

# VARSITY



## Film

We look at what's hot and what's not on college screens  
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## Interview

Natasha Grayson falls in love with Greg Wise  
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The Cambridge student newspaper

19 October 2001

[www.varsity.cam.ac.uk](http://www.varsity.cam.ac.uk)

# GET YOUR AKHTAR-GETHER



Photo: Sophie Morphet

## Judith Whiteley

CUSU has come under attack from several corners of the student body this week, following recent concerns about administrative efficiency, the management of Creation and CUSU's political stance. However, after a difficult week, CUSU used their first council meeting of the year to try and address students' concerns and are hoping to leave behind what has been a tricky start to term.

This week's criticisms came from both graduate and undergraduate bodies in several different colleges. A spokesman from Magdalene JCR said that they were concerned that "petty poli-

ticking may get in the way of CUSU service provision". Having still not received any CUSU diaries or guides at Magdalene, he remarked that there seemed to be "specific problems with provision and delivery of CUSU publications." Oli Wort, the Vice-President of Clare JCR, also attacked CUSU on numerous points. He firstly criticised their inadequate provision of student services, saying "the level of incompetence shown time and time again (including Creation) would not be acceptable in the real world." Secondly that, "CUSU does not seem willing, as a collective body, to accept responsibility and blame for its failings." Thirdly, "CUSU postures on issues with which it

should not concern itself such as the terrorism issue. CUSU should not presume to act as a moral guide for its students on issues of ethical complexity." He also termed "unconstitutional", a letter sent by Pav Akhtar to Downing Street requesting moderation in the war in Afghanistan before the issue had been put to Council. He finally called for "an acceptance of collective responsibility and a welcome dash of humility." Trinity Hall's JCR newsletter also described CUSU as "the worst student union ever," this week.

In response to criticism of CUSU's political stance, Alison Ismail, CUSU Women's Officer, said at Council that they had received a large number of phone

calls asking for CUSU's position on the current world crisis, and given that many Cambridge students had been directly affected in many different ways, the union was right to express an opinion.

Also at Council, a question from Peterhouse led the Executive to reveal that the Quality of Life Survey results will only be available after the Christmas vacation. The CUSU organisation of Ents also came under fire. Posters advertising the Ministry of Sound event on Tuesday 6th November have only just been distributed and Corpus Christi questioned CUSU's decision to reject Toxic8's proposal for a student night. Clare JCR has resolved to negotiate a deal of its own with the club.

Graduates have expressed their

own set of concerns about the running of CUSU. Magdalene MCR's disenchantment has caused them to stop paying their subscription to CUSU and are affiliating to the Graduate Union instead. It was decided that CUSU did not provide "the best value for money." MCR President, John Philips, told *Varsity*.

The possible affiliation of the Graduate Union with CUSU has also been thrown into doubt by recent events. At Graduate Union Council on Wednesday "growing reservations were expressed about GU affiliation with CUSU," a GU insider told *Varsity*. Anger was also caused by the fact that a meeting about the relocation of the GU offices had been held

between CUSU and the University authorities over the summer, without a GU rep being present. CUSU, however, assured *Varsity* that every effort had been made to get in touch with a member of the GU, but it had not been possible at the time. Rachel Tripp, CUSU Access Officer, told *Varsity* that it was a question of "crossed wires" and following the Council meeting, the GU was now "happy."

In response to the week's problems, Pav Akhtar, CUSU president said, "If people feel disenfranchised, CUSU should respond." However, in his opinion, "CUSU isn't out of touch," and Pav urged students to "invite CUSU to JCR open meetings," if they have any concerns.



# Bill's bonanza bursaries

Jenny Hogan

Microsoft has become a founder member of the Cambridge Entrepreneurship Centre (CEC), it was announced last week. While Microsoft's sponsorship of the new Computer Laboratory buildings on Madingley Road was worth over £10 million, according to Peter Hiscock, Director of CEC, the company's latest contribution to the University is a "smallish number of thousands."

The CEC was established as a University department last year. It offers free training and advice about starting new businesses to students and staff across the University. "Our aim is to increase the culture of entrepreneurship within the University" said Hiscock.

Hiscock was quick to reassure *Varsity* that Microsoft does not control the teaching agenda of the CEC. "They don't have influence on what we teach, but we're happy to have their comments. They are sensible businessmen and they know their industry. They have

input, but not authority." Microsoft is one of eight companies offering significant support to the centre, which is still seeking further financial sponsorship. Commercial and industrial investment is necessary to supplement government funding of higher education, enabling the University to maintain its world-class standards.

The University has in fact further benefited from its relationship with Microsoft and the company founder, Bill Gates. \$210 million was last year given to the University by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to establish a scholarship trust for "students of exceptional academic achievement and scholarly promise for whom further study at Cambridge would be particularly appropriate... Gates Cambridge Scholars will be expected to be leaders in addressing global problems relating to learning, technology, health and social equity."

The first Gates Cambridge Scholars arrived this October. *Varsity* spoke to Susanna Throop, who is starting a PhD in Medieval History at Trinity Hall and

is one of 151 students chosen from 8,000 applicants worldwide. "I've been trying to get to England for post-graduate study for a few years. It was difficult because I needed full funding – I was

really excited to hear about the scholarship program." All fees will be paid and in addition she will receive £7,500 stipend per year plus £1,500 for educational expenses.



Photo: Kieran Drake

# Kinky kamera

Peter Head

A man has resigned following the discovery of a web cam in the ladies' toilets of a University department. The tiny video camera was found over two weeks ago in the Department of Experimental Psychology. It was linked directly to the computer of one of the department's technical staff.

The toilets in which the camera was found are located in a laboratory complex that can only be accessed by swipe-card. Robert Fishwick, Secretary of the Department of Experimental Psychology, stressed the importance of this point in relation to student welfare. He said that the number of women able to enter and use the facilities was limited to about 45-50. All the students, teaching staff and other department personnel

who may have been affected were informed following the camera's discovery. The department then made arrangements with the University Counselling Service for those in need of support. Mr Fishwick stated emphatically that his department was not hiding anything: "Our efforts have been directed into reassuring all students, all staff. We feel we have nothing to cover up."

The University has referred the incident to the police, but it is uncertain at this point whether or not an investigation will take place. There is no evidence that the images from the camera were recorded or broadcast on the internet, making a prosecution seem unlikely. A statement by Cambridge Police said: "on the basis of what we have been told so far and the circumstances surrounding the incident, there doesn't appear to be any evidence of criminal activity."

CUSU was not notified of the case before it was leaked to the national press a week ago. Helen Evans, CUSU's Welfare Officer, said the University's failure to inform them earlier had been an "unfortunate oversight." She went on to say that CUSU had been a victim of a gap in the system, as neither the Experimental Psychology department nor the University had been obliged to contact them. University Councillor Matt Hood expressed his concerns at how the incident was handled, and at how it could have occurred in the first place. It was, he said, "a very worrying development in terms of how the University exercises control over its technical personnel, and we can only hope that they investigate such matters more diligently and promptly in the future."

# PavNUS

James Birchall

CUSU president, Pav Akhtar, has attacked the National Union of Students for "irresponsible" and "alarmist" statements made about Islamic extremist groups, including the Al-Muhajiroun.

The outburst comes in the light of an NUS drive to fax every university in the country warning members to watch out for fundamentalist and extremist activity, with explicit reference to Islamic groups.

Mr Akhtar spoke angrily of the NUS's insistence on using the word "Islamic", and said that singling out these groups has resulted in "a whipping-up of 'Islamophobia'." He also suggested that the NUS might now wish to send another fax "supporting the overwhelming majority of Muslims, who are suffering as a consequence of the horrific events in the US and the NUS's alarmist faxing fetish."

Mr Akhtar also criticised the NUS for "inaction" on addressing the problem of hostility throughout the UK towards Asian undergraduates, and branded "tepid" the NUS's call for its institutions to be a "model for how different races and faiths can work together". He adds, "They [the NUS] do not offer any practical advice or support on how to achieve this."

The NUS's stance is in contrast to their Welsh counterparts who last week set about issuing guidance on how to deal with 'Islamophobia'. This comes amid growing concern over verbal attacks on the Asian student community.

The *Muslim News* has documented on their web site reports of hundreds of attacks on British Muslims since the events of September 11th, and also claims that many more are reluctant to come forward due to the 'climate of fear' prevailing in the Muslim community. There have been several reports of attacks on Cambridge students to the CUSU anti-racism officer.

In a final comment, Pav Akhtar blamed careless use of language for "perpetuating the notion that all Muslims are terrorists" and was fearful that this was having the effect of forcing Muslims to "shy away from their identity."

## News in brief

### Burglaries

There have been a spate of thefts from student rooms this term. This week has seen four burglaries of items, including laptops, cameras and cash. Last week, there were three laptops stolen from two colleges, and also reports of cash being taken. A spokesperson for the Cambridge Police feels that the introduction of the "reducing burglary packs", given to every fresher at the start of term has "completely missed the point," as valuable student belongings "are walking out of the rooms." They are keen to reiterate the dangers to all students who are not taking proper care of their possessions by not ensuring that they are secure. They added "if you leave your room unlocked you run the risk of being burgled."

### Cam mayoral proposition

Cambridge is bidding to become the first town of the new millennium to be awarded a Lord Mayor. The Queen has decided to mark her Golden Jubilee by awarding a Lord Mayoralty to a British city. A major factor in the choice will be whether the city has a character and dignity of its own. The proposal was submitted yesterday to the Lord Chancellor's Department in London. It has been backed by several of Cambridge's leading figures, including the Mayor, Chris Lakin and the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Sir Alec Broers. The Mayor has commented on the "hard work and thought" that has gone into the application, which emphasises Cambridge's unique heritage, referring to the 800th anniversary of the King John Charter, and the 50th anniversary of its city status. The Mayor added, "to receive this award would be a great honour for the city."

### Shackleton

In a significant boost for the University, the Scott Polar Research Institute has obtained historic documents from two major Antarctic expeditions. The diary of Dr Alexander Macklin describes Sir Ernest Shackleton's failed expedition to the South Pole in 1914. With their ship *The Endurance* crushed by pack-ice, the team was left drifting on the ice-floes for five months. Macklin, the ship's surgeon, recorded in detail the daily struggle to stay alive in the appalling conditions. His diary, stained with the blubber of seals and penguins, has never been copied and as such represents a unique account of the heroic story.

The Institute (which is the world's largest polar research centre) has also acquired a sizeable archive of papers from Shackleton's final expedition in 1922, on which the explorer died. The National Heritage Fund and the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust contributed to the purchase of the documents, which sold at auction in September.

Robert Headland, archivist and curator at the SPRI, described the papers as "a major acquisition." He added, "There's a very strong Shackleton blizzard blowing."

## Girton girls in their glad RAGs on the pyjama pub crawl



Photo: Sophie Morphet

CAREER QUIZ SPE

# Discover what you want from your **first job**

1. Do you want to have an impact?  
☒ a) I want to see results from my work, and make a mark in whatever I do  
b) I would like my work to be right, but achieving anything is hard  
c) As long as I have a job in London, I don't mind what I do

2. What do you want to do on a day-to-day basis?  
☒ a) I want to resolve key issues for the world's most results-orientated businesses  
b) I want to work on lots of difficult things  
c) I want to use the complex colour photocopiers

3. Do you want to be recognised, rewarded and trained?  
☒ a) If I perform well I want to progress rapidly, with career flexibility and extensive training and support  
b) I would like a fixed career with tenure based promotions  
c) I don't like the concept of feedback; and I think it's down to me to train myself

4. Do you care about the kind of people you work with?  
☒ a) Definitely. I want to work with smart, down to earth and friendly colleagues  
b) No. I prefer to get my head down and not be disturbed  
c) I'm indifferent. People are incidental to my career experiences

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# Future faculty

Rebecca Hoyle

The Sidgwick Site is heading for a major re-development program. This will be initiated in summer 2002 with a new building for the English Faculty and Criminology Department.

The Victorian villas on West Road, which currently house both the English Faculty and Criminology Department, have been described by the English Faculty web site as "grossly inadequate." It adds that "even thirty years ago it was acknowledged that such a converted domestic dwelling could provide space for only a fraction of the Faculty and Department's activities." However, it is only now that plans for them to be demolished and replaced have come into fruition.

The new English Faculty will be built round a courtyard with a terracotta design that is hoped will fit in with the style of the site as a whole. The new Faculty will provide computing and social areas for students and staff, in addi-

tion to offices for non-college based supervisors and other staff, a new faculty library and a separate area to accommodate the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic. There will

also be a drama studio for workshops and some performances.

