

# ~ DAILY ~ VARSITY

THURSDAY  
FINAL ISSUE

Thursday June 18th 2009

The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

Issue no 699 | varsity.co.uk

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Exclusive interview:  
Making The Mays



»p5 Ball Reviews

Last night's Balls  
reviewed inside!



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Old school

## Class of 2009: 40,000 graduates face unemployment

Gemma Oke

Figures collected for *the Guardian* suggest that up to 40,000 graduates of the class of 2009 will still be out of work six months after graduation.

The figures, compiled by the Higher Education Careers Service Unit (HECSU), suggest that as many as one in ten of this year's graduates could be out of work after graduating, adding to a general rise in unemployment among under-25s.

New figures released by the Office for National Statistics show that overall unemployment rose at the start of 2009 by an increment of 232,000, taking the jobless total to 2.26 million. In contrast, the total number of job vacancies appearing between March and May 2009 stood at 444,000.

Responding to the survey, David Lammy, the Universities Minister at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), told *the Guardian* that despite the bleak outlook on the jobs market, a university degree was still a valuable

### 2.26m

Total number of jobless in the UK at the start of 2009

### 0.44m

Number of job vacancies, in thousands, appearing between March and May 2009

qualification. "It will be harder for some to go into the exact career they wanted," he acknowledged, "but over a lifetime it will help them get where they want to be."

The Cambridge University Careers Service has seen a sharp increase in the number of graduates and final year students using its resources. Gordon Chesterman, the Service's director, told *Varsity* that graduates "shouldn't panic [but] should be realistic and make full use of the services on offer".

Chesterman said, "In the third week of Michaelmas term, we had 2,100 enquiries compared with 1,700 at the same time last year. Usually the unemployment level for Cambridge students six months after graduation is between 3.5 and 4 percent; this year I will be disappointed if it is above 5 percent."

"Employers are still targeting Cambridge graduates, and a large proportion of graduates - around 45 percent - go into sectors like postgraduate research, which aren't really affected by the recession. When the economy improves, there will probably be a lot of job swapping, as employers start recruiting again."

"A small number of people have put aside the Service, and careers, completely. For these people and for next year's finalists, we're really stepping up services over the summer and into Michaelmas 2009. We've got short term help, like our Summer Careers Fair on June 24, and longer term help with skills events and advice and peer support from alumni. We're also actively looking for vacancies in competitive areas like the media for students."

He conceded that there would have to be some flexibility among graduates to win vacancies.

*Continued on page 4*



Queueing for King's Affair – Hedonopolis

## Department of Higher Education and Department for Business merge

Heidi Aho

Two weeks ago, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) was merged with the Department for Business to form one "super-ministry" – the department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

The University and College Union

expressed their disappointment that Brown's Government has eliminated the DIUS, which was devoted specifically to higher education issues. Likewise, the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) found the merger "unsettling".

HEPI spokesmen argue that the merger is troubling because a higher education system is not valuable to Brit-

ain solely for economic reasons. They believe that the merger implies Governmental conviction that universities are an economic tool alone, thus undermining their contribution to the cultural and intellectual spheres of society.

Lord Mandelson, head of the newly created BIS, has claimed that such accusations rest on a false dichotomy.

"Universities contribute as much to the character of our society and the development of individuals in society as they do to the competitiveness of the economy. Those things are not mutually exclusive," he told *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, adding that three "high-placed friends in different universities" had already told him they

were "delighted" with the formation of the new ministry.

Although Mandelson admitted that in future applied research "will obviously receive greater emphasis", he stressed that other areas would not be ignored. Any university, he said, necessarily includes "a substantial element of fundamental curiosity-driven research".

MICHAEL DERRINGER

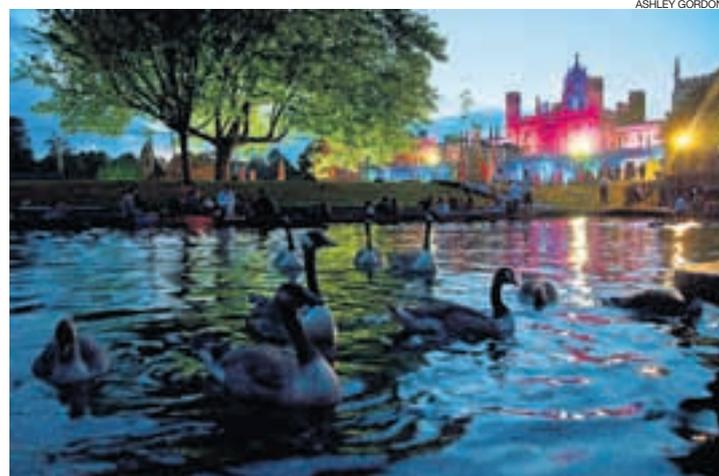
Got a good picture? Email it to [mayweek@varsity.co.uk](mailto:mayweek@varsity.co.uk)



HARRY BULLIVANT

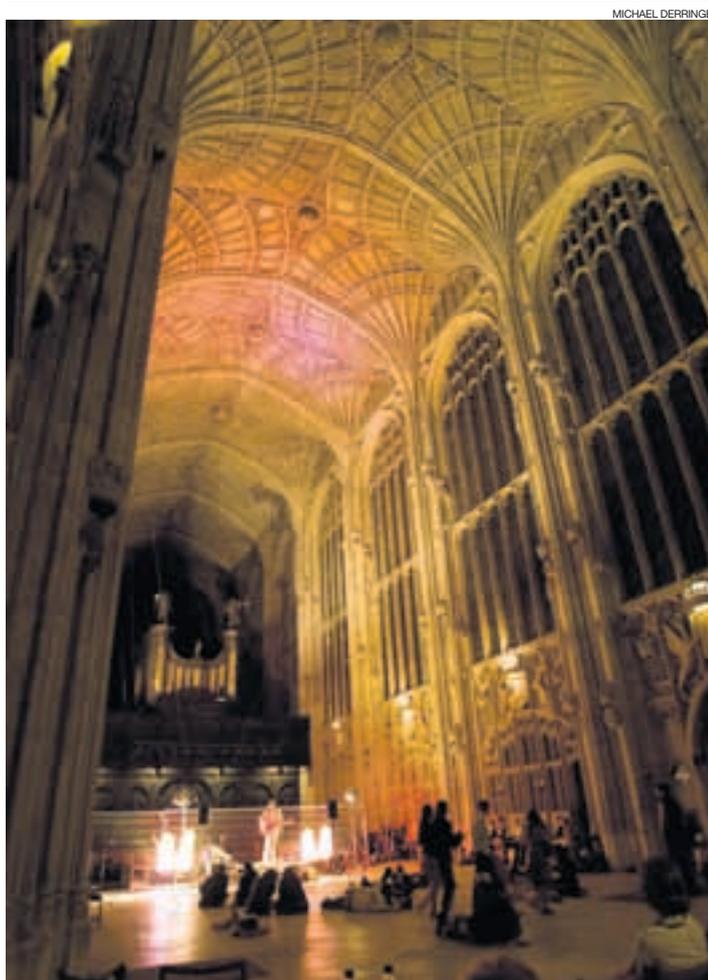


MICHAEL DERRINGER



ASHLEY GORDON

MICHAEL DERRINGER



MICHAEL DERRINGER



## News

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Learn how CBSP has been helping Balls reduce their environmental footprints.



**Cambridge Spies » p4**  
Yesterday's hottest gossip, written up so that no one can understand it.

## Ball Reviews

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**King's Affair, Trinity Hall June Event, Pembroke & Magdalene Balls**  
All of last night's Balls are reviewed on these pages. We REALLY need to sleep!



## Comment »p6

**Keep exam results public**  
Hugo Gye says we should buck up about class lists.

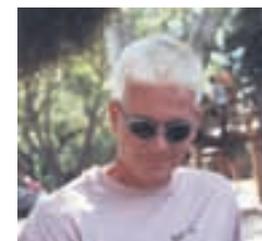
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**Varsity Previews**  
Previews of tennis and cricket Varsity matches. Our sport editor is a hero.

Got a news story? Text 'Varsity' + your thoughts to 07797 800 300\*

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### Clarification

In Issue 698, our headline ('Jesus ents shut down after noise complaints') stated that all the 'ents' at Jesus May Ball were shut down on the morning of June 16th. We should have stated that the Ball's music, not all its entertainments, were stopped.

# How green are May Balls?

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE COLLEGE BALL SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT



Rubbish left over after a non-CBSP Ball

**2**  
number of skips of non-recyclable waste produced by Queens' Ball this year

**0.75**  
number of skips of biodegradable waste produced by Queens' Ball

**76%**  
percentage of events held during the 2008-9 year that used CBSP

**3,025**  
number of litres of glass bottles thrown away by Emmanuel Ball in 2007

**1,440**  
number of litres of glass bottles thrown away by Emmanuel Ball in 2009

### Helen Mackreath

As May Week gets into full swing, the extravagance of May Balls seems necessarily to raise questions about sustainability, recycling and, in particular, excess waste.

The College Ball Sustainability Project (CBSP) was established three years ago as a response to the normally monumental amount of rubbish produced by May Balls. The Project's coordinators say their aim is to "provide practical, pragmatic advice to College Balls (May, Spring and Winter Balls) which will allow them to operate in a way which minimises their environmental burden and potential ethical harm".

Waste from balls, usually amounting to several tonnes, is predominantly made up of food and drink but also includes props and décor. It is taken to the skips together and sent to landfill; this creates large and unnecessary environmental hazards which will take centuries to biodegrade.

By coordinating with Ball Committees, CBSP hopes to reduce such waste. Their services are free, and they work by directly advising Committees on waste disposal and recycling issues, through both the provision of trained recycling teams to work at Balls and through general consultancy services. All Balls which make use of these two services are awarded a CBSP Green Stamp of Approval for use in publicity.

The student Waste and Recycling Teams provided by CBSP trained to know which types of waste can be recycled, and how to deal with it appropriately. However, the size of CBSP does not yet allow recycling at every event and recycling teams are therefore assigned on a first-come-first-served basis.

The work of CBSP, which is an initiative launched by the Cambridge University Environmental Consulting Society (CUECS)

in partnership with CUSU Green, serves as a reminder of the environmental cost of an evening of indulgence.

Statistics from Tuesday night's May Balls illustrate the magnitude of the task which faces those clearing up after over 2,000 people. The 20 bars at St John's Ball alone amassed two 1100-litre bins and a half skip's worth of plastic bottles, as well as three 1100-litre bins and a quarter of a skip's worth of glass bottles. Queens' Ball's figures demonstrate similar levels of waste: three 1100-litre bins and one skip worth of plastic, and one 1100-litre bin worth of glass were used. More interesting is the fact that two skips' worth of their waste was non-recyclable, compared to only three quarters of a skip being biodegradable.

Other figures obtained by *Varsity* indicate the extent of waste produced by multiple Balls. At Emmanuel ball, the amount of waste exceeded prior estimates: their one skip overflowed by 200%. Jesus are reported to have filled five skips with mixed waste.

