

WEEK  
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2012

# VARSLITY



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Newspaper  
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10 Features: *How Warsaw adapted it's Soviet Palace for every day life*



12 Listings: *My Cambridge Week*



16 Film: *ArcSoc Cinefile*



18 Theatre: *Varsity speaks to the cast of Rookie, the all-female sketch show*

## Shhh... UL's secrets revealed



Investigation: *Varsity* gets a rare glimpse into the behind-the-scenes workings of Cambridge's University Library  
Main Feature: Warsaw's Palace of Culture is put under the microscope



### Exclusive: student who rejected Oxford University speaks to *Varsity*

"I originally applied to Cambridge (Emmanuel College) last year. I think Emmanuel's test system is a reasonably good idea, though I found the interview process stressful.

I think people receive their most valuable education when they decide they really want to study something. It is inconsequential at what point this happens, although it is far easier to study at home pre-university, as GCSEs and A-levels are thoroughly limiting.

The wide-spread interest that my rejection email sparked fascinates me. It's bizarre that you can make the headlines for laughing at something. Imagine the headline, "student mocks the monarchy" – for some reason, it wouldn't have the same effect.

Additionally, the anger that my letter caused was definitely most extreme in Oxbridge students/graduates. I find this quite hilarious, and was taken even further with many claiming, "She can't criticise it as she's not a student here, and therefore knows nothing." To continue the earlier example, imagine if we believed that only the royal family could question the monarchy. Ridiculous." *Elly Nowell*

'The postcard's role in the understanding and dissemination of culture is extremely important. It is a very democratic art form'



British photographer  
Martin Parr  
17

## Fighting for a Living Wage

Colleges aren't paying a living wage to all employees

by Matt Russell, Andrew Griffin  
NEWS CORRESPONDENTS

Almost all Cambridge colleges are not paying living wages to all of their staff, Freedom of Information requests have revealed.

The University itself pays 112 members of staff less than the living wage threshold of £7.20 per hour. As well as all training staff, many employees classified as Grade 1, the University's least senior staff, are on less than the living wage.

The living wage is a rate of pay that allows workers to afford the basic essentials in life, such as housing, food and utilities. Outside of London, the rate is calculated by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University and is determined annually.

The problem has been identified across Cambridge, not just within

the University, that staff are not being paid living wages with Labour and Green councillors pressuring to make Cambridge City Council a living wage employer.

Out of the colleges, only Hughes Hall were able to state unequivocally that all staff are paid living wage, although Jesus said that no permanent staff were on less than the living wage, but offered no such qualification about the casual staff who are not on a fixed contract with the college.

Two of the worst offending colleges are Homerton and Emmanuel who, at the time of the FOI requests by the Cambridge University Labour Club (CULC) in October, employed 65 and 70 people respectively below the living wage.

Homerton told *Varsity* that all permanent staff are paid above the living wage, while the number of casual

workers fluctuates throughout the year.

Some colleges have responded by suggesting that the figure may not be truly reflective because of engagement in training and apprenticeship schemes, and also that the term 'living wage' may not be wholly appropriate in that context.

Another common reason cited by the bursars contacted by *Varsity* for not paying the living wage to staff, and particularly casual workers, is the correlation between staff costs and student charges. In most colleges, staff costs account for between 40-50% of what students pay.

Some also pointed towards generous pension schemes, benefits such as free meals and free parking, and the fact that many casual staff are below the age of 20 and therefore often on much more than the minimum wage.

*Continues on page 3*

- MUSIC** *Neutral Milk Hotel*
- BOOKS** *Ahdaf Soueif by Sarah Hall*
- FILM** *Asghar Farhadi's A Separation*
- ART** *Henri Gaudier-Brzeska: Vorticist!*
- THEATRE** *The Dumb Waiter, Zombie Haiku*

### WEEKEND WEATHER



PS. Look out for our new book website, coming soon to a laptop near you

Intelligence is really a kind of taste: taste in ideas. – Susan Sontag

# Inside

...24 pages of words, pictures, facts, opinions, thoughts, clues, statements, conclusions, insinuations and the occasional *flash* of genius...

## DIGITAL CONTENTS

### Online:

The Varsity May Ball guide, keep checking regularly for more updates!

### Podcasts:

**Alternative Idea of the University:** Grad union president, Liv Watson, on her idea of the university.

**My Ear Abroad:** Rebecca Bailey, on life and on location in Beijing

**Soapbox:** Felix Danczak on the status of privacy in the modern-day city

**The Ink Trail:** John Kinsella interviewed on his new poetry journal, 'This Corner'

[www.varsity.co.uk/podcasts](http://www.varsity.co.uk/podcasts)

### VarsiTV:

**RAG Jailbreak:** Covering the student stampede beyond the bubble

[www.varsitytv.co.uk/tv](http://www.varsitytv.co.uk/tv)

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## NEWS

### CUSU disaffiliation 6

Robinson and Pembroke vote on weakening ties with CUSU



## SCIENCE

### Rock of the Week 7

This week Varsity takes a look at the latest in a series of hunks, sandstone



## FEATURES

### Palaces of Culture 10

A look at Warsaw's abandoned people's palace



## MUSIC

### Blues Funeral 14

Review: Mark Lanegan Band's newest release 'Blues Funeral'



## FASHION

### Gareth Pugh 18

Blurring the line between fashion and architecture



## SPORT

### Blues Lose 24

Disappointing post-Varsity loss to Durham



## DON'T FORGET

### The Varsity Crossword 23

## Post

### Eggscuse me!

Dear Editors,

Visiting my friends' universities I have seen a lot of different Student Newspapers, and must say that I was particularly impressed by yours. The new-look paper is bright and colourful, but what I really wanted to congratulate you on is the fashion page. Varsity is not Vogue and it's good to see that it doesn't try to be; the playfulness and originality of the double-page spread (pages 20-21) turned it from a section I skipped in previous newspapers to a page now stuck to my notice-board.

One thing though, I do think you could have provided an answer to the location of the third penguin egg (caption 6, page 11) to provide an easy way out of hours of searching.

Yours,

SOPHIE WATSON

### Mistaken identities

Dear Editors,

I was recently outraged by the uncensored publication of private images of myself in last issue's VARSHITTY.

IMAGINE my consternation upon opening your paper over my Friday morning Coco-Pops, only to spit out the chocolatey milk all over your Fashion pages.

Do you REALISE how difficult it is for a person of my delicate complexion to endure such drastic amounts of cosmetic surgery EVERY SINGLE MORNING in order to maintain the illusion that I am in fact a petite Kiwi gentleman, not in reality a tall sexy French girl.

This is certainly not how I intended my true race and gender (never mind my penchant for cheerleading in stockings) to be revealed to my friends and family.

I don't know how these pictures were leaked, but be aware that you and your entire organisation are soon to be on

the receiving end of a VERY SERIOUS LITIGATION PROCESS.

My Sincerest Regards,  
EUGENE GEIDELBERG

### In defence of Will

To whom it may pun-cern,

Being a devoted thespyman, your review of King Lear — printed in last week's issue — caught my eye. The swelling syntaxes of Cindaz Higgle's effervescent prose was, as ever, a delight to read, but before I knew it, my naïve gaze had been all but molested by the captions that accompanied the action shots of my dear ADC-bar-brethren.

It is outrageous that you seem to think it appropriate to denigrate the Bard's work with the so-called 'wit' of whatever sub-sub-standard sub you have churning out these puns. I am writing to bring to your attention this literary discourtesy, and to tell you that, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, Daddy's home, and (word)playtime is most definitely over.

Shakespeare was a serious playwright, and would never have allowed these juvenile indulgences to be associated with his works. In annotating this performance with your practically physiological sense of humour(s), you do him an injustice. And yet, across the four printed photographs, you persist. Allow me to assure you, parapraxis does not make perfect. You even skewed the image of act three's remarkable sign language display to give the impression that it was some kind of dance. Please — for decades there has been a scholarly consensus that the only Knight Fever to feature in the Bard's canon was syphilis.

(Up) yours,  
SILLYAM JAPESPEARE

### Apologies and corrections

Apologies to James Vincent and Lizzie Marx, who were omitted from our team list, and to Amy Lonton-Rawsthorne who was not credited for her review of *Shame* last week.

## EDITORIAL

### Cities: Zoom in, don't zoom out

This week's uncovering of the results of the Living Wage Campaign in Cambridge shocked us; many of us must surely remember the days of after-school and weekend jobs, taken up with the glint of a little extra spending-money clear in our sights. To work within specifications of what is denoted as the national minimum wage, only to find that ends simply aren't meeting, must be both demoralising and utterly alienating.

Such an oversight of care for workers seems incongruous if we look to the stringent policing of safety standards at work, with employers increasingly afraid even to allow a member of staff up a ladder for fear of their safety (and the lawsuit that would inevitably follow, to adopt a more cynical line of thought). It is clear that employers look to abide by the rules — and, as evidenced in the majority of colleges examined — strive for nothing more.

Ultimately, then, it is the rules that urgently need to change, with the current broad and careless strokes of the umbrella minimum wage adjusted accordingly, shaded in, and painted more delicately. It is up to us as students to set such a change in motion, and follow St John's College Oxford, in pushing their JCRs to pass the motion insisting that their college staff are paid the living, not the minimum, wage. A city must be understood as a sum of its parts — and the people who interact with these components should not become a blur within a much larger picture; each worker cannot be whitewashed out with national averages.

And so, we should focus more on this city that we inhabit for these three short years. Already, with only two issues behind us, we have

encountered multiple nostalgic accounts from ex-Cambridge whippersnappers interviewed in the paper, no longer so young and bright-eyed, talking of their days here. Rose-tinted the muddy River Cam might be upon moving away, but the realities of cloistered college life, time spent reading in grand libraries (and, on occasion, in bed, as we attempt to soak up a semblance of a Normal Student Life of late rising and — difficult to imagine as it is — 'Reading Week'), and being offered a cup of tea by a supervisor is to be valued here and now.

It is important to remember, though, that the city extends much further than college and library walls. It takes only a short cycle ride to realise quite how fast the spires fall away to flat, green countryside, dusty farms, and the odd stile. Escaping the city is integral to relishing our inhabitation of it: a pair of our very own small-scale, self-adopted rose-tinted glasses.

Spaces, buildings, and the streets we walk along every day build up powerful associations for each of us. This is surely acknowledged in the inspiration taken from architecture in everything from cinema to fashion, as we have explored in this week's issue.

Take a look through; most of all, we hope that Varsity's presence in your library and porter's lodge can help to shape your week, and fit into this familiar, fleeting landscape.



Madeleine Morley & Louise Benson  
Editors, Lent 2012

## INTERVIEW

# Sir Crispin Tickell

The former president of the Royal Geographical Society and prominent environmentalist talks to **Felix Nugee** about his past, and visions for the future

**F**ormer diplomat and now a leading authority on climate change: Sir Crispin cut an authoritative figure upon first sight of him at the Peterhouse Politics Society. After his talk “Thinking Differently: Out of the Box and into the Future”, we sit down to talk.

Having been one of Britain’s top diplomats for many years, his career changed direction significantly in the mid 1970s, something he describes as “a product of chance, because I had a sabbatical year off at Harvard in the mid 1970s and contrary to the advice I was given at the time, I focused on the relationship between climate change and politics. I was able to read all the literature in something like 3 months whereas now it would take me 30 years.” His 1977 book *Climate Change and World Affairs* was incredibly influential, and led to him advising successive British governments, including Thatcher’s.

He muses “I think my biggest achievement has been to help people understand the problems of climate change”, despite a spell as Britain’s representative on the UN Security council. He boasts that during his time there “I never once used my veto” – no mean feat, considering that he was present during the breakup of the Soviet Union and the first Gulf War. The secret, he

explains, was that he used to have all five members at his house for meetings; he believes it certainly helped having a friendly relationship with his opposite numbers.

Throughout, Sir Crispin stresses the need for academics from different disciplines to work together in order to combat the multiple crises we currently face, both economic and environmental.

## ‘Out of date economics should be recognised as a dangerous mental condition’

“In an ideal world, you’d make an arrangement whereby people very rapidly change their energy policies. But that means thinking again about economics and measuring things differently and putting your priorities in different places. If you did that you may be able to stay or delay some of these things happening and get it under control. There are one or two things where we are past the tipping point though; such as sea level rise.”

He does accept that multilateral treaties, such as Kyoto or Copenhagen, do not necessarily provide the best way



Sir Crispin Tickell was ahead of his time on the environment

of achieving these changes, stressing that “Governments have to somehow understand these changes are not only for the good of the planet but for the good of themselves.”

The attitude of “Why should Britain damage itself for the sake of the world?”, as shown in a recent speech by George Osborne, is labelled deplorable and Sir Crispin calls for one of the larger countries to take leadership of the issue.

Sir Crispin also emphasises the need for a New Economics: “I welcome the demonstrations against market capitalism at present; I’ve walked amongst those people at St Paul’s and I don’t think they know what they want but much of the resentment about bankers giving themselves huge bonuses is part of the unease about the system as a whole.”

He expands on this topic: “Out of date economics should be recognised as a dangerous mental condition which

is driving the world in an alarmingly wrong direction”. He points out that there is no such thing as a true free market, that we need to determine the character of regulation and somehow take these externalities into account. Illustrating these points he asked “how do we value uncut rainforest?” He envisages a future where instead of focusing purely on GDP, we measure health, wealth and happiness.

As we draw to a close, I ask him what he feels about the prospects of the changes he outlines actually being implemented in order to stop what he describes as climate destabilisation. “Optimism of the intellect and pessimism of the will”, he replies, but he carries on with cautious hope, stressing that not only British political parties are aware of the issue, but also those in France and Germany. The question is now when, not if; – hopefully before a tipping point.

## Student sent down following bog-standard row

An unnamed student from Emma has been sent down after being caught urinating in a toilet by porters.

Against all natural instincts of comfort and convenience, the student left his room at approximately two in the morning. The trek two floors down to relieve himself was made despite the completely functional sink merely metres away from his bed. Declining to comment, the student has since returned to his home in Somerset and deleted his Facebook due to intensive bullying.

The attendant porter told Varsity “It’s very unusual to hear the sound of tinkles at that time of night. It’s sometimes the European students, but that’s a culture thing. The young lad even washed his hands after, like that made it alright or something.”

The Dean of the college has promised to launch an investigation amid fears that the practice may be more widespread than anyone would like to admit. The Guardian’s “Comment is Free” pleaded wider socio-economic understanding of the incident, while The Daily Mail died of a hissy fit.

*Angus Hackdonald*

## Varsity May Ball guide 2012 is now online

Keep checking the website for updates on launches, themes and tickets

*Continued from page 1*

However, many of the staff paid under the living wage are on permanent contracts. Among them, Selwyn employs 28 permanent staff who are paid below the living

wage, Magdalene 30 and Churchill 13.

Many colleges were vague about the number of staff paid less than the living wage; though Downing said 42 employees were on less, it

was said that this was equivalent to 24 full-time staff since most of these employees were part-time.

These are also absolute figures and therefore more likely to be skewed against larger colleges, such as Homerton.

Universities across the country are already beginning to make the commitment to living wage. In 2010 UCL agreed to pay living wage for all their staff after initially making media headlines for refusing to. They are now one of nine London universities who committed to the move.

Last week it was announced that St John’s College in Oxford had agreed to pay their staff the living wage after the college’s JCR had passed a motion to lobby the college to pay the rate in Michaelmas. The news comes amid a similar campaign for the living wage to be paid across the University

of Oxford.

However, the campaign in Cambridge is proving to be slow moving. Although Emma’s JCR passed a motion in support of the campaign last term, as yet many JCRs are still refusing to give formal support to the campaign.

One positive move has come from Peterhouse where 30 members of staff were paid below the living wage. From 1st August this year, the college’s standard pay per hour will increase to £7.24 from the current level of £7.10, and therefore above the threshold.

Yet, despite this, many colleges do not seem to be following suit. When contacted, Selwyn stated that there was only a 1% increase in the last pay round in addition to some of the ‘perks’ mentioned earlier, while many colleges have so far failed to respond to enquiries at all.



Selwyn College: One of the worst offenders for paying living wage



## Looking for work this summer?

University of Cambridge International Summer Schools can offer 4-7 weeks work for Cambridge undergraduate and graduate students. £250 per week plus college accommodation.

For details call network: 60850 or 01223 760850 or email: [int.ra@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:int.ra@ice.cam.ac.uk)

## IdeaSpace: Cambridge's new enterprise initiative

**CAMBRIDGE** A new enterprise initiative in Cambridge aims to further assist start-up companies in the region.

IdeaSpace, which is based on the University of Cambridge's West Campus, will offer new firms business mentoring and access to 70,000 square feet of laboratory space at Barbraham Research Campus.

It is hoped that the initiative will mean that ideaSpace can extend its reach to encompass businesses in the biotechnology sector.

Dr Belinda Clarke, Director of External Relations at ideaSpace said, "Many companies don't need full time access to lab facilities but want to access it on an 'as needed' basis".

## 'CO2morrow': Climate change artwork comes to Cambridge

**CAMBRIDGE** A striking, 28 foot environmental sculpture named 'CO2morrow' is soon to be installed at the entrance to Cambridge University Botanic Garden.

The city council obtained this unusual piece of art, designed and created by Marcos Lutyens and Alessandro Marianantoni, through a Sustainable City grant.

After initially being displayed on the facade of the Royal Academy, London and Seaton Delaval Hall, Northumberland, the sculpture continues its journey to Cambridge to increase awareness of climate change.

## Vermeer exhibition record-breaking success

**CAMBRIDGE** A staggering 131,416 people packed into The Fitzwilliam Museum's three-month Vermeer exhibition. Impressively, this is almost half the number of visitors the museum usually opens its doors to in an entire year.

Such was the demand to see 'Vermeer's Women: Secrets and Silence' that opening hours had to be extended in the last few weeks. Those who visited the exhibition could expect to queue for up to 90 minutes for their chance to see the masterpieces.

Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum Dr Timothy Potts said he was "delighted" with the exhibition's "unprecedented success".

## Cambridge research leads prominent figures to call for alternative Leveson Inquiry

**UNITED KINGDOM** Leading human rights campaigners and lawyers, journalists and prominent public figures have formed the group 'The Alternative Leveson Inquiry' to highlight the fact that the Leveson Inquiry has failed to deal sufficiently with the issue of anti-Islam media coverage.

Recent research that was undertaken by University of Cambridge found that "a wider set of representations of Islam would signify a welcome change to reporting practices. Muslims deserve a better press than they have been given in the past decade".

The group are calling for a more pro-active response to the increasingly frequent findings of this kind in research undertaken into the issue, suggesting that improvements need to be made to the ethical standards of reporting in the UK media.

# Cultivating the wrong kind of affinity?

by Helen Charman  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

The Affinity project, which had its official launch on Tuesday night in Cindies, is a student-run project endorsed by the Cambridge Union Society that terms itself "education helping education": it aims to provide pastoral and financial assistance to a comprehensive school in Croydon that was affected by this summer's riots and the ongoing government cuts to education.

## £170m

worth of facilities have been provided for academies by the Harris Federation

The project is linked with the Harris Academy Purley, and aims to give the school the financial resources to help with the purchase of equipment and facilities that the school has asked for in a wish list given to the project.

The project has also started a "Skype-buddy mentorship" scheme, where student volunteers talk with a pupil from the school for an hour once a



The Harris Academy Purley is sponsored by Carpetright CEO, Lord Harris of Peckham

week, aiming to help the pupils not just with academia but also any personal or future goals they have. The project will be holding various events, but the main way it plans to raise money is through a fortnightly lottery, where tickets will cost £1 and the prizes on offer will vary from vouchers to free meals.

Although the project is undeniably

well-intentioned, questions have been raised about the choice of school for the project to support: several figures from the educational community and members of the university have expressed surprise at the choice of the Harris Academy Purley as the school that the Affinity Project have chosen to focus on.

Although the Academy is a state school and prides itself on taking students of all backgrounds and abilities, it is independently run, meaning its funding is not received in the same way as state school.

The fact that the school is not affiliated to a Local Education Authority means the company that runs it, in this case the Harris Federation, can decide how much funding and support the school receives.

The Academy is one of 13 in the country run by the Harris Federation, with Lord Harris of Peckham – the chairman and chief executive of Carpetright – the main sponsor of the scheme. The Harris Federation invests in educational opportunities in London, and has so far overseen an investment of approximately £170 million in buildings and facilities for the academies.

Certainly the mentoring side of the project and its focus on helping with the education of children living in disadvantaged parts of London are admirable. However, it seems perhaps an odd target for a fund-raising initiative, bearing in mind the number of struggling comprehensive state schools that do not have the financial support of a company like the Harris Federation.