Funding for the project, whose costs have been projected as £15 – 16 million, has been raised from a number of sources, including £4 million from the University, £3 million from an anonymous donor, and £1 million each from Trinity College and various charitable trusts. The Faculty has so far managed to raise nearly £12 million and, according to Claire Daunton, Administrative Officer of the Faculty of English, "the Faculty has redoubled its fund-raising efforts and hopes to have raised the remainder of the funding for the construction of the building by the end of the calendar year 2001."

The location of the Faculty during the two year construction project has not yet been finalised, but Daunton commented that they were "very close to a solution" and added that "the Faculty hopes to make an announcement about this in the near future."



Inadequate faculty: the current English buildings

Photo: Kieran Drake

# Medicourse

Katy Long

The Department of Clinical Medicine launched a radical new graduate-entry medical course last week. The course has been designed to help diversify the academic backgrounds of medical students, and will also aid in the government's drive to fill the serious shortfall of doctors nationwide, according to Paul Siklos, the Course Director and Assistant Clinical Dean of Medicine.

The new course allows graduate students with a 2:1 honours degree in any subject to read medicine in an innovative four year course, which focuses on links with hospital services at West Suffolk Hospital and local GP practices. Students will spend two days of each week in placement with a local GP, and Dr Siklos asserted that the graduate course revolves around a "much closer relationship between primary and secondary care in the health service." This represents a signal break with the traditional undergraduate course which has been criticised by some medical professionals as lacking patient contact in the pre-clinical phase.

When asked by Varsity if the new graduate course signalled a possible move in the future to involve more patient interaction in the undergraduate tripos, Dr Siklos responded, "The straight answer is there are no immediate plans," but added that "the lessons learnt" from the course would be used in considering future changes to

course content. Pamela Bowman, a first year undergraduate medic at King's, agreed that she "would like to see a bit more patient contact as the first years are very science based, and medicine is also about interaction with people...although obviously you need to learn the science too."

Of the twenty students beginning the course this year, five are humanities graduates. However, this statistic masks the fact that applicants to the course must still meet the pre-medical requirements of an A (or A/S)-level pass in Chemistry, and two from either Physics, Maths or Biology. While Dr Siklos admitted that this year's entry had been largely composed of science graduates, he pointed to schemes such as the University of West Anglia's Access to Medicine Course as entry qualifications, emphasising that these one year courses require "no prior scientific background."

The addition of twenty medical students per year at Cambridge is unlikely to make inroads into the national shortage of doctors, Dr Siklos commented to Varsity, although the government hopes to provide 1,000 extra medical school placements this year. The Cambridge course, similar to schemes already in operation at Oxford and St. George's, London, is likely to prove very popular. A key factor is that, unlike with most graduate and undergraduate degrees, students' tuition fees for the last three years of the course will be funded by the Department of Health.

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# Sowing dragons' teeth

Alex Lee

Once upon a time, there was a farmer and his wife who lived on a very pretty farm not so very long ago. The soil was deep and fertile, the grass was green and sweet and the animals compliant and healthy. The farmer and his wife had worked hard on the land and they prospered, enjoying all sorts of lovely things.

After a long period of comfort, however, they began to become complacent about their farm. So well did things go for them that they started to believe that nothing could go wrong. It was not long before they forgot to spray the insecticide and left the rodent traps and scarecrows to decay, so caught up were they in their happiness. On a small and distant field, however, a mole appeared with its little children. The farmer noticed it, and saw that little mounds of earth were springing up all over the far away field. But he didn't mind too much, since he was sure that he would be alright: the farm was really very big, and really very prosperous, you know.

One day, however, the farmer and his wife woke up to find that the moles had burrowed frantically during the night, and destroyed all of their crops. All the corn and the barley, the beans and the hops were all gone. The grass was faded and the animals would soon have nothing to eat. Worst of all, a field of tall and ripe wheat of which the farmer was especially proud, right next to the farmhouse, had been laid to waste by the little moles.

"Oh no!" cried the farmer's wife. "Whatever shall we do? Winter is coming, and what will our children have to eat? All our work has been for nothing: now they'll go hungry, grow sick and die in the cold!" She began to cry.

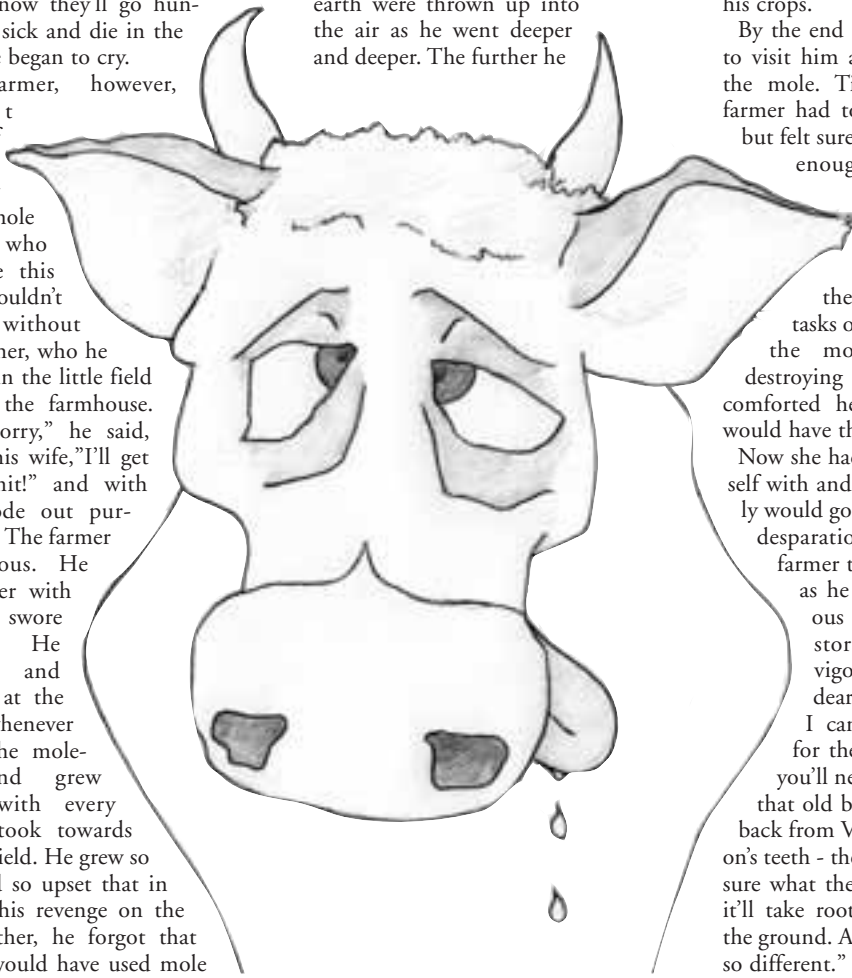
The farmer, however, thought himself shrewd. He knew that the mole children who had done this damage couldn't survive without their mother, who he had seen in the little field far from the farmhouse. "Don't worry," he said, hugging his wife, "I'll get that varmit!" and with that, strode out purposefully. The farmer was furious. He boiled over with rage and swore revenge. He shouted and blustered at the ground whenever he saw the mole-hills, and grew angrier with every step he took towards the little field. He grew so angry and so upset that in swearing his revenge on the mole mother, he forgot that once he would have used mole

traps and spared the field. But putting the disregarded past aside, the farmer took to his digging machine and began to tear at the field. Huge chunks of earth were thrown up into the air as he went deeper and deeper. The further he

went, the more determined he was, but still he couldn't find the mole, who was clever at hiding, and all the while the little mole children were eating away at his crops.

By the end of the day, his wife came to visit him and see if he had caught the mole. Tired and frustrated, the farmer had to confess that he hadn't, but felt sure that he'd scared the mole enough to make the traps unnecessary. But the farmer's wife started crying again. On her way she had seen that the farmer had neglected his tasks on the rest of the farm and the moles had run havoc, destroying all that was left. But she comforted herself that at least they would have the mother mole dead.

Now she had nothing to console herself with and the farmer and his family would go hungry for the winter. In desperation at what to say, the farmer turned to his English wife as he stood on the mountainous and ruined land he had stormed into with such vigour and said "Never mind, dear. With your help, I know I can make something work for the winter. I tell you what, you'll never guess what I found in that old basket of stuff we brought back from Vietnam: a packet of dragons' teeth - they're sure to grow. I'm not sure what they'll give us, but I'm sure it'll take root now that I've prepared the ground. After all, this new field isn't so different."



## Choice

The situation in Afghanistan is difficult and complex. Students today seem less and less keen to engage in political debate and whether an incident with as many shades of grey as this one should be tackled by students is questionable. But universities do provide a challenging alternative voice, and thus it's vital that they get involved.

Thankfully, Cambridge has begun to respond to the situation. The University is rich not only in its facilities, but in the diversity, intelligence, and articulacy of its community. We ourselves are a real resource which must be used if we are to be an institution which asks questions that matter. This does not necessarily mean chaining yourself to the UL, staging naked sit-ins at caff, or going on strike from lectures... unless you want to. But it is time we put our "intelligence" to the test, and tried to make sense of what is going on outside the city. We need to look closely at our ethical choices and the implications of how we use our money and our vote. We need to examine our own ethnic or racial prejudices. We need to ask how we want our nation and our world to be, and what rôle we, as students, have to play in society.

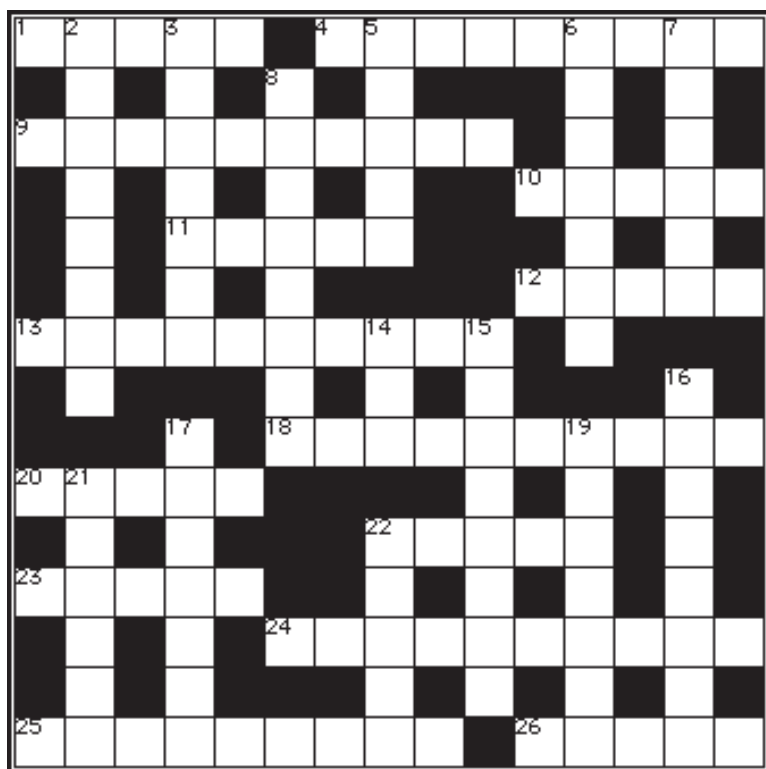
Debate cranked into action last week at college level, as CUSU proposed the twin motions of condemning all acts of terrorism and the bombing of Afghanistan. This itself prompted the questioning of what we expect of our student union. Is it our place to criticise international politics? Should we limit ourselves to access and student loans? At what point does the world outside, and the question of human rights far away, begin to overlap with our little life here, Cambridge racism, and abusive letters to Pav Akhtar?

In addition, events are being organised spontaneously by teaching staff: discussion forums were held on Friday, Tuesday, and Wednesday this week. Speakers came from a variety of national and academic backgrounds, including lecturers from the Faculties of History, Oriental Studies and English, experts in International Law, Intelligence Systems, Islam in politics, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Israel, as well as representatives from Campeace. This provides an excellent chance to pool the human resources of the University, and to air opinions in open and informed debate. An email list, 'cjustice', has been formed to publicise future events, and non-university members are welcome.

For those more interested in direct action, there are events such as the Campeace rally and march in London last week. Amnesty International is also running a letter-writing campaign to local MPs and Heads of State. Or if you just want to find out about some of the different arguments in circulation, there are infinite internet discussion sites such as "Le Mode-Diplomatique."

At the moment, wherever discussions take place, passionate feelings break out on all sides. This, more than anything, points to how desperately we need to talk about what is going on. We are in an unparalleled position to exchange information, ideas, emotions, and opinions (though hopefully not blows) on the state of our world. In doing so, we can make the most of our education and our preparation for adulthood. So look into it, in any of the many ways available to you, and make some decisions about where you stand. Besides, whoever the enemy is, they are probably counting on our apathy.

