

VARSITY

Friday May 15th 2009

The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

Issue no 695 | varsity.co.uk

»p3 News

Roger Norrington comes to CUMS



»p6 Comment

The evil ways of Zac Efron. Boo! Hiss!



»p8 Fashion

The Amnesty fashion show

Peterhouse Ball President quits over 'illegal' party

Lizzy Tyler

The President of the Peterhouse May Ball committee has been forced to resign in a recent disciplinary action by College authorities.

This step was taken following an unauthorized house party in Peterhouse accommodation. The Ball President, Ben Margereson, and the Food Officer, Maria Onyango, were involved in organizing the party on April 24th, which was closed by the Head Porter and the police.

Varsity has learned that windows were broken, fire alarms were set off and the party, held at 7 Tennis Court Terrace, was "pretty rowdy".

One room had been turned into a ball pit, one of the hostesses wore a small "but very much alive" python around her neck and the walls were plastered with "some pretty skanky porn pictures". When the fire alarm was set off for half an hour, comments such as "is this what trendy house music sounds like these days?" were elicited.

A source at the party said, "The College knew about the party all the while that it was being planned, as someone in the house told them early on. On the evening the porters came an hour before the guests were due to arrive so there was nothing anyone could do to stop it".

The porters initially came at about 10.30pm and were accompanied by the police about an hour later. The students inside barricaded the doors and continued partying, only stopping when everyone was asked to leave later on.

Margereson and Onyango are under instructions to leave College accommodation by June 1st and are not allowed to

be involved with or even attend the Ball on Saturday June 13th.

Some Petreans have been shocked by the severity of the College's actions, a breach of which could result in a ban from their graduation ceremony later this summer. A Facebook group called 'Rallying Old Petreans (ROP)' has recently been set up to protest against the "draconian measures" taken by the college. The group calls for old members of the College to express their disdain for the authorities' actions and show their solidarity with the students affected.

The group alleges that the students are also banned from College grounds from 1pm on every day of that month, making them unable to attend any event held in Peterhouse over May Week.

The group expresses a feeling that "the administration has grown too somber in recent years".

A Peterhouse student involved with the Ball told *Varsity* that "a couple of committee members simply feel a bit let down by the behaviour of those involved, they knew they had responsibility for the Ball, and it was clear that College would react".

This feeling seems amplified by the fact that the Ball was cancelled last year in reaction to the poor academic performance of Peterhouse students.

Another third-year member of the College, who is not on the Ball committee, has also faced the same disciplinary action.

The Ball is set to be a grander occasion than normal, falling on the 725th anniversary of Peterhouse, as well as the 800th anniversary of the University.

Peterhouse refused to comment, and Ben Margereson was unavailable.



You've got to hand it to him

London-based sculptor David Begbie poses in front of one of his pieces at the Fitzwilliam Museum. Titled *Palm I*, 2007, Balbie constructed the piece from a bronze mesh and galvanised steel-frame easel. The work is part of a new showcase for contemporary sculpture, unveiled on April 28, which occupies the Museum lawns fronting Trumpington Street. The Sculpture Promenade will be open until January 2010.

Foreign fees set to rise by 10%

Gemma Oke

Proposals forwarded by the University Council could see fees for international students increase by as much as three times the rate of inflation.

As revealed in the *University Reporter*, the Council, which is the policy-making body of the University, has agreed to fee increases for international students in 2009/10 of 4.5 per cent, and a proposal of fee increases of 10 per cent in the year 2010/11.

The projected increase – substantially higher than the inflation rate of 2.9 per cent announced in March – is expected to cover "an expected sharp rise in University utility, pay and pension costs". Fees for home and EU postgraduate students are expected to rise by 2.7 per cent in the next academic year.

The University has been quick to stress the provisional nature of the fee increases. A University spokeswoman emphasised that whilst the fee increases for 2009/10 could be confirmed, "nothing has been decided" on the proposals for fee levels beyond the next academic year.

Overseas students have expressed disappointment at the proposals, citing that fees for international students at Cambridge are already comparatively higher than those at other universities. One student described the suggested rise as "unacceptable".

He said, "Although I am funded by a University trust, and may not be affected as much by the rise, the reasons for it are unacceptable. The University should be looking at various ways to cover expected rises in utility, pay and pensions, such as requesting additional government funding, or drawing on investment income."

Fees for international students, unlike the standardised fees paid by home and EU students, vary according to the subject studied, with some scientific undergraduate courses costing £12,768 per year. Levels of financial support are limited, often forming a partial contribution to total costs on a means tested basis.

Mathematics named the cleverest department in the University

Beth Staton

A quiz held for the University's 800th anniversary has named the department of Pure Maths and Mathematical Statistics the cleverest in the University.

After winning against Physics in the semi-final, DPMMS defeated History with 170 points to 110 in a final hosted by Clive Anderson. The team from the

University Library also made it into the final four, who competed in the Union's Debating Chamber last Monday.

Team captain Vicky Neale claimed that the winning team didn't spend much time worrying about their performance. "We were pretty consistent through the rounds," she said.

Ms Neale also didn't accept claims that knowledge of popular culture was

conspicuously lacking from the team's intellectual repertoire. "The team had a very balanced pool of knowledge," she commented. "We like to show that pure mathematicians have more than just numbers up their sleeve."

24 academic and administrative departments took part in the first round of the quiz, which sent Music and MML to a shameful elimination

with just 55 points each.

"The competition celebrates the influence the university has had on the world we live in," said Simon Spiro, one of the organisers of the competition. "Each question is somehow linked to the University, though not explicitly - for example a question about physics may somehow be related to Newton's theories."

The early rounds saw the Veterinary

School narrowly defeat the Department of Medicine, and organisers attempted to put another long-standing rivalry to rest by pitting the Divinity Faculty against Genetics. Although Divinity won the quiz, scholars have not used the victory as evidence for creationism.

Cambridge Quizzesoc hosts a pub quiz at the Cricketers in Melbourne Place, every Tuesday at 9pm.

VARSITY

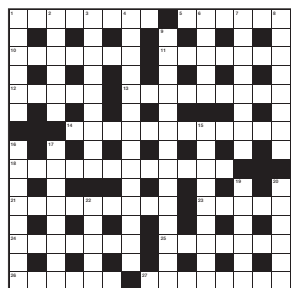
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Contents

News » p1-5

Expenses furore » p4

The bad news is, MPs are bastards. The good news is, our MP David Howarth isn't: he has never claimed expenses.



Games & puzzles » p5

A suggestion: do the Sudoku in the UL stacks.

Cambridge Spies » p5

Sexual shenanigans and boorish boozing.

Comment » p6

Climate greenery » p6

Dan Hitchens advocates the need for shared values to save the world.



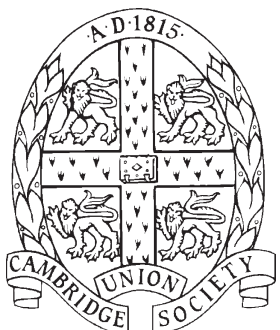
Bad Zac Efron » p6

Anna Dannreuther claims that the winsome teen star is promoting dubious attitudes.

Magazine » p7-14

My Week » p7

The trials and tribulations of a controversial Ball President.



The Varsity Week » p11

There is SO MUCH going on you simply wouldn't believe.

Union book review » p12

Livvy Potts reviews a new history of the Cambridge Union. Shockingly exciting.

Sport » p15-16

Varsity darts » p15

We won, we won, we won!

Cooney's Marathon » p16

She's done it! She may not have come first, but Lauren finished the marathon.



Get involved

If you would like to contribute to the May Week edition of Varsity, please contact the May Week Editors at mayweek@varsity.co.uk.

If you would like to contribute to Varsity in the Michaelmas term, visit varsity.co.uk/jobs, e-mail editor@varsity.co.uk or look out for open meetings being held throughout the term.

Taking a stand against Tripos

Exams are undoubtedly important. The Tripos system is generally an excellent way of measuring academic achievement, and anyone who takes their time at Cambridge seriously should want to do as well as possible in their exams.

However, they are not the be-all and end-all. There is far, far more to Cambridge than the Tripos, as we all recognise for at least two-thirds of the year. A balance must be struck: Cambridge is justly famed for extra-curricular pursuits such as music, drama and sport, and some of its best-known alumni – Lord Byron and Hugh Laurie spring to mind – would have put little store in exam success. Moreover, it is slightly disheartening, if not surprising, to see people suddenly flock to the library in the Easter term – if your subject is so important, then why not work for it all year round? It is this cramming attitude which can make Cambridge such an unpleasant place to be in this term.

Varsity has traditionally acquiesced in this exam-term exceptionalism, by not publishing any issues during the course of the term. Consider this issue, then, as a small stab at changing that attitude: life goes on even in the midst of revision, and a newspaper should reflect that. We should all try to do more than work this term.

Have some respect for students

No College would take kindly to a group of its students organising an illegal party on its property, leading to some arguably criminal damage and the involvement of the police, as happened at Peterhouse earlier this term. Since Ben Margereson (a former Varsity Fashion Editor) happened to be President of the College's May Ball, it was not surprising that he was stripped of such a high-profile position. All those running the party knew the risks, and must have known that something like this could happen.

However, the next step, to ban Margereson and the other organisers of the party from Peterhouse after June 1st, is disproportionate. Their actions may have been foolish, but they were not harmful in the long term; the response – effectively kicking three people out of a community to which they have contributed a huge amount over three years – is grossly unfair.

Peterhouse has a heavy-handed attitude to its students, as witnessed by their cancellation of the May Ball in 2008. That attitude is sadly shared by other Colleges, who show, by actions such as banning students from their rooms outside term-time or forcing them to go to Hall, that junior members are very low in the pecking order. This is an educational establishment, and we who are being educated deserve more respect.

Work for Varsity

Applications to work for Varsity are still open. The deadline is Monday June 1st. We are looking for section editors, reporters, critics, photographers, illustrators and an online editor.

Application forms are available at varsity.co.uk/jobs. If you have any questions, please e-mail the Editors, Rob Peal & Anna Trench: editor@varsity.co.uk

New Deadline for Applications:
Monday June 1st 2009

letters@varsity.co.uk

Submit your letter for the chance to win a bottle of wine from the Cambridge Wine Merchants. All letters may be edited for space and style.

Misuse of Milton

Dear Sirs,

As a Milton scholar I was delighted by Hugo Schmidt's reference to Milton's *Areopagitica* in Varsity [issue 694, April 24th], even if he has, unfortunately, failed to understand any of it (Milton was adamant that speech should not be free but that Laudian and Catholic works should be suppressed, while he valued 'free speech' – the promotion of sectarian literature – not as a goal in itself but as a means to Divine grace).

In the same vein I found Dr Schmidt's reference to Milton somewhat uncomfortably at odds with the gist of his article, namely that religious sentiment threatens freedom of speech; Milton would have had absolutely

no time for Dr Schmidt's unfounded and fashionably irrational claim that "religion is the greatest creator and intensifier of human hatred".

I was confused by the train of his argument. He begins by condemning the prosecution of free-thinkers in the name of freedom of speech, and ends by remarking that "the Crown Prosecution Service decided to prosecute the makers [of the Channel 4 documentary] and not the imams", who, by extension, he feels should be prosecuted for hate speech. The relationship between freedom of speech and hate speech legislation might have made a more interesting theme in his essay.