## Shift in CUSU relations

### Colleges voting on their affiliation with CUSU

by Varsity News

A referendum on Robinson's affiliation with Cambridge University Students' Union (CUSU) will take place today after 55 Robinson students signed a petition forcing the vote.

Ewan McGregor, the previous chair of Robinson College Students' Association (RCSA), started the petition at the end of last term.

He believes the relationship is not financially beneficial, saying: "It seems interesting that out of a budget of half a million, CUSU only spend £5,000-6,000 on access activities per year. This is reduced to £750 if you take away what they make in revenues, which seems pitiful given that we pay them £2,500 every year."

The current executive committee of the RCSA have already voted to not disaffiliate from CUSU.

Gerard Tully, president of CUSU, said that McGregor's claim that it is just £750 is "factually untrue", pointing out that there will be £22,000 for access next year.

CUSU turned out in force for the open meeting at Robinson regarding the potential disaffiliation with four sabbatical officers, among others, turning up. If Robinson do vote to disaffiliate, they would become the second college to do so after Corpus Christi paved the way in 2010.

71% of Corpus' undergraduates and 86% of their postgraduates had voted in favour after citing disillusionment with the welfare support they had received.

At Robinson the affiliation fees were discussed; it costs £6.70 per undergraduate student for affiliation with CUSU. Pembroke are also reconsidering the nature of their affiliation with CUSU with a referendum of their own coming up soon.

Unlike Robinson, the referendum does not concern complete disaffiliation, but rather a change to a clause in their constitution which currently



Robinson's referendum marks a changing attitude in the relationship between colleges and CUSU

states that they are automatically affiliated. The proposed change is to force a referendum to be held every year

## 'We essentially have a service relationship with CUSU, and have never really assessed whether CUSU give us value for money'

and within the first two weeks of term, which would reaffirm their affiliation with CUSU. A similar set-up is already in place at other colleges.

Though not as direct a threat to their affiliation with CUSU, with the move coinciding with Robinson's referendum, Pembroke's own vote signals a drastically shifting relationship between students and CUSU.

## A charitable affair at the Union Society

by Varsity News

Friday 27th January sees the first ever charity fair to be held at the Cambridge Union. The fair, which will be held on the Union premises at 9A Bridge Street will be open to both members and non-members, taking place as it does during the traditional Union open period at the beginning of term.

The fair is open from 6pm to 10pm and will see contributions from twelve charities including Amnesty International, Cambridge Mental Wealth – a group of Cambridge students devoted to promoting wellbeing on campus – and Campus Children's Holidays – a Cambridge-based charity dedicated to providing holidays for disadvantaged children from inner-city Liverpool.

The fair is not only the first charity fair put on by the Cambridge Union Society but the first event of its kind to be held in Cambridge. It taps into a philanthropic trend currently appearing in the university, as shown by the emergence of

ventures such as Alora, a not-for-profit organisation set up by students. Alora creates bespoke May Ball dresses and will be making an appearance at the fair.

The fair will also involve a food workshop from Cambridge FoodCycle, a comedy sketch representing Cambridge Mental Wealth performed by Sidney Sussex students and a talk from Tom Latchford about building viable careers in the not-for-profit sector.

Latchford is a leading expert in the field, and CEO of RasingIT, an organisation that enables charities to improve their productivity by improving IT facilities, aiming to change the way that charities are often seen to lag behind other industries in benefiting from leading edge technology.

The Union are hoping for a healthy turnout at the fair, particularly due to the trailblazing nature of the event, offering free food and what the facebook event describes as "delicious cocktails" to encourage a more charitable mindset amongst the attendees.

### BRIEF INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL WINNER

**Which of your films are you proudest of?**

Probably a movie I made in Cambridge in 1967 called *I'll Never Forget What's isname*. It starred my all time hero Orson Welles together with Oliver Reed and other notables. It was very ahead of its time in dealing with the despoliation of the planet in a very humorous way and in someone (Oliver Reed) who wished to opt out of the rat race and chopped his desk up with an axe at the start of the movie.

**You've been quoted as saying, "If you want art, don't mess about with movies. Buy a Picasso". Do you think this still applies today?**

Movies are made as entertainment, they have to attract the largest audience

possible in order to recoup their very substantial costs. That does not mean they cannot be artistic. But so many movies seem to be made as "arty farty films" to delight people in Hampstead, fellow so called 'intellectuals'. A popular film can still say something, can still have considerable artistic merit, but if it is made purely for art the chances are it will attract far few people. That is not to say some great movies which could be called artistic are not worthwhile. *Citizen Kane* was one of the greatest movies of all time. It never made a profit. Indeed, it made a substantial loss!

● Michael Winner, ex-Editor of Varsity, will be talking at the Union on Tuesday, 31st. See next week's issue for our full interview.

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# The UL: an insider's guide

Described by Chamberlain as “that magnificent erection”, **Isabella Cookson** and **George Austin-Cliff** explore the lesser-known passages of the University Library for a glimpse into one of the biggest academic organs in the world

**T**he UL: the building that welcomes over 1,100 of us every day and expands below the surface at a shelf rate of 3km per year. It reduced our fresher selves to tears when we contemplated the collective IQ of the people sharing our desk. It frustrates us daily during the hot but vain pursuit for a book on the desolate sixth floor of the North Front – or was it Wing? While so many of us feel we know this place inside out, Varsity's intimate tour reveals a new world unseen by the average Cambridge undergraduate. Have you ever wondered what happens to the book you just gave back? Or even who works in those many rooms where no student treads? What actually goes on in that tower?

It's right up to the 17th floor where Vanessa Lacey, Head of the Tower Project, revels in the musty smell of 19th century ‘trash’, which she has been inhaling daily for the last few years. Trash? The recently acquired Peter André autobiography is perhaps the modern equivalent of the texts that suddenly started flooding into the UL's former buildings, after it first became a legal deposit library in the early 1800s. ‘You can imagine the sort of chaos there was. The students were all sitting there reading their Greek and Theology, and suddenly they're getting Little Martha's Book of Geography and all these children's books that nobody really knew what to do with. So when we moved here in the 1930s, they dumped them all up in the tower.’ What of the explicit images rumoured to be lurking somewhere among these dusty tomes? ‘Well, so far we've managed to unearth a few racy catalogues of electric and magnetic corsets made by a certain Mr. Harness. Could be a sex toy, or possibly a slimming aid. Who knows?’

A glimmer of hope still remains, though, for Cambridge's best-loved rumour; a glimmer – or a desk lamp.



Clockwise from top left: Delicate work: repairing manuscripts; Books to be shelved; Book binding workshop. Below: Cover of the *Magnetic Corsets* catalogue

**‘All sorts of texts started flooding in when we became a legal deposit library. You can imagine the chaos’**

Students have mythologised the light on the top floor which stays on after nightfall, maintaining that it illuminates the smutty literature over which ageing professors stoop into the early morning. Maintenance denies its existence. Suspicious. Downstairs, we've managed to steal a few precious minutes of Larissa Erzincioğlu's time, one of the library's book fetchers. Eight to ten fetchers are on duty at any moment, with extra conscripts over exam term to cope with the increased onslaught



of requests launched by students. ‘Seventeen minutes is our average fetching time. Pretty good compared to other legal deposit libraries: the British Library has deposits in Yorkshire, where books are located by robots and sent down to London by lorry. Even the Bodleian can take up to three days. There are stories of Oxford professors driving to Cambridge to read books here because we're so much quicker.’

When you hand in your book to the desk, it normally takes a maximum of two days to be digested through the system and put back on the shelves: quite a feat considering that an average of 821 loans are made each day. Manned by humans alone, with all its deposits stored on site, faster than anywhere else – the UL is truly the *crème de la crème*.

And, as we discover as the afternoon goes on, there's more to the University Library – even more than its role as the grand site of desperate attempts to come up with a sexy dissertation title, or to grasp the intricacies of 18th century economic policies. The UL also houses some of the best craftsmanship in the country, and is one of the very few places where book conservation is carried out in the UK. Lucy Cheng,

a conservator, shows us the intricate work of repairing old manuscripts, a rare but essential skill when faced with the Taylor-Schechter Genizah Collection that she is currently working on. Its 190,000 manuscript fragments, mainly in Hebrew, Judaeo-Arabic and Arabic, are an unparalleled resource for the study of Jewish history in the Middle Ages.

The work of the industrious bookbinders happens next door. Tools and noisy machines fill the room as they sew and chop, cover and emboss titles onto the books. Jim Bloxam, senior Book Conservator, explains that with the advent of online material, the skills in this room are becoming rare indeed. He talks also of the difficulties that are prone to arise when sharing their resources with other academic institutions. Shipping their delicate material to other countries “can be a bit of a nightmare” – especially considering the recent terrorism scares. The UL might seem like a rigid, static building – but this is a place of movement and transition, of international exchange and flux. People come from all over the world to use the library that we casually stroll to after lunch. That being said, there are their loyal members: Professor MacCaffery, now in his early nineties, can still be seen industriously working away in the Reading Room most days of the week.

Next time you visit the library, then, forget for a moment about your weekly essay, cast aside the tempting Tea Room, and explore its majestic realms a little further. Visit the exhibition centre to view some of those treasures that lie hidden in its depths.



Browsing the 160km of shelves in the UL

## THE LIBRARIAN

*The longest serving member of staff, John Reynolds, has been working at the UL for nearly 47 years and is currently Head of the Entrance Hall.*

### How has the UL changed since you begun working here in 1965?

When I started, we still had the manual system. Undergraduates had to get borrowing forms signed by their tutors. If they were overdue, we used to phone the tutors up because they were, in theory, responsible for the fines.

### Any particularly amusing moments?

I remember one morning I was at the desk when a young chap came in without his library card or any ID. When I asked for written proof of his name he replied, “Well, it's on my underpants” and started undoing his trousers!

### What's the social scene like among the staff?

It's great. We have the Christmas social, a grand summer quiz and there's a choir – we sing carols in the entrance hall at Christmas. There are even football teams who play against each other for the glory of the trophy, the ‘Copyright Cup’.

### You are retiring this year: what will you miss most?

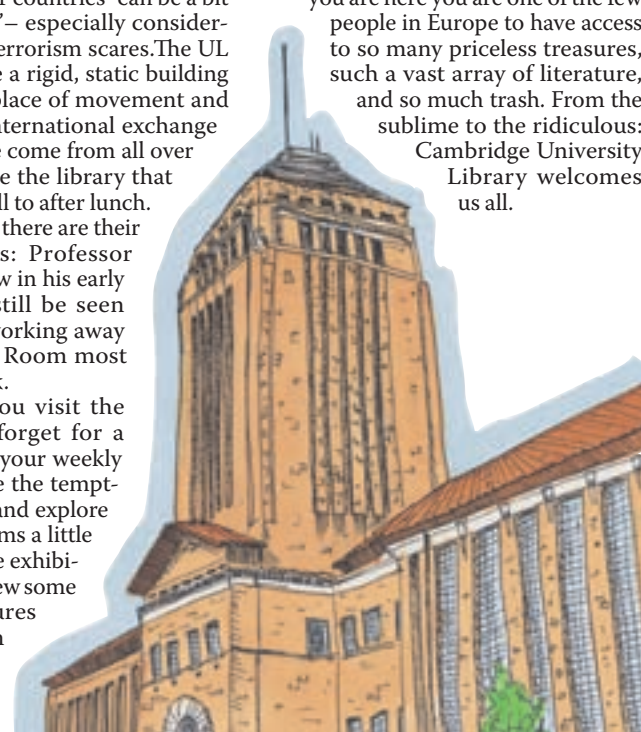
The people – both the staff and the readers. It really has always been a wonderful place to work over all these years.

Delve into the manuscripts room and request to see the famous Gutenberg Bible. Or even check out one of the other numerous UL blogs on the library website (the tower project blog is quite a treat). Throw away your academic insecurities and remember that while you are here you are one of the few people in Europe to have access to so many priceless treasures, such a vast array of literature, and so much trash. From the sublime to the ridiculous: Cambridge University Library welcomes us all.

## LITTLE-KNOWN UL FACTS

- The building opened in 1934, and was designed by Giles Gilbert Scott who also designed the Tate Modern, Battersea Power Station and the old-style red phone boxes
- In total there are around 8 million books in library, around a quarter of which are on open shelves. This makes the UL the largest open-access library in Europe
- The oldest items in the library's collections are Chinese oracle bones dating back from the 13th Century BC
- The main Reading Room houses around 17,000 titles
- Around 85,000 monographs are currently received under legal deposit each year
- The library contains over 160km of shelving

- The Rare Books department includes the Gutenberg Bible, produced by Mainz around 1455 by Johann Gutenberg
- There are 355,000 registered users of the library
- About 33,000 serial titles are deposited, representing over 100,000 issues a year
- There are 350 members of staff, including 100 working on research projects with outside funding
- In 2011 there were 205,281 loans (excluding staff and reader renewals). Assuming 250 working days, this gives an average of 821 loans per day
- The Book fetchers fetch a total of around 1,000 books per week



# Nature's eager engineers

**James Elderfield** shows us why we're not the only ones with urban-style living tendencies

**I**t is often said that humans are different from other organisms because we change the world around us rather than adapt to it. That buildings and cities allow us to live sustainably and comfortably at a much greater population density than otherwise possible shows this nicely. However, there are cases of organisms with this capability to modify their surroundings throughout nature.

Easy examples are the construction beaver dams and termite mounds. You might consider these to be unimpressive compared to our feats of engineering, but you should think again.

The largest known beaver dam is found in Wood Buffalo National Park in Alberta, Canada and measures a

stunning 850m long. This puts the Great Pyramid of Giza to shame. Despite being one of our finest and most revered examples of building, it is a meagre 145m (roughly 85 times the height of a human) – and we only managed one of those whilst there are tens of thousands of termite mounds across the world.

Perhaps even more impressive is the fact that termite mounds can, in some African species, extend above the ground to 9m (roughly 1500 times the length of a worker termite) not counting the extensive nest underground. Termite mounds also can maintain temperatures within a range of one degree Celsius over the entire day and keep the air/gas balance suitable for life with ventilation.

Those examples, however, are confined to animals, which really only make up a very small portion of the world's biodiversity. For small-scale building one can look at the single-celled amoeboid of the genus *Diffugia* which build intricate and beautiful house-like shells out of sand for themselves.

Microscopic organisms even beat us to bringing about climate change and what's more, they did it on a much bigger scale, though maybe not quite as rapidly. Since the Industrial Revolution we have managed to increase the carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere by about 35% to the current level of 390ppm.

About 2.4 billion years ago early cyanobacteria (also known as blue-green algae) caused the Great Oxygenation Event. Atmospheric oxygen levels went from basically nil to a concentration greater than what it is currently.

They brought this about by a little process called photosynthesis. Photosynthesis is generally considered a "good thing" these days as 99.9% of ecosystems rely on it and it does a good job of offsetting our carbon emissions. Back then, however, it was catastrophic and caused one of the biggest extinction events in the history of Earth. It also produced hundreds of new mineral types and converted the high proportion of methane in the atmosphere into carbon dioxide, causing one of the longest Ice Ages.

Mankind manages some pretty spectacular, and sometimes spectacularly stupid, things – but to avoid species-wide arrogance it's important to notice that we are not alone in this. Plus, nature beats us in that it never evolved to accommodate a Cindies.

Fast worker: the largest known beaver dam measures a stunning 850m long



## Rock of the Week

### SANDSTONE

Upon receiving this week's rock, Kiki cried 'That's not a chunk, that's a bloody slab' – and she was right. This sandstone continues last week's sedimentary theme, though unlike limestone, this week's rock is decidedly clastic. This means the rock is composed of minerals and rock fragments that were transported by moving fluids, such as rivers. Its porosity means it plays a vital role in the formation of aquifers. The ancient settlement of Petra is carved entirely of sandstone. Closer to home, the morose and rainy northern town of Stockport is built upon sandstone. It's a shame they settled on such a sturdy rock, as the world would be a better place if the entire town and its inhabitants were swallowed up in some freak geological disaster. *Joseph White*



### FAQS

**If beavers build such great dams, why don't we just employ them instead of those expensive, annoying engineers?**

Difficult question. I don't think I can answer that one.

**Could I live in a termite mound?**

Depends how fussy you are about internal design.

**If microorganisms caused climate change, why didn't they stop it, like we are?**

They just musn't feel guilt.

**Would you advise getting a pet beaver?**

Well, given that they such proficient builders I certainly would. I'm sure it would be easy to convince them to do odd DIY jobs around the house.

**What would I feed my beaver?**

They're herbivores, so any plant.



## Best gadgets for city living

### WiFi Bathroom Scales

We all want to monitor our weight all the time. What better way to make sure you always feel guilty about it than bathroom scales that sync to your iPhone? Perfect.

### Lumie Bodyclock Active 250

A digital clock that simulates sunrise in your bedroom. We may not wish to actually rise with the sun but "human beings haven't evolved to spring awake at the sound of a digital beep". The best of both worlds.

### Desktop Coffee Maker

City living is busy, and we don't all have time to leave our desks to go and grab a coffee. This handy machine even comes with two mugs - so you don't even have to go buy those.

### Star-Theatre Planetarium

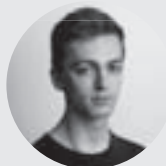
There's a world beyond the towering buildings of the city, but why bother going to a place without light pollution to see the stars? This handy gadget simulates all the wonders of the night sky at the click of the button.

### Voodoo Knife Block

Maybe knife crime wouldn't be such a problem in the metropolis if all those angry murderers had one of these. Who wouldn't want to put their knife away with this guy to hold it? Incentivising criminals to store their weapons rather than use them would surely put stabbings to an end. *Helen Cahill*



## Technically Speaking



by James Vincent  
Online Editor

My internet went out the other day. I froze for a second then sank my head into my hands, rubbed my temples, and tried to remember all the funny pictures of cats I could. The shakes eased off but I was left with a feeling of stalled arrival. Frown. What now? Come home – dump bag – internet: it's a routine years in the making, rooted in the little roster of websites I visit daily: they make a sort of virtual home-from-home – familiar and oddly soothing. But with this unexpected break in the schedule I began to wonder what I'd been making a home out of.

The internet, of course, doesn't really exist. There's no physical reality to these sites I find homely. They're not run for me but for some nameless and faceless proto-user. And though I might make profiles or log-ins for sites, those aren't 'me' anymore than

my Uni ID card is. And what about the history of these places? Returning to my room I notice little changes – clothes on the floor or festering mugs – but websites don't show change (except content) and they never show a past, only their present.

In 1992 the anthropologist Marc Augé invented the term 'non-place' that perfectly describes these odd, ephemeral spaces. Although Augé was referring to the likes of motorways, supermarkets, or airport terminals, his description fits the internet perfectly. Non-places are devoted to "solitary individuality... the temporal", grant anonymity via "contracts", and guide unknown masses via "instructions for use". They're also bleak as hell. So, I wonder, is the internet any different? Augé says that non-places are often defined by their function (eg, commerce or transport) but what's the internet's 'purpose'?

For me, I'd say it was communication – whether local or global – via blogs or news sites. Put in those terms, coming home to a conversation isn't so bad.

## NOT-SCI: Flu-fighting fraud

**Nicola Love** asks if the herbal product Echinacea will actually cure your fever

**I**t's that time of year again. The dreaded flu season is back, and, although the common cold is pretty minor, we all wish for a magic pill to help us feel better.

Cold cure quackery is almost as common as the viruses themselves but despite the widespread use of alternative therapies, little scientific evidence exists to show how these treatments work, or whether they're safe to use.

In the UK one packet of the most

# 800

Number of formulations of Echinacea available

popular 'flu-fighting' herbal product, Echinacea, is bought every minute during the winter months, amounting to an annual spend of around £30 million. However, scientific research on the effectiveness of Echinacea is inconclusive, with many studies showing that Echinacea works no better than a placebo.

Supporters of the immune-system stimulator claim that taking Echinacea

at the first sign of a cold can significantly reduce the severity of symptoms and that taking it before you catch a cold may prevent you from getting ill in the first place.

On the other hand, recent studies have shown that taking Echinacea has no benefit whatsoever. In fact, some trials show it also frequently has side effects, just what you want when you already feel ill.

Also, it is little use as a preventative method, unless you can predict when you're likely to catch a cold, as the European Medicines agency states that it's only safe to use for a maximum of 10 days.

The problem with alternative medicines is that they're not regulated as tightly as drugs, so it's hard to know what you're getting – and as safety information is not mandatory, if it's safe to take. So is Echinacea a miracle cure or just a placebo? The jury is still out.

Echinacea supplements are unlikely to cause you harm, but with an average price of £7.50 you might be better off saving your money, because chances are they won't do you much good either.

