

# VARSITY

Friday October 17 2008

The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

Issue No 679 | varsity.co.uk

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## Cambridge crunched

» *University has £11 million at risk in Icelandic banks*  
» *College financial prospects "very, very grim"*

Natasha Lennard and Michael Stothard  
*Varsity News*

The University of Cambridge faces losing £11 million invested in Icelandic banks. But Cambridge colleges, CUSU and local businesses say that this is only the beginning of how the 'credit crunch' will affect Cambridge institutions.

College finances are already being badly hit by the 'credit crunch'. The financial outlook for colleges is already looking "very, very grim," said Churchill Bursar Jennifer Rigby.

Students may pay the price. "The value of College endowments will have gone down significantly over the last few months. We will do all we can to stop our financial burden being passed onto the students, but it will have to at

some point," said Rigby.

Cambridge University Student Union (CUSU) expressed concern for its overall security in these difficult financial times. This is because they are dependent on income from volatile sectors such as publishing, club entertainments and recruitment advertising.

"A credible block grant from the University is the only real guarantor of a secure and independent future for a charity such as ours," said Adam Colligan, CUSU coordinator.

Some Cambridge institutions are less affected than others. Cambridge Union President Adam Bott said: "The two services we offer are drinking and arguing, both always in demand in tough times. Broadly speaking our current strategy is to spend our way through the recession. Economist friends tell me this is akin to smoking your way through a heart attack, but if there's one thing we ought to have learned it's that economists can't be trusted."

Local businesses in Cambridge are seeing the effect of the 'credit crunch' on consumer confidence. The high-end businesses have been the worst hit.

"The credit crunch has made a noticeable impact," said a worker at La Raza Bar and Restaurant. People come into town to do some shopping, and prefer to buy a sandwich rather than spend thirty or fifty pounds on a meal

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**Climbing high: elusive Night Climbers**  
**photographed and interviewed »p34**

**John's Dean "a Facebook faker"**

Craig Hogg  
*Deputy News Editor*

The Dean of St John's is suspected of using Facebook to find and discipline students. He has targeted those he feels have gone too far in the recent Hall wine allowance debate.

Using the fake account name Pedro Amigo, Peter Linehan is thought to have viewed a number of anti-College posts made on a wall set up to protest against the new limit on alcohol in Hall.

The JCR became suspicious when the Dean of College suddenly began summoning the students who had been most outspoken on Facebook to his office last week. It was when a student typed Linehan's Hermes e-mail address into the 'Find Friends' search bar that they found the profile of the mysterious Pedro.

Despite being a member of the Cambridge network, the account appears to have no friends and no picture. The name, which translates as 'Peter Friend' in Spanish, shows a command of linguistics and history in keeping with Linehan's field of expertise, the history of medieval Spain and Portugal, while recalling the Dean's initials, P.A.L.

Speaking to *Varsity*, Linehan said: "If a Dean of John's wanted to gain information on the student body, he would be wise not to use a forum as public as Facebook to do so." However, he declined expressly to deny or confirm any connection to the account.

There has been protest by the student body at the College ever since it announced its new rule on alcohol in Hall. Until this year, students could bring one bottle of wine to Formal Hall. Under the new rule, diners are limited to two glasses of wine per meal, provided by the College.

To join a university network on Facebook, users need an institutional e-mail account. The Facebook policy on fake accounts clearly states that the use of fake names is a violation of the terms of use.

**£11m**

Amount Cambridge University has invested in Glitnir and Landsbanki

**£9m**

Amount Cambridge City Council has invested in Glitnir and Landsbanki

## Girton receives £5 million donation from anonymous alumnus

Camilla Greene  
*News Reporter*

Girton has received an anonymous donation of £5 million. The College, founded in 1866 by public subscription, is benefiting from the support

of an alumnus, who does not wish to be named, for its pilot Teaching Support Fund.

The fund will ensure that the supervision system at Girton continues into the future, and that the college will be able to maintain its commit-

ment to employing a high number of teaching officers.

The donation was praised by Dame Marilyn Strathern, the Mistress of Girton, who declared that the gift upheld the ethos of the college, commenting that "from its founda-

tion, Girton has grown because of the thought and enthusiasm of people committed to education and the personal generosity of so many." She added that "the scale of this particular donation [will enable us] to take a long view of our objectives."

The Girton web campaign is adamant that small gifts by recent alumni can make a huge difference overall: "The wide participation of our alumni in donating can influence funding decisions by donors such as trusts and corporations."

»p17 Peter Tatchell interviewed »p28 Tessa Jowell, Olympics Minister, on the legacy of Beijing

# VARSITY

Applications are invited to edit the 2009 Mays Anthology.  
Interested candidates should contact [business@varsity.co.uk](mailto:business@varsity.co.uk).

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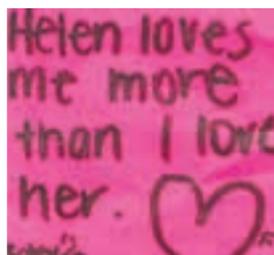
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## Intelligent design

Bad architecture corrodes the soul. As anyone who's read JG Ballard's dystopic masterpiece *High Rise* can testify, ugly and ill-planned buildings will send you mad. Particularly if you have to live in them.

It's therefore gratifying to learn that a set of beautiful and thoughtfully-designed residential houses has been built on our very own doorstep. Indeed, as the article on the facing page reports, the new Accordia development down by the station has even won a prestigious award for its socially-considerate layout. Only time will tell whether the architects' vision will really result in a communal utopia which encourages neighbourly love, but it is nevertheless a relief that attention is at last being devoted again to suburban architecture and not just to more visible public structures.

This is a serious issue: depressing houses do affect one's psyche. Cramped tower-blocks are divisive; dull, brick-built semis often make for gloomy homes. Little wonder that their inhabitants often feel alienated and uninspired.

It is a shame, then, that the vast majority of the Accordia estate will only be available to the private market. For all the developers' pretensions to social revolution, hardly any of the residences have been designated as council houses. The development is consequently unattainable for the people who are most in need of accommodation like that in Accordia – those who have been confined to high-rises all their lives.

In the end, it is inevitably and, perhaps justifiably, not the first priority of the private developer to redress the problem of social housing. It should, however, be the new Housing Minister Margaret Beckett's primary goal. She needs to build council estates which are accessible to those who cannot afford Accordia-style property and which, fundamentally, serve not just as sleeping quarters, but as beautiful homes which engender respect for one's local environment. This country's housing shortage may need to be solved quickly but Beckett should be warned against unreservedly constructing the tenements of tomorrow. She could, instead, take a leaf out of Accordia's book.

## The Varsity Plagiarism Survey 2008

Varsity is conducting a survey about plagiarism at Cambridge.

To complete the survey, please go to [varsity.co.uk/plagiarism](http://varsity.co.uk/plagiarism).

It should take under two minutes to complete.

All entries are completely anonymous.

[letters@varsity.co.uk](mailto:letters@varsity.co.uk) Submit your letter for the chance to win a bottle of wine from the Cambridge Wine Merchants.  
This week's winner is Amy Goodwin of Queens' College.

### One queen or two?

Sir,  
I find it outrageous that the Editors [sic] of Varsity consistently fail to appreciate that



Queens' has two patronesses, as the apostrophe, if correctly placed, indicates. Please do not confuse us with the college at the other place.

Yours faithfully,  
Amy Goodwin  
Queens' College

### Of arms and a man

Sir,  
Your report on arms divestment in colleges [Varsity Issue 679] failed to consider a crucial argument in favour of buying stocks of

weapon manufacturers. If the colleges succeeded in acquiring a controlling stake in a weapon manufacturer they could shut it down. This certainly would be an effective way to make a long-term difference.

Yours faithfully,  
Phillipp Heller  
King's College

### Stuck off

Sir,  
In your interview with Sir Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate Gallery [Varsity Issue 680], he says of the trustees, "I don't have any part to play in their appointment." The Tate website says, "The key stages of the appointment are overseen by a panel, which will normally include the Director." Serota asks about the trustees, "Why would I want to win their support?" A good reason is that they are his employers. He asserts the Tate bought Ofili's work at a bargain price,

but in 2003 he said, "the price will have to come down". It didn't, but the Tate bought it anyway. He makes the excuse, "we had been following a practice which had been running for fifty years," which supports my contention of institutional malpractice through inbred governance. Tate minutes on the website are not "open": they are heavily censored.

Serota compares criticism for not buying Whiteread and Hirst with criticism for buying Ofili and Doig. The former were not trustees; the latter were. In 2005, I analysed recent Tate acquisitions for artists born since the war: 4% were paintings; nearly 50% were installations. A national museum, the Walker Art Gallery, mounted a major five month show of Stuckist work for the 2004 Liverpool Biennial. My petition against Serota's directorship is at <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/tatedirector>.

Yours faithfully,  
Charles Thomson  
Co-founder, The Stuckists

Varsity has been Cambridge's independent student newspaper since 1947 and distributes 10,000 free copies to every Cambridge college and to ARU each week.

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Accordia is "housing for the 21st century"

## Sensation as Cambridge estate wins Stirling Prize

» Judges commend revolutionary residential development despite paucity of social housing

Christiana Spens  
News Reporter

A Cambridge housing estate has won the Stirling Prize. The Accordia development, on Brookland Avenue, is the first housing estate ever to win the RIBA Stirling Prize, the country's most prestigious architectural award.

Accordia beat off competition from the renovated Royal Festival Hall and the London 2012 Aquatic Centre, among others, to win the £20,000 prize last Saturday. The judges hailed the development as "architecture which gives hope for all of us in the future".

The core concept of Accordia is

communal. It is a collaboration by architects from three separate practices – Feilden Clegg Bradley, Alison Brooks and MacCreanor Lavington – for people with varying residential needs.

The development includes council homes (about a quarter of all housing), homes for private sale and some available under shared-equity schemes. The judges of the award called it "housing for the 21st century, a post-Thatcherite development that is not afraid of communal aspirations and aesthetics".

The development is supposed to encourage integration, independence and play. There is shared land where children can safely run wild, "as if in

some idyllic throwback to the 1950s", as one judge said. There are both rural and urban views, with private roof terraces and public lawns. It tries to combine traditional values with forward-thinking and imaginative ways to solve old problems.

Social housing has previously had little attention from the architectural community, according to Alison Brooks: "The fact is that there are very few high quality housing schemes." Brooks' collaborator, Peter Clegg announced after winning the award that "what we are doing is changing the mould of housing".

The British architectural establish-

ment agrees. Sunand Prasad, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects said that Accordia has done "the most for British architecture in the past year".

Accordia is said to represent a move from corporate extravagance to communal sensibilities, a new approach from a previously business-focused industry. As one member of Accordia's architectural team explains, "A lot of mistakes were made in the past: not all the fault of architects, but architects were party to that. Put all the same sort of people in the same place; it never works." But this new communal aesthetic seems to do so.

## In Brief



### Tempus frangit

The Corpus clock broke down on Monday, for the third time. The eye-catching clock, which cost £1 million and took seven years to build, came to a stop in the early evening after a fault in a temperature sensor was detected automatically. The clock was repaired by Tuesday lunchtime. Its designer John Taylor claims that "the timekeeping of the clock is not affected" by such unexpected failures.

### Grad banned from Parliament

A Cambridge graduate has been ordered to stay away from Parliament. Tamsin Omond, an environmental protestor, is banned from going within a kilometre of the Palace of Westminster after attempting to force her way in to the House of Commons on Monday. Omond graduated from Trinity with a 2:1 in English in 2007 and has devoted her time since to protesting with organisations such as Greenpeace and anti-aviation campaigns. She hit the headlines earlier this year after holding a protest on the roof of Parliament, after which she was released on bail. Her latest brush with the law comes after a group of activists tried to storm St. Stephen's entrance to the Palace, recreating the actions of a group of suffragettes in 1908. Omond has described the latest protest as "a great success".

### Catz Chorus

Catz has established a new choir for girls. The choir, comprised of eighteen girls from local schools, aged from eight to fourteen, sang publicly for the first time on Tuesday. It will continue to sing in the College's chapel every Tuesday. The choir is the first of its kind at any British university, despite the long tradition of boys' choirs at Cambridge and Oxford. The College's Director of Music, Edward Wickham, says that "College music will be enormously enriched by this new ensemble". The Chaplain, Anthony Moore, adds that "there are exciting times ahead".



The opening of Primark's Oxford Street store sparked fights

## Primark comes to Cambridge

Lizzy Tyler  
News Reporter

Primark is set to open a shop in Cambridge. The cut-price clothing company has secured planning permission for a new branch. Primark, which is now the second largest UK clothing retailer by volume, has until now been one of the few familiar names missing from the Cambridge streets.

The new store will be situated on the site of the old John Lewis on Burleigh Road, near the Grafton Centre. The decision to grant planning permission is thought to be part of a move to regenerate the area, which has seen a drop in popularity in the past few years as new shopping destinations have opened up more centrally.

Although an official source reported that there were "no issues with planning and wide support from public and press", there are worries that the new outlet, which contains 40,000 square feet of trading space, could take some sales away from independent shops in the area, as well as the many charity shops based on Burleigh Road.

Primark, which is owned by global corporate giant Associated British Foods, employs over 25,000 people worldwide and has thrived in recent years on its "Look Good, Pay Less" tagline.

Primark was the subject of scrutiny

from the BBC's Panorama programme earlier this year, when the ethical standards of its production systems were investigated. But the clothing giant was quick to quash such concerns, sacking three of its Indian suppliers alleged to have been using child labour and employing local NGOs to act as its "eyes and ears on the ground".

The company is a member of the Ethical Trading Initiative which "aims to promote respect for the rights of people in factories and farms worldwide".

The news that Primark is to open a new store in the city has been met with largely positive feedback from the student body. "Finally!" was the resounding response from various Cambridge undergraduates when informed of the plan.

Not only is Primark a valuable source of party costumes but, in economically unstable times, its ethos of low prices and fast turnover will seem even more attractive to increasingly stretched student budgets.

Although "pretty far away" according to one lethargic student, the new store promises to attract hundreds of customers on its opening day in late 2009. The flagship branch on London's Oxford Street sold one million items in its first ten days of trading and, with Primark accounting for every pound out of ten spent on clothing in Britain, the brand's popularity seems set to continue.

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on presentation of this voucher  
and proof of student status

## MythBusters

What Scudamore's don't want you to know



**Week 2:** *The Mathematical Bridge (sometimes called Newton's Bridge) was a) built by Isaac Newton, and b) disassembled by students who were then unable to put it back together again.*

The closer an object is to the river, the more time a Scudamore's punter has to bullshit about it. Aside from a duck, or the punt itself, a bridge is the closest thing you can get to the river. God knows they tried to give ducks a profound historical gravitas: "Did you know that it was looking at this very Mallard that Stephen Hawking first decided to think about space... and stuff..." said one punter, trailing off nervously at the end. They may be tourists, but they are not that stupid.

Punters then settled into making up reams upon reams of slightly more plausible crap about the Mathematical Bridge, which we can now set straight. Firstly, Isaac Newton, who died in 1727, was very dead by the time the bridge was first built by James Essex the Younger in 1749.

Moreover, Newton was a theoretical physicist, not an engineer or architect, so is unlikely to have been building many bridges even while alive. In Scudamore's defence, even though he had nothing tangible to do with the bridge, if Newton had never discovered that things fell when they were dropped, the bridge builders might have struggled.

The bridge was never disassembled by students who failed to put it back together. It was never taken apart by students at all. Anyone who thinks so "cannot have a serious grasp on reality," according to the Queens' College website. Screws of some sort have been used to hold together all of the three different versions of the bridge built by different engineers since 1749.

This second myth is very clever on the part of Scudamore's, because it combines a student prank with a satisfying hubristic moment. "Ha! Cambridge students are not as clever as they think they are," say the punters. This is not true. We are just as clever as we think we are, and we are far smarter than Newton was when the bridge was built twenty-two years after his death.  
**Michael Stothard**



The incident occurred after this inter-universities match

## John's ent closed after Oxonian punches porter

**Niroshan Kumar**  
News Reporter

A John's ent was stopped after a drunken Oxford rugby player punched a porter.

Earlier in the day, Pembroke College, Oxford had been defeated by the John's team. The Pembroke side, who were staying in a hotel, decided to join the festivities in John's after their black-tie dinner.

One visitor had been drinking both prior to and during the ent, leading to rowdy behaviour. A JCR rep acted by accosting the student and taking him aside. In his drunken state, the Oxonian lost his temper and punched a porter. No-one was injured in the confrontation.

The porters acted by closing down the entire ent, despite no other bad behaviour coming from other visitors.

Students have commented that this was an "exaggerated response" by the

porters, and that "punishing all the John's students for the actions of an individual is completely unfair".

The Pembroke side has now been 'blacklisted' in the eyes of the John's student body, although nearly all behaved properly. Rumours of damage during the ent by the visitors have been unfounded, especially as the venue was inspected by porters afterwards.

Tom Chigbo, John's JCR President, told Varsity, "it's a shame that the 250 other people who weren't violent were

punished due to the actions of a couple of non-Johnians". No John's entertainment has been shut down in recent years, but last year the first ent of the year was cancelled by the College.

Second-year James Morgan said, "it's disappointing that this is how the freshers experienced their first real ent". He continued to say that, like last year, it is the new set of freshers that will be most affected.

Both St John's and Pembroke have declined to comment.



## New Hawking statue announced

**Arthur Turrell**  
News Reporter

A statue of Stephen Hawking is to be unveiled in Cambridge. Professor Hawking, Fellow of Caius and Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, will have the rare honour of having two statues in Cambridge. The wheelchair-bound physicist will be immortalised in a three-metre-high bronze statue by award-winning artist Eve Shepherd.

Only last year, a bust of Professor Hawking designed by the late Ian Walters was unveiled at the Centre for Mathematical Sciences, to mark the opening of the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology. The new sculpture, also situated at the centre, will feature the Professor in his wheelchair surrounded by a swirling arc reminiscent of a black hole, a phenomenon on which he has published extensively.

Professor Hawking, 66, is most famous for his popular accounts of theoretical physics, including *A Brief History of Time*, which stayed on the *Sunday Times* bestseller list for a record-breaking 237 weeks.

He is renowned in academia for his work on cosmology and quantum gravity, which he has completed despite being

almost completely paralysed by a neurodegenerative condition known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease.

The statue is not yet complete, but a small-scale version has already been given to the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences, which Professor Hawking visited earlier this year.

Throughout the project, commissioned by Professor Hawking's colleagues at a cost of £250,000, Shepherd has been shadowing the professor in order to learn more about his personality, indicating that she wanted to show the "power of Professor Hawking's mind and the fragility of his body".

"There's so much personality and energy inside Stephen's mind, but it is difficult to show that in a sculpture because his body doesn't reflect it," the 32-year-old Brighton-based sculptor says. "However, I didn't want to ignore his disability, and Stephen agreed with that."

The sculpture has sparked debate amongst students. One finds Hawking undeserving of such a tribute: "He seems totally overrated when compared to, say, Newton". However, a graduate student commented that "he deserves much more than a paltry 10ft statue".

*Additional reporting by Celestine Heaton-Armstrong and Natasha Moules*

## Floods shut down Life

» Vandalism rumours unfounded, says club

**Martin McQuade**  
Deputy News Editor

Revellers were evacuated from The Place on Sunday night after faulty drains flooded the newly refurbished club.

Whilst initially the lower basement area was simply cordoned off, water levels later began to rise above several inches. The club, known as Life by most students, was evacuated at 11.30 amidst fear of human waste making its way onto the dance floor.

One attendee says, "it was pandemonium. They didn't stamp our hands on the way in so we have no chance of a refund".

Though rumour quickly spread amongst the club-goers that the flooding was due to vandalism in the gents' bathroom, the club denies this.

"There was no vandalism at all: there were just some drainage issues which we've now completely fixed," says Ollie Bevin, Assistant Manager. "We're also offering free entry to everybody next Sunday by way of an apology," he adds.

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## NEWS INVESTIGATION



# Crunch will “affect college dividends by 30%”

» Bursar: “Food quality will decrease, food prices will go up and room rates will increase markedly”

» Full impact will be “very distressing”

Continued from front page

for two,” he said.

While up-market restaurants like Galeria have been cutting down on staff recently, fast food outlets such as Gardies or the Hot Sausage Company are doing relatively well. “There’s no difference in my business. I’m the bottom of the food chain, like algae,” said the manager of the Hot Sausage Company.

Even he is pessimistic for the future though. “I personally think it’s going to be six months down the road that it all kicks in,” he said.

Some newsagents in Cambridge reported sales down by nearly 35% and revenue down by nearly 20%. One reported that more students were buying rolling tobacco rather than straight cigarettes, as they were cheaper.



“All retail in Cambridge has been affected,” said Aileen Hughes at John Lewis.

Although in John Lewis, “there has been a growth in the sales of hot-water bottles of 200%, suggesting people are deferring putting on their heating,” she continued.

Cambridge graduates are also suffering from the ‘credit crunch.’ “The big banks aren’t doing the recruitment milk-round, and it seems that the number of recruitment events planned for the coming year is notably smaller than in previous years,” said Colligan.

A recent graduate working at a small fund management firm described the situation as “bloody awful.”

“It’s not that new graduates are being fired; we’re cheap to keep. There are, however many incidents of contracts being withdrawn before graduates begin their jobs... Those wanting to be bankers are entering into a very different world than they would have been even last year. Serious money and security can no longer be relied upon. Perhaps they never could be, but it did use to feel that way,” he continued.

Three hundred fewer students than last year attended the banking Careers Service event on Wednesday. Four banks cancelled their slots because they were no longer recruiting, including Lehman Brothers and Bear Stearns. There was, however, a rise in the number of students at the consulting event yesterday,

which some students see as a safer option. “We are asking students to have a plan B when trying to enter the financial industry,” said Gordon Chesterman, the Director of the Careers Service. A representative from the University was keen to point out that the university’s money market investments, which are threatened by the Icelandic bank affair, are separate from the long-term investments and endowments that the University predominantly relies upon for long-term stability. It is yet to be established how much, if any, of the investments in Icelandic banks might be reclaimed. The £11 million hanging in the balance was split between two banks, Glitnir and Heritable – a UK subsidiary of Landsbanki – that collapsed earlier this month. Their assets are not frozen. Other potential victims of the Icelandic affair are the Cambridge City Council, which has £9 million invested, and Oxford University, which has £30 million.

Departments themselves have also been confronted with financial difficulties. The Universities financial watchdog has come out saying that the School of Humanities is facing “serious financial pressure.”

On a college level, the full impact of the credit crunch remains to be seen. One bursar told Varsity that it was likely to take until next year for the financial turmoil to filter down and make a substantial difference to college finances. All bursars agree that when the full impact hits it will be “very distressing.”

As company earnings fall they try to keep liquidity by stopping the payment of dividends to their investors. Many colleges rely on these dividends for the basic running of day to do college life. “I would not be at all surprised if dividends fall 30 per cent in the third quarter. The most important thing to realise is that this is all just starting,” said one Bursar.

Additional reporting by Chris Dobbie, Imogen Goodman, Mike Hornsey, Jennifer Mills, Alasdair Pal, Rishin Patel, Caedmon Tunstall-Behrens and Vicky Woolley.

How these losses will impact the workings of the colleges is currently uncertain. If there is a full recession, “the quality of the food will decrease, the price of food will go up and room rates will increase markedly,” said one bursar.

Additional repairs and upgrades to living conditions are likely to be postponed until after the downturn. Churchill’s JCR President admitted that the financial climate was already making it likely to be more difficult “to raise the £6 million required for a new court”.

The major effect of the ‘credit crunch’ on college finances will be the drop in Cambridge’s conferences and banqueting business. This income helps many colleges keep student costs down. Cancellations of bookings are yet to be seen, but as a bursar of a large college notes “it is only a matter of time.” This is particularly important for college such as John’s, Queens’, Robinson, Churchill and Homerton, who rely on conference income more than most.

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Additional reporting by Chris Dobbie, Imogen Goodman, Mike Hornsey, Jennifer Mills, Alasdair Pal, Rishin Patel, Caedmon Tunstall-Behrens and Vicky Woolley.

# -35%

Estimated decrease in retail sales for selected Cambridge companies

# -20%

Estimated decrease in revenue for selected Cambridge companies

# £6m

Cost of Churchill development which may not now be completed

# 200%

Increase in hot water bottle sales at John Lewis due to energy price rises

# £30m

Amount Oxford University has invested in Iceland banks

## Triple Helix debates pros and cons of eternal life

» Leading scientists argue that prolonging years of poor health is a waste of money

Timothy Leung  
Science Editor

Five eminent scientists gathered in Cambridge at a talk entitled ‘Who wants to live forever?’ to discuss the impacts of extreme ageing and the future of life extension research. The event was hosted by the Triple Helix society, their first meeting of the year.

Richard Faragher of the University of Brighton began proceedings with the statement that there is a dispar-

ity between the steady increase in lifespan that we have seen over the last century and the smaller increase in healthspan, the number of years one can expect to live in good health.

For Guy Brown of the Department of Biochemistry, this discrepancy indicates that currently, extra years of lifespan are poor quality years of ill health added to the end of life, so his message was simply to “forget about living forever...until we have solved age-related disability.” Indeed, Ken-

neth Howse of the Oxford Institute of Ageing pointed out that investment in life-extending intervention might be pointless if we are merely increasing the number of years spent in ill health at the end of life.

The possibility of solving this problem was presented with characteristic passion by Trinity Hall alumnus Aubrey de Grey of the Methuselah Institute. Faragher noted that “if ageing research had a paramilitary wing, then the head of that paramilitary wing

would be de Grey.” His vision of a human being maintained by engineering remedies to specific tissue damage provided a refreshing contrast to the fatalism of the “pro-ageing trance”, the notion that ageing and its related problems are inevitable.

Although de Grey’s proposal does not necessitate an understanding of the biochemical processes underlying ageing, the importance of scientific research into this field was highlighted by Klaus Okkenhaug of the Babraham

Institute, which sponsored the event. Okkenhaug discussed the finding that model organisms with fewer memory T cells in their immune systems have prolonged lifespans, which raises the possibility that genes mediating the immune system might affect longevity.

The message of the evening was one of interdisciplinary co-operation and practical economics: worthy as research into ageing might be, its annual cost to the UK of £5 million might simply prove too hefty for us to live forever.