These figures suggest that Balls have a long way to go to achieve sustainability. But many colleges, for example Emmanuel, have reduced the amount of waste: in 2007 Emmanuel produced 3,025 litres worth of glass bottles compared to 1,440 litres, plus a shopping trolley's worth, in 2009. This is a reduction of about a half, although it must be pointed out that this trend is not necessarily true of all Colleges.

CBSP is positive about its role in minimising environmental damage. Judging by the numbers of Ball Committees who have employed their services this year, Colleges are increasingly conscious of the necessity of recycling.

Fitzwilliam Winter Ball, Selwyn Snowball, Churchill Spring Ball, Hughes Hall,

Peterhouse, Trinity, Clare, Queens', Downing, St. John's, King's, Magdalene, Pembroke, Trinity Hall, Corpus and Darwin May Balls have all made use of the CBSP service – a total of 16 out of 21 annual events. Nor has sustainability been limited to Balls, with Garden Parties held by Murray Edwards, Newnham, and the Wyverns all now seeking environmental advice.

These numbers represent a steady increase since the initial launch of the initiative; in 2006 only Hughes Hall, Jesus and Sidney Sussex May Balls and the Pembroke June Event used their services. The rise in participation over the past few years reflects an increased awareness in the environmental cost of Balls and comes at a time when Colleges are giving more attention to green issues. It may be relevant that CUECS have been naming and shaming colleges since 2002 in their annual College Green League Tables.

Events held by Colleges which have not signed up with CBSP are not necessarily less sustainable, but it is clear that CBSP's offer of a free and ecologically minded cleanup has become increasingly attractive. This year all but five Colleges (Robinson, Homerton, Emmanuel, Jesus and Wolfson) turned to CBSP for help.

CBSP has published a Sustainability Guide which offers extensive suggestions for Ball Committees concerning the reduction of Balls' environmental footprints. It has been distributed to every Ball Committee in Cambridge for the past three years. Within this guide there are contacts provided for organic, fair trade and ethical companies to ensure that food and drink cause minimal environmental damage in their sourcing. Biodegradable cutlery, crockery and washing and cleaning products are also recommended.

## In Brief

### Students to scale Kilimanjaro

A group of 11 Churchill students and recent alumni plan to scale Mt Kilimanjaro in aid of Village Education Project Kilimanjaro this summer. The team plan to climb the 5895m summit in 5 ½ days, reaching the peak on the 13th of August.

The group have raised over £1000 for VEPK, an organisation which focuses on improving education in the Kilimanjaro region. Several members are planning to volunteer in the district after the expedition, either directly in the community or helping with environmental projects, and others are planning research projects based in Kilimanjaro, focusing on either acute mountain sickness or malaria.

To donate to the cause join the "from Cambridge to Kilimanjaro group on Facebook.

### Climate Camp in Cambridge

Camp for Climate Action, the activist group concerned with climate change issues, will hold a national gathering in Cambridge this weekend.

The gathering will focus on planning a summer protest camp similar to those held at Heathrow, Drax and Kingsnorth power station over the last three years. The Camp, a non-hierarchical collective, is open to all and uses, for organisation, monthly gatherings in various areas of the country and a consensus decision-making process.

The gathering will take place at the Museum of Technology on Cheddars Lane, beginning at 10am on Saturday. It will include a welcoming session for newcomers, working groups, and a discussion about the role of Anticapitalism in the Climate Camp movement.

### From banners to bags

The University's 800 Anniversary banners, currently to be seen hanging from streetlamps across the city, are soon to be turned into bags to be sold for charity.

The banners, which read '800 years of innovation', celebrate Cambridge's notable alumni and achievements. Each 12ft banner displays an image relevant to Cambridge's present and past, including photographs of a cellist from the Endellion String Quartet, the University's founding charter, and the Babbage Difference Engine No 1.

Profits from the sale of the bags will go to Camfed, the University's charity of the year, which works to eradicate poverty in Africa through the education of young girls.

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and proof of student status

## Cambridge Spies



### Anonymous

#### Bright Young Thing

A prank which started with throwing eggs through a window got out of hand when a large plastic bag full of flour, fluorescent food dye and water was introduced into the equation. As well as repainting the considerable part of a facade, the brand new dark coloured saloon of one fellow ended up as a spotted LSD extravaganza. Knowing that this particular Fellow was pernickety to the point of mania about the cleanliness of said car, and keen to avoid an eruption in the SCR, a senior college figure was forced to return home to fetch a car-washing kit and spent a good hour scrubbing the fluorescence off while the culprit watched from an upstairs window, not sure whether to own up or not. The Fellow, happily, is still in the dark.

### Murray Edwards

#### Bouncer's Brawl

Over the weekend, at a certain hill college garden party, one event was seen to darken an otherwise perfect afternoon. An inebriated Robinson third year was spotted ripping his clothes off of his body, and attempting to grind the faces of helpless guests into his sweaty naked chest. The real drama came, however, when several bouncers attempted to throw him out, to which he responded with expletives and shouts of indignation. One bouncer, who had encountered this young gentleman in a similar capacity before, responded by head-butting him in his chiselled torso. Two of the student's friends then joined the mayhem, resulting in what can only be described as a brawl. All three of them were finally escorted from the premises, and it is uncertain whether action is being taken against the bouncer for his unprofessional behaviour.

### Queens'

#### Stuck in the Mud

Raising his eyebrows at the price of a certain regal college's Ball ticket, one intrepid adventurer took it upon himself to crash the Ball. Most gatecrashers, however, have better plans than wading across the Cam. Seriously misjudging its depth, his dreams of success sank with his shoes to the bottom of the murk, much to the amusement of his plus-one, still safe on the bank. He was welcomed to the other side by security guards, missing a shoe and his pride, and promptly escorted off the premises.

Continued from page 1

"A minority of people are complacent. They think 'I've got a degree from Cambridge; I'll walk into a good job'. It's about managing expectations as well as finding a job."

Chesterman's comments seem to reflect student sentiments. Niklas Smith, a third-year historian who has a conditional place on a Cambridge postgraduate course, said, "In these times you have to adjust your expectations."

"Postgraduate study is not a 'soft option' - certainly not at Cambridge. I haven't applied to other jobs, so if I don't meet the requirements for the course I haven't got

a job at all. For a lot of vacancies you have to apply months, even a year in advance. For a lot of graduates here, it's not getting a job that's a problem - it's getting a job that you want."

Smith also added that the postgraduate sector often attracts students who have performed well at university, and are thus some of the most competitive candidates in other sectors: those who seek employment solely in other sectors might have difficulty in finding jobs as they are not among the most highly classed of graduates.

Tom Morris, a fourth-year who has se-

cured a job, told *Varsity* that finding his position was a "long term process". He said, "I started looking in September and applied to 25 companies. I ended up with three offers in April. I'm lucky in the sense that I did get what I wanted - it just took a long time."

It is easy to find statistics for graduate unemployment, but harder to measure the effects on graduates in terms of stress. Speaking to *Varsity* about CUSU's role in advising Cambridge finalists about careers, Andrea Walko, CUSU Welfare and Graduates Officer, said "Graduate employment isn't really in our remit. Practically,

we can refer people to the Careers Service, and we also advertise some graduate recruitment programmes. I really deal more with the welfare side of things - the stress that results from students' struggle to find attractive jobs.

"But in terms of stress among the students who visit me, career worries are often only one contributing factor among many others. No one comes to me solely because they are worried about graduate employment - usually it's a secondary concern." She does, however, think more students have mentioned career-related stress this year than in years past.

## Cambridge Admissions Director says personal statements are ignored

Anna Harper

Geoff Parks, Director of Admissions for the Cambridge Colleges and Fellow of Jesus College, has stated controversially that admissions tutors at the university do not pay much attention to applicants' personal statements.

This is not the first dramatic announcement from Parks, who in February 2008 made waves by scrapping the Cambridge Application Form (CAF) and its accompanying £10 fee. When this change was made public, a popular photo of Parks tearing the old CAF in half was widely circulated.

Parks says that universities can no longer tell whether a student has written any of his or her 'personal' statement, because of the levels of help on offer from teachers and websites such as [www.ucaspersonalstatement.com](http://www.ucaspersonalstatement.com) and [www.oxbridgeapplications.com](http://www.oxbridgeapplications.com), or books such as Paul Telfer's *How to Write a UCAS Personal Statement*.

In recent years, a proliferation of companies and websites have offered help with personal statements for a fee. According to Parks, the level of help on offer has reached the stage where "no admissions tutor believes [personal statements] to be the sole work of the applicant anymore."

"We certainly don't assign any marks to personal statements. I have been told by students after they have been admitted that their schools write the personal statements." Parks adds that references from teachers count for very little, as he believes that teachers have stopped making controversial or differentiating comments.

Some students have not taken kindly to the statements made by Parks. "This is insulting for those of us who do actually spend time on personal statements," said Jamie Ptaszynski, a second-year MML student at Jesus.

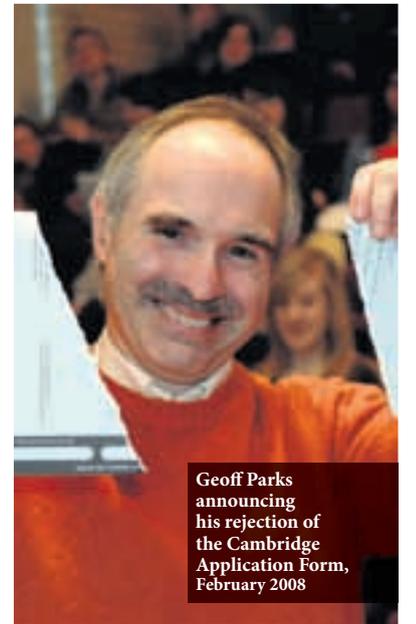
Parks has also claimed in recent years that Cambridge views all A-level subjects as equal in the admissions process,

not viewing subjects - usually including the word 'Studies' - as "soft".

Independent schools such as Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls in London provide extra lessons for Oxbridge preparation and work with students for long hours re-drafting personal statements. The result in the case of Haberdashers' is that 30 percent of its students gain Oxbridge places. Oxbridge admission percentages are even higher at 'feeder' schools such as Westminster.

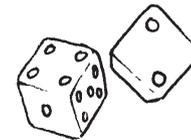
Contradicting the comments made by Geoff Parks, a spokesman for the University of Cambridge, speaking to *the Guardian*, has said that "Cambridge admissions tutors and subject interviewers do indeed give careful consideration to the personal statements of applicants for undergraduate admission."

"While the potential for coaching or third party involvement makes it difficult to attribute a 'score' to a personal statement, we do regard it as providing valuable background information."