Not-Sci is produced by BlueSci, the Cambridge University science magazine from *Varsity*

"All cities are mad: but the madness is gallant. All cities are beautiful: but the beauty is grim" Charles Morley

# The voice of the megacity and the architecture of words

UN statistics show that almost 180,000 people move into cities every day- an estimated 2 people a second. As urbanisation thrives in this age of the megacity, it is not only the way we live that is changing, but the way we define ourselves

A huge shift in global demographics now sees a world in rural decline, the global landscape today punctuated by city after city and the rise of the megalopolis. With 1.5 billion people (22% of the world's population) living in over 600 cities, compared with only 3% of the population in 1800, and with these cities generating around 60% of global GDP, the shift represents not only vast economic and social changes across the world, but poses challenging questions to us about the nature of collective living and cultural identity today.

Every city has its own voice. We have ideas and assumptions about places which we have never even visited. And as a traveller or tourist, one wholly expects upon arrival in a different city to hear this strange new voice resonating in synchrony from its populace. We pitch up, guide books in hand, on the prowl for the distinctive sounds and stories of a new, untrodden land.

Whether we seek the dulcet tones of a welcoming Dubliner, armed with charm and a pint of the black stuff, the elegantly restrained riposte of a haughty, cigarette-waving Parisian or the laid-back chat of a beach-bound San Diego "dude", we are demonstrating an awareness of this process of definition-by-dwelling, ascribing certain characteristics to people based on the place where they live.

In today's world, the rise of the megacity is indeed rapidly altering the global demographic. Around one in twenty-five people live in what is classed as a megacity. There are currently 23 megacities with populations over 10 million, including Mexico City, Tokyo, Delhi, London and Paris, and this number is set to rise to 36 by the year 2025.

In such a colossal urban environment,



is it still possible to identify a quirk, an eccentricity which makes that place particular or individual and characterises its citizens? Something which unites its inhabitants, who, mostly migrants, have their origins and histories in other places? Or is each inhabitant in a city of millions rendered faceless and unidentifiable? Perhaps Rousseau was right: "Cities are the abyss of the human species".

The sheer size of a megacity does undeniably make the task of ascribing an identity challenging, yet I contest that every city irrefutably has its own voice, its own idiosyncrasies and its own "feel". This could be said to arise from two main features: firstly, the architectural landscape and infrastructure, and secondly, the architecture of

## 'We have regressed from the days of Babel'

the language of that place.

According to Steven Fry's recent episode of 'Fry's Planet Word', each language that we come into contact with is a symbol of a shared cultural identity. More than 6000 languages pervade our planet, each an encapsulation and an emblem of a people's history, and perhaps more importantly, of an identity, a personality; they provide as much a form of expression as a form of cultural impression.

Fry even traces senses of humour back through old languages such as Yiddish, and demonstrates that words, language, dialects and accents shape us, and consequentially our municipalities as much as the buildings which surround us. In short, we inhabit a language as truthfully as we inhabit our city dwellings.

However, thanks to globalisation,



the international megacity and the prevalence of Globish (global English), perhaps in some respects we have regressed from the days of Babel, the scattering of languages and the creation of diversity in the human race to a shrunken world in a state of global, soulless unity.

Fortunately, this is only half the story, as we need only look beyond the commercial, business world of megalopolitics for reassurance that these idiosyncrasies are still prevalent. Specificities in urban language, accent and lexicon and their portrayal in the world

of art and culture allow a city's personality to thrive despite the pressures of conforming to the global mould.

Unfortunately, the megacity does not, however, come without its drawbacks; not every defining characteristic is a good one. What we are often confronted with in the megacity is a fractured, fragmented populus, shaped as much by difference and disparity as by their shared urban identity. A megalopolis such as Mexico City epitomises these issues, and through films such as surrealist Buñuel's 'Los Olvidados', artistic depictions of violence, mobocracy and

marginalisation serve to demonstrate the reality of life on the urban peripheries of the modern city.

In a rather negative sense, then, we can see that the city and its citizens are also defined by the physical urban landscape which they inhabit.

Take another much more trivial example – the apparently ominous infrastructure of London's public transport. It practically conditions any outsider into a state of tense, mute silence as they emulate the averted gazes of the city's hardwired commuters. A Londoner wouldn't bat an eyelid (literally, wouldn't bat an eyelid), yet in the eyes of a tourist or a visitor, an apparent austerity seems pervasive and infectious.

However, urban conditioning is not always perceived as a negative thing. Far from it. On a much greater scale, the urban landscape and its redevelopment has had the power to alter and transform entire cultures. The complete redesign of Paris, for instance, under Louis-Napoleon both created and facilitated the boulevard-based culture of the 'flâneur' which is an iconic association with the French capital today.

Thus, it is definitely possible to characterise the megacity. Its citizens are more than just a cog in the merciless mechanism of the 'concrete jungle'. But this characterisation encompasses the city's conflicting identities and developments as much as any sense of overall cohesion. As a result, this multifarious question of identity exposes the truth behind the mask of touristic expectations of a stereotypical, straight-forward city identity.

Even megacities, it would seem, have their own individual architecture; the worlds of each inhabitant are present both in a skyline of fears, anticipations, aspirations and expectations, and in the verbal and artistic culture that permeates the city's streets. *Emily Fittzell*

# Whatever You Say

THE ONLY LIMIT TO FEMALE SUCCESS IS FEMALE AMBITION



ALI LEWIS



Women can't vote," said the fictional man in the pub. "Yes they can," I countered. "Okay, but they can't have jobs." "Yes they can," I again riposted. "Okay well, yes, they can be secretaries and nurses," he said in a way that was both sexist and patronising to two professions. "Actually, they do all kinds of jobs nowadays," I sighed at the imaginary sexist, "but, seriously, name one thing that men do better than women?" He paused: "Sports! Name a sport women can play that men can't." I thought for a long moment, and then went in for the kill: "Women's football." "But, but... men can't play women's football." "Precisely." In light of this defeat the apocryphal chauvinist moved onto safer ground: "Women can't wee standing up".

"So?" I said, "How does that in any way hold women back?" "Well, let me tell you," said the chimerical intransigent, improvising wildly, "female politicians have to plan their campaign routes around public toilets, whilst their male counter-parts are free to piss gaily against arbitrarily-chosen shrubbery and brickwork, thus rendering..." "SHE WEE!" interrupted an imaginary, screaming duffard. "Yes, yes, she wee, women do wee, well done," we replied patiently, approaching with the strait jacket reserved in my dreams for committers of grammatical sins. "No!" he cried, "SheWee!" "Oh!" we said, loosening the bonds of the outmoded mental health apparatus, "why didn't you say so? I completely forgot about SheWee!" "Excuse me, for a moment, if I might interject?" interjected the sexist self-permissively, "but what exactly is a SheWee?" "Well, to quote from their website, a SheWee is a "water repellent plastic funnel that allows women to urinate whilst standing." "But if women can vote, have jobs, play sports and wee standing up, that means..." I beg to propose.

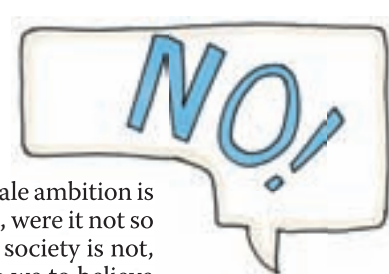
As a mother, I would find the notion that female ambition is the only limit to female success to be risible, were it not so offensive. We have heard it said often that society is not, metaphorically speaking, 'colourblind'. Are we to believe that, in spite of this, society is sex-blind? (Tee-hee.)

Can we seriously entertain the view that women are only being held back in life by their lack of desire for success? Of course not. Women are also being held back by the fact that they are less good at things, a point to which many of the 19th century minor aristocrats who formed my focus group will attest.

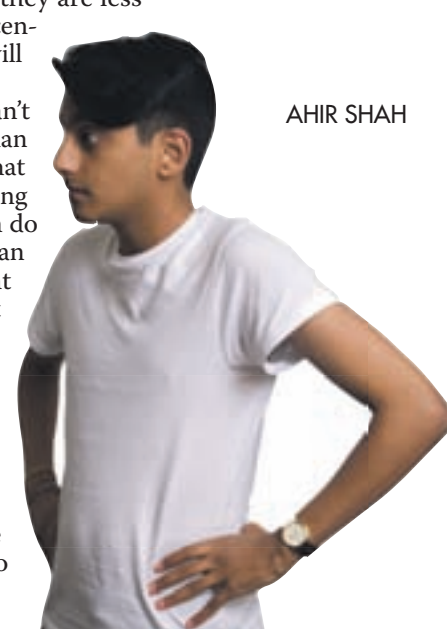
"But Ahir," you ask, "is it not the case that you can't think of anything meaningful you can do that a woman couldn't do just as well? Furthermore, isn't it true that even if this hypothetical woman were doing something that you can do either better or worse than you can do it, this has less to do with the fact that she is a woman and more to do with the fact that she is a different person? And, over and above any other point, is it not the case that many people considering this topic of debate will have in their minds a conception of success centred on the world of business, with a focus on high-powered and -salaried jobs, that doesn't necessarily appeal to everyone - male or female - as each individual has their own notion of what constitutes 'success' in life?"

"That may be the case," I would respond. "But the fact remains that I am deeply prejudiced, and also deceptively good at opening jars."

For the sake of these jokes, I beg to oppose.



AHIR SHAH



# Education for life? Education for exams more like

Our system is impersonal and in need of reform. Does Philosophy hold the answer?

In our culture we are brought up to have a very clear understanding of 'education' – what it is and what it entails. Rarely does the opportunity arise to question it, though question it we should.



What would he have said to an education system built around learning as a mere means to passing exams?

Nineteenth century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche would have agreed with Montaigne's criticism. He felt that education became a lifeless process when all it set to achieve was to transfer a body of facts rather than a process of developing human understanding.

He argued that the main aim of education should be to give students the tools required to develop their own abilities rather than being handed an image to merely imitate. Students should be allowed to ascribe value to whatever they choose in order to become authentic individuals, for if everything had the same value for everyone, nothing would have any true value at all.

The contemporary educational thinker Ken Robinson would approve of this sentiment. He criticises the

## DID YOU KNOW?

It was estimated in 2010 that by age 19, students would have spent an entire year's worth of their school education taking exams

education system in its rigidity, emphasising that the main aim of education should be to encourage creativity. Society does not value originality, and this not only stalls personal development, but is also damaging on an international scale.

He reasons that our education system was developed in the nineteenth century and was designed to meet the needs of a mass industrial society, one which valued the Sciences over the Arts – education was for installing you with knowledge and skills, not for bringing out talent and potential.

However, in the modern world, our requirements have changed. As we are faced with new challenges, we need to produce a more 'thoughtful society'. The education system, in Robinson's eyes, needs to be revolutionised in order for this to become possible.

Education should therefore be made pertinent to our own lives, and, learning by example, perhaps we should put greater emphasis on the subject of Philosophy. If Philosophy were a compulsory subject, young people would be encouraged to expand their minds – counteracting the impersonal, doctrinal elements of the system. Children would be encouraged to 'think outside the box' – to question everything and take nothing for granted.

The main aim of the education system should be to celebrate originality and inspire creativity, whilst retaining a relevance to everyday life.

**'The main aim of the education system should be to celebrate originality and inspire creativity'**

Education should also aspire to the attainment of happiness – not by preaching, but by introducing young people to the works of philosophers who dedicated their lives to the challenge. Philosophy has the potential to generate equality in a classroom like no other subject. By encouraging freedom of thought and expression, it ultimately has the power, as a core academic discipline, to open minds and reinvigorate a stagnant education system.

Montaigne wrote: "I have seen in my time hundreds of craftsmen and ploughmen wiser and happier than university rectors." Academic achievement alone does not make you happy. Only an education of the whole person can do that – and it is this we should strive for. Mr Gove should take note.

*Francis Dearnley*

**Ladylike**

FREYA BERRY



My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun', wrote Shakespeare. Short of coloured contact lenses, we girls can't change our eyes. But we damn well can, and do, alter the other parts he lists – breasts, lips, cheeks... If Shakespeare had been married to, say, Heidi Montag or Demi Moore (let's just pause and imagine that for a minute – I'm picturing Ashton Kutcher in tights, tweeting sonnets line by line) then his sonnet would have been rendered invalid.

Not that these two female celebrities look especially better with plastic surgery. Montag had ten procedures in a day. But is it any wonder they did? H&M were caught late last year using computer-generated bodies in their advertisements, with real female models' heads attached.

Yup, that's right, ladies – even models, the beings whose very name suggests some kind of Platonic ideal, aren't good enough to be put on a billboard anymore.

Imagine the stress of being a fat cell on a female celebrity's body. Endlessly photographed, speculated upon, laughed at. Sometimes, you are swaddled in clingfilm, or rudely sucked out by liposuction – which may leave huge scars, but hey, look how skinny her stomach looks!

From what I remember of A-level biology (which ain't much – my teacher spent most of his time reminiscing about how he taught Rosamund Pike and telling us to evade relationship bliss with the slogan 'Dump the Lump'), you are composed merely of a nucleus, a cell wall and – my memory fails me here.

Whatever. I find fat cells as interesting as I found measuring trampled footpath width on a Biology trip to Nettlecombe. That is to say, not at all. I bloody love Heat magazine, but one has to wonder why acres of ink are spilt in it quoting sources – who speak, curiously, exactly like magazine journalists – telling the public how stressed / unhappy / generally fat a celebrity is.

Then there is more ink, more serious this time, in the broadsheets, telling us how rubbish a self-image teenage girls have. I know girls who have or have had anorexia, some who have recovered and one who has died; girls who post Facebook statuses about their weight and have terrifyingly tiny arms in their profile pictures.

'We have no time to stand and stare', wrote W.H. Davies. We bloody do. It's just that all the gazes we should be saving for natural phenomena are instead concentrated, slack-jawed, on the waistlines of women. Because flowers and waterfalls don't have a fat content or a good PR, and have never been pictured falling out of Mahiki in a tiny dress.

Tracy Anderson, personal fitness guru, is our cultural leader, our very own Wordsworth, attractively packaged in a honeyed blonde casing. We brought this upon ourselves, I tell you.

## Cambridge talks The State of the Union

Well it must be said that this term has a lot more promise than the last, and their coffee's pretty good – oh wait, you mean that Union. Actually, I guess the same applies.

Luisa Filby  
Newnham

I voted for Obama last time round, and I have not been disappointed. He's had a tough ride, but he's made the best he could of a bad, bad situation. Come November, he'll sure as hell be getting my vote; there'll be no removal vans needed at the White House this year.

Given that Obama was elected at just the moment that the world economy began to fail, widespread disappointment was inevitable. Voters have been left disillusioned and he has been put on the defensive in the face of rising conservatism and the crippling levels of federal debt.

So far, however, no credible opposition has emerged among the Republicans, with infighting damaging the party. I think Obama probably stands a good chance at winning re-election, and hopefully this time more realistic expectations might make for a stronger term.

Katie Lam  
President of the  
Cambridge Union

From across the water – Blake Tomlinson, the man in the elevator, San Diego, USA

## Austerity doesn't work

With regards to Greece, the Eurozone-come-dangerzone needs to rethink its tactics

Deeply into the Danger Zone". This is not a scaremongering newspaper headline, but more worryingly, the title of the IMF's most recent Global Financial Stability Report, published on 24th January.

Cutting global growth rates from 4% to 3.25%, the IMF concluded that the Eurozone debt crisis has just entered 'a perilous new phase'. Even Britain's economy, so far seemingly immune to the Euro debt crisis, contracted by 0.2% in the fourth quarter of 2011. These figures, released by the Office of National Statistics, challenge the wisdom of George Osborne's austerity measures.

Financial talks to avoid a chaotic Greek debt default muddled on through the week. Excessive levels of Greek debt contributed to the current Eurozone crisis, but this does not mean that government austerity, the European Central Bank's favoured solution, will solve all of Europe's problems.

Firstly, no balance of tax cuts and spending cuts can stabilise the Greek budget, which is currently running a deficit of 9.5% of GDP. Raising already penal tax rates only chokes off economic growth and tax revenues. Spending cuts will simply increase expenditure on unemployment, and reduce tax revenues further. Deflation will also increase the real value of debt, making it even more difficult for Greece to pay it off.

Even the normally pro-austerity newspaper *The Economist* has now admitted that no level of austerity can balance Greece's budget, which has also been confirmed by a recent IMF study. The social cost of the Euro has

become unbearable for Greece. Household incomes are falling by 7.3% a year, and unemployment has now reached 18.2%. Most shockingly, reports now say child and baby abandonment rates have spiked, their parents no longer able to afford to keep them.

**'Austerity may fatally damage democratic accountability'**

But this suffering need not be the case. If Greece returns to the drachma, it could devalue its exchange rate, boost its competitiveness, and reduce its real debt burden, soon returning to growth, meaning that the rest of Europe will no longer have to bail it out.

More importantly, however, European-imposed austerity may fatally damage the democratic accountability of the European project. The European Central Bank, an unelected institution, will have to impose austerity against the will of the Greeks and other peoples.

Already there has been a rise in popularity of anti-EU nationalist parties in reaction to government cuts, including the Popular Orthodox Rally in Greece, the Northern League in Italy and Jobbik in Hungary. Any deepening of the 'democratic deficit' through centrally-imposed austerity will ultimately lead to more civil strife, like that in Greece, accompanied by a backlash against the whole European project itself.

Curing the Euro through austerity could end up killing the patient – the whole idea of a federal Europe itself.

*Charles Read*

# Palaces of culture

From our powerhouse of culture, the UL, to Stalin's contribution to war-torn Poland. Climbing the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, **Michal Murawski** shows how a piece of communist architecture has adapted to everyday life

Anyone who spends any length of time in Warsaw cannot remain indifferent to the Palace of Culture and Science. Grotesquely outsized (231 metres in height, 212 metres in width at the base) and unambiguously phallic, the tower (surrounded by a vast and windswept 'Parade Square') is impaled into the belly of Poland's capital. A 'gift' from Comrade Stalin to the Polish nation, the Palace was hoisted between 1952 and 1955 onto a sixty-acre plot then still strewn with ruins left over from the carnage of WWII.

Cambridge's twentieth century has been gentler than Warsaw's. Be that as it may, this twee town's collegiate idyll has also been rudely interrupted by a solid exemplar of midcentury architectural totalitarianism. This week, Varsity reports on the UL: littler (a mere 48 metres high), older and less conspicuously central, but a blood-relative of the Warsaw Palace nevertheless. While in Warsaw on PhD fieldwork, I became seduced by the nooks, crannies and social life of this beastly but fascinating building. Now, as I fumble for the light switch among the North Front bookshelves, I thank George Gilbert Scott for making me feel a little bit at home.

The Place's entrance hall was once



'...a magnet for workers on cigarette breaks and pigeon shit'

## FACTFILE

**Area:** 123 084 m<sup>2</sup> (1 324 876 ft<sup>2</sup>)

**Rooms:** 3,000

**Construction material:** limestone (last week's rock of the week)

The year of 1956 saw seventeen suicides from the top viewing deck. There is now a metal railing in place.

crowned by an enormous sculpture of two muscular proletarians locked in homoerotic embrace. Representing Polish-Soviet friendship, this was an early, "regime-friendly" work by top sculptor Alina Szapocznikow. In a charmingly philistine outburst typical of the profit-hungry loony years of early 90s Polish capitalism, the Palace's then-director flogged the piece for the price of scrap metal to an entrepreneurial farmer, who came to pick it up on his pick-up truck under the cover of one night in 1992. Its plinth still stands, disconcerting visitors with its emptiness. Here, two middle-aged ladies on an ironic Stalinist nostalgia trip do their best to bring back the good old days.

Before scaling the phallus, let us briefly descend into its murky roots. The subterranean Palace is the subject of many urban legends (secret train lines to Moscow, evil nuclear bunkers, that sort of thing). The reality is a little more prosaic. Along with a poster of a malevolently-smirking Pope Ratzinger, a huge fishtank and a collection of empty beer cans, this calendar snap of a scantily clad lady fireperson adds a touch of colour to the windowless control room on Level -1. While the control room is alive with affable tall men with moustaches, who spend long shifts turning and pushing the giant dials and switches which



1. The once cutting-edge Museum of Technology in the palace's wing is now home to a model of a mini-Fiat, a collection of cacti and various other curiosities.

2. Affectionately referred to as 'Stalin's Penis', the Palace of Culture and Science at the heart of Warsaw bears more than a striking resemblance to our own UL.

3. The plinth where an enormous sculpture of two proletarians in a homoerotic embrace. Sold to a farmer for scrap, two tourists re-enact the monument.

direct the Palace's Soviet-era infrastructure, a feline workforce of sixteen or so individuals scurry around the cellar corridors. They keep the Palace rodent-free, but their bodily outgoings ensure that a trip to the basement makes a lasting imprint on even the hardest nostrils.