Are there really no objective means of deciding what is inflammatory, irrational and offensive, and thus worthy of censorship? Is it too much in the

twenty-first century to hope for a public informed by reasonable (rather than simply free) dialogue?

Yours faithfully,

Seb Robins
Corpus Christi College

Correction

In a story in our last issue ['Ex-Selwyn student found guilty of possessing child pornography' – issue 694], we wrongly attributed comments to Michael Tilby, whom we described as Selwyn's Senior Tutor. Dr Tilby did not make the comments, and is no longer Senior Tutor; the comments should have been attributed to James Keeler, current Senior Tutor of Selwyn. We apologise to all involved for the error.

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

This issue of Varsity was edited by Clementine Dowley, Hugo Gye, Katy King, Joel Massey, Emma Mustich, Robert Peal, Jamie Ptaszynski, Robert Stagg, Laurie Tuffrey & Cædmon Tunstall-Behrens Sub-editor Colm Flanagan Illustrators Claudia Stocker & Sarah Woolley

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Sir Roger Norrington named CUMS Principal Guest Conductor

» Sir Roger to spearhead the drive to 'expand Cambridge's musical horizons'
» Celebrated conductors to join Sir Roger in the new 'Great Conductors' series

Caedmon Tunstall-Behrens

Sir Roger Norrington, renowned for his career as one of contemporary Britain's most distinguished and accomplished conductors, has been appointed Principal Guest Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the Cambridge University Musical Society (CUMS).

Sir Roger, an alumnus of Clare, will work closely with other members of the society to appoint a young professional orchestral conductor to take on a new role as Orchestra Director. This new role will involve close work with Sir Roger to "expand Cambridge's musical horizons".

Simon Fairclough, chairman of CUMS, said the appointment was part of their plan to "develop high end musical opportunities in the world of classical music, not just the Cambridge bubble. As part of that drive we are hosting the world premiere of a Peter Maxwell Davis piece, the CUMS chorus is developing a relationship with the Philharmonia Orchestra."

Contacts that Sir Roger has made over his career, spanning almost half a century, are hoped to be invaluable in solidifying Cambridge's place on the

classical music map.

Sir Roger will be working closely with the CUMS I orchestra, helping it prepare for his first conducting role as Principal Guest Conductor at King's College Chapel on June 12 next year, where it will perform the Brahms *Ein deutsches Requiem* and another as of yet undecided piece.

The two-tiered format of CUMS means that although provisionally only those more experienced players will benefit from Sir Roger, those involved with CUMS second orchestra and the wind band may graduate in their second or third year to CUMS I.

The Society is also introducing a 'Great Conductors' series, commencing with Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Principal Guest Conductor of the Russian State Symphony Orchestra, in March 2010. This will be followed by Sir Roger in June 2010.

Fairclough added that the Society is in talks with Andrew Davis who is keen to come and

participate in the future.

Lara Acott, a third year music undergraduate at Selwyn and the second flautist in CUMS I, expressed excitement that Sir Roger was joining the socie-

ty. "He's very into performance practice and it will be interesting to see how his views on that feed into his conducting," she said.

"It's a fantastic opportunity not only for people in the orchestra, but also for aspiring conductors in Cambridge. I expect more people will be attracted to audition to the society in the first place and also for CUMS conducting," she added.



Last year's Gates scholars on an orientation course

Gates scholarship winners named

Bhavya Dore

Ninety Gates Cambridge Scholarships for students from previously unrepresented countries such as Bangladesh, Mongolia, Slovakia and Venezuela have been announced.

The programme, which selects scholars from over 6,700 international applicants, was set up in 2000 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and seeks out scholars with a strong academic record, social commitment and leadership qualities.

The students selected this year include both former and new students at the University. Rajiv Chowdhury, from Bangladesh, was previously a Commonwealth Scholar before he returned home to work for the ICDDR, an international centre for health and population research. He will begin his PhD in Public Health this October and will specifically study the role of nutrition and nutrigenetics in cardiovascular disease.

Chowdhury commented: "During my

clinical rotations as a medical graduate I realised that I could only help the person in front of me. An interest to make a meaningful difference to the overall health of millions of people steered me onto the public health track."

Jargal Jamsranjav is the first Mongolian Gates scholar. She spent a year in Cambridge on a Chevening scholarship studying biodiversity, and then returned to Mongolia to run an ecological research training program. Jargal, who has a gold medal in Mongolian traditional dancing, will be pursuing a PhD focusing on the conflict between nomadic herders in Mongolia and wildlife.

Gordon Johnson, Provost of the Gates Cambridge Trust, said: "Being part of the Gates community brings with it a responsibility to use an education gained at one of the world's leading universities for the benefit of society at large. We are confident that the new cohort of Gates Scholars will meet this responsibility in a range of interesting and creative ways."

Darwin sculpture shortlisted for prestigious prize

Christos Lavidas

A new sculpture located in the Darwin Garden of Christ's has been shortlisted for the Marsh Sculpture Prize.

The work, entitled the 'Young Charles Darwin' and displays Darwin as he would have looked in 1831 as an undergraduate at the college. The statue is placed on the arm of a bench in New Court.

The statue was unveiled by Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh and Chancellor of the University, earlier this year to mark Darwin's 200th birthday. Sarah Darwin, the scientist's great-great-granddaughter, was present at the ceremony.

It was designed by Anthony Smith, a young British artist of growing reputation and a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London. In the past he has been commissioned to sculpt the bust of Ian

Fleming and Carl Linnaeus as well as being approached by the Royal Mint to submit designs for the new £2 coin.

The Marsh Sculpture Prize has been awarded to the best newly commissioned public sculpture or restoration of a public sculpture annually for the past five years. It is run by the Marsh Christian Trust and the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association. The first ever winner was Maggi Hambling for 'Scallop', positioned on Aldeburgh Beach, Suffolk.

The winner will be announced on November 17, at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London. The Duke of Gloucester will attend the event.

This year's team of judges will include Michael Paraskos, Research Fellow at Harlow Art Trust, Sue Ridge of Chelsea College of Art and Zuleika Dobson, former Director of the Camden Art Centre in London.



The Duke of Edinburgh at the unveiling of the statue in February

In Brief

Student members of Council elected

Tom Chigbo has been elected to the University Council. CUSU's President-elect won the annual election last week for student members of the Council, the University's main governing body. Also elected were David Lowry, Jesus' JCR President, and Julia Li, a graduate student at St John's. Elections were also held for the General Board, the highest academic body in the University: these were won by Sam Wakeford, CUSU Education Officer for next year, and Yang Xia, a Trinity postgrad.

Cambridge busking festival

Cambridge was treated to an extravaganza of contemporary music and performance last week when the Buskers and Street Performers Festival 2009 came to town. At 28 locations throughout the city centre, including from a punt in the Mill Pond, buskers plied their trade to an overwhelmingly receptive Cambridge audience. Event organiser Heather Bevan Hunt hailed the festival as a great success as it succeeded in meeting its dual aims of celebrating the cultural diversity of the city while at the same time reminding buskers of the importance of the street performer code in regulating their activities. The enjoyment was not shared by all. One passer-by moaned that the Council "should be doing an Oxford" rather than promoting such "glorified begging", a reference to last year's curtailment of busking along Oxford's main Cornmarket Street.

Edward Hughes

Development of child literacy

Professor of Education Maria Nikolajeva gave an Inaugural Lecture on 'The Power of Language: Literacy, (mis)communication and oppression in literature for young readers' on April 29th. Using books like A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* and Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, Nikolajeva discussed how children's literature encourages and discourages literacy. According to Prof. Nikolajeva, books for children often make the language "as simple as possible", but doing so, however, does not necessarily encourage literacy: by making their language too simple, writers fail to engage their readers. She stressed that the best literature for children plays with the rules of language, often using it incorrectly in a way that they can recognize.

Maylin Tu

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Energy saving efforts are not effective enough, says Cambridge prof

Mike Hornsey

A Cambridge physicist has hit the headlines for claiming that household energy savings are ineffective.

David Mackay is a professor of natural philosophy in the physics department and is affiliated with Darwin College. In a YouTube video titled 'How Many Light Bulbs? From Cambridge Ideas', Prof. Mackay describes how he got so fed up with politicians and pressure groups giving bad advice about saving energy that he measured the output of utilities in his home to find out exactly how much energy they used.

Some of his statistics are surprising. A phone charger, for example, requires just a one-hundredth of the energy needed by a light bulb. Flying to Cape Town and back uses as much energy as driving a car 50km a day for a whole year, the professor says.

On his website, www.withouthotair.com, Prof. Mackay explains how people need a better awareness of the things that can really make a difference. "Obsessively switching off the phone-charger is like bailing the titanic with a teaspoon... I'm not saying that you shouldn't switch the phone charger off. But don't be duped by the mantra 'every little helps'."

The focus, he suggests, should be on things that make a substantial difference; doing just a little will achieve only a little.

Although he strongly advocates the use of renewable energy sources, he emphasises the importance of using them effectively. "Roof-mounted micro-wind turbines are an utter waste of resources... They never pay for themselves. In contrast, roof-mounted solar water heaters are a no-brainer." Installing a solar panel can heat half of a typical family's hot water supply.

Prof. Mackay's findings come at a time when more and more businesses are adopting environmentally friendly policies. Tesco have halved the amount of energy used by their UK stores since 2000, and have plans to install wind turbines in two of their Cambridge branches as part of a wider effort to lower their energy footprint.

South Cambridgeshire District Council have authorised the turbines at both the Milton and Bar Hill stores and will decide whether to extend the program to the Fulbourn store by the end of the month.

McKay explains that to provide a quarter of our current energy intake, seventy-five per cent of the UK would have to be covered with biomass plantations. He says that "we need a plan that adds up. The good news is that such plans can be made. The bad news is that implementing them will not be easy."



Cambridge MP avoids criticism over expenses

Cædmon Tunstall-Behrens

The MP for Cambridge has come out of Westminster's expenses scandal unscathed, as receipts leaked to *the Daily Telegraph* has revealed.

Amid the negative columns written about expense abuse over the past few weeks, David Howarth, the Liberal Democrat MP for the city, has been found to be the only Lib Dem MP outside of Greater London not to claim a

second homes allowance last year.

Mr Howarth commented "I decided to travel into London every day, rather than set up a second home, because I hoped that it would keep me more in touch with my family and with my constituents."

He prefers to take the 45 minute commute into London by train. He said, "In any case, many Cambridge residents commute to London and I didn't feel that I should be exempt from the experience."

His expenses, which are published on his website www.davidhowarth.org.uk, reveal that he claims nothing towards the Additional Costs Allowance. The House of Commons states that this stipend is paid to "reimburse members for necessary costs incurred when staying overnight away from their main home for the purpose of performing parliamentary duties."

Howarth commented that "there is no justification, under any circumstances,

for MPs to buy property with money from their allowances. The second homes allowance should be restricted to paying for hotel accommodation or a furnished rental property."

The expenses breakdown on the website shows that Howarth claimed £15,134.53 on for Incidental Expenses Provision (IEP), the allowance to meet the costs of maintaining a



constituency office. He claimed £67,131.55 in the staffing allowance, £4,600 for an annual rail season ticket and the amount for centrally purchased stationery and postage is to be confirmed.