## In Brief

### Cambridge is "finishing school"

The vice-chancellor of London Metropolitan University has said that Cambridge and Oxford should be denied state funding. In an interview with Times Higher Education, Brian Roper called the universities "rather superior finishing schools", adding that if Oxbridge doesn't want to be controlled by the government they should "just go" and turn private. Roper's comments follow demands from both universities that they should be allowed to determine their own admissions policy, statements which Roper calls "morally offensive".

### John's coated in gold leaf

While most colleges are struggling through the murky depths of the credit crunch, St John's is painting its balconies with gold leaf. One John's student said that he was "outraged, that in such tough times the college was doing something so decadent. This is what gives John's a bad name," he said. The move is part of a refurbishment of North and Chapel Courts which started in 2006 and is the first comprehensive renovation of the building since its completion in 1939. They are replating the original gold leaf. "This is a hubristic decision worthy of Midas," said a third-year student.

### Tata Steel endows chair

The University plans to establish a new chair in metallurgy. Harry Bhadeshia will be the first Tata Steel Professor of Metallurgy, starting from December 1; he is currently a Professor of Physical Metallurgy. The new chair is being endowed by Tata Steel, one of the world's biggest steel companies, which caused controversy recently with its acquisition of Corus, formerly British Steel. The company is donating more than £2 million for the endowment of the chair.

### Cambridge is NHS partner

The University is teaming up with the NHS to improve regular health care. Cambridge, along with eight other universities, will work to test new treatments and methodologies, having been awarded a Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care. The collaboration will focus on chronic conditions such as depression and dementia, and will involve the Departments of Engineering and Psychiatry, among others.

### Tourists fail to drown

No-one drowned in the Cam this week, as many students and tourists went punting on the river. Five people who fell in the river particularly did not drown, although they did get wet. One punter said "Yes...no-one was hurt this week, again, although a few people did get a bit wet." Following the five incidents, which forced countless items of clothing to be hung out to dry, the river manager Phillipa Noon said: "we will be investigating what happened."



PATRICK GARETY

## Why did Sir Peter Hall cross the road? To re-open the ADC Theatre

Sir Peter Hall and Sir Trevor Nunn helped officially to re-open the ADC Theatre on Monday evening. The directing legends were both ADC stalwarts while at Cambridge; Sir Peter gave a speech recalling his student thespian experience. The ADC marked its opening night, after six months of renovations, with the student-penned musical *Hero*, which was a hit at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival over the summer.

## University hosts ecumenical conference

» Event praised as important step in Muslim-Christian relations

Emma Inkester  
News Reporter

Cambridge University played host to a major international conference of Muslim and Christian scholars and religious leaders this week.

The four-day event, 'A Common Word and Future Muslim-Christian Engagement', opened on Sunday with presentations from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, and the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Gomaa.

The conference formed the next step in dialogue between the two faiths, set in motion by 'A Common Word Between Us And You', a letter released by 138 Islamic scholars in October 2007. This document extended the hand of peace

and friendship to Christians, and emphasised their common priorities of love for God and for one's neighbour. The Archbishop of Canterbury responded in July, with 'A Common Word for the Common Good'.

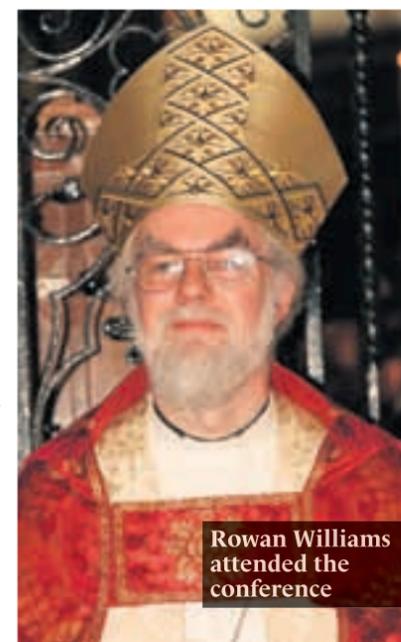
David Ford, Regius Professor of Divinity and director of the Cambridge Inter-Faith Programme, describes the Common Word letters as "probably the most important step forward in Muslim-Christian relations in fifty years, adding: "They engage with each other from the core of each faith and they face many of the big issues. These include practical matters of violence, religious freedom and how to collaborate for the sake of peace, and also some of the deepest religious issues to do with God, prayer, love

of neighbour and dealing with global problems."

He expressed a hope that the discussions would bring about "understanding, trust and a commitment to ongoing conversation" and future engagement. He says that "we aim to offer a model of partnership between Muslims and Christians at the highest level of intellectual engagement and the deepest level of scriptural attentiveness."

The conference culminated on Wednesday with a final address by the Archbishop at Lambeth Palace.

Alongside communication between Muslims and Christians, Professor Ford announced "plans for engagement with Jews as an appropriate further dimension of the Common Word process."



Rowan Williams attended the conference

## Cambridge exams for Ethiopia

Anna Richardson  
News Reporter

Cambridge has launched a new exam in Ethiopia. As of this month, a Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) diploma in Project Management will be offered in the country.

The diploma, delivered through a qualification authority called the Zemen Institute, is aimed at experienced project managers. According to Zemen, it will allow them to demonstrate their skills and credibility through an affordable, internationally recognised qualification.

CIE is a non-profit organisation, and has launched international qualification programmes in 150 countries. As well as offering a series of vocational, CIE is the largest provider of international qualifications for fourteen-to-nineteen-year-olds. Their mission statement says that their aim is "to deliver high-quality and leading-edge assessment services."

The International Diploma in Project Management (IDPM) has been devised for CIE by partner 4cPM, an organization dedicated to gaining worldwide recognition for project managers. Udoka Ogbue of CIE said that he was "happy with the design, delivery and assessment" of the qualification.

The diploma targets established man-

agers seeking to build upon or formalise their skills. The program will include three three-day seminars and three short research assignments. Assessment will be in the form of an ongoing project on which the manager is already working. This means that not only can a student continue to work full time, but their work will also make up a considerable portion of the diploma requirements.

Crucially, the new award will be affordable. In a press release of September 28, Zemen pointed out that "the hidden cost of full-time attendance of an academic institution, plus the cost of the qualification itself, has been a major inhibitor to many project managers becoming qualified." The cost of the new diploma is to be guided by the equivalent cost of a locally conferred tertiary qualification, but will be open to negotiation.

In the long-term, such training of project managers could, according to Zemen, improve the efficiency of many Ethiopian projects, including non-governmental organizations, healthcare institutions, property and land development and local government. It has been suggested, however, that Ethiopian project managers who attain the new diploma might migrate to higher-paid jobs elsewhere in Africa.

Additional reporting by Louise Nixey



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# Addenbrooke's bed space reaches critical levels

Lizzie Homersham  
News Reporter

Addenbrooke's was put on 'Black Alert' this week as demand for hospital beds rose sharply.

"Some planned operations had to be rescheduled," admitted James Woodman, an Addenbrooke's spokesman.

A traffic light-style system uses green, amber, red and, finally, black to measure the number of beds available for patients.

This marks the third time in as many

consecutive years that a rise in emergency admissions has caused the bed capacity to be assessed as black at Addenbrooke's.

When asked where emergency patients would have been taken if Addenbrooke's had been unable to offer any more beds, he stressed that this had never happened, and that "emergencies always take priority".

Woodman told Varsity that being 'on black' is "not about saying there aren't beds available. It is simply us keeping track of how many beds we have". And

whilst the Cambridge News said that the hospital was on "Black Alert," Woodman stated that "nobody in the NHS calls it that".

He described it as "a term coined by the Daily Mail" that could lead to the public perceiving the situation as more serious than it is.

Indeed, in terms of urgent and emergency care, Addenbrooke's was recently rated as 'best performing' in a report by the Healthcare Commission, an independent watchdog.

The Cambridge University hospital's annual report for 2007/8 outlines improvements that are still to be made. The number of beds occupied by patients experiencing a delay in their discharge is still above the national average, despite having fallen in the last year.

The Neuro-Sciences department has recently benefitted from 16 new beds. Woodman claims, however, that this boost in resources is not a direct reaction to the problems experienced with bed capacity.

## Cambridge Spies



### Master debaters

#### Condomania

A senior apparatchik in a Cambridge debating society found herself in a compromising position with a fresh-faced University debutant: as events progressed, it became clear that protection would have to be provided. At this point, a dilemma presented itself: Durex, or the society's own brand? Despite repeated assurances from top brass that the latter are as safe as (metaphorical) houses, our heroine plumped for the recognised brand. Does she know something we don't?

### St Catherine's

#### Star quality

A successful actor of the silver screen, turned Cambridge student, was indulging in his weekly celebration of the fact that he was affluent, talented and picturesque. He must have had a particularly stupendous week of being himself because he decided to indulge in one or two tipples by the rack. After several metres of drink, things seemed like a good idea that may, in fact, not have been. Like pilfering a tank of gasoline from a purveyor of Russian spirits, and bounding outside to deposit the contents in the road. Witnesses reported mildly manic cackling. The next day his college suggested he paid the institution back the price of the gasoline, and sign them an autograph.

### Girton

#### The fairer sex

In an exchange over a spilt drink, our rambunctious heroine collided her fist into the nose of a young fresher. Shocked by the profuse bleeding, and worried that feminism has already made it socially unacceptable to hit men, the cunning shrew came up with a plan. Slipping into a quiet court, she proceeded to knock her skull against the wall until she struck blood. Summoning crocodile tears, she slipped back into the party, and accused the now happily bopping fellow of beating her. Needless to say, he was set upon by a loyal drinking society and extracted from the premises. It would appear that the female of the species is indeed more deadly than the male. Shock shock horror horror.



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**Date:** 3rd November 2008

**Time:** 18:30

**Venue:** Cambridge

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# Pressure on parking

» Queues for Cambridge car parks after pay machines are vandalised

Julie Chan  
News Reporter

Vandalism has hit Cambridge car parks. Recent damage to Pay and Display machines has left long queues in the underground facilities at the Grand Arcade and Park Street. Machines have been taken out in both areas, with Park Street being the worse hit of the two.

According to a Cambridge parking services official, three of the nine pay machines at the Grand Arcade were vandalised, while all four of the machines serving the Park Street multi-storey car park, next to the Maypole, were destroyed. The police think that the crimes took place early in the morning. They have a list of suspected culprits and are continuing investigations.

This is the second time in recent months that serious police incidents have occurred at the Grand Arcade. In July there had been a break-in at the shopping centre, with management beefing up security in response.

While the parking services were able to get the damaged machines at Grand Arcade repaired fairly quickly, new machines have been ordered to replace those on Park Street. However, Cambridge parking services expect

the new machines to take about a month to arrive from the manufacturer.

As a temporary solution, two machines have been moved from the Grand Arcade to the Park Street car park. This is half of the car park's usual capacity, and has led to some inconvenience to drivers.

Given that the Park Street multi-storey is a popular car park for drivers due to its proximity to the city centre, there have been long queues during the busy periods of the day. However, it does not seem to have affected the number of people using the car park. Similarly, there has not been any significant drop in the number of drivers using the spaces at the Grand Arcade.

There are 2,892 spaces in the five Cambridge car parks, all of which are run by the City Council. They are all open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Cambridge parking administrator declined to comment on whether these incidents would justify an increased police presence in Cambridge. As a result of the recent vandalism, Cambridge parking services are modifying the new Pay and Display machines. The new machines will be more robust in order to withstand vandalism.



A vandalised pay machine at Park Street

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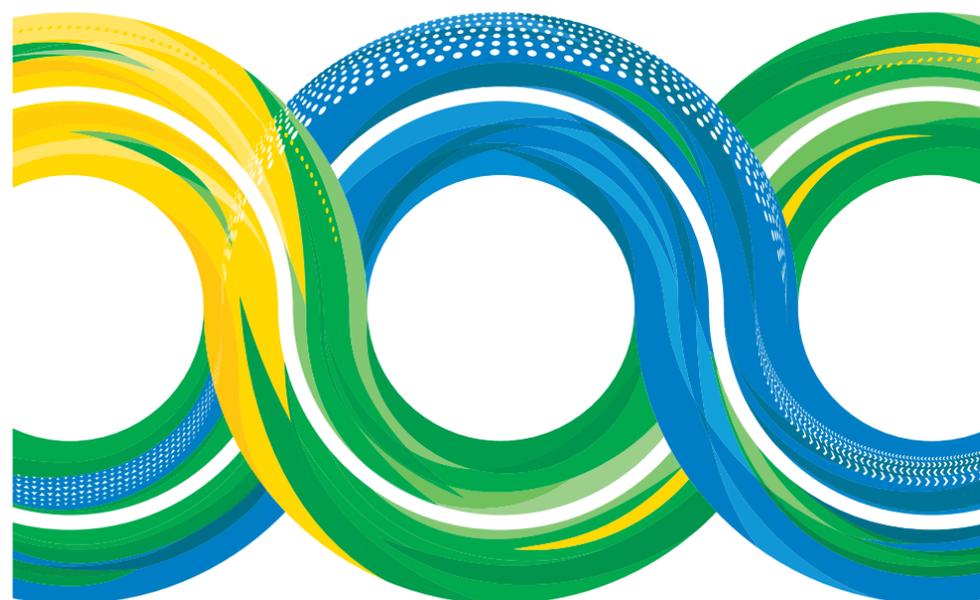
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## Varsity Profile

» Week 2: David Howarth, MP for Cambridge

“Cambridge as a city has changed enormously over the past thirty years,” states David Howarth. He should know: he has been both a student and academic here, and is currently Cambridge’s MP. Born near Wolverhampton, David, a Liberal Democrat, graduated from Clare with a first in law in 1981. He also has Masters degrees in law and sociology from Yale. He soon returned to Clare, and has been a Fellow there since 1985.

He beat Labour candidate Anne Campbell for the Cambridge seat in 2005. He is also Shadow Solicitor General for his party. His involvement in politics traces back to his student days: he was president of the Clare College Students’ Association and a member of CUSU executive. However, he shunned the Union: he claims it was “rather grand”. So what advice does it offer for students aspiring to be MPs? “My advice to students who want a career in politics is to do something else,” he says. “We probably have enough career politicians already. Politics should arise out of experience of life, not life out of politics.”

However, David himself joined the Liberal Party while still a student. Why the Lib Dems? David admits they “are not the kind of party you join if your only ambition is to be MP!” Instead the party attracted him, he states, “because they stood for the kind of politics – political freedom, social justice, the spreading of power and protecting the environment – that I still believe today”. He says that student life has changed considerably since the 1970s. “We had a lot less to worry about financially,” he reflects; “I had

no debt at all when I graduated.” So how does his party propose to help ease the burden on students, especially in credit-crunchy times? “It is probably better to spend a recession studying than trying to get a full-time job,” he claims. “I am more worried about people coming to the end of their course than the beginning.”

Despite finding commuting a bit of a drag, he believes that the highlight of his career was stopping the “ludicrous and dangerous” Legislative Regulatory Reform Bill. This legislation, he feels, “would have transferred all power to make new laws from Parliament to the government”. This success secured him a nomination as Backbencher of the Year 2006.

Yet Howarth seems disillusioned the current political system. He describes the ‘first past the post’ voting system as “ridiculous,” as votes have a far greater value in marginal constituencies. However, for this reason, his advice to Liberal Democrat supporters is to “vote here [in Cambridge]”. He believes that Prime Minister’s Questions features “largely pointless macho posturing”. He also doubts that the internet has made MPs more accessible: “There is probably no personal contact between MPs and constituents than before.”

He continues to enjoy interacting with his constituents and does look forward to spending time in the city that he represents in Parliament four times a week. “London might be bigger and more powerful, but it just doesn’t have the spark that Cambridge does.”

Lauren Smith

2

Jobs: academic and parliamentary

3

Unsuccessful runs for Parliament

1981

Year Howarth graduated

4339

Size of Howarth’s majority



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**Who:** Open to all

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### Hi! Society



#### Week 2: ArcSoc

ArcSoc is a student-run architecture society. Based in the architecture department, ArcSoc is not just for architects, it's for everyone. Here are a few of the tasty gobstoppers we offer:

#### Talks

Every Tuesday a different speaker from the design world is invited to give a talk in the Architecture department. Last year saw the beginning of an exciting lecture series with a group of Dutch architects and designers. This year we are continuing the ArcSocDutch talks, with Rem Koolhaas, our highest profile speaker yet, expected to make an appearance, as well as regular lectures from artists, architects and anthropologists. Keep on the lookout for posters.

#### Life Drawing

Every Friday 'The Shop' plays host to ARCSOC life drawing classes, with models ranging from ballerinas to eight months pregnant women. This class is run by Christ's artist-in-residence Issam Kourbaj. Materials are provided and all abilities are welcome. Contact el294@cam.ac.uk.

#### Events

Take forty cycling students to Byron's pond, nr. Grantchester, add three bags of firewood, fire-roasted mushrooms with cheese, napkin hot-air balloons, flaming marshmallows, Chinese lanterns and home-made mulled wine — and you've got one helluva bonfire night! (summer and winter varieties available). We also put on a Cabaret nights in the architecture classrooms with dancing, singing, swinging, tiny speedos and trumpets.

#### End-of-year Exhibition

At the end of the academic year there is an exhibition of all the Architecture students' work. Last year ArcSoc took the exhibition to London for the first time with great success. We look forward to doing it again this year. Alice Edgerley

Membership £15 for the whole year (with hefty discounts on all of the above). To sign up contact amce2@cam.ac.uk or arm55@cam.ac.uk

## Letter From Abroad



## Week 2: Paris, France

On October 27 2005, two teenage boys died in Clichy-sous-Bois, an eastern suburb of Paris after running away from the police into an electricity sub-station. In the days that followed, the impoverished estates where they lived erupted. Cars, schools and nurseries were burnt to the ground. Within a few days the riots had spread to other *banlieues* (suburbs) in Paris. By the end of the week, almost every major city in France had been affected. Nearly 9,000 cars were burnt and over 2,500 arrests made in twenty consecutive nights of violence. A state of national emergency was declared.

Today, the estates where the riots began are as deprived and isolated as ever. To get to central Paris you have to take three different buses. Unemployment here is twice as high as the rest of France. It's a different world.

I met Ladj Ly to talk about the situation three years on. He was born in Les Bosquets, the estate which neighbours La Forestière, where the riots began. Despite President Sarkozy's much heralded plan for the *banlieues*, Ly despaired: "Nothing has changed... After the riots everyone was waiting with baited breath. What will happen? The answer: nothing."

Driving around we came across a new block of flats. I asked Ly if the former inhabitants have moved into this improved accommodation. "Some," he replied, "but others have been moved. They let half the original people stay and then they move the rest to another estate to make room for nice white people." He describes this process as ethnic cleansing.

This week, John Travolta will begin filming a new multi-million dollar spy movie (*From Paris with Love*) in Les Bosquets. For some, such a high-profile actor will bring much needed publicity to the area, as well as the chance for locals to find employment as extras or as security guards. Others do not see the project through such rose-tinted spectacles. "Some guys got jobs, but for one week, and less than 100 euros a day... When they leave, it'll be the same old shit for the rest of us," pointed out Mamoudou, 24, an unemployed resident of Les Bosquets.

Most of the movie will in fact be filmed in central Paris, and no local actors were given substantial roles. One new apartment block has been built since the riots. Les Bosquets is still not served by any metro or suburban train network. Unemployment remains at 25%.

Three years on, the residents of Les Bosquets are still waiting for their big break.

Hannah Wright



# The Searchers

**DAVY AND PETER ROTHBART BEGAN COLLECTING DROPPED NOTES AND OBJECTS AT SCHOOL. SOON THESE GEMS WERE GATHERED IN FOUND MAGAZINE. CURRENTLY ON TOUR WITH A SHOW OF THEIR FINDS, DECCA MULDOWNY TALKS TO THEM ABOUT BOOTY FLAVA, BABY EELS AND HEALTHY VOYEURISM**

On a freezing Chicago night in the winter of 1999, Davy Rothbart walked out to his snow-covered car to find a note on his windshield. All the cars looked identical in the snow and it was clear that this note was meant for someone else. It read, "Mario, I fucking hate you. You said you had to work whys your car HERE at HER place?? You're a fucking LIAR. I hate you I fucking hate you, Amber. PS Page me later." This case of mistaken identity inspired Rothbart to start *Found* magazine, a collection of notes, letters, photographs, shopping lists and other found objects that he and his friends had collected over the years. For Davy and his brother Peter, finding things was nothing new. "We used to have to walk across this schoolyard to get to our school bus," Peter explains. "It was always strewn with litter, kids writing love notes to each other in class and we always used to pick them up." They had no idea that so many other people were doing the same thing. *Found* magazine, published roughly once a year, has attracted a cult following, with people sending their finds in from all over the globe. It is a 'community art project' unlike any other.

In 2001, Davy Rothbart and his brother Peter began touring the United States with a show based on the contents of the magazine, visiting all fifty states. Peter Rothbart, a musician who performs under the moniker 'The Poem Adept', plays songs he has written based on the finds, whilst Davy reads out some of his favourites. Now they are hitting Europe supported by what they call, 'one of their greatest finds', nineteen-year-old Brett Loudermilk, a sword-swallower and sideshow performer they found in a dive-bar in West Virginia, and New York DJ Andrew Cohn. The show, like *Found* magazine itself, is unique, eclectic and unpredictable, cobbled together from

various fragments. Brett breathes fire and puts his tongue in a mousetrap. Davy reads out shopping lists, love letters and death threats that have been found all over America and beyond. He has you laughing hysterically one minute and extremely moved the next. His empathy with the unseen people behind the found pieces is obvious. He manages to bring every scrap, however brief, to life. At one point, when read-

**"YOU'RE A FUCKING LIAR. I FUCKING HATE YOU, AMBER. PS PAGE ME LATER."**

ing a note found left in a graveyard, he seems almost reduced to tears.

Peter seems equally fascinated by the possibilities of the stories behind each object. "The most fun part is inventing your own back-story to each item," he says, explaining his song-writing process. "I usually take a lot of original material from the finds and then mix it with my own material. It has enhanced my style. I am much more interested in writing songs that have a narrative rather than my own angst or my forlornness with girls. I am more interested in what is happening around me than inside me." His songs also combine the tragic and the hilarious. Scarlett Johansson is apparently a particular fan of Rothbart's song 'The Booty Don't Stop'. It was inspired by a mix-tape found in Michigan, clearly made by two kids in their room with a Casio keyboard and some beats. It included such classics as, 'Wave Yo' Booty In The Air', 'Booty Flava' and 'Damn! Yo' Shit Be Up In My Face'. Peter tells me it is perhaps his favourite find ever. He also loves the terse, little notes that can be peculiarly poetic, like the post-it that just says, 'I took some

hoes to get some burritos'. And the strangest? "The most bizarre find was a mason jar filled with formaldehyde," Peter says. "And inside was a baby eel. There was a post-it on the jar that said, 'Flaky and Self-conscious'. It was totally inexplicable. I always try and put a story to the found item. But that time I was baffled." One thing that *Found* magazine and its contents prove outright is that fact is certainly stranger than fiction.

Whilst at college Davy and Peter worked in prisons teaching debate and creative writing. As a result of their experiences, *Found* magazine is free to anyone imprisoned in the United States. "It gave me a lot of insight into how the penal system works," Peter explains. "It's not about rehabilitation: it's just about keeping people away from society. It's just about people wasting their lives. We thought, whatever we could do to give people something interesting, something to be excited about, something to be inspired by...if we can inspire just a few people then it's worth it." The latest edition of *Found* is a crime issue, containing amongst other things, "a former FBI agent's life story, prison guard poetry, found notes about arson, pot, and self-amputation, academic crime, crimes of the heart, found eyeballs, found crack and the story of a guy who found a million dollars in the road".

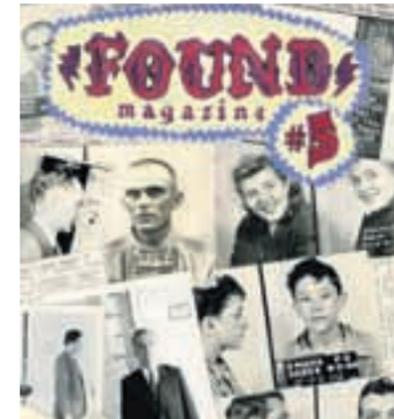
"We get a lot of finds from prisoners and ex-cons," Peter tells me. "I guess the prison yard is a good place to find things." Whether it is the schoolyard or the prison yard then, it seems that there is always something to be found if you know how to look.

But why do people love *Found* magazine so much? "I think it's natural to be interested in other people's lives, how they live and think and interact with the world," Peter says. "Seeing what people write into their notes,

diaries, even shopping lists gives you a lot of insight into how other people function." Perhaps the most fascinating thing about the writing in *Found* is its sheer honesty. As Peter puts it, "When people are writing these notes, they are not intended to be read by anyone. It's very raw, they are not self-editing. They are people thinking and writing how they actually think and write. It's like reality TV for real." Is it not a little voyeuristic? "I think a degree of voyeurism is healthy. It's good to be curious about other people's experience of being alive and being human. There's so many times I read a note and think, God, I've written that same pitiful love note, or this person has the same silly idiosyncrasies as I do. I think that's what life is about: finding yourself." He laughs, "If you find myself, please send me into *Found* magazine."

So, next time you are walking down the street, keep your eyes open and pick up that scrunched-up piece of paper blowing round your feet. You never know what you might find.

*FOUND* magazine's *By The Time I Get To Europe Tour "2008!"* will be at *The Cafe Project*, 22 Jesus Lane, October 18 at 7.30.



# A Born Winner

WRITER, FOOD CRITIC, FILM DIRECTOR: MICHAEL WINNER IS BRITAIN'S LEAST RECOGNISED POLYMATH. HE IS NOW FAMOUS ONLY FOR BEING PROFESSIONALLY INSULTING, BUT ROB PEAL DISCOVERS THAT WINNER HAS A FAR MORE COLOURFUL PAST THAN HE LETS ON



The first thing you notice about Michael Winner is his tan. This, coupled with his swept-back white hair, makes Winner look like he is on one of his much loved Caribbean holidays, even when sitting in the dreary confines of the Cambridge Union offices.