Francesca Raphaely



The Varsity crossword is sponsored by Joti and Debbie, graduate advisors at NatWest, who welcome freshers to Cambridge and wish everyone all the best for the forthcoming year. To win a £10 music/book voucher return either completed puzzle with your details to the Varsity offices by 12 noon Wednesday.

Compiled by Sarah



### Answers to last week's crossword:

**Cryptic Crossword Across:** 1. Leather 4. Bewail 9. Peregrine 11. Agent 12. Tangerine 13. Apex 14. Whom 18. Abusive 20. Leeward 21. Asks 23. Coop 24. Nutrition 25. Agate 26. Recreates 27. Preyed 28. Cyclone **Down:** 2. Erroneous 3. Elixir 5. Wigwag 6. Latex 7. Upstream 8. Renewal 10. Gremlins 15. Overtime 16. Badminton 17. Admonish 19. Ensnare 21. Apathy 22. Sticky 23. Champ

**Quick Crossword Across:** 1. Chervil 4. Jargon 8. Impounded 10. Udder 11. Fictional 12. Sloe 13. Loch 16. Etching 18. Cahoots 20. Byre 22. Dour 23. Requested 24. Corgi 25. Identical 26. Tavern 27. Skillet **Down:** 2. Hopscotch 3. Iodine 5. Radish 6. Norse 7. Idyllic 9. Ubiquity 14. Coherent 15. Moustache 17. Gherkin 19. Swaddle 20. Brogue 21. Squeak 22. Ducat

Last week's winner was Jack Nichols – your voucher is at the NatWest in Benet Street.

### Cryptic Crossword

#### Across

1. Material in many long-johns (5)
4. Vegetable of globe or Jerusalem (9)
9. Mover and shaker? (10)
10. Person fashionable in appeal for money (5)
11. Fool one princess, written before part of Bible (5)
12. Plunder used for shooting (5)
13. Die cynical, debauched from immodesty (10)
18. Drunk, rue consent to meetings (10)
20. Shower, and from Sunday show piety (5)
22. Relative, after degree, becomes artisan (5)
23. Rat in church box (5)
24. Man from mountains, not low sea, with queen (10)
25. Slay ouzel injured fanatically (9)
26. Laughing dog has longed to be in joyful expression (5)

#### Down

2. Relaying savage animal, aged between 12 and 24 months (8)
3. Sketch not it pad (7)
5. Interrogate on Sunday, traditionally (5)
6. The rice cooked by infidel (7)
7. It's at the heart of Joker Nelson, in a nutshell (6)
8. Eagle-like quail stewed in front of fashionable oriental (8)
14. Car crashed into French triumphal monument (3)
15. Yes! Flour mixed by you (8)
16. Ha! Arcane work from earliest geological period (8)
17. Incomplete at April commotion (7)
19. A number, then a hundred in any occupancy (7)
21. Angry after page is illegally copied (6)
22. Tycoon is smog, ultimately (5)

### Quick Crossword

#### Across

1. Fairylike (5)
4. Impotence (9)
9. Prepare before (10)
10. Frighten off, discourage (5)
11. Additional (5)
12. \_\_\_\_\_'s razor (5)
13. Dessicated (10)
18. Native, an indigenous people (10)
20. Type of Negro sorcery esp. West Indies (5)
22. Hoarse, sullen (5)
23. Ten million (Indian) (5)
24. German pickled cabbage (10)
25. Send down from university, make rural (9)
26. Coiled, injury (5)

#### Down

2. Thief (8)
3. Senselessly (7)
5. Food from heaven, mild laxative (5)
6. Heighten, intensify (7)
7. Transparent covering of eye (6)
8. Neurosis (8)
14. Number (3)
15. Alcoholic drink (8)
16. Saying little (8)
17. Lover of one's country (7)
19. Section of Dante's Divine Comedy (7)
21. Government department, desk with drawers (6)
22. Haggard (5)



# Confidence in CUSU crashes

Tracey Jensen

Following *Varsity's* report last week of the £31,000 loss at the *Creation* event last term, there has been considerable criticism of the way CUSU is organised and run. Some colleges have expressed resentment at the late release of this information, and they believe that this only happened at all because it had been leaked to *Varsity*. On a recent visit to Pembroke, CUSU officers were asked why the Services Officer post is an elected sabbatical position, rather than a professional position paid for by CUSU. The implication was that the inexperience of Martin Lucas-Smith (last year's CUSU Services Officer) led to *Creation's* losses, and such shortfalls could have been avoided had the post been held by an individual with more commercial knowledge. Alex Whittaker (External Officer at Pembroke) stated that "the Services Officer is not and should not be a political position."

CUSU's response was that the Services Officer is responsible for the financial management of the Student Union, and therefore needs to remain answerable to the students. "We believe that it is very important that CUSU's Services provision remains democratically accountable" said Mike Bourke, CUSU Academic Affairs Officer, "and that the Services Officer remains an elected position." He also pointed out that *Creation* took place on a far larger scale than pre-



Asking questions; Clare College

Photos: Michael Phillips

vious union ents, and any mistakes should be seen as learning opportunities, rather than failings. Bourke went on to say, "As an organisation, CUSU is absorbing this experience and will be putting it into practice for next year's event."

One of the concerns was that whilst losses such as these are "learning opportunities", they also damage the CUSU campaign to get a central union building. £31,000 is an awful lot to lose at an event conceived of as a profit-making

exercise, but the deficit was absorbed by a surplus in other areas, and amounted to £10,000 overall. As Bourke said, "£10,000 is not going to make or break a union building for anyone. It is obviously extremely unfortunate and requires a lot of work to ensure it doesn't happen again, but it is just not true to say that it has any bearing on our ability to lease a building when one becomes available." This in itself is questionable; the inability of CUSU to move fast enough to secure the lease on the old Waterstone's

building is proof of the problems faced when competing with commercial interests.

Moreover, episodes such as this result in colleges losing faith in CUSU's ability to provide an adequate service in other areas. One such college is Clare, whose Vice-President and External Officer, Oli Wort, said this week that, "CUSU has an important role to play but is not playing it properly, and is choosing to play a different role instead." Referring to the motions in Council last week regarding terrorism and the war in Afghanistan, Wort suggested that "CUSU should stay within its own parameters." Perhaps what one student termed "political masturbation" is best left to philosophy students.

Clare's position is supported by Magdalene, who are also unhappy with the quality of service provided. "We call for a radical rethink in the way CUSU is structured and functions," said Tom Licence, Vice-President at Magdalene. "Fundamental questions need to be asked about the priorities of this union and those who run it."

Then again, it must be remembered that there is far more to CUSU than Council. CUSU has a responsibility to discuss any motion that its students put forward – and the anti-terrorist motion was clearly one that was felt to be relevant. There is no CUSU without Council, in the same way that there is no government without parliament, but CUSU is not just about facilities. It also

delivers academic support, welfare provision, access work, as well as campaigns for the Women's Union, Anti-Racism and those against top-up fees.

Financial losses such as those at *Creation* are very serious indeed, and this week's Council motions have left some feeling that CUSU is attempting to act as an unwelcome and presumptive moral guide. But we should not let CUSU's good work be overshadowed. Attempts have been made this year to make students feel more informed about what CUSU does, not an easy task in a collegiate university. CUSU sabbatical officers visited colleges in Freshers' week to explain CUSU's role and services, and JCR/MCR representatives frequently meet with CUSU for general support and coordination of their work.

Some of the services CUSU provides go unacknowledged. "Very often students use CUSU's services without realising it," said Bourke. "They go to the student night's at Life and Cindy's, use CUSU's mail service and belong to societies that use CUSU's photocopiers and CUSU administered minibuses to function effectively." The problem that has become apparent this week is not necessarily with CUSU as an entity, but with its responsibilities. At a time when a CUSU building feels, for many, a distant dream, they need to reassure students that first, it is not preoccupying itself with issues outside its mandate and second, that it can deliver the services we reasonably expect of our student union.

# End of history

Michael Phillips

The Internet has provided many benefits to society, long lost relatives can be put in touch, news has become a constantly moving entity, and teenagers have unlimited access to hardcore pornography. But it has also had a more pernicious effect. It could well help to destroy biography, and permanently change the face of history.

From Plutarch's Ancient Rome onwards, biography has been one of history's principal tools. The broad strokes have been covered through studies of the great and good, Caesar, Napoleon, Churchill. Post-Marxism, the focus has been shifted, with the lives of mill workers and match sellers highlighting the hardship faced by those on the margins of society. The past is brought closer via the insight which a single life can give into the thoughts and feelings of an epoch.

The common link here is correspondence. The public life can be brought out easily through newspaper reports, the persons work, and public testimony. But the innermost personal feelings of an individual are best brought out through the letters which

they think that no one else is ever going to read. This is where people reveal the truth.

But no one writes letters anymore. They send e-mails. And despite the fact that MI5, the CIA, KGB, and Burger King can all monitor the Internet, eventually e-mails will disappear. The death of the letter will signal and end to there being a physical artefact displaying private emotions which historians can pore over. The enlightening personal aspect of history will be gone, because of our new, quick, efficient, but ultimately ephemeral methods of communication. No longer will love letters, criminal communiqués, or revealing epistles allow a raw insight into a person's existence.

Of course there will be diaries and journals left for biographers to study, but gone will be the truth gleaned from someone exposing themselves to another. History will suffer, because what will be left is the public facade, and autobiography. Both of these things are fraught with difficulties, as neither is as free from manipulation and bias as a letter only destined for one person.

But the Internet will add a curious new dimension to history; one not entirely accurate, but interesting nevertheless. Working on the presumption that technology doesn't move so fast as to make the net obsolete there is going to emerge a website graveyard. Abandoned sites are already common, their creators either moving on, getting bored, or going bust. Thus, with every site having a different address, they will all continue to exist until the net itself dies, and will be available to view. An insight into our times will be provided by the web pages we visited, and which were the most popular. At the moment, any historian pursuing this method of research would be convinced that our culture is obsessed with 'chat' and 'barely legal teens'. And they would be right. (A curious footnote to history will be that until September 11th, sex had been the most popular search engine term every day for over 5 years running). But for the first time our entire culture, on an almost global scale, can be preserved for future access, despite the fact that the inner feelings of that same culture can never be truly accessed again.



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## VARSITY

## Time for them to deliver

This week has seen CUSU come under wide-ranging attack. It is clear that they have many big problems to deal with and serious changes in their organisation and communication with students should be implemented as soon as possible. *Varsity* does still however have faith in the current CUSU Executive. Many of the mistakes seem to have been made by the previous Executive or by the current team in its earliest days. We believe that they can and will learn the lessons. As students, we elected them as our representatives for a reason, now is the time for them to repay our faith and start to deliver. Some might say that *Varsity* has been too critical of CUSU. There are two answers to this: firstly we feel that we have a duty to hold CUSU to account and secondly we have heard very little positive news from CUSU. What are the big issues they are fighting for this year on students' behalf? At the CUSU council meeting last Wednesday there was scant encouragement that CUSU know what direction they are heading in. Now is the time to solve these issues before discontent turns into apathy.

## Beware Thieves About

On Wednesday night, we at *Varsity* received an email from the police reporting a sharp increase in the number of burglaries from student accommodation in Cambridge. I briefly read through it and then forwarded it on to the news team. Little did I know that at approximately the same time some thieves were climbing up a ladder, in through my window and stealing my laptop. I thought that my room would be safe, it was not on the ground floor and I had a very expensive lock on my laptop, which claimed to be impossible to break. There were also other people constantly in the house. The police who came promptly voiced their concern at the number of burglaries taking place. Apparently two or three student rooms a day are currently being broken into and most of the crime is drug related. Whilst I was the victim of a determined thief, many student losses happen through carelessness. A case from last Saturday was highlighted in which a Pembroke student left his door unlocked in college and when he returned two hours later his laptop was gone. Whilst burglars will always exist, we can make their job as difficult as possible, for example by hiding your laptop when you are not using it and by always locking your door and windows.

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## LETTERS

## Newnham defence

The suggestion both in Stuart Martindale's article and in your accompanying editorial that candidates taken from the pool are in some sense 'second best' is damagingly inaccurate and based on a considerable misunderstanding on the role of the pool in the Cambridge admissions process. All colleges fully support the right of every candidate to choose a college, should they wish to do so. However, ours is a highly competitive system, and one in which application rates can fluctuate considerably, both by college and by subject, from one year to the next. The inter-col-

legiate pool seeks to counteract the effect of these fluctuations by re-distributing excellent candidates whose first choice colleges believe they should not be denied a place here simply because they chose to apply to a college who in their subject had, say, 12 outstanding applicants and only ten places. The pool is used by a wide range of colleges, and anyone chosen from it has no cause whatsoever to doubt their own academic excellence. Any suggestion otherwise is an insult both to a considerable proportion of the student body and to the admissions tutors and fellows who work hard to ensure that the admissions process is as equitable as any competitive process can be.