THE UNIVERSITY OF

Cambridge

an 800th Anniversary Portrait

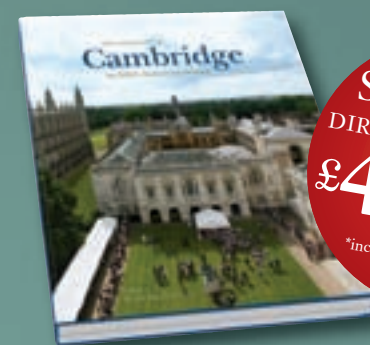
To celebrate its 800th anniversary year in 2009, the University of Cambridge has worked with publishers Third Millennium for over two years to produce this special commemorative book. Edited by Peter Pagnamenta, one of Britain's most distinguished documentary producers, this lavishly illustrated, beautifully designed and produced hardback volume traces the University's growth and development from its small beginnings to tomorrow's aspirations. This is a volume to treasure for years to come.

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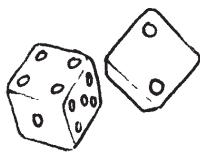


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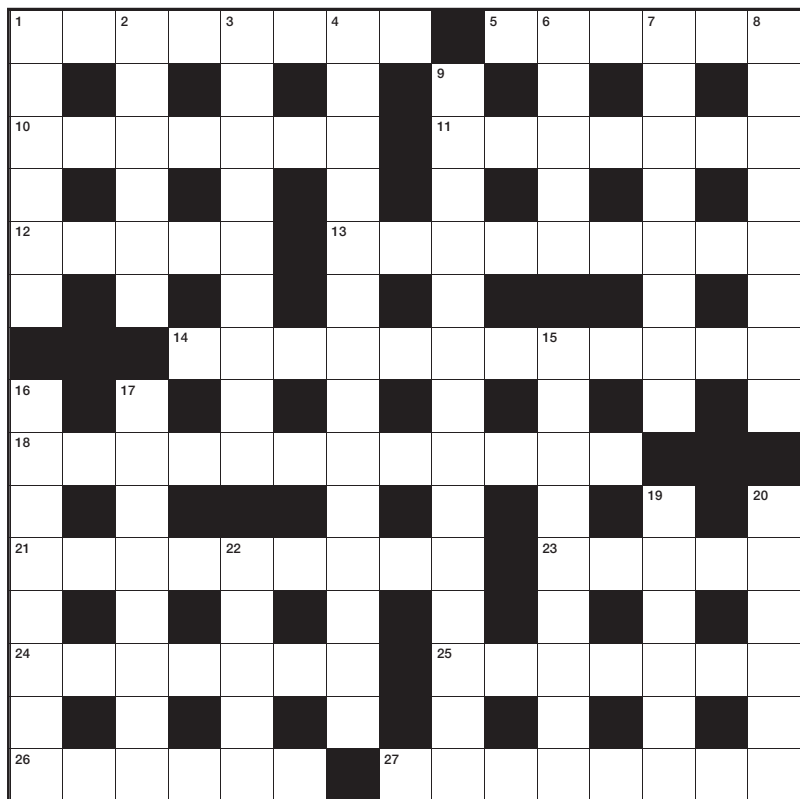


Games & puzzles



Varsity Crossword

no. 504



Across

- 1 Farm hand, sorted, so they say, after a drink (8)
5 Deviant smiles as mystics circle around a point (6)
10 Drop of fresh glue sealing in pitch (7)
11 Provoke creation in church top (7)
12 A fool made of myself: do it, some-

- how (5)
13/19 Dow pun for one of Bob's finest? (7,2,2,4)
14 Nearer bat poorly concealed in source of heat underground (12)
18 Narrowly in favour of Leonardo supporter? (12)
21 Wee chap in elaborately constructed item popular at formal (5,4)
23 Neither backing party's musical

Answers to last issue's crossword (no. 503)

Across: 1 Dissertation, 10 Related, 11 Stress, 13 Ruined, 14 Vacation, 16 Padded cell, 17 Or so, 18 Ably, 20 Favourable, 24 Livelier, 25 As well, 27 Tedium, 28 Inertia, 30 Years of study. Down: 2 Ill wind, 3 So there, 4 Ride, 5 At, 6 In-tray, 7 Needier, 8 Pre-Raphaelite, 9 Using one's loaf, 12 Balloon, 15 Scraped, 19 Lively, 21 Respect, 22 Bleated, 23 Pleura, 26 Riff, 29 Is.

- form (5)
24 Love note about Eastern European capital made of elegant paper (7)
25 Small, sensitive circles are nothing left above boundaries (7)
26 Topless nude love following maid-head compromise (4,2)
27 Good girl to notice a prosthetic part (5,3)

Down

- 1 PM on whose farm I am not going to work? (6)
2 Opportunity to pay a visit (4-2)
3 Eastern peak to display Wyclef or Lauryn, for instance, by the sound of it (5,4)
4 Unsure of self, tin deity? (8,6)
6 In between a salute relating to one sense (5)
7 Criminal de-veiled a terrible crime (4,4)
8 Unconscious, in a bandage, spend a penny getting up (8)
9 Uncompromising attitude granting no reward even for one second? (6-5-3)
15 They provoke a negative reaction from various genres, after all (9)
16 Type of verse ghost-writer might begin after digital image? (4,4)
17 Writer of 16 briefly unwell abroad, maybe missing Greece? (8)
19 See 13 Across
20 Classic song Joel arranged for two points (6)
22 Tied up initially in Dylan's provocative language, always a-changin' (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.

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

The Varsity Scribblepad

Last issue's solution

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

Cambridge Spies



Corpus Christi

Power couple?

One evening at Christ's, a group of merry men and buxom lasses, having got rather merrier (and buxomer), decided to separate for the night, into their several couples. A former debating queen from a similarly pious home found, to her surprise, that she was paired off with the flame-haired chieftain of Cambridge's lesser newsrag. She was happy to go along with this plan for a short while – anything for networking – but soon realised the enormity of her mistake. She ran off into the night, leaving her potential paramour with the line "Sorry, I'm a Varsity girl..." According to our sources, she certainly is.

Jesus Green

Menage à trois?

One vivacious vixen took frivolities on last Bank Holiday weekend to a new height, adding not one, not two, but three new knots to the old bedpost. Declaring at dinner that she would accompany an old boy back to his hotel room, so as to be in a better position to inspect the sheets, she sealed the first deal. Huddling under a tree during the battle of the next day, our insatiable heroine hatched a foolproof plan with a similarly intoxicated blonde bombshell to entrap the male of their desires into an afternoon of six-footed mischief. And she scores a hat-trick.

Christ's

Busta does it again

Returning also for the annual Pimm's confrontation on Sunday, our rather sickly and most certainly inebriated reprobate sauntered into a buzzing tucked-away drinking hole. A sudden bout of vertigo bowled him into the nearest obstacle. Finding there not a well-grounded pillar, but an alarmed member of the fairer sex, he was apparently not sufficiently satisfied at the imposition he had caused: he threw her newly replenished tippie to the floor. The silence brought on by the resultant smash he took as an invitation to break into the anthem of the near-by gentlemen's den, much to the general confusion of those in his vicinity.

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Web Wit & Wisdom



Week 4: Expenses

So when do the Forensic Accountants get involved ?????

wise_man_49@hotmail.co.uk

I am sick to the back teeth and to my stomach (simultaneously) when i hear the rubbish put 4ward by the nations mps. these people r supposed to be our moral superiors, and while is truggle putting food on the table and into my families mouths (simultaneously) they have theyre snouts in the trough. DISGUSTING.

gardening_ben, Slough

This shameful series of revelations is just the tip of the iceberg. For too many years they have had their noses in the trough. no more.

Voice of Reason, Harlow, Essex

If we left the EU none of this would happen.

Thegrassyknoll@yahoo.com

We expect no more than this from the New Labour cheats and hypocrites. The 'Party of the Working Class', ha, ha! It does remind me of the pigs and humans sitting around the table at the closing scene of Animal Farm. However, have the Conservatives had their snouts in the trough too? I fear so...

John, UK

tIME to clean out the stables and turn back the tide.

MetaphorMary, Hertfordshire

UIt's like the nazis in 1933. what next? parliament burns down and the expenses details suddenly disappear? COINCIDENCE? i think not.

theflagisstill@moonlanding.com

The Cabinet doth no longer keep their revels to-night: Take heed Brown and come not within the people's sight; For Cameron & Oberon will be passing fell and wrath, Because that Brown and his attendants hath taken too much

Sally Roberts, Australia

It's all the fault of Tracey Playle, this girl i had in for itnerview who didnt know who hitler was and could she read greek could she fuck

Eric_10003@cam.ac.uk

Dan Hitchens



The Community in Conservatism

Genuine 'shared values' are the best way to abrupt a climate crisis

It's an uncomfortable fact that the closest communities tend to be the most liberal-minded. Our politicians are correct in thinking that 'shared values' are the source of social cohesion and togetherness. But, rather than encouraging attitudes of tolerance and amiability, these values in fact enact strict codes and customs which distinguish outsiders from those who belong, the 'us' from the 'them'.

Religiosity and patriotism, two such markers, are harmful for the same reason that they are valuable: they are the most deeply-rooted of emotional affinities, far more so than the modern liberal's delicate attachment to principles of freedom and justice.

The obvious comparison here is with America. Aspects of the last election seemed bizarre to a British audience: the flagpin controversy, the success of Mike Huckabee, and the attention paid to one candidate's religious beliefs and to the other's military service. American values have some laughable manifestations, but they are also the origin of Americans' undeniable community spirit.

The point is not that the UK ought to be more like America. But we should admit to the existence of a trade-off between the ideals of diversity and open-mindedness on one hand, and the ideals of togetherness and public spirit on the other. In Britain, we have seen fifty or so years of liberalisation and increased tolerance in matters of lifestyle, taste, sex, language, religion, and almost every part of our culture. We can be grateful

for at least some of this, but we must also recognise its corollary. Last year the University of Sheffield produced a study on UK residents' diminishing sense of belonging. The results were even more wretched than one might expect. "Even the weakest communities in 1971 were stronger than any community now," the researchers reported.

This is especially concerning because of the fact that community spirit is the precondition for public spirit. 'Social conscience' starts at home, and is an impossibility in a population deprived of the experience of home. To return to

opened yet, but it has begun, particularly in one area: the crisis of climate change, an issue to which both public spirit and 'collective consciousness' are crucial.

If the warnings of Al Gore and Mark Lynas are true – even if they are only semi-true – then the issue of the environment reduces almost every other to near-irrelevance, a claim with which most of our generation, having grown up surrounded by a heightened awareness of global warming, would agree. I doubt many *Varsity* readers would dispute the fact that climate change presents a huge danger to mankind's future

that most see this as a concern in which personal responsibility comes a long way behind state intervention. Of course, governments can do a lot. But in a country with healthy public spirit, the authorities could work by encouragement, subsidy and advice. When the collective consciousness has been dissolved, on the other hand, we see exactly the authoritarianism which Eliot warned would follow.