"I could have become president of the Union," Winner boasts. And my God does Winner boast. On every subject we mention, he declares either his historic innovation or his unrivalled supremacy. He wrote a newspaper gossip column from the age of fourteen, he was the youngest editor of *Varsity*, the first British director to film nudity, cunnilingus and Billy Fury, he invented a now ubiquitous style of food reviewing and is (or was) the "dearest friend" of John Cleese, Michael Caine, Oliver Reed, Orson Welles and Marlon Brando. Michael Winner is definitely the type of man who keeps count of how many women he has slept with (130 if you're interested).

However, there is no need to correct Winner. He is a fantastically talented polymath. The only reason people do not recognise it more often is because there is no need: he trumpets his talents so you don't have to. But herein lies the paradox: Michael Winner refuses to take himself seriously.

In his early career, Michael Winner was an essential member of Swinging London. "I made classic swinging Sixties films, but I did not say 'my God, this is a classic swinging sixties film,'" he explains. "I was responsible for the first time cunnilingus was on the screen, but I wasn't aware of that really." Winner is referring to an infamous scene in his 1967 film *I'll Never Forget What's Her Name*, starring Orson Welles and Oliver Reed, with whom he made six films. Unlike the more self-important members of his trade, Winner sees this as harmless: "There was no nudity in the Fifties, then filmed orgies in the Sixties. But nobody gave a damn. The world did not end, the Queen didn't have to abdicate."

Winner made his last film in 1999, and I ask him whether he misses directing. "Well, you see, to a degree," he replies, but then qualifies. "It's not worth turning up on set with an inferior script and inferior actors." From the man who made the 1976 film *Won Ton Ton, The Dog Who Saved Hollywood*, this is a little hard to believe.

In the public eye, Winner the director has all but disappeared, to be replaced by Winner the hated celebrity. However, he seems to revel in his media notoriety. He retells with joy the time that *The Mirror* photographed him in a convertible sports car with O. J. Simpson. Piers Morgan ran the headline "Britain's most reviled man (with his friend O. J. Simpson)".

His career at Cambridge was a dry run for this particular form of fame. When at *Varsity*, he put a salacious story about men swimming in a girls' college's swimming pool on the front page. The men in question were not best pleased but their response was more inventive than just filing a law suit. "They found me when I was going into my digs just off Parker's Piece. They all had these hoods with slits – it was quite frightening – and they bundled me into a van. They took me to the River Thames in the middle of winter and they threatened to throw me in." He convinced them that he could not swim and fearing for his life they relented. I ask him what he did, and he replies: "I said 'would you give me a lift back?' Which they did not."

Whilst at Cambridge, Winner came second to Jonathan Miller in a vote for the university's most famous student. I asked whether opera director Sir Jonathan Miller took himself seriously at University and got the impression that his defeat still rankles: "Oh he's a pompous arse! He's a pompous arse... He wrote for me at *Varsity*, I gave him a column and all he did was attack the paper! You know, like he was some kind of god! Oh, he's a fucking bore, Jonathan Miller." Miller is clearly the antithesis of Winner's brutal straight-forwardness. He venomously hates didactic performers: "They get off stage and they think they're wiser human beings. They have something to say to the world. Well, that's unbelievably tedious, isn't it? I don't need Jonathan Miller to tell me about the world, thank you".

So you can see why Winner is so happy now with his light-hearted, gossipy *Sunday Times* column *Winner's Dinners*. I ask the man himself what makes a good food review. Of course, he replies by telling me how Michael Winner makes a good food review. "Well, you know, I changed the whole ethos of food reviewing... Until I came along it was very serious, and everyone talked about the food. And it was scholarly and it was totally fucking boring!" On the topic of food, Winner is resolutely unadorned. "I don't go into great detail about the food because I'm not clever enough... If I eat a sauce, I don't know what's in the sauce. Either I don't like it, or it's bitter or not bitter, but I can't say to you 'this has got garlic...' I don't know what it's got in it, it's a bit of sauce and I eat it!" It is safe to say Gordon Ramsay's jibe that Winner does not know the first thing about food would not have cut that deep.

Winner has clearly dined with some remarkable people over the years. Ten years ago he was the only celebrity to attend Oliver Reed's funeral. "Ollie wished to be buried in the field behind his favourite pub." What followed was a mawkish scene of which Winner clearly disapproved. "Everyone said 'oh, what a wonderful place he chose to be buried. Those elm trees, and the peacefulness, and the Irish green – it's the most beautiful field.'" So Winner tells with emphatic approval the reaction of Kate, Reed's first wife "she said to me 'what a shit house, what fucking rubbish, it's full of fucking shit and full of flies, only Oliver could be so fucking drunk to want to be buried here.'" Winner laughs uproariously at such candour.

Winner finished the story by mentioning something genuinely moving: that he then recounted the story to Oliver Reed himself. "But he's dead," I protest. "Well, a lot of the people I know are dead!" Winner responds. "Marlon's dead, Mitchum's dead, Orson's dead, all the people I worked with and was very friendly with are dead. So I go to a street in London and can see Mitchum standing on the corner, because we filmed there, and I have a chat with him."

I am rather taken aback. I ask him whether his own year spent in a hospital bed changed his outlook, but this was clearly enough sentimentality for one day. "People say to me 'you were pronounced dead five times, you went through that absolutely awful period, what did you learn from it?' And I say 'yes, I did learn from it, I learnt that illness is a nuisance and severe illness is a fucking nuisance.'"

Life, death, controversy, engagement: Winner takes it all with a big pinch of salt.

## From the Archives



Week 2: *Varsity*, March 5 1955  
'How Versatile the University' by Michael Winner

When I came up to Cambridge I was frightened. The damp streets and bare walls seemed extremely unfriendly, and my fellow freshmen a detached set of people unimaginable in other surroundings. Everyone seemed to wear a thick tweed jacket, and as I hadn't got such a thing I went straight out and bought one.

In my first Hall I met a lot of very earnest men who talked endlessly about poetry and novels. After coffee in my room they sang dirty songs into my tape-recorder for four hours. It was all rather baffling. But one is acclimatised very quickly to the eccentricities of Cambridge. Presidents and Editors were pointed out to me with tones of deference, and I listened as they were insulted in private by those who sought favours from them in public.

The pomposity of the Union was put over with such affrontery to the gullible freshman that I hastily joined for life, and did not give up a burning ambition to be President until after hearing the first debate. In the *Varsity* office my first handful of previously published articles was followed by a request for a weekly contribution. I re-wrote the first article seven times before handing it timidly to the editor concerned – he sent it off to the printers without ever reading it. At the ADC I gave up any thought of competing with the amazing variety of "existentialist" costumes and paint-brush-in-hand verbosity...

My particular fad was writing and so I came up against the myriad entity, the Cambridge public. To satisfy it completely is quite impossible. On the whole people in Cambridge don't know what they want, and when they get it they don't want it... The three things that seem to stir the undergraduates most are sex, religion and humour, in that order. The deluge of letters, most of them quite inane, that reach *Varsity* office at the slightest mention of undergraduate relationships is quite incredible.

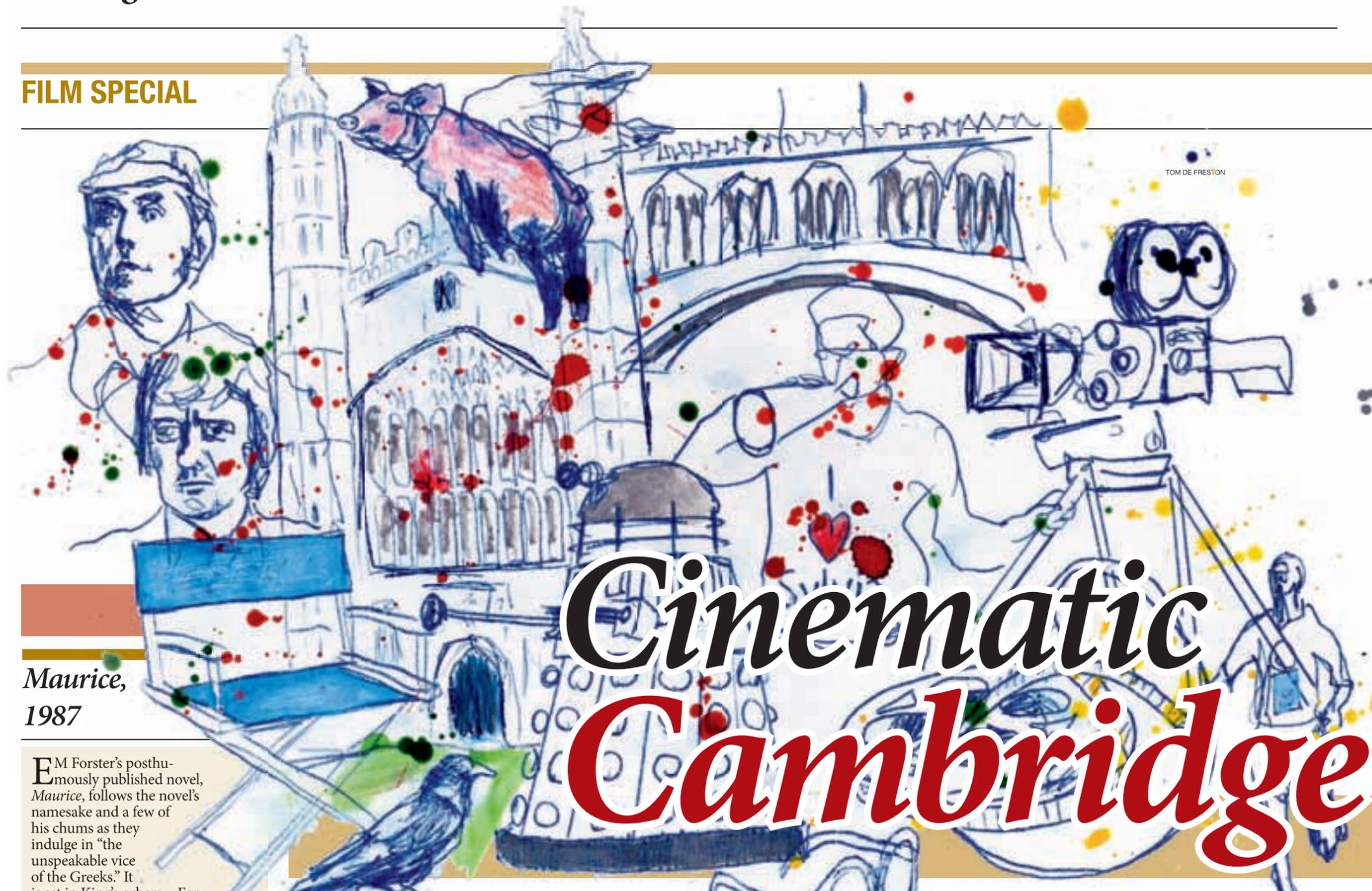
*Varsity*, May 28 1955  
From Winner's weekly column

Then there are restaurants. I'm still fed up with getting cold rice and thinly disguised rabbit. In fact, I was going to issue an ultimatum to Cambridge restaurateurs. Because some of us are hatching a gay little plan to whisk an unchicken-like bone away and get it examined by an expert and then print the name of the restaurant that serves such things.

## Winning Times

- 1954 Becomes youngest ever editor of *Varsity*.
- 1964 Makes his first film with Oliver Reed, *The System*.
- 1974 Releases career defining blockbuster, *Death Wish*, with Charles Bronson.
- 1999 Directs his last film, *Parting Shots*.
- 2007 Nearly dies of a bacterial infection after an oyster meal.

## FILM SPECIAL

**Maurice,**  
1987

EM Forster's posthumously published novel, *Maurice*, follows the novel's namesake and a few of his chums as they indulge in "the unspeakable vice of the Greeks." It is set in King's, where Forster studied and seemed to live for ever. One would be hard pushed to recreate King's Chapel in a studio, and thankfully Merchant Ivory did not attempt to. Instead they had a whale of a time filming pretty boys walking to chapel, walking past the chapel, looking at the chapel, and flicking their floppy hair and bantering pretentiously in a punt on the Cam flowing past the chapel. There are also a few shots of Gibbs, Hall and First Court, all relating to the chapel. There is a touching scene of the two young male lovers ignoring the threats of the Dean and whizzing off through the Webb's exit in an irresistible old motorcar to hold hands in the Grantchester grass. It's something I'm sure we'd all like to do at some point, except poor Maurice got sent down for it.

# Cinematic Cambridge

Like visiting Manhattan or having sex for the first time, arriving at Cambridge feels strangely familiar. The reason? You've seen it all before in the movies. From Queen Elizabeth floating under the Bridge of Sighs in St John's, to Dr Who being pursued through Clare by a floating orb, Cambridge's cloisters and alleyways have been earmarked by many a location scout over the years. Location filming is a lucrative industry: it was worth an estimated £2.3 million to Cambridgeshire's economy in 2006/07. We give you a rundown of the romance, the action and the gaffes that have graced the towering spires and great halls of Cambridge.



Chariots of Fire

**Elizabeth the Golden Age, 1987**

This questionable historical epic manages to better resemble Pirates of the Caribbean than 16th-century England. The film opens with Queen Elizabeth holding court in a Whitehall Palace which better resembles St John's College where many of the opening scenes were filmed. The Queen natters with her ladies in waiting about her new heart throb Sir Walter Raleigh as she floats along the Thames in her Royal Barge. The Thames is in fact the Cam, and she drifts straight under the Bridge of Sighs, quite an achievement when seeing that the Bridge of Sighs was only built in 1831. As the Virgin Queen enters

St John's, the dashing adventurer Raleigh, still smelling of the Atlantic, rushes over to perform that legendary romantic gesture: throwing his cape over a puddle. Location scouts Screen East organised the use of Cambridge for filming, and their head of Locations Kerry Ixer says "We are delighted that Elizabeth: The Golden Age [chose] the East of England as a filming location... the local community was very much involved in the shoot and as a result the filming has brought economic and cultural benefits to the area". Maybe Jonathan Rhys Meyers will be along shortly for the third season of *The Tudors*.

**Chariots of Fire, 1981**

*Chariots of Fire* has something of a cult following from those who went to Cambridge in the early 1980s. Particularly because half of them, from Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie to Derek Pringle, the England cricketer, are in it. The fame-hungry students were drafted in, given a 1920s crop in order to look the part (a travesty in the ever-trendy eighties, decade of the mullet) and

paid a fiver for their troubles. The film depicts 1920s Cambridge in its element, with some impressive shots of the King's Parade and of the Societies Fair, filmed in the Senate House, where polite boys in striped blazers and boater hats make lad chat. You wonder why people think Cambridge is public school. Despite lacking somewhat in historical accuracy (the pretty fundamental

Great Court Run scene was actually filmed at Eton, not Trinity, while a car containing Abrahams pulls up outside an entrance of "Caius" that looks suspiciously like Tit Hall), the film won four Academy Awards and can be recognised, even by those who haven't actually seen it, by its epic theme tune, which brought a whole new wealth of possibilities to the world of slow-motion running.



### Sylvia, 2003

**S**ylvia opens with Gwyneth Paltrow, every inch the Fullbright Scholar, soaring down Trinity Lane as we follow Plath's graduate years and her relationship with Ted Hughes. Amid students convulsing to jazz, Plath bites down on Hughes's cheek in her infamous introduction. The dusty college atmosphere drives the corduroy scale off the charts and our poets incant Shakespeare amid wine bottles and peeling paint. A punting Plath preaches Chaucer to bemused cows at King's. It's an awkward

scene among an all too rigid, postcard recreation of Fifties Cambridge and Paltrow and Daniel Craig consequently feel pasted onto the world. But the redeeming part of *Sylvia* is when its location speaks for itself. Plath reads Hughes's poetry in the corridors of John's and gazes up at the autumn light passing through the trees by the backs. The natural beauty of Cambridge evokes the primal spark that then ignites something far greater than the drama itself.

### Dr Who, 1979

**A**h, the 1970s. Forget the economic decline, the oil crisis and the rise of terrorism – this was the decade of David Bowie, the fitted blazer, and Tom Baker as Doctor Who. Between 1974 and 1981, the TARDIS took him to the Daleks' home planet, the birth of planet Earth, and the foggy alleyways of Victorian London. It also took him to Cambridge, where the Doctor is pur-

sued into Clare by a floating orb. He visits a fellow Time Lord in St. Cedd's College. Which is actually Emma. "I'm confused," says Romana (pondering the occurrence of May Week in June). "So is the TARDIS," replies the Doctor (explaining why they arrived in October and not June). So are we.



CONTRIBUTIONS BY CATHY BUEKER, ROB PEAL, FRED ROWSON, ALICE TYLER AND SARAH WOOLLEY.  
ILLUSTRATION BY TOM DE FREESTON



### The History Boys, 2006

**A**fter sitting their entrance exams, our eight plucky Yorkshire lads are driven off into the sunset. But to where? Suddenly, all in less than a minute: punters on the Backs! The Radcliffe Camera! Queens' Tudor court! The Bridge of Sighs! Christ Church Cathedral! A Tit Hall archway! ...And an interior from Harrow! Whoops! Swoosh! Watch your head,



### Not Only But Always, 2004

**T**his superlative dramatisation of the friendship between comedians Peter Cook (played by Rhys Ifans) and Dudley Moore (Aiden McArdle) begins with Cook's career in Cambridge. He is filmed leaving the exam hall and being reprimanded by the Pembroke Master for the state of his ripped

gown. Cook reacts by pretending to be Dracula, and fleeing from the natural light. In actual fact, Cook never made it to the end of his finals. Having stayed up cramming all night, he drank a bottle of whiskey during the exam to 'liven up his answers' and promptly fell unconscious, hit his head on the

edge of the desk, and ended up in Addenbrooke's. Cook hones his trademark surrealist humour in the smokers of Cambridge, where Jonathan Miller approaches him and asks "you're speech patterns and cadences exactly match those of a schizophrenic, have you worked with schizophrenics?" "I'll

ask him when I see me" Cook dryly replies. Having slept with the waitress he seduced at a café, she asks him "making love, dancing, charming... Is there anything you're not good at?" "Failure" is the ominous response from man who reinvented British satire, but so sadly lost his career to drink and depression.



**GORILLA ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11):** The gorilla tries to warm himself up by giving you a big old cuddle. But just in case he doesn't know his own strength – or even, in fact, if he does and he wants to crush you to death – you give him some nourishing refreshment. But what? »p18 The slightly racist jungle-themed drink Umbongo. »p20 Some chicken cooked on your Lean Mean Gorilling Machine.

## Time In

Our weekly suggestions for making the most of your spare time  
Week 2: a Credit Crunch playlist

**O**rlando Reade takes you on an epic journey through the economic rollercoaster, from the causes of the crisis down to the depths of despair. Looking back to the recessions of the past, he shows us how we can forge a new social identity by finding in ourselves a British love of asceticism.

1. *Free Money (live)*  
Patti Smith
2. *My Debts Spiral Out of Control*  
Monster Bobby
3. *Play with Fire*  
The Rolling Stones
4. *Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out*  
Nina Simone
5. *Darklands*  
The Jesus and Mary Chain
6. *Dead Souls*  
Joy Division
7. *Deep Water*  
Portishead
8. *A Forest (live)*  
The Cure
9. *Which Will*  
Nick Drake
10. *The Modern World*  
The Modern Lovers
11. *Kidney Stew Blues*  
Eddie "Mr Cleanhead" Vinson
12. *I Don't Care*  
Orange Juice
13. *New Age*  
The Velvet Underground
14. *Wickerman*  
Pulp

This playlist will soon be available on varsity.co.uk.

## Time Out

Week 2: The Cambridge Folk Museum

**T**hose with the misfortune of living up the only hill in Cambridge will be familiar with the Cambridge Folk Museum's exterior at least. Up the hill from Magdalene College, the museum is housed in a former Inn. We all know that Cambridge is historic, but if you want to actually know about its history, here is the place. Amongst the curious exhibits which are only ever found in local museums (see a comprehensive collection of vacuum cleaners through the ages) are some wonderful insights into Cambridge's past. There is a 1680 letter from a concerned parent to the Master of St Catherine's pleading him to wean his child off tobacco and wenches and a photo of a campaign against female entry into colleges in 1921 with a banner over Senate House declaring "Get you to Girton Beatrice, get you to Newnham, here's no place for you maids". And did you ever know that Association football began on Parker's Piece in 1846? There is a painting of the famous Cambridge businessman Thomas Hobson donated to the museum by John Maynard Keynes. Hobson, a stable manager, had a famous 'this one or none' policy when it came to horse hire, giving birth to the expression 'Hobson's Choice'. The highlight is a room about the mysterious lost world of the Fens, where the amphibious inhabitants kept mole's paws to fend of rheumatism, built animal bones into their walls and pinned ears of corn onto prospective wives. Well worth the £2 student entry.



EMMA HOGAN

# Fun? It's pure hell!

MAGGI HAMBLING IS AN ARTISTIC RENEGADE: A DIVISIVE SCULPTOR AND A CONTROVERSIAL COMMENTATOR.  
EMMA HOGAN VISITED HER STUDIO

**H**alfway through my interview with the artist Maggi Hambling, she tells me that journalists often describe her as over-the-top. "But what is the top that I'm supposed to be over?"

Certainly, she cuts a rakish figure, sitting in one of her airy Suffolk studios wearing a panama hat and paint-splattered jeans, while Lux, her Tibetan terrier languidly stretches on the floor beside her. The day before our interview she had appeared dressed up as the Mayor in the Aldeburgh Carnival on the float, winning the first prize. But it is a mistake to regard her striking originality as mere eccentricity, for it is an originality that comes across most forcefully in her art.

Hambling is perhaps best known for her portraits, and is included in the collections of Clare, Jesus and Murray Edwards colleges. For the past six years, however, she has been working on a series

of paintings focussing on a part of the sea off the Suffolk coast. She cites Rembrandt, Bacon, Rothko and Van Gogh as influences but her art is so distinctive that you will have never seen anything like it. Part of this is down to the simple fact that she doesn't really give a damn what other people think of her work: "It's corny but true: one is doing it for oneself. No one asked me to make paintings." Though intensely self-critical, she laughs at any negative criticism from the public or the media, such as that received for two sculptures: her 1998 *Conversation with Oscar Wilde* in Charing Cross and her monument to Benjamin Britten in 2003, *Scallop*, on Aldeburgh beach.

It was when she was working on *Scallop* that she returned to painting the sea, a place which she says feels like "the edge of everything". It is "magical, seductive and sexy... yet savage, eating away at the land". This intoxicating mixture of the seductive and the frightening is perhaps what drives her art. I ask her if being frightened of a subject, whether it be the sea or a person, is the same as being a bit in love with it.

"I've always said that painting someone's portrait is like a love affair... it's an intense, intimate thing, a sworn, tacit agreement. But with a bit of luck at the end there is a portrait, not a broken heart." It is through the "vulnerable, human thing of putting paint on canvas" that her work comes alive: you can feel the sea in her

paintings and you can see the personalities of the people she has painted. Her favourite Rembrandt quotation holds true for her own work: "I have painted nothing but portraits."

Hambling studied at Ipswich, Camberwell and the Slade, managing to be a student for seven years when "student grants were not student debts." Though at Camberwell there was a decided male homosexual bias, she has never really felt at a disadvantage as a woman artist: "It doesn't make any difference to me whether someone's gay or straight or a woman or a man. So what?" When at the Slade in 1969 she protested against a visit by Enoch Powell to the Conservative Association of UCL and in 1970 she produced *Rembrandt*, one of her 'street works'. Thirty polythene bags were filled with photocopies of a Rembrandt etching of a couple in bed, and tied to the railings by King's Cross. They turned out to be particularly popular with a group of taxi drivers, and were all taken soon after they were put up. Hambling says that she has never purposely set out to be controversial in her work, "but if it is, it shows it's got a bit of life in it".

For a while, people found her the most controversial for her part as a panelist in a 1980s television art quiz show, *Gallery*, hosted by the late jazz singer and art

historian, George Melly. It sounds as if it was an anarchic mixture of *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* and the Tate Gallery: Hambling sipped vodka instead of water, smoked constantly, and once, for a laugh, wore a moustache – mistaken by the female controller of Channel 4 to be a feminist statement, when instead it was just a form of visual rebellion against the watershed. At George Melly's recent funeral she allowed herself to smoke again: "The beauty of it, deliciousness of it... like nectar from the gods. I long for funerals." Like David Hockney, she hates the smoking ban, and rooted out a fake cigarette from a joke shop in Clapham for her photograph, just to make a point.

She is glad now that finally, people have forgotten the fake moustache and discuss her art, rather than just her love of performing Cabaret or smoking: "People do not have any idea how hard you have to work to achieve anything. Most of the time I am in a constant state of despair about it all." Hambling gets up around 5am every day to go draw the sea, then comes back to her studio and paints until the afternoon. I suggest that, although she follows such a brutal, dedicated routine, it sounds like fun. She answers this, however, with a characteristically mischievous twinkle: "Fun? It's pure hell, woman! Pure hell!"

## Hambling Timeline

- 1969 Graduates from the Slade
- 1980 Appointed as first artist-in-residence at the National Gallery
- 1983 First exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery
- 1995 Wins Jerwood Prize for painting and is awarded an OBE
- 1998 *A Conversation With Oscar Wilde* is unveiled
- 2003 *Scallop* is installed on Aldeburgh beach

**GORILLA ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11):** Your gorilla is extremely angry because he now can't practice his new routine to a Bonnie Tyler song. He plucks you up in his paw and whisks you off to the top of the highest building in town. This turns out to be the University Library. He perches on top of the tower, and peeks through the window at the 17th century pornography within. »p21 Scream for help. »p22 Tame the beast.

# Peter the Great

IF THE WORLD'S GOT A PROBLEM, HE HAS A PROTEST: PETER TATCHELL HAS CAMPAIGNED FOR ALMOST EVERY MOVEMENT FOR THE LAST FORTY YEARS. RICKY POWER SAYEED MEETS THE MAN WHO STARTED AS AN ANTI-VIETNAM CAMPAIGNER AS A STUDENT AND IS NOW RUNNING AS THE GREEN PARTY CANDIDATE FOR OXFORD EAST

Peter Tatchell complains professionally. He wants to change the world and he'll keep nit-picking until he dies. I actually admire him greatly, which makes interviewing him impossible.

I say he complains professionally but, even as political activist *par excellence*, he's on an income close to zero. At dinner, he saves the bread roll and butter for later. Perhaps he's just frugal, but I remember him doing something very similar when he spoke at my school, years ago.