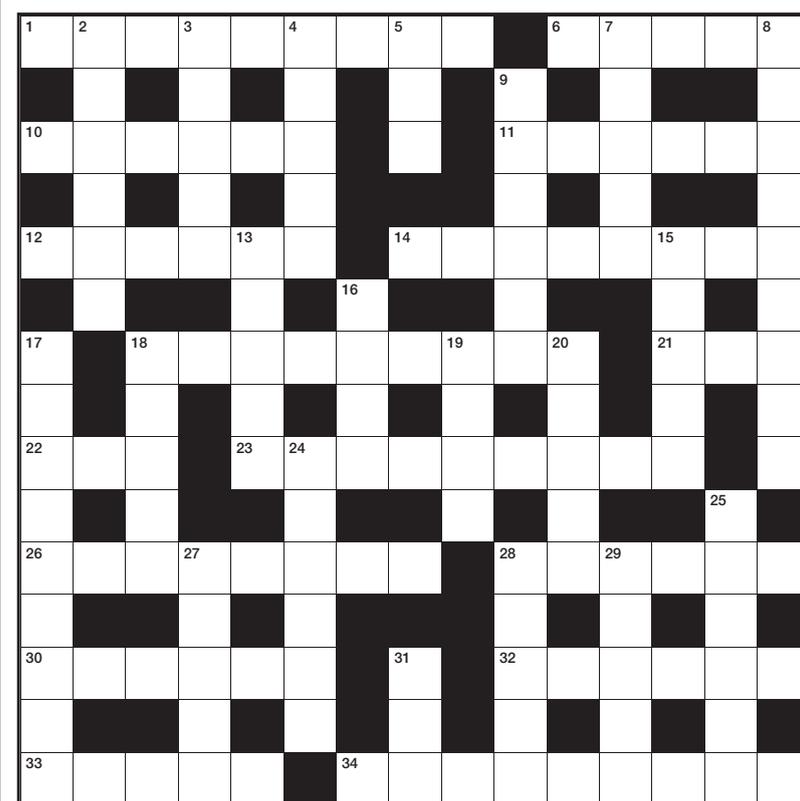
Geoff Parks announcing his rejection of the Cambridge Application Form, February 2008

## Games & puzzles



### Varsity Crossword

no. 507



#### Across

- 1 Expensive trip around bread-based college ball (5, 4)
- 6 Because, in France, meditation is a type of billiards (5)
- 10 In short, the referee started with drugs - it caused controversy (6)
- 11 Or, in reverse, Chanel creates art (6)
- 12 Film a hundred in number with this degree (6)
- 14 I saw fat Elvis in a mess at Glastonbury (8)
- 18 The plane must stay in flight above this apparently drinking-themed college ball. (9)
- 21 A horse with one eye in the middle - that's a show! (3)
- 22 Cartoons are one form of synecdoche. (3)
- 23 Two men of age. (9)
- 26 Fatal is man's idol. (8)
- 28 I have no yen for year-round crazy passion. (6)
- 30 Hold still, I tell you - art! (6)
- 32 Lyrical spasm of Raven writer. (6)
- 33 Late with tea, coffee. (5)
- 34 Educational college spies a theme. (5,4)

#### Down

- 2 Stay about the sea. (6)
- 3 The volcano is erupting! What a din! (5)

- 4 Letter from the army. (5)
- 5 There's no sender, and it's undersize, this gun. (3)
- 7 Anglo-Saxon/Celtic is, interestingly, initially a code. (5)
- 8 Sonata is fitting for, I hear, pit college masquerade. (9)
- 9 A prayer for little sister in the stars. (6)
- 13 His way of going about life is French - I can see it on the screen. (5)
- 15 People eat both veg and meat, but within that, some refrain. (5)
- 16 Cultivate a big row inside. (4)
- 17 It will fit with the blue, but add gold arrangements to make it attractive. (9)
- 18 About birth in South Africa. (5)
- 19 In a wry sense of humour, something is crooked. (4)
- 20 Make a mistake with ID - crazy, but less wet. (5)
- 24 Found with 17 at regal college that's going to hell. (6)
- 25 Small college ball involved in merger. (6)
- 27 The Queen, with a number in attendance, is in the middle of it, though she's not doing anything. (5)
- 28 Fruity computers. (5)
- 29 'Like the sea and the sand we ebb and flow' - Nerd! (5)
- 31 'Banned, I hear, in Norway' he exclaimed. (3)

Set by Hythloday

Answers to last issue's crossword (no. 506)

Across: 7 End up, 8 Vacations, 10 Uses up, 11 Appetite, 12 Ambience, 13 Cosy, 15/24/1/17 We're All Going On a Summer Holiday, 20 Stun, 22 Ice lolly, 25 Comatos, 26 Seesaw, 27 In general, 28 In general, 29 Honey. Down: 2 Sunshine, 3 Parades, 4 Gazpacho, 5 Vistas, 6 Unity, 9 Open, 14 Ball games, 16 Londoner, 18 I love you, 19 Wine bar, 21 Travel, 23 Easy.

# Trinity Hall: 'Fusion'

## Balls in Brief



MICHAEL STOTHARD



**Pembroke: Moonlight Masquerade**  
Perhaps in keeping with this year's theme, Pembroke seemed determined to keep us out of the Ball for as long as possible. I began queuing at half past nine and didn't get in until eleven o'clock. Once inside, however, all that seemed a million miles away. The already beautiful surroundings were transmuted into a mystical, ethereal land decorated with globes, moons and otherworldly masks, as light glanced off the mirrors hanging from the trees.

Importantly, there was also a lot of booze, as well as some delicious Lamb Tagine. I needed it for the adrenaline rush of Metronomy - the headline act, and the big thrill on a night filled with lovely surprises.  
*Lizzie Tyler*

**Magdalene May Ball**  
Yesterday I wondered whether Magdalene could live up to John's. Definitely yes, but the two Balls were entirely different. John's felt like Disneyland - a big fairground, brightly lit and noisy. Magdalene was charming, dark, intimate and atmospheric, filled with small but delightful attractions. I got my nails done while my friend went to a seamstress. They had thought of everything, even umbrellas in case of rain.

Dinner was a similar story, including a huge cheeseboard and copious wine. I decided, listening to the strains of Johnny Flynn, that this is how a Ball should be. For all the white tie, it was a homely experience, and all the better for it.  
*Avantika Chilkoti*

**King's Affair: Hedonopolis**  
King's Affair was a no-nonsense, good value event with some seriously funky musical acts. Student DJs Frankly Sick and Spyral Sounds pumped out some truly mind-boggling beats. Drum and bass star DJ Hype was a good enough choice for headline personally I would have liked to have seen a big dubstep name especially as they had Caspa last year. A slick set from Churchill Jazz Band in the beautiful College Chapel gave the evening a touch of class, and the silent disco provided some indie classics for what is often justly criticised as an "electrocentric" event.

Decorations were sparse, but ultimately if you would rather have your ticket money spent on music than on chocolate fountains, King's Affair remains a good choice.  
*Joel Massey*

**5,000**

number of glow-sticks

**1**

number of snakes

**8**

number of children's play tunnels

**2,500**

number of fortune cookies

**54,000**

number of individual noodles

Any ball that serves pints of VK Apple has to be great. By Wednesday night champagne has become passé and what the Trinity Hall Event revelers wanted was to get really tanked. This was what they got.

Sure, the queue to get in went on until eleven. Sure, it poured with rain. Sure, the dripping wet tedium of queuing made some folk so angry they heckled the staff. We can forget all that when we remember there was a stall handing out buckets (literally, you got a bucket) of Shark energy drink and vodka. Everyone went mental.

No drink was in short supply. In one room beer covered every surface as far as the eye could see. The bar, all the tables and some of the seats were a sea of neatly poured pints. There was nowhere to put your pint down, so you just had to drink it.

The theme was 'Fusion', pretty similar to Clare's The Forbidden City and Emmanuel's Commonwealth (slash Empire). Like all of them, it pretty much meant general exotic stuff east of Suez. As well as the Full Moon Party there was a Passage to India room, a Land of the Rising Sun area and something called Shanghai Infusions.

If you had to guess the theme, though, you would have said it was gap year, not Fusion. Shisha pipes aplenty, silent disco, electro and indie rock but most of all the happy chilled-out gap year vibe.

It was a £65 Event, not a full-on ball, and without the pressure, the dressing up, the expense that goes with the big balls, people were relaxed. There

was a lot of sitting around drinking, unashamedly ridiculous dancing at the silent disco and seeing who could get the most buckets at a time from the bar. There was not the same pressure to have fun as at a big white tie event. This was just people with their mates on a night out.

The laid-back atmosphere was sometimes taken a bit far. The food queues were all too long, particularly at the beginning, and it sometimes felt a bit like there were just too many people in the Ball without enough staff to handle them. 54,000 noodles is not that much when there are 2,000 guests. Twenty-seven noodles each in fact.

But this is understandable. The Committee were smart enough to realise that, in the end what people really want to do is drink and dance, not eat.

This is not to say they were lazy, however. There were a heap of nice touches throughout the night, like dancing Chinese dragons circling each other to steel drums. There was also sumo wrestling in fat suits, belly dancing, fire dancing and henna tattoos (sooooo gap-year). All of these made just walking around a smorgasbord of super fun.

The music was brilliantly chosen for a easy-going, drunken audience. Heartbreak, with an electro disco feel, were billed as sounding like "how the 80s would sound like today if the 90s hadn't got in the way". This, of course, makes no sense at all. Neither did the music really either, with its metal and Italo-disco undertones, so the description is pretty accurate.

## What I hate about May Week



There is no need to be a killjoy about it. But one aspect of May Week does make me uneasy. I find myself asking: is it elitist enough? For the essence of an elite is not money, privilege and extravagance. Those things belong to aristocracy. An elite, meanwhile – take, as an innocuous example, the Royal College of Surgeons – has to possess some special ability which justifies its position. Because the members of an elite can often expect certain advantages, they need a credible answer to the democrat's pointed question: 'What's so special about you, then?'

The surgeons can call attention to their expertise in surgical matters. Cambridge's answer would be harder to formulate, but it would doubtless refer to the University's vast intellectual contribution in every area. Darwin's anniversary follows on from Milton's, and it seems natural that Cambridge should be commemorating both of them as alumni. The boast on the posters around town, '800 years of achievement', is true for here if it is true for anywhere.

But elitism extends beyond academic matters. A Cambridge institution may channel the spirit of the University. Footlights, for instance, is a non-academic club – but its character is unquestionably typical of Cambridge. The success stories of Footlights are Cambridge's successes too: they are part of the whole tradition of intellectual achievement, and they possess what people are referring to when they say, 'That's so Cambridge.' Of course, the only place anyone ever says, 'That's so Cambridge' is Cambridge – and when they do so they are being elitist, identifying something unique about the University.

So Cambridge's elitism has many non-academic embodiments, in sport, drama, music and elsewhere. It is not necessarily that these things are done well, but that they are done in a certain way, so that they reflect what is peculiar to the 'Cambridge bubble'. On this score, May Balls are not remotely elitist. The whole point about strawberries, pop music, dodgems and alcohol is that everybody appreciates them. Now, it is hardly an argument against strawberries that they are popular – but they are not, in the sense I describe above, elitist. May Week is only out of the ordinary because it is excessive. The risk is that we start thinking of aristocratic indulgence as some kind of ultimate expression of Cambridge, when it is anything but. For one thing, a truly elitist Ball would be quite cheap.