Consider the actions taken in the name of environmentalism. The EU has banned most types of lightbulb because they may use more energy. Councils place microchips in bins so they can fine anyone who gets confused between cardboard and glazed cardboard. The Students' Union at Leeds recently made it unlawful to sell bottled water on campus.

These examples of heavyhanded desperation is only to be expected when a sense of community has withered. Some see it as a necessary evil: if the worst sacrifice we have to make for our future is changing lightbulbs, they ask, then what is the problem? It is an attitude which misses the point.

Crackdowns only become attractive as solutions when it is impossible to rely on genuine community action. Personal responsibility, stemming from the feeling of belonging, is always preferable to the blundering swipes of government, and this is the conclusion reached by environmentalists. The rest of us, meanwhile, should remember not to talk of tolerance and non-judgmentalism as though they were attitudes one could never have enough of.

"Both public spirit and 'collective consciousness' are crucial to climate change"

the earlier contrast: proportional to GDP, Americans give about two and a half times as much to charity as Britons.

Worse still, as public spirit shrinks, the state advances, intervening in realms further and further beyond its competence. T.S. Eliot pointed out in 1939: "By destroying traditional social habits of the people, by dissolving their natural collective consciousness into individual constituents... Liberalism can prepare the way for that which is its own negation: the artificial, mechanised or brutalised control which is a desperate remedy for its chaos". Of course all this has not hap-

wellbeing. But how many people have ever cancelled a holiday because only an aeroplane could take them to their destination?

Global warming skeptics are attacked, perhaps unfairly, as 'Flat-Earthers'. Actually, the comparison works much better in reverse. Most people believe in man-made climate change in the same way we believe that the earth is round. That is, we know what we think when we stop to consider, but such matters barely impinge upon our daily routine, and it is rare to hear a conversation on the subject.

The reason for such indifference is

Anna Dannreuther



Zac Efron: Patriarch?

The High School Musical star is promoting some dubious values

Deemed "small but beautifully formed" by the *The Times*, a "hormonal Adonis" by the *Guardian*, and, rather more questioningly, a "minor Thundercat" by the *Daily Telegraph*, it would seem that Zac Efron has won over even the most begrudging of ageing journalists.

In a film that extols youth, and more specifically high school, as the determining factor of one's future happiness, *17 Again* employs Zac Efron to play the younger version of bitter, twisted and – let's face it – old, Matthew Perry. Here we see Efron in his favourite type of role, despairingly similar to the character he played in *High School Musical*, throwing hoops on the basketball court and saving the entire high school from the inevitable boredom of his show-tappin' and song-bustin' absence.

Yes, this is his domain and I imagine it will remain so in many more hormonally-driven teen films to come. I have chosen, however to refrain from using character names throughout this article because, despite Efron's appearance in several squeaky-clean Disney-related roles mentioned here, we all know the main role belongs to his bulging biceps and terse torso, for which I have created my own names which I'd rather keep concealed for reasons of general integrity.

But the swoon-inducing beauty of

Zac Efron is being used to promote some rather questionable ethos. Of the two Zac films I have seen (*High School Musical 3* and *17 Again*), it seems to me that beauty is being used misleadingly to promote the abstinence from that very thing which it provokes.

For example, in *High School Musical 3*, Vanessa Hudgens, Efron's co-star and real-life girlfriend (well, sort of real life) is only ever seen wearing a provocative yet tasteful white dress which never fails to fall just above the knee and the neckline of which plunges no higher or lower than cleavage level. Her lack of coherent or intelligent speech give her less credibility, and her incessant donning of bare legs and heels make the difference between teeming sexualised object and chaste guard of innocence difficult to define. Instead of kissing they practise more wholesome activities, amongst which singing, dancing, hand-touching and even waltzing play a large feature.

These activities are always initiated by Zac, who, when not luring the beautiful Hudgens away from her studies, busies himself with being a dab hand on the basketball court and a Julliard-worthy stage performer. Hudgens contents herself with yearbook editor and being good at math, which is not as uplifting for the high school or the audience and does not (correctly) merit half as many songs as Efron. She becomes an onlooker to the

trials and tribulations of Zac, similar to the crusading heroes of medieval epics who, on questing to save the maiden from her isolation or imprisonment, really have all the fun and leave women as merely an afterthought.

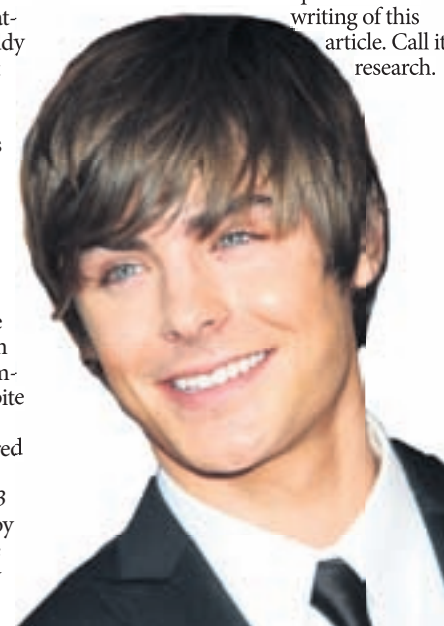
In *17 Again*, involving the transformation of a forty-something man into his seventeen year old bicep-bulging successful self so that he might fix the wrongs of his later life, the spirit of the older Matthew Perry manages to tell several giddy girls to respect themselves. "You don't have to respect me," one says; "You don't even have to know my name". Whilst this is regarded as a humorous moment in the film, the result of an obvious conflict-of-generations-and-ideologies, the point made by such a scene is in fact quite a serious one.

Girls in the Western world, and increasingly globally, are confused. While the world preaches to them the importance of self-respect, self-esteem and abstinence, it also throws them images of beautiful celebrities who (despite having gone off the rails in terms of health and mentality) are clearly desired and acknowledged.

Films such as *High School Musical 3* and *17 Again* do not help the matter by promoting absolute abstinence on the part of women and aggressive activity on the part of men, serving only to encourage women's subjugation to

men. In the eight hundred years from the twelfth-century French epic I'm reading to the time of my reading it, nothing has really changed. Beauty, chastity and virtue are still the qualities held up as exemplary for a woman, which paradoxically serve only to increase her desirability. Hypocritically enough, none of that did all that much to dissuade me from the two-hour Zac-fest required for the

writing of this article. Call it research.



MAGAZINE



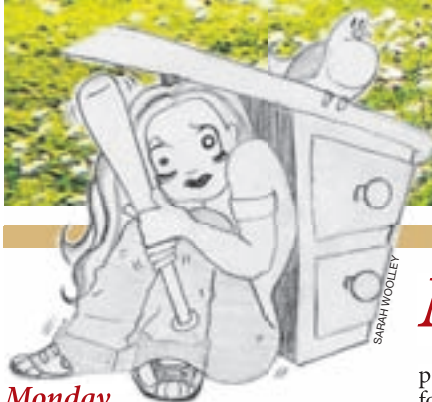
THIS WEEK IN THE MAGAZINE: RENOWNED TAIWANESE DIRECTOR WEI TE-SHENG / BALL DRESSES / OODLES OF LISTINGS / PEAL'S MEALS / A SINGULAR ROUND-UP / THIS WEEK'S DRAMA REVIEWED

Photograph of the week by *Liliana Rodriguez*



“Taken from a punt in front of Trinity, a scale of greens and flowers frame a young man studying, forming three distinctive layers of depth. In contrast to other places along the busy and buzzing banks of the river Cam, this area creates an ambiance of calm and tranquillity. Earlier on this term, during the sunny spring days of April, the backs were full of enthusiastically revising students, but the mediocre May weather seems to have driven most of us back to the libraries.”

If you have a potential Photograph of the week, send it to features@varsity.co.uk



*My week by Carla Cavort, May Ball President**

Monday

Copacabana 2009 is in serious trouble. Our main attraction, a sixteen-foot replica model of Pelé, has been put on the rocks as the papier-mâché company we commissioned it from went bust. I hold an emergency meeting at 4.38am with the May Ball team to discuss our options, but their drowsy efforts at brainstorming are frankly pathetic.

I leave the room to get my head straight, and through the crack in the door I hear seditious rumblings from my Publicity Officer, Daryl. To my abject horror, I hear the snivelling little toad planning an insurrection: “She’s lost the plot and we have to make sure this doesn’t ruin the ball.” In a state of

panic I flee the meeting room and go for a calming walk across the Market Square, but even the pigeons are trying to oust me from power. As I pass by I can hear them chanting “coup, coup.”

Tuesday

If that bastard Daryl thinks he can galvanise support against me, then he is tragically mistaken. I burst into his room after supper, kick him in the shins and tell him that I would literally kill for the success of this May Ball. He thinks I’m joking, so I calmly inform him that suicides are very common at this time of year and remarkably easy to fake. That did it, at the May Ball meeting this evening the whole team are suitably meek.

Wednesday

This afternoon sees a PR disaster. Someone has leaked to CUSU our plans for the Amazon Jungle Room, where we are going to have fifteen native South Americans running around naked with blow sticks amongst a forest of pot plants. The CUSU President rings me up in the afternoon to tell me I am a racist pervert. I put the phone down on him and think little of it.

Thursday

I nearly choke on my breakfast bar this morning when, idly strolling through the newsagents, I noticed the front page of *The Sun*. “EXCLUSIVE CAMBRIDGE COLLEGE IN BRAZILIAN SEX PARTY”. The Master calls

me into his office and tells me I either put the story to bed, or the Ball will be cancelled. Four hours later and I have drafted a press release with our Legal Advisor. The room shall be renamed Primary Rainforest and it will be populated with a racially indiscriminate mix of fully clad tribespeople.

Friday

The Music Officer Jenny had some trouble with the band contracts today. Our main act, who were massive in the 90s, demanded in their contract that they get a private dressing room complete with naked waiters handing round silver trays of cocaine. Jenny chose to ignore it. The band then replied that it was “one of those jokes

that isn’t really a joke”. I decide to play it tactically, and ring up their agent to tell him that Chumbawumba are very willing to fill in at short notice. After a ten-minute wait we get a call from the lead singer telling us not to worry about the cocaine and that he’s still “mad for it”.

An anonymous email tells me that that malignant turd Daryl tipped off CUSU about the Amazon Room. Fifteen minutes later I’m hanging him out of his window from his ankles forcing him to pledge his unswerving allegiance to my premiership. Nothing will stand between me and the best party in Cambridge has ever seen.

* As told to Rob Peal

Cambridge University Amnesty FACE Fashion Show



In the wake of several similar efforts last year, this show succeeded where its predecessors fell flat; showcasing wearable, current and exciting clothes. Add to this the difficulty of sourcing entirely ethical fashion, and CU Amnesty's efforts look all the more impressive. Lily Cole's high-profile appearance can no doubt be thanked for the range of upmarket and competitive designers, including Noir and Katherine Hamnett. But the evening's most memorable appearance was that of Sam Roddick and her harem of ethically (un)clad dominatrixes. Roddick, the founder of Coco De Mer and mother of ethical erotica, gave a bold and inspiring speech on the savage extortion of the textile industry, giving the show a weighty backdrop, while the models inserted some serious fun. Though the show was by no means on a par with other universities' annual productions, Hannah Perry and the Amnesty team deserve high praise for producing a show that was not, in Sam Roddick's words, "arse-backward". It was clear that the cause came before the fashion, and this was made emphatic throughout. Paradoxically, this is a cause that will ultimately succeed by making itself invisible: the assumption must be that all clothes are ethical, without the need to proclaim it in hemp. Still, thankfully, this catwalk was hemp-free.