As a professional dissident, Tatchell fights every battle going: homophobia, racism, sexism, economic inequality, climate change. He was a leading member of the Gay Liberation Front, and helped found gay rights protest group Outrage! He twice attempted a citizen's arrest on Muggabe at a time when most Britons couldn't even name the Zimbabwean president and got minor brain damage as a result. He opposes the Miss World competition, the Iraq War and sweat shops.

At one point, I attempt to joke that the rainbow ribbon on his jacket, the international symbol of lesbian and gay

**"WHAT MAKES PEOPLE HAPPY IS NOT NECESSARILY MATERIAL WEALTH OR CONSUMER POSSESSIONS."**

human rights, might reflect his wide range of political interests. He looks at me like I'm a complete idiot.

But he's not in a great mood. He's had "a crazily busy day", he's late and he has to get to his Union debate. So, with no time for pleasantries, we bundle into the taxi and we begin.

Seeing that he is a former Labour candidate, I ask him why he is campaigning with the Green Party. "The old grey parties are wedded to a productivist economic agenda. They believe that ever-expanding economic growth is the route to prosperity or progress... what makes people happy is not necessarily material wealth or consumer possessions." He spits loudly and assuredly but, suddenly, loses his precision.

"It's, you know, having a loving supportive... having loving supportive friends and family, um, enjoying cordial relations with one's neighbours, being in a safe neighbourhood, um, and, um, being able to, um, being able to, er, experience, you know, er, being able to have, you know, good quality air and water. Those basics are fundamental."

The sudden loss of confidence isn't because his ideas are vague, but because they're broad. There's so much detail in that broad view that his monologue stumbles somewhere between the transformation of human society and how you get on with your neighbours.

But should the state try to change family or community life?

"The state shouldn't be dictating to people, but if people collectively agree that things have to change, then the state can be an agency for that transformation."

It's not much of an answer. But at the debate, Peter proposes a new sort of sex education – "age-appropriate...explicit... teaching children about relationships," and one audience response is that this is an imposition by the state. Later, I put this to him.

"Well, I think all policies of government ought to come from a consensus of the people."

A consensus or a majority, I ask him. "A consensus of the people. Now, it's not always possible to have unanimity... at the end of the day, it's better the government follow a majority view than a minority view unless, of course, the minority view is seeking to uphold and defend human rights against the majority."

Because human rights are absolute?

"Human rights are a human invention, you know. Humanity has collectively decided over many decades, even centuries, a body of rights and freedoms which are regarded as inviolable and universal... those rights need to be defended against the encroachments of the state..."

"I don't advocate the state imposing a view about sex education. What I believe is the state ought to draw on the consensus of public opinion to devise a policy that can hopefully enhance the welfare and happiness of the maximum number of people."

This is very mainstream, utilitarian, representative democratic stuff, a far cry from 'Peter Tatchell, celebrity dissident'. It doesn't stay that way.

"Sometimes law-breaking can be ethically legitimate when the government goes against the will of the people, when it breaks electoral promises and when it violates human rights."

"Of course, some of those instances can be in mutual conflict. For example, a majority of people may support the death penalty, but I would argue in that case defence of human rights trumps the majority rule. All campaigns, I've tried to work inside the system. Only when that's failed and failed consistently, have I resorted to non-violent civil disobedience."

However, Tatchell has a long history in what appears to be 'establishment' party politics; first with Labour, for whom he was a highly controversial candidate, and now with the Green Party.

"We're frozen out, as are other, you know, radical left and green social movements... Direct action is a fundamental part of the green ethos. Not for its own sake, but because we believe sometimes it's the only way to shake up the political elite and get the people's voice heard... The government is tinkering with the system."

And what does he think if the Labour Party that he once fought for?

"Blairism and Brownism are Thatcherism by a different name... New Labour isn't a democratic party anymore because the grassroots members no longer control the party... Labour has abandoned democracy and it has abandoned socialism."

Tatchell, on the other hand, claims that the basis of his political actions is human rights. But the human rights

## A Life in Action

- 1952 Born in Melbourne, Australia.
- 1983 Looses the Bermondsey by-election as Labour candidate.
- 1990 Co-founder of Outrage!
- 2001 Attempts a citizen's arrest on Robert Mugabe.
- 2007 Nearly knocked unconscious at Moscow Pride protest.
- 2007 Selected as Green Party candidate for Oxford East.

he defends, the values he fights for, he defines himself.

"We all have to follow our own conscience... It wouldn't mean to say that we'd get everything right but I think too many people go along with the crowd... it's very important to have a critical sceptical attitude towards all people in authority and all institutions."

Tatchell, like all campaigners and activists before him, is making the world look like how he wants it to look. He spends every day doing this.

In the dining room of the Union, the main course is served. The vegetarian option is fairly unpleasant, but Peter's complaint isn't culinary. Gently, he beckons to the attendant and firmly notes that humans need protein and there is little here – he points to his plate – compared with that, his finger now jabbing towards the chicken breast on his neighbour's plate.

Over the course of four or five exchanges, deferential and whispering attendants spar with a firm and unembarrassed Peter Tatchell. He wants more protein, they want him to take what he's given. Eventually, they send out for some mixed nuts.

"Not the ones with bits and flour?"

"No."

A bowl of many nuts arrives and Peter offers them around, to vegetarians and omnivores



## Next Big Thing



Week 2: Tom Hiddleston

"At the age of 19 I had the Apresumption to play someone suffering with a nervous breakdown." It was this performance in *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the ADC that got Tom Hiddleston an agent while still reading Classics at Pembroke College. A part in a television adaptation of *Nicholas Nickleby* soon followed, and then three years at RADA. Now he has a role in the Donmar Warehouse's *Ivanov*, a part in the edgy British film *Unrelated* and a new television series *Wallander*, where he plays the side-kick to a "Swedish Inspector Morse", played by his *Ivanov* co-star Kenneth Branagh. Not bad for an actor who describes his first couple of years at Cambridge as being "very green. I had no idea what I was doing".

Tall, with piercing eyes and a mop of curly blonde hair, it's not hard to see why he got snapped up by top agent Linda Hamilton at the end of his first year. Yet Hiddleston claims he concentrated more on his degree than other actors; he was "hopeless at multitasking" and not integral to the ADC crowd. The plays he did do at Cambridge, though, stand out: he was Romeo, an officer in Brian Friel's *Translations*, and Orestes in the Marlowe Society's Greek play *Electra*.

Going to RADA, by contrast, felt like "going back to school: you work 8.30 to 7 to a rigid timetable, with thirty people for three years. It doesn't feel like a natural progression. Yet it's about becoming an artist, about becoming creatively free". Where Cambridge was intellectual, RADA was instinctive: "Three years at RADA are three years reminding you that acting is a completely instinctive thing." It's an intense, incestuous place, "a mixture of the best holiday in the world and the Big Brother house".

Watching *Ivanov*, it is clear that Hiddleston is an actor who has been trained with such precision that he can perform with utter conviction. He is compelling to watch, even through the tiniest movements. His character in the play, Dr Lvov, is probably the most sympathetic of the lot in Chekov's early work. Yet Hiddleston describes the character as a figure who "treads the line between being a prig and a revolutionary". It is testament to Hiddleston's ability that he manages to tight-walk this line, making him utterly transfixing to watch on stage. *Emma Hogan*

*Ivanov* is at the Wyndham's Theatre in London until November 29

# the VARSITY WEEK



THE VARSITY WEEK: YOUR COMPLETELY COMPREHENSIVE PULL-OUT GUIDE TO THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS. STICK IT ON YOUR WALL.

## Music

**Friday 17th**  
**Electro-Greece**  
Recital Hall, ARU: 1.10pm  
A concert of electronic music by contemporary Greek composers, curated by the award-winning Theodore Lotis. Lotis' current focuses are on spectrum, timbre, sonic space and light.

**Saturday 18th**  
**The Stranglers**  
Corn Exchange: 7.30pm (£23)  
Touring in support of a new greatest hits collection, The Stranglers will dig into their massive back catalogue of songs traversing punk rock, new wave, and 80s pop. Classics like 'Golden Brown' and 'Peaches' are likely to figure.

**Sunday 19th**  
**Songs in the Dark**  
Clowns: 8pm (free)  
A lovely fortnightly evening of poetry and music upstairs at the colourful Clowns.

**Andy Bowie**  
Cricketers Pub: 8.30pm (free)  
Sax-led modern jazz from Ellington to Shorter from ever-expanding repertoire, in a new, larger venue.

**Tuesday 21st**  
**Flook**  
Junction: 8pm (£13 adv)  
Flook play an innovative all-acoustic fusion of Irish folklore and modern rhythms. They won the Best Group award in the 2006 Radio 2 Folk Awards.

**Fitz Swing**  
ADC: 11pm (£4)  
The popular group present an evening of Big Band music from all eras. From traditional Swing, through Blues and on into Latin, Funk and some interesting grey areas in between.

**Wednesday 22nd**  
**Roots Manuva**  
Junction: 8pm (£13.50 adv)  
One of the major driving forces of British Hip Hop, Roots Manuva has been immensely successful in the UK, as well as abroad where he has worked with many diverse international artists.

**Thursday 23rd**  
**Goldfrapp**  
Corn Exchange: 7.30pm (£22.50 adv)  
With their latest album, *Seventh Tree*, moving towards a slower, folkier sound, it will be interesting to see how they have adapted their set.

## Theatre

**Friday 17th**  
**Nevermind the Alcock**  
**The Doubtful Guest**  
**Hero**  
(see last week's listings for details of above)

**Saturday 18th**  
**FOUND Magazine**  
The Cafe Project (22 Jesus Lane): 8pm  
See pgs 11/12 for the low-down.

**Monday 20th**  
**Murder on Air**  
Arts Theatre: 7.45pm (£10)  
The Agatha Christie Theatre Company present a trio of Poirot specials: 'Personal Call', 'Hercule Poirot in The Yellow Iris', 'Butter in a Lordly Dish.' See Pick of the Week.

**Tuesday 21st**  
**The Hothouse**  
ADC: 7.45pm (£6)  
CUADC presents Pinter's darkest comedy, which follows the fortunes of Roote as he investigates the conception of a child on the premises of his clinic for lost souls.

**Murder on Air**  
**Wednesday 22nd**  
**Life x 3**  
ADC: 11pm (£4)  
Enmanuel Dramatic Society present Yasmina Reza's comic look at modern marriage.

**Murder on Air**  
**The Hothouse**  
**Thursday 23rd**  
**Jesus College Smokers**  
Above Jesus Bar: 10pm (£2)  
See pg 20 for a run-down on one of Cambridge's best comedy nights.

**The Tiger Who Came to Tea**  
Arts Theatre: 10am and 12pm (£10)  
A big stripy tiger interrupts Sophie and her Mummy while they're having tea.

**Life x 3**  
**Murder on Air**  
**The Hothouse**

**Friday 24th**  
**Knights of the Round Table**  
Peterhouse Theatre: 7.30pm  
The Heywood Society presents Auden's translation of Cocteau's fanciful look at Arthurian Britain.

**Life x 3**  
**Murder on Air**  
**The Hothouse**  
**The Tiger Who Came to Tea**

## Talks and Events

**Friday 17th**  
**Unite to Fight AIDS**  
Queens' Building Lecture Theatre: 2pm  
Four young people from Zambia, Uganda, Ireland and the USA will be coming to discuss how HIV/AIDS has affected their lives and how they are fighting to achieve universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment, prevention, care and support by 2010.

**Unheard Of**  
The Shop, 18 Jesus Lane: 7.30pm  
Come at 7.30pm to sign up for this fortnightly open-mic poetry and acoustic music night. Performances start at 8pm sharp, so if you've come just to watch and listen, you'll need to have bagged your spot by then.

**Bernard Laporte**  
The Union - Chamber: 4.30pm  
Currently Minister of State for Sport, Laporte was a coach of the national rugby team, overseeing 8 years of mercurial rugby.

**Monday 20th**  
**Centre of African Studies: Research Seminar Series**  
The Mond Building Seminar Room, Free School Lane: 5pm  
Mr Barry Gilder, South Africa's former Coordinator for Intelligence, speaks on 'From Liberation to Governance: The Birth and Growing of South Africa's Democratic Intelligence Services.'

**Tuesday 21st**  
**Moral Sciences Club**  
Dirac Room, Fisher Building, John's: 5.15pm (£1 for junior members, £2 others)  
Jerry Levinson from the University of Maryland presents a paper entitled 'Towards a Non-Minimalist Conception of Aesthetic Experience.'

**Thursday 23rd**  
**Slade Lectures 2008**  
Mill Lane Lecture Rooms: 5pm  
Prof Robert Hillenbrand FBA, recently retired Professor of Islamic Art at Edinburgh, will give the second Slade Lecture (which focus on Early Islamic Art 650-750 A.D.) on 'The Dome of the Rock: Contested Faiths in Jerusalem.'

**Women's Status Men's States**  
Law Faculty LG17: 3pm  
The Centre for Gender Studies presents renowned lawyer and activist Catharine MacKinnon.

## Going Out

**Friday 17th**  
**Lee Mortimer**  
Clare Cellars: 9pm (£4)  
N.B. student ID required  
Fidgety-house. Sounds like Switch and Claude von Stroke.

**Froot**  
The Harris Suite (South Stand), Cambridge United Football Ground: 9pm (£5/£4)  
Featuring Ministry of Sound's Emma Harkness, Fatt Baz, Dougie 'Filth' Mitchell and D-Sub, Froot allegedly brings you the latest electro-house, electro-clash and fidgety-house tunes.

**Destination Ibiza**  
Queen's: 9pm (£5)  
N.B. student ID required  
Foam Party with DJ Olly Riley-Smith.

**Green Bay v Indianapolis Colts**  
Sky Sports 2: 9pm  
NFL action from Lambeau Field. Expect massive hits, cheerleading and touchdowns. Indianapolis have been inconsistent this term whilst the Packers have lost their last two fixtures; both sides will be looking to get their seasons back on track.

**Monday 20th**  
**Rugby Blues v Harlequins**  
Grange Road: 7.30pm  
A disappointing tour of Portugal against strong opposition has been followed with encouraging displays against Blackheath and Nottingham. The Blues will be looking to gather some momentum with one eye on the Varsity fixture on 11th December.

**Tuesday 21st**  
**Man United v Celtic**  
ITV1: 7.30pm  
United have made a faltering start to the season but will look to get their season back on track with three points against Celtic. The Hoops have picked up just one point out of a possible forty-five away from Parkhead in the Champions League.

**Wednesday 22nd**  
**Basketball Blues v De Montfort**  
Time and Venue TBC  
A narrow 68-65 loss in last year's Varsity match was harsh on the squad but Oxford have a strong record, winning 9 out of 11 Varsity fixtures. New captain Hugo Halferty Drochon will be looking to start the season positively and stop the rot with victory in this fixture.

## Sport

**Saturday 18th**  
**Middlesborough v Chelsea**  
Sky Sports 1: 12.20pm  
Luiz Felipe Scolari has enjoyed a bright start to his reign at Stamford Bridge but faces a test at the Riverside against Middlesbrough. The Teesiders have a strong record at home to Chelsea; although Chelsea won there last season they were upset on the previous two occasions.

**Sunday 19th**  
**Chinese Grand Prix**  
Setanta Sports: 7.45am  
The latest instalment from the F1 season in China. Renault's Fernando Alonso followed up his success in Singapore with victory again in Japan last week and will be looking to make it three in a row at the Shanghai International Circuit.

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## Art, Jazz and Classical

**Ongoing Exhibitions**  
**Fitzwilliam Museum:**  
• Japanese Pottery (booking necessary)  
• Palaces in the Night - Whistler's Prints  
• Chinese Imperial Jades  
• Tomb Treasures of Ancient Georgia  
• Greeks, 'Barbarans' and their Coins  
• Picasso Prints - Dreams and Lies  
• The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book and Lady Nevell's Boo.

**Kettle's Yard (all free):**  
• Conversations  
• Paul Coldwell: 'I called when you were out' (2-4pm)

**Friday 17th**  
**Norma Winstone's Jazz Trio**  
Kettle's Yard: 7.30pm (£8 on the door)  
An evening of the highest quality jazz, combining classical, jazz and folk influences. See pick of the week.

**Jazz at John's**  
Fisher Building: 9pm (£4)  
Featuring the Tom Millar Trio, and the Alex Merritt Quartet

**Saturday 18th**  
**V-Williams, Dvorak, Rachmaninov**  
West Road: 7.30pm (£8)  
The City of Cambridge Symphony Orchestra, with Tom Poster at the piano, perform V-W's "In the Fen Country", Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 3 and Dvorak's New World Symphony.

**Sunday 19th**  
**Wagner, Lindberg, Mahler**  
West Road: 7.30pm (£12)  
The Prelude to Wagner's magnificent Tristan and Isolde kicks off a Northern-European focus.

**Thursday 23rd**  
**Night Music**  
West Road: 8pm  
The Britten Sinfonia present a truly eclectic mix of pieces centring around the theme of night, featuring wonderful British tenor Mark Padmore singing Britten's Nocture. With music by Stravinsky, Harrison, Handel and John Woolrich.

**Friday 24th**  
**Cambridge Gamelan Society**  
West Road: 7pm (£5)  
"A gamelan is a musical ensemble of Indonesia," Wikipedia tells me. And for one night only they will be joined by the renowned Indonesian dancer, Ni Made Pujawati.

## CUR 1350 Radio

**Friday 17th**  
**The Alphabet Cassette**  
2-4pm  
Hey kids! Revise the Latin alphabet through the miracle of indiepop and alternative music! From astrology to zoology, sing, clap and dance along as you learn!

**Saturday 18th**  
**The Alice Jones Show**  
10-11am  
Lively chit chat and special guests. Interesting facts about sea creatures and Kant. Plus 'who-to-know-in-Cambridge special guests' and much, much more.

**Sunday 19th**  
**One Step Beyond**  
1-3pm  
An eclectic and in-depth jazz-based show, concentrating on the more experimental and avant-garde side of things: music that is 'one step beyond'.

**Monday 20th**  
**A & E (Anything and Everything)**  
7-9pm  
Chris Boreham and Sarah Birch bring you your weekly dose of musical medication. Whatever you need, we've got it, from rock to rap and ska to swing, a guaranteed pick-me-up.

**Tuesday 21st**  
**Talk Scratchings**  
7-9pm  
Christos & Micky return with their own unique brand of nothing, along with the best in new music, and a few old favourites. They discuss movies & TV, and the odder side of the news, with competitions.

**Wednesday 22nd**  
**Dangerously Unfashionable**  
3-4pm  
Join Chris Boreham as he fights the tyranny of modernity, bringing you an hour of the best in classic Rock, Pop and Soul. Features include a spotlight on lesser known bands, Original vs. Cover and Guess that Intro.

**Thursday 23rd**  
**Faces for the Radio**  
8-9pm  
Libby and Ellie's safari through indie and alternative classics; from The Velvet Underground to The Verve. More fun than a penguin on a bouncy castle, and twice as enjoyable!

## Film

**Brideshead Revisited**  
Arts Picturehouse  
Fri, Sat, Sun, Weds: 16.15; 18.45  
Mon, Tues: 16.00; 18.30  
Thurs: 14.30; 19.10  
It wants to be *Atonement*. It isn't. This suggests that it could be quite good. It isn't.

**How to Lose Friends and Alienate People**  
Arts Picturehouse  
Fri: 14.15  
Vue  
Fri-Mon: 15.15; 17.45; 20.15 (Mon also 12.45, Fri & Sat also 12.45; 22.45)  
Tues: 15.15; 17.45  
Simon Pegg and Kirsten Dunst team up with Jeff Bridges in this adaptation of Toby Young's book.

**Gomorrh**  
Arts Picturehouse  
Fri, Mon: 12.15; 15.00; 17.45; 20.45  
Sat: 12.15; 18.00; 21.00  
Sun: 12.15; 17.45; 20.45  
Tues: 16.00; 18.45; 21.30  
Wed: 15.00; 17.45; 20.45  
A hard-hitting drama that brings out the brutality of the Neapolitan Mafia. Five stories are craftily laced together; based on Roberto Saviano's bestselling book. In Italian with subs.

**Burn After Reading**  
Arts Picturehouse  
Fri-Thurs: 13.45; 16.15; 18.45; 21.15  
Vue  
Fri-Thurs: 13.30; 16.00; 18.30; 21.00  
Fri & Weekend also 23.30  
The Coens gamble their newfound rep on a classic fiasco comedy, but is it *The Big Lebowski* or *Intolerable Cruelty*?

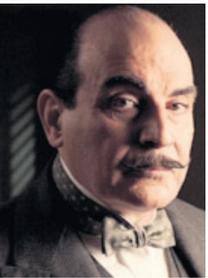
**High School Musical 3: Senior Year**  
Vue  
Weds & Thurs: 09.30; 10.30; 12.00; 13.20; 14.40; 16.10; 17.20; 19.00; 20.00; 21.40  
'Troy! Gabriella! They're back, and this time, they're graduating! Is it any good? What a question! High School Musical 3 is undoubtedly the unmissable film of the week. Start queuing people - would we lie to you?

**City of Ember**  
Vue  
Weekdays: 13.00; 15.40  
Weekends also at 10.10  
It's a sort of science fiction, city-based thing. Look, forget that, it has Bill Murray in it.

## Pick of the Week

**Murder on Air**  
Monday 20th to Saturday 25th October  
(Thursday and Saturday Matinees at 2.30pm)  
Arts Theatre: 7.45pm (£10)

Anyone who has wiled away many a Sunday afternoon watching the inimitable Belgian played by David Suchet (right) might well be a little apprehensive about following our hero to the stage, and without Suchet! But you will be safe, I can assure you, in the hands of Bill Kenwright - the UK's largest independent theatre and film production company. After a triumphant summer, particularly with *'And Then There Were None'*, Bill Kenwright is returning to the Arts Theatre to perform three of Christie's radio plays in the style of their original BBC broadcasts.



**Norma Winstone's Jazz Trio**  
Friday 17th October  
Kettle's Yard: 7pm (£8 on the door)

World-renowned jazz singer Norma Winstone, who received the MBE in recognition of services to British jazz, launched her new album 'Distances' with Italian pianist Glauro Venier and German saxophonist Klaus Gesing earlier this year on the prestigious ECM label. In the 1960s Winstone was a pioneer in vocal improvisation in important collaborations with musicians including Joe Harriott, John Stevens and Mike Westbrook. There will be £8 tickets on the door, but it might be better to be safe than sorry and buy in advance at [www.junction.co.uk](http://www.junction.co.uk).

**adc theatre** To win a pair of tickets to ADC's mainshow, turn to our competition on page 23

**Howells Evensongs**  
Saturday 18th October  
King's Chapel: 5.30pm / John's Chapel 6.30pm

Herbert Howells, perhaps the greatest post-Tudor composer of church music, was born on the 17th October 1892; and these two evensongs celebrate his life and work. King's will sing his seraphic and jubilant Gloucester Service, whilst John's are staying closer to home with his St John's Service, which recognises the composers stint as organist at the college during the war. You could just about make it to both, but my advice would be to opt for the robustness of John's tone, which tends to complement the inspiring grandeur and lyrical beauty of Howells' music perfectly. Also watch out for Harris' anthem "Holy is the True Light", which will be John's introit.

**High School Musical 3**  
Vue  
Weds & Thurs: 09.30; 10.30; 12.00; 13.20; 14.40; 16.10; 17.20; 19.00; 20.00; 21.40  
In this, the third instalment of the High School Musical epic, we join Troy and Gabriella in their final year of high school. The thought of having to separate for college is a daunting one. Fears are allayed, however, when the couple and their friends decide to stage a musical to deal with their concerns about the future head on. High School Musical 2 was the most watched in history (the history of the Disney Channel, that is).



**GORILLA ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11):** It's quite hard to get hold of Umbongo nowadays, but you track it down and give him a carton. The gorilla perks up, because they drink it in the Congo, and he is from the Congo as well. Bursting with energy, he bursts out the room and runs around fuelled by E-numbers and a sense of vanquished ennui. The police are dispatched to protect the humans in his path, and they are largely successful.

View From  
The StageJames Moran,  
Jesus Smokers

## What's it all about?

It's an hour of raw, naked, trembling comedy every other Thursday above Jesus Bar. Expect to see a mish-mash of original sketches, monologues and stand-up from Footlights regulars and fresh new talent. There are open auditions before each one, and anyone is encouraged to come along. The idea is to make it all a bit edgier than ADC Smokers – for example, the last smoker had material about porn stars, chloratetracyclic acid and the Maldivian presidential elections.

## Tell us a tale.

During our first batch of auditions, we were interrupted by CUSU officers turning up because our audition space happened to be directly in front of their supply of Fresher Packs. So we had to stand by with the auditionees and watch huge amounts of condoms and lube get loaded into a van. The upside is that we now know where all the free contraceptives and pizza tokens are.

## Your role?

I organise and host the events; I also provide the eye candy.

## If you like this, you'll like...

It's probably most like The Secret Policeman's Ball – an eclectic mix of stuff. No one knows what the hell is going to happen – I certainly don't. In the first one I was subjected to a five-minute improvised stripping-down from the stand-up Lucien Young, which the crowd seemed to enjoy more than was necessary.

## What's in it for me?

Some of the best comedy in Cambridge, cheap entry and drinks deals all night in Jesus Bar.

## You'll be happy if the audience goes away...

...having paid £2. But mainly I wanted people to leave having laughed like idiots and wanting to get involved in comedy themselves – although the standard of the comedy is very high, the atmosphere is very relaxed and inviting. Having said that, I do have a bone to pick with the man who chose to fart loudly during a poignant silence in a sketch about sexual politics last week.

## Little known fact...

The unofficial tagline for the smokers is "The Jesus Smokers – they're funnier than being nailed to a cross."

## Show Details:

The Jesus Smokers are at 10pm on the 23rd of October, 6th and 20th of November above Jesus Bar.

## THEATRE

## A Midsummer Night's Dream

King's College Chapel, 11-13 October

Dir: James Lewis; Pembroke Players Japan Tour

★★★★★

I would have loved to have seen this production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on its Pembroke Players Japan tour. It would have fitted in so perfectly in a place far removed from the everyday realities of student life: from the opening chords of Finn Beames' haunting, moving musical score to the luxurious, stylised costumes and energetic, uplifting performance of the cast, everything evokes the otherworldly, the magical.