Dan Hitchens



ANNA TRENCH

Hugo Gye



## Keep exam results public

*This CUSU-sponsored mollycoddling misses the point*

This, we all know, is the most exciting time of the year. No, not the Balls; for booze and fireworks can scarcely hope to compete with the joys of the Senate House, and the highlight of May Week is results day. For hundreds of years, students have trooped off to the Senate House, trembling with fear, and scanned the class lists for their names (starting, of course, from the bottom). It is a way to turn the hell of exams into a genuinely exciting shared experience, and a tradition which is worth preserving.

But now, following a CUSU campaign, all this is to be done away with. The University is not abolishing class lists – indeed, a survey of students has come out in resounding support of them – but they want to reduce their importance significantly. Now, all students will receive their results privately before they are published at the Senate House, and students will be allowed to remove their names from class lists without having to explain why.

The first argument, that results should be released privately, rests on the idea that waiting for CamSIS to reload, receiving an e-mail or being hauled up before your DoS is a more pleasant way of discovering your results than seeing them at the Senate House. Yet how could we prefer these impersonal

and solitary methods to the communal trip into town, the shared excitement and relief? Learning exam results is hardly ever going to be fun as such: just because the current system can be nerve-wracking, that is not to say that other systems are better.

We all know how hard Cambridge is: hard to get in, hard to get through exams, hard to balance work and social lives. We do not look down on those who do not do as well as others in the Tripos, and anyone who takes exams to be a reasonable indicator of someone's

Results can, with sufficient justification, be removed from the lists, and that is entirely right, for no-one should be made to suffer from exams. But to allow everyone to remove their names – for example, if they got a II.1 and were expecting a first – is over the top and creates the impression that we need to be protected from ourselves, that we cannot face up to the consequences of our own actions.

Ultimately, that is what it boils down to: those who shy away from having their results published are not willing

understanding of any mitigating circumstances.

The University prides itself on openness. For decades, it has produced weekly reports on its internal governance, and every decision is laid bare to the community. To suppress the publication of exam results, one of the central planks of the Cambridge experience, is to abandon that openness and to threaten that sense of community, for if we cannot trust each other to treat results sensitively, and to treat each other with the respect we deserve, then we are no longer a community. We want to hide behind anonymity, when we should glory in an environment where we are all friends and can support each other.

Cambridge is a harsh place; it is full of those who have overreached themselves, and excessive ambition has been both the glory and ruin of thousands of alumni. The fierce competition embodied by the public nature of exams has been one of the hallmarks of a Cambridge education; the compassion which stops this system from being cruel has been another. To deny the open exchange of information and move exam results from the public to the private is to deny this heritage. These moves help us hide; we should not want to.

*"If we cannot trust each other with our results, then we are no longer a community"*

worth, status or even intelligence is seriously misguided. We are aware of the fundamental importance of exams; that is why results are published. However, we are equally aware that they need to be taken with a pinch of salt; this is why no-one should fear their publication.

Naturally, we are extremely sympathetic towards those who have underperformed or who are genuinely distressed by exams and exam results.

to acknowledge their own efforts (or lack thereof). We all know how much we have worked, and how much we have dossed around, and most of us know what grade we have deserved; it is frankly bizarre to demand the suppression of that grade. Indeed, even if we have underperformed in some ways, the only people who will actually care are our friends; they will discover our results in any case, and will be entirely

# The end is only the beginning...



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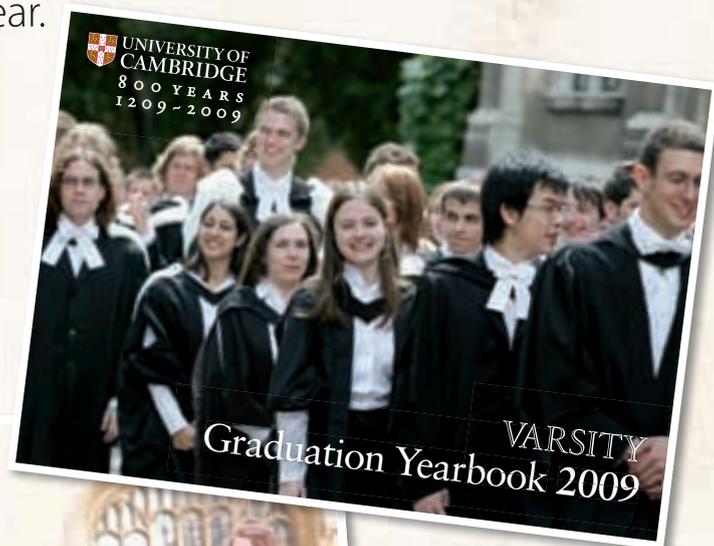
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# Making The Mays

**PETER MORELLI, CO-EDITOR WITH DECCA MULDOWNY OF THE MAYS, SPEAKS TO AVANTIKA CHILKOTI ABOUT THE WORK THAT GOES IN TO PRODUCING OXBRIDGE'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS STUDENT LITERARY ANTHOLOGY**

*The Mays Literary Anthology* is a compilation of poetry, prose and the visual arts by the new talent of Oxford and Cambridge. 2009 sees the seventeenth issue of this unique collection, originally the innovation of Peter Ho Davies, Adrian Woolfson and Ron Dimant. Inevitably, with different students organising the publication every year, the structure, form and tone has developed. Where *The Mays* originally consisted of two separate collections for poetry and prose, these are now combined along with works from the visual arts. The publication is especially notable for the famous names connected with it. *The Mays* was a launch pad for Zadie Smith, while Stephen Fry, ex-Poet Laureate Andrew Motion and this year Patti Smith have worked as guest editors. The name *The Mays* is most appropriate and one assumes that the creators chose it to encapsulate an aura of revitalising pleasure and things new and fresh. As this year's launch approaches on June 18th, I spoke to one of the editors, Peter Morelli, to learn more about the organisation of this year's *Mays* and the aspirations the editors have for it.

The guest editors always add something unique to the Mays and the

choice of American songwriter Patti Smith this year was interesting. Peter explains, "She really enjoys Wittgenstein, he was a Fellow at Trinity, and the Bloomsbury set too, who were connected with King's, so she wanted to come see King's. Though we tried to play by the proper channels to begin with, going through agents, they shot down the idea before it even got to her, so in the end personal connections came in handy. It just tells you about the barriers media and agents set up around the world," he says resignedly. And seeing previews of *The Mays*, Smith's contribution has been significant. The editors this year were very keen to get together works "that just really hit you and you realise it's got something new and edgy" and Smith's tastes worked perfectly with these goals. "She went for stuff that was new and interesting," Pete adds.

Another key objective that Peter and Decca had expressed when applying for the editorial position was that they were keen to "make it the best possible journal, and do everything possible to revitalise an old tradition and make it current again." For this, it was crucial to publicise *The Mays* as somewhere writers and artists would be eager

and willing to place their work. "You have to make sure that you get enough high quality submissions and that *The Mays* is a place people want to submit," Pete says. "If you're going to pitch yourself as the best new



PABLO NAVARRO MACLOCHLAINN

writing from Cambridge and Oxford you damn well better be the best new writing and that's still something that could be improved". The distinct and "edgy" feel the editors were aspiring too did indeed materialise with one short story about a man that gets mail telling him that he has an elephant waiting for him to pick up and in general, all the works "come to things from a new and interesting angle."

The organisation and administration of the collection is a project in itself. "It is so seldom that something you conceptualise and visualise materialises in a way that actually exceeds expectations." Decca and Pete themselves responded to an advertisement in a Michaelmas edition of *Varsity* and put in a joint application detailing their plans, which was then pored over by Patrick Kingsley and Michael Derringer. Pete then put out adverts inviting people to come and edit, then interviewed everyone who responded, which he jokes "certainly gets you a better team." For some positions in art and design, they approached people directly. The end result was 3 editorial boards and committees for poetry, prose and art and design. The

editorial committees read and scrutinise every entry submitted, totalling around 200 poems and 50 short stories, and a longlist is sent to external editors. Patti Smith gets the longlist and picks the pieces she likes. There isn't a prose editor, so the committee stepped in to help select the final pieces.

The best bit, Pete says, is setting pages, building the journal and design, the layout, typography: effectively making a cohesive architectural structure. Visual arts are used as end papers. The hardest part? Incessant e-mails. Pete explains that throughout the project they tried to forge a personal relationship with the authors, to keep them informed and to show them proofs before print. The end result, though, is exactly what the editors hoped for: "new, fresh writing with a real edge to it".

With 400 copies printed in the first run, *The Mays* ends up in bookshops all over the country. "We can only hope the book takes," says Peter. While Waterstone's has always supported the publication, Heffers and Blackwell in Oxford are now selling copies too. "You just want to keep expanding," Peter concludes, on an appealingly optimistic note.



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# Sartre, Surf and Stars

**MOYA TILLY SARNER DISCOVERS THE BEAUTIFUL MULTIVERSE OF ANDY MARTIN, SOMETIME MML LECTURER AND PROFESSIONAL RENAISSANCE MAN**

“Are you dissatisfied with your place in the universe? Here’s how to transcend time and space in one easy lesson”. Andy Martin’s tongue-in-cheek characterisation of his new book, *Beware Invisible Cows*, may seem full of implausible promises, but as any of his students here will know, Martin is nothing if not unlikely. A Cambridge academic in French literature and ex-surfing correspondent for *The Times*, his latest work will take you on an odyssey back to the origin of time. Yet another testament to his instinctive drive to defy categorisation, and the illusory (as he perceives it) gulf between the arts and the sciences: “I hate being put in a box”, he tells me, “it feels like being buried in a coffin”. Well, ladies and gentlemen, Andy Martin has risen again: time to think outside the box, man.

But life outside the box is not as easy-going as it sounds. “My advice to

students embarking on their career is: don’t do what I did.” Martin’s professional life began in a predictable, linear fashion: he was awarded a fellowship at King’s College, Cambridge, after finishing his Ph.D. there. That straight line, however, soon wiggled into a wave. He fell under the spell of surfing in Bali in the 1980s (as he explained in this newspaper’s column “The day that changed my world”, Issue no. 680), and his interests took an unexpected twist, as is testified by his books *Walking on Water* (1991) and *Stealing the Wave* (2007). “I read surfing as an epic poem. As something seemingly trivial and insignificant, that doubled as an allegory of the great totality. As a kind of symbolic representation of existence in a non-literary form; a collection of signs which seemed deeply meaningful, but whose meaning eluded me in a very tantalizing way.”

Not everybody dug those vibes, and

he found himself swimming against the academic tide. Whereas in America surfing constituted a significant chapter in cultural history, “a story that needed to be told” (as one fan put it), here in Cambridge the move “tended to be radically misunderstood. Let’s just say there was a school of thought which misinterpreted my

**“THE DEMARCATIONISTS SAY THAT THIS STUFF OVER HERE MAKES SENSE, THIS IS REASONABLE; THAT STUFF OVER THERE IS NONSENSE, THERE LIES THE UNREASONABLE. I SAY LET’S APPLY THE SENSIBLE CRITERIA TO THE STUFF THAT SEEMS CRAZY. LIKE SURFING.”**

work as skiving off, a mere intellectual holiday.” For Martin, a soi-disant “non-demarcationist”, surfing should be taken seriously. “The demarcationists say that this stuff over here makes sense, this is reasonable; that stuff over there is nonsense, there lies the unreasonable. I say let’s apply the sensible criteria to the stuff that seems crazy. Like surfing.”