**Dr Tessa Stone**  
Admissions Tutor,  
Newnham College



## Vox-pops criticism

We would like to point out to Simon Marshall of Pembroke that the United States and Britain are not bombing Ireland and Israel since neither Israel nor Ireland harbour or support terrorist organisations. Any comparison between these countries and the Taliban is unwarranted, unfair and betrays an astounding ignorance of world politics. Perhaps Mr Marshall should watch the news or read a good paper before providing *Varsity* with any more sound-bites.

**Simon Lightman**  
Jon Roiser

Simon Marshall of Pembroke questions why Britain isn't bombing Ireland if the current bombing is a 'war on terrorism'. Such flippant remarks show astonishing ignorance. To put things in perspective Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda organisation killed more people in an hour and a half, than either side has in 30 years of conflict in Northern Ireland.

**Dylan Murphy,**  
Magdalene College

## Union building?

Your excellent front page article highlighting CUSU incompetence claimed that there was no central student building in Cambridge. Might I draw your readers' attention to the Cambridge Union, which has the cheapest bar in Cambridge, is central, and has regular bops and ents; as well as brilliant debates and speakers, a library and full sized snooker tables. With over 40% of freshers already members this year, perhaps the Union should be considered the central student building in Cambridge...

**Michael Fry, Christ's**  
Director of Communications,  
Cambridge Union

## CUSU needs a kicking

As a member of CUSU I am frustrated that CUSU is dominated by ranting hacks and dozy sycophants. Too many CUSU people want to govern Britain. Too few want to help students. There are too many 'do-gooders' and not enough useful types. The Exec must be injected with fresh blood to halt the endless, stale flow of Labour Students!

I call upon all voters in March to oust the political wannabes and elect more officers like Cuckston, who are not afraid to confront the system.

**Name withheld**

## CUSU hits back

We were disappointed by your article last week which we feel was misleading and unbalanced, despite the fact that we had an extensive meeting with the editors before *Varsity* went to press.

To correct the inaccuracies: there was no failure to anticipate VAT – we were given bad advice. Ticket sales of over 2000 are not "disasterous". The union building campaign, and the losses made on Creation are separate issues, and to conflate them was misleading.

Most of all we object to the printing of Thomas Cuckston's opinion that we have alienated staff within the university. He has now resigned, but sat on no University committees, and had no contact with senior members of the University. He is of course entitled to his opinion, however ill informed. We will continue cultivating the professional and productive relationship we have always had with the University.

**Pav Akhtar**  
CUSU President

## Headline shocker

I have usually held the greatest admiration for student journalism in our fair city, but there has always been one element which has caused the gravest concern, and now prompts me to write. I refer of course to the consistently poor performance displayed by your Sports Headlines department.

After the conspiracy between cruel Madame Fate and the devilish cunning of Bury St. Edmund's resulted in the defeat of our hockey ladies, was "Hockey girls Bury-ed"!!!! truly the best headline that you could come up with?

Can I have your assurances that in future we will have less of the pedestrian word play, and more of the "Blue Belles Bludgeoned by Bury Bitch Blunderbuss" type action, that we all want and richly deserve.

**'Disgusted' of Homerton**

## Letter of the week

In my enfeebled condition, I pick up my pen, perhaps for the last time, to tell of the appalling hardships suffered in recent times by students at Magdalene. Some college bureaucrat has wantonly taken our bread. Many of us have now resorted to eating the cruel and dangerous slop served in the canteen and I fear that scurvy will soon be rife. Rumoured statements from college officials concerning "the need to invest more in conference facilities" have bred despair amongst starving students trembling in dilapidated, chilly rooms. I pray someone will take my place in championing our cause as I fear the end is nigh.

**D.Y. Ing**

[letters@varsity.cam.ac.uk](mailto:letters@varsity.cam.ac.uk)



The winner of the Letter of the Week wins two tickets to the Arts Picture House

## The Varsity Team

If you would like to contribute to Varsity, turn up to a section meeting (times below) at the Varsity offices (unless otherwise indicated) or email a section editor

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Business Manager	Ed Hall	<a href="mailto:business@varsity.cam.ac.uk">business@varsity.cam.ac.uk</a>	News Features Editor	Michael Phillips	<a href="mailto:newsfeatures@varsity.cam.ac.uk">newsfeatures@varsity.cam.ac.uk</a>	Fri 5pm	
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Back to mine?



Louisa's room



best pictures, cute toys, pick with everything



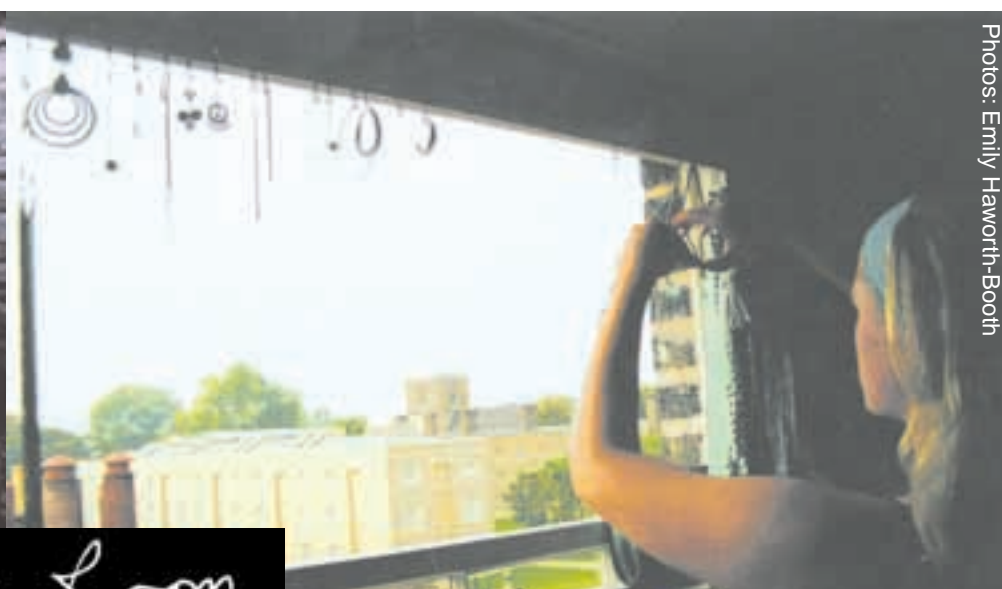
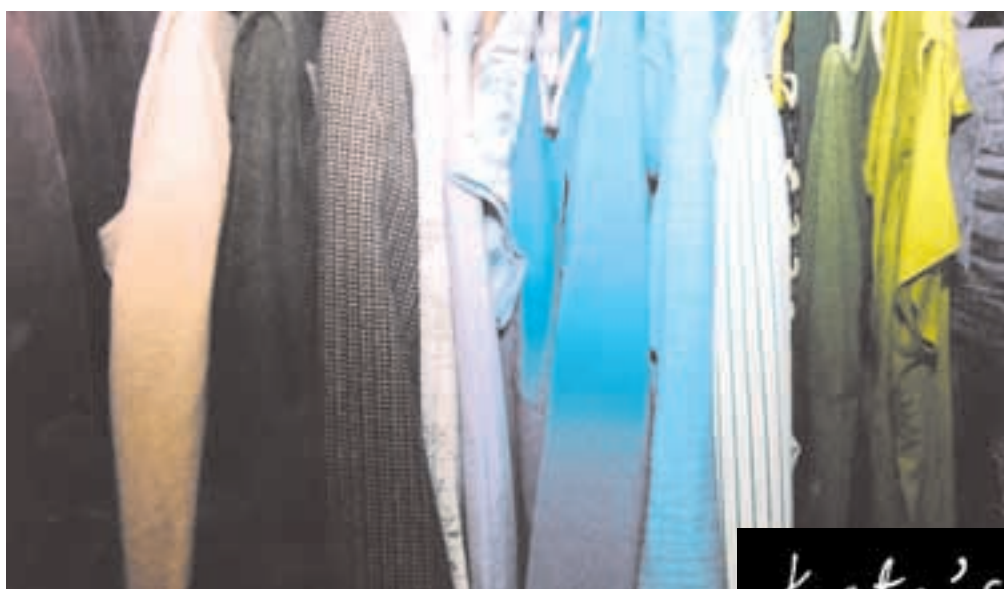
Nelga's Room



pop art, postcards, primary colours

Photos: Emily Haworth-Footh





Photos: Emily Haworth-Booth

Kate's Room



Japanese packaging, green glassware, clau-coordinated clothes

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Dan  
Birdwhistell

I've written two mass emails to my friends in the States since I've been here. I wrote one early in the first week, painting pictures of marvellous scenery and lovely people, revealing how much I loved the city. The second, I wrote after splitting three bottles of wine with a friend behind Kings. It spoke of grand chapels and people, of two good bottles of wine and one that tasted like tart, green apples, and, still, of a special little quality of Cambridge. The latter was simply expressed as, "Cabmrige?—Ill kiss er"

I'm not yet able to put my finger on it, but there is definitely this pleasant, melodic zing about Cambridge that punches you in the stomach only to jerk you back up, slap you on the back, and shout, "C'mon, mate, let's go get pissed." It is quite comforting in that I'll-tolerate-Jar-Jar-Binks-only-cuz-I-really-like-Star-Wars kind of way.

Yes, I've feared for my life on many occasions upon hearing a monstrous bus approaching from behind. I've constantly been told that I'm going the wrong way or that I need a headlight on my bicycle. I hear, "That is such a typical American thing to say," at least once a day. And I still am totally confused as to why there aren't many fish in the River Cam (and why I shouldn't buy some and put them in there).

But, I still couldn't be happier. And I'm even happier now that I've discovered RyanAir. I mean, man, oh man, I could get to Dublin and do whatever they do in Dublin for a day and come back the next day for five pounds. Slap me on the back and call me Daisy. Call me Sally, even. I don't care, because I'll be in Dublin.

Alright, alright, back on task. (I know my Ritalin is around here somewhere.) I did a fun thing the other day and I suggest everyone try it out. I took one of those open-top bus tours of Cambridge. I made sure that no one I knew would see me (Yes, Irena, it was me). But then I slowly realized that I was doing a very cool thing. I was hip, happening, and totally with-it. I sat there, patiently, knowing that any minute, a flock of adoring ladies would rush my way.

The tour spanned from the cows of West Cambridge to, well, all the rest of Cambridge—I just wanted to point out the cows, since I hadn't seen any in so long. They are loving beasts; I need them in my life. We had a very pleasant guide as well. She revealed to us the sexy points in Cambridge history while also providing us with paper towels to wipe off the rain-covered seats. I don't remember her name, but I really liked this lady—perhaps I'll cook her dinner sometime. She has white hair and glasses, so if you see her around, tell her I'm looking for her.

So I highly recommend the bus tour. In the coming days, I'm planning on heading out to go see *Les Misérables* in London, taking out a punt, and finally finding these elusive Cambridge night clubs. I can't dance worth a lick, but I'm always up for trying my hardest. I'm also heading back to Kentucky for a few days to attend my sister's wedding. And everyone's telling me to bring back loads of pictures. So if you see me out and about this week with my mondo-tourist-camera, don't laugh. Instead, simply turn to me, smile, and give me your best, "Yes, I am quite clever" look. I'd like to show everyone I'm in good company. Academic robes optional.

## Flying High

Angela Das explores Duxford War Museum

Even if you know nothing about aeroplanes, which I didn't when I went to the summer show, Duxford is an excellent way to spend a day out of Cambridge. Especially if they're hosting an air show, like they were on Sunday. Rest assured that Duxford is no ordinary museum. Its history begins at WW1 when it became one of the earliest Royal Air Force Stations and the RAF's No. 2 Flying Training School in 1920. Today it houses 180 historic military aircraft and seven acres of indoor exhibition holding an impressive array of tanks and military vehicles. The Battle of Britain exhibition in Hangar 4 demands its own attention as it currently holds a Hurricane and Spitfire that the Royal Air Force's Fighter Command used to defend Britain from the Blitz of 1940 - 1941.