However, James Lewis' production of Shakespeare's comedy has somehow managed to transfer back successfully on home turf, in the suitably picturesque chapel at King's. Yet what the Chapel makes up for in atmosphere and occasional reverberating acoustics, it lacks in the practicalities of an actual theatre: even three rows back, it was hard to see what was happening

for most of the production. This was particularly damaging to the show, for at times the production is incredibly physical, with actors rolling about on the floor in nearly every scene. They leap in to the air, throw each other over their shoulders, jump upon one another – it is exciting and new, but frustrating to watch when half eclipsed by the head of someone in front of you. Having said that, the woman sitting next to me whose view was just as obscured as mine was practically rolling in the aisles, in union with the actors, with merry laughter.

This production has been played with a constant emphasis on the comic elements of the play – on laughs that it (usually) manages to get. The hysterical Helena (Scarlett Creme) and clown-like Nick Bottom (Adam Hollingworth) are the broad slapstick tempered by the

mischievous, nuanced performance of Kamal Hussain as Puck and the lovely comic timing of Celeste Dring, surprisingly as 'the Wall' in the meta-carpenter scenes, which were played with panache by all involved. Adam Hollingworth in particular egged out a rather long 'death' scene that most found hilarious but some, myself included, found rather over the top. However, there was one particularly brilliant scene which involved the lovers (Sophia Sibthorpe, Scarlett Creme, Edward Rowett and Finn Beames) spinning, cavorting, rollicking backwards under Puck's command, and James Lewis managed to create a cohesive, elastic team for such group scenes. It was at a moments such as this that this engaging, though occasionally exaggerated, production became truly alive, and made it well worth seeing. *Emma Hogan*



## Hero

ADC, 14-18 October

Dir. Matthew Eberhardt; CUADC

★★★★★

Sir Peter Hall was always going to be a difficult act to follow. After his short speech to open the new ADC Complex, we settled down to watch *Hero* – another production back from a summer in Edinburgh. *Hero* is the story of Tel-ephos, a failed shopkeeper who decides he too could get the girl and be... a hero. Written by Ben Nicholls and Ashley Riches, *Hero* promised 'show-stopping songs' and 'musical comedy'. Phrases, in my experience, to be treated with a degree of caution and trepidation.

With a cast comprised largely of choral scholars, the singing was always going to be of a very high standard. Particularly well sung was Maud Miller's song as the oracle: a gem, despite its irrelevance to the plot and bizarre lyrics. Jonathan Kanagasooriam provided the 'comedy' part of the deal, managing well with Balaska, who was less a character

than a caricature. The best moments of Matthew Eberhardt's production were courtesy of the slave chorus, excellently choreographed by Hannah Lee. They succeeded in livening up the stage whenever the production flagged, as it often did.

The production paid the price for choosing singers rather than actors. Without the support of a musical score the acting became wooden and the actors themselves nervous. The plot was incomprehensible at points: the lead character was a wet-blanket and his love for the girl utterly absurd (springing, apparently, from the sight of her spitting). The ending was so forced that the audience were at a loss as to how or why it was reached.

*Hero* was unforgivably lumpy. Not just its meandering and pointlessly complex plot, but the scene changes,

the sound balance and the jokes felt awkward and under-rehearsed. It should be mentioned that one of the main characters was played by an understudy on this evening. Even taking this into account, however, the show should have run more smoothly.

This could have been a genuinely exciting project. But, as one audience member who preferred to remain anonymous said: "Didn't Disney do this about ten years ago?"

The script was unoriginal and needed some serious tightening; some of the songs needed brutal editing and the acting was often poor. Disney do, indeed, seem to have drained this barrel, with considerably greater success. The cast and audience spent the evening doggedly searching for a hero who, unfortunately, never appeared. *Lizzie Davis*

## The Doubtful Guest by Edward Gorey

Arts Theatre, 15-18 October

Dir. Shôn Dale-Jones; Hoipolloi

★★★★★

Hoipolloi's Artistic Director writes "we hope that age won't matter when watching *The Doubtful Guest*", and the first thing you notice in the auditorium (something which you are encouraged by the cast to consider) is that all sorts of people are there. This production has something to offer each one of them, and in that single, glorious idea lies Hoipolloi's greatest strengths – the excitement to leave no stone unturned and the ability to lever them up from every angle.

The show is dubbed as 'inspired by' Gorey's illustrated story of the same name, and it stays intimately close to the original work. We witness the interruption of a nervous, quirksome family by a mysterious caller who proceeds to rattle their cage in a rib-tickling series

of 'episodes'. Whilst consistently and genuinely hilarious, Gorey's macabre element is included in equal measure.

Hoipolloi employ a relentless duality: the aesthetic of the show is in some way about accepting the confines of the physical theatre, but also forcing all our responses to it back into the imagination. The ensemble explains how they will tell their story – with what concepts, with which props – and yet transitions between meta-theatre and pretence are seamless. Alexander Rudd's music underscores and jars by turns, floating between echoes of Beethoven's piano sonatas and clunky, end-of-the-pier clarinets and strings. The songs are beautiful and haunting, but disturbing lyrics are comically delivered. Actors alert spectators to

modern lighting effects and yet inhabit a distressed set, dressed in stiff, Edwardian costume.

There is something sinister about the idea of Gorey's dark illustrations coming to life, and something difficult about negotiating the risible, rhyming couplets which accompany them. Adapting both for the stage in one effort is therefore not an easy task, and perhaps why Hoipolloi chose to project the original words as a visual escort to the actors. Part of this production is about translation – from image to action, experience to recollection and metaphor to reality. But it is also about confronting – or not – those unwelcome guests in our own lives, our elephants in the room. *Finn Beames*



FIRST NIGHT THEATRE REVIEWS ARE PUBLISHED ONLINE AT VARSITY.CO.UK/REVIEWS

★ Company should be ashamed   ★★ Serviceable elements, but little overall success   ★★★ Very good show spoilt by a few weak moments  
★★★★ Level of success outweighs its few faults   ★★★★★ Among the highlights of the term   ★★★★★★ One of the best you'll see at Cambridge

**Wolfson Howler**

Wolfson College Bar, Monday 13th October

Headliner: Dan Antopolski

★★★★★

"The best night of comedy in Cambridge!" boasted Chris Lander, founder of *Wolfson Howler* – quite some claim to live up to. As soon as the compères introduced themselves and rolled out a few lacklustre, insipid and quite simply inane jokes (leaving the audience awkwardly shifting in their seats), it appeared that Lander had underestimated the class of the Cambridge comedy scene.

Luckily, the mood soon changed with the arrival of ex-Footlights member Tom Williams. He captivated and relieved the audience within seconds of setting foot onto the small stage in Wolfson's bar, which had a great atmosphere throughout the evening. Williams conjured up images of smug Cambridge couples and cocky cyclists, which were warmly received by stu-

dents, appreciative of his personalised touch. He hit the Cantabrigian nail on the head with wordplay galore and absurd jokes that suited the student audience so well. The highlight of the evening was Tom Evans, another Footlights marvel and writer of *Faust: The Panto*. The roaring audience clearly loved Evans' style, delivery and jokes and were howling out for more when he left the stage all too soon. He effortlessly wove together disparate scenes, and several times reduced the audience to a heap of giggles. Comedians like Evans remind you what comedy should be like.

However, with a running time of three hours, the evening was just too long. On top of this, the audience took a while to adapt to the different styles and paces of each new performer.

After four Cambridge comics, including Evans and Williams, headliner Dan Antopolski (right) took to the stage. Coming straight from Edinburgh, (which marked his return to comedy after a paternity break) Antopolski used his incredibly expressive face and seemingly detached eyebrows to mesmerise and captivate the audience with raps and rhymes aplenty. The crowd, many fans of BBC3's *Hyperdrive*, starring Antopolski, loved his performance and the overall mood at the end of the evening was upbeat and happy; just how you should feel after such a night. So was it "the best night of comedy in Cambridge?" Perhaps not the *best* night, but it was a good one with some hilarious acts that made it well worth £6, provided you had the time and patience to sit through the tedious links. *Victoria Ball*



CHARLOTTE RUNCIE

Analysis



Week 2: Harold Pinter (1930-)

Harold Pinter is the Marmite of the theatre world. Author of some 29 stage plays and 26 screenplays, and winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, he seems to polarise audiences and critics alike. Those who are not taken with his work are veritably indignant, whilst those who like it tend to be utterly enamoured. Perhaps the universality of his name combined with the cryptic nature of his writing puts people under undue pressure to make snap judgements about his work, pouncing on specific features in order to 'bully through' an opinion.

Take, for example, the pauses. Spurned by his wife as "the curse of Pinter", these minor nuances have become the subject of infinite scrutiny and perpetual misunderstanding – and are, in the playwright's opinion, ultimately ascribed too much importance. Pinter has commented: "I think they've been taken much too far... I've really been extremely depressed when I've seen productions in which a silence happens because it says silence or a pause happens because it says pause."

Yet people talk of the 'Pinter pause' in a tone of either needless reverence or scornful disdain. The pauses either single-handedly illuminate the breakdown of communication in society or are pretentious and silly. But it makes very little sense to judge Pinter on his pauses. It is the equivalent of judging Shakespeare on his punctuation or a piece of music on its rests. Consider the inherent absurdity of criticizing or applauding a writer for what he doesn't write. All too often, pauses become a scapegoat for the Pinter hater or an unnecessary sidetrack for the Pinter lover.

Ultimately, the greatest single misunderstanding surrounding Pinter is that there is something to be understood. His plays are not naturalistic, nor do they profess to be. The plays do not take themselves overly seriously; their critics do. People want to say concrete things about the plays; Pinter doesn't. Try to read T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* and to extract tangible meaning from it – it's not possible. The poem is complex and layered, and that is its very beauty. It is not enough simply to say "it's about the decay of society" – it just doesn't do the poem justice. In much the same vein, we need to relax around Pinter, submit to its mystery and complexity, to its humour, and indeed to its natural poetry, in the knowledge that, whilst we are in the hands of a great playwright, there is no onus on us to intellectualise – just to enjoy. *Joe Hytner*

Joe is co-directing Pinter's *'The Hothouse'* at the ADC from Tuesday 21st to Saturday 25th October, at 7.45pm. And there's a matinee at 2.30pm on the Saturday.



TOM MICHENER

**The Philosopher's Wife by Jean Rees-Lyons**

Michaelhouse, 10-12 October

With Clare Crossman's Poetry

★★★★★

Unusual but not striking; nostalgic rather than provocative, *The Philosopher's Wife* is a jigsaw of a play that nevertheless manages to fit together. The play is an ensemble of letters, poetry and music, based on the story of French political philosopher André Gorz, and his English wife, Doreen Keir, whose love endured 58 years until their joint suicide in September 2007. The playwright Jean Rees – whose striking hair left an indelible impression upon us – replaced actress Helen Catwright at the last minute, and gave a more or less convincing performance as Doreen Keir. The play unfurls in a cyclical (if at times repetitive) monologue about memories, frustrated recollections of times past, and deep-seated proclamations of love. Whilst its components mirror each other well, the monologue doesn't quite reach the levels of introspection the

play is capable of having. However, this drawback is vastly compensated by the accompanying guitar – and especially piano – music. Sam Tannenbaum's minimalist, eerily semi-atonal, yet also paradoxically harmonic composition dramatically enriches the play, adding a filmic depth that captures the spirit of the words.

The play's main body consists in a series of letters written by Doreen to her husband throughout their long marriage, exploring their personal trials of childlessness and, most touchingly, their rehearsals for the day that they would be found, hands entwined, on their bed after a lethal overdose. These letters, which formed part of the narrative alongside Rees' own writing, sound rather flat in comparison to the powerfully delivered, haunting poetry of Clare Crossman. Visually, the play is uninter-

esting – during the poetic readings, Rees simply wanders around the small stage, picking up objects in response to the words being read.

Overall, however, the performers make imaginative use of Michaelhouse as a dramatic space. The acoustics in the main acting area perfectly carry Lou Ismail's delicate voice during her song, *My End is My Beginning*, the title of which reflects Rees' crippled walk from the chapel and onto the stage at the start and her triumphant exit as a resurrected spirit.

This walk through the valley of death is perhaps a little too clichéd. *The Philosopher's Wife* is neither emotionally harrowing nor intellectually stimulating, but as a study of a love that remains fresh as the body grows old, it is a pleasantly melancholic appeal to the ears. *Jenny Stark & Sophie Sawicka-Sykes*

**Nevermind the Alcock**

ADC, 15-18 October

Improvised; Alcock Improv.

★★★★★

"More of me comes out when I improvise," Edward Hopper once observed. He was referring to painting New York, yet it is certainly this hope that makes improvisation games an actor's most essential limbering-up exercise. The four, smiling, black-clad members of Alcock Improv. bound onto the stage and explain that this lateshow is going to be entirely dedicated to just such games, directed by the audience. A risky process, crucial in the rehearsal room, but why should an hour long comedy set be devoted to it?

Well, it works. Despite the reliance on 'audience participation', one of the greatest strengths of *Never Mind The Alcock* is its refusal to pander to its onlookers or to turn itself into a budget

panto. People shout out genuine suggestions, but the group ride the laughs extremely elegantly, and don't waste time with heckling and banter. The material is verbally and intellectually sharp ("a cycle of violence...laundrette") but blissfully free from lazy Oxbridge in-jokes and slapstick.

It is when the predictable celebrity impressions are dispensed with that the performers' formidable strengths as straight actors are revealed. The penultimate 'game' involved a police interrogation in which the suspect (Higgot) had to guess the crime assigned him by the audience. Alongside the laughs, the group conjured up a sense of genuine panic and cruelty, perfectly displayed in Higgot's face. This was the same actor whose monologue, as an inspector

of a factory secretly dealing in 'blood-fudge', had just completely convinced us. The set closed with Barker-Wren performing a breath-annihilating, stunningly surreal riff on the subject of cracked eggs, lover-eating and Batman's butler. Powerful jabberings that could almost have been out of Beckett.

Alcock Improv. are extremely good at what they do and this production is guaranteed to be an original and extremely funny evening. However, I'm still not convinced that 'more comes out' by performing entirely in this set-up. And by the end of the performance I did want more. With a tighter, more complex format and room for darker material, this group could develop their work into even more interesting territory. *Isabel Taylor*



RICHARD GARDNER

**GORILLA ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11):** The librarians stick their heads out of the windows and tell you to be quiet because people are trying to work. The gorilla perks up at the idea of working in a library, and joins in. Gorillas are pretty clever after all – and they also love the smell of books. In fact, they love the taste of them as well, and this helps clear some space on the UL shelves.

## Books Every Right-Minded Person Should Read



### The Watchmen Alan Moore (1986-7)

**W**atchmen is the greatest thing Alan Moore's ever done, better than *The Killing Joke* or *From Hell*, even. Moore – mad as a snake – crams everything into this huge, dense comic, or graphic novel if you prefer, which I don't, because part of what's terrific about *Watchmen* is its self-reflective relationship with 'The Comic'. There is even a comic-within-the-comic, the furious story of a pirate driven mad by death, the themes of which shade the epic plot of *Watchmen* proper.

A classic hard-boiled conspiracy relentlessly drives that plot. In Moore's alternative history, masked vigilantes were on the streets until the mid-1970s, when Nixon outlawed their kind, most of whom retire. The Comedian and Rorschach do not retire; both are psychopaths; the Comedian is murdered, and Rorschach sets out to discover why. The only hero with superhuman powers is Dr. Manhattan, who was atomised by mistake in a nuclear experiment only to have somehow reconstructed himself, and who can now create and destroy anything at will. Manhattan is what mankind understands as God. Only he is a God with no taste for mankind.

He exists in a dimensional plane similar to that of Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5*, in which time stretches out before Billy Pilgrim as a mountain range, with every ridge and abyss visible at once. Appropriately, then, *Watchmen* is concerned with the history of its characters, both the original Minutemen (now forgotten heroes, drunk or dead in the 'present') and those trained to replace them. Dave Gibbons' drawing style perfectly (re)creates the sense of a glorious *Action Comic*-style past, with the Minutemen doing battle in Adam West-era *Batman* gin joints with their nemesis, Molloch, now a septuagenarian pensioner with cancer.

The heroic deeds of the ordinary men and women driven by social conscience and sexual kinks to dress up and fight one another are dwarfed by time and by Manhattan, whose immortality makes every human thing seem futile. Moore contrasts our make-believe importance with the indifference of molecular eternity, eliciting pathos from the efforts of small people to become ubermensch. For me, though, the most remarkable thing about *Watchmen* is its ending, which is so bizarre, so audacious, that it doesn't really sink in. What it does do is question what lengths people will go to, not for power or money or territory, but for peace.

"At midnight all the agents and the superhuman crew..." *Freddy Sybourn*

# ART, FILM AND CLASSICAL

## Between Somewhere + Nowhere Museum of Classical Archaeology, Sidgwick Site Tom de Freston

★★★★★

Tucked amongst the busts and reclining classical figures in the Sidgwick Museum of Classical Archaeology lies an exhibition of Tom de Freston's extensive work. De Freston has been awarded the 2008-2009 Christ's College Levy Plumb visual arts scholarship, and is not only talented but extraordinarily prolific. From scraps of paper and backs of envelopes in a display folder to his large oil paintings, *Between Somewhere + Nowhere* shows not only his finished pieces but also the work leading up to them, and is an exhibition all the more exciting for it.

De Freston obsessively experiments with the human form, cavorting it across the canvas, bodies twisting in distress or leaping into water. His paintings echo or question the work of Francis Bacon, and he sets his figures in similar areas of confine-

ment. Similarly, displayed amongst the permanent collection in the Classics Faculty, his paintings, drawings and sketches crumple the heroic status of the classical statues lying around them, making it more than just an exhibition of paintings, but instead a dialogue, a response.

Yet perhaps the sheer volume of work on display is somewhat overwhelming, and this exhibition will need to be seen again. Alongside large-scale paintings such as the stunning 'Swimmer of Lethe' series, where a series of male bodies leaping into water are conveyed through silhouettes painted in oils and washed over with gloss, making the canvas sparkle as though actually wet, are smaller works. De Freston's sketches are intimate and well-worth seeking out amidst the larger, darker pieces on display. From

rows of old men huddled in a line to a man walking a dog on a beach, these pieces seem to capture life in snatched moments, and are a counter to the occasionally oppressive brilliance of his painted work. Yet even these small sketches can pack a punch – one in particular, entitled 'To the entombment' haunted me afterwards with its three figures lugging an indistinguishable person or thing into a building.

Looking at the titles of his work such as 'After the Bacchanal' and 'Icarus', it is apposite that De Freston has been placed in the Classics Faculty – and at times, illuminating, as when the curved reclining figure of 'Danae IV' echoes that of the statue of the Son of Niobe underneath it. Yet though such flickering shadows occur in De Freston's work, his style and force is ultimately his own. *Emma Hogan*



## How to Lose Friends and Alienate People

Dir: Robert B. Weide

Starring: Simon Pegg, Kirsten Dunst

★★★★★

**H**ow to Lose Friends & Alienate People, however, both asks many questions: Why are so many of the British films that make it to the silver screen romantic comedies? Are we a nation that loves the no-hoper given the chance of love? And it simultaneously fulfils a very British stereotype. Turn off Pegg's accent and you'd still recognize the celebrity parties that are reminiscent of an episode of *Footballers' Wives* with the background 'suspense' music of *Hustle*.

Even Pegg's character's jokes sound like they are the spawn of Jimmy Carr and a sitcom writer: (Dunst [pointing to an empty seat next to her]: "My boyfriend is sitting there." Pegg: "Well he's f\*\*\*ing small, isn't he?"). Yet, the film's Britishness is not something to be derided, but is central to its successes. Sidney Young (Pegg, left) plays the bum-

bling, socially awkward British celebrity journalist thrown into the dog-eat-dog world of New York magazines. Think a mixture of Mr Bean and Ugly Betty. His combination of cringe humour and bitterness makes Young an easy character to empathise with, perhaps more than his socks and sandals. It is a shame that many further insights into his character come so late in the film, including the introduction of his intellectual father.

Dunst's character (Alison Olsen) describes herself as a "walking cliché", and that is precisely what she is: the high-powered boyfriend who doesn't really love her, the novel which she can never complete, both serve to define her. Whereas in most films this setup just leads us down the inevitable route of the archetype romantic comedy, with a few mild digressions for the sake of a

few insipid laughs, *How to Lose Friends & Alienate People* succeeds in standing out. Alison's self-description as the "walking cliché" is one example of the film not taking itself too seriously; Sidney's cringeworthy comments at a board meeting show that the film's tongue is placed firmly in its cheek.

*How to Lose Friends & Alienate People* succeeds in lying between being a romantic comedy and a comedy drama. There is something there for the fan of farce and slapstick comedy, for the admirer of banter that only a Brit could engage in, as well as the sense of the bitterness that makes us fall in love with our protagonist. Forgive the amount of inevitability that is necessary and simply enjoy Pegg doing what he does best.

*Daniel Isenberg*

## Dido and Aeneas by Purcell; Four UK Premieres by Gibbons West Road, Thursday 9th October

Dir: Richard Egarr; Academy of Ancient Music

★★★★★

**A**magnificent season-opening performance from the AAM combined the familiar with newly unearthed gems.

The first half of the concert contained the 'premieres' of four works by Christopher Gibbons (1615-1676), a court musician during the English Civil War, a music teacher during the Interregnum, and then organist at Westminster Abbey, where he played for Charles II's coronation in 1661. The pieces, three anthems and one chamber work, have recently been rediscovered and are being toured by the AAM, in their first performances for over 300 years.

The masterpiece is the anthem *Not unto us, O Lord*, written for eight-part choir. With so many polyphonic lines moving around, Gibbons creates ten-

sion through never allowing the music to remain static. Like in the minimalism of Steve Reich, there is a great release when the individual lines come together to create single chordal blocks: here, it aptly happens on 'Hallelujah'. Of the other pieces, the most interesting was a *Fantasy-Suite* for two violins, gamba and harpsichord. The two violins serenade one another in the bitersweet opening pavane, followed by three joyous dances. As ever, the players and singers of the AAM had real fun in their performances, investing genuine emotion, which never failed to come across.

Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, a one-hour opera, completed the concert. Though everyone in the audience knows the tragedy of the final act

(when Dido resolves to die as she believes her love Aeneas has betrayed her), the vitality of the first two acts was brought across so well by conductor Richard Egarr (right), especially in the transitional dances, that the finale was all the more crushing.

The choir were again the stars, all 'acting' their parts as a kind of Greek chorus: the soloists taken from within their ranks as the witches and sailors were particularly characterful. Brummelstroete was masterful in bringing off Dido's change of mood in the third act, her famous lament almost intolerably moving. Koningsberger was a suitably weighty Aeneas, and Giles Underwood brought a wonderful contrast to his roles as the Sorceress and the Spirit. *David Allen*



# CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

## Parallax Error Beheads You

Max Tundra

Domino; Out 20th October

★★★★★

If a country's national stereotype results in the creation of a corresponding type of music, then the enduring production of soulless German electronica is probably caused by their ruthless, machine-like efficiency. I don't like *Kraftwerk*, and I'm not musically snobbish enough to pretend I ever 'got' Captain Beefheart. Tundra has spent a lot of time listening to both of them. And his album is called *Parallax Error Beheads You*. On first appearance then, it seemed like there is everything not to like on this record.

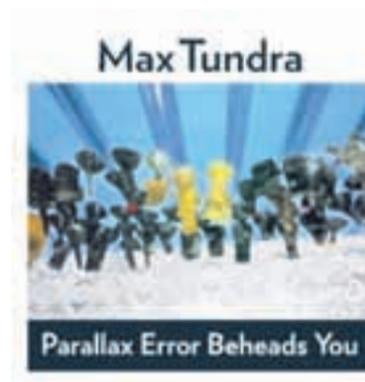
Densely layered and six years in the making, this is the third album from Brit Max Tundra. He played and produced every element in the recording of this album, which are then painstakingly put through an

ancient Commodore Amiga computer, with drum loops recorded on a old school cassette player. It took up to three months to record each song. The temptation is to say he should probably get out more.

And indeed, on first and second listen, it sounds like a regurgitated pick and mix, a bewildering blur of inverted drum'n'bass, synths and snes soundtracks, skewed trance and offbeat drum loops. But a record so painstakingly produced deserves further attention, and on repeated listening, this absurdly named album begins to endear itself. This is mainly because of its idiosyncrasies, a warmth and obvious delight in its production remind you that it was actually made by a human being and not just a computer. Tundra hasn't

just been listening to Beefheart – he's a child of the 80s who watched trashy tv and played video games like the rest of us.

The breadth of influences from cheesy 80s pop to breakfast cereal commercials are all bizarrely blended together – Tundra sounds like an over excitable 8 year old playing Super Nintendo on a sugar high - but some of the time it almost works. 'Which Song' sounds like Super Mario speedballing with Donkey Kong, while 'Glycaemic Index Blues' schizophrenically flips from The Postal Service one minute to Pendulum the next. Inevitably at times it descends into an indigestible mess, and Max Tundra is too ADD to ever give any of his ideas enough space to breathe as a 'song' in any conventional sense. But



the relentless creativity is part of its weird charm. Undoubtedly people will be saying they like Max Tundra because he's 'rated', but unlike Captain Beefheart, I can actually see why they possibly might. *Henry Donati*

## In Ear Park

Department of Eagles

4AD; Out Now

★★★★★

Department of Eagles' core members, Daniel Rossen and Fred Nicolaus, started their career as NYU roommates, piecing together collections of samples and drum loops into a string of small release EPs. In their first major release, *The Cold Nose*, Rossen and Nicolaus demonstrated a prowess for incorporating all manner of genres from electronica and trip-hop to psychedelic folk and garage rock. Rossen soon put the project on hold to join *Grizzly Bear* but after a three-year hiatus the two have returned to the studio with past contributors from both projects, to create their latest offering, *In Ear Park*. The result is difficult to pinpoint; on first listen there are moments of post-*Revolver Beatles*, the *Beta Band* and *Elliot Smith*, but as the record spins it becomes apparent

that these are no more than threads in a wash of mellow acoustics, marching bands, fuzz-driven guitars and twitching bass lines.

