knew opening up would make me a headline?"



the ZARA LARSSON resurgence

Picture this, it's mid-August 2024 and you're opening your TikTok feed to a static image of dolphins jumping out of the water canvassed on a rainbow backdrop with one-liners like 'My therapist told me I'm the problem' or 'Stop leaving me on delivered, you're not a celebrity' are written over it.



How does this link to the resurgence of Swedish pop star Zara Larsson? Those silly little dolphins helped reintroduce the Swedish star to mainstream pop culture as it was her collaboration with Clean Bandit titled 'Symphony' that was soundtracking these epiphanies.

Larsson had two choices, ignore the memes and let the trend blow over or double down on the hype and embrace the humour. She chose the latter. The platinum-blonde singer-songwriter has altered her fashion style, encouraged fans to add yellow flowers to their social media profile pictures and even worked with Lisa Frank on a limited-edition CD, all inspired by this "Summer isn't over yet" energy.

It's not just visually either, her ongoing Midnight Sun era has seen the Swedish superstar taking a more light-hearted approach to her music. Whether it's the wolf-howling 'Blue Moon' or the Tiffany Pollard-chanting 'Hot & Sexy', she's consistently dropping club-ready, upbeat numbers that match this satirical soundscape.

But, Larsson's dedication to music is nothing to joke about as she's always been determined to make it big in this industry. At the age of ten 'The Ambition' singer won native talent show Talang and released her debut EP four years later titled Introducing.

Her UK breakout came when she dropped 'Lush Life' followed by a link-up with now-longtime collaborator and industry friend MNEK on the single 'Never Forget You' both in 2015.

The love for 'Lush Life' didn't stop there, as the song gained a second lease of life thanks to TikTok once again. This time, her song found itself being used online for a viral dance. This turned into a special segment at her shows where Larsson would call on a fan each night to perform with her on stage.

Now, Zara has the popsphere hooked on her every move and musical peers too, teaming up with Brit-producer and performer PinkPantheress for a brand-new rendition of her hit 'Stateside'. On the track, the 'Euro Summer' singer asks listeners "Who knew opening up would make me a headline?" in reference to her stint supporting Tate McRae on her Miss Possessive Tour.

When Zara said, "Connected, I'm so in touch with it all" on her hit 'Midnight Sun', she really wasn't lying. Everything has fallen perfectly into place and it couldn't have happened to a more deserving artist.

'Midnight Sun' received a remix courtesy of R&B star Muni Long in November and Larsson is now dropping a deluxe with a whole host of artists. Who do you want to feature alongside this Swedish hitmaker?

If the last twelve months have taught us anything it's that this is Zara's world and we're all just living in it. As she gears up for her second consecutive summer domination, there's just one question left to ask.

Are you ready to live your lushest life?



Thomas Melia

Huddersfield Blueprint
Our Cultural Heart



Artist's impression of new public square (Image: Our Cultural Heart)

New Food Hall/Library Opening

Earlier last year, work officially began with the demolition of much of the original Queensgate Market building, while preserving the distinctive 'parasol' roof and murals that make the building so unique.

The vision is for the new space to become a new public square, with the former market being transformed into a food hall and a new library building to be constructed on the side facing the University, set to also be the new home for the Kirklees Local Studies Library



Artist's impression of the extension to the former Huddersfield Art Gallery & Museum (Image: Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios)

Museum & Art Gallery

Further Phases
Further plans include an urban park to fully replace The Piazza Centre, a new events area and an additional car park
Market refurb
Under (now deferred) plans, Huddersfield Open Market is to undergo major a £16.5m refurbishment to perform major repairs and upgrade its facilities; which would include fixed stalls for produce, hot food vendors, a bar and a dedicated seating area, as well as an outdoor "market yard" with about 50 more removable stalls.



Artist's impression of the view of the George Hotel from John William Street (Image: Kirklees Council)

George Hotel

Bought in 2020 by Kirklees Council, the George Hotel (a Grade II* listed building) is currently undergoing works to increases its capacity from 91 to 108 rooms since planning permission was approved in October last year. The hotel will be run by the Radisson Hotel Group as one of its Radisson RED venues.

Transport

TransPennine Route Upgrade
Ongoing since 2021, much to the chagrin of many University of Huddersfield students I'm sure, the TransPennine Route Upgrade is the largest investment in the railways since for a long time. A multibillion-pound project that aims to electrify routes, upgrade stations and improve journey times for passengers travelling between Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds and York.

Recently, work has been completed on Huddersfield station itself to restore its distinctive 'Euston-style' roof, with construction still going full steam ahead to upgrade to extend a current platform Rand create two additional ones.

Lewis Craven

Hope for Hudds Future Yet?
Some big projects to look forward to

For years Huddersfield has been slowly slipping under the radar, but with an ambitious 10 year-long vision backed by government funding, there may be more to look forward to for residents, correcting the mistakes of the past.

Leeds-Bradford Tram (Next Stop Hudds?)
For decades they have been trying to get a Leeds tram project off the ground. But with West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin's plans for a Leeds-Bradford tram being blown off course it is unclear whether it will see the light of day for decades again. However, if it ever gets completed, never mind in our lifetimes, Huddersfield has been floated as one of the potential extensions.

Train Nationalisation
Since the 2024 General Election the government has been pledged to renationalise the railways, taking over each of the franchises from the Train Operating Companies as their contracts expire – to be eventually folded into the state-owned Great British Railways. However, TransPennine Express and Northern were both renationalised in 2023 and 2020 respectively due to poor performance and have since been run by the Department for Transport via the Operator of Last Resort.

Huddersfield University

National Health Innovation Campus
A new chapter is dawning for the University, in the form of the National Health Innovation Campus, that aims to put Huddersfield at the centre of improving health outcome in the Yorkshire & Humber region, with a scope of up to seven building on-site. In addition to the Community Diagnostic Centre, to be run by the Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust, located inside the new Emily Siddon Building there will be further facilities to improve health, as well as opportunities for students with new specialist facilities and courses being introduced.

Park area in Queensgate campus
On the grounds of the former Researcher Hub (demolished in 2024) there are currently works undergoing to transform it. Plans floated previously include performance event spaces, railway-themed sculpture gardens, growing structures, yoga "Zen" areas, and diverse seating with low-maintenance planting.

The project would also include landscaping to connect front and the back of the Barbara Hepworth with a circular route, to make travelling campus easier and more accessible.