Alice Newell-Hanson

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You shall go to the ball... but ye will be judged

Katy King philosophises on why finding the right May Ball dress matters.



On bleak revision days, from the depths of Mary Wollstonecraft, I sometimes dream of a society where what I said and what I did was more important than what I wore or how I looked. It seems that little has changed since 1792, when Wollstonecraft urged women not find their worth in the looking-glass. Modern life is a constant effort to make sure you have the right selection of material goods; a reflection of your status in consumer Britain. It's not enough to have the most possessions, you must have the right possessions. A vintage handbag, one of a kind, tells the world I am an individual, aware of current trends but not a slave to Topshop. The right possessions give a sense of self, an identity.

Fearful of the critical eyes of others, we brand ourselves, selling ourselves as a desirable possession: a friend to look good on your arm, a boyfriend to dangle from your key chain. Dressing well is just another way of asserting your dominance, your superiority over others. At Cambridge, at this time of year, sartorial elegance is edged out by the library, exams and, yes, the Vindication of the Rights of Women, but we await May Week and the chance to emerge, phoenix-like from the flames of exam hell, clad in the glorious plumage of our May Ball Dress. Finding the right May Ball Dress is almost on par with finding the right wedding dress, but with the added risk of someone ruining the big day by turning up in the same silk chiffon confection, hastily culled from the Monsoon sale rail.

Whether you buy designer, high street or vintage, you are branding yourself, not only for the night, but for an internet eternity. Never before have so many hundreds of digital cameras flashed at May Balls 'capturing' the night. To remember, but also to upload. Once tagged, they will become part of your profile, the finishing touches to an idealised (and carefully edited and detagged) portrayal of yourself. Look how fun I am! Look how crazy! Look at me jumping off a waterfall in Thailand! Look at me with this handcrafted vodka luge! Facebook has created a new level of awareness of how we are perceived and how we perceive others. There is no more modern form of PR. The May Ball Dress, then, is far more than a dress; it is a status symbol, a PR stunt, wish-fulfillment in taffeta, and woe betide she who chooses the wrong dress, for she will be judged.

There's a lot waiting for you beyond the Cambridge bubble...



If you're a finalist, probably all you can think about right now is getting through exams and the revels of May Week to come.

And then what's next? Are you going to stay? Are you going to go? Or you just don't know?

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THE VARSITY WEEK

THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS

Theatre

Ongoing until Saturday 16th
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?
ADC: 7.45pm (£7-£9)
See review, p14.

The Wonderful World of Dissocia
Corpus Playroom: 7pm (£5-£6)
See review, p14.

Friday 15th
Art
ADC: 11pm (£5-£6)
See review, p14.

Mark Steel
The Junction: 8pm (£13)
This is comedy. It will be funny.

Saturday 16th
Science and Sensibility
ADC: 11pm (£4-£6)
Ever had the hemisphere of your brain that you predominantly use insulted? This battle of improvised wit promises to resolve once and for all the conflict between the arts and the sciences.

Sunday 17th
MAD Festival 2009
ADC Larkum Studio: 7pm (£4-£5)
Is there a limit to crazy? Find out at this exciting new writing showcase. Runs every Sunday until June 7th.

Tuesday 19th
The City Weeps & Baghdad Monologue
The Junction: 8pm (£6-£12)
Get ready to hear the plucked-string sounds of an ancient lyre, echoing from every corner of electronic space. Runs until Wednesday 20th.

Wednesday 20th
The Odyssey
ADC: 7.45pm (£7-£10)
Who's better than Shakespeare, older than Buddha and the name-sake of the main character in *The Simpsons*? Homer, of course. Hattie Naylor's new adaptation of the big man's classic is set to be a corker. Runs until Saturday 23rd.

Music & Nightlife

Friday 15th
The Broken Family Band
The Junction 1: 7pm (£10)
The Broken Family Band describe themselves as "four men playing music in a band". If that weren't appealing enough, they formed in Cambridge and their latest album is called *Please and Thank You*. They seem exquisitely polite.

Cambridge Band Competition 2009
Corn Exchange: 7pm (£6)
The final of the lung-running local music contest. The finalists are *Sensible Fun*, *The Scissors*, *A.R.T!*, *Ed Hope & Friends* and *After Effect*. We back *Sensible Fun*.



Saturday 16th
Morrissey
Corn Exchange: 7.30pm
Morrissey was the voice of a generation, the pre-eminent popular musician of the late 20th century. A slight disappointment, therefore, to discover that his Cambridge gig is sold out. Bummer.

Wednesday 20th
The Hold Steady
See Pick of the Week.

Thursday 21st
10 Ton Tongue
Portland Arms: 8pm (£5)
"Experimental/Lyrical/Grunge". Excited? Go and see *10 Ton Tongue*, who describe themselves as all those things. They're playing a benefit gig for the annual Strawberry Fair.

Art & Classical

Ongoing Exhibitions
Fitzwilliam Museum (free):
• *Kachōfūgetsu* – the natural world in Japanese prints (until Sunday 17th)
• *Changing faces*: Anthony Van Dyck as an etcher (until Sunday 31st)
• *The Immortal Stone* – Chinese jades (until Sunday 31st)
• *Commodore Perry and the opening of Japan* (until July 5th)
• *Sculpture promenade* (until January 31st)

Museum of Arch and Anth (free):
• *Assembling Bodies* (until Saturday 30th)
Murray Edwards College (free):
• *Anne Teahan: 'Footfalls'* (until Sunday 24th)
University Library (free):
• *Advancing By Degrees* (until June 20th)

Botanic Garden (free):
• *Carnivores: Plants That Bite Back* (until December 31st)

Friday 15th
CUSO performs Prokofiev & Dvořák
West Road Concert Hall: 8pm (£4-£12)
Cambridge's premier symphony orchestra plays the music of two of eastern Europe's greatest composers.

Saturday 16th
Material Intelligence
Kettle's Yard (free)
An exhibition in the gallery section of Kettle's Yard, featuring eight artists' innovative use of everyday materials. Runs until July 12th.

Sunday 17th
Max de Wardener
Kettle's Yard: 12pm (£4-£6)
Kettle's Yard's Sunday Coffee Concerts continue with "a talented multi-instrumentalist and composer".

Tuesday 28th
Cambridge University Wind Orchestra
West Road Concert Hall: 8pm (£5-£10)
The music of Bernstein, Gershwin and Hess.

Talks & Events

Monday 18th
Richard J. Evans' inaugural lecture
Law Faculty: 5pm (free)
The Regius Professor of Modern History gives his inaugural lecture on 'Cosmopolitan Islanders - British Historians and the European Continent'. Professor Evans is one of the world's most respected historians: this chance to see him in action is not one to be missed. To seal the deal, there's a reception afterwards.

Cambridge CAMRA beer festival
Jesus Green
For a less cerebral experience, head to *Jesus Green* for the 36th annual CAMRA beer festival in Cambridge. It is the country's oldest beer festival, and promises well over 300 different drinks. The festival is open on Monday evening (£3.50 admission), Tuesday to Friday lunchtime (free) and evenings (£3.50), and all day on Saturday (£2.50).



Thursday 21st
Material Intelligence: exhibition tour
Thursday 21st
Kettle's Yard: 1.10pm (free)
An unmissable opportunity for a free tour of Kettle's Yard's exciting new exhibition (above), given by its curator Elizabeth Fisher. Should be the perfect introduction for those who run a mile from 'contemporary art', and a million times more interesting than yet another half-hour in the College Library.

Film

Angels & Demons
Arts Picturehouse: (daily except Sun) 12pm, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm; (Sun) 2pm, 5pm, 8pm
A sequel to *The Da Vinci Code*. We have no respect for anyone who would choose to watch this. Genuinely less fun than revision.

Synecdoche, New York
Arts Picturehouse: (daily) 2.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm
Charlie Kaufman's directorial debut promises to be shockingly quirky but probably good – *Philip Seymour Hoffman's* in it. Plus, it gives you an opportunity to talk loudly about the fact that you know what 'synecdoche' means. (Just don't pronounce it 'sin-ek-dosh'.)

Cheri
Arts Picturehouse: (Fri/Sat/Sun/Tue) 5pm, 7pm; (Mon) 12.15pm, 7.15pm; (Wed) 2.30pm, 4.15pm (Thu) 12pm, 4.45pm
A period drama, based on a French novel, starring *Michelle Pfeiffer*. You know instantly whether or not this will appeal to you.

Is Anybody There?
Arts Picturehouse: (Fri-Sun) 2pm; (Mon/Thu) 1.30pm; (Tue) 11.30am; (Wed) 4.45pm
A chirpy, sunny Britflick about a young boy's struggle to come to terms with death. *Fiona from Shameless* is in it. *Michael Caine* plays "an elderly magician in the early stages of dementia".

State of Play
Arts Picturehouse: (Fri/Sat) 11.30am, 4pm; (Mon) 4pm; (Tue) 11.30am; (Wed/Thu) 9.20pm
Another adaptation of a TV series. An investigative journalist, a suspicious Congressman, a series of brutal murders and *Russell Crowe*, fat.

In the Loop
Arts Picturehouse: (Fri-Tue) 9.20pm
If you haven't seen this, you should probably catch this one chance. It's a fucking good film.



The Hold Steady
Wednesday 20th
The Junction 1: 8pm (£15)
The Hold Steady are from Portland, Oregon. For a rock band, they are unfeasibly old, and look much older. They are also unfeasibly good. If this doesn't sell out, it will be an absolutely travesty of justice, so get your tickets NOW to enjoy the lyrical musings of singer *Craig Finn* and the spectacle of a keyboard player who looks like a garlic-seller.



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71 Castle Street**

The first curry I saw in Cambridge was a pile of vomit outside Cindies. For the rest of my first year I persisted with the misconception that there were just two curry houses in Cambridge, both catering to legions of boozed-up revellers who slap each other with naan bread and use papadoms as Frisbees.

However, an unexpected joy of spending my second year in a house halfway to Girton has been the discovery of a magnificent colony of curry houses at the top of Castle Street. Since the New Year, Cocum has added to their number. Specialising in South Indian Keralan Cuisine, I knew it would have to be good to cope with the nearby competition, but I did not realise how good.

By the time I finished my papadom, I was completely sold. I would have thought it sacrilegious to serve papadoms without the holy trinity of onions, lime pickle and mango chutney, but instead it was a revelation. Cocum have a rotating array of home-made pickles and chutneys. We were served vegetable, garlic, fish and chicken chutneys alongside a coconut and coriander yogurt. My dining partner and I were genuinely taken aback by their unusual flavours, and our amiable conversation was very nearly lost to a vicious fight for the remnants.

Cocum's menu aims to overcome the tyranny of the chicken tikka massala with an array of unique Kerala specialities. I opted for Dosa, a South Indian pancake made from lentils and rice stuffed with curry and served with coconut chutney and a vegetable soup. This enormous dish was fantastic, and all the better for being ludicrously well priced.