Reaching out like talons into the surrounding city are the Palace's sprawling side wings. The biggest one accommodates Warsaw's premier concert venue. Everybody from Miles Davis to Marlene Dietrich has graced this stage; here, Mick Jagger devoured a bunch of flowers during the Stones' first ever Iron Curtain gig in 1967. The 'Congress Hall' was primarily designed to host the long and vodka-soaked conferences of the Polish United Workers' Party: a hilariously Bond-villainesque mechanism would part the stage floor, revealing a 72-seat Praesidium that accommodated the plump buttocks of the biggest cheeses in the People's Republic.

Another talon is reserved for the wonderfully anachronistic Museum of Technology, a perpetually unchanging cabinet of once-cutting-edge technological curiosities. A dissected model of the socialist-era motorisation stalwart, the Polish Mini Fiat, and a collection of cacti look out onto the building site of a 192-metre residential tower designed by Daniel Libeskind – one of the many wishful but ultimately doomed attempts to challenge the Palace's dominance over Warsaw's cityscape.

A massive chunk of the Palace is occupied by the Palace of Youth – a once highly



## UP THE CAM...WITH DAVID MITCHELL

ANYONE WHO has fallen in the Cam on a punting trip or, under the influence of a glass of Pimms too many in May Week, gone for a swim, will be familiar with 'Cam Fever' – an exhausting and embarrassing condition brought on by the frightening number of water-born bacteria inhabiting the open sewer which is Cambridge's main recreation area in summer. It is characterised by the body's attempts to rid itself of all that it contains from both ends and results in a lavatory bowl filled with a soupy mixture of vomit and diarrhoea which is subsequently flushed back into the river which caused it. Few will be aware, however, of how and when 'Cam Fever' first came to be talked about...

Cambridge was a wild place in the Twenties, where the privileged classes came to charleston and learn about cocktails. Some of the greatest cocktails in history were invented and forgotten in Twenties Cambridge – the 'slow drift to Grantchester' was a creamy creation with Irish whiskey while the 'innocent unsuspecting choirboy in the Chapel' was a lethal mixture of tequila and gin and a gentleman would pay a guinea for a 'yielding don up against the library'.

The best place in Cambridge to both charleston and drink cocktails was the infamous Gardenia Club (now a fast-food restaurant) and it was here where the first and most dangerous cases of 'Cam Fever' occurred. It was all caused by the frenzied drinking of glass after glass of the Gardenia's most popular cocktail, the 'ethanol fizz'. Orgiastic charlestoning would ensue with, according to contemporary reports, 'terrifying whirling of hands and feet'. Many a gentleman would awake from his stupor, to find, as well as the characteristic symptom of vomiting copiously, his knee-cap impaled on the heel of a lady's shoe.

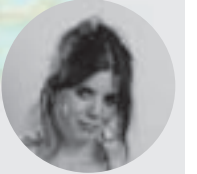
Dr Arnold Peters, now a Fellow of Magdalene, bitterly remembers those thoughtless days. Dr Peters developed an unfortunate condition during the 'Fever Days', as they were known, and is now unable to stop charlestoning. I met him in his soundproofed basement underneath Quayside; a thin, desperate figure with enormous calf muscles, he gyrated frantically on the worn-away remains of his feet throughout our discussion: "I find it insulting that people have stolen the name for those wild, stupid days and for all that I have suffered to refer to a common stomach complaint! I always make a point of weeing into the river as I charleston past – it's just my little statement."

The Gardenia Club went bankrupt as a result of the Wall Street Crash and hundreds of undergraduates were left with nowhere to get their fix of ethanol fizz and charlestoning. This 'Fever Generation' emerged bitter and twisted; for many of them fascism seemed the answer and, indeed, many of those who marched under Oswald Moseley's banner in the Thirties were, in fact, charlestoning uncontrollably. This, then, was the original 'Cam Fever'; a wild, youthful recklessness which would probably be unthinkable in these cynical times. But let us remember the unfortunate spirits of the Twenties whenever we vomit or defecate uncontrollably as a result of the water in the Cam.



## The Little Gem

LETTICE FRANKLIN



If you type 'Savino's' into google, it brings up gushing reviews, seasoned with 'authentic', 'genuine', and 'antidote to chain-coffee shop'. One even reaches a fever-pitch of excitement when it considers the cafe's customers... wait for it... deep breath... "people who actually just live in the city of Cambridge." Yup, you heard that right. ACTUAL. REAL. PEOPLE!

And here I am, in the actual, real Savino's, gazing at these incredible specimens. More relevant is what I do not gaze on: students, architectural treasures, cows, rivers, punters, stars. And whaaat a relief.

So bored of beauty, we tend to seek the urban and REAL. Mill Road acquires mythic status - "Oh you haven't been, naive First Year? But it is the only place to stock up on real dumplings. And I can only work in CB1." - although a pretty ordinary city street.

A funny thing about cities is that we like them most when they don't feel like cities - thrilled by daffodils growing within an inner-city roundabout, the unexpected canal, lilacs blooming from an abandoned car. In postcard-perfect Cambridge, beauty is standard rather than surprising. My daily journey (to and from the UL - sigh) includes a moonlit crossing of the Cam, glittering with stars and the reflection of yet another Wren flight of fancy, occasionally fracturing when violently invaded by... a swan.

Savino's too is an urban oasis in our idyllic desert. Seconds away from Emma Garden, it offers a vista exclusively of buses roaring by. The fact that there are real Italians here is layered on as thickly as the nose-strokingly-frothy foam on the cappuccinos. This is the kind of place where MML students can't comment patronisingly on the incorrect usage of the plural panini.

A sample panin-o encloses dolcelatte cheese, wild rocket, fresh pesto and artichoke hearts, its ingredients (happily given my word-limit) speaking for themselves, requiring no awkwardly-hyphenated adjectives. Glamorous, terrifying Italians down espressos (SORRY, espressi!) at the counter, presumably living fast-paced, metropolitan lives, their minds alert and caffeinated, rather than filled with bloody books.

**Salvino's**, 3 Emmanuel Street

**Large Latte**: £2.60

**Panini**: £3.65

prestigious site of extra-curricular incultation for thousands of Warsaw's brightest young things. Despite having lost much of its once lavish state funding, the talented and hopeful continue to flock to the Palace's overstretched and rustically aging facilities, hoping to excel in fields as diverse as boat building, synchronised swimming, body-pumping and ballroom dancing.

The fourth-floor Rudnev Room is the venue for many open meetings on architecture and planning (the city's Municipal Architects have their offices high up in the tower), to which members of the public flock for a chance to heckle and harangue decision-makers. In the aftermath of one such event, a group of irregularly-shaped attendees exchange invectives over a scale model of the future city centre, with the Palace still conspicuously slap-bang in the middle.

The marble-stuffed, stuccoed and columned halls on the 2nd and 4th floors are hired out for posh and opulent debauchery (by those who can afford to pay). In the photo above, a right-wing political journalist and his new wife cut their wedding cake. They chose the Palace for their ceremony to provoke their Communist-bashing friends. The assembled conservatives, however, harmlessly jiggle

around on the dance floor to socialist power ballads. They have sated themselves on liquor and a menu of ironic People's Poland-style delicacies (cold stuffed hog, pickled herring, etc.)

Higher up, above all the politics and spectacle, are the unused terraces surmounting the Palace's forbidding side towers, magnets for cigarette butts and pigeon shit. Yet these elaborate ramparts also provide a spectacular backdrop for brutality of Attenbourghian proportions. The highest reaches of the tower are home to a pair of famished and bloodthirsty peregrine falcons, who do their best to gorge and poke all they can out of the intrepid pigeons who dare wander into their domain. Come migrating season, the flying rats are joined by a morbid multitude of more exotic avian carcasses.

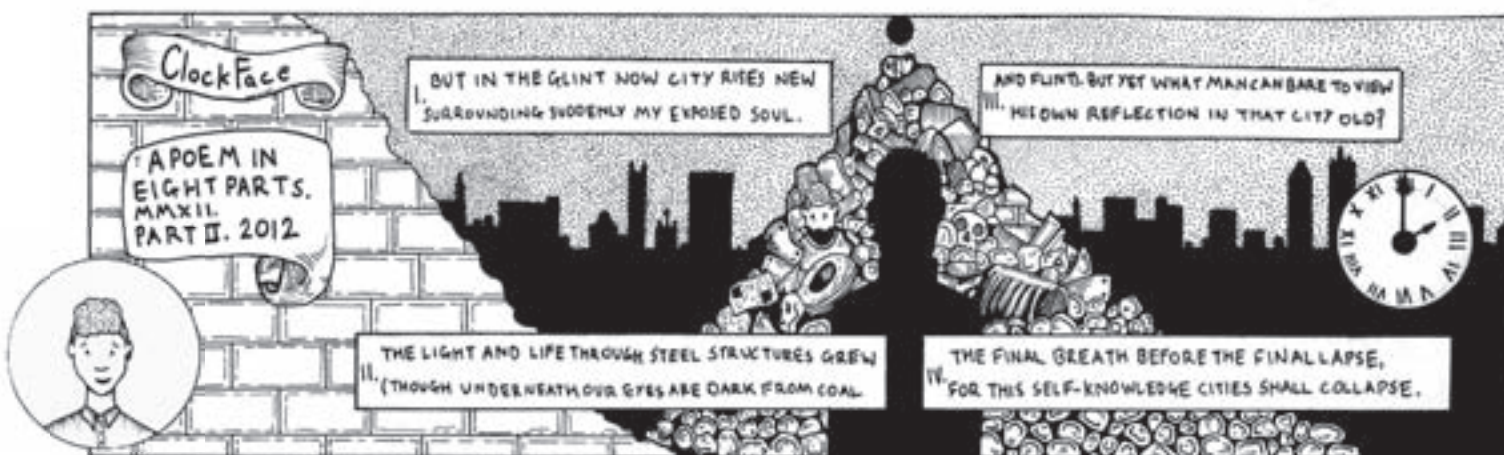
Nearby the Palace is Warsaw's central railway station, a Mecca for the city's densest concentration of bearded and pungent vagabonds and booze hounds. On a summer's day, you could do worse on a trip to Warsaw than to strike up a conversation and raise a glass with one of these fellows as they recline in vacant statue niches, striking classical poses. All hail to Stalin's Palace, may it forever fascinate and disturb us!

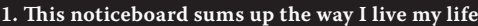
4. Far from being a gratuitous picture to brighten up our page, this headless pigeon is a common sight on the terraces of the Palace. Just another victim of the pair of peregrine falcons that have taken residence. 5. The by-gone glory of the Palace now plays host to right-wing weddings. 6. Again, not gratuitous, this is pin-up sits in one of the Palace's underground control rooms. 7. The UL doesn't quite have the same night-time display. Except to stop collisions with low-flying aircraft. I don't think this counts.



## The Comic Strip

LEWIS WYNN





**SIANA BANGURA**  
**2ND YEAR, PETERHOUSE**

## Pull out and pin up on your board

Sunday  
29<sup>th</sup>

For the first night in a long time, CUJO performs with equally-accomplished cousins from somewhere to the west. There will be ample dance floor space, and the Josh Ison Trio will be featuring in the next room.

A rare chance to meet Sir Mark Elder and attend his final rehearsal of Parsifal (Act III) in King's College Chapel. Followed by a talk by Wagner specialists John Deathridge and Robin Holloway, chaired by David Trippett.

Mozart's work is 'filled with such longing...it had me trembling. It seemed to me that I was hearing a voice of God' (Salieri in Peter Schaeffer's *Ama-deus*). Nicholas Daniel plays Britten's miniatures with poetry readings by Professor Simon Goldhill.

King Creosote  
album, self-de-  
romanticised v  
coastal village  
bike wheels, te

From Alexander Payne, the creator of the Oscar-winning *Sideways*. George Clooney stars as an indifferent husband and father of two girls, forced to re-examine his past and embrace his future when his wife suffers a boating accident off Waikiki.



Tintin is a Belgian boy who manages to be a journalist without ever writing a word, knocks out grown men twice his size with a single fling of his fist, and lives in a world where the only woman is a jolly opera singer. Enjoy the surrealism tonight.

A free screening of *Blade Runner* (1982) will be held at the Los Angeles in November. The film is a classic of the sci-fi genre, featuring a futuristic Los Angeles and a cast of iconic actors. The screening is a great opportunity for fans to see the film in a large theater and enjoy the special effects.

As part of the Darwin College Lecture Series, Dr Robert MacFarlane investigates a persistent paradox of apocalyptic art -that in order to abolish the world imaginatively, it is also necessary to summon it into being.

Shake off the winter blues on an informal gallery tour. Discover ways in which artists have engaged with nature by looking at early paintings, and those in the newly refurbished Impressionist gallery. Booking essential – see website for details.

Do you have a story waiting to be told? Come and pick up some tricks of the trade, whether you're going to tell stories in clubs, pubs or round the fireside. You can either listen to the writing of others, or bring something to read yourself.

The second in  
given by Prof.  
of the creation  
Run by the Hist  
to all.

Cheek By Jowl have established an international reputation for bringing fresh life to the classics. In this new production, we watch a brother and sister's passionate descent into hell.

Your last chance to see Cambridge University Contemporary Dance Workshop in their return to the ADC stage. Featuring performances ranging from ballet to hip hop, to classical Indian Bharatanatyam, and all things in between.



Subtitled "The Days and Nights of London Now, As Told by Those Who Love It, Hate It, Live It, Left It and Long for It". These narratives paint a vivid and fresh portrait of 21st Century London.

The Ultimate Equalizer, The Grim Reaper, The Blessed Release. We all have death in common, and the Southbank Centre is confronting this unknowable certainty from many angles in Festival for the Living. Hear more in this special festival podcast.

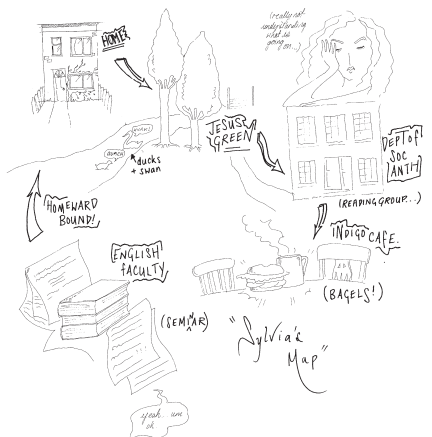
We've been listening to  
sixth form school  
that you should

Bringing Cambridge's up-and-coming charities together to provide information about their cause, alongside a range of entertainment including food and live music.

From the land of legends and warrior Shaolin monks comes live acrobatic show *Yin Yang*. The traditional masters of physical theatre put precision acrobatics, martial arts and dazzling circus skills on display.

Presented by ArcSoc and Body Shop. "Follow the herd to the heart of the beat on a long, smouldering night. A hot fiesta, a seductive soundscape, nocturnal naughtiness." Exotic.

*Sylvia Christie, Homerton, 3rd year  
English student.*





MIXED UP  
COSMOPO-  
LONDON



London is one of the most cosmopolitan of cities, so let's make a toast to its diversity with the eponymous cocktail.

This cosmo pays homage to London by putting a twist on the classic recipe, replacing the traditional citrus vodka with a splash of London dry gin.

**■ INGREDIENTS**  
1 part Bombay London gin  
1 part Cointreau triple sec  
1½ parts cranberry juice  
½ part lime juice  
Orange zest (to garnish)

**■ YOU WILL NEED**  
Cocktail shaker  
Martini glass

**■ METHOD**  
1. Pour all the ingredients, along with ice, into a cocktail shaker.  
  
2. Shake well and fine strain into a chilled glass.  
  
3. To finish, garnish the martini glass with a twist of orange zest.

Monday  
30<sup>th</sup>

**cosote**  
7PM; £12.50  
showcases tracks from his new  
scribed as the 'soundtrack to a  
version of a life lived in a Scottish  
' . It weaves in slices of Fife life,  
a cups and café chatter.

Tuesday  
31<sup>st</sup>



Film

DEPT. SCROOPE TERRACE 7PM  
ing of Ridley Scott's sci-fi epic  
[1982]. Set in a dystopian Los  
ember 2019, wherein geneti-  
ed organic robots are manufac-  
ne world.

Corpus Films

MCCRUM LECTURE THEATRE 8PM  
Corpus' new film society offers a free screen-  
ing of *Animal House* (2010), a broody Austral-  
ian independent film about a Melbourne crime  
family. The venue is situated next to The Eagle  
pub.

Wednesday  
1<sup>st</sup>

Jazz Wave Baroosh

B BAR, MARKET PASSAGE 8.30-10.30PM  
Jazz Wave band with singer Ruth Wilman,  
playing a mixture of vocals and instrumentals  
centred on swing, mainstream and modern  
jazz, with excursions into Dixie, funk and pop.

Thursday  
2<sup>nd</sup>

Nick Mulvey

THE JUNCTION 7PM; £12  
A key founding member of Portico Quartet,  
Nick has toured the world picking up a wealth  
of international acclaim. His solo music is  
influenced by both Western artists and African  
guitar styles.

ecture as Spolia

A, BENE'T STREET 5-6.30PM  
the series of Slade Lectures,  
Paul Crossley, offers an analysis  
of Gothic in northern France.  
story of Art department, but open

Michael Winner

THE CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY 7.30PM  
Michael Winner, ex-Editor of *Varsity*, has  
directed over 30 movies including the *Death  
Wish* series starring Charles Bronson. He is  
also a restaurant critic for *The Sunday Times*.

David Miliband

THE CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY 12PM  
David Miliband is a Labour MP and former  
Foreign Secretary. He studied at Oxford and  
MIT, and was a major contributor to Labour's  
manifesto for the 1997 general election. He  
stood for the Labour leadership in 2010.

Debate: Fashion is Elitist?

THE CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY 7.30PM  
Guardian columnist Hadley Freeman, fashion  
journalist Caryn Franklin and Prof. Beth Dincuff  
take the bench, opposed by Charley Speed,  
Grace Woodward (of Britain's Next Top Model  
fame), Hilary Alexander and Sir David Hang.

nd Men

OM 9.30PM; £5  
driven from your home by care-  
? Turned down for that comedy  
ide Michael Caine? Fear not;  
medy Ents brings you an hour of  
foolery to gladden the heart and  
kers.

AVOID: Theatre Column

VARSITY, P18  
Whispers around the office are confirming what  
you all suspect - our Theatre Editor is deranged,  
probably senile. In fact she'd be out of a job if  
it weren't for the charitable heart of the Senior  
Arts Editor. Do yourself a favour and skip her  
carpings, not that you ever read them anyway.

Thyestes

ADC THEATRE 11PM; £4  
With characters locked in a never-ending  
struggle for control, Seneca's classic tragedy  
is brought to the heart of Cambridge. This  
production brings its raw brutality full circle,  
round to the dark comedy and meta-theatre  
inherent in the text.

Mother Courage

ADC THEATRE 7.45PM; £8/ £6  
(Until 4th Feb). The formidable Mother  
Courage makes her living following armies  
up and down the country, peddling salvaged  
goods amidst a war-torn wasteland. She brings  
her two sons and dumb daughter, battling  
times of conveniently profit-surging violence.

Marine Girls

PARTY  
listening to this post-punk group of  
ol girls this week, and we think  
d to.



BLOG: Lists of Note

WWW.LISTSOFNOTE.COM  
Lists are created, and have been for many  
centuries, for all manner of reasons. Creator  
of this blog, Shaun Usher, features hilarious  
and memorable examples from lots of famous  
names right here.

WATCH: The Idiot Colony

ICA.ORG.UK  
A clip recorded from a live performance at  
the ICA. RedCape Theatre present this jarring  
play about three women forgotten for decades  
inside a mental hospital. Part of the London  
International Mime Festival.



Braided Together

MURRAY EDWARDS 10AM-6PM; FREE  
Brings together ten international contemporary  
women artists, all of whom investigate the  
symbolic meaning of hair in their artwork.  
The exhibition is the first of its kind, and will  
investigate concerns such as fragility, power  
and loss.

Thatcher's 80s Revival

THE FOUNTAIN INN; FREE BEFORE 10.45PM  
Remember the 1980s? Black Monday, high  
employment rates, depression, rioting, £9,000  
tuition fees etc. Here's your chance to relive all  
the special moments you never had. Maggie T  
on the decks bringing you her all time favourite  
tracks.



BRIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD

OLIVER REES

Most people in Cambridge need to get  
out more. And by out, I mean out of  
Cambridge. There are some great  
sights they're missing: the American  
Cemetery, the Steam Museum, Fen Ditton, Mad-  
ingley Hall, Audley End and Ely to name a few. And  
even if you don't care about the sights, you're prob-  
ably one of those people who just needs to relax.