Was he reacting against the specificity of institutionalised intellectual life, the disciplinary structure of Cambridge, in all senses of the word? It is not that simple. “I’m a self-disciplined kinda guy at heart, up to a point. But then it becomes self-denying, austere and repressive, censorial. Here our disciplines define themselves by some kind of self-suppression or exclusion. And I wanted to get inclusive.” Whence the surfing; whence the science: *Beware Invisible Cows* is the next step on Martin’s path from literature and linearity, via waves, into a more cosmic space. “To some extent, this book is my escape: when you hit a certain point in university life, you can either have a nervous breakdown, or you can write *Beware Invisible Cows*. I’d had enough of the constraints; it was like being forced to write sonnets forever. Sonnets are great, but enough is enough. I wanted to get out of the sonnets and write the epic.”

“I wanted to do everything. To explore all the avenues I found interesting, see all intellectual activity as a continuum, rather than divided into the arts and the sciences.” So another barrier is broken down. But this one is not merely academic: it’s in his blood. His twin brother (known as Unc, “for obscure and ancient reasons”) is a rocket scientist. They are “antithetical rather than merely non-identical twins: radically opposed on nearly everything,” Martin writes in *Beware Invisible Cows*. So this book is his attempt to open a dialogue between two brothers, as well as between differing

but related intellectual spheres - the voicing of his desire to overcome that “mutual autism” which divides all. No to “grand isolation”, yes to fusion, “like a certain kind of music. A classical jazz fusion.” Groovy.

So where do you start if you want to do everything? When in doubt, just ask: what would Julie Andrews

say? Start at the very beginning. That’s how Martin ended up at the W.M. Keck Observatory on the summit of Hawaii’s Mauna Kea volcano, home to the world’s largest and most powerful telescopes, at the opening chapter of a book and a journey back to the origin of the universe.

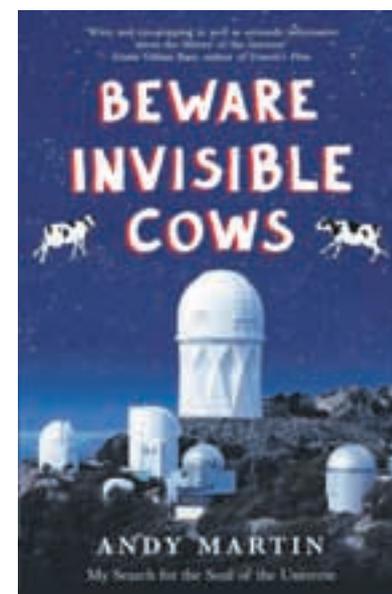
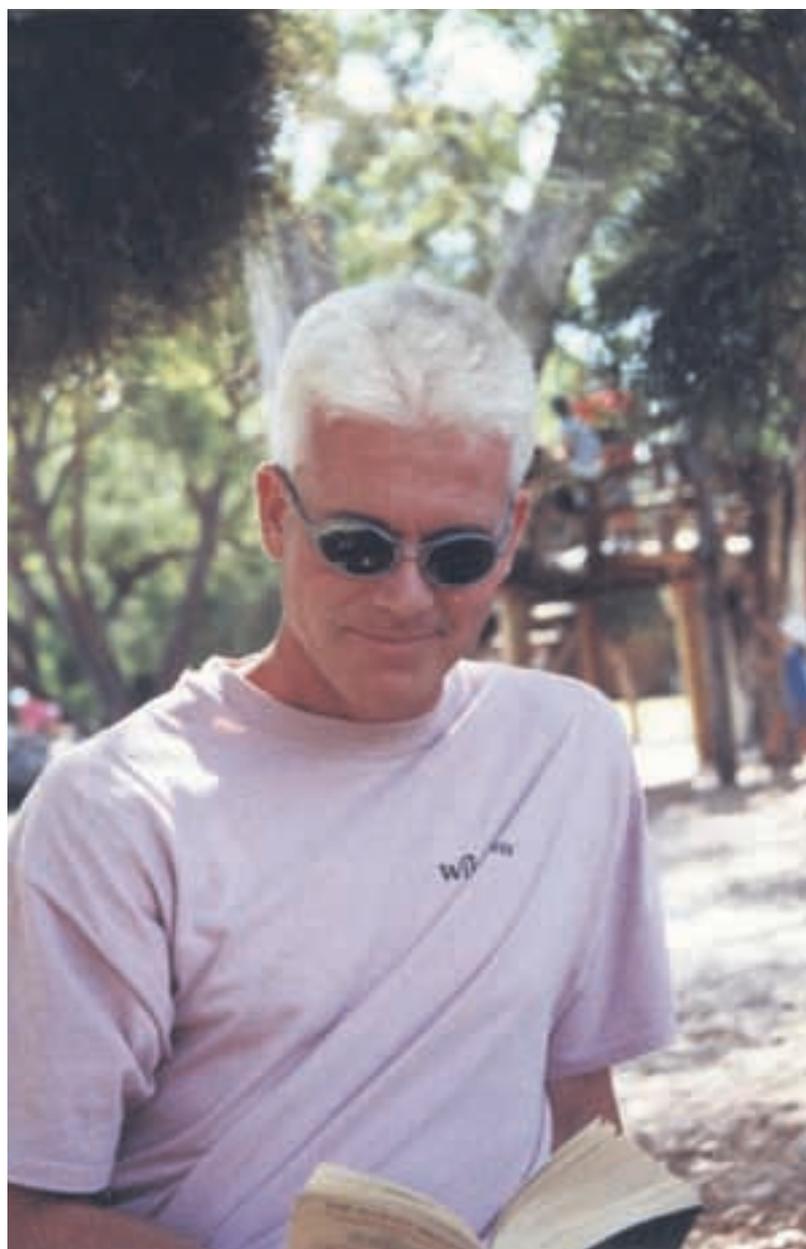
It’s all done with mirrors, he explains. “When you look into a mirror you’re seeing yourself as you were, travelling back in time. If you put the mirror far enough from the object, in theory, you should be able to see all the way back to the beginning.”

But the problem with using mirrors for time travel, is that the further back you go, the darker it gets. “At Keck”, he marvels, “I saw this red dot that was 13 billion years old. It was like seeing back to the infancy of the universe. But then the photons ran out. You can’t see anything else. No more light”. Such “cosmic censorship” led him forwards - as well as backwards - to waves. Gravitational waves, that is: a way of sensing phenomena that are not available to the visual realm, a method of translating the darkness into some kind of sign that could be understood. “I had to get jazzier, less empirical. To jump ship from seeing to feeling, onto what you might call vibes. I had to feel the vibe.”

Martin followed the vibes to the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) in Washington State. “In the wilderness of America, you’ve got these two perpendicular 4km long pipes, with laser lights jumping around inside. A massive and massively sensitive construction, trying to detect those very elusive gravitational waves. They let me stick my head inside one of the great barrels, having very kindly switched off the laser for me - probably would have burned my eye out if not. The experience took me right back to that surfing fantasy of ‘being inside the tube’. This was the quintessential physics high, looking down a barrel in the direction of in-

finity, waiting for the truth to hit me.”

As must be expected of a specialist in French literature, Martin’s quest for truth does not end in revelation; “heroic failure” is our best hope. Which brings us back to the present time, and his imminent departure for New York City. Having won the “dream gig” New York Public Library Fellowship, he will spend the next year working on a new project, *What it feels like to be alive: Sartre, Camus, and the philosophy of failure*, in which he aims to make sense of failing, to trace its beauty. (This notion may prove comforting to those of us currently awaiting our exam results.) “As you go through life, you’re constantly floundering, flailing, falling with style. Every now and then, as you sink through the great ocean of life, you grab on to some passing straw to hold on to, that enables you to make sense of mysteries. That’s what I was doing with surfing, I suspect. So too with the invisible cows.” Sinking with style. That’s what Cambridge is all about.



Although his long surfer dude hair has been replaced by a New York-cool crewcut, Martin still retains the sense of effervescent non-conformity that has made him into something of a whispered myth amongst many of his students. Of course, his efforts to mirror Peter Cook’s expertise in “the universe and all that surrounds it” will inevitably (and beautifully) fail. But if anyone can transcend time and space, Andy Martin can. In describing his distaste for rigid boundaries, he finds himself empathising with Kurt Vonnegut, who objected to his work being placed in the science fiction category since “so many serious critics regularly mistake the drawer for a urinal.” Well, Dr Martin, nobody is pissing on you now.

Visit Andy Martin’s website:  
[www.andymartinthewriter.co.uk](http://www.andymartinthewriter.co.uk)

## Context



## Cherry Orchard

As the sun sets gently on the Grantchester Orchard and the warmth of the day slowly ebbs away, you will, should you be seeing Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, be feeling bittersweet. At least, directors Josh Seymour and Sam Pallis hope you will be. Whilst intended to be a farce by Chekhov himself, the often dark undertones he consciously or unconsciously wove into his plays were picked up by theatre practitioner Constantin Stanislavski and transformed into tragedy. It is this balance between tragedy and comedy that lives in all Chekhov's work, but especially *The Cherry Orchard*. Written over the course of several years, the play captures his oscillation between lighthearted giddiness and despondent frustration. His last play (he was to die within a year of its performance), it is often seen as reflection of all his previous work, picking up the themes of many earlier plays.

Like *Uncle Vanya* and *Three Sisters*, characters talk of great things and, through both inaction and inability, never manage to achieve them themselves. For the two directors, they intend to link this to another key strand of their production: playing upon the idea of a community on the precipice of demise - the decline of an aristocratic class and the ascendancy of an emergent middle class. The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 allowed former serfs to gain wealth and status while some aristocrats were becoming impoverished, unable to tend their estates without the cheap labour of slavery. In a parable of our time the decay in the play is brought on by negligence. Chekhov in *The Cherry Orchard* is trying to document the solipsistic nature of the ruling class of that time; the assumption is that we can see similarities with our financial follies and abject apathy today.

And their reason for staging the play in the orchard? To "give Chekhov plays what they often lack, which is immediate translation to the audience. We want them to become part of the action, like voyeurs witnessing the process of decline. The orchard tea garden is also a beautiful backdrop for the play and a great evening out." The decision to stage the play in the midst of its namesake would have been approved of by Chekhov himself, often upheld as the first ecological author.

Although prompting division among critics, *The Cherry Orchard* was met by resounding popular approval upon its debut in the Moscow Art Theater on January 17, 1904. For such a many-layered and delicately balanced play, it could be the perfect bittersweet end to the hedonism of May Week. *Laurie Coldwell*

## THEATRE

*Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare  
Clare Fellows' Garden, June 17th-20th

Dir. Anna Hobbiss; Clare Actors

★★★★★

You should probably just ignore this. A timing error led to the 'Plus 1' and me stumbling into Clare Gardens an hour into the production, hungover to hell from three May Balls straight. One actor waiting to enter politely informed us we had missed his big scene. Well. Fuck.