The curtains are raised with the title track, dedicated to a park which Rossen and his late father once frequented. It works to establish the record's lush and vibrant timbre; a dreamy waltz between two tightly knitted guitar parts, sailing upon high-end drones and a sultry double bass. 'No One Does it Like You' kicks the record away from its pensive beginnings with a gritty bass that bounces below velvety vocals. A 60s pop song in its basic form, it rises and falls before dropping the mood for one of the record's masterpieces, 'Phantom Other'. Reminiscent of *Radiohead's* 'You and Whose Army?', it begins lethargically as Rossen croons

over an acoustic guitar the lyrics "What would it take to make you listen?", before evolving into a march, spattered with synthetic squeaks and chirps, then ascending into a melange of soaring guitars and trembling vocals.

'Teenagers' provides a pseudo-interlude before the record enters timidly into a symphony of songs which, although slightly inaccessible upon the first listen, provide a rich mixture of complex rhythms, hammering pianos and enchanting melodies, textured with hand clapping, tambourines and dramatic effects. 'Balmy Night' closes the record with a dancing banjo carefully manipulated to evoke the shimmering microtones of a sitar beneath Rossen's harrowing vocals.

The combination of sounds, genres and arrangements that Rossen and



Nicolaus have brought together are certainly ambitious, but each is executed with a dexterity that makes *In Ear Park* a wholly convincing record with a great deal to offer on each listen. *Mike Coxhead*

## The Chemistry of Common Life

Fucked Up

Matador; Out Now

★★★★★

A couple of years ago, probably in some magazine printed on recycled A5 paper and only distributed to newly opened skate-shops and record stores in the East End of London, I saw some photos from a concert where this really fat bald man was lying on the floor of a stage in a little pub, with his shirt off, continuing to sing/shout into a microphone while blood streamed down his face and body. My first thoughts were: man, this is fucked up. How right I was.

For a band that leave a wake of thousands of dollars worth of damage wherever they are mistakenly booked to play, their music is actually surprisingly tame. With the album beginning with a gentle flute solo, interrupted by a Courtney Love squeal, you would be forgiven for thinking that the peroxide widow was

back in town to play a set of punk covers.

Named after a book published in 1855 describing experiences with different narcotics from across the world, *The Chemistry of Common Life* is really a very well concocted sensory adventure. Listening through the dense and spiny forest of the dozens of layered guitar tracks which provide the Punk surface to every song, one finds details such as extended psych-outs that lead you to question what is really going on beneath the aggressive outer layer. This attention to detail is unusual to find on a Hardcore Punk album, and one can't help but try and discover the reasons for their intricacies by listening hard to the beautiful melodies (yes! Beautiful melodies!).

The lyrics which you will find if you reach the other end of the forest allude to

occultism, mind control and apparently even to Nazi ideals, but I guess that's not surprising coming from a band two of whose members are named Concentration Camp (aka Gulag) and Mustard Gas. They use ancient mystic symbols on their record covers too, and even have a photo of the "Manhattan-Henge" phenomenon on the cover of this one, so it's not their music alone that makes this Toronto band so interesting: they actually have shallow-seeded quasi-philosophical roots!

The pub-floor antics I recounted previously that stick so fondly in my mind may have happened in the early days of this band's career, but after releasing two full-length albums and a series of 12 inches, they still haven't really changed, and they probably never will. When they



stitched Pink Eyes, the lead, er, singer, up after he smashed a pint-glass on himself, they didn't get all the shards out, so he still has glass in his forehead. *Andrew Spyrou*

## Take Five One-Liners



## Five of the Best

### Roger Bannister (1952)

"Doctors and scientists said that breaking the four-minute mile was impossible, that one would die in the attempt. Thus, when I got up from the track after collapsing at the finish line, I figured I was dead."

### Rodney Marsh

Introduced by a radio-show host as "the white Pele," Marsh indignantly replied that Pele was in fact, "the black Rodney Marsh."

### Winston Churchill

Lady Astor: "If you were my husband, I'd poison your coffee!"  
Churchill: "My dear, if you were my wife I'd drink it."

### Withnail and I (1987)

Danny: "I don't advise a haircut, man. All hairdressers are in the employment of the government. Hairs are your aerials. They pick up signals from the cosmos, and transmit them directly into the brain. This is the reason bald-headed men are uptight."

### Rodney Marsh to Ian Botham

"So how's your wife and my kids?"

## Five of the Worst

### James Bond, Casino Royale (2006)

Vesper Lynd: "If the only thing left of you was your smile and your little finger, you'd still be more of a man than anyone I've ever known."  
James Bond: "That's because you know what I can do with my little finger."

### Five Easy Pieces (1970)

Dupea: "I want you to hold it between your knees" - during a conversation with a waitress about his sandwich.

### Tony Greig (1976)

"If they're down, they grovel, and I intend, with the help of Closey and a few others, to make them grovel." Greig's infamous remark ignited the West-Indian post-colonialist anger; England lost 3-0, and the Windies' bowling hostility left careers, bats and flesh in tatters.

### Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994)

Charles: "For the first time in my whole life I realised I totally and utterly loved one person. And it wasn't the person next to me in the veil. It's the person standing opposite me now... in the rain."  
Carrie: "Is it still raining? I hadn't noticed."

### Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith (2005)

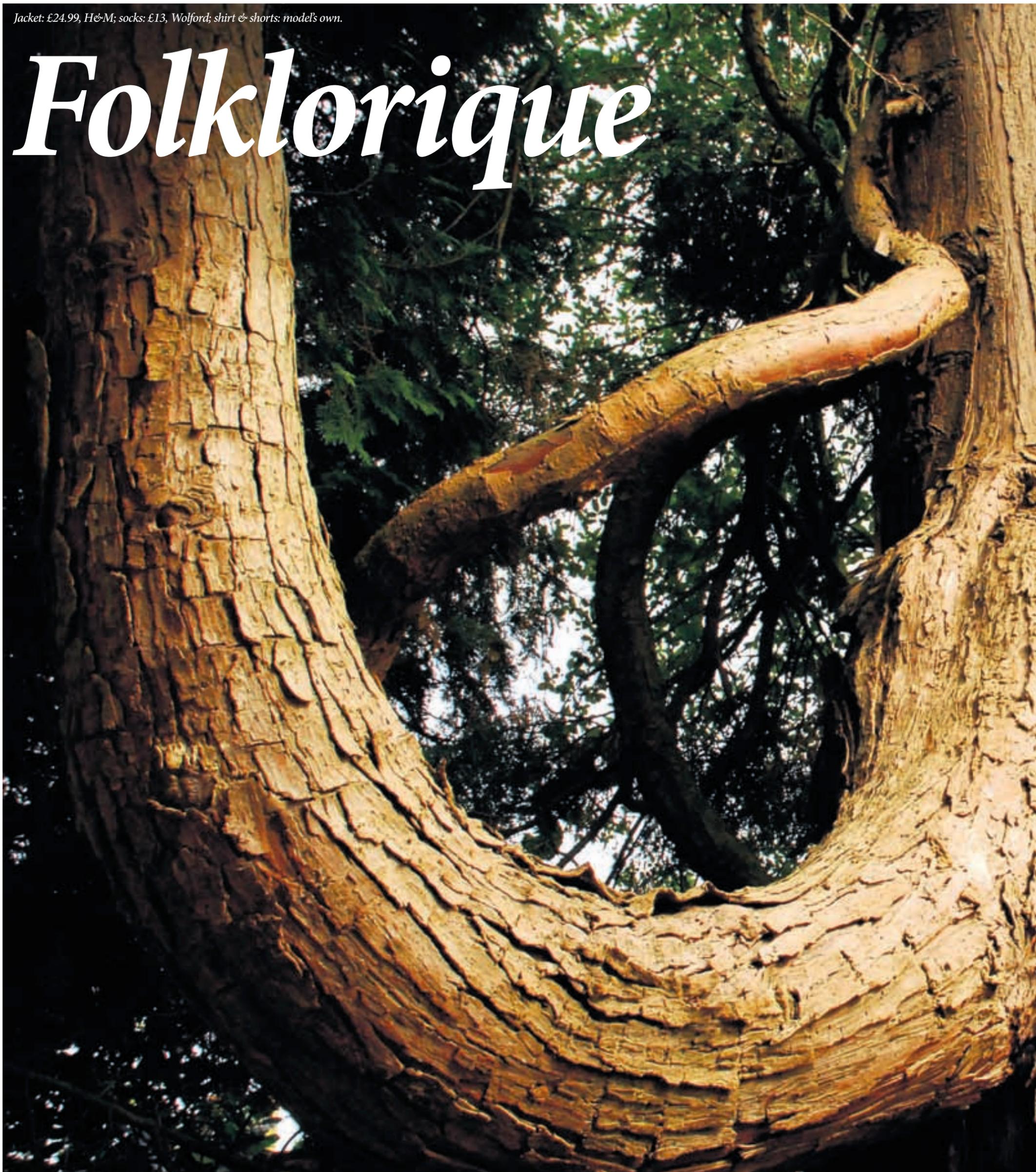
Padme: "I don't know you anymore. Anakin, you're breaking my heart."  
Ah, young love.

## Competition ADC Theatre

Next week's topic is *film music*: send your worst and best to reviews@varsity.co.uk by midday on Monday, and you could win a pair of first-night tickets to the ADC mainshow.

Jacket: £24.99, H&M; socks: £13, Woford; shirt & shorts: model's own.

# Folklorique



Model: Armani Bennett; Styling: Joanna & Ben; Photography: Jamie Daltrey

GORILLA ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11): Your suspicions are confirmed when the gorilla takes off his head to reveal that it was just a man in a suit pretending to be a gorilla. He's from the gorilla company, and they ran out of gorillas when the gorillas ran away from them. When you started shaving the suit, the man became so scared you'd bust him that he shat himself. It is a funny old world, isn't it.



**GORILLA ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11):** Yes – the gorilla is actually running around the room saying how relieved he is. He loves being adopted by you, and can't wait to get stuck in to his new life at university. It's so much better than the beautiful lush rainforest, full of his gorilla friends. Gorilla sarcasm is harder to pick up than human sarcasm, so you don't notice what he meant until much later.



## Georgia on my mind

**LIZZIE MITCHELL INTRODUCES FROM THE LAND OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE: TOMB TREASURES OF ANCIENT GEORGIA, THE LATEST EXHIBITION AT THE FITZWILLIAM**

They didn't call ancient Georgia 'rich in gold' for nothing. It was to Georgia that Jason and the Argonauts sailed in search of the legendary Golden Fleece and, looking round the Fitzwilliam's exhibition of Georgian tomb treasures, it's no surprise that a myth might link the most mythologised of metals to this small kingdom on the Baltic coast.

The loot from the Georgian graves is fantastic. From a land of springs and green mountains comes a glistering treasure trove of wonderful things. Horsemen, turtles, birds and lions sport and fight over diadems, necklaces and axe-heads. The silver drinking vessels give off a gleam that belies their two millennia, while the gold chains are so finely wrought that it's hard to believe they could have been made by hand.

But there's more to this stuff than dazzle and gold-lust. This is the first exhibition about ancient Georgia to be shown in the UK. Most of the artefacts have never been shown outside the Republic of Georgia before. Putting them on display in a major British museum is a crucial stage in broadening awareness of Georgia's rich cultural past. These objects bring into focus the fascinating history and identity of a comparatively small civilisation surrounded by bigger, stronger, far better known ones. You can see the influence of the Greeks to the west, the Persians to the east, and the Scythians to the north. Georgia was a centre of immensely skilled material production with fingers in all sorts of different cultural pies. But when taken as a group, these objects from the shores of the Baltic are neither definitively eastern nor definitively western. And

the most high-status objects of all, the gold ornaments for which Georgia is so famous, are the ones in which there is the strongest evidence of an indigenous Georgian tradition.

One of the most interesting curatorial decisions in this show, and an extremely successful one, is the positioning at the entrance of a slideshow of images of modern Georgia. There's a danger, when looking at an artefact in a glass case under fancy spotlights, of forgetting the unfamiliar landscape from which it has been unearthed and it was good to be reminded of where all this gold has actually come from. This was especially true given that the photos aren't just of lonely shepherds in secluded mountain valleys which have remained unchanged for two thousand years: the image of the town hall in the Georgian capital Tbilisi brought the cross-cultural relations of an ancient aristocracy sharply into the political present.

This exhibition could scarcely have come at a better time. There is no way that the curators of the Fitzwilliam could have known, when they signed for these beautiful and very interesting objects, quite how events would conspire to make Georgian cultural history so incredibly relevant to the contemporary political world, but the time is most definitely ripe to increase awareness and understanding of the history of Georgia. 'From the Land of the Golden Fleece' is an exciting and relevant show and it deserves to be a blockbuster.

*From the Land of the Golden Fleece: Tomb Treasures of Ancient Georgia is at the Fitzwilliam Museum until 4 January 2009. Entry is free.*

## The Day That Changed My World



### Week 2: 9/11

A lot of people lost their loved ones on 9/11. I decided to leave America and make a life in Britain with mine.

I was working at Harvard as a post-doctoral research fellow, having left my girlfriend and family behind in England eight months before. I loved it out there; I was involved in numerous exciting projects and didn't know when, or even if, I would move back.

As per usual, I arrived at work, made some coffee, and stared out the window: my office was in the tallest building in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and I liked to watch the planes taking off at Boston's Logan International Airport. It was a clear, sunny day. What a view.

An hour later news came through of a small plane hitting a building in New York. Then it became an airliner; then the World Trade Centre: this was major. My colleague turned on CNN, and as he said "They think it might not be an accident", a plane cut across the screen behind his shoulder, crashing into the second tower.

"Holy fuck." This was a terrorist attack. The security guards evacuated the building; its height made it a target. Everything became a target. We all rushed out to a friend's house where we stayed glued to the news, watching 9/11 unfold. Those planes had taken off from Logan Airport. Part of this morning's beautiful view had left New York City in flames.

As an Englishman in America, I felt completely isolated. The phone system collapsed, so my girlfriend, terrified, didn't reach me until the evening. I was 3,500 miles from everyone I wanted to see, and could feel the distance. When you miss your loved ones already, and you can't be with them for another day, a seven-hour flight is just too long. In such volatile political times, that's not how I wanted to live.

Harvard was great but I needed to go home. I found a job in London and moved there soon after. Perhaps I should have stayed longer. Harvard was extraordinarily stimulating and I left too early to reap all the benefits. But I'd realised my priorities, and I don't regret coming back. Far from it. Just over seven years later, I've become a fellow at a Cambridge college, the girlfriend I came home to is now my wife, and we're expecting our first baby. My life in Cambridge, England, knocks that of Cambridge Mass. into a cocked hat.

*Contributor: A Cambridge fellow  
Interview and article by  
Moya Sarner*

*Would you like to be interviewed for this column? Please contact Moya Sarner (mts31)*

## Great Works Of Art In Cambridge

### #12: St. Peter's Church

#### Honey Hill

The first time you catch a glance of St. Peter's will be the first time you visit Kettle's Yard. Unless, that is, you are at Fitzwilliam, or Murray Edwards College, or are particularly fond of thrifty curries.

Perched on Honey Hill, it has overlooked the main trade routes into town for over nine hundred years. Twelve years ago, workmen digging a pathway up to the house happened upon some bodies, which were identified as Saxon and suggested that a burial site and perhaps even a church existed before. The church predates the university by around one hundred years but its continual renovations and down-sizing in 1781 meant it fell into disuse, whilst the blockish St. Giles across the road on Chesterton Lane was favoured by the ecclesiastics (if not by aesthetes).

Kettle's Yard has long had a relationship with St. Peter's. When the owner Jim Ede was renovating the cottages into an art gallery in the 1950s, he had a hand in restoring the church, installing flagstones torn up from St. John's (consensually) and a new bell which he would ring morning and night until his death in 1991.

Ede compared the view from his house onto the church to a Samuel Palmer painting: a piece of the pastoral in his backyard. I don't think this includes the spooky bucolics who populate Palmer's paintings, and I've not been there at moonlight, but there's no better analogy. The north windows on the ground and first floor of the house offer tasty glimpses of the church and graveyard, slightly obscured (in a nice way) by the mature limes and horse chestnuts, which litter the ground with leaves, evoking the pastoral scenes of the British artist and printmaker.

You can't appreciate it all from the house: the curious mermen on the thirteenth-century font must be seen at close quarters. Similarly, the tranquillity of the whitewashed interior and the weathercock just about visible from the graveyard reward detailed inspection. Watch out for the initials of Andrew Perne, the infamous Dean of Ely, whose political flip-flopping is thought to be responsible for the fact that Cambridge survived the tumultuous Tudor period with increased wealth and influence. *Orlando Reade*



St Peter's Church, seen from a window in Kettle's Yard

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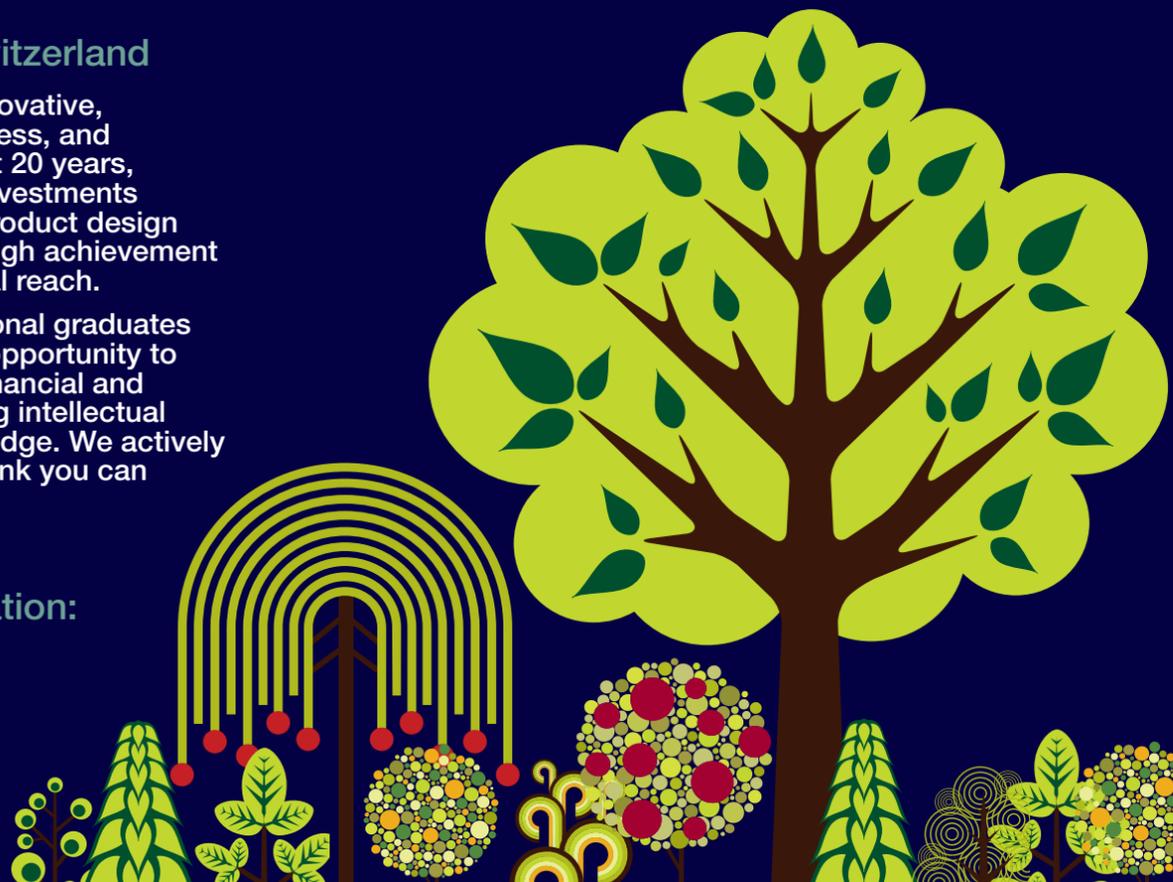
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## The Soapbox



Week 2:  
Tessa Jowell, Minister for the Olympics

London learnt many things from this year's Olympics. Beijing 2008 was a monumental success, on a hugely grand and epic scale, but I think they will be the last games of their kind. We're not trying to emulate Beijing. We're very conscious of what sort of legacy we want to have: there will be no white elephants. We have had our budget reaffirmed and we're going to stick to it. We want all our expenditure to be justified, and by justified I mean that it must be justified for the whole country, not just London. Regeneration must be accelerated everywhere. One of the best ways for people all over the country to become involved is through our volunteer projects. This we really have learned from the Chinese. Thousands of Chinese supported the Olympic effort; a massive algae bloom that threatened the Beijing Olympics sailing venue was cleared in a flash when volunteers cleared 419,000 tons of algae from the water and 333,000 tons from the seashore. Direct involvement will do much to boost national pride. Importantly, each city will do the games differently, each will express its own unique soul.

The Olympics brought about many changes in China – economic, sporting and so on – but I think the most powerful and important legacy will be China's changing attitude to the disabled. There has been a powerful shift, largely thanks to the Chinese witnessing first-hand the winning of medals in the Paralympics. This has greatly altered perceptions of what disabled people are capable of and has been a huge boost for China. China has not been previously known for its tolerance of disabled people. Until recently, public facilities for the disabled in major cities were practically nonexistent, and state support for the disabled in the form of health care or jobs has been very limited. In preparation for the Games, sporting venues, the Olympic subway route and some of Beijing's most popular tourist attractions such as the Forbidden City and the Great Wall were equipped with facilities making them accessible.

This Wednesday, the Olympics Hero parade took place. For the first time, Olympic and Paralympic athletes took part together, marking their impressive performances in Beijing this summer. Even before my involvement in the Olympics, I was always convinced of the importance and the power of sport, not just in terms of a festival, but also in its power to stimulate regeneration. The Olympics represent the height of sporting achievement, and without that global brand, such regeneration would take much longer to effect.

## Tom Cheshire



## The Virgin Atlantic

Why flying is the new religion

I spent a lot of my summer on planes. Yes, I'm aware of the massive carbon footprint, but dimly proud of it too: you know what they say about people with big feet after all. I realised that flying is the new religion, baby.

It was when on one internal flight in the USA, as we all sat there in our neat rows, some in rapt attention, others scarcely noticing, that a member of the cabin crew asked for "observance" of the safety rules. From the hushed dignity of the business lounge to rabble raising easyJet evangelism – "Go Forth Into The World! For £4.99 + tithes!" – it's all there. The cordial "hello" as you enter, the communion of horrible wine poured by preposterously be-robed attendants, the in-flight magazines as interesting as the average parish news letter. Muslim looking fellows are viewed with suspicion by the authorities of both institutions and, by all accounts, the cockpit's just as randy as the cloisters, if less paedophilic.

At check-in we automatically mutter our Responses – "Have you packed your bag yourself?" – "It is meek and right so to do"; in security we offer our soles to be searched. The ritual of take-off and landing is familiar, comforting and learned early on; whatever denomination of plane you fly, it's more or less the same.

In years gone by, people used to

get excited about both aviation and religion, make the efforts and wear suits; nowadays Madonna can board a plane in a dressing gown and my vicar wears ladies' underwear. Guilt accompanies both, (see carbon footprint above) but is easily bought off with the self-castigation of a couple of hail marys/bags for life. So too does the omnipresent fear of death: the only reason I pay attention to Gospel or safety briefing is for tips on how to avoid a fiery end. Church is highest at 30,000 feet.

A sharp kick in the back interrupted this wild analogising and pointed out a discrepancy: there's no Sunday school for the little monsters on airplanes. And very rarely is there the Peace either, at least not until I've gorged myself on a fuck-off Toblerone and BA alcohol, and passed out watching Stuart Little.

C.S. Lewis, the devout aeronaut, thought that "the perfect Church service would be one we were almost unaware of." Flying has a long way to go before it reaches such levels of anaesthetised bliss, and air miles seem an unenlightened way to get to paradise. But when it comes to all the things the Church used to pride itself on – torture, obscene

taxes, random confiscation of possessions and delight in controlling others' lives – the airlines aren't far behind.

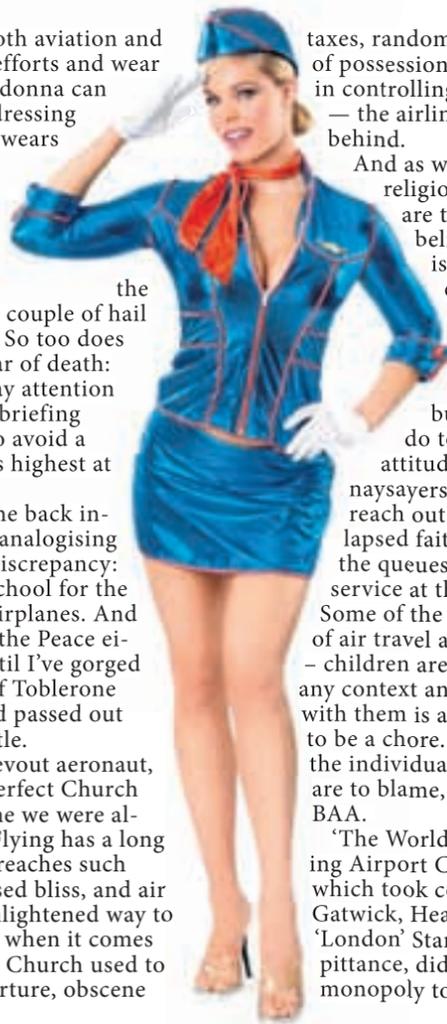
And as with all good religions, there are the non-believers; flying is undoubtedly bad for the planet. There is little the aviation business can do to change the attitudes of these naysayers. But it can reach out to those of lapsed faith, put off by the queues and shoddy service at the airport. Some of the aggravations of air travel are inherent – children are annoying in any context and travelling with them is always going to be a chore. But it's not the individual airlines who are to blame, rather the BAA.

"The World's Leading Airport Company", which took control of Gatwick, Heathrow and 'London' Stansted for a pittance, did not use its monopoly to create busi-

ness efficiencies, but grew fat, lazy and complacent. It could make you stand in line for hours for security, be treated rudely by unattractive employees and present an underwhelming picture of modern Britain to the foreign arrival.

The new runways and airports the UK needs (that's another column before you start complaining) would have been built a lot sooner in a free market. Endemic mismanagement, like the handling of the security crisis in 2006, costs airlines and passengers money. The shambolic Terminal 5 opening showed BAA to be entirely unsuited to control such an important part of our lives. When even British Airways joined the campaign protesting BAA's monopoly, you know things have gone too far.