VARSAITY VENTURED ONTO KINGS PARADE TO ASK YOU WHAT YOU DO  
WHEN THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE BECOMES TOO MUCH TO BEAR

The most depressed person in Cambridge that  
I ever see is a science student who cycles home at  
6.10pm every day. One day I saw his bike fall over  
after he'd locked it up and he looked really sad. He  
only ever seems to use his bike to cycle to lectures,  
and I just want to tell him: go to the American Cem-  
etery! I don't tell him this because it would probably  
sound weird out of context. But I mean it. Some-  
times the only way to relax is to get out, if only for  
a moment.



Cambridge is a pretty small city but the greyness,  
people and devastating depression that sometimes  
people get caught in can get too much for anyone  
– especially the science student that I see out of my  
window. Though lots of people say going for a night  
out is the best way to lose yourself, it isn't, especially  
as you now have to choose between kids so alter-  
native they don't even look alternative any more  
and guys who wear "no-one's ugly after 4am" on  
their t-shirts. Sometimes you just have to properly  
get lost for an hour. Especially when the water polo  
team is in town.



MUSIC EDITOR

Songs in the Dark

Sun 29th Jan 8pm  
The Clowns Cafe *Free*

An informal open mic night where  
musicians, poets and other perform-  
ers can show their talents before an  
audience. *Rory Williamson*

ART EDITOR

Kinshasa on Film

Tues 31st Jan 4.15 - 7pm  
CRASSH, Rm SG1 *Free*

The screening of two films on Kin-  
shasa, 'Cemetery State' and 'The  
Tourist City', and a discussion with  
the directors. *Holly Gupta*

SENIOR ARTS

Tidal Waves or Time Bombs

Mon 30th Jan 6.15pm  
Lecture Hall, Trinity Hall *Free*

Professor Simon Wessely discusses  
the mental health consequences of  
Iraq and Afghanistan on the UK  
Armed Forces. *Zoe Large*

Pick of the Week

Elektra

Tues 31st Jan - Sat 4th Feb 7pm  
Corpus Playrooms £6/ £5

REDS presents the first-ever UK performance of Ezra Pound and  
Rudd Fleming's translation, which relocates the tragedy from  
Ancient Greece to the Deep South

Want to draw a mind map, take your week in pictures, or see your event listed on these pages? Get in touch with seniorarts@varsity.co.uk



## Listen

RORY WILLIAMSON

Midway through their supporting slot, the singer from psych-folk band Fuzzy Lights uttered the last words I ever expected to hear at a gig: "We're from Cambridge, by the way."

For a second, I was forced to abandon my comfortable assumption that Cambridge was a barren wasteland where new music was concerned, with the only possible fruit the delights of a Led Zeppelin tribute band (yes, they really exist). My mind immediately flew to wild conjectures: could it be that this quaint little city had a secret wealth of exciting musical talent thriving under its surface?

Sadly, the inevitable answer was no. My foolishly instantaneous hopes could never be supported by the reality of Cambridge; it was hardly going to become Brooklyn overnight. Hell, Nick Drake couldn't even bring himself to finish his degree here.

However, my search wasn't an absolute failure: I discovered a clutch of interesting artists that I had previously been oblivious to, a variety that, though small, was heartening.

Aside from Fuzzy Lights, of particular interest are Kelvox1's organic, experimental song structures, as well as Nochexxx's boundary-pushing techno; on a completely different note, The Willows play a delightfully delicate rootsy folk. Cambridge may not harbour a vibrant underground community, but it's not worth giving up hope quite yet.



# For folk's sake: the rise of pop-folk

Why is current music so saturated with references to folk tradition? Alice Rudge explores its rise in modern music culture, and probes the authenticity of popular ideas of folk

None of us would want to be branded a 'folkie'. The word conjures up an image of a cider-swigging, morris-dancing yokel with a penchant for 'hey nonny-nonnys' and, sadly, less of a penchant for washing. Folk is uncool. The young don't get excited by the idea of tradition any more than the old get excited by the avant-garde. So how do we explain the recent surge in popularity of folk-tinged popular music that has variously been termed 'nu-folk', or 'psych-folk'?

Folk music is rather romantically described by many as 'the music of the people'. It has always naturally been a community music: many refuse to acknowledge that traditional songs have had a composer at all, but have sprung up as a result of a feeling of a particular group of people at a particular time in history. As a result, it has always had a role as protest music, and let's face it – protest is a bit cool. One only has to look at Bob Dylan's massive 60s following to see that.

People want to feel like they are the renegades on the edge of society fighting for a worthy cause, and folk music allows them to feel like they could be that person – even if they are just some middle class kid listening to it in their room at home. Folk somehow inspires that feeling of power and possibility because of

the contexts in which we are used to hearing it; for example, Joan Baez's rendition of 'We Will Overcome' can't help but conjure up images of the Civil Rights Movement in America.

**'Songwriters today are looking to use the inherent honesty and authenticity that folk music has'**

In this age of Simon Cowell, something music fans do want to protest about is the homogenisation and general dumbing-down that is mass media entertainment. Folk offers the perfect antidote for this. Whereas

One Direction are shiny and new, folk is nicely worn and tattered; vintage, if you will. Folk has a personality; it's otherworldly and yet at the same time honest and earthy. Songwriters today are looking to use this inherent honesty and authenticity that folk music has to give their own music those same qualities.

This borrowing of material and ideas also works the other way around. Beloved are using traditional tunes but reworked in a much bigger way – a line up of brass, strings, pots, pans, cutlery and many other things lets them create a massive sound more suited to the stage than the folk club. At their recent London gig, Lau combined their furiously infectious jigs and reels with electronic effects, light shows and an impressive amplification system,

making the whole experience incredibly hypnotic and effective. Proof of this borrowing between genres can be found in the fact that in 2010 Laura Marling's 'Rambling Man' was nominated for a Radio 2 Folk award, alongside folk greats Andy Cutting and Eliza Carthy, while her album was nominated for the Mercury Prize alongside indie greats, The xx and Wild Beasts.

It's clear from the prevalence of bands such as Fleet Foxes and Johnny Flynn that popular genres are learning from folk to great commercial success, but there is a danger of alienating audiences. Take Mumford and Sons: they have exploited their success to such a degree that people now consider them inauthentic and bland, a pop band falsely donning folk apparel. Likewise, if a band like Lau pushed too far in the abstract electronic direction, they'd risk losing many of their fans.

It's principally a question of choosing between success and sticking to your roots, although it's arguable that bands like Mumford and Sons and Noah and the Whale have no genuine 'roots.' In their hands, folk becomes an empty, tacked on sign of authenticity and originality, as though the addition of a banjo renders a pop song revolutionary. While it can be disheartening to see such bastardisations of the folk tradition, it is worth remembering that there are many musicians using these influences in new and exciting ways that help to combat this over-saturation. Pop may have had its way with folk, but the tradition continues to thrive in other areas.



LIZZIE MARK

*"There is just enough discontinuity to keep the album fresh, but not fragmentary"*

●●● Grunge, with few exceptions, has not aged well. Those of its figures who haven't faded away have mostly settled into a cycle of producing overblown anachronistic rock that might shift units, but doesn't inspire or challenge (see Dave Grohl, Chris Cornell).

Fortunately, ex-Screaming Trees frontman Mark Lanegan doesn't make these mistakes in his solo work, instead situating himself within much older,

Mark Lanegan  
Band

**Blues Funeral**  
★★★★★

more timeless blues and folk traditions. Lanegan's low, mournful voice has some of the resonant timbre of Nick Cave or Tom Waits, and he doesn't shy away from this inheritance.

Without Isobel Campbell's sweetening influence from their previous collaborations, *Blues Funeral* takes on a great sense of lonely personal lament; this is an album populated with bluesy dirges that have titles like 'Bleeding

Muddy Water' and 'St Louis Elegy.'

But the interest of this record lies in its not being straightforward. Opening track and single 'Gravedigger's Song' works within a similar tone to the rest of the album, but its throbbing drums and distorted bass backbone reference his time playing with bastions of stoner rock, Queens Of The Stone Age.

Later, just as we might begin to feel complacent with the established aesthetic, there's a surprise in the form of the upbeat synth line and disco beat of 'Ode To Sad Disco.' As Lanegan's vocals pull us back into a familiar gloom, there is just enough discontinuity to keep the album fresh, but not fragmentary.

Lanegan intelligently plays with referential styles and self-aware song titles to place himself within a lone troubadour archetype that the album doesn't quite fit. This may sound like a knowing joke, but who cares when it sounds so good? *Joey Frances*

*"He is not just vulnerable, he is constantly at risk of being consumed by the product of his own thoughts"*

●●● It turns out playing 'hard to get' can work rather well.

In 1998, Jeff Mangum and his band Neutral Milk Hotel released their magnum opus, *In The Aeroplane Over The Sea* and it barely registered as a drop in the indie ocean. After over a decade of being a recluse, Mangum sold out London's own Union Chapel in just 3 days.

Box Set

**Neutral Milk Hotel**  
★★★★★

For the first time, the band's brief career has been compiled into one vinyl-only box set containing their two studio albums, and a wealth of rare and unreleased material. *In The Aeroplane Over The Sea* is, quite bluntly, one of the greatest records ever made. The lyrics conjure images influenced by Georges Méliès and Jules Verne, anachronistic contraptions composed of the bric-a-brac of the household of his youth. Mangum never sounds entirely in control of the music he creates; he is not just vulnerable, he is constantly at risk of being consumed and swallowed alive by the product of his own thoughts.

At the climax of 'Ghost,' and in its consequent instrumental reprise, he finally explodes in a jubilant, cathartic cacophony of theremin and bagpipes. This sets the stage beautifully for 'Two Headed Boy, Part 2' – an arcane album closer, a mournful serenade that plays while the subsequent debris cascades down around his head.

Elsewhere, their debut *On Avery Island* is much murkier and messier than its refined sibling, but features

the incredible 'Naomi' – in my opinion, their greatest moment.

Here his lachrymose lungs plead for a lover to not leave him here, wherever that may be, and it could not sound more urgent, vital and on the precipice of destruction.

On the new *Ferris Wheel on Fire* EP, live staple 'Engine' is the immediate standout. Between the lines of his curiously cursive lyrics and accompanied by a lonely singing saw, he attempts to exorcise both the monsters that lurk under his bed and the demons that sleep between the covers.

The crestfallen 'My Dream Girl Don't Exist,' meanwhile, is a tale of suburban dissonance that feels like gazing through a spinning zoetrope; the multitude of images are individually fleeting, spinning so fast you can hardly hold them in your head.

Neutral Milk Hotel's impact on the contemporary indie scene is colossal. Their incredible repertoire of obscure instruments surely guided Beirut's *Gulag Orkestar* and Sufjan Stevens' work, as well as undoubtedly influencing Arcade Fire, Bon Iver and Brand New, among others.

Despite this, no one has yet replicated anything quite this extraordinary. Obsessive and corrosive yet intricate and bittersweet, only one person could have created such beautiful, personal music. This collection proves that by the point that Mangum disappeared, he had perfectly defined his life, his death and everything in between; what on earth could you have done for an encore? *Dominic Kelly*

Double Booked  
ROBERT GLASPER (2009)

First half 'trio,' second half 'experiment,' both halves excellent. The trio side opens with a phone call from famed trumpeter Terence Blanchard, anticipating five tracks of blistering sophistication, Glasper's disjointed lines and Chris Dave's technical drumming on full show. The experiment side, a progressive mix of jazz and hip-hop, is a wild mess of vocoders and electric pianos, and, critically, pervasive melodic sensibility. *Theo Evan*



Heaven or Las Vegas  
COCTEAU TWINS (1990)

This is perhaps the most accessible the group ever sounded, with some of Elizabeth Fraser's astounding vocals even comprehensible. Concrete meaning was never what the band were about, of course; backed by shimmering, effects-laden guitars, every syllable Fraser utters seems to take on a gut tangibility and texture of its own. This roots their sound in both ethereal landscapes and direct reality, and the effect is intoxicating. *Rory Williamson*

# Why the Romantics were wrong

Forget the room, says **Zoe Large**, a whole city of one's own is right there for the taking

Even if you know nothing else about Virginia Woolf, you've probably heard her most famous maxim: that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction". Feminist concerns aside, this notorious statement seems to confirm a basic common sense truth. Surely works of great genius can't be produced amidst the hustle and bustle of the city, with all its barking dogs, hooting vehicles and screaming children? They require space to develop; silence in which ideas can be fully processed and explored.

Woolf's words are being taken literally by the Hosking Houses Trust – a registered writers' charity founded in 1999. Its purpose is to offer selected applicants rent-free accommodation in the rural site of Cottage Chambers, supporting talented writers by giving them space to work outside the city. Likewise, the Arvon Foundation aims to take members of its writing course to "a secluded atmosphere where there are no distractions, other than the beautiful countryside" imbuing them with rural "sustenance and inspiration". (Quoted from [www.arvonfoundation.org](http://www.arvonfoundation.org)).

The logic behind such projects coheres with the artistic theories of Blake and Wordsworth, Emerson and Thoreau. It's difficult to argue when Wordsworth denigrates the anesthetic effect of the city, because the beauty of his writing seems to support his

claims – his belief that the Imagination is properly nourished only by rolling hills and unpolluted skies.

"Humble and rustic life" he argued, was where "the essential patterns of

**'Do cities lack the subtleties that inspire great writing?'**

the heart find a better soil". The wandering, meandering lifestyle upheld in his poetry is certainly at odds with the frenzied pace of modern London. Apparently, we don't have the patience to browse for books any more, let alone write them. Digital stores such as Amazon proudly lead us directly to our goal while showing us virtually nothing along the way. Cities provide a hub for this kind of technology: devices which save time, but inevitably prevent the expansion of our imaginative world.

Conceived as nothing more than the sum of mechanised parts, cities lack the subtleties which inspire great writing. Engineers cannot design epiphanies, computers cannot measure alliances or associations, and marketers do not deal in meaning or emotion. Add people into the mix, however, and this landscape turns into a repository of

possibility.

Cities might be built by men, but they always contain more than any one inhabitant can know. Perhaps they run to fulfil inhuman criteria of efficiency and predictability, yet the by-products, at the level of the individual, are refreshing possibilities for anonymity and infinite variety.

This year marks the 200th birthday of Charles Dickens, whose continuing popularity is affirmed by the thousands of festivals and events being held to celebrate his life's work. Dickens' acclaim owes much to his vivid and intricate explorations of urban dwellings.

Famously hailing London as his 'magic lantern', his novels

evoke the city in terms which praise industrial progression. Dreams realised are often placed in vibrant proximity to dreams deferred; thriving trade reproduced alongside grubby opium dens.

In fact, these are the juxtapositions highlighted within any city, yet they are always more easily appreciated in fiction. Reading the novels of Dickens or Defoe, we can come to appreciate London as its own sort of wilderness – the perfect landscape in which to get lost, or expand our horizons. How ironic, then, that many writers feel the need to escape its bounds in order to produce great work. Rather than indicating any debilitating quality in the atmosphere of cities themselves, this notion reveals a problem in our own attitudes to the world around us.

In her beautiful book *Storming the Gates of Paradise*, Rebecca Solnit longs for a 'public landscape in which we can roam the streets at midnight, in which every square is available for Virginia Woolf to make up her novels'. Her solution to Woolf's maxim is not an escape from the city, but a reclamation of public space.

Urban sites can be used to our advantage, and material circumstances are only distracting if we work against them rather than alongside them. The metropolis will become the home of the imagination when it is welcomed and treated as such – approached, no less than rocks and soil, as an environment to be 'roam[ed]', explored and enjoyed.



LUZZIE MARX

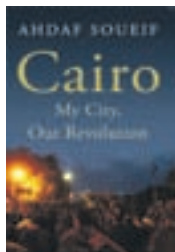
Read  
CHARLOTTE KEITH



Here we are all, by day; by night we're hurl'd/ By dreams, each one into a several world" – Robert Herrick. An uncannily apt description of the Circle line during rush hour? Since Judith Chernaik launched the scheme in 1986, there have been Poems on the Underground. There is a peculiar beauty to the idea: moments of stillness in a crowded tube carriage, subtly shoving the person next to you, perhaps, to get a better look. More interesting, at the very least, than reading another advert for car insurance. The poems only require a glance, a snort of derision or an appreciative 'hm', and provide a welcome distraction if someone has positioned their armpit awkwardly close to your face. This week, the project gets animated: advertising screens across the tube network will be hijacked by poems transformed into typographic films, which promise to 'uplift and inspire commuters during the bleakest months of the year'. Take that, car insurance! This also claims to help combat 'the apparent indifference to literature shown during the London riots'. Unlikely. But the 'several world' that a city encompasses deserves this kind of creative public space. Some commuters might even smile.



*“snapshots of Shabab revolutionaries forming a human chain around the Egyptian Museum”*



●●● You may have gathered that this Wednesday was the anniversary of the protests which led to the downfall of President Mubarak, and that the Egyptian parliament opened on Monday after an election that a British broadsheet called "the freest in Egypt's modern history". So far so good, then.

Yet the most striking element of Ahdaf Soueif's *Cairo* is not those eighteen heady days in Tahrir Square last Spring, but the "interruption" that skips on to the Summer and Autumn.

**Cairo: My City, Our Revolution**

Ahdaf Soueif  
★★★★★

The events of Tahrir are recent in the memory, though Soueif's account adds first-hand immediacy: we see, for example, snapshots of shabab revolutionaries forming a human chain around the Egyptian Museum to hand it over intact to the Army (whose officers' IDs are even checked), only for snipers to be placed on the roof and torturers set to work inside. That story, for all its vicious irony, encapsulates too the mutual respect with which the Army and the protestors interacted; there were football matches, flowers on tanks, and chants of "The People!/The Army!/One Hand!". This is where Soueif's structuring shines: we flick forward to a protest in July which is blocked off by the Army so that the supposedly dissolved Central Security and plainclothes baltagis can batter the crowd with stones and Molotov cocktails. This most violent part of the book comes when the Army begins to "protect the revolution" from the revolutionaries themselves.

There are faults here that detract from our ability to empathise with Soueif: the text can be surprisingly clunky for a novelist who has been

shortlisted for the Booker. Sentences such as "each person was in one place, totally and fully committed to that place, unable to be aware of any other" must have been put down in a hurry to publish in time for the anniversary.

**'Soueif's friends are hurt, imprisoned, killed'**

The subtitle *My City, Our Revolution* warns that much of the narrative is personal. Initially, this is poignant – we are made aware of the suffering of Cairo's citizens in particular, rather than general, terms when Soueif's friends are hurt, imprisoned, or killed. Nonetheless, the personal easily becomes obscure – the hospital where Soueif was born, for instance, clearly has significance for her, but not for the reader.

Perhaps, however, the book's greatest flaw is one that Soueif can do little about: the story of the revolution is ongoing, as indeed she acknowledges in her final words. The regime remains in power, backed by the support of the Army. The Muslim Brotherhood has as yet stayed fairly quiescent, though that could change.

To date, the signs of hope, such as the recent elections, are a compromise to preserve this situation; for example Field Marshal Tantawi announced on Wednesday the end of the 31-year state of emergency, but reserved the right to re-impose the law on "thuggery", the term the Army has taken to using to describe the protests. At least 12,000 "thugs" remain in jail. Soueif's book, therefore, feels sharp, but incomplete.

Ed Winfield

● Bloomsbury, £14.99, hardback



**The Beautiful Indifference**

Sarah Hall  
★★★★★

●●● *The Beautiful Indifference* is not an easy collection: in its pages are contained moments of pain, heartache and anxiety. Neither, in the strictest sense, is it a perfect one. The stories are not consistently well-plotted and in some stories there are moments – that slightly jar. But what Sarah Hall lacks in suspense-building she makes up for with language that can only be described as exquisite.

She is a poet, playing with rhymes and sounds. In 'Bees', the phrase "Is it something to do with infected hives? Mites in their throats or pesticide?" requires a reader to glance back, to think, and to marvel. In 'Butcher's Perfume', she says of one character that, when in the grips of a fight, "she was lit up, the way someone plain looks better when they sing,

when suddenly it seems they have bright colours under a dull wing." Her short, sharp, sentences simultaneously capture urgency and control; her life observations are intense and occasionally wince-inducing.

In 'She Murdered Mortal He', a woman contemplates the man who has spurned her: "maybe he was asleep; oblivious to everything, making use of that shut-off mechanism men could rely upon". I can't say that I felt an engagement with every character; "You", the protagonist of 'Bees', struggles to feel like "me". But I am anxious to justify my star rating. The collection's flaws, necessarily emphasised in a review, are minor. And what is the 5th star for except to reward writing that takes your breath away?