Interesting Quirk of choice was a setting of the roaring 20s, and the flapper dresses nicely suited the Fellows' Gardens; with a little sunshine and imagination they might have been a corner of Gatsby's grounds. Instead we got clouds and the wind stealing words; it's difficult not to shout lines when one's competing with King's Affair sound checks and the weather.

Critical consensus says that a production's leaning can be judged by

how Beatrice's infamous command to 'Kill Claudio' is delivered. Here we had quickfire comedy, yet that's not to say Anna Hobbiss neglected all of Much Ado's tragedy. Hero's funeral was marked by Mary-Ellen Lynall's unbearably beautiful lamentation; within notes it made the kind of theatrical moment that throws one from the reviewer to the emotionally absorbed. And our Interesting Quirk surmounted the insight that tassels are en vogue this season; a sassy Watch of three 20s sirens was a great little touch, and consolation enough for no Dogberry.

Toby Jones infused Benedick's power with lashings of 20s sleaze to win the biggest laughs of the evening, but his humour was somewhat lost amidst Beatrice's flouncing. Holly Cracknell

was fine when eavesdropping on Hero and Ursula with the slapstick novelty of the garden pond, but both female leads succumbed to hysteria rather than wit; they were bettered by the soldiers' banter.

This isn't the week to be pedantic about line slips or interruptions - maybe even tardiness can be forgiven. It's some testament to this production's life that we remained conscious and rather regretful of missing those earlier scenes. It wasn't quite as sexy as it all promised, but still, it's difficult to be sexy on a glum English afternoon with front rows wrapped in cagoules. May the sun shine and the bootleggers languish; social schedule permitting, we'll head back to catch the beginning. *Abigail Dean*



TIM JOHNS

KATY KING

*A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Cloister Court, Queens College, June 17th-20th

Dir. Steph Bain and Bea Walker; BATS

★★★★★

Fittingly, it was as though in a dream that I walked across the Mathematical Bridge. May Week had taken its toll on me. Disorientated and confused I took my seat at BATS' take on Shakespeare's most infamous comedy. Outdoor productions of *A Midsummer's Nights Dream* have become as much a part of the British summertime as bad weather and Butlins, and, as such, have to work hard in order to stand out from the crowd. Yet in their wonderfully imagined show, directors Stephanie Bain and Beatrice Walker have certainly created something different, with fairy pillow fights, dinosaur pyjamas and air guitar performances giving the play a fresh feeling. Cloister Court provided the

perfect setting for the Athenian woods; the excellent stage direction leading to an ingenious use of the space. The heavens opened and the winds howled, but the cast remained audible without succumbing to shouting, and so avoiding the plague of so many outdoor plays. Rob Frimston was cast perfectly as Quince, the angst-ridden carpenter attempting to organise his troupe of amateurs. It was The Mechanicals who stole the show, displaying the dynamics lacking in the court scenes. Pablo Navarro-Maclochlai also stood out as Puck, a character still sprightly, but with a distinctly human side too, seen in his awkwardness and attempts to seek assurance from Oberon. Humour is what this play is best at, and it works

wonderfully when it doesn't take itself too seriously. The moments of earnestness and sobriety were the weakest; the relationships between the four lovers, for example, were never quite convincing despite good individual performances, especially Mel Heslop's Hermia. An unannounced interval after nearly two hours caused some members of the audience to leave. The audience, or more accurately lack of it, was the main problem with the show - the sole poster I saw for the play was tacked to the gate of Queens' with the grey page blending in to a grey day. This is a shame as BATS' is a production worth seeing, superb in its artistic vision if a little let down by some of the acting. *Emmie Hodges*

## PREVIEW

*The Turn of the Screw*

Wren Library Cloister, Trinity College, June 8th

Dir. Claudia Parkes; Trinity College Music Society

Okay, cards on the table: I must confess that I turned up to Trinity's Wren Cloister yesterday in a fairly considerable funk. A couple of May Balls 'on the bounce', as it were, had left me in that strange mind-haze when you get that... you know, you... you can't really string a... um, a cogent whassname, a sentence, you can't string a sentence to, um... together. Anyway, admittedly bewildered, I turned up to the dress rehearsal of *The Turn of the Screw* to see how The CUOS's May Week project was coming along.

Christopher Stark is conducting the chamber orchestra and he had the players immaculately under control from the off. Director Claudia Parkes

wisely decided to stage her production in Trinity's Wren Cloister; the grand, practically palatial atmosphere of the architecture seems airy and expansive at first but, as the audience filter round, the orchestra rises and the sun begins to set, the whole place mimics the cloying claustrophobia of James' Bly House.

The story is a simple one: a new governess is hired by an aristocratic gentleman to look after his niece and nephew. Though everything goes pretty swimmingly at first, things go rather sharply awry when the governess becomes convinced the children are being visited by two creepy ghosts, Mr Quint and Miss Jessel. Of course, the actual experience

of the opera is much more intense, much more complex and much, much nastier than that crudely freeze-dried synopsis.

Here the psychological ambivalence of the governess is captured superbly by Joanna Songi. The erratic deterioration of the character is countered perfectly by Songi's straight- beautiful voice. Katy Ambrose and Verity Trynka-Watson are similarly fantastic as the troubled children. Oh, and seriously, watch out for their 'Golden Syrup' scene with Quint (Matt Sandy) and Miss Jessel (Naomi Scott). I kid you not; it is one of the sickliest, most suggestive, grubby, disgusting set pieces I have seen in a long, long while. Magnificent. *Nathan Brooker*



TIM JOHNS

# REVIEWS

## Cambridge Camerata with Steve Bingham Mendelssohn, Elgar and Tchaikovsky West Road Concert Hall, June 14th

★★★★★

“When Chivalry / Lifted up her lance on High.” This quote by Keats, which marks the top of every copy of Elgar’s Concert Overture, Froissart, failed to inspire the orchestra into an exciting concert opener. The immaturity of this early Elgar work was emphasised by a lack of musical direction, a weak-sounding string section and a general lack of unity. However, there were redeeming qualities, including the very impressive tone produced by the horn and brass sections.

In this two-hundredth year since the birth of Mendelssohn, the Violin Concerto was a very appropriate addition to this concert programme. Steve Bingham showed off a stunning purity in his rendition of this famous work. The orchestra stepped up its performance,

but still seemed a little inflexible for the soloist, who even appeared to show a little annoyance by the third movement. The solo cadenza was highly impressive, as was the apparently infinite breath control of the bassoonist. The final movement also showed some moments of brilliance, but ended disappointingly, not together; an anticlimax which rather summed up the first half.

The brutal opening fanfare of Tchaikovsky’s fourth symphony was unleashed with a terrifying viciousness by the horn and brass sections. This announced what felt like a totally different orchestra. The second half saw the strings finding their feet with a greater breadth of sound and outstanding use of pizzicato in a particularly exciting third movement. It was the fourth

movement, which was occasionally breathtaking, that really showed off the ability of this orchestra.

The fatalistic portrayal of Destiny in Tchaikovsky’s Fourth is demonstrated by fate’s disruption of the joys of life. Fate is never triumphed over; it instead holds the music by the throat. In much the same way, the orchestra were held back by a fatal lack of unity in bond between conductor and orchestra. Peter Wadl showed intelligent reading of the music, but his conducting style seriously hampered the portrayal of these ideas. There was a clear time delay between his beat and that of the music, and a rather confusing set of random arm movements occasionally appeared. The Tchaikovsky struggled with some messy entries and the woodwind ap-



peared unconfident in their interlinking passages due to the ambiguous conducting. However, Andrew Lawrie, leader of the orchestra, did a fantastic job in keeping the orchestra together in a concert that improved throughout the evening, finishing on a high.  
*Andrew Hadfield*

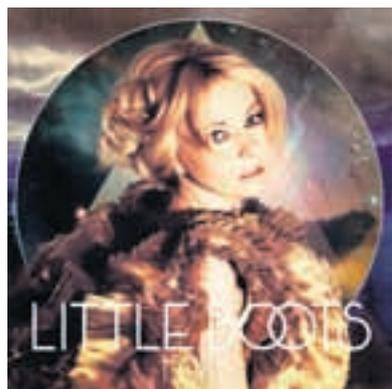
## Hands

### Little Boots

#### Atlantic, out now

★★★★★

Little Boots is a girl with big shoes to fill. Having been tipped by the BBC, the NME and just about every-



one in between as the sound of 2009, her debut album was one of the most anticipated releases of the year so far. It’s all great publicity for a debut record, albeit slightly dangerous. Little Boots’ *Hands* makes a valiant effort not to get eaten alive by the hype machine and just about survives.

*Hands* starts out strongly with the singles ‘New in Town’, ‘Stuck on Repeat’ and the album-only ‘Earthquakes’. ‘New in Town’ is a bright summer pop number that will no doubt get plenty of airings at the summer festivals. In these tracks, Little Boots lives up to all the hype that has surrounded her over the past months. ‘Meddle’ is another highlight; with a really heavy bass

line and a bewitching chorus melody, you will be humming it for days, but won’t mind one bit. In short, it might just be the perfect pop song.

Towards the end of the record the songs gradually drift from well-crafted, stylish tracks with a little kitsch to songs reminiscent of the throwaway bubblegum pop of the 90s. It seems to me that here the retro influences begin to swamp the songs and they start to sound really quite dated. ‘Symmetry’ is the perfect example of this. What is easily worst track on the record, this boy/girl duet about “love in perfect symmetry” grates from the opening bars. It sounds like a Eurovision entry. This isn’t helped by the constant references made to

computers, radios and all things electrical. I don’t think I’ve seen it done on a record for quite some time, in fact not since Britney Spears’ 1999 classic ‘E-mail My Heart’. Needless to say, I remain unconvinced.

*Hands* is patchy. At its high points, it definitely seems like a contender for the best album of the year; it is unfortunate however, that it so often misses its mark. Little Boots tries to walk the line between engaging, 80s inspired tunes and tacky euro-pop, and on more than one occasion, she falls off. However, the best tracks here are so very good, that although this album may not live up to the hype, it is clear that Little Boots can.  
*Lucy Bryant*

## The E.N.D.

### Black Eyed Peas

#### Interscope, out now

★★★★★

Will.i.am, apl.de.ap, Taboo and Fergie, surely the most highly-punctuated people in hip hop, are back with their latest album, *The E.N.D.* (Energy Never Dies), and it’s, well, pretty good really. After the enormous success of their breakout album, *Elephunk*, in 2003, the BEP went on to scoop further commercial and critical accolades in 2005 with *Monkey Business*. Focusing on a brand of up-beat hip/pop strongly influenced by other genre-defying acts like OutKast and Kanye West, their consistently positive (though not always profound – I’m looking at you ‘My Humps’) lyrics make them radio-friendly and ripe for sponsorship deals (of which there have been many).