After a week of evangelising amongst my friends, I returned. This time I opted for a Biryani, a dish I have always suspected was invented to allow chefs to mix leftover curry and rice to serve up the next day. However, the menu informed me that it is in fact part of the traditional marriage feast of Kerala Muslims, so suitably corrected I thought I would give it a go. Instead of the usual dry flavourless pile of rice, Cocum's Biryani was a wonderful collection of ingredients and spices complemented with raitha and a homemade lime chutney.

Leaving for the second time, I was in a good mind to give up on my exams and dedicate the next two weeks to trying everything on their menu. If you need some South Indian sun to brighten your day, Cocum is well worth a walk up the hill.

Robert Peal**REVIEWS****Graham Coxon****Soul Tree****Tuesday May 12th**

★★★★★

When I stood on my tiptoes and peered over the stage crew to see Graham Coxon's set list taped to an amp, I was hoping a few of my old favourites had made the cut. As I scanned the list, I quickly realised this show was for *The Spinning Top* and *The Spinning Top* alone.

The Spinning Top is Coxon's new record and follows the story of a man from his birth to his death. On Tuesday night, Coxon played through it almost in its entirety, every track but one. With the new record being quite diverse, the show followed suit. Coxon and his band kept the set fluid and elegant and never allowed it to feel disjointed, despite the variety of material they were playing.

The ex-Blur man opened the show with 'Look Into The Light', a delicate number played on acoustic guitar, which set the tone for the evening; Coxon had many incredibly pretty songs like this to play from his new record.

Much of *The Spinning Top* is very involved and intricate, an effect which was amplified during this performance. There were only ever three people on stage at a time, between them playing a total of six instruments. Despite the stripped-down performance, nothing present on the record escaped the live show. It was obvious within the first few notes that Coxon is a gifted musician and there was to be no carelessness in this performance. His playing was deliberate, conscien-

tious and expertly executed.

'Dead Bees' was a set highlight. The track felt raucous and guttural. It was even more pleasing given that its authority came as quite a surprise after all the delicateness that came before it, a perfect example of how the show (and the album) switched effortlessly between styles.

It is nearly impossible not to think of Mr Coxon's last band when you're watching his solo show; they are being talked about rather a lot at the moment (a headline slot at Glastonbury does tend to capture attention). I admit I expected to find myself becoming nostalgic and crossing my fingers for a quick, if unlikely, rendition of 'The Universal'. But the show didn't leave any time for thoughts



PAUL SMITH

like that; by the end my only thought was, if all of Blur are this good alone, come June 28th, we are in for a treat.
Lucy Bryant

Singles Round-Up**This week's new releases, reviewed and rated****Ladyhawke - 'Back Of The Van'**

★★★★★

Pip Brown, aka Ladyhawke (above), is quickly becoming one of the artists of 2009. This brilliant slice of '80s revivalism, which takes the classic waiting-by-the-phone love song and adds Police-esque guitars and a cheeky new wave chorus, has one of those hooks which buries deep into your brain and

leaves you humming it for the whole day. With 'My Delirium' under her arm as well, Ladyhawke could be one to watch at summer festivals. Simply put, brilliant.

Asher Roth - 'I Love College'

★★★★★

Imagine a Miller-fueled, weed-soaked frat party in America. A young Asher Roth is dancing with a naked girl, a beer bong in his pocket and a piece of \$1-a-slice pizza in his hand... he thinks, "Dude, maybe I should, like, put this into a song. Now pass me a joint..." You've just imagined 'I Love College', the Budweiser 'wassup!' advert of lo-fi white-boy rapping. Roth is admittedly a man of simple pleasures - he loves college/drinking/women/college - though it's hard not to like the slacker guitar/drum loop and such lyrical gems as "I am champion of beer pong". Now, who's

for a keg stand?

Lily Allen - 'Not Fair'

★★★★★

Taken from her recent album *It's Not Me, It's You*, Lily Allen seems to be continuing the finger-pointing theme, this time setting her sights on her underperforming boyfriend. Perhaps someone should tell Lily, then, that the best way to convey disappointment isn't through employing Johnny Cash's ex-backing band for this strange mix-up of good ol' timey-feel pseudo-country and lyrical moaning. It's not all bad, though - listen out for the comedy harmonica used to censor a lyric halfway through.

The Horrors - 'Who Can Say'

★★★★★

Are Faris Badwan and his cast of Tim Burton extras slowly turning into Joy Division? Whatever's happening to the

Horrors, it seems to be working; 'Who Can Say' has all the swagger of the Jesus And Mary Chain matched with an ace keyboard riff (nabbing the sound from the Mancunian miserabilists' 'Love Will Tear Us Apart'). A short and sweet bit of Gothrock.

Deadmau5 & Kaskadee - 'I Remember'

★★★★★

Sounding exactly the same as most bands with names like Deadmau5 - that's you Basshunter/Cascada/Scooter - 'I Remember' pretty much nails the whole trance-anthem-with-whispery-female-vocal thing. If you have a particularly aggressive subwoofer fetish, this is for you.

Laurie Tuffrey

All the singles reviewed are out this week, except 'Back Of The Van', released May 18th.

Arena of Ambition: A History of the Cambridge Union**Stephen Parkinson****Icon Books, out 30 May**

★★★★★

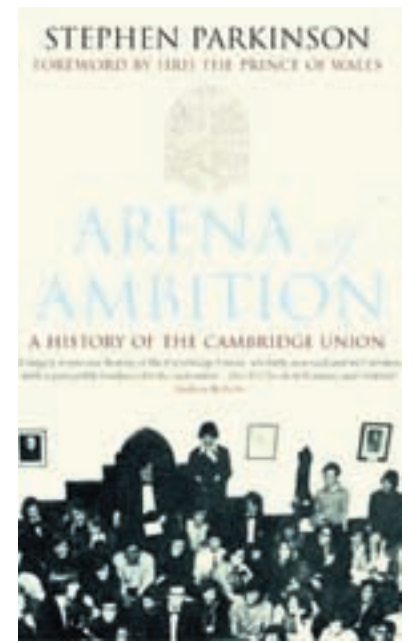
Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them. This isn't their story. This is the story of big fish in a small pond, and their brief brush with recognition.

Picking up where Percy Craddock's 1953 *Recollections of the Cambridge Union* leaves off, *Arena of Ambition* details the intricate and continually politicised history of the Union with recollections from the likes of Arianna Huffington, Michael Howard, Norman Lamont and Douglas Hurd. Stephen Parkinson's research is meticulous and fascinating, clearly explained for non-Union aficionados, and creates a narrative for the Union's sprawling and disparate history, moving from the Second World War (in which the Union was bombed), to the battle to admit women, and ending (thankfully, for the more recent presidents among us) in 1990 with President Reagan's visit.

Cambridge Union presidents - and their less successful electoral opponents, whose failures are frequently and brutally detailed in this book - are of a very particular breed: willing to put themselves up for election against their contemporaries and friends, shamelessly hack for votes and place themselves under the scrutiny of the membership. It is both exciting and slightly disconcerting to realise how little the Cambridge Union has changed in its near-200 year old history. Like much of the University it retains its traditions and quirks. Parkinson, President of the Union in Lent 2004, does not shy away from the gory details of Union disputes. Yet this book is not exclusive: there is a certain voyeurism in reading these individuals' recollections as they look back on their undergraduate youth, ruthlessness and vigour with wry humour and often fondness.

How many readers of this book

are likely to feel genuine sickness sweep over them as Peter Bazalgette recounts his discovery that the Union was on fire and much of the chamber destroyed? Probably not many (I had to set the book aside for a whole day). This is clearly a book of niche interest: unless you've endured the convoluted and tiresome election process, or sat through a members' business meeting, it may be worth skimming over some of the finer points of constitutional changes and committee divisions. But *Arena of Ambition* is a treasure trove of anecdotes and juicy details, for which presidents would have sold their grandmothers to prevent *Varsity* discovering. *Arena of Ambition* is both well-written and carefully compiled, and is, doubtless, a labour of love about a unique institution; it should be essential reading for anyone considering a Union career.

Olivia Potts**(President of the Union, Lent 2009)**

Lucky No. 7

RIISING STAR WEI TE-SHENG'S FIRST FILM, CAPE NO. 7, WAS A RUNAWAY SUCCESS IN TAIWAN LAST YEAR. ON A RECENT VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE, HE SPOKE WITH MAYLIN TU ABOUT RISKING HIS LIVELIHOOD AND HIS FAMILY FOR THE CHANCE TO MAKE IT BIG

It is the stuff of fairy tale if not of legend: an entrepreneurial writer/director risks house, marriage and sanity to make his first feature film, ending up £600,000 in the hole and on the verge of losing everything. Against all expectation, the film becomes a box office smash, winning its audience with true-to-life characters, veracious language and local humour, ultimately making more money than any other nationally produced or foreign film in its country's history – save *Titanic*.

This is the story of Taiwanese director Wei Te-sheng and his debut film *Cape No. 7* (2008).

Cape No. 7 tells the story of old and new love in modern day Taiwan. Aga, a failed rock musician, returns home from Taipei to the southern coastal town of Hengchun, disaffected and disheartened by his lack of success. Through political and parental maneuvering, he ends up working as a postman and leading a band supervised by an irritable and irritating Japanese ex-model, Tomoko. Tempers flare and cultures clash as the band prepares for its debut as the opening act for a popular Japanese singer at a concert held by the local resort. Underneath all this is a cryptic history: seven love letters from a Japanese teacher to his Chinese ex-student, written after the reoccupation of Taiwan by the Chinese Kuomintang in 1945.

For a newly minted director of blockbuster films, forty-year-old Wei Te-sheng is disarmingly candid about the vicissitudes of low-budget filmmaking. Last term, he screened *Cape No. 7* for a mainly Chinese audience in conjunction with the Cambridge Department of East Asian Studies, and afterwards we got the chance to talk.

“AT THE TIME IT WAS JUST AS HARD TO FIND NT\$100 MILLION AS IT WAS TO FIND NT\$10 MILLION. AND SO I THOUGHT, WHY NOT TRY FOR 100 MILLION?”

Wei started out in engineering, but became interested in film after serving in the military with a friend who had studied film. The two eventually went to Taipei together to try their luck in the industry. Wei tells me about the two tough years that followed:

“My first job was at a television station. At that time Taiwanese films were getting worse and worse, so a lot of the people making movies were switching to television. If there was a movie to shoot and someone didn't want to go they would send me instead.

“They wanted to make television. I wanted to make movies.”

Wei eventually got a job as assistant director on the set of acclaimed Taiwanese filmmaker Edward Yang's film *Mahjong* (1996). At this point,

Wei was twenty-seven years old and had been working at the television station for several years.

Originally hired as only a low-level assistant, Wei got bumped up after delays in production caused experienced crew members to drop out. While it was fortuitous career-wise, Wei's rapid ascension ultimately proved to be a mixed blessing. Although all of the principal production positions were filled by trained professionals, he found himself leading a line crew as inexperienced as himself:

“I got yelled at [by Yang] every day. I got yelled at until I couldn't even walk straight – I couldn't walk down the street, couldn't do anything without wondering, am I doing this right? I found out many years later that I was the only person he ever yelled at from day one to the very last day of the shoot. This had never happened before – I broke the record.”

Wei maintains that this daily abuse helped him to learn faster and that Yang's demanding habits as a director proved helpful in the end.

In the meantime, Wei continued to practice his craft by making several award-winning short films as “practice”. Eventually, he felt ready to step out as a feature film director, but the film industry was suffering an all-time low:

“I had been in the industry for ten years and I had trained myself to be the kind of person ready to enter the battlefield. But where was my battlefield? At the time it was just as hard to find NT\$100 million as it was to find NT\$10 million. And so I thought, why not try for 100?”

So Wei dreamed up *Seediq Bale*, an historical epic about an aboriginal Taiwanese uprising against the

Japanese during colonial rule. The film would have cost at least NT\$200 million (£4 million) to make. Wei shot a five-minute trailer for the film to show to potential investors. No one was interested.

While he was pitching his epic to investors, filmmakers in Taiwan began realizing a great profit could be made on low-budget films made for only NT\$5 or 6 million. So Wei decided to write something “a little smaller” to cash in on the trend. But with one condition; he refused to sacrifice on quality. “Taiwan has a saying: ‘If you have this much money, do this many things,’ but I disagree. If you want to do this many things, find this much money.”

That small film – *Cape No. 7* – eventually exploded into a NT\$50 million (£1 million) project.

The film received a grant of NT\$5 million for production from the Taiwanese Government Information Office, but needed an additional NT\$15 million to continue production, on top of what had already been borrowed. The government offered to guarantee 80% of the loan, but banks still refused to loan the money. As Wei puts it, “Things were bad from the beginning.”

But Wei wasn't about to quit: “*Seediq Bale* had already failed, so if I didn't go through with *Cape No. 7*, then I was going to lose face big time. I had to do it no matter what.”

By the end of the second week, the production already owed money. “That was a very tense period. If a bank hadn't lent us money, we would probably have had to stop filming. At the last minute, a bank agreed to lend us half of what we needed.” That was the first crisis. After one and a half months of filming, another bank offered to lend them the other half and a second crisis was averted.

“A lot of miracles occurred during the filming of this movie,” Wei says.

“You can't imagine what it was like. I would shoot a scene, and after it was finished, the actors would go to make-up and the lighting technicians would be doing their work, striking the lights and what not. And what was I doing? Calling people and asking for money.”

Wei used all his connections to find potential lenders. No amount was too small: “[I would ask], ‘Do you have 2 million? 1 million? 500,000? 200,000?’ If they didn't have it, then, ‘Do you have any friends with money? How much can they lend?’

“I did this over and over again. Everyone asked me how I could keep asking for money. The thing is, do you yell ‘cut!’ or do you borrow the money? Of course, you would rather borrow. Then they ask, ‘But what if you can't pay it back?’ Well, don't think about it too much!”

In the course of raising money for *Cape No. 7*, Wei and his wife refinanced their home. As Wei and the production got deeper and deeper into debt, familial pressures mounted.

In what he describes as a “really bad situation,” Wei admits, “I almost lost my family.”

“Actually, at the time I didn't speak to my wife for three months – she didn't speak to me, I didn't speak to her.” They did, however, reconcile after the film finished shooting. “Now she laughs about it,” Wei says.

In a climate of economic and political tension, *Cape No. 7* is nothing less than a dream come true for its director.

Luckily for Wei, funding for his next film, the long-awaited *Seediq Bale*, shouldn't be as much of a problem this time around (given *Cape No. 7*'s box office success). Few people feel trepidation betting on a winner.



CLAUDIA STOCKER

View from the
Groundlings

Well, congratulations, I suppose. You've managed to survive the soaring suicide rates of EXAM TERM and even found time to grab a cheeky copy of *Varsity*. So perhaps you'll join me in a toast to, I propose, all the actors, directors and technicians who continue to believe that there really is life beyond the cramped alcoves of the University Library.

These noble souls, these great beacons of our age, have cast aside dusty tomes detailing the minutiae of Latin grammar and are returning, once more, to the stage. From there they selflessly serve their fellow students by providing first class entertainment and an all too timely chance to chill the hell out.

This week's Übermensch includes the team behind *Science and Sensibility*, an ADC lateshow on Saturday that promises to resolve the conflict between the arts and the sciences. With a scuffle between Einstein and Shakespeare and a showdown between the right and left hemispheres of the brain, hilarity will no doubt ensue.

I'm sad to report that things are a little quiet over the next couple of weeks. Some light amidst the gloom will be provided by productions of *The Dumb Waiter* and *The Burial at Thebes*, both at the Corpus Playroom in Week 6. However, I'd pinpoint Week 7 as the moment when Cambridge drama truly returns to its usual rude health, as we see five student productions, among which will be *Wishful Thinking*, the latest instalment from the Footlights, and *The Ugly One* at Jesus College. This misleadingly named play is about a man who becomes too handsome for his own good after plastic surgery. As ever, I wish I could say I knew the feeling.

May Week is, of course, set to be a Bacchic orgy of theatrical delights. *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Comedy of Errors*, at Clare and Caius respectively, will provide the obligatory dose of Shakespeare in tights. While you're at it, I'd suggest you catch *Little Shop of Horrors* at Trinity Hall. This cult musical tells the story of an impoverished florist who achieves fame and fortune by nurturing a blood-sucking, man-eating plant and the catastrophic consequences that follow. Hang on, now I think of it, a global disaster brought on by the greed of a small handful of individuals, it almost sounds like a credit crunch fable. What a remarkably visionary director.

Well, that's what I call a rough guide to Exam Term drama. Be sure to see everything I mentioned. *Joel Massey*

THEATRE

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? by Edward Albee

ADC Theatre, May 12th-16th

Dir. Robyn Hoedemaker; *Stitch in Time*

★★★★★

I have never come out of a play so depressed. I couldn't quite put my finger on why, but it certainly wasn't the fault of a good production of a difficult play.

Edward Albee's half-satire, half-melodrama of bourgeois life in a university town promised to hit the right note for an embittered second-year happy to see figures not unlike his supervisors suffering uncharacteristic bouts of maniacal sexual deviancy. Add to that a dependency upon alcohol that made the biggest tossers of your College drinking society look like Puritans, and the evening promised to be a feast of transferable schadenfreude. By the end, however, I fled the ADC in desperate need of a drink and a suitcase full of Benson and Hedges.

The play revolves around a series of revelations about Martha and George's

married life which does more than just scratch away the veneer of middle class respectability, but actually rips up the floorboards. We soon learn that their guests, fresh-faced newlyweds from way out West, are far from perfect either. The plaudits must go to Elizabeth Donnelly, who was horny, desperate and magnificent as Martha, middle-aged wife of Ed Rowett's bumbling George, the professor who hides his cruel insinuations behind Latin proverbs and feigned deafness.

Martha and George's intrigues are largely illusory, but, as the programme notes ask, "are they really having fun?" Despite Rowett's excellent one liners and Donnelly's burlesqued sluttiness, the answer seems to be that they weren't. Too often the outrageous stories, such as the time Martha punched George 'acciden-

tally,' were told as if the actors were fully aware of the pain they were causing each other, and not with a sense of disregard. The emotional torment that they were inflicting upon each other wasn't really balanced by the idea that they were playing a game, which meant that, with each shocking revelation, we were offered no comic escape from the overwhelming bleakness of murderous impulse and Oedipal desire.

Robyn Hoedemaker's production captured a sense of the tragedy of two middle-aged lives wasted, and the impending horror of marriage that seems the inevitable fate of their young guests. But maybe I was wrong to be so depressed – as the play ends George and Martha hold each other and sing. *Pascal Porcheron*



JOE PITT-RASHID

JANET EVANS



Art by Yasmina Reza

ADC Theatre, May 12th-15th

Dir. Simon Evans; *Magic EEL*

★★★★★

I have to admit, I wasn't really looking forward to *Art*. It's about three friends who fall out when one of them pays an exorbitant amount of money for what is essentially a white painting. "I know all the arguments about modern art," I thought to myself, moseying around daintily on my high horse; "Isn't this a little out of date?" Quite unsurprisingly, I was well wrong; *Art*, let us be clear, is a complete triumph.

I knew I was wrong as soon as I sat down. The fairly simple set had a rather neat and witty twist: hung each side of the problematic canvas were two of the most disgusting paintings I've ever seen. One was a rather bizarre, fairy-story landscape that looked like it had been painted by a little pixie version of John Constable, and the other was an orangey

bit of oriental toss. Totally ghastly, it looked like someone had sicked-up an Irn-Bru bar. The point being, that traditionally 'decorative' art can be just as stomach-pumpingly awful and vile and artless as anything the modern machine can churn out.

Anyway, in a slight departure from the original script, this production boasts an all-female cast – and it works magnificently. Marc, Serge and Yvan are re-imagined as Marie, Sarah and Eve, and that slight feminine touch to the script just seems to open up the characters beautifully. Their prickly nastiness seems that little bit more pronounced, as does their vulnerability.

It just totally works; and it works because *Art* is immaculately cast. Sarah (Eve Rosato), the girl that buys the white

painting, is played excellently. Argumentative, pretentious, a little, well, brassy, Rosato gives a spirited and nuanced performance. Ellie Ross's Marie is similarly brilliant. Headstrong and confrontational, Ross plays Marie as though she has a personal vendetta against Sarah that fuels her incessant need to callously chip away at everything. Lucy Evans' Eve is equally remarkable. Desperately trying to bridge the gap between her friends, Evans manages to convey a real pool of melancholia that sits just beneath the jaunty surface; when Sarah and Marie turn on her, it is quite genuinely heartbreaking.

Art is a fantastic play. It manages to be thought-provoking without being preachy and very funny without being frivolous. It is, in short, great, actually. *Nathan Brooker*

The Wonderful World of Dissocia by Anthony Neilson

Corpus Playroom, May 12th-16th

Dir. Anna Harpin; *FallOut Theatre Company*

★★★★★

"I've lost an hour of my life and I want it back!" Believe me, Lisa, that is what we were all thinking after *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*; although count yourself lucky, for we had lost over two hours. In this term where time is tight and tempers taut, directors have to do something pretty exceptional. I am sure that hoards of superior critics would be supercilious enough to eulogize the surreal and otherworldly nature of the piece. I am afraid that this critic is going to be down-to-earth: this *Alice in Wonderland* style play never quite hit the mark and was little more than a pile of pretentious prattle.

Watching Max Barton lick dusty hotdogs off the floor and then sit there whilst the slimy sausages are hurled at us is not fun or comical. Likewise, having an angry Scotsman wave his

penis at us is frankly nothing less than embarrassing and awkward in the close quarters of the Corpus Playroom. The anal rape scene was vile and left everyone squirming and shifting, and not in a contemplative, thought-provoking way. Maybe I sound a prude. Prim and properness is not what caused my objections. I genuinely think that many of the supposedly 'edgy' effects were simply not entertaining; on the contrary, they were insipidly inane.

The second half turned the tables on the LSD-induced trip that was the first half, as everyone knew it would. An audience, especially a Cambridge audience, can probably work out the actress's emotion by her... acting. There was no need to have an extended period of silence in a white box to hammer home the point that this was a

bored, mentally ill girl. We got it.

Some truly brilliant actors were prostituting themselves in this ridiculous play. Abigail Rokison's decline into madness was executed with tenderness and sincerity. The insecurity guards made the most of their one-joke parts and my hat goes off to them. The group dance ensemble was slick and entertaining. But thank heavens for Tamara Astor: she was the saving grace of the play. When we were writhing and wriggling in our seats out of sheer unease, it was heavenly knowing that the antidote lay within easy reach: like an addict grappling with the screw top of the bottle of methadone, we all sought out Tamara with her unstinting energy and hilarious facial gymnastics. And we heaved a sigh of relief. *Victoria Ball*



ANNA HARPIN

Jamie Ptaszynski

Sport Comment



New Balls, Please

The British can claim to have invented a fair few popular sports. The rules for Association Football were laid down right here at Cambridge, William Webb-Ellis had his famous moment on a sports field in Warwickshire and the sound of leather striking willow on a warm summer afternoon is as intrinsically British as warm beer or Prince Harry's ginger hair.

But it seems the world is growing weary with our sporting creations. In a shocking and, frankly, ungentlemanly display of honesty, Chris Gayle said on Tuesday that he "would not be so sad" if Test cricket fell by the wayside. As the 20:20 league, funded by India, played in South Africa, grows rapidly in popularity, such important British characteristics as patience, grit and the ability to sit through five days of ball-crunchingly dull cricket (when everybody knows that half an hour of rain on day four will probably be the deciding factor) are being hideously undermined by the international sporting community.

It's not the first time we've seen our sports reinvented: Most of the newfan-

gled games they play across the pond are actually just re-branded versions of our own women's sports. Baseball is a less amusing version of rounders and basketball is simply an attempt by some confused American to inject some excitement (and plenty of commercial breaks) into netball. Ice hockey is Unihoc (as played by eleven-year-old girls)

"We are and always have been brilliant at making up rules"

but on a different surface and with extra punching. To be fair, what the Americans call football is definitely a man's game, or at least it would be if they didn't play while wrapped, essentially, in a large sofa.

Though Test cricket is perhaps the most endangered, it is not the only British sporting institution to come under

scrutiny this year. Sepp Blatter is doing his best to end the dominance of the Premier League in Europe by introducing a system of quotas for home-grown players which would leave even Stoke struggling to field a team. Some suspect that he bribed the referee to knock Chelsea out of the Champions' League. Even the British Grand Prix is on the

brink of extinction, with Silverstone out of favour and Donington under-prepared. Ecclestone has repeatedly said he would be happy to take it to the Middle East, or the Far East, where the viewing market and sponsorships would be "more lucrative". At least we have a couple of decent British drivers nowadays: a great contrast with tennis,

where the first potentially great British player since Fred Perry refuses to admit that Scotland is part of the United Kingdom and speaks in a hideous semi-American drawl.

What I propose we do is generously to donate football, cricket, Formula One, tennis and any other great British sports to the rest of the world and get on with the task of inventing some more for ourselves. These new sports would play to our strengths: Perhaps a five-day version of football with a bigger pitch and long lunch-breaks. Or a combination of rugby and rounders where you can get brutally tackled to prevent you reaching the bases. Or tennis played with a square ball and more cucumber sandwiches.

We are and always have been brilliant at making up rules and no doubt these new sports would soon catch on worldwide and be changed to allow for Chris Gayle's incredible laziness. But that's fine, because that is our role in the worldwide sporting community. We will never be great players, or drivers, or hosts: We are inventors.

Cooney's Marathon

(Continued...)

sweating log-like on playback at three different points of the 26.2 mile course too. As I say, I saw some bad shit.

Though no actual shit. Curbs piled high with empty water bottles and drizzled with acidic yellow spewed up energy drinks that seemed to glisten in the sun were as bad as it got. And when it got bad for me, and I felt the call of nature, or a desire to check my appearance in anticipation of my father's video camera, I opted to duck under the feeble plastic barriers and head to the nearest pub. No grotty portaloos for Lauren.

Thankfully there are many pubs en route. And the route in general is rather fabby, for runner and spectator alike. Particularly between 11 and 18 miles, adrenaline is high: you cross the midpoint at Tower Bridge, the crowds are full and thronging, and you try to capture the essence on your camera phone but it turns out you took a succession of photos that look like a chin with a spire coming out of it. Still everyone is buzzing and for some magical miracle reason your legs feel like a car.

But at 19 miles my legs cramped over. The sensual relationship I had developed with my physio over Easter was rendered a sham. Moreover, the mental horror of 10-minute miles suddenly taking 30 minutes induced a fear of boredom. This is where Peter Andre would have been amusing. I knew I was going to finish, and I knew my legs had pretty much frozen for good; I needed some entertainment to see me through the last seven miles. My fellow runners were similarly suffering. We all had our name printed across the front of our t-shirts so the crowd could cheer us on. Occasionally a member of the pack broke ahead for a stretch, and the crowd erupted with "John!... Lauren! (cheers guys)... Dream Team Katie Price and Peter Andre!..." but this only lasted for 200m, and the comedy of these brief eruptions quickly overwhelmed any ability to provoke them.

And so it was with a smile on my face I crossed the finish line. My dad's footage even shows a sweet little victory jump. A fortnight on I haven't stopped telling people how much I enjoyed the experience, and am hoping to do it again next year. I'm still raising money and will remind you of my sponsorship website, but first I want to encourage you all to run and raise money yourself: unlike chums Peter and Jordan, I guarantee you can go the distance. www.everyclick.com/laurencooney

Darts win for bullish Blues

Cambridge	3
Oxford	10

Doug Speed

Last weekend, eight stout fellows from Cambridge made history by claiming the University's first ever win in the thirteen-year history of the darts Varsity Match. The result looked unlikely when Oxford raced into a 10-2 lead in the best-of-thirteen match. But, with just the beer leg remaining, Oxford shocked the Cambridge team when they suggested the final contest become a decider. And thus the eight finest dartists in Oxford faced off against the only eight students in Cambridge willing to brave the X5.

Winning the bull off, Cambridge's number one opened with a surprising ton. What followed will give scorers across the country nightmares. While Oxford mechanically pounded the twenty, Cambridge's wayward darts somehow fluked high scores. A solid 60 was matched by a confused 73, a conventional 100 by a two-dart 83.

Both sides reached an outshot at the same time. Still Oxford were unfazed, having witnessed Cambridge's previous lame attempts at finishes: an early throw at bull had hit double one, an aim at double one had hit the fire extinguisher. Then Oxford made the most treacherous of schoolboy of errors, leaving themselves with three remaining, needing a one and a double one.

Cambridge meanwhile had continued to hit everything except their target and found themselves needing double two. Up stepped Aaron, a rugby player by trade, whose only contribution thus far had been to scare the bejesus out a poor-value member of the opposition called Aimsforth. As you will have guessed, he hit double two and the room erupted into a stunned silence. True to their word, Oxford allowed Cambridge to rub victory in their faces before witnessing a spontaneous parade round the quad.

And so the 3-10 triumph was secured. Cambridge are now searching for competent players for next year's return leg.

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College Catch-up

Mens' Cuppers Hockey

A sunny May evening at Wilberforce Astro was to be the scene of a great battle between Emma and Jesus hockey teams. Early goals from Scotland U21 Nick Parkes and a Dave Madden drag flick went unanswered, despite excellent midfield play from Emma. Chances came for the losing side in the form of several penalty corners, but inept scoops and over-complicated routines were absorbed by Jesus' experienced defence. Emma fought to the end and the final 6-0 score line was not a fair representation of their performance.

Sport

Where did it all go wrong?

Jamie Ptaszynski discusses the future of British sport...
p15

VARSlTY MATCH RUNNING TOTAL: CAMBRIDGE 20, OXFORD 17. NEXT UP: CRICKET, ATHLETICS, TENNIS, CYCLING



Jenny Morgan controls her horse around the paddock and the victorious Cambridge team pose with the trophy (inset).

Cooney's Marathon



Lauren Cooney

Week 4

In which Lauren finally runs the London marathon...

The plaintive news of Jordan and Peter Andre's divorce struck like an icy cord on the wee hours of Tuesday morning. Surely this must be the tabloid super-story of insanity? No-one knew, or thought they knew, better than me the divinely special bond that held these two together. No amount of OK! coverage could ever quite convey their love. I saw it, I saw it with my own envious eyes. I saw Peter Andre helping his injured damsel across the finish line of the 2009 London Marathon.

Obviously I saw this from my seated grandstand position, finisher's medal proudly hung from my neck, having completed the race a few hours earlier. But I still bloody saw it.

And boy would I have loved Peter Andre to have bunny hopped me along the long, and soul-splittingly arduous course. I was that desperate. I saw a lot of things out there, man, a lot of things a player should never have to see. I saw grown men buckle over and vomit up Lucozade; I saw three armadillos rub alongside me before disappearing into the horizon (despite repeating constant mental mantras of "just stay in front of the armadillo, it's a fucking armadillo, where's that armadillo going, what's that? Oh, it's another armadillo... just stay in front of the armadillo"); I saw my parents beaming wildly at three different points of the 26.2 mile course, and my old man filmed it so I went home and saw myself

Continued on page 15

Strictly Come Prancing

» Cambridge secure sixth consecutive victory in Varsity horseback riding competition

Varsity Sport

Zara Philips wasn't there. I'm not Simon Barnes. Yet this is an article on horse riding, on the back page of a respected newspaper. And with good reason, because Cambridge are bloody good at it.

Long established experts at the sitting down sports, the Light Blues have an excellent record when it comes to the ponies. And last weekend was no exception as the equestrian team stormed ahead to take Varsity honours for the sixth consecutive year.

Coming into the two-phase competition the home side were clear favourites after a year that has included a strong performance at the National Champion-

Cambridge	12
Oxford	113

ships and the inclusion of Sam Cutts in the British Student Squad. But horses can be great levellers and no one was willing to tempt fate for fear of literally biting the dust later on.

The day started well for the Cambridge four with three riders receiving zero penalties after the first round of dressage. Consisting of poncing around on borrowed horses (enormous, by the way), the dressage phase depends entirely on the opinion of a judge on a series of

complex movements.

The second round was more of the same, with Cambridge relishing the challenge of some more taxing movements and some slightly more normal sized animals to ride. Fresher Georgie Messenger had to work particularly hard to coax anything like impulsion out of a difficult mare, whilst Chilean team member Juanjo Sarralde Tassara made up for a less-than-perfect start with a clean sheet.

At the break for lunch (they don't call it the sport of kings for nothing), Cambridge lead by a margin of 113 points. But there was still all to play for in the jumping: the host farm had lost three of its jumping horses in the week before the competition, so it was far from certain

that the replacements would fit the bill.

Juanjo got the team off to a great start with a clean sheet on his first ride while captain Jenny Morgan suffered a refusal on her inexperienced mount. Oxford matched the pace, putting out two clears of their own. When Georgie Messenger came a cropper on her second difficult ride of the day, it seemed Cambridge's cushion might not be enough.

The final round of jumping was equally tense but this time the team performed more consistently, with clear rounds from the first two and a couple of rolled poles for the latter. It was enough to secure another victory for the Light Blues, and individual honours for Cambridge's Sam Cutts.

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