Joe Harper

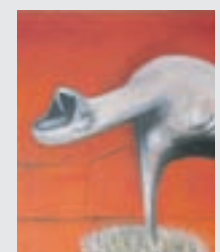
● Faber and Faber, £12.99, paperback

## POET'S CORNER

enough  
now to go about  
like a Provençal ravi  
(which comes up  
on the crib-side sign as 'ecstatic'),

unstilled, always  
praising unseen; heading allward  
out of my districts with arms out,  
and so making the circuit  
just beneath the upstream;

singing  
into the noise,  
just to check the current data  
for us, to Christ-Of-The-Excess



*This is the first poem in a sequence, 'be they mouths'. See the rest online.*

Jack Bellooli


**Watch**  
INDIA ROSS

There's nothing we love more than a good awards ceremony. No, wait, a Ricky Gervais-hosted awards ceremony. But for all their tacky delights, the might of the Oscars and Golden Globes in dictating common cinema-goers' tastes is not to be underestimated.

At the time of writing, the Oscar nominations are yet to be released – but given the hallmarks of many a second-rate winner in the past, one can make a fair stab at how it's going to play out. Best Picture will, traditionally, be universally adored by the moderately educated, and universally panned by the arthouse brigade. It will have been flogged to within an inch of its life in Awards Season mania, emblazoned across double-deckers and Daily Mail supplements. It will contribute something tentatively political or cultural but not to the extent that 'haters gonna hate'. With such cultural influence comes, one would hope, a little integrity, but with a long history of questionable winners and outrageous misfires (Natalie Portman, anyone?), one can't resist a sense of skulduggery in the offing. There is no hiding the fact that the 'Oscarcast' itself is higher rated where box-office smashes are tipped for success. At risk of personal embarrassment, I would bet money on *The Artist*.



# The decline and fall of British TV

Film Editor **India Ross** on *Downton*, *EastEnders* and falling standards on the small screen

The thing is, people will watch *anything*.

When the slack-jawed British populus hit the couch, Stella in hand, curry in lap, what's actually on the box is no more than academic. The Youtube generation seek instant gratification with minimal emotional investment; a parade of cheap laughs and familiar faces.

Such is the extent of the pathological defeatism in British TV, we are losing sight of what a good show even looks like. With *Downton Abbey* hailed as the 'most critically acclaimed television show of 2011', one is forced to concede that standards are in dangerous decline.

It is all a question of expectation. The British public are the captive recipients of whatever the BBC et al choose to feed to them, and without selection pressure

from other pioneering networks, an apathetic equilibrium is reached in which expectations are so low that no one can ever be disappointed.

Broadcasters are embarking on an insidious moving of the goalposts, cashing in on the low-expectation void left by *The X Factor* et al. Stagnant airtime is filled with play-it-safe, low-budget productions with irritating, recycled actors. The

'The US has left us impotent in its wake'

rise and rise of the ludicrous Benedict Cumberbatch leaves me all but speechless.

It is with regret that I watch David Lynch's incomparable *Twin Peaks*. An artist and a visionary, Lynch pushed the medium of television into transcendence; no longer a stop-gap between news bulletins, it was an artistic vehicle to rival the cinema. The most accessible of all artforms, the small screen could erode cultural divisions in a way that non-mainstream cinema, in all its exclusivity, never did.

The US once again leaves us impotent in its wake. While there have arguably been few successors to quite match *Twin Peaks*, current American television reeks of ambition. The growing array



*Downton Abbey* drew in an audience of 12 million in 2011, while *Mad Men*, left, remains one of the most critically-acclaimed shows of the decade

of dazzling productions, from *Mad Men* to *Breaking Bad*, is a showcase of stellar cinematography and inimitable character actors sourced from obscurity.

There is of course a parallel supply of junk food entertainment (we've all dabbled in *90210*), but it is recognised as such, never serving as a substitute for the real thing.

Even in comedy, the British have been usurped. Former triumphs like *Monty Python* and *Yes, Minister* have long since been archived, and in the post-*Seinfeld* era we have been losing ground year on year. Britain wasn't ready for *The Office*, a rare gem

in an otherwise banal decade, which was promptly exported across the Atlantic when its potential was recognised, going on to spawn an entire movement in situational comedy, from the under-appreciated *Arrested Development* to the wonderful *Modern Family* nearly a decade later.

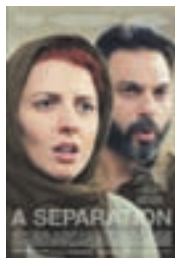
The obvious retort is that limited budgets will always constrain British TV. A fair point (apparently Jon Hamm is currently racking up \$250,000 per episode of *Mad Men*, and the first season of *Game of Thrones* reportedly went for a whopping \$55 million) but considering that the BBC's annual expenditure on *EastEnders* is £30m, perhaps a re-think is in order. After all, inspiration costs nothing.

## OUTSIDE THE BOX

- 1 The X Factor Results  
13.7 million viewers
- 2 The Royal Wedding  
13.6 million viewers
- 3 Strictly Come Dancing  
13.0 million viewers
- 4 Britain's Got Talent Results  
12.95 million viewers
- 5 I'm A Celebrity...  
12.8 million viewers

FIGURES FOR 2011, SOURCE: BARB

"A story of men whose sense of moral certainty is such that they will do almost anything to find vindication"



## A Separation

Asghar Farhadi  
★★★★★

●●● The opening shot of Iranian drama *A Separation* finds bank teller Nader (Peyman Moaadi) and university lecturer Simin (Leila Hatami) in a drab government office, filing for the titular divorce. In an unbroken take, the audience sits in place of the unseen judge who will decide their fate, setting the stage for the unflinching scrutiny

of its characters that will unfold in the film's two hour running time.

Writer-director Asghar Farhadi's fifth film, and winner of the Berlin Film Festival's coveted Golden Bear, combines beautifully observed everyday interactions with the high stakes of a suspense thriller. The fallout from Simin and Nader's attempt to divorce leads the couple to cross paths with an unemployed shoemaker and his timid wife. When a tragic accident (or was it?) entangles their lives even further, the film veers off in unexpectedly heart-racing directions. In a year dominated by visual stylists like Nicolas Winding Refn and

Terrence Malick, Farhadi's stripped-back direction feels refreshingly understated. There's also a noticeable lack of music in the film; instead the chatter of crowded government hallways and Tehran's thrumming streets provide the soundtrack.

The cast are faultless across the board, with the two central couples imbuing their roles with such ambiguity that no true heroes or villains ever emerge. While the character of Nader defies the cliché of the uncaring, conservative husband, the script is also eager to point out the hypocrisies present in liberal, middle class Iranians of his ilk. At its heart, *A Separation* is a story of men whose sense of moral certainty is such that they will do almost anything to find vindication. Farhadi doesn't linger over this inherent paradox but we see that in a society still clinging to some semblance of patriarchy, self-doubt is a privilege left only to the women.

The title *A Separation* begins as an oblique reference to a marital split but quickly encompasses much more than that: the division of social classes, the gulf between moral justice and the law, the irreconcilability of two versions of the same event. The adulation the film has received is well deserved and, having already won the Golden Globe for Best Foreign Language Film, it seems poised to snatch the Oscar too. But whatever happens on February 26th, *A Separation* is undoubtedly among the best small films of the year, no matter the language. *Jamie Fraser*  
● *A Separation* was on limited release in the UK from July. It is now widely available on DVD



## GOING GLOBAL RUSSIA



FILM: *Nightwatch*  
DIRECTOR: Bekmambetov  
YEAR: 2004

A Russian vampire film about the struggle between Good and Bad – what could be better than that? Pre-sparkly-R-Patz-vamp-mania, but post-Buffy-Spike-Angel love triangle, director Bekmambetov offers up a sinister thriller.

Back in the Middle Ages, so the story goes, an epic battle took place between the forces of Light and Dark, culminating in an equilibrium between the destructive powers who await the arrival of a Messiah-type arbiter.

An admittedly silly premise,

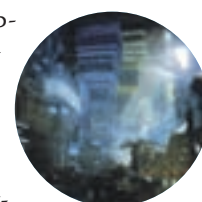
yes, but nonetheless a masterpiece in genre-defying cinema. The bleakness of the Russian cityscape combined with the absurdity of the storyline – one of the women frequently turns into an owl – make it a riveting watch with an explosive climax.

Bekmambetov went on to release an apt sequel, *Daywatch*, in 2006. I also eagerly await the third instalment, "Twilightwatch" which should hopefully be out any day now...

Alice Bolland

## Cine-file

CITYSCAPES



I recently read a letter published in *PIDGIN*, a Princeton School of Architecture journal, titled 'Dear Architects, I am sick of your shit'. In this the author complains, among other things, that architects are incapable of discussing anything other than architecture, such as her interest in Turkey eggs, and that all buildings resemble phalluses.

Phalluses aside, buildings are, needless to say, everywhere. Our whole lives are underpinned by architecture: no wonder it's so difficult for an architect to escape it. This brings me to a filmmaker's fascination with the metropolis. Some of its most interesting cinematic portrayals lie not in the real, but the imagined city. Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982)

imagines a dystopian Los Angeles in 2019. Architecture evokes as much as it reveals, being only based on real space. Similarly, in its various incarnations on the big screen, Gotham City (home of Batman), has been imagined and re-imagined, drawing inspiration from New York City, Boston, Detroit, Pittsburgh, London and Chicago. Contrasting Tim Burton and Christopher Nolan's visions, Burton does more in the line of evoking, collaging architectural styles. The power of this alternate reality comes from its architectural roots, the inexorable metropolis.

Tom Hart

ARCSOC WILL BE SHOWING *BLADE RUNNER* ON 30.01.12 AT 7PM, ARCHITECTURE DEPT.

On a similar theme: *La Antena* (Esteban Sapir, 2007), *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1926), *Escape from New York* (John Carpenter), *Rear Window* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1954), *Gattaca* (Andrew Niccol, 1997)

# Boring postcards get interesting

Making fiction from reality: iconic British photographer Martin Parr talks to Louise Benson

It was in a bathroom of a cafe several years ago that I first came across Martin Parr's work: hung up were several framed images of typical English food – two limp slices of white bread, a fry-up swimming with baked beans, and a lone cup of milky tea. Photographed arrestingly close up, with their stinging colours glowering off the stained white walls, I was delighted by their cheerful showcasing of the ordinary.

Now, I am curious to zoom in further still, and hear Parr's take on the ordinary and everyday of our experiences in here in Cambridge. Having had several commissions lead him here over the last decade, it is with a certain familiarity that he considers the city. Within this, though, I detect an arch note of humour in his remarks upon finding himself in Cambridge – “that most secretive place” – once more. He discusses the difficulties he has been faced with when photographing the city, describing the closeted professors and suddenly-self conscious students encountered here when he was commissioned by *the Guardian* to capture ten British cities – it is “a challenge to get any kind of access”. Cambridge was the third of those in the series, and he “pushed hard to penetrate its shell”. We focus on the university, Parr stressing how bizarre it is that in a location so rich with a diversity of life – most notably the town/gown split – “photography is ignored and marginalised” as a discipline to be taught and explored.

Reflecting on his experience of teaching photography, Parr notes the “laziness of the students” he's encountered: “They've either got it or haven't got it”. I wonder, then, what he feels



Photographs from *The Last Resort*, above; *Food*, top right; and *Boring Postcards*, right



PHOTOS BY MARTIN PARR

about contemporary photography emerging today. He is quick to counter his earlier abruptness on the younger generations emerging, talking animatedly on his experience of curating the Brighton Photo Biennial in 2010 – “I wanted to give a platform to those who I felt were photographing the world in an interesting way; to young photographers who have not yet been seen, and older ones who have a potential to fill.” When asked for names of ones to watch, he quips, “Well, you'll have to check who featured in Brighton, won't you? I'm not going to do all the work for you.”

Such flitting between seriousness and straight-faced humour, the gap between the two being navigated almost imperceptibly, characterises the images that Parr catches through his lens. His famed photographs of the seaside town of New Brighton, Merseyside, published in 1986 under the title *The Last Resort* (pictured below, bottom left) catch the fantastic banalities – and, on occasion, absurdities – of everyday life. Informed

largely by the pioneering colour photographs of John Hinde, the vivid hues of the snapshots imbue them with an excitement, and almost a sickness, that Parr acknowledges when I pitch this towards him, summarising “I regard myself as creating fiction out of reality.”

This brings us to his reaction to being inaugurated in 1994 into Magnum, one of the most influential social-documentary establishments in the world. He describes in plain terms the “partnership and cooperative” nature of Magnum, and “their strength to apply themselves to the commercial world.” It is evident

‘He describes the postcard as “the most democratic art form”’

that Parr appreciates the stepping stone that they are able to give photographers, while unashamedly asserting that “It is a broader church than previously, which my being taken on certainly assisted.” I ask whether he would consider himself a documentary photographer at

all. Parr pauses over the contradiction that he proceeds to lay out, detailing the “ambiguity of contradictions even in one frame”, while concluding “But yes, documentary is certainly the simplest and most straightforward reading of my work”. His reticence to resign himself to a terming so simple, though, is clear, and we retread this and find ourselves addressing the humour evident in his work. Parr stresses that it is “Very British – one of the things we do best in this country in irony.”

We talk next about his editing process – Parr describes the hundreds of images he takes in order to discover among them just a handful of greats: put bluntly, “If you take more pictures to edit from you're likely to get some better.” I ask about his grouping together of his work, with over 60 photo books to Parr's name, where patterns are sought out in ways that never fail to make me laugh. *Bored Couples* is a favourite, as is *Bad Weather*: much of his British sense of humour emerges in this placing together of his images.

It is on his vast collection of postcards that we close – Parr went so far as to publish a volume of them under the title *Boring Postcards*. He describes the postcard as “the most democratic art form”, and the influence of the colour-enhanced cityscapes that populate so many of them sold in unassuming newsagents around the world is clear in his own photographs – although the democracy of the fiction created by his lens could certainly be drawn into question. Parr insists “I am not trying to preach in my images, simply to show one point of view.” As he puts it moments before we end, “It is one way of seeing the world.”

Look  
HOLLY GUPTA



Kodak used to be a byword for the film and camera industry; last week, they filed for bankruptcy.

Their failure to invest in new digital technology is only one side of the story. Kodak went out of business because no-one wanted the products that they had remained loyal to. These were the camera films that created real prints that you could stick on your wall and into albums. Beyond and above the tangible nature of film, prints from negatives look very different – sometimes better, sometimes worse. Snapfish is faster and cheaper, but probably not as fun.

However, recent interest in film seems to owe much to a curiosity about all things pre-digital, which have a sort of mysticism about them. People my age seem to feel nostalgia for an era of film that they never knew – just look at the success of high street chain Urban Outfitter's attempt to sell basic Japanese film cameras originally meant as toys.

Tacita Dean explores our fascination with these ideas in her current Turbine hall installation ‘Film’, a, er, film in which lightning strikes and eggs roll across the screen. She provokes more than she explains. How has she created these effects in such a ‘primitive’ medium? Why are unmoving sprockets visible against a changing image? And why has she not chosen digital?

Dean's favour of the physical, complex and archaic has broad and challenging implications.



“Sparked by the Tate's exhibition, *The Vorticists: Manifesto for a modern world*, there has been an explosion of critical interest in Vorticism.”

Henri Gaudier-Brzeska: Vorticist!

Kettle's Yard until 1 April

★★★★★

●●● Vorticism, perhaps the most avant-garde and cohesive art movement to emerge on the British Isles, was so ephemeral that history had more or less forgotten about it. Still, much like fruit shoots (which changed an entire generation's understanding about the relationship between fruit and candy) it should not have been forgotten. What a relief, then, that last year brought

with it the rediscovery of Vorticism. Sparked by the Tate's exhibition, *The Vorticists: Manifesto for a modern world*, there has been an explosion of critical interest in Vorticism.

Jim Ede (original owner of Kettle's Yard) was an avid collector of Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, one of the group of artists to form the Rebel Art Centre in 1914. Gaudier-Brzeska, primarily a sculptor (though many of his most iconic works are in China ink), helped Wyndham Lewis and Jacob Epstein

(among others) to found the Centre in opposition to Roger Fry's autocratic regime at the Omega workshops in London. The group would be baptised ‘the Vorticists’ by Ezra Pound, a close friend and collaborator.

Gaudier-Brzeska's ink sketch of Ezra Pound is one of many of his works that have been taken out of Kettle's Yard's reserve collection and displayed on location accompanied by contextual materials from the archive.

The gallery pays appropriate tribute to Gaudier-Brzeska's consuming dedication to the Vorticists, symbolised by his Toy, which Ezra Pound declared the finest of his experiments, and used as a totem to fiddle with whilst trying to think. Gaudier-Brzeska's investment in the Vorticist fascination with the relationship between animals and machines is also represented in the exhibition, in the sharp angles and aggressive geometrisation of his *Bird Swallowing a Fish*. The sculpture sits in the middle of the second room, hanging in its moment of suspended animation for a viewer to consider as they walk around.

Arranged neatly in the small rooms, Gaudier-Brzeska's brilliant work could not look more at home at Kettle's Yard. Which makes sense, because they are at home – just moments away from the bedroom in which Ede lovingly sheltered them. *Aliya Ram*



“...a way of controlling the chaos”

●●● The editor of this wittily titled book of contemporary collage describes the medium as “a way of controlling the chaos”. The idea that, in the stillness of a scalpel knife and some PVA, something spontaneous and beautiful can be made in moments is the idea that all of the artists sell, and is what makes the notion behind compilation

so successful. The multiplicity of media imagery is immediately reduced to something precise, neat and delightful: it is the language of advertising, but nothing is being sold. The book selects and presents in a way just as seductive as the medium

it represents. Block-like geometric compositions sit alongside faded naturalistic ones. A single image of a body on a blank page can have equal impact as a kaleidoscopic layering of lines and textures. There is no one success story, and the pages work together without the sequence ever feeling tired: it is simultaneously both surprising and logical.

The introductory history of collage was bizarre, because the work is immediate. It needs no explanation or positioning in time, especially as all the work is very recent. I loved it because, knowing nothing about it, I could open it and be absorbed. *Holly Gupta*

Book Review: *Cutting Edges*

Edited by James Gallagher

★★★★★

## Hidden Treasures

Last term Trinity Hall hosted an art exhibition of the work of painter Barbara Rae (left). The college has now been given several of the paintings for the Master's Lodge, and is in the process of buying another.

Do you know what masterpieces your college has tucked away?

Watch VarsiTV's series ‘Hidden Treasures’ to find out more.

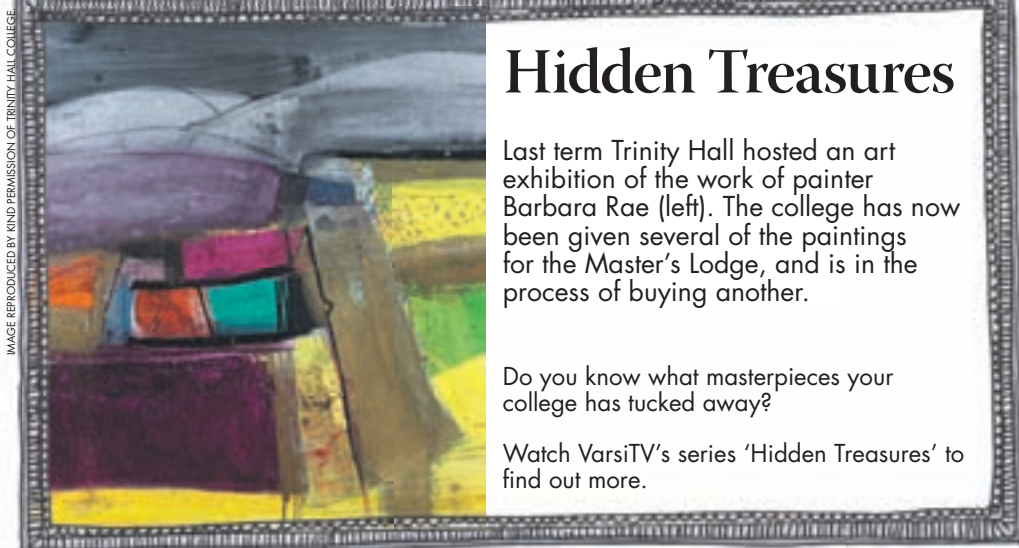


IMAGE REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF TRINITY HALL COLLEGE

## Playground

HELEN CAHILL

Being a Section Editor is bloody hard work. Luckily, I'm rather good at it, but I've noticed some of our team slacking. The Senior Arts Editor is particularly clueless. Personally, I think she should be fired. Email [theatre@varsity.co.uk](mailto:theatre@varsity.co.uk) to join the cause.

My own competence is what has distressed me this week. Don't worry, it's not my editorial excellence that has upset me. It is more how underappreciated I am – nobody reads my column. After the first issue, I thought my inbox would be inundated with congratulatory emails. It wasn't. On introducing myself as the masterful author of 'Playground', I received blank stares from my college Porters. I assumed *Varsity* hadn't been printed yet, but then I saw a copy in their rubbish bin, discarded heartlessly with their respect for the recycling facilities of St. Catharine's College. Is it because my subject matter is uninteresting? Surely not. As Fred demonstrates each week in 'Critique', Theatre is inherently compelling and good.