The E.N.D. sees them move towards a more auto-tuned sound (see T-Pain’s SNL masterpiece ‘I’m On A Boat’),

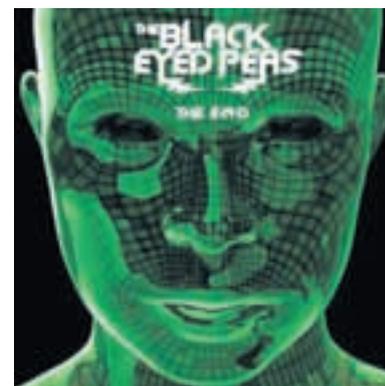
which can be very successful, as on ‘Imma Be’ and ‘I Gotta Feeling’, or somewhat less so, as on the mind-numbing ‘Party All The Time’. ‘Out Of My Head’ has a pounding baseline and some clever samples which are sure to fill dance floors, and ‘Boom Boom Pow’, the debut single, has reaffirmed the BEP’s mastery of clicks, beeps and other industrial noises. Staccato, clipped vocals are dotted throughout the album, sometimes making you wish for a full sentence or two just to give you a hold on what’s going on. Generally though they manage to rein in some of their more annoying habits, like stuttering samples and endless loops, and their creative use of vowels to generate rhymes is thankfully more entertaining than annoying.

Since 2005, the BEP have been work-

ing on a variety of solo projects, such as Fergie’s reasonably good, but very successful, ‘The Dutchess’, and will.i.am’s excellent, but largely underappreciated, ‘Songs About Girls’, but they seem to have fallen together again for *The E.N.D.* without any audible rough-edges. Unfortunately, for all its slickness and polish, *The E.N.D.* is very patchy in terms of quality, with the first half of the album being massively better than the first. It sounds like all the potential singles are jammed into the first eight tracks, with the final seven being mostly rehashes of previous songs (such as ‘One Tribe’ compared to ‘Union’), or outright filler (such as ‘Electric City’).

Fundamentally, a Black Eyed Peas album is always worth listening to, and many of my complaints could be rectified

if the album were only ten tracks long rather than fifteen. There are some great moments on this record, so brace for radio saturation.  
*Sirrom Samoht*



## Food & Drink

### Eating Balls



There is an underlying paradox at all May Balls between the affected magnificence of the event, and the student-run reality. Wandering through the backs last night into John’s May Ball, the aura of splendour was shattered when a friend from the History Faculty nonchalantly handed me my strawberries and champagne and, smirking, said, “Enjoy your evening sir.”

This discrepancy between the opulent and the amateur is compounded by the barbaric lust with which I, like many others, cast aside all dignity and lurch around the event trying to stuff every last penny’s worth of the ticket into my mouth.

Nothing typifies this better than the famed chocolate fountain. This seemingly fabulous instalment evokes both luxury and decadence, and appeals to every adult who as a child read *Willy Wonka* and was uncontrollably envious of Augustus Gloop’s fate flowing down the chocolate river. What a way to go. However, in reality the chocolate fountain is quite different. At a Ball on Saturday night, having sufficiently stuffed myself with hog roast and falafel to find it fitting to move onto dessert, I made a bee line for the chocolate fountain.

When I arrived, my ideal was shattered utterly. The two students staffing it were idly playing with their mobile phones and counting down the minutes until they could escape for their “second half off.” So they were not bothered that their chocolate fountain stall after an hour of action looked more like a sewage spillage. Chocolate had been flung and spilt all over the table and assorted toppings; rendering the principle of dipping your marshmallow and strawberry in the fountain to cover it in chocolate pointless. The fountains were building up deposits of solidifying chocolate around the edges, and the pools were filled with discarded chunks of melon and mini-doughnuts. I tucked in nevertheless, obviously it tasted the same, but I could not help think that my greed was being somehow reflected in the tawdry, chocolate mess.

One thankful lesson that May Balls have taught me is how early the sun comes up in June. By five o’clock, these events are filled with the brutally revealing light of day, and any residual fantastical illusions are shattered. The pig carcass is wheeled away from the hog roast, the ice luge has melted into a sorry puddle, and the likes of me scurry around with napkins preparing doggy bags for tomorrow. Both the glory and the sorrow of a May Ball lies in its transitory grandeur.

*Rob Peal*

# VARSITY MAY WEEK

## Theatre

### Thursday 18th

*Gigi* (ends Thurs)  
**Cambridge Comedy Festival**  
*The Comedy of Errors* (ends Thurs)  
*Trojan Women* (ends Thurs)  
*Fair Youth* (ends Thurs)  
*Wishful Thinking - Footlights Tour Show 2009*  
**Dreamboats and Petticoats: The Musical**  
*Sense and Sensibility* (ends Thurs)  
*Much Ado About Nothing*

**Julius Caesar**  
 Fellows' Garden, Selwyn College: 3pm  
 (£4 concessions - £5 other)

**The Cherry Orchard**  
 The Orchard Tea Garden, Grantchester: 7pm (£6 concessions - £10 other)

**Don Juan on Trial**  
 College Garden, Pembroke College: 7pm (£4 concessions - £5 other)

**The Turn of the Screw**  
 Wren Library Cloister, Trinity College: 8.30pm (£6 concessions - £12 other, from Corn Exchange Box Office)

**Friday 19th**  
**Little Shop of Horrors**  
 Lecture Theatre, Trinity Hall: 3pm (£6)

## Balls

### Friday 19th

**Darwin May Ball: E-volution**  
 Darwin, Charles Darwin, E-volution, theory of evolution by natural selection. My punning mind may just explode.

**Wolfson June Event: Red Hot**  
 Is this a reference to spice or heat? Either way, the website promises a sexy, fiery evening.

**Corpus Christi May Ball: The Grand Tour**  
 If you're still alive after the week's revellies a Byron-inspired tour of Europe is surely just the ticket to render you suitably spent before you set off home for the Long Vacation.



## Art & Classical

### Thursday 18th

**UC Philharmonic Orchestra Summer Concert**  
 Trinity College Chapel: 8pm (£5-£8)

**Survival of the Fittest**  
 Fitzwilliam Museum: 1.15pm (free)  
 A lecture at the Fitz on Victorian life, delivered by the museum's co-curator Diana Donald

**FDR's First Hundred Days... and Obama's**  
 Richard Eden Suite, Herschel Road: 6pm (free)

### Friday 19th

**The Belcea Quartet and Valentine Erben**  
 The Theatre, Peterhouse: 5pm (free for Trinity and Peterhouse students, £5 to other students and £10 to other University members)

**University of Cambridge Service Units' Musical Spectacular with fireworks**  
 St John's College grounds: 6.30pm - 7.45pm (£10 conc., £15 adults, £35 family, from Corn Exchange Box Office)

**'I hear America singing': an American poetic revue**  
 Clare Hall: 8pm

## Garden Parties

### Thursday 18th

**Clare College Garden Party**  
 MEM lawns: 2-5.30pm (£6)  
 An array of games will be on offer, from sumo suits to giant jenga, croquet to giant Connect 4 and you can feast yourself on candy floss and a free ice cream cart until 4pm. Brings back many a childhood memory. BYOB as Clare were unable to get a license.

**Mays 17 Launch Party**  
 Fellows' Garden, King's College: 5pm-7pm (free)

**Carnival: The Original International Night**  
 Ballare: 10pm (£3 before 11pm, £4 after)  
 If you grab a flyer it's £2 entry and a free shot!

### Friday 19th

**Herodoteans' Garden Party**  
 Memorial Court Front Lawns, Clare College: 2.30pm-5pm (£5 advance-£7 on the door)

**Lost in Paradise: A Fashion Show**  
 The Shop, XVII Jesus Lane: 8.30pm (£8-£10, including entry to the after-party at the Union)

## Film

### Looking for Eric

Arts Picturehouse: 12.00 (daily except Wed), 14.20, 18.50, 21.20  
 Vue: 12.00, 14.45, 17.30, 20.15  
 Steve Evets plays a down-and-out postman who seeks existential advice from Eric Cantona, obviously. Shot in Manchester, and filled with good-natured humour, Ken Loach's latest film could well be worth a watch.

### Terminator Salvation

Vue: 11.45, 12.30, 14.30, 15.15, 17.15, 18.15 (Wed/Thurs) 20.00, 21.00, 22.45 (Wed), 23.45 (Wed/Thurs)  
 Christian Bale is repeatedly thrown against things by robots, while looking angry and shouting at nearby humans. If you enjoy LOUD NOISES and boredom then why not try walking next to a motorway for two hours instead.

### Red Cliff

Arts Picturehouse: 13.30, 17.00, 20.15  
 John Woo's latest is the most expensive Asian film ever made. Centred on the epic battle of Red Cliffs at the end of the Chinese Han Dynasty, it has been praised for its epic scale and tight choreography. Thankfully, it's finally made its way to the UK.

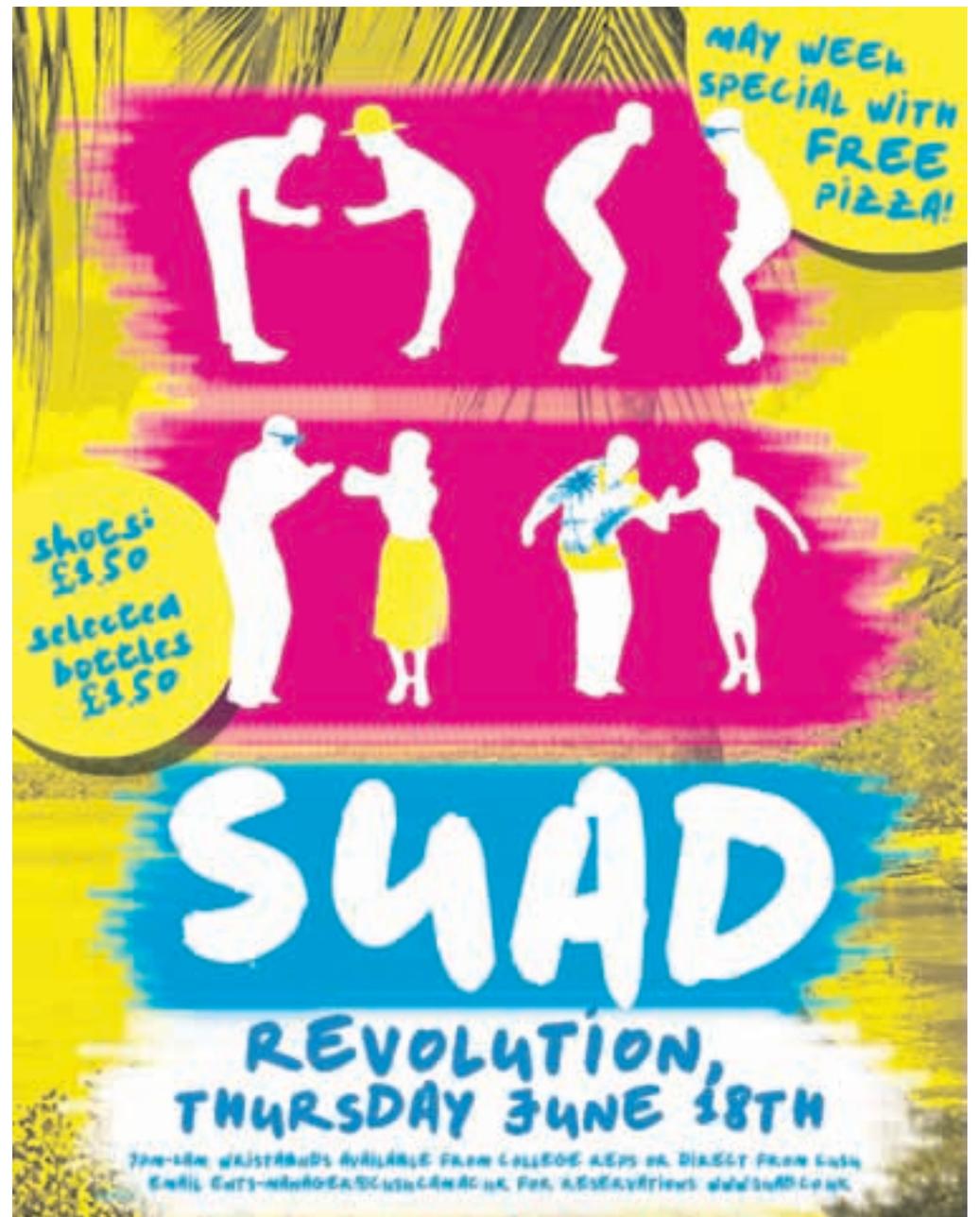


## Have a fabulous May week!

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## VARSITY PREVIEWS

# Tennis boys expect a win

» *Light Blues confident ahead of Varsity clash despite losing last year's star player*



John Western serves at Varsity last year

The Cambridge Men's Blues Tennis Team competed in the BUCS Northern Premier Division this academic year, and managed to come 5th out of 6 in the League and hence hold onto their place for next season. Despite facing tough opposition, particularly from Leeds Metropolitan who went on to win the League comfortably, the Blues scored two crucial victories by comfortably thrashing Edinburgh 10-0 both at home and in the return fixture. Adding this to the point that was gained by drawing 5-5 away at the University of Manchester and Cambridge's position was secure.

Travelling to some of the BUCS matches were a tremendous effort for the team, most notably the away match in Stirling, which involved a drive to Stansted, a flight to Edinburgh International, a bus to Waverley central train station and then a train to Stirling (all of this, and the return journey were completed in one day)!

With the League completed, the Blues turned their attention to the

BUCS Cup Competition. After narrowly defeating Manchester at home in a nail biting tie-break shoot-out after the match was tied 5-5, Cambridge faced a very tough away trip to Bath. Bath always put out a very competitive side, but the Light Blues showed great spirit by taking the match to 4-4 with only one match left. However they were then unfortunately knocked out with an incredibly tight 7-5, 7-6 loss in the last match of the day.

Following the Cup disappointment, the Blues went on the road for a series of friendlies and managed to beat the Queen's Club 5-1, Roehampton LTC 4-2, the Old Blues 8-1 and the Hurlingham Club 3-1. In our most prestigious match of the year, a combined Oxford-Cambridge team (4 players from each) takes on the All England LTC at Wimbledon. Despite the valiant efforts of the Oxbridge team, the All England Club triumphed by seven matches to five. But the whole day was, of course, a delightful experience and a great honour.

With regard to the Varsity Match (both Men's and Ladies' will be held concurrently) on June 29th and 30th and July 1st at the National Tennis Centre at Roehampton, Cambridge Men have won the last three encounters, with last year's score being 15-6. However, we have a marginally weaker team than last year (due to the loss of our number one player Jon Tassell) while Oxford are approximately the same, so the match will be very closely fought. Though we might still expect a victory, we will certainly not be counting our chickens.

### Full Team (in playing order)

1. Rob Blythe (Emmanuel)
2. James Ashton (Emmanuel)
3. John Western (Selwyn)
4. Rutger-Jan Lange (King's)
5. Pavel Chichkanov (Queens')
6. Kirill Zavodov (St. Edmund's)
7. Phil Compeau (Churchill)
8. Nick Jenkins (St Johns)

# Cricketers fired up for Test

» *Four Day match at Fenner's promises to be a tight-fought battle between two under-achieving teams*

If you can't get tickets to the first Ashes match, and the weather's nice, and you happen to be in Cambridge between the 8th and the 12th of July, why not pop down to the Fenner's ground to watch a bit of the Varsity cricket match. It may overlap with the test against the Aussies in Cardiff, but there's something special about sitting on the boundary rope with a glass of Pimm's and a cigarette, listening to that archetypal English summer sound of leather on willow.

The season so far has been interrupted by rain, with the Twenty20

match being entirely called off last Wednesday. Last month the MCCU did play a few one-day games, but they were not particularly promising, with losses against Durham, Loughborough and Cardiff. They will hope for better luck against the Dark Blues.

Ruel Braithwaite's quick bowling will be a useful weapon, as will Anand Ashok's dangerous batting. He averages over 50 this season, with a top score of 109 not out. The team list is yet to be decided, but the squad has been training together since March, so they should have some idea of who will play.



Ruel Braithwaite runs in to bowl at Fenner's

LORI THOMPSON

## JOIN THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE BUILDING OF A NEW SPORTS CENTRE FOR CAMBRIDGE

The Hawks, the Ospreys and CUSU have launched a joint campaign for the building of a new sports centre for Cambridge. The campaign is gathering momentum and will not die with the current generation of students. Next term you can expect more high profile

activity, including demonstrations, a celebration of the 10th birthday of the Fenner's model of the centre, and more. Please get involved by doing one of the following:

1. SIGN the online petition, which can be found at

[www.800yearswithnosportscentre.org](http://www.800yearswithnosportscentre.org) – it takes two minutes to do and could give us a permanent sports centre to be proud of.

2. BUY a campaign t-shirt (£5 from CUSU offices at the Old Examinations Hall, New Museums

Site, or £10 from A.E. Clothier and Ryder and Amies).

3. JOIN the Facebook group '800 years with No Sports Centre', and spread the word to friends and contacts to increase support for the project – it's your sports centre, so get involved!

## Coming Up This Summer...

### International

#### The Ashes

After a couple of four day warm-up matches, the Australians will take on England in the first NPower test in Cardiff on July 8-12th. Lord's, Edgbaston, Headingley and the Oval are the remaining venues for what ought to be an interesting contest (if the weather holds).

Try Viagogo or Seatwave.com for tickets. Otherwise catch every ball live on Sky Sports 1.

### University

#### Varsity One Day Cricket

As well as the four day match, as detailed above, CUCC will go head to head with OUCC in a one day match at Lord's. Even at this level, there is an enormous difference between the two disciplines. With the Twenty20 having been rained off, this match now takes on an even greater importance.

Saturday July 4th, Lord's Cricket Ground

### International

#### Wimbledon

Murray's win at Queen's is encouraging for anyone who'd like to see another British champion at Wimbledon. Most of us are more interested in the ongoing Federer vs. Nadal battle, because they both seem like really nice people.

Monday June 22nd-Sunday July 5th. Go to [wimbledon.org](http://wimbledon.org) for ticketing information or watch it on the BBC.

### International

#### The Confederations Cup

The winners of the six different FIFA groups, plus a host nation and the world champions, make up the eight teams competing in this very irrelevant tournament. Worthwhile if you want to watch Kaka, the world's second most expensive player, take on the Italians.

Italy vs. Brazil, Sunday June 21st, 7.30pm, Highlights on [fifa.com/confederationscup](http://fifa.com/confederationscup)

## From the (sporting) Archives

### Cricket

#### October 9th 1979:

'The second morning saw Cooper complete a steady 50, and when the Gloucestershire opener was out for 54, Pringle started playing his shots. When the eighth wicket fell at 251, Pringle was close to his 50 and tail-enders Pete Cottrell and Dave Surridge held a watching brief as he went on to hit the Oxford bowling for a further 50 runs, including three massive sixes into the sparsely populated stands. Pringle reached his century with a driven four, at which point captain Greig declared on 302-9 leaving the ex-Felsted all-rounder on 103 not out. Now 205 runs behind, Oxford found themselves in trouble again as they slipped to 20-3, and though skipper Simon Clements made 30, the Dark Blues were 6 down for 103 at the end of the day. On a sunny third morning, Cambridge needed only 64 minutes to dispose of the last four Oxford wickets. Only Hameed showed any fight, finally making 34 including a six off Pringle.'

*Oxford were all out for 153, still 52 short of making Cambridge bat again. Derek Pringle, one of the greatest stroke players of his day as a student, went on to play for England under three different captains. Over the course of nine years he made 30 test starts as a reliable medium-pace seamer.*

### Tennis

#### June 7th 1980:

'On May 10 and 11 at Fenner's Cambridge beat Oxford 21-0 in the annual Varsity Tennis Match. This was the first time in the history of the contest that any side had won by this margin. The Blues were able to field a full strength side for the first time this season. This includes four junior internationals, Mike Appleton, Bill Gowans, Mike Taylor and Dave Atkinson. Consequently they were very confident at the start of the match. On the Saturday morning the first round of singles were played, all of which were won in straight sets with the only problem being Nick Koehli, who found himself 5-3 down in the first set. However he responded quite brilliantly with a series of fine strokes to take three love games in a row.' ... 'In the mid-afternoon (on Sunday) Appleton and Dave Atkinson won the final point against Jordan and Tabir to secure the 21-0 victory and thus go one better than last year, when Cambridge won 20-0.'

*In something of a golden period for Cambridge tennis, the Blues squad lost only three matches to the old foe in the four years between 1979 and 1980. Appleton, Taylor, Gowans and Atkinson formed the foundations of their success. Appleton continues to play local tournaments, but none of them furthered their careers as professional sportsmen.*

### **We are...**

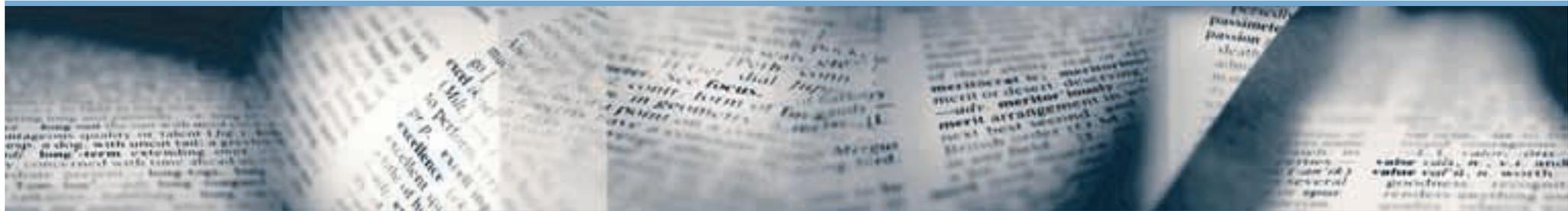
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