The Competition Commission's ruling, that BAA should be forced to dispose of one of its airports, is a move in the right direction. Competition from a new owner at Gatwick will mean cheaper costs and better service for airlines and customers alike. We need heresies to challenge the flatulent orthodoxy of putting shops before service. As people fly less due to current economic hiccups, the general synod of BAA is going to have to be a lot more attentive to the needs of its parishioners – both airlines and customers. BAA must restore flying's good name.



## Jasmin Sandelson



## This sterile presidency

Obama dodges the stereotype of a sexual predator

Sex sells. It sells cars, clothes, cosmetics and candidates. So why has one of politics' most attractive luminaries run an election campaign that is clean when attacking his rivals, but positively sterile in presenting himself?

Candidates have charmed and flirted their way through interviews, town hall meetings and debates since the advent of mass media. The enormous opinion poll bounce for the dashing John Kennedy triggered by his visual advantage over the lined (and sweating) Richard Nixon in the first ever televised Presidential Debate carried Kennedy to victory in 1960. Whilst Kennedy, FDR, Johnson, and Clinton infamously beguiled more than voters, hyperbolised masculinity has been harmlessly deployed to woo undecided constituents for centuries.

These politics of beauty are not gender exclusive; the Palin effect may since have worn off, but the appointment of 'Sexy Sarah' complete with librarian spectacles (along, of course, with her flawlessly conservative voting record and, presumably, her disbelief in dinosaurs) to the GOP ticket in August propelled John McCain to front-runner position for the first time in months. So why has Barack Obama not capitalised on his own appealing aesthetic? Given that 20 per cent of United States Senators are septuagenarians, at 47 Obama is positively sprightly. At a dignified 6'1" and sporting a Basketball-toned physique, commanding charisma and an all-important Presidential nomina-

tion, we should have a veritable Capitol Hill heart-throb in the making.

But Barack Obama is black. And in America today, black male sexuality remains absurdly stereotyped by the media and by millions in homogenous Middle-America, with promiscuity, absent fathers and AIDS among the many brushes with which all African-American men are too often tarred.

Is Obama excising all innuendo

and families." Similarly, in 2008, actress Scarlett Johansson's jovial comment to a journalist that her "heart belongs to Barack" was promptly rebuked by the disapproving Obama camp.

This hard-line approach is understandable considering Obama's opponents' none-too-subtle intimations about his masculinity offered. Columnist Jo-Ann Wypijewski admonished the Republican Party for trying to "mine

"Is Obama excising all innuendo from his image in order to 'compensate' for his race?"

from his image in order to 'compensate' for his race? Coverage of Obama, his wife and two daughters depicts a wholesome, modest, ice-cream-eating, hula-hoop-frolicking family channeling Camelot cool – lacking only tactility and passion. This is deliberate and self-styled sterility, which extends to vocal condemnation of any external sexualisation of the candidate. In 2007, the elegiac 'Obama-Girl' You-Tube phenomenon (where model/actress Amber Lee Ettinger writhes her way through the song *I Got a Crush on Obama*) hit headlines; the light-hearted skit has notched up almost ten million hits to date. Obama's response? An austere, "You do wish people would think about what impact their actions have on kids

the vein of white fear of unbridled black sexuality". Such insinuations are patent in the controversial "Celeb Ad", aired recently by the McCain campaign. The advert, superficially claiming to liken Obama to a Hollywood starlet and question his political gravitas, has been criticised for juxtaposing an emboldened Barack, formidable at a podium, with Britney Spears and Paris Hilton – two very young, blonde women whose public notoriety is tied to their sexuality. This, coupled with lingering shots of the phallic Berlin Victory Column and Washington Monument makes for some uncomfortably suggestive viewing.

The Celeb-Ad exploits a pervasive American taboo – interracial sex. Thus Obama's asexual persona is not just a

reluctance to be pigeon-holed as a sexually potent African-American male; rather it is requisite that he appears sexless before an overwhelmingly white electorate.

Why? In a 2008 ABC News/Washington Post Poll showed that whilst 81 per cent of white Americans surveyed had at least one fairly close black friend, 17 per cent of them actively disapproved of marriage between blacks and whites. Another poll from www.politicalforum.com revealed that of the 94 per cent of voters who would vote for a qualified black candidate nominated by their chosen party, 30.6 per cent would forbid their daughters to date a black man. So there remains an unwritten but ubiquitous statute confining the 'permissible' integration of blacks and whites to the platonic sphere. Incidentally, mixed-race sexual union was illegal in Alabama until 2000.

Consequently, whilst Obama bulldozes bigotry and prejudice everywhere, the persistent stereotype of the sexually predatory black man is too entrenched for him to dare challenge.

With interracial sex in America stigmatised, many white men who believe themselves tolerant would doubtless be turned off Obama should he turn on white women. Of all the 'October surprises', swift-boating and last-minute sabotage attempts, it is a frightening and saddening truth that in modern America, something as innocent as a college hook-up could sink one of the most captivating campaigns in history.



Rocco Falconer

## The sorry state of Sierra Leone

*The new government must deliver or face frightening consequences*

Sierra Leone hangs in the balance between development and further descent into aching poverty. There is much cause for hope in the country: peace has finally been secured, its diamonds are the best in the world, and its vast agricultural and fishing resources remain largely untapped. But that may not be enough. Given that local chiefs determine political allegiances — often violently — and the legal system lacks any autonomy, the state is little more than a crooked means of employment when it needs to be an effective means of economic and social development. The tasks of state-building must get underway.

Encouraging steps have been taken by indefatigable local and international groups. But development must be driven by the market and the state, and at present both are too weak to counter many problems facing the nation. Government is still the interest-driven, personal affair that constitutionalism arose to assault. The needs of citizens, so often let down in Africa, must come before the needs of governors. It would be a paradigm shift, but without it the focus will always be on survival rather than development. And that must change.

The war left a horrifying legacy. Just outside the capital is Grafton, a vast camp of 17,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), dispossessed and uprooted by the war. With no medical facilities, secondary schools or permanent houses, and unchecked disease rampaging, it is not unique. With no livelihoods, the IDPs are forced into the ever-retreating trees behind the camp to hack down enough to sell for firewood in the city. In corners are pockets of amputees and lepers. The

number of street children, many of them former child soldiers, is staggering. Equally shocking is the state's response: the children are confined to markets and dumps where they sleep in crowded rooms to shelter. If found by police, they are beaten back.

A momentous step needs to be taken in fighting corruption. Outdated pay rates leave it as the only way to earn a living wage, meaning that public service becomes nothing more than individual gain. The anti-corruption

protect citizens from government cannot be dependent on it. Few states have succeeded in such a politically patriarchal stranglehold.

Cultural aspects of Sierra Leonean society continue to haunt its progress. Traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, polygamy, and forced and early marriage, are extremely widespread — an estimated 94 per cent of girls have been 'cut'. The consequences of a corrupt government are evident here too. In elections,

Civil society groups need to expand to counter traditional inertia to social change if the change is going to be anything more than skin deep. Seeking to alter a culture so embedded in a nation's foundations is very difficult, but without it Sierra Leone will be unable to compete on a global scale or raise itself out of constricting economic relations. Agriculture needs to be cultivated, to create employment and counter the devastating inefficiencies of the food supply. Currently the norm is subsistence farming, with surpluses sold. The majority of food comes from outside. This is because resources are unused, not because they don't exist. The scale of production must be expanded to feed a growing nation in a time of rising food costs, not least because of the trend in Africa of foreign countries purchasing agricultural rights, as recently happened in Sudan.

The new government faces astonishing challenges. It has promised to inspire hope, but it must deliver more. Without fundamental economic, social and political reappraisals, as well as engagement with many problems set to grow in size, optimism is hollow. These are changes that take time, excruciating effort, and billions of pounds to achieve. Large scale, long term action which must meet the obstacles of an extremely undeveloped state, a culture resistant to it and a near-total lack of political, infrastructural, and legal institutions supporting it. Only change and engagement, though, from both society and state, is enough to foment real progress that benefits the nation as a whole. The alternative is further descent, with frightening consequences.

*“Without fundamental economic, social and political reappraisals, and engagement with the nation's growing problems, optimism is hollow”*

commission, founded in November 2007 with the new government, lacks autonomy, which it needs to have any tangible effect. Its only power is to hand cases to the Attorney General (also Minister of Justice) — the head of a judiciary financially dependent on corruption, which has secured no convictions as yet. The government's refusal to grant independence to commissions designed to encourage reform ensures that everything is overseen and ultimately controlled by government. All Sierra Leone's human-rights organisations, for example, fall under an umbrella network chaired by a cabinet minister, which declares itself “non-confrontational” to government. Groups designed to

politicians encourage and fund mass initiations — mass mutilations — to gain support. The morals are irrelevant: Sierra Leone has signed up to the African Charter on Human Rights and the International Rights of the Child, which forbid such practice. Musu Kandeh, minister for Social Welfare, Gender, and Children's affairs, attended a two-day conference and gave his voice to the cry against FGM, but the government is reluctant to enforce the laws it has agreed to, arguing that it is the role of civil society groups to alter opinions. He is right, but as things stand politicians retain more power to resist shifts in attitudes than NGOs do to advance them. And that balance of power must change.

## Spk yr brains

*Chatroom chinwag between Wifi Wendies and Broadband Brians*



Week 2:

*The US of A*

obama was born in kenya. his own mother said she witnessed his birth in kenya. you have to be a natural born citizen of america to be president. no wonder he wont give any records of his background. he posted a copy of his birth certificate on his website which has been proven time and time again to be fake. He also will not release his birth certificate. This man is a fraud!

*sampsons\_hair, Barking posted Thurs 11:23:17*

dont any of you find it interesting that obama is related to bush and cheeny? whats more interesting is that bush and cheeneys family tree has been traced back thousands of years to ancient babylon. and in this family tree in every time period these people have been in great positions of power. kings and queens and dictators. so obama is part of this bloodline. you guys have to realize that he has the same exact agenda to push as bush and all the crooked politicians. dont ignore this info!

*Courtminstrel1066, Sheen posted Thurs 14:54:12*

i love seeing this side of mccain, such a tough, no nonsense kinda guy. give me a case of shnitz, three xanax pills, the keycard to his hotel room, and hear you me, he'll be singing praises of the black man and his long dong silver.

*ovenchips07, East Finchley posted Thurs, 17:35:51*

Obama girl versus palin. Garsh she's purtty. esp when she winks...

*Younglad666, Merseyside Posted Fri, 12:43:21*

I f\*cked Palin in the a\*\*, she loved it! She kept looking back and winking at me.

*such\_a\_chiller, Bungay posted Fri, 12:59:40*

i just got my chatcam working!!! msn me jane24belle V

*piesaregood\_pastiesbetter, Hull posted Fri, 13:39:53*

9/11 was an inside job. The war on terror is a sham. Come on people know your Hitler youth. They even brainwash children.

*greggregoryvigilant, Hants posted Fri, 14:24:31*

Thats not a wink. She wrote the answers on the inside of her eyelids ! wink wink wink ya little eva braun !!

*vaginadialogue, Derby posted Fri, 18:18:26*

## The Varsity Debate



# Has our prize-giving culture become meaningless?

This week the winners of the Booker and Stirling Prizes were announced, and the Turner Prize will be awarded in November. But has prize-giving become so commonplace as to devalue its significance completely?

## Yes

Katherine Waters



Prizes are most relevant to the big businesses which sponsor them

Thomas Gray provides the jump-off point for this debate:

“Not all that tempts your wand’ring eyes  
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;  
Nor all that glisters, gold.”

There is many a “lawful prize” but if you go about it with a “heedless heart”, then more often than not, it’s the dross you’ll come across, or the fools’ gold.

I’m not going to say that all prizes, awards and ceremonies deserve a lambasting, but rather suggest that we assess the impulse which lies behind our appetite for them. There is, quite obviously, a rather large difference between say, the Nobel prizes, and knowing that your Waitrose own-brand ready-to-cook frozen margherita pizza is a prize-winner thanks to a rather spurious laurel on the back. The difference isn’t just between oven-ready pizza and Nelson Mandela, but the thought which has gone into awarding the prize; the deliberation behind not only who will receive the prize, but why the prize should be given in the first place.

As far back as 1928, Ezra Pound questioned this impulse, writing that “The whole system of prize-giving... belongs to an uncritical epoch; it is the act of people who, having learned the alphabet, refuse to learn how to spell.” Our judgments and personal tastes are dictated to us by juries whose irritating publicity-stunt prizes seem to have become the sole tool by which we measure success and value.

Turner, Mercury, Stirling, Oscar. We usually only know the names of the awards themselves, not those who actually win them. No one cares who wins the Turner Prize anymore. Last year, the six foot blond transvestite potter, Grayson Perry, narrowly defeated the Chapman brothers’ dolls cast in bronze performing oral sex. This seemed irrelevant to all but the big businesses who vie for sponsorship in order to seem culturally relevant and hip.

It was announced on Wednesday that Gordon’s Gin is taking over from Channel 4 as the main sponsor of Turner Prize. A spokeswoman said the sponsorship was aimed at linking Gordon’s reputation as a refined British spirit with the craftsmanship and skill needed to create a work of art. As part of the deal, Gordon’s is doubling the prize money awarded to the winners of the competition from £20,000 to £40,000.

It is not the prize money that is at stake: it is commonplace for the winner of the Mercury

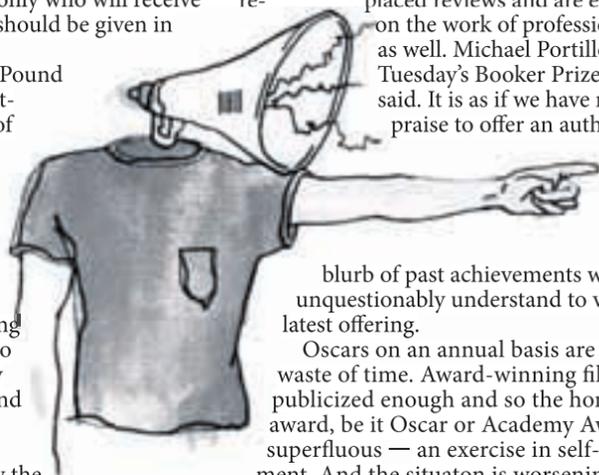
Prize to toss away the winning cheque. Most stars wouldn’t bat an eyelid over £20,000, its about symbolic capital and belonging to a cultural hierarchy.

Intrinsic value is hard to spot these days, so quickly does it become bound up in celebrity and commerce. Jean-Paul Sartre, elected in 1964, is the only Nobel laureate to voluntarily decline the Nobel Prize for Literature. In turning down the \$53,000 award, he said, “It is not the same thing if I sign ‘Jean-Paul Sartre’ or if I sign ‘Jean-Paul Sartre, Nobel Prize winner’.” A writer must refuse to allow himself to be transformed into an institution, even if it takes place in the most honorable form.”

Prizes function as a pivot for the indecisive to turn upon. If you are choosing a CD for the sole reason that it received an award, then you’re either curious in a mundane sense of the word, clueless, or a sheep. With books, prizes long ago placed reviews and are encroaching on the work of professional critics as well. Michael Portillo judged Tuesday’s Booker Prize. Enough said. It is as if we have no other praise to offer an author, no alternative method of evaluation except a roll-call

blurb of past achievements which we unquestionably understand to validate the latest offering.

Oscars on an annual basis are rather a waste of time. Award-winning films are publicized enough and so the honour of an award, be it Oscar or Academy Award, is superfluous — an exercise in self-aggrandisement. And the situation is worsening since one prize spawns another, in imitation or reaction, as if we needed any more. Awards such as the Ig Nobel Prizes are perhaps the best of the bunch. These are meant to “first make people laugh, and then make people think”. There is a kind of integrity in this. The Ig Nobels seem to be the apogee and nadir of prize giving. On the one hand they are derisory awards handed out to those who find out that fleas jump higher on dogs than on cats. On the other, they provide a real insight into our culture. Whatever your opinion, this year’s Chemistry award was shared between researchers who proved Coca-Cola is a spermicide, and a competing team who proved that it isn’t. The medicine award went to Dan Ariely who proved expensive placebos are more effective than cheap ones demonstrating how easy it is to manipulate people’s perceptions. It’s obviously harder than we thought to know if all that glisters is gold or not.



Rob Stagg



There’s nothing wrong with an egalitarian system

## No

In 1998, the journalist Melanie Phillips interrupted her weekly assaults on everything contemporary to write a book called *All Must Have Prizes*. (The title is annexed from the Dodo’s emphatic words in Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*). It was a talking-points-only criticism of ‘postmodernism’ in education, and its alleged excesses of egalitarianism. As Phillips might have intended, her title has mutated into an ironic comment on itself. Her rather broad-brush thoughts are now engraved into the craniums of ‘middle England’. ‘Dumbing down’ is the phrase of choice for stupid people everywhere.

This queasiness about rewards, awards, celebrations, recognitions and prizes has uncontrollably bled over into the land of High Culture. I’ve heard more than one author respond to a nomination with the quip, “I think there are too many award ceremonies.” But is this wit dry or desiccated? What is the pointlessly egalitarian, unthinkingly postmodern position here? It seems to me that the ideology Phillips so detested has chased its own tail and vanished up its own fundament. For the new trendy position is one of contempt for ‘authorities’ like the Nobel Committee. We can all curdle a sneer for the Turner Prize and its passé notions of the ‘progressive’. Don’t they understand that such labels are so out this season? Why not be altogether fairer and leave everyone to paddle for recognition on their own? We don’t need to be condescended to by the critics, do we? Such talk simply announces the death of art, or its prostitution to the highest (monetary) bidder. And tedious arguments about how prize committees mandate ‘objectivity’ over ‘subjectivity’ are as easy to demolish as to construct.

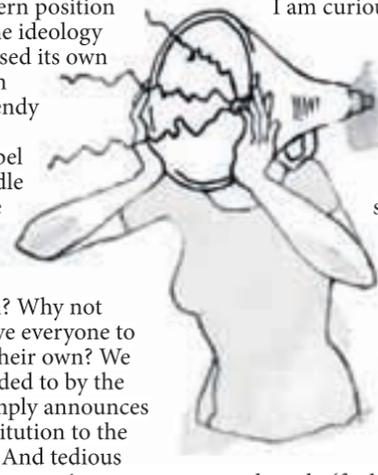
I concede. The Nobel Prize was founded by a man accurately described as a “merchant of death” in his premature obituary. Its literary wing has passed over Tolstoy, Chekhov, Joyce, Auden, Borges, Nabokov, Greene, Ibsen, Zola and Twain — and went through a particularly silly phrase where it only rewarded the ‘lofty and sound idealism’ that its founder desired. It also regaled Harold Pinter as a sage for having written “fuck George Bush” a lot. But for every alarming reject, there’s been a heavyweight accepted. The Nobel Committee championed Dario Fo when he was regarded as a crass propagandist, and other ceremonies chose to defend Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses* from the monominds of Islam. Indeed, the most notable failures of the Nobel system have been ill-considered efforts to please the wider public. I think of the commendation of the war criminal sophist Henry Kissinger or

the adulation of that old roadblock Menachem Begin. Both were jerks of the knee to placate a servile, grateful and abjectly uninformed audience.

Which segues tidily into that most especially unbeloved of awards, the Turner Prize. One could allocate considerably sympathy to Jonathan Jones’ criticism: “Turner Prize art is based on a formula where something looks startling at first and then turns out to be expressing some kind of banal idea, which somebody will be sure to tell you about. The ideas are never important or even really ideas, more notions, like the notions in advertising.” One might even find oneself in chorus with former Culture Minister Kim Howells, who stated that such show-art is “cold, mechanical, conceptual bullshit”. But who, I wonder, will say that the show’s regularly silly attempts to be ‘progressive’ and ‘boundary pushing’ are unnecessary or misguided? I am curious about this.

I am curious about it because it sounds very much like the baseline response to the Momart warehouse fire, which destroyed a spectacular quantity of contemporary art. I remember a prim dumpling of a woman, sporting pretension straight out of a catalogue, stridently asking a Question Time panel whether they considered all this smoke without much fire, and a cow in a tank isn’t art, and a tent with sex partners is vulgar, and why can’t we go back to good portraiture, and to hell with the YBAs, they should have their paintbrushes taken away from them, and should all go home hanging their heads in unison. I thought ‘fuck off’ then, and I still do. The smug applause of the audience (for everyone is now a critic) proved sanity is definitively not statistical. Tracey Emin later emerged to make an unapposite comparison with Nazi book-burning. A better analogy might have been the entartete Kunst — ‘degenerate’ — art exhibition held by the German state in 1937, highlighting ‘Jewish Bolshevist’ works by Chagall, Matisse, Picasso, Kirchner and van Gogh. No awards ceremony could compete because they weren’t allowed to.

Those who emit glib chat about awards ceremonies being too ‘objective’ might find this suggestive. And those who prefer a tone of censorious condemnation might find this instructive. Rewards remain worthwhile. Those who would prefer some sort of Joshua-Reynolds-is-king autocracy betray themselves quickly when holding forth on this subject. We need not be in the giving vein every day, but we cannot afford to sacrifice art to the propagandists for anaemia.





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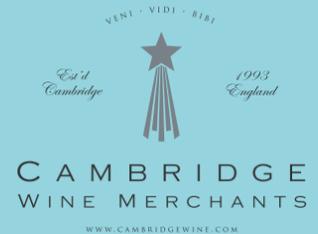
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cyclone Nargis and what is being done to get rid of this  
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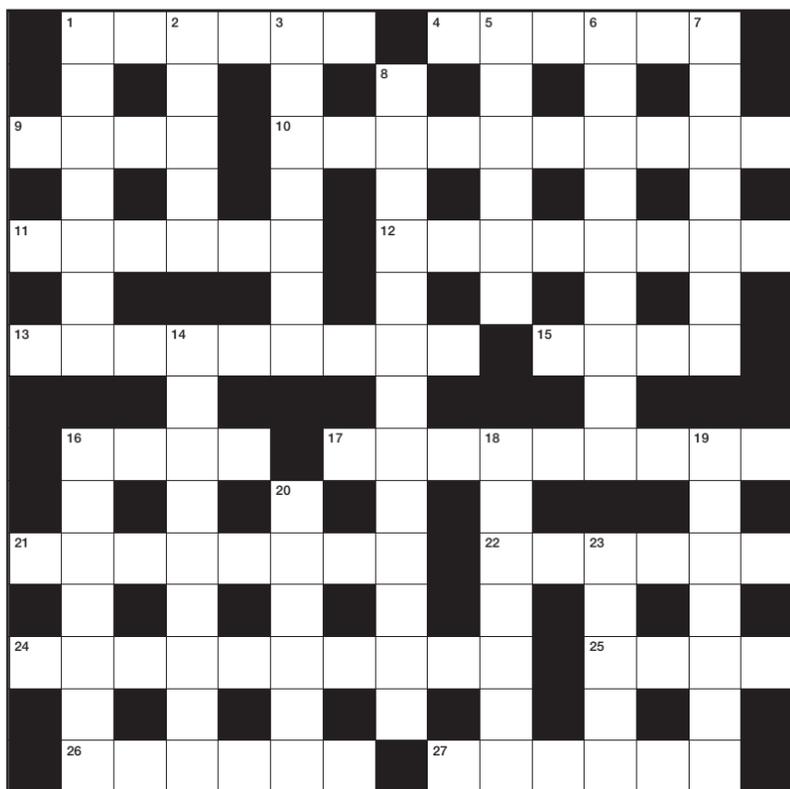
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# Games & puzzles



## Varsity Crossword

no. 488



### Across

- 1 Resist furious nun (6)  
4 Pass by an unfortunate recurrence,  
topless (6)  
9 The protagonist, she owns nothing?  
(4)  
10 A cinder too frustrated to organise  
(10)  
11 Gardeners use these suits (6)  
12 Toiled endlessly to make an effort  
for a cosmetic product (8)  
13 I, branded a loony: just plain  
thoughtless (5-4)  
15 Secure loan connection (4)  
16 Give credit to aural vision (4)

- 17 Caught a lovebug? (9)  
21 After fights, Latin is most thinly  
spread (8)  
22 Puck and company combine  
somehow in a big mess (4-2)  
24 The Vikings used this constrictive  
constrictor to a T (6,4)  
25 Rebel! Decay surrounds the  
individual (4)  
26 Inside dire mess is most of the fuss  
(6)  
27 Lisp at weird girl's hair (6)

### Down

- 1 Unconscious person on railway  
track (7)  
2 The end of a crossword is a  
dangerous weapon (5)  
3 Hidden within holder hidden  
within end (7)  
5 Young chap, expire?! (6)  
6 Heavy area of water meets soured  
uprising (9)  
7 In conclusion, assorted greenery  
has gone in (7)  
8 Safe sex machine broken by church  
(13)  
14 Find the meaning of strange tree-  
print (9)  
16 Composer in police state (7)  
18 When musicians play about the  
backside, including myself (7)  
19 Permits government overthrow on  
state leader (7)  
20 Sporty American kids cry, upset,  
and head East several times (3-3)  
23 Inside decor, ginger dog (5)

Set by Hisashi

## Sudoku

The object is to insert the numbers in the boxes to satisfy only one  
condition: each row, column and 3x3 box must contain the digits 1  
through 9 exactly once.

	6	4	8		1	2	9	
		1		5		8		
8	5		9		6		3	4
		6				4		
4			5	6	8			2
		5				9		
1	9		6		5		4	3
		3		1		6		
2	7	3		4	5	1		

### The Varsity Scribblepad

### Last issue's solutions

1	4	6	7	3	5	9	1	2	5	8
7	6	1	2		5	2	7	1	4	3
9	8	2	5		5	3	4	5	6	5
6	2		9	8	3	2	5	1	6	5
3	1		3	5	6	7	2	3	2	1
8	3	5	6		7	5	4	6	1	5
7	9				1	6	1	5	1	2
9	1	2	5	7	4	3	6	8	9	7
4	3	7	5	6	1	2	5	9	3	4
5	8	2	9	3	4	1	7	8	4	5
3	7	8	9	4	5	1	2	6		
1	4	5	6	9	2	9	7	3		

## Kakuro

Fill the grid so that each run of squares adds up to the total in the  
box above or to the left. Use only numbers 1-9, and never use  
a number more than once per run (a number may reoccur in the  
same row in a separate run).

				8		21			
			15						
		21							
	19							20	6
14				11					
16				24		12			
				9					
		16							
		15							

## Hitori

Shade in the squares so that no number occurs more than once  
per row or column. Shaded squares may not be horizontally or  
vertically adjacent. Unshaded squares must form a single area.

7	1	5	2	6	4	7
6	2	4	1	5	1	3
3	4	2	5	7	5	6
3	3	3	7	1	6	4
1	4	3	2	2	7	5
4	7	1	4	1	2	1
5	1	6	2	4	7	7

REPORTS

# John's crush Oxford rivals

» Oxford's Pembroke humiliated by a dominant St John's side  
» Impressive display sends warning sign to college opponents

Jenny Morgan  
Sport Reporter

It was all in the socks. You have to play like Stade Français to get away with such pretty, hyacinth hosiery but Pembroke, unfortunately, fell short of the mark. They wore flowers; they played like pansies. From the moment the Red Boys ran out onto the pitch, cool and professional in tight formation, the lads from Oxford knew they were in for a rough ride. And John's did not disappoint.

From the first whistle, John's were off, driving to the try line and dominating in the early scrums. Pembroke were slow to come out of scrum formation and left gaping holes in the defence which John's soon penetrated with a swift move to the right and an early try for fresher Ilia Cherezov. The play soon came back down to the home end though, and some beginning of the season fumbles led to a line out dangerously close to the John's try line. All teams this year will have to pay close attention to the new rules. However

**John's** 46  
**Pembroke, Ox.** 3

John's were able to demonstrate their dominance in the lineout too, and the danger was soon averted. To cries of 'keep it simple' from some of the more experienced players, John's did just that, and the ensuing speed of movement across the pitch was impressive, with strong balls reaching the mark accurately and quickly. Soon the boys were rewarded with a second try, this time out to the left when the Pembroke flanker was caught off his guard after another excellent John's scrum. A point of weakness here, John's were able to wage a war of attrition down this side in particular with several more scores to result. The only glimmer of hope for Pembroke was an excellent penalty kick from far out on the touch line; John's need to show more consistency in this area as the season progresses.

But the second half brought yet more glory to the boys in red. Hungry for points, some strong work from the captain, Will Hall, kept the team from becoming complacent and a quick try for fresher Fred Burdon came within the first few minutes. John's proved they are more than just muscle when an imaginative kick into space lent winger Shao-Chun Lin the opportunity to flaunt his speed and take his second try of the match. Soon afterwards, four Johnian players were recruited across to the Pembroke pinks (Oxford filching from Cambridge? Surely not). Even they were unable to halt the final John's onslaught which began with an excellent take from full back Henry Begg; crunching tackles from Hugo Cartwright and Lloyd Rickard coming too late to stop another try taking the final score to 46-3.

Cambridge teams take note: whilst today's fixture was a victory for us all, John's will walk away from this Oxford encounter full of confidence for the season ahead and based on this showing, they'll be the team to beat.



John's captain Will Hall protects the ball

## Footballers turned over on South Coast

» Rutt's men go down to a strong Navy XI in Portsmouth

Andy Ryan  
Sport Reporter

The Blues' trip to Portsmouth ended in a 3-1 defeat, after a hard-fought game against the Navy.

Cambridge made the brighter start at the Victory Stadium and their early attacking intent led to a series of half-chances. The Blues also showed that they were not going to be intimidated by the Navy's physical approach, competing strongly.

Despite this beginning, the game's first real chance fell to the Navy. Cambridge were left indebted to keeper Stu Ferguson who produced a fine finger-

**Cambridge** 1  
**Navy** 3

tip save to deny the hosts. Cambridge then had their best opportunity of the half. Mark Baxter beat a couple of defenders on the right wing. He then did well to fire in a shot from a tight angle and force a good save, though he may have done better to square the ball. The half ended goalless.

Moments into the second half, the deadlock was broken. The Blues

failed to clear a corner and the Navy striker took full advantage, smashing home from six yards out.

It was another corner that ultimately led to Cambridge's equaliser. The well worked short corner found Michael Johnson who was upended in the box. He gathered himself and slotted home the spot-kick with composure.

The Blues had precious little time to enjoy being back on level terms. Straight from the restart, the Navy chanced a long ball over the top and substitute keeper Chris Ellis was forced to rush out and clear it. But before he was able to get back in his

goal, the Navy stole possession and a central midfielder unleashed an ambitious lob from all of forty yards to put the home side back in front.

With time running out, the Blues began to desperately chase the game, committing men forward in numbers.

This left them exposed at the back and the Navy began to enjoy some success on the counter-attack. One of these moves culminated in a dangerously positioned free-kick and a sublime strike effectively ended the contest.

**Star Man:** Michael Johnson – lively up front and a cool spot-kick to bring the sides level.



Johnson equalised from the spot

## Hockey boys outmuscled by Havering

» Blues follow up their cup heroics with a narrow defeat

Jenny Morgan  
Sport Reporter

It was the best of days and the worst of days. Taking to the pitch on a glorious autumn Saturday, fresh from a resounding victory the previous weekend, and with two promising young players excited for their debut, the Men's Hockey team were walking tall. Funny thing how sport can bring you crashing right back down again.

Havering began the dream-wrecking in the first few minutes, when a truly awesome shot to the top right hand corner caught keeper Chris Robinson by surprise. Cambridge fought back with some fabulous work from the back; Jez Hansell sending the ball hard and fast up to the midfield, then out to Jack Yelland creating space on the right, who was able to storm

**Cambridge** 2  
**Havering** 3

to the base line before slipping in a neat pass to the penalty spot, ready for an excellent sweep finish from vice-captain Stuart Jackson. The boys have been working on this sort of set play in training, with the forwards delaying their movements out wide in order to create the space for such a manoeuvre, and it was great to see them reaping the rewards in the form of an equaliser. However their defence was not so sharp; failure to step in front of their players led to a second deflected shot on goal taking Havering ahead once more. Cambridge were

left playing catch-up again, securing a goal from Owen Kemp in the closing stages of the first half to take the teams level at half time.

The sheer physicality of Havering began to take its toll as the match continued. Another goal from open play and Cambridge simply couldn't find the means to respond, leaving the final score 3-2 to the visitors. Cambridge will be disappointed with the end result, which could have gone either way, and would no doubt have been looking to get the season off to a more impressive start. However, all signs point to this being an early blip; with both League and third-round Cup matches to play this weekend, the boys and their supporters will be looking for a return to form.

**Star Man:** Jack Yelland – genuine pace and incisive movement in attack.



SOPHIE PICKFORD

Sport Feature: Cambridge's Unofficial Sports



One night climber braves a famous Cambridge landmark



TOM DE FRESTON

# Cambridge's Unofficial Sports

BEN RILEY-SMITH DELVES INTO A WORLD OF SECRECY AND OBSCURITY AS HE INVESTIGATES CAMBRIDGE'S UNOFFICIAL SPORTS

## Night Climbing

Night Climbing – the practice of roaming college rooftops under moonlight – is one of Cambridge's most famous and dangerous unofficial sports. The activity burst onto the scene in the 1930s with the publication of *Night Climbers of Cambridge*, a book written by undergraduate Noel Howard Symington under the pseudonym 'Whipplesnaith'. Its 2007 re-release to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the original edition has inspired a new wave of nocturnal adventurers.

"Every Christmas I would go up to the Caius statues and put Christmas hats on them," recalls a recently graduated Cantabridgian. "Whenever I get somewhere,

I like leaving something." This predisposition for marking his athletic achievements has left our climbing enthusiast in some unfortunate predicaments in the past. Having scaled the Old Library next to the Senate House by following Whipplesnaith's directions, our man decided to crown the highest tower with his boxer shorts. All was going to plan until the descent. "Sliding down, my trousers got caught on a gargyle's head, ripping them clean off," leaving our poor subject "hanging off the Old Library starkers". "I rung up my mate waiting below and said 'two things: firstly, when I'm climbing down, don't look up. Secondly, can I borrow your trousers?'"

For all the japes and capers, this sport brings with it a significant danger factor.

Our source described how he was once left hanging off the Virgin Mary's golden crown on St John's gate as a patrolling police car passed below. Another night brought a run-in with the University authorities. "Me and one mate went to the top of Sidney Sussex and rang their huge bell. I looked down and suddenly just outside the plodge five porters had run out," leaving only one choice: to "escape from them on the rooftops."

As far as our man knows, there isn't any Night Climbing society, but simply "a group of nutters like me giving it a go." Nonetheless many "nutters" still take to Cambridge's roofs by night. "One thing you learn is that people never look up." Next time you are out under the stars, we suggest you do so.

## Hash House Harriers

'Hashing' is perhaps the world's largest unofficial sport. Invented by a group of bored British colonial officers serving out in Kuala Lumpur in 1938, the game is essentially a human hare-and-hound chase. One person is designated as the 'hare'. Their job is to set a trail, leaving markings in white powder for the following 'hashers' to identify, interpret and follow. The aim of the game is for the hashers to find the 'true' path, successfully avoiding any attempts by the hare to mislead them and to either catch the hare or reach the end of the trail first.

Having died out during the Second World War, the Hash House Harriers (named after the Hash House restaurant frequented by those colonial inventors) were recreated after combat. Yet the sport remained almost unheard of until the 1970s when its popularity soared and new 'kennels' were rapidly created throughout the world. Today, the numbers are astonishing. It is estimated that 1700 kennels exist across the globe, with between 20-100 regular participants attached to each kennel. Every major city has at least one kennel. Its popularity has even reached the Antarctic, which proudly boasts two kennels.

Given its imperial origins, it will come as little surprise to learn that drinking is an element of the games. Self-described as a "drinking club with a running problem", the Hash House Harriers are keen to emphasise the social side of their athletic pursuits. The constitution of the original Kuala Lumpur kennel declared the game was designed to "get rid of weekend hangovers" and to "acquire a good thirst and to satisfy it in beer" as well as to "promote physical fitness among our members".

Cambridge itself has a kennel called the Cantab HHH. They meet every Monday at 7pm at the St. Radegund pub on King Street. Its members, according to its website, include "students, lecturers, computer scientists, US air base staff, a condom tester and others who actually work for a living". They go out hashing at least once a week and are always looking for new members. If you want to try out this wacky historic sport, either pop in to the St. Radegund on Monday night or email [underwear@hashing.org](mailto:underwear@hashing.org).

## Beer Pong

Combining two of Cambridge's favourite pastimes – team sports and binge drinking – Beer Pong has become increasingly popular with undergraduates. The idea is a simple one. Two pairs stand at opposite ends of a table, each with six cups half-full with beer. They then take turns to project a ping pong ball through the air towards their opponents' cups. Should the ball successfully enter the cup, their opponent must consume its alcoholic content and remove it from the field of action. The game continues until one team has no cups remaining.

The origins of Beer Pong, much like the vision of its players, remain blurry. It is generally believed that it sprouted

from Dartmouth College's 'pong', a similar game played with table-tennis bats. Whatever its beginnings, Beer Pong's popularity has soared. An annual tournament is now held in Las Vegas with \$50,000 prize money for the winner. Indeed Nintendo Wii have deemed the game so internationally popular that they have created virtual Beer Pong as part of their Frat Party Games which launched this summer. The craze certainly has not passed Cambridge by. In recent years it is not uncommon to see students pour into college bars and JCRs armed with a ping-pong ball and a crate. As one student stated simply, "It is tiddlywinks for adults."

Yet can Beer Pong really be called a 'sport', unofficial or not? Is it not just heavy drinking weakly disguised as ath-

letic endeavour? To many this is certainly the case. Yet those who advocate the game would strongly stress the sporting skills needed to succeed. Compare it to darts. Both test precision throwing, with successful players using skill and judgement to produce the correct trajectory to hit a small target. Both, many would point out, have had heavy drinking as a central part of their game in the past. And finally neither 'sports' necessitate a player to be athletic or physically fit. Andy Fordham would certainly not look out of place at a Beer Pong match. So if Darts can seriously push for inclusion in the Olympic Games, Beer Pong's skill and popularity among this town's students more than warrants its title of an 'Unofficial Sport of Cambridge'.

## Varsity Punting

The Varsity match is the biggest highlight of any Oxbridge sports team's season. Each year Cambridge's meanest, strongest and fastest reopen the oldest sporting rivalry in England. Eager to secure their place in history, Cantabridgians do battle with their 800-year-old foes, whipping themselves into a frenzy and baying for Dark Blue blood. Life and limb are placed on the line for honour and glory. Yet, far away from the hysteria and adrenaline fuelled hatred of your average Cambridge-Oxford clash, lies the Varsity Punting match.

Few people are aware that in re-

cent years the finest punters at Cambridge and Oxford have met to race in the summer term. In some ways it is surprising that this event has such a low profile given punting's popularity. After all, there must be more students who have punted than who have played rugby or football at Cambridge.

Then again, most people punt for pleasure, not competition. Not so at the Varsity Match. The race is a simple sprint. Each team provides four boats, each manned by two people. Four head-to-head races are conducted, with competitors driving their poles into the murky water's sludge with the hope of crossing the finish line first and claiming victory.

The eventual winners receive a bottle of champagne, not to mention a year's bragging rights.

The Varsity Punting match is, of course, unofficial. But it is also brilliantly Oxbridge. The races add a competitive edge to one of Cambridge's most treasured pastimes yet never lose its sense of wholehearted fun. Unfortunately, in the last couple of years, the annual event has not occurred, or at least has been very poorly publicised. It would be sad to hear that such a fun tradition has died out. For now all we can do is wait and hope that Cambridge's most light-hearted unofficial sport still lives to fight – goodnaturedly – another day.

**John Savage**



## Wembley: the fickle fortress?

*Sport Comment*

89,107 fans flocked to England's new home last Saturday evening to face lowly Kazakhstan, dwarfing the crowd size of every other European fixture.

As Fabio Capello had hoped, the stage was set for the fans to transform the stadium, which has yet to find its character, into a fortress, one in which the home side would feel every clap and would hear every cheer, and in which the visiting side would tremble at the sight of an ocean of white shirts.

However, let's not kid ourselves. The real reason for the full house had little to do with the manager's plea. Rather, it was the thought of another demolition job, as orchestrated in Zagreb, that drove the spectators towards the famous arch.

Because entertainment is what counts at the moment. The through-thick-and-thin mentality has largely been replaced by a hunger, almost a presumption, for England to replicate the prowess of the Premier League's top clubs.

On the one hand, people argue that the price of a coveted Wembley ticket warrants such expectations but, then

again, it's counter-productive to the cause to demand such performances, to treat them as England's right, a notion which the supporters have fostered from the moment the Jules Rimet trophy was held aloft in the old

*"Why has Rooney, the lip-reader's dream, not suffered at the hands of the boo boys?"*

Wembley all those years ago.

With each minute the Kazakhstan net remained untouched, the pressure on the England players increased. Although this pressure was not explicitly seen or heard in the first half, how else can Upson's bizarre back pass be explained and how else can Gerrard's sudden lack of passing accuracy be accounted for?

Ferdinand's header dispelled some of the pressure, even though the ma-

jority of the section above the dugout probably missed the goal, choosing rather to enjoy the free half-time hospitality to the full. And the own goal that followed took the score to an acceptable level.

Then came Ashley Cole's gaffe, which sparked pockets of the stadium to boo his every touch thereafter. The treatment he received as a result of his error has divided opinions.

True, it would be a close call between Cole and Joey Barton for the Sports Un-Personality of the Year, but to use the former's admittedly distasteful behaviour as a justification is questionable. Why has Rooney, the lip-reader's dream, not suffered at the hands of the boo boys? Why, then, were Owen Hargreaves and Peter Crouch, both fine examples of modern footballers, subject to boos in previous internationals?

The whistles were admittedly drowned out by encouragement for Cole from the many who realised that the situation was ridiculous. This at least shows that the majority are aware that the England players are fighting to

realise a common dream and therefore need the invaluable advantage that a home game affords.

Any suggestion that Wembley is now a fortress is plainly wrong. Knowing the fickle nature of the crowd, it can hardly be comfortable for the England stars to play home games, whereas for a member of the opposition, this knowledge is a dangerous weapon: force England into mistakes and the home advantage has been nullified, if not tipped in favour of the visitors.

Hampden Park saw an equally horrendous mistake, one which could potentially cost Scotland a place in South Africa, but the players and fans have jumped to Chris Iwelumo's defence, preferring to congratulate him on making his international debut, rather than hounding him for his miss from two yards with the goal at his mercy.

Confidence is a huge factor in football and is predominantly influenced by the fans. By boosting the players from the stands, at least they've been given the chance to entertain.

## On The Terraces



### Week 2: Basketball

*Sporting layman Jamie Ptaszynski trains with a different Blues team each week*

My personal experience of the sport of basketball used to be limited to one viewing of the film *Space Jam*: not a full education I feel. So, I pondered to myself, what am I missing? This week I went to train with one of the university teams. Why not go straight to the top? After all, it might be really easy.

I know it's predictable for me to now tell you that it's not, but I'd be lying if I said anything else. Dumbfounded by the hellishly noisy blur of orange rubber and moistened human flesh which hung about six feet off the ground, I approached the leader of the session, Rich, in a daze. He was welcoming and said he'd try to find something fun for me to get involved in. The first exercise involved loads of running around. Being a man who values his lungs, and his dignity, I opted out. The second one, Rich said, would be really fun. We had to sprint from one wall to the other and back to the middle and not be last to get a ball. I soon realised that if I'm ever going to be a professional bee-baller, or whatever the jargon is, I'm going to need to get a lot quicker.

Then we had a better game: trying to get the ball in the hole from a few yards away. It's a bit like golf in that way, except you use your hands not a metal stick. And the hole is in the air, not on the ground. And everyone's a lot taller than you. The ball is big, maybe about the size of a certain type of whale's testes, or something, which makes it a lot harder to hold than it looks when the Rabbit does it in *Space Jam*. I didn't get it in the hole, even though I tried to cheat, so I had to run up and down some more. It's a training system based on punishment rather than reward. After that we did some defensive stuff. When they're defending they touch each other quite a lot; not as much as in rugby but definitely more than in snooker. Finally they started a real game but I snuck off quietly, out of breath and more than slightly embarrassed.

To anyone else who's thinking of being a bee-baller, here's my advice: Unless you're really fit, are good at handling big balls and can jump, really high, and stay there for a while, don't bother.

## Hockey girls humbled

»Oxford prove too strong on the counter-attack

Becca Langton  
Sports Reporter

Cambridge	1
Oxford	4

In the first of the Ladies Blues matches since promotion to South Premier B.U.C.S, the highest level of University Hockey, Cambridge took on Oxford at Wilberforce Road. Cambridge entered the game as the underdogs, having not beaten Oxford in Varsity for the previous six years. However, with a number of new players looking to make their mark against the Dark Blues, there was everything to play for. The game started well for Cambridge as possession was taken immediately from a careless Oxford push back. Ignoring the torrential rain, the home side surged into the Oxford circle and looked threatening from the off. Driving runs down the wing from quick paced Anna Stanley left the visitors off guard and, ungainly in defence, Oxford were lucky not to be punished for their slow start. Pressed into their own twenty-five, the Dark Blue defence found it increasingly difficult to escape from Cambridge's masterful press.

However, while the Cambridge forward line maintained possession, a clinical finish eluded them. The Oxford keeper, forced into a series of close range saves, kept the scores equal. Despite Cambridge

dominating in territory and possession, it was Oxford who, against the run of play, stole the lead when England player Beth Wild took a snap shot on the edge of the D and sent a swerving ball inside the left post.

Undeterred and unwilling to allow the relentless long-ball tactics of the opposition get the better of Cambridge's precision play, the Light Blues reformed their attack. With great distribution around the backline Rosie Evans was superb in breaking Oxford's aggressive press while Hannah Rickman, unerring as usual, sent the opposition chasing well placed balls to the hard working midfield. Cambridge were repeatedly unlucky in their attacking half, Lisa Noble showed her dominance in the centre of the park, shaking off the niggling tackles of her opposite number and sending a series of searing passes into the circle which were sent wide by a frantic attack. However, whilst the Light Blues were undoubtedly the better side, it was Oxford who were able to capitalise on their chance



Lisa Noble was instrumental in midfield

sliding a second past keeper Fran Stubbins with ten minutes left to play.

It was inevitable that the game would be a high scoring one and Cambridge answered Oxford almost immediately; player of the match Jenny Stevenson showed her perpetual tenacity, clipping a loose ball past a desperate Oxford keeper. At two goals to one, it seemed as if Cambridge might be able to overturn their long run of losses, however with a lapse of concentration just before the 35 minute mark the visitors consolidated their lead as Alice Cook claimed a deflection at the far post.

Cambridge were not to be downhearted, and in the second half immediately regained pace, showing the strength and depth inherent in their game and team. Oxford looked menacing on the break, however Stubbins was solid in goal and tipped a number of Oxford attempts wide of the mark. Cambridge repeatedly turned over Dark Blue possession, Emma Goater

was peerless on the wing, leaving her marker for dust on almost every occasion whilst Sarah Baggs bossed the left side of the pitch, making crucial tackles at one end, and drilling balls through the Oxford defence at the other. Although Cambridge increasingly looked to score it was the visitors who once again demonstrated their reliance on a core of key players, catching the Light Blues on the break again for a commanding 4-1 lead. The final score was an unjust representation of the territorial and tactical dominance which Cambridge demonstrated. Reflecting on the end result coach James Waters was positive about the season to come: "Basically, we were undone by some poor execution in the attacking D and by some weak tackling on Oxford's star players. We had twice as many attempts on goal but lost the game 4-1. It shouldn't really happen like that."

**Star Player:** Jenny Stevens - inspirational work rate and tenacity.

## The Week Ahead

### University

#### Basketball

Cambridge's basketball Blues take on De Montfort in their first match of the season. With Oxford having won 9 of the last 11 Varsity matches a strong start to the season is needed.

Kelsey Kerridge, Wednesday October 22, KO 12:00

### University

#### Rugby

Jon Dawson's men look to build on last week's last minute victory and gather momentum for the December 11th Varsity match as they take on The Ospreys

Grange Road, Monday October 20, KO 6:00

### University

#### Lacrosse

The Blues Men's Lacrosse team have started the season strongly with two victories in the SEMLA league. They start their BUCS campaign this Saturday.

Queens' College Sports Ground, Barton Road, Saturday October 18 KO 13:00

### National

#### Football

Man U take on Celtic in a Champions League Battle of Britain. Celtic have picked up just one point out of a possible 45 away from Park-head in Europe.

Watch it on ITV1, Tuesday October 21, KO 19:30

### National

#### Formula One

With Brit Lewis Hamilton only 5 five points ahead of fierce rival Felipe Massa, a huge amount rides on the penultimate grand prix in China.

Watch it on Setanta Sports, Sunday October 19, KO 07:30

# Sport



Unofficial Sports  
»p34

Night-climbing and  
Hashing introduced

## Captain's Corner

Kevin  
Musselman  
Ice Hockey



As far as ice hockey goes, the Force has most definitely been with the Dark side in recent times: the Oxford team has reigned victorious in the Varsity Match for the last four years on the trot. A difficult task, then, for the man charged with turning around the Cambridge Blues' fortunes, captain Kevin Musselman.

The squad is not lacking in talent, with many members having played competitive ice hockey in North America. The international dimension of the squad is remarkable, yet more British interest in the sport might lead to provision of better training facilities in Cambridge and hence increased participation – which would be no bad thing for a club such as CUIHC. When asked if the demographics of the sport affect his talent pool, Musselman concedes that the absence of ice hockey in the sporting mainstream in the UK manifests itself in “a larger percentage of Canadian and American players than British ones” but he feels that “we will see more home-grown players in coming years”.

Having been on the end of an 8-2 defeat in the Varsity match last year, the captain exudes a refreshingly positive outlook on the coming season. “Many of the old Blues are back this year, and we have had an excellent influx of quality recruits, so I am very optimistic about our chances.”

The Blues' first test of the new season is a tasty encounter with the old enemy on November 1st. Clearly, the captain has confidence in his side's Varsity-winning credentials; it is a fine opportunity to test them out. We wish the team the best of luck in their preparations.

# Lax ladies smash Oxford

» Lacrosse ladies continue in last season's fine form with a comprehensive victory

Jenny Morgan  
Sports Reporter

Lacrosse: like Quidditch but without the brooms, they told me. There was certainly magic in the air the way the Cambridge women played on Wednesday afternoon. Perhaps not surprising from a team who were unbeaten last season and who have retained more than half of their former squad this year. But against the old enemy, Oxford, one can never be too sure.

From the draw, Cambridge dominated the early possession and were rewarded with a quick goal within the first two minutes. The speed of play was astonishing from the offset, with excellent dodging through the midfield and good communication around the goalmouth ensuring that the ball was moved around efficiently in the attack. The spoils were shared between these forward players, as they clocked up a second, third and fourth goal in quick succession against the rather static Oxford defence. But like bees round a honey pot, the players were drawn towards where the action was happening, leaving them on the backfoot when Oxford suddenly gained possession and went storming up the middle to take their opening goal. This proved to be Oxford's strength; with two or three speedy players capable of outrunning their Cambridge counterparts over distance, they were quick on the break after a long period of Cambridge attack.

But this wasn't enough to make up for their fumbling handling errors and rather inaccurate passing. Cambridge kept picking up the loose ends in midfield and punishing the Oxford defence. Some aggressive and ambitious play through the middle from Ellie Walshe just kept sending the play back to the Oxford end, where the good communi-

Cambridge	17
Oxford	7

cation that comes from an established team enabled calm play under pressure around the goal. Multiple shots finally resulted in a fabulous goal from Ros Lloyd, dodging past two defenders and slamming it into the top corner, bringing the first half score to 9-2 to the home team.

After a half time talk calling for more of the same, Cambridge continued to deliver. Hannah Whittaker pushed through a slightly improved Oxford defence for the opener. Oxford had more influence in this half, but their play remained erratic and their possession short-lived. They managed to slip two quick scores on the bounce past the Cambridge keeper, and then a third made it look like this could be a late comeback from the dark blues. But then, as the clouds gathered, Cambridge shone once more. Battling into the sudden wind which brought the heavy rain straight into the faces of the players, Cambridge found their stride once again, clocking up goal after goal in the difficult conditions, bringing the final score to a decisive 17-7. This is perhaps where the ultimate strength of this team lies – the ability to keep their heads as all around them lose theirs. The Cambridge game plan was set from the start of the match, and there was a ruthless calm to the way the team delivered it. The confidence and certainty of the whole squad was infectious – this is a team going places, and it knows it.

**Star Player:** Ros Lloyd – her spectacular finishes topped off a cool and classy attacking style.



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