It can't be that *Varsity* is unimportant. That claim is not only blasphemous, it's downright inaccurate. I wouldn't work for *Varsity* if it weren't an exemplar of student journalism. Despite the slight (figurative) limp incurred upon us by our incompetent Senior Arts Editor, she's no obstacle that the organisational proficiency of the majority of our team can't circumnavigate. We put all other publications to shame.

It's extraordinarily rare for me to have difficulty understanding something. I'm forced to conclude that this is an unsolvable problem. Maybe one day, you'll look back and recognise my insightful contributions for the genius they are, and wished you'd talked to me one night in The Maypole.



# Elektra shock: next week's Corpus mainshow

Meeting the cast at their country retreat, **Katy Browse** talks to director, Ellie Kendrick, on what to do with a Greek Play

Once every three years there occurs a 'Cambridge Greek Play'. The actors are taught to pronounce Greek, choirs to sing it and the audience to appreciate the tense and overblown family dramas of the original texts. It is a phenomenon that's hard to translate into English, let alone re-create in the Corpus Playroom.

When I arrive at Kendrick's home, the small cast of the upcoming *Elektra* production has already been here for

'Much of the time in Kent has been spent working on original music that revives the chorus' part in the play'

about a week. Careful timetables reveal the tight rehearsal programs as well as the sheer amount of food that has been consumed during the making of the play. At one point I catch Kendrick's mum restocking the biscuits. "Ellie had to plan over 300 breakfasts!" she tells me, laughing. So why the need to lock themselves up in Kent in the run-up to term?

This is a particularly different and difficult take on Sophocles' *Elektra*: the translation they're working from has been pronounced unfinished by many and unreadable by others, let alone stageable. It is not only liberal with its literal translation, but moves the entire action from Ancient Greece to the fields of the Deep South of America.

Ellie and I agree that similar modernisation has proved disastrous to these plays, but this is a strapping

young girl fresh from the classical texts that all third year English students must study intensively, reluctantly or no and an appreciation of the original shows. It shows in the choice of translation particularly, which is that of Ezra Pound, one of the only modern poets that you would trust with classical Greek. It is a bit of a literary curio in itself, written while the poet was in a mental asylum, unpublished in his lifetime.

Kendrick admits that handling the text was a sensitive process: "Looking at what had been done with this translation before, it was treated as if everything in it, Pound's use of Greek for one, was imperfect. But if you look closely you see that the moments where the Greek is put are those when *Elektra* is looking to the chorus for help. If you look at the way it's put next to the English, and you read it out-loud, you can see how he's trying to build up a dialogue – like a secret language between the character and the chorus, one that we've tried to maintain as much as possible."

"At first we asked Anthony Bowen to teach the cast the Greek parts of the play," Kendrick recalls, referring to a classical language coach. Yet here Greek meter was not quite right. Much of the time in Kent has been spent working on original music that revives the chorus' part in the play.

While the cast rehearses, I can hear snatches of a guitar that I assume belongs to Music Director, Hatty Carman, putting the finishing touches to a song. Summed up in Blues rhythms and some rich harmonies, they give the play a strength that's different to the Greek but at the same time very much in a similar vein.

Roll on the spectacle and bloody murder! They are in surprisingly safe hands.



1. Sophie Crawford as Elektra, surrounded by the chorus members of the play. 2. An Elektra-fying moment 3. Elektra and her less vengeful sister, Chrysothemis (Rozzi Nicholson-Lailey)

The Varsity Star Guide ★★★★★ Show me out ★★★★★ Poor show ★★★★★

## Girls Just Wanna Have Fun

**Sophie Lewisohn** talks to the cast of *Rookie*, the all-female sketch show

We are assigning the week's theatre jobs in the *Varsity* offices when it gets to *Rookie*, a new all-female sketch show. Fred Maynard makes a shrewd point: if a girl reviews it and finds it funny, will she be believed? Better send a man for the job.

The lurking 'woman question' in comedy runs along the lines of: are women funny, and do we even like funny women? It is something the *Rookie* cast are acutely aware of; over breakfast in Indigo I hear how the show came about.

The comedy scene in Cambridge, as everywhere, is male-dominated. Celine Lowenthal, the show's director, explains that though you find girls in comic roles and smokers, they are rarely to be found in high profile sketch shows or on the Footlights committee. "It's crazy, but it was so difficult to break into the comedy circuit that an exclusively female show seemed necessary just to get heard."

*Rookie* is the brainchild of Rosa Robson. Gathering up girls she'd seen in comedies and standup nights, Robson

collected five like-minded women and a female director for the project. They then "incarcerated themselves" for two weeks in each other's homes, brainstorming ideas, working in different pairings, testing their jokes and writing their script.

Whether their material should focus on 'female issues' was a question they debated at the beginning of the project. Giulia Galastro recalls that no one was keen to restrict themselves to the familiar female comedian's territory of menstruation jokes and waxing stories. "Women's lives are a rich mine for comedy," says Lowenthal. "There's so much to play with; the material has a lot of variety." Galastro does promise one period joke, however. "The girl jokes eventually emerged organically – after all, you write what you know."

For Galastro, the best part of the project has been the chance to develop sketches collaboratively. Compared with the short, sharp audition and performance routine of the fortnightly smokers, which can be intimidating, *Rookie* was a show that could be

nurtured and developed over weeks. "There's a lot of back and forth, exchanging ideas, right up to the end. If something's not working in rehearsal you can just change it – the writer is standing right next to you!"

As director, Lowenthal was an audience for the developing material, advising the cast which ideas to expand and which to cut. "Compared to directing straight plays, the process with *Rookie* has been far more fluid. There isn't that hierarchy of director/actors – everyone's comments are valid."

Setting up a space within Cambridge comedy for women is an exciting breakthrough – for Lowenthal: "the most important show I've worked on." The hope is that *Rookie* will encourage more girls to put themselves forward for comedy. "The talent is there – it's just a question of confidence and opportunity."

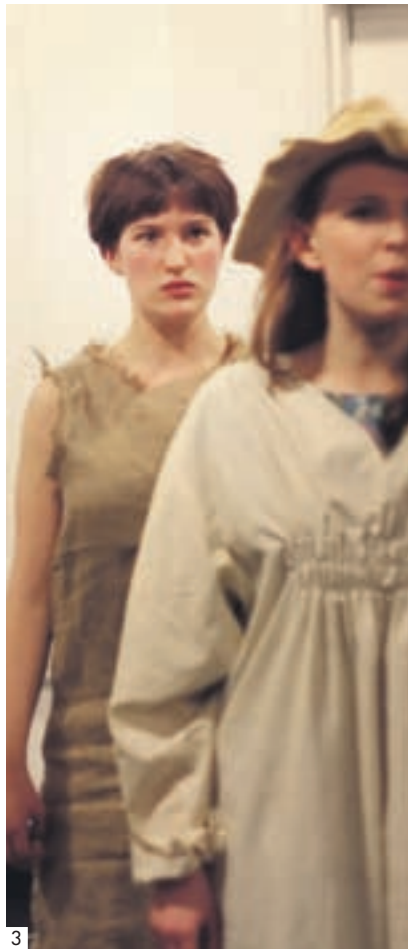
● *Rookie* opens on Tue, 31st Jan. at Corpus Playroom starring Rosa Robson, Matilda Wnek, Emma Powell, Ellie Nunn, Giulia Galastro and Temi Wilkey.

"Setting up a space within Cambridge comedy for women is an exciting breakthrough – for Lowenthal the most important show she's worked on"



It takes balls to break into the male-dominated Cambridge comedy scene

# has the power



Unbearable ★★★★★ Show me more ★★★★★ Showing off



“I would have liked more time to see Gus explore his situation verbally as well as physically”

●●● I wanted to start this review by explaining why the newspaper prop used in this production annoyed me. I don't know whether it was a deliberate attempt to make *A Point* in a play which resists that sort of thing, or just a rare lapse into lazy anachronistic design, or... But such pedantry would annoy you more than the prop annoyed me. And it would just show up how little there is in this production to get annoyed about.

## The Dumb Waiter

## Corpus Mainshow

★★★★★

The production is a masterclass in using the Playroom effectively. The eponymous waiter is kept (almost) out of the audience's eye-line: it therefore comes as the last surprise reveal of an opening section in which George Johnston's pacing has carefully established the kind of space we're in.

It's only when he wanders into the aisle to pick up a mysterious envelope that Luka Krsljanin rises, and begins making the underground room his own as well. It's rare to see the “shifty, shifting dynamics” that the flyer boasts so clearly enshrined in blocking.

Such clarity is partly possible because the play's a two-hander – but it helps to have two such gifted hands.

Krsljanin's posture stays precisely, and menacingly, on the edge of comic; he does an impressive job of silently building up what may, just may, be concealed knowledge of what's going to happen as the play ends.

If I've got a criticism, it's that some of Johnston's monologues felt rattled off. I recognise the attempt to play against the Pinter-pause cliché but, at 45 minutes, this feels disarmingly brief. I would have liked more time to see Gus explore his situation verbally as well as physically – and perhaps a bit longer on that final tableau. Credit must go too to the light and sound design: the lighting creeps up on you unnervingly in the silence as the play begins, and the sound of the dumb waiter is first jolting, then wonderfully ominous.

Best of all, however, is use of the Playroom's intimacy. *Corpus* is the kind of space in which a struck match can hang on the air and, if you're sitting next to the aisle at the right moment, you can literally smell a character's fear. This production exploits that, creating exactly the sort of giddily live experience I want from theatre. See, hear and smell it for yourself, and find out why that newspaper annoyed me.

Jack Belloli



Johnston and Krsljanin use the intimacy of the Playroom to its full effect

## Critique

FRED MAYNARD



Is theatre at Cambridge too conservative? Not politically, full as it is of angsty lefties like myself, but in our choice of plays. In the past fortnight we've already been visited by that perennial undergraduate pair of favourites, Shakespeare and Pinter. These two return again and again; I count 7 Pinters and 12 Shakespeares in the 4 terms I've been here. And both of them are wonderful playwrights. But do we need that much of them?

I understand the financial reasons behind the same conventional plays being staged. The ADC has to make money, and Tennessee Williams and Ibsen are guaranteed to bring in punters from outside the university. There is also a problem for us compared to other universities, since we have no drama degree: practically the whole theatre world is made up of English undergraduates. I'm one of them. And English students, especially Cambridge ones, love wordy, literary plays that aren't necessarily at the cutting edge of innovation. They have all kinds of ideas as to what Stoppard means in *Travesties*, where a drama student might be interested in what Punchdrunk are doing with “immersive theatre” nowadays. Both might be pretentious, but the latter, I think, ends up with the more interesting theatre experience.

Much as I enjoyed *King Lear* last week (and there was plenty to praise), I couldn't help comparing it to other versions of the play I had seen. It couldn't help but suffer from comparison with the Ian McKellen version of 2007 – a ridiculous demand from me, of course, but that is the nature of doing Shakespeare – whatever your innovation, someone will have done it before, with Patrick Stewart, in space. Which isn't to mention the problem both Pinter and Shakespeare presents to students: they are both far more difficult to perform than they first appear.

Those signature rhythms of “Pause.” and iambic pentameter respectively require years of training for professionals to get right. For students with four weeks of rehearsal, the result can far too easily come out as underwhelming, especially when there are so many professional examples to compare it to.

Also, Shakespeare does require an age range greater than 18-21 for its cast. So much of the plays' power comes from the sense of generational conflict, and so many of the greatest speeches have that elegant weariness of experience hard-won, that somehow 19 year olds can come across as trite and shallow, through no fault of their performance. Not to mention the testing of credulity when Polonius is clearly the same age as Ophelia. (In fairness I should salute the performance last week of *King Lear* himself – in both its halves, Theo Hughes-Morgan and his makeup).

If you look at the critical reception of recent Cambridge Shakespeare, the broad picture seems one of general apathy. Very few productions managed to get even four stars, which reflects a certain jadedness on behalf of critics and audiences as well, I think. I don't think we shouldn't do Shakespeare, it just doesn't fit our skill set well enough to do it all the time.



“I could try and defend this play as an innocent piece of zombie-riffic fun, but I would be wasting my breath”

●●● I think I had better come clean: I didn't get this. I'm not sure there was anything to get, but every time I convinced myself of this, something would make me think again. The play was based on poetry, which, as any English student will tell you, always means something; and perhaps I missed the point of the ring composition. Then again, *Zombie Haiku* could just be a waste of everybody's time.

## Zombie Haiku

## Corpus Latesow

★★★★★

This is a forty minute presentation of the frame of a play that is incoherent and lacks all purpose. The complete dialogue would fit into my 400 word limit for this article several times over, but no profundity lay within the brevity. Exchanges were even more mundane than real life, which is a feat when you are depicting a zombie apocalypse.

Most of the duration is padded out with highly stylised, heavily choreographed ensemble physical theatre, accompanied by what I can only describe as the director Chloe Mashiter's theme tune.

For what it's worth, the ensemble was slick, but ‘neat’ theatre just for the sake of

it strikes me as rather pointless. One man's journey to work was presented, it seemed, to show that the director could give the impression of a crowded tube train on stage; clever, yes, but with this purpose only, why do it?

The cast are mainly novices, but the fact that little more was demanded of them than prolonged vacant stares and moving in time to the director's signature soundtrack meant that any acting frailties that may have existed went unexposed.

A noticeably strong performance came from Michael Campbell, while Lizzie Schenk and Charlie Bindels were given just enough of a chance to show that they would be deserving of more substantial opportunities in the future.

I could try and defend this play as an innocent piece of zombie-riffic fun, but I would be wasting my breath. It didn't seem to be making any attempt to get the audience laughing – at least, I hope it wasn't.

I suppose a one star play deserves a one star summarising line: *Zombie Haiku* presents the bare bones of a play that is not – and never should be – fleshed out.

Richard Stockwell

## Why be a producer?

There's a lot of people management involved, and I suppose the biggest privilege of being a producer is that you are perhaps one of the few people on the production who gets to liaise with everyone. Although a lot of the time quashing the cast-tech rivalry would make the most ardent of UN negotiators shudder, I revel in it.



Claudia Blunt  
Producer

# All for Pugh

**Heather Williams** wants to wear the unwearable: she explores Gareth Pugh and the allure of the architectural

**W**hen I first watched a Gareth Pugh show I realised it was okay to want to be a building. I also immediately understood that I was born in the wrong century, began reading my father's New Scientist, and avidly dreamt of inventing a working time machine that would take me to a future era where everybody dressed in latex, masks, and harlequin squares arranged in bizarre (and painful to wear) configurations. I was sixteen, deeply impractical, and had never seen anything quite like his designs.

Pugh's work has variously been described as monochromatic, angu-  
**'There's a reason why much of Pugh's work is labelled unwearable'**

lar, geometric, and apocalyptic. The models wearing his clothes look awkward – oppressed by the architectural designs that they carry, not wear. His early shows are the clearest example of this, with the designs swamping and extending the frail bodies underneath them. There's a reason why much of Pugh's work is labeled 'unwearable.' In Pugh's Spring/Summer 2007 collection the faces of the models are obscured by impenetrable black masks, and the clothes they wear look as though they have been built around them, with cuboid shoulders and angular shapes hiding the natural curves of their bodies. They look as though they are carrying fragments of the city on their shoulders.

Pugh's early designs show a human body fundamentally at unease with its urban environment, so why do they appeal to us? This is because his work is only apocalyptic if the apocalypse is interpreted with total optimism, as an

unspecified future event of radical change where the relationship between the human body and its environment has been transformed – where an organic connection between city and self has been achieved. The fabrics and textures represent both transience and permanence, evoking the solidity of the skyscrapers that surround us and the delicacy of the objects that appear and disappear in the urban debris. Let's not forget that underlying sense of humour, however – notably, Pugh recently created a series of headpieces by inflating condoms and imitating the shapes that appeared. He told the Independent that the inspiration came from 'the idea of creating something permanent from something that would normally be here today and gone tomorrow.' His work gives all aspects of the city validity, and gestures towards a future where we truly inhabit the spaces we live in.

Yet Pugh's work also effects a reconciliation of old and new. In 2011, Pugh made his Italian debut in Florence with Pitti Immagine, projecting a film into the ceiling of a 14th century church. His collection is inspired by Florentine art and religious iconography but firmly locates these within modernity. His angels sport plastic, rectangular wings, and a robotic model is duplicated over and over again, associating Medici gold with the factory production line. Through his fashion films, as well as in his main lines, Pugh shows us a sci-fi future where technology can be beautiful and the city spiritual, and where the human body and architecture can each mirror the other. One day, perhaps, the teenage Pugh-bot in me will find that future home.



## I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND THIS ALPHABET TOWN

### TRUE DAT

Deemed by Pevsner as 'the best of the new', **Churchill College** occupies one of the largest spaces of the whole university! It houses tonnes of modern artwork, from Hepworth's *Four Square Walk-Through* to Warhol's prints of

Marilyn Monroe.

**Top Tip:** The silver sculpture at the front that resembles a dog? Don't make the mistake of saying it looks like a dog – it's abstract.

## Hot stuff!

International May Week inspiration in the making at the monochrome masked ball – from an **American in Paris** to you

City living on the mean streets of Cambridge can be tough – but not when you've got this neat stuff



'The Classic', **£74**, The Cambridge Satchel Company

'Y5L' College Sweater, **£32.90**, 5 Preview

La Antena – 'A city without a voice', **£10.79**, amazon.co.uk





**PHILIPPA WEARS** (L-R Clockwise)  
**1** All Clothes and Accessories *Charlie May* **2** Coat *Cos*  
Trousers *Charlie May* Hairband *Topshop* **3** All Clothes *Charlie May*  
Hairband *Topshop* **4** All Clothes *Charlie May* Shoes *Office*  
Hairband *Topshop* Necklace *Cos* **5** All Clothes *Charlie May*  
**PHOTOGRAPHS** Louise Benson **STYLING** Naomi Pallas  
& Claire Healy **MODEL** Philippa Bywater



**Taste**  
CLAIRE HEALY &  
NAOMI PALLAS

Churchill College woke up this weekend to grey skies, strong winds and two fashion editors wailing ‘Rain rain go away, please don’t destroy the Charlie May!’ – the two fashion editors being some idiots without umbrellas, and Charlie May being the name of the young designer whose clothes we shot this week. Our theme this week is Cities, but rather than predictably hit you with some over-excited anticipation for the upcoming Fashion Month (New York! London! Paris! Milan! ~~Cambridge!~~) we thought we’d abandon big city dreamin’ for the hidden pleasures to be found more locally.

Forget riverside punts and grass that you can’t step on – it’s the modern colleges outside of town that have the real feel of a city-scape. Churchill’s buildings, sculptures and general greyness provide the perfect setting for the asymmetric lines and contrast with the billowing fabrics of the clothes. Modelling this week was the lovely Philippa, who somehow managed to look comfortable in stiff ponyskin trousers that left little room to breathe – professionalism at its finest. Fashion boffins love to talk about the different styles of each style capital – Paris is chic, New York is classic and London is, well, just a bit odd. In less glamorous climes, however, we think the neutral tones and simple lines

of this young design talent suit a grey Cambridge day just fine.



‘City Scene’ Motel Dress, **£29**, [asos.co.uk](http://asos.co.uk)



Finger Puppets – Milan Fashion Designers (Donatella, Giorgio, Miuccia, Viktor + Rolf, Anna), **£65**, [Rubbish Magazine Website](http://RubbishMagazineWebsite.com)



‘Hollywood Tighs’ Henry Holland, On Sale at **£8.70**, [tight-splease.co.uk](http://tight-splease.co.uk)



Andy Warhol ‘Giant Size’ – Hardback, **£20.04**, [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)

# Blues draw continues undefeated streak



Blues captain, Nick Parkes, threatens the Chelmsford goal

by Gus Kennedy  
HOCKEY CORRESPONDENT

Having dispatched league leaders West Herts' in the opening fixture of 2012, the Blues were hoping to extend a five game undefeated streak against former National League side Chelmsford. With Balding, Bennett and Charleston returning, the Blues had a strong side for what would be a close encounter.

Cambridge were quick to show their intent, employing a solid press from the outset. The tight marking of the home sides trio of midfielders gave Cambridge the first goal scoring opportunity of the match, with Sam Grimshaw's shot cleared off the line. Grimshaw continued to make a nuisance of himself up front, shuttling between the opposition's centre halves, though his enthusiasm sometimes got the better of him as he managed to obstruct his own right back.

It was Chelmsford who took an early lead, however, breaking up the right hand side and sliding a pass across the face of goal for a simple tap in against the run of play. Undeterred by this

setback, Cambridge stuck to their attacking style, which seemed sure to pay dividends. While a penalty stroke following a foul on Charlie Bennett was tipped onto the post, only moments later the scores were levelled when a fantastic counter attack gave Grimshaw his 5th of the season, before the umpire called half time.