Outside, there are plenty of interesting stalls to wander around during the air show. This gives your neck a break, even if it is only to get fat on fried onions and greasy burgers. The air show on at the beginning of the summer included the

B-17 Flying Fortress 'Sally B', L39 Albatross, Bristol Blenheim, Spitfire V, Tiger Moths and many more historical fighter planes. This past Sunday the highlight of the show was without a doubt the Utterly Butterly team who had particularly brave women strapped to the wings waving their arms and holding their ankles...

I highly recommend a warm sweater whenever it is that you go and a woolly scarf as it will no doubt be very windy. **How to get there:** A free bus service runs from Cambridge city centre daily throughout the year picking up passengers from Crowne Plaza and from the Railway Station. You'll know which one it is as it has been decoratively plastered in pictures of full colour Spitfires. The entrance is not free, but after producing a student card, a mere 6 of your hard-earned squids for a fun day out to see something new. Check the web site (<http://www.iwm.org.uk/duxford/index.htm>) for more information on bus times and a weather report!



Photo: Angela Das

## Radio gaga

CUR out to win in Student Radio Awards

Cambridge University has its own radio station; few people know this and fewer still have ever listened to it, despite the fact it has been broadcasting for the last twenty two years. Perhaps this is due to the fact that it is broadcast from a tiny studio hidden away in the depths of Churchill College. Few people venture into the confines of Churchill, so the audience is automatically limited because the station can only be received within the vicinity of the studio. This is due to change soon, however, because the station has just been given a grant to buy the aerial that will enable them to broadcast on medium wave to the whole of Cambridge (the frequency will be 1350 AM). This new service is being launched in November. It is possible, if you should feel so inclined, to listen to the University's only radio station over the internet. Or vicariously experience live broadcasting via the web cam in the studio. I visited the site when researching this article and found an eerily empty studio, but maybe it's not fair to pass judgement on this evidence.

The station boasts that it broadcasts 24 hours a day. This is, strictly speaking, true, but stretching the truth a little because it resorts to airing Student Broadcast Network during the times they have no presenters. These gaps in live broadcasting mean that there are still spaces for others to take on the responsibility of presenting or producing their own show. The station requires a small joining fee for the privilege of being part of their organisation, but anyone is free to do this. One result of this free-for-all policy is that there is a variety of stuff broadcast.

The station does not restrict itself to any genre in particular and as a result there are all kinds of shows broadcast; music, including chart, cheese, drum and bass and jazz; talk and interview

programmes, and quiz shows. The quiz show is perhaps worth listening to for the sake of the prizes alone; this year they managed to give away trips to Amsterdam and on Eurostar to Paris.

The station has been celebrating recently since the announcement of the nominations for The Student Radio Awards. The Awards, considered to be one of the most prestigious events in student radio, placed CUR joint third out of thirty eight student radio stations for the nominations it has received.

Richard Straffon was particularly pleased by the nominations, having been directly involved in three: Best Male Presenter, Best Show (for the breakfast show "Straffon In The Morning") and Best Speech Based Programming (Non Factual). These nominations make Straffon the most nominated individual in UK radio this year. His understandably enthusiastic comment on the nominations was "I'm absolutely ecstatic – for me this is better than getting a degree!"

Jack Soper and Ed Kinsella are also happy about their nomination for Best Specialist Music Programme, with the "Jazz Lounge" which features a selection of jazz, funk and blues. Jack explained his affection for the medium of radio, and the merits of CUR, expressing a lack of surprise at the station's success: "I think this shows the value of Cambridge Student Radio as an alternative to the bland and repetitive output that is broadcast on some radio stations." They have just to wait until the 9th November when the awards ceremony takes place to see if any of these nominations will actually mature into awards, or if, like the number of listeners, the station has decent potential which isn't quite brought to fruition.

## HOTPOT WORTH A SHOT

Jamie Douglass and Thomas Farnsworth sample the delights of a little known Chinese restaurant

It is fairly unlikely that anyone but a determined fan of Chinese food will have found The Hotpot, situated halfway down Chesterton Road, around a hundred metres before De Freville Avenue. However, this is a shame, because it really is to be recommended. We came to it on one of our periodic walks back from Chesterton, a suburb that boasts many attractive features; a factory, for instance, and a wonderful chimney; yes, Chesterton is awful. And this is why no-one will ever make it their first choice for a night out. This, in turn, has dictated that The Hotpot has remained not a close-kept secret, but rather an unknown entity.

We decided on the set menu, which promised more courses than you would normally either want or get, but looked better than trying to choose your own. We started with the Hot and Sour Soup; very hot and very sour, tasting like the chef had decided that Spice Of The Week was white pepper, and he was damned if he was going to skimp. Mmm, unsure. Moreover, it was of that thick texture so beloved of Chinese restaurants for which I believe the technical term is "gloopy." Mind you, the pieces of tofu and the shiitake mushrooms that floated around the

sides were a treat, and it would be churlish to write it off. A second starter of Aromatic Crispy Duck was, well, aromatic and, to be honest, crispy. If you have ever had this in any Chinese restaurant, then I don't need to tell you what it was like, because you will know. It is always the same. Over my years I have eaten several quarters worth of the stuff and barring the amount of Hoi Sin sauce you get, it has never once failed to be exactly the same as the last effort. For the uninitiated, they take a duck and roast it in spices, shred it, and you eat it in pancakes with hoi sin sauce and unidentified veg. It's great. It's also fun. Coz you get to make your own pancakes, which, for a quondam five-yr-old like me, is just brilliant.

But it was the main courses that made the difference. The deep-fried shredded beef in chilli was one of the best examples of Chinese cooking that I've tasted for a long time and the chef had resisted the temptation to drown it in a thick sauce that would ruin the taste of actual beef. Unfortunately, the Chicken with Ginger was of average take-away standard. Fine, if you like that sort of thing, but distinctly out of place.

Where they really excelled was with the Deep-fried Tiger Prawns. You know when

you were young and you had your first ever KFC, and you marvelled at the crispiness and the succulence and the general all-over gorgeousness of the thing? Well, it was like this, only for proper food. That is, made from a named species. It was so good that I wanted to swap the other dishes for more of them. And more and more until, well, until I died nastily from a surfeit of seafood, I suppose. As for the special fried rice, and the suggestively named 'Monk's vegetables', the dishes were nice, but unexciting to the point of irrelevance.

If I have a complaint about the place, it is that it looks like a trucker's caff on Chinese theme night. Definitely not a place to take anyone you wish to impress with your taste and sagacity. But the food was ridiculously cheap – £18 a head, and that provided so much food that neither of us could physically walk out of the restaurant for at least half an hour after finishing. The service is amazing, and the waitresses insisted on bringing as much iced water as we wanted, a good idea, considering the beer price. All in all: 3/5.



Photo: Kieran Drake



# Jane Austen's loveable rogue

Natasha Grayson gets personal with *Sense and Sensibility* star Greg Wise

In Helen Fielding's sequel to her diary, *Bridget Jones*, in her inimitable style, interviews Colin Firth. Her meeting with the quintessential Austenian heart-throb is more embarrassingly similar to my own experience than I should be prepared to admit. Because just as Firth was immortalised by Mr. Darcy and that wet T-shirt scene, Greg Wise's reputation still hinges largely on his portrayal of the 'roguish' John Willoughby in *Sense and Sensibility*, for a screenplay written by his partner Emma Thompson. And just as *Bridget* is pulverised by her encounter with a famous actor with a cult female following, I was sufficiently star-struck when I met Greg Wise to be, well, somewhat flustered.

We met at his club in central London, a tiny, exclusive set of rooms up a frighteningly narrow staircase, furnished with gilt-

"Hello, Bridget, this is Colin Firth." We all jumped about a foot backwards. It was Mr Darcy. The same posh, deep, can't-be-bothered voice that he proposed to Elizabeth Bennet in on the BBC. *Bridget*. Me. Mr Darcy said *Bridget*. On my answerphone.

**From *The Edge of Reason*, by Helen Fielding**

framed mirrors and suitably antique furniture. A reliable insight, I imagine, into what the Pitt Club looks like on the inside. In case I had wanted to know.

When Wise emerges at the top of the stairs, his predictably overwhelming presence is enhanced in the cramped doorway, and I am grateful to succeed in encountering his firm, confident handshake without passing out like a teenager at a boy band gig. He wears an age-worn T-shirt and casual jeans, a sports bag slung across his back, as if he were turning up for rehearsals – the picture of ease and self-satisfaction. And when we settle ourselves at a table and he dumps out his rizlas and tobacco next to his bottle of mineral water, I am convinced that he is indeed an actor, and I am in love. I decide that asking about his career is a good place to start, because I can sit back and gaze in silence while he talks, gesturing broadly with a hand-rolled cigarette dangling sexily from one hand.

Unlike Thompson, Wise does not come from an acting background. He trained first of all as an architect at Edinburgh College of Art, but he traces his interest in drama back to his "fantastic English teacher" at school, who was keen on drama and encouraged students to perform plays, which he directed. Wise also cites his childhood experiences making glove puppet theatres with his older sister in their playroom. "Maybe that's where it came from – having a space where you can just play. That's all acting is really – playing."

Wise completed a three-year BA in architecture ("absolutely no use at all, you can't do anything with it") before moving to the Royal Scottish Academy in Glasgow to study drama. So after six years as a student ("I was getting a little bit fed up with having to live on £3,000 a year"), he moved to London to look for work. His first job was actually in Liverpool, playing the lead role in a Rock 'n' Roll musical.

When it becomes expedient for me to speak again, the *Bridget* effect sets in, and for some reason all I can think of to ask

about is the explicit sex scenes in the recent television adaptation of *Madame Bovary*, in which he plays one of her lovers. "There's not explicit sex in it. There is some sex, but, you know, it's BBC2 of a Sunday evening. And the book is undoubtedly sexy, and was banned when it was written. It's a naughty book."

Despite the limitations of his renown, Greg Wise has played a variety of roles, the majority of them not as the requisite heart-throb in a period drama. "I did something that finished about three weeks ago, which was a thriller for British television, called *Sirens*. That was fun, I'd never done a thriller before, and that was all done in London, which was fun, because rarely do you get the chance to work at home."

Home is important to Wise because he and Thompson have a daughter, Gaia, who is now almost two years old. Is he enjoying being a father? "Yeah, it's wild." A favourite term of his.

I ask whether Wise is concerned that his daughter will grow up to see her father's naked bottom on television. But he is not troubled. "I did a stage play about seven years ago, which was an adaptation of an Emile Zola novel, *La Bête Humaine*. And in it I had to be naked for a quarter of an hour, culminating in an epileptic fit, writhing in blood, completely naked, on stage. And it was fantastic, but you know, of course, your sister comes and sees it, and your mum comes and sees it, and my dad still thinks it's the best thing he's seen on stage, which is nice. You semi-think, Oh God, here I am, tackling the breeze" (mmm...) "but there's nothing wrong with nudity. I would rather Gaia saw that than violence. You know, nudity is seen as something offensive, but chopping someone's head off with hedge cutters is absolutely fine."

Despite the perceived glamour of the industry, Wise confirms that making a film really is not endlessly exciting. "There's a lot of sitting around time, that's the nature of the work. On a bad day, you are looking to shoot between four and five minutes of finished, uncut footage." But, asks the *Bridget* in me, what's it like to work with all those famous actors? What's Alan Rickman like? "He's sort of, how he appears, you know", Wise answers patiently. "Everyone on *Sense and Sensibility* was fab, you know, and Ang Lee, who directed it, this little Taiwanese person, landed in the midst of all this weirdness, he did such a fantastic job."

Despite the recent spate of celebrities suing newspapers for invasion of privacy, Wise's approach to the issue is characteristically unconcerned. "I don't read anything. Because it just makes you angry, and there's no point. Ignorance is bliss." But he has had some run-ins with the press, and his Oscar-winning partner has inevitably raised his profile. "When the news broke that Em and I were together, I went on the run and they besieged my house." So that scene in *Notting Hill* is true. "Really true. They were camped outside the house for three or four days. I wasn't there, my sister kept driving by and then phoning up and saying, 'still there'. But I had to go to Australia to film. And about three or four days later, we were in the Bush in Queensland, in the middle of f\*\*king nowhere, and a pap steps out from behind a tree. So someone was naughty and told them where I was."

Does Wise worry about Gaia growing up in the public eye? "No, because she's not, really. And we're not. We lead a fairly boring life." Thompson is undoubtedly better known than Wise, but he is not



Photo courtesy of Carlton TV

remotely competitive. "I'm conscious of the fact that she gets more press, but yippee-do, you know. She's got to do more post, she gets more fan letters, she has to work harder."

I insist on probing the fantasy of fame even further. Doesn't he get stopped in the street all the time? "It comes and goes in waves. But Brits generally are very good, they whisper to each other and, sort of,

don't know the guy's there."

See, he gets photographed by the paparazzi, he really is famous! Lucky me, I've met him! But the ultimate proof of glamorous celeb status has yet to be questioned. Has he been to the Oscars? "No." Not even when Emma won hers? "I watched it with Alan Rickman on the box in a friend's house in Los Angeles, and then we both went to the party after-

successes. He has the details right – the casual drama school outfit, the rizlas and mineral water, the charismatic presence and lavish gestures. But I discovered that Wise has his feet firmly on the ground. "I think you have to realise the Faustian nature of what you do. I think that you do have to expect a certain amount of intrusion a certain amount of the time, and that comes with the territory, and if it pisses you off, do a different job. You have to be pragmatic about it."

Although he was patient enough to put up with a bumbling *Bridget* for quite a while, he eventually tore himself away "to give the baby a bath". As we walked together back to the station, I was disappointed to find that no one whispered and pointed, no one noticed the momentous spectacle of my humble self walking around London with a film star. There, then, was the reality. I did spend the rest of the afternoon in a daze, reflecting on the experience, realising with shame the intensity with which I had watched him chatter, gesticulate, roll cigarettes. (Poor Gaia, I hope he does not smoke like that at home!) Wise confirmed some of the imagined truths about the glamour of acting as well as dispelling some of them. So I retained a glimpse of the fantasy world intact. The reality of Greg was, at least, entirely to my satisfaction.

Colin Firth:	Can we talk about something that isn't to do with Mr Darcy?
Bridget Jones:	Yes. (Pause, rustling papers.)
Bridget Jones:	Are you still going out with your girlfriend?
Colin Firth:	Yes.
Bridget Jones:	Oh. (Long pause.)
From <i>The Edge of Reason</i> , by Helen Fielding	

point. Americans rush up to you with napkins to sign in restaurants a lot more." How immature, naturally us whisperers and pointers are far more sophisticated. "There was a time when the paparazzi got us in Hampstead walking the kid around, and it's ended up in the newspaper, and you think, well that's quite sweet. And actually, some of the nicest photos we've got of Gaia are pap shots, because you

wards. Emma went to the ceremony with her mum." Was it a good party? (As glamorous as I am imagining it would be?) "Not really, no. I didn't really meet anyone interesting. I went to the loo and then the bouncer wouldn't let me back in again, and I said, 'I'm in the film!' 'I haven't seen it, Sir.'"

Wise is on TV, in the cinema and shacked up with one of England's greatest



## FRIDAY 19

### FILM

• **ARTS:** 12.30, 3.00, 5.30, 8.00: Amelie (15). 10.30pm: Dancer In The Dark (15). 12.45, 3.15, 5.45, 8.15: The Pledge (15). 10.40pm: Stop Making Sense (PG). 6.00: Solas (15). 3.00: Tierra (15). 1.00, 8.30: George Washington (12).

### MISC

• **Ballroom Dancing – Absolute Beginners:** £10 to join; £1.20 per class. *St Columba's Church Halls, Downing Place.* 7:15pm.  
• **CU Jewish Society:** 'Friday Night Experience' – *Student Centre, 3 Thompsons Lane.* 7:30pm.  
• **Queens' Ents:** Gold! The radical sound of the 80s. *Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall.* 9pm. £4.

• **Salsa Classes with Nelson Batista:** Abs beg/imp: 6-7.30pm. Int/adv: 7.30-9pm. *St Columba's Hall, £4 stud.*

### MUSIC

• **Kettle's Yard Music:** Lunchtime recital *Kettle's Yard.* 1:10pm.  
• **The Hudson Sound:** Last chance to catch phenomenal band here before big time. *Portland Arms, Mitchums Corner.* 9pm.

### TALK

• **Cambridge Bird Club:** "Birds of Scotland" illustrated talk by Tony Cook *Milton Country Park Visitor Centre.* 7:30pm. £1.  
• **New Hall:** "Through the Looking Glass of Poverty" by Devaki Jain. *Buckingham House.* 5pm.  
• **Tibet and Tibetans Week:** Geshe Tashi Tsering on "Compassion in Society". *Friends Meeting House, Jesus Lane.* 7:30pm.

### THEATRE

• **Cambridge University Theatre Co:** Lear (American Pie) *ADC Theatre.* 11pm  
• **Churchill GODS:** "The Bear" and "The Proposal" by Anton Chekov. *Churchill College, Wolfson Hall.* 7:45pm. £3.  
• **Outlook Productions – Medea:** Radical new production. Sell-out at the Edinburgh Fringe. *Pembroke College, New Cellars.* 8pm. £5/£4.

## SATURDAY 20

### FILM

• **ARTS:** 12.30, 3.00, 5.30, 8.00: Amelie (15). 10.30pm: Dancer In The Dark (15). 11.00am: Thunderbirds Are Go! (U) (Kids Club). 12.45, 3.15, 5.45, 8.15: The Pledge (15). 10.40pm: Stop Making Sense (PG). 1.30, 6.00: Solas (15). 4.00, 8.30: George Washington (12).

### MISC

• **CU Ballet Club:** Pointe Class for intermediate & advanced level dancers. *Kelsey Kerridge.* 4pm. £50p.  
• **CU Judo Club:** Senior graded session. *Fenner's Gym.* 6pm.  
• **CUJS:** Play reading of Merchant of Venice. *The Culan Centre, 33 Bridge Street.* 3pm.  
• **Queens' Films:** Hard House and Uplifting Trance. *Fitzpatrick Hall.* 9pm. £4.

### MUSIC

• **CUOperaS/Robinson College Music Society:** 'Orpheus and Euridice'. *Chapel.* 7:30pm. £8/£5 (concs)/£3 CUOperaS & RCMS.  
• **Harlow Chorus:** Glorious Russian Music. *King's College, Chapel.* 8:15pm. £5  
• **The Hudson Sound:** *Portland Arms, Mitchums Corner.* 9pm.

### THEATRE

• **Cambridge University Theatre Co:** Lear (American Pie) – *ADC Theatre.* 11pm.  
• **Churchill GODS:** "The Bear" and "The Proposal" by Anton Chekov. *Wolfson Hall.* 7:45pm. £3.  
• **Outlook Productions – Medea:** Radical new production. Sell-out at the Edinburgh Fringe. *Pembroke College, New Cellars.* 8pm. £5/£4.

## SUNDAY 21

### FILM

• **ARTS:** 12.30, 3.00, 5.30, 8.00: Amelie (15). 12.45, 3.15, 5.45, 8.15: The Pledge (15). 12.20, 6.00: Solas (15). 3.00: Orphee (PG). 8.30: George Washington (12).  
• **Christ's Films:** The Mexican. *New Court Theatre.* 10:30pm. £2.  
• **Queens' Films:** Election. 8pm. £1.50. The Truman Show. 10:30pm. £1.50 *Fitzpatrick Hall.*  
• **Robinson Films:** Chocolat – 7pm & 10pm. £2. *Robinson Auditorium.*  
• **St John's Films:** Bridget Jones's Diary (15). 7:30pm and 10pm. *Fisher Building.* £1.80.  
• **Trinity Film:** Brief Encounter. *Winstanley Theatre.* 9pm. £2.

### MISC

• **CU Kickboxing:** suitable for any standard *Parkside Community College.* 7pm. £2.50.  
• **CU Trampoline Club:** Freshers Sessions. *Leys School.* 1pm. £2.  
• **Samatha Meditation:** Meditation classes in traditional buddhist meditation. No charge. *Darwin College, Old Library.* 8pm.  
• **The Pembroke College Winnie-The-Pooh Society:** Elevenses – Please bring a mug. *Pembroke College, AA20.* 6pm.

### MUSIC

• **King's College Music Society:** Misc.

chamber music. *King's College, Great Hall.* 7:30pm. £6-£2.  
• **The Hudson Sound:** *Portland Arms, Mitchums Corner.* 9pm.

### TALK

• **MethSoc:** "One World Week Lunch". *Wesley Church.* 12am.  
• **Quodlibet (Christ's Arts Society):** Arts discussion group. *MCR.* 5pm.

### THEATRE

• **Cambridge University Theatre Co:** Lear (American Pie) – *ADC Theatre.* 11am.  
• **Outlook Productions – Medea:** Sell-out at the Edinburgh Fringe. *Pembroke College, New Cellars.* 8pm. £5/£4.

## MONDAY 22

### FILM

• **ARTS:** 1.30, 4.00, 6.30, 9.00: Amelie (15). 1.45, 4.15, 6.45, 9.15: The Pledge (15). 1.00, 5.00, 9.30: George Washington (12). 3.00: A Propos De Nice & Paris Qui Dort (PG) with live musical accompaniment.  
• **Trinity Film:** Brief Encounter. *Winstanley Theatre.* 9pm. £2

### MISC

• **Charity hitch-hike to Morocco!** Join the Easter 2002 hitch for 'Link Community Development'. *Hogshead Pub, Regent Street.* 7pm.  
• **CU Meditation & Buddhism Society:** Introduction to meditation, for relaxation and development. *Sidney Sussex, Knox-Shaw Room.* 7:15pm.  
• **CUJS:** Study with a buddy – 8 simultaneous classes ranging from film to talmud. *The Culan Centre, 33 Bridge Street.* 7pm.  
• **CUPro-LifeSoc:** Hard Truth – 10 minute abortion video. Informal discussion. *St Catharine's College, Rushmore Room.* 7:30pm.  
• **CUTAZZ:** Intermediate/Advanced tap classes. *Robinson College, Games*

### University of Cambridge - Physical Education Department Recreation Assistant

The Physical Education Department is seeking to appoint a part-time Recreation Assistant to work at the Physical Education Centre, Fenner's. Duties include the general supervision of training throughout the building: the circuit rooms, gymnasiums, weight training facility and fitness suite. Work will be on an hourly paid basis on evening or weekends. Previous experience would be an advantage.

#### Bar Staff

The PE Department also wishes to appoint hourly paid bar staff to work variable hours at Wilberforce Road Sports Ground.

The University is committed to equality of opportunity.

For both posts: Further particulars and application forms are available from the PE Department by telephoning 01223 336596 or via e-mail from karen.day@sport.cam.ac.uk

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We invite you to join our team of volunteers, to run an exciting, energetic, child-centred programme (son-rise) for our 7 year-old, mildly autistic daughter. We would like to ask you to volunteer 4 hours per week.

No experience is needed – travelling expenses reimbursed.

Make the call – Make a difference  
Telephone: 248622



## The Cambridge Mumpers

invites applications from **SCRIPT WRITERS** for a show to be performed in Lent term

Scripts to the 'Mumpers' pigeonhole in the ADC Clubroom by Saturday 3rd November  
Contact Michael Nabarro (man32)



**Amateur Dramatic Club**  
The Amateur Dramatic Club invites **APPLICATIONS to DIRECT/PRODUCE** in Lent Term 2001 including its **Lent Term Musical**

Application Guidelines and Forms available from the 'Club Applications' pigeonhole in the ADC Clubroom.

**DEADLINE:**  
**FRIDAY**  
**2nd November**  
**6pm**

Interviews will be held on or before the weekend of 10th/11th November  
Questions to Alex Clay  
(director@cuadc.org, 07946 351 051)

## London Literary Agent seeks fresh talent

All submissions considered  
No reading fees

Email an introductory descriptive letter to:

rw\_la@hotmail.com

### LOTOS THEATRE COMPANY

Announces auditions for a professional production of

*Almost A Goddess*  
by Jaime Salom

**UK Premiere Summer 2002**

**AUDITIONS ADC BAR**

11am-3pm Tues 23rd & Weds 24th Oct.

Please prepare a 2-5 minute speech and bring a photograph of yourself (professional quality not required)

Contact Raf Kinston (Director) on rjkinson@yahoo.co.uk

### LOTOS THEATRE COMPANY

Invites applications for the positions of:

• **Technical Director** • **Chief Electrician**  
• **Sound Designer**  
• **Stage Manager / Company Manager**  
• **Business Manager** • **Publicity Manager**

For a Summer 2002 tour of:

*Almost A Goddess*  
by Jaime Salom

To Cambridge, Edinburgh & London

APPLICATIONS CLOSE SUNDAY 28th OCT

Contact: Adam (apbailey00@hotmail.com) or Em (mehr 2)

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**BATS** invites

## APPLICATIONS

to Direct/Produce shows in week 5 and 7, Lent term 2002

To be staged in:

**FITZPATRICK HALL**  
**QUEENS' COLLEGE**

Contact: Katie (keg28) for details

### ARCADIA

**Sidney Sussex Drama Fund** invites applications for **FUNDING**

Michaelmas 2001/Lent 2002 to Laura Wood's (llw21) p'hole by 6pm, 31st October

**Elfin Productions**

invite applications to direct a two-person production of

**TRAINSPOTTING**

in Lent 2002

Contact: bjp24 for details

## Christ's Films

Sunday 21st October

8pm & 10.30pm

**THE MEXICAN**

Thursday 25th October – 10pm

**GROSSE POINT BLANK**

New Court Theatre, Christ's  
£2 inc. raffle for wine

www.christs.cam.ac.uk/cfilms/

### CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

*St. John's Chapel*

OCTOBER 20th 8pm

Conductor – *Wayne Marshall*

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Are you interested in performing some computerised games of memory and attention? Can you spare about 4 hours?

**£30**

will be paid to cover your travel expenses and time.

To find out more please contact: Danielle Turner  
Tel: 01223 336010 or e-mail dcl23@cam.ac.uk

**Want to hitch to Morocco for charity?**

At Easter 2002 students from all over the UK will be taking part in a sponsored hitch to Morocco to raise funds for the educational charity Link Community Development.

To find out more come to our first meeting:  
**Monday 22nd October 7 pm**  
**The Hogshead Regent St**

For more information contact: cambridge@moroccot hitch.org

usit campus

ROUGH GUIDES



room. 7pm. £2.50.

• **Tibet Photo Exhibition:** "Tibet Under Threat: Destruction of the Environment" to 3/11. Arts Picture House 12am.

## MUSIC

• **Cambridge University Troubadours:** Rehearsals for performers of mediaeval and Renaissance music. Jesus College, Octagon room beneath bar. 7:30pm.

• **CU Opera Society:** Chorus Rehearsal for 'Maschinist Hopkins'. All singers welcome, no auditions. Churchill, Recital Room. 7:30pm.

• **The Hudson Sound:** Portland Arms, Mitchums Corner. 9pm.

## TALK

• **CU Biological Society:** The Early Days of Sequencing – Dr Sanger (noble laureate). Chemistry Lecture Theatre 1, Lensfield Road. 7:30pm. £1.

## TUESDAY 23

## FILM

• **ARTS:** 1.30: Oh! What A Lovely War! (PG). 2.00, 6.30, 9.00: Amelie (15). 1.45, 4.15, 6.45, 9.15: The Pledge (15). 12.45, 5.00: Enigma of Kaspar Hauser (15). 3.00 George Washington (12). 9.15: Erin Brockovich (15).

• **Corpus Christi College Pictures:** Don't Look Now. McCrum Theatre, Benet Street. 8pm. £2.

## MISC

• **Ballroom Dancing – Absolute Beginners:** £10 to join; £1.20 per class. St Columba's Church Hall, Downing Place. 9pm.

• **CU Ballet Club:** 'Improvers' Ballet Class. Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall. 6pm. £1.50. Jazz Dance Class – beginners level. Kelsey Kerridge, (+£2.25 entrance to KK). 8pm. £1.

• **CU Judo Club:** Senior graded session. Fenner's Gym. 8pm.

• **CUTAZZ:** Beginners jazz classes 7pm. Intermediate/Advanced classes 8pm. Emmanuel United Reformed Church, Church Hall. £2.50.

• **CUWCC (Women's Cricket):** Winter nets practice. 7–9pm. Info: hpl20. Hills Road Sports Centre.

• **The Globe Cafe:** For international students, relaxed and informal chat, coffee, cakes. Emmanuel College, O6 New Court. 7pm.

## MUSIC

• **CU Jewish Society:** 'The Minims' – new singing group with fun and diverse music. Culanu Centre, 33 Bridge Street. More info: jmr53. 7pm.

• **The Cheese Factory Jam Sessions:** Jazz/Funk Jam session. The Man On The Moon. 8:30pm. £2. (£1 players).

## WEDNESDAY 24

## FILM

• **ARTS:** 1.30, 4.00, 6.30, 9.00: Amelie (15). 1.45, 4.15, 6.45, 9.15: The Pledge (15). 2.30, 9.30: Enigma of Kaspar Hauser (15). 5.00: George Washington (12). 7.00: Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant (15).

• **Churchill MCR Film Soc:** Bridget Jones's Diary. Churchill College, Wolfson Hall. 8pm & 11pm. £2.00.

Varsity apologises that it is unable to print all listings

STJOHNSFILMS  
<http://come.to/johnsfilms>

Sunday 21st October

**Bridget Jones's Diary**

7:30pm and 10pm

Thursday 25th October

**Audition**

9pm

In association with the Cambridge University Anglo-Japanese Society

Sponsored by  
**citigroup** corporate & investment bank

Fisher Building, St John's £1.80

## MISC

• **CU Tiddlywinks Club:** Expert tuition in the noble art. Queens' College, Erasmus Room. 7:30pm.

• **CU Wireless Society:** Induction Evening. Emmanuel College, Old JCR. 8:30pm.

## MUSIC

• **CUOperaS & Magdalene Music Society:** Early-opera concert of voice & harpsichord. Benson Hall. 8:45pm.

• **Trinity College Music Society:** Midweek Recital. Claire Postlethwaite plays 'cello sonatas by Beethoven & Brahms. Chapel. 8pm. £4/£2/£1.

## TALK

• **PdOC (Post-docs of Cambridge):** So you want to be a science writer? Dr Kathryn Phillips, University Centre, 12 Mill Lane, Room 1. 6pm.

• **Tibet and Tibetans Week:** Mary Craig, on "Writing About Tibet". Waterstones Bookshop. 6:30pm.

## THURSDAY 25

## FILM

• **ARTS:** 1.30, 4.00, 6.30, 9.00: Amelie (15). 1.45, 4.15, 6.45, 9.15: The Pledge (15). 3.00: MacBeth (PG). 1.00, 9.30: George Washington (12). 5.00: Enigma of Kaspar Hauser (15). 7.00: Virgin Machine (18)

• **Christ's Films:** Grosse Pointe Blank. New Court Theatre. 10pm. £2.

## SUBSCRIPTION CONCERT 2001/2

Michaelmas Term

October 25

Hugo Wolf Quartet, Vienna

November 1

Jonathan Cohen - cello &

Huw Watkins - piano

November 8

Guarneri Trio, Prague

November 15

Britten Pears School Singers – Winter Words

November 22

Britten Sinfonia - Britten's Birthday Concert

Subscription rates for 2001/2 season:

Students £30 per year, £8.50 per term, others £75 per year, £30 per term. Members are welcome to bring guests on payment of £7 at the door.

For information and a subscription form please contact:

Susie Biller at Kettle's Yard, Castle Street, Cambridge CB3 0AQ tel 352124 • fax 324377 • e-mail [susie@kettlesyard.cam.ac.uk](mailto:susie@kettlesyard.cam.ac.uk)

• **Queens' Films:** Othello. 8pm. £1.50. Ten Things I Hate About You. 10:30pm. £1.50. Fitzpatrick Hall.

• **Robinson Films:** Buena Vista Social Club £2. Robinson Auditorium. 9:30pm

• **St John's Films:** Odishon (Audition) (18). Fisher Building. 9pm. £1.80.

## MISC

• **CU Ballet Club:** 'Beginners' Ballet Class. Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall. 7pm. £1.50.

• **CU Jewish Society:** 'Lunch and Learn' – King's College, Chetwynd Room. More info: jmr53. 1pm.

• **CU Judo Club:** Beginners session. First session free. Wear strong long-sleeved top. Fenner's Gym. 8pm.

• **Dances of Universal Peace:** Chant, movement, meditation. Bharat Bhavan 117 Mill Road. 8pm. £2.50-£5.

• **Greek Dance Classes:** Come have fun by learning to Greek dance! Darwin College, Common Room. 5pm. £15/term or £2 /class.

• **PdOC (Post-Docs of Cambridge):** Join us for a drink in the bar. Grad Pad. 6pm.

## MUSIC

• **Kettle's Yard Music:** Subscription Concert: chamber music in the beautiful setting of Kettle's Yard House. 8pm. £8.50 per term, £20 per year.

## TALK

• **Kettle's Yard:** Lunchtime talk about the current exhibition or a work of art in the house. Kettle's Yard. 1:10pm.

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# Nature's numbers uncovered

Where can you find the Fibonacci series and the golden mean? Anywhere and everywhere, says Jonathan Zwart

Try this puzzle, posed by Fibonacci to his lecture audiences in the thirteenth century...

"A pair of rabbits is put into a field and, if rabbits take a month to become mature and then produce a new pair every month after that, how many pairs will there be in twelve months' time?"

How to solve this medieval riddle? We start with one pair and make the assumptions that none die and none escape. At the end of the first month there is still one pair since the rabbits haven't yet matured. At the end of the second month a new pair is produced, making two pairs. At the end of the third month there are three pairs (the first offspring haven't matured), at the end of the fourth, five (they have now). This series of numbers, which begins with 1,1,2,3,5,8... has come to be known as the Fibonacci Series. The presence of this seemingly irrelevant mathematical conjuring trick has become almost ubiquitous in the work of scientists and artists alike – botanists and developmental biologists, architects and musicians, all find themselves in the thrall of the Fibonacci Series.

The series' most famous role in the natural world is the Fibonacci Spiral. To make this, two squares of side-length one are placed next to each other. A square of side-length two is drawn above, one of side-length three to the right, five below, etc. Each new square has a side whose length is the sum of the last two squares' sides. The spiral is constructed by drawing quarter circles within each square. Snail shells, seashells, pinecones, pineapples and even cauliflowers clearly exhibit Fibonacci Spirals. In fact, many have two sets of spirals rotating in opposite directions. Even a human embryo slowly unfolds itself into this familiar pattern, as it spins further and further from its centre.

The Fibonacci numbers seem to appear in almost every aspect of plant growth from the number of branches at which new growth is possible, to the number of leaves counted going a

certain number of times around a stem. A flower's seedhead gives yet another illustration of Fibonacci at work. Close examination of the centre of a flower reveals spirals curving both to the left and to the right. The number of spirals to the left and to the right, counted at the outer edge, are adjacent (e.g. 34 and 55) Fibonacci numbers.

in a single group of cells called the meristem. Once formed, the cells grow in size and the meristem rises as cells further down the stem expand. The cells grow in a spiral manner, as if the stem turns by an angle and then a new cell appears, turning again to make way for another new cell, and so on. These cells may become a new branch, or, on a flower, new petals or

sure to light and hence its ability to grow. Similarly, once a seed is positioned on a seedhead, the seed continues to grow outwards maintaining the original angle on the seedhead and maximising the likelihood of pollination. In the case of the human embryo or the seashell, the spiral pattern is present because the growth of the organism is proportional to its size.

matter how much growth appears after it. The angle in question is  $137.50776^\circ$ , or  $1/\Phi$  of a revolution! So the Fibonacci numbers appear in plants because they give the best whole number approximations to the fraction of a revolution that result in optimal growth.

The Golden Mean has been well known since classical times. The Golden Rectangle, said to be pleasing to the eye, is a rectangle whose sides are in the ratio  $1:\Phi$ . There are many examples of the use of the Golden Mean in classical architecture. The Parthenon appears to include Golden Rectangles on its front and side elevations. Works by Da Vinci and Michaelangelo incorporate the Golden Mean dimension. It's been argued that Virgil and other Roman poets consciously used Fibonacci numbers to structure their poetry. Stradivari was aware of the Golden Mean, using it to position the f-holes of his violins. There is evidence that many of Mozart's sonatas divide into two parts exactly at a point where the ratio of the lengths of the two halves is  $1:\Phi$ , in almost all cases. This may have been a conscious choice or perhaps an unknown, intuitive effect. There is similar evidence for works by Beethoven, Bartok, Debussy, Schubert and Bach.

The inevitable question is whether the use of the Golden Mean is by design or by accident? By far the more interesting are the instances where it is by accident – it seems relatively straightforward to incorporate such a phenomenon into, for example, the shape of a building, but its natural occurrence in a complex, growing plant is something at which to be amazed. And of course, the idea of a relative length that is "aesthetically desirable" is obviously a matter of debate.

And before you go, I'll have to mention one last tendency. Take a look at your middle finger. What do you think the ratio of the length of the central bone to the shortest bone might be...?



## Botanists and developmental biologists, architects and musicians, all find themselves in the thrall of the Fibonacci Series.

But for all these examples, we have still not addressed the question of why the Fibonacci numbers should keep cropping up in plants and flowers? The reason is that nature uses a single pattern to distribute seeds on a seedhead, petals around the edge of a flower and leaves around a stem. The growth occurs at the tips of the shoots

stamens.

The key lies in the angle of rotation – the optimum "design" is maintained by a single, fixed angle of rotation of the growing cells. Once the angle is fixed for, say, a leaf, that leaf will least obscure the leaves below and will least be obscured by any further leaves above, maximising the plant's expo-

Now let's examine the Fibonacci Series a little more closely. Taking the ratio of successive terms in the series, we find this ratio tends to a limiting value of 1.61804..., an irrational number known as the Golden Mean, the Golden Ratio or  $\Phi$ . Returning to the seedhead, we find that a single angle produces uniform packing no

## ETHICS: SHOULD SEX-CHANGES BE AVAILABLE ON THE NHS?

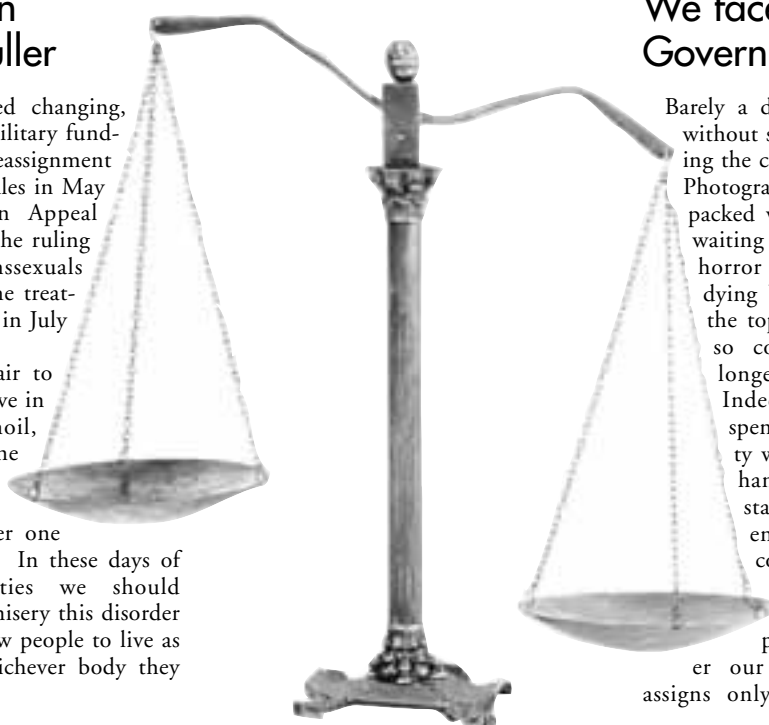
### It's unfair to expect people to live in emotional turmoil, says Hannah Fuller

There are reputedly over one thousand people in England currently requesting treatment for a medically recognised condition that causes extreme mental and physical stress, not to mention social isolation and exclusion. However, treatment for this condition, Gender Identity Dysphoria, is not readily available on the NHS.

It is very difficult to imagine what it must be like to believe you have been born into the wrong sex. However, thousands of people in Britain do, so much so that they are willing to have an operation to change their physical sex to match their believed gender. People who have never experienced these feelings often think that Gender Dysphoria is not an illness, simply a state of mind – but was the same not once said of clinical depression?

Times are indeed changing, with the British military funding the gender reassignment surgery of four males in May this year and an Appeal Court upholding the ruling that three transsexuals should be given the treatment on the NHS in July 1999.

Surely, it is unfair to expect people to live in emotional turmoil, relying on hormone therapies that leave them in sexual limbo as neither one sex nor the other. In these days of equal opportunities we should acknowledge the misery this disorder can cause and allow people to live as they want, in whichever body they want.



### We face more pressing requirements for Government cash, argues Emma Sherwood

Barely a day goes by in the UK without some newspaper lamenting the critical state of the NHS. Photographs of hospital corridors packed with trolleys of patients waiting days to receive a bed and horror stories about patients dying before they could reach the top of the waiting list are so common that they no longer provoke shock. Indeed, anyone who has spent Friday night in casualty will have witnessed firsthand the chronic understaffing problems experienced throughout the country.

The current problems are hardly surprising when you consider our government annually assigns only £790 per person to

health – placing it 29th out of 35 surveyed countries. In the UK only 6.5% of lung cancer patients survive for five years, compared to 13% in Germany where a far greater proportion of the GNP is spent on the health service. The statistics speak for themselves: it seems ridiculous that the NHS could consider funding a sex change (costing up to £10,000) before life saving operations such as heart bypasses (costing £8000), or mastectomies (costing £1000).

From both an ethical and a financial point of view, a sex change is extremely expensive in terms of the benefits it reaps. There is no doubt that many undergoing sex changes will experience an improved quality of life, but we must confront the fact that with limited resources we face much more pressing requirements for treatment than those of transgender patients.



I spoke to pianist Joanna MacGregor for no more than fifteen minutes, but her breathless enthusiasm is guaranteed to stay with me for considerably longer than that. As our conversation began she apologised for being “on the point of collapse”, which is hardly suprising considering she had just returned from Estonia to embark immediately on an ambitious and original UK tour, ‘Light and Shade’. Thankfully, collapse did not ensue and instead genuine excitement and exuberance was thrown at me as she described her current projects.

Owning her own record label, *Sound Circus* has undoubtedly given her a freedom of expression which could have come through no other channel – her album *Play* is a tribute to her best loved music and is a dazzlingly diverse world of sounds. She tells me of the difficulty in whittling down the tracks for inclusion to form an intensely personal album, including Bach and Nancarrow, and her collaboration with Talvin Singh – undoubtedly a personal favorite of hers.

Her current UK tour with percussion quartet Ensemble Bash and the acclaimed Britten Sinfonia reaches the Corn Exchange this week, and sees Joanna make her debut as a conductor in a programme that is the very essence of Sound Circus diversity: Arvo Part, Schnittke, Lou Harrison and most excitingly, the premiere of Nitin Sawnhey’s first work for orchestra – “It’s such a gritty and exciting work – hard hitting, energetic and topical. The Indian Classical rhythms have been a real challenge that the Britten Sinfonia have risen to.”

Diversity is certainly something MacGregor excels at, but she’s wary of the criticisms which come with success in many areas. “There’s that awful phrase ‘Jack of all Trades’ which seems to sum up the very English suspicion of those who don’t just find what they are good at and stay there”. Her diversity is not just restricted to music either – she has radio plays and children’s books to her name also, and her recent trip to Estonia involved visuals alongside sound.

Bearing this branching out in mind, I asked her whether she still sees herself as primarily a pianist. The answer, a resounding ‘Yes’ – she explores all possibilities of the piano, and it takes her to many places, but she will always come back.

*‘Light and Shade’ – Joanna MacGregor, Ensemble Bash and The Britten Sinfonia at the Corn Exchange – Wednesday 24th October 7.30pm.*

**Benjamin Ward**





# Gangsters, voyeurs & 'chicks'

**COLLEGE FILM FOCUS:** Mark Baczoni, Angela Das, Tom Armitage, Ian Fong, Josh Perry & Charlie Philips

## Bridget Jones' Diary

21 Oct, 7.30 & 10pm, John's

[Female perspective] Only let your girlfriend make you watch this if you really enjoyed *Pride and Prejudice*. Based on a book made up of diary entries that resemble the nutritional information on a box of instant noodles, *Bridget Jones' Diary* is the ultimate chick-flick. Bridget shows some insights that could be startlingly true, but, won't women watching the film decide that she must be the norm, and continue to live their lives as if they were in fact Bridget? For all you learned boys: there's even a guy called Darcy... (AD)

[Male perspective] With this much-hyped adaptation of Helen Fielding's girlie must-read, Texan Renée Zellweger has all but cemented her position as box-office queen, while screenwriter Richard Curtis (*Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Notting Hill* and er, *Bean*) has been anointed the 'King Midas' of British film. Zellweger is endearing as the lovable wine-swilling, chain-smoking thirty-something (with an almost flawless accent to boot), while Hugh Grant and Colin Firth provide the polar love interests. (IF)



## Election

21 Oct, 8pm, Queens'

Over-ambitious bright young students who don't know how to fail? Can you identify with that? Reese Witherspoon is a neurotic American schoolgirl wanting to win the class president election and resorting to any extreme to achieve her dream. A dark but hilarious version of the ever-wonderful American teen drama genre with a star performance from Mathew Broderick, who didn't get stuck in the mysteries of the eighties after all. (CP)

## The Mexican

21 Oct, 8.30 & 10.30pm, Christ's

Until the release of this misguided comedy, the ultimate riddle of film goes the world over was: "What do you get if you put Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts in the same movie?" With this lacklustre effort, director Gore Verbinski (*Mouse Hunt*) is probably wishing he'd never tried to come up with a solution. The overly convoluted plot is an ailment endemic to the quirky, offbeat mobster/chase genre and, with Brad and Julia spending almost no screen time together, Gandolfini effortlessly steals the show as gay hit man Leroy. (IF)

## Brief Encounter

21/22 Oct, 9pm, Trinity

Apparently the train station in which much of the film's repressed, extra-marital flirtation takes place is currently seeking funding to become a museum based on the film. This seems entirely appropriate given that today, watching David Lean's celebrated classic of British cinema feels rather like historical observation: Queen's English dialogue is juxtaposed with Dolly's station café gossip, while the central illicit rela-

tionship is played out with endearing innocence. Based on a Noel Coward play, the film is superbly shot with Film Noir overtones, and has an enduring charm that puts shoddy contemporary British cinema to shame. (JP)

## The Truman Show

21 Oct, 10.30pm, Queens'

Truman Burbank is a national institution. From the moment of his birth, he's been the unknowing star of a hugely successful TV show. Every waking minute of his life is filmed, and everything he knows is false. But suddenly, the perfect seams of his world begin to tear, and he realizes that all is not what it seems. As he searches for the truth, he raises some greater questions that apply to us all whilst battling against the great institution of TV itself. Peter Weir pulls off that rarest of feats in *TTS*: a great American satire. He's aided by a revelatory performance from Jim Carrey, who really convinces us of Truman's humanity and his plight as a guinea pig. An optimistic, positive film, then, perhaps more relevant than ever in this age of surveillance. (TA)

## Audition

25 Oct, 9pm, John's

Those of weak constitution beware. This film deserves its 18 rating. The premise is innocent enough; widowed film executive Shigeharu Aoyama decides to find himself a new partner by holding an audition of nubile young ladies. After much drooling and deliberation Aoyama decides on the beautiful Asami, whose past is shrouded in mystery. Following in the creepy footsteps of Japanese horror classic *The Ring*, *Audition* doesn't disappoint in the shit-your-pants department. This is horror at its most graphic, with unhealthy doses of severed tongues, non-therapeutic acupuncture and piano wire-induced agony. (IF)



## Grosse Pointe Blank

25 Oct, 10pm, Christ's

*Grosse Pointe Blank* (GPB) is one of my favourite films; it's witty, courageous, and proof that something positive can come out of Hollywood.

GPB is the story of Martin Blank (John Cusack), a hit man who is a little down on life and his chosen profession. On the advice of his terrified analyst he decides to revisit his childhood home, Detroit, on the weekend of his ten year High School reunion-hoping to rediscover his abandoned love Debby (Minnie Driver) and mix pleasure with a little bit of business...

But it is much more than that. It's funny and off-beat, with a great 80's soundtrack and magnificent acting. It's a quirky take on the emptiness of the modern American way of life, on getting old(er) and the dangers of importing T-34s into Alabama. But it's also a good old-fashioned love story, albeit in a modern and fairly violent frame. It's a splendid mixture

of action, romance and humour, with just the right proportion of each to make it a joy to watch – again and again. (MB)

## Ten things I hate about you

25 Oct, 10.30pm, Queens'

Cute clean-cut geek Cameron wants scary-hunk Patrick to date "heinous-bitch" Kat so that...

But then, as with all high-school flicks, the plot is not the point. What you get is an unashamed genre piece, and as such, it should be judged against its peers: blunter dialogue than *Clueless*; half-hearted literary adaptation (here, *The Taming of the Shrew*) from the *Cruel Intentions* school of thoughtlessness; pasteurised beauties in lead roles (Heath Ledger of *Knight's Tale* fame and Julia Stiles of questionable fame) in the manner of *Almost Famous*... Oh, and one good gag about beer-flavoured nipples... It's fine, actually. (JP)

# SUBVERSIVE CINEMA

Created in spite of official disapproval, this film not only critiques the social prison in which Iranian women are forced to live, but deliberately transgresses codes and taboos. Eleanor Burke on *The Circle*

Tragedy strikes on a maternity ward: not the death of a newborn or of a young mother, but the birth of a baby girl. Sonograms have predicted a male child and the new baby's grandmother flees