After the break, Cambridge began

**'Despite failing to convert multiple opportunities in front of goal, the draw extended the Blues' recent streak as they build for Varsity'**

to take control of what had been a pretty even contest. The back four of Way, Styles, Cairns and Harrison were dominant, in spite of dogged Harrison having only been judged fit in the pre-match warm up. The University's press

prevented the visitors from building any sustained passages of possession, and the Blues made incisive forays towards the Chelmsford goal.

Rupert Allison led the way with a dominant display in the centre of the midfield, and the Chelmsford support crew were increasingly muted as a second goal for Cambridge seemed inevitable. Cairns shot just wide of the right hand post after a terrific forward run, before Bennett saw his one-on-one saved by the Chelmsford goalie. It seemed only a matter of time as the Light Blues won short corner after short corner, however the persistent pressure failed to translate into goals and the home side had to settle for a 1-1 draw.

Despite failing to convert multiple opportunities in front of goal, the draw extended the Blues' recent streak as they build for Varsity.

Meanwhile the Wanderers beat league whipping boys Harpenden 3-0, giving a relatively young side confidence for their Varsity preparations, while a struggling Squanderers side lost narrowly to Dereham.

## King's in the ascendancy

by Sorchia Bacon, Hatty Carman

The King's College netball team is not your average netball team, if anything they are your sub-average netball team. Donning Docs and, in the words of one obnoxious Newnham girl, 'home-made' bibs, they hardly gave the appearance of a league topping powerhouse.

At the beginning of Michaelmas 2011, players were few and hard to come by, but the revolutionary captain Sorchia Bacon scraped the barrel and turned the sub-par ingredients into a broth of netball excellence.

Prior to the first match, the average girl was still recovering from the bitter trauma of being steamrollered in Year

Nine netball games. The others had either never played or were only familiar with the more conventional rules of American basketball. In compliance with any Hollywood fairytale, they were born to be champions.

**The frequently hungover ex-captain remarked, 'I like watching people cry'**

From week to week, the violence increased as rapidly as their victories became more glorious. Screaming matches with arbitrary umpires, rouge balls, bent goal hoops, furious toss-

ups, hurled abuse and the occasional fistfight only added to their fervent enthusiasm.

Frequently hungover ex-captain Hatty 'Hellfire' Carman remarked, "I like watching people cry." The scores increased to such an extent that anything below a 17-0 win brought only bitter disappointment to the mysteriously competitive team.

No one expected a squad from such humble beginnings to emerge as an undefeated, league topping inspiration. And so, King's College Netball team successfully moved up from the fifth league to the blood bath of the fourth. Trinity Hall seconds, you better watch out!

## Kickabout TV Rights and Piracy

TIM KENNETT



Being, like many people, almost wholly dependent on Wikipedia for our degrees, my friends and I were concerned with the blackout staged last week to protest SOPA and PIPA. Thankfully, we all managed to circumvent the blackout, and return, undisturbed, to procrastinating from our work.

Wikipedia's protest was nonetheless effective, in that it got us talking about internet piracy, and how it should be regulated. The conclusion we came to was that the best way to combat piracy within the current copyright framework is to offer a high quality service – something football clubs universally fail to do.

Now, I should confess: I have no great respect for intellectual property laws. Nor am I sufficiently wealthy to have a Sky subscription. The natural, inevitable result of these two factors is that I have, in my time, tried to watch dodgy streams of live football online. Mostly in Arabic. Not once has the experience been satisfying. And the streams often, somewhat alarmingly, cut out while your watching them.

The clubs are lucky that what they sell – the rights to live games – are one-offs. No one torrents football matches. But they aren't taking full advantage of this. Sure, they sell TV rights to companies around the world. But why have that middleman? Why don't clubs sell their matches online directly to fans worldwide?

Football is notoriously bad at business. Apparently in the seventies some of the sports companies managed to convince the clubs to

not only pay for their strips, but to pay a premium for them. The clubs didn't realise that the advertising space on their shirts had value. The incompetence is staggering.

They're in a similar situation with broadcast rights at the moment though. The current situation is bad for the fans and it's bad for the clubs. For starters, streaming online would increase the revenues of those clubs – like, say, Swansea – who are not 'big' enough to have their matches shown on TV all the time, and it would allow all their fans to see all their games, even if they couldn't go to the stadium. It would also allow for a massive swelling of fanbase. This has already been a trend of football in the last twenty years, with clubs like Manchester United and Barcelona becoming global brands. These clubs have millions of fans around the world who aren't capable of attending games. They would, and do, watch games though – and could surely be convinced to buy online 'season tickets' allowing them to view every match.

The reason Facebook is valued at more than \$80 billion not because they have high revenues (only \$4.27 billion) but because they have a customer base. The theory is that it is easier to 'monetise' – rip off – customers you already have than to get new customers. Football clubs are in a similar position. They have large, loyal customer bases around the world. They need to get on it.



### INTERVIEW

## Off the field

Darren Wood has been Trinity Head Groundsman for 11 years. **Laura Kirk** went to meet him

### What are your responsibilities at Trinity?

The general upkeep of Trinity Old Fields, the gym and Cranmer Road pitches, and in particular the transition from winter to summer sports. I am in charge of all aspects of sport at Trinity, be it football, rugby and hockey in the winter to tennis and cricket in the summer, or badminton and squash all year round.

### Favourite part of the job?

First and foremost I enjoy constantly being outside and not stuck behind a desk in an office! More importantly though, I love being able to build relationships with the students. I am passionate about the success of Trinity sports and always want the teams to do well, so I will always step-in to offer support when a team is struggling or needs encouragement. The rugby boys have had a tough couple of seasons, but I'm hoping last week's massive win against Magdalene will kick-start their season and lead to more success in the future. Having been at Trinity for eleven years, I can have a bit of banter with the teams

and genuinely have a laugh with the students, although they do give as good as they get, in particular Ollie Twinam!

### Worst part of the job?

Definitely having to work seven days a week. With the exception of rugby, all college games are played at weekends, which makes it hard to balance work with family life. When I first arrived the students were not as friendly as now, but this has completely changed.

### What do you do in your spare time?

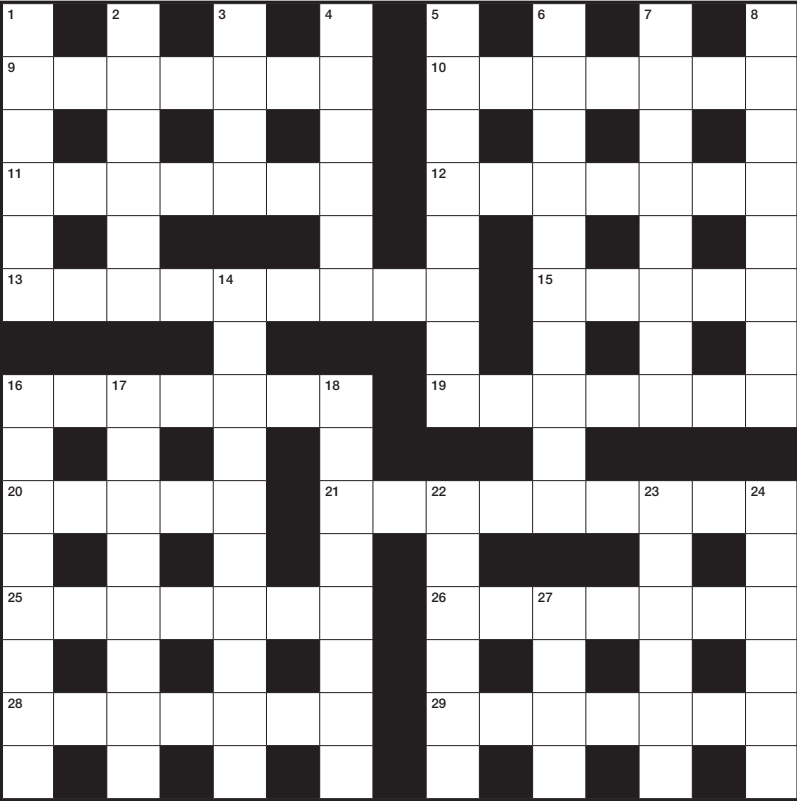
Football! I have played at Cambridge United and am currently coaching the Trinity Football team. I'm also watching my son follow in my footsteps, having been snapped up by Cambridge United already!

● Each week Varsity will be featuring 'Off the field', meeting someone whose work to support the teams of Cambridge is not always appropriately acknowledged. If you have a particular 'Unheralded Hero' who you think deserves recognition, please email [sport@varsity.co.uk](mailto:sport@varsity.co.uk) with your nomination.

Give us a smile, Darren



Varsity Crossword **NO. 536**



- ACROSS**
- 9 Outcast, Eve admitted a prompt (7)
  - 10 Man with most points becomes writer (7)
  - 11 Ship carrying something strange for 10's villain (7)
  - 12 Cambridge healthier for a bishop's crook (7)
  - 13 Sacred composer grabs one, not in a wrestling school (9)
  - 15 La Paz dealt with Spanish marketplace (5)
  - 16 Dire hairdo for one of 10's characters (7)
  - 19 English leader repulsive; you give a look of contempt (4,3)
  - 20 French newspaper doubly docked a fruit (5)
  - 21 10's hair-raising quantity reported after mid-January (5,4)
  - 25 Vermin conspiracy a bit of a predicament (7)
  - 26 Obstacles abutting 10's character (7)
  - 28 10's miser tampered with sore cog (7)
  - 29 Tornado played on a plastic mat (7)

- DOWN**
- 1 Crossword compiler backing kitty to ruin everything (4-2)
  - 2 Go off me, Saul and 10's character (6)
  - 3 Reportedly confound 10's sissy (4)
  - 4 Elite alien ready after the first of January (3,3)
  - 5 A caldera explosion for 10's beauty (3,5)
  - 6 Achieve calm, his cop murdered (10)
  - 7 Virtuous church free without hesitation (8)
  - 8 Sure is strange label for logging on (8)
  - 14 Dowdier don reformed by 10 (5,5)
  - 16 Ancient Russian leader amongst surge of people looking for precious metal (4,4)
  - 17 A Tuesday in jail is childish (8)
  - 18 Head of government with abnormal dock is more dissatisfied (8)
  - 22 Inuits arranged in position (2,4)
  - 23 Fake amongst tigers at zoo (6)
  - 24 Petitions losing Republican consumers (6)
  - 27 Initially alto really into alternative song (4)

Set by Phonic

Downing snatch last-gasp victory

In a dramatic finish, Downing take one step closer to PWC Division 1 title after 3-2 win over Homerton

By Tom Nutt  
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

A thrilling encounter between two of the serious PWC Division 1 title contenders saw Downing come out on top with a dramatic late winner. Five points separated the sides going into the match, with Homerton knowing that victory would all but end any hopes Downing had of claiming their second league trophy in three years.

Homerton saw much of the ball in the early stages, with Downing, setting up with five across the midfield, content on soaking up the early pressure and looking to break on the counter. The deadlock was broken, somewhat against the run of play, twenty minutes in after a swift passing move found James Corcut

on the edge of the Homerton box. He unleashed a trademark shot from long-range that looped over the keeper after taking a slight deflection.

This settled the Downing side, who began to grow in confidence and find their passing game. With few further clear cut opportunities created in the first half, Homerton found themselves on level terms going into the break. As is somewhat customary of the Downing side this season, a free-kick from a fairly innocuous position made its way to the box, and a failed clearance enabled the Homerton forward to head the ball home from close range.

A large Downing support was beginning to gather on the side-lines, and they saw their team move into the ascendancy as the second half progressed.

● **In the Women's PWC Division 1, Homerton and King's will be looking to build on last term's success after both recording crushing victories in the final week. With a six-point gap between second place King's and third place Darwin, it will be a two-horse race for the title. At the other end of the table, Girton will be looking for their first win of the season to lift them out of the relegation zone.**

Dan Sellman put the away side into a deserved lead after a dangerous ball across the Homerton box eluded their entire back line, leaving Sellman with a simple finish at the back post.

This was met with a strong response from Homerton , who prior to the

match had lost just once this season. As the game moved in the latter stages of the second-half, Homerton levelled the score line for the second time. Following good work on the right side by Barney Mayles, a dangerous cross found the head of Ryan Stevens at the near post, who glanced the ball past a helpless Alex Matthews in the Downing goal.

Although a draw was looking like the most likely outcome with 10 minutes to play, another speculative effort from Corcut was fumbled by the Homerton goalkeeper, only for the quick-thinking Clark Glasgow to follow up and poke the ball home. A resolute Downing side saw out the remaining minutes to clinch a vital 3-2 victory and put themselves in pole position to regain the league title.



Homerton and Downing clash in a tense encounter

The **Fab**  
Varsity Quiz

- 1. What does the UL have in common with a telephone box?
- 2. Which Ocean goes to the deepest depths?
- 3. Which Bear grows larger, Brown Grizzly or Polar?
- 4. What is a fear of beards called?
- 5. What is Paul McCartney's middle name?
- 6. The Canary Islands were named after which animal?
- 7. What was the world's first organised fashion week?
- 8. Which super fun italian brand is moving to london this fashion week to show its AW collection?
- 9. Is Cambridge a city?
- 10. What do you call a resident of Halifax?
- 11. The highest-rated broadcast in the history of British TV was the 1966 World Cup final. In which city was it held?
- 12. Which recent film was the first ever to win 3 Bears at the Berlin Film Festival?
- 13. While fourteen horses portrayed Joey in this week's War Horse, the main equine star had previously appeared in another blockbuster, what was it?
- 14. What links Sheffield, Rome & Istanbul?
- 15. Which city has been continuously habited for the longest time?
- 16. What is the world's first garden city?

**ANSWERS:** 1. Both designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott 2. The Pacific Ocean 3. Polar bear is twice the size 4. Pogonophobia 5. Paul 6. Dogs 7. New York Fashion Week 8. Moshimo cheap and chic 9. Yes, Great St. Mary's has the same status as a cathedral 10. A Halibut 11. London 12. A Separation 13. Seabiscuit 14. All built on seven hills 15. Darnacus 16. Leitchworth

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## SPORT

**22 Hockey:** Blues fail to get the points despite sustained pressure against Chelmsford



# Varsity hangover begins



Cambridge scrum-half Donald Blake makes a break

**BLUES** 22  
**DURHAM** 44

by Joseph Burgis  
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

For most of the university, University rugby after Varsity is an afterthought, a quiet footnote to an already decided season. In the early moments of this Saturday's fixture against Durham University, it appeared that even the Blues themselves shared this opinion.

It took less than a minute for Durham to chalk up the first points of the game, courtesy of a try and conversion from captain M. Ward. Within ten minutes, the scoreboard read 19-0 in the visi-

**'This was a scrap, characterised by errors, occasionally illuminated by slick handling'**

tors' favour, as the Blues could muster no more than a sluggish response to the onslaught of the Durham pack.

With missed tackles, dropped passes and a miscued restart, it was beginning to look as if the Blues would be on the wrong end of a cricket score. In the face of a strong defensive line they struggled to penetrate with the ball in hand, until no.8 Ben Martin galvanised his side with a try and Rob Stevens lifted the players further with a quality conversion from the right touchline.

From then on the game levelled out, as the Blues embarked on a period of sustained pressure. Fullback Greg Cushing was on hand to convert excellent handling into an impressive break, before a well worked line-out and subsequent

drive brought the score to 19-12.

This was a scrap, characterised by errors from both sides and occasionally illuminated by slick handling in the back line. Some misguided kicking began to creep into the Blues' game before they again started to exert some real pressure.

An encouraging break down the right wing had the Durham defence rattled and resulted in flanker Jonathan Kennedy seeing yellow.

The Blues took advantage of their extra man. Having earned a penalty and kicked to touch, another well-executed lineout provided the platform for Rob Malaney, a former Durham captain, to get over the line. Though unconverted, his efforts took the score to 19-17 and the Blues now had a solid foothold in the game.

Durham looked the better-drilled side, but the Blues were physically dominant. Scrum-half Donald Blake's ambitious but ultimately unsuccessful quick throw-in brought the first half to an end.

Having fought to get back into the game, the Blues needed a strong start to the second half. But once again, Durham punished a lack of alertness in the early exchanges as second row Josh Beaumont, influential throughout the game, drove over to make it 24-17.

A lengthy period of dominance for Durham began. The Blues failed to muster real momentum, spilling passes and looking a distinct second best at the breakdown. A penalty under the posts gave Durham a ten point lead.

The Blues looked more aggressive from the restart and were strong in the scrum, yet barely ventured out of their own half. Following a wasted penalty, as touch proved elusive, the Durham pack capitalised and forced a try. Once

converted, the deficit stretched to 17 points.

The rallying cry from Durham no. 6 was 'let's get vicious', and his side soon proceeded to do so. Slick passing and good angles opened up the Blues' defence, and at 41-17 the game was irretrievable.

Rob Stephen provided a late try for the Blues, before Durham converted another penalty to make the final score

an apt 44-22. There remained only a final flurry from the Blues, thwarted by further handling errors, and some imaginary card-waving worthy of Mancini himself.

There is no doubt that Durham put in an impressive performance, but the Blues will be disappointed with the manner in which they let this game slip away from them after pulling it back at half time.

## A very complex sports debate

by Adam Fuller

On Thursday night, the Union held an emergency debate discussing whether the new £16m sports centre being built in West Cambridge was money well spent.

It was clear from the outset that the two sides would approach the question with different degrees of seriousness. Arguing against the sport centre, Steve Squirrel was quick to adopt a satirical tone, condemning the development as "morally disgusting", and the "worst move since founding Churchill". Perhaps acknowledging the potentially indefensible nature of the proposition, he suggested that the University's stake (£10m) would be better spent on cows for King's and struggling Cindies, winning laughs. His fellow proposition speaker Josh Heath took a similar line of attack, suggesting that 50 million Freddos might be a better investment.

By contrast, Ospreys' President Anna Harrison took a more serious approach. She focused on the benefits of sport to individuals, and the importance of sporting prowess for University reputation. She also compared the £10m to the £46m spent on the new Materials Science building. Hawks' President Andrew Dinsmore was equally straight-faced, discussing the merits of

**'50 million Freddos is a better investment'**

sport with regard to employability and again emphasizing the prestige associated with top-class University sport.

In the end seriousness won out, and the audience voted that the sports centre was a good investment. All were also relieved to learn that Cindies was "alive and well", Mr Dinsmore having been there "only last night".

### Lacrosse Kingfishers unable to close-out Oxford Brookes

**UNIVERSITY** The Kingfishers twice threw away a three goal lead at Oxford Brookes to come away with only an 8-8 draw. After starting strongly and having a goal disallowed, Cambridge let Brookes bring the score back to 4-4. After the break, Cambridge extended their lead to 8-5, but could not capitalise on their numerous attacking opportunities. With minutes to go, a resurgent Brookes scored 4 goals in quick succession, and it was down to the heroics of the Cambridge goal-keeper to keep the scores even at the final whistle.

### Hockey Blues steal second place from Nottingham Trent

**UNIVERSITY** The Ladies Blues beat Nottingham Trent 3-0 in a match crucial to attaining their Blues status of coming 3rd in their league. Tied for second place prior to the match, the first half ended 0-0.

After a rousing team talk from Vicky Evans, the Blues came out strong to take a 3-0 lead, with goals from Abby Gibb and Dani Moyles. Cambridge brought a physicality to the game, with tackles from Gibb and Banfield riling a frustrated Trent side.

As always there was a fear that Trent might mount a comeback, but the Blues held their nerve until the final whistle gave them sole ownership of second place.

### Jesus maintain control of Top Division

**COLLEGE** Jesus had a strong start with a huge 36-9 win over newly promoted Emma. Murray Edwards launched their own bid for the title with a 25-7 win against St. Catharine's, who were unable to stop the clinical Murray Edwards. St. Catharine's had three teams promoted last term, but will face a tough challenge if they are to remain in the top flight.

Elsewhere in Division 1, Newnham recorded an 11-5 win over St. John's. Queens' started their own campaign with a 17-8 victory over Downing.

### Football Blues sent to Coventry

**UNIVERSITY** The Blues were unable to repeat last week's performance against title rivals Coventry, going down 3-2 against the same opposition. After a promising start, the Blues found themselves behind mid-way into the first half. The reply from Dan Forde brought Cambridge level but Coventry took the lead before half time.

Cambridge found themselves 3-1 down soon into the second half and it wasn't until the last 20 minutes that the side really got a grip on the game. Long spells of possession resulted in Danny Kerrigan being brought down in the Coventry box and Baxter converted the resulting penalty. The remaining 15 minutes, however, were not enough for the Blues to find an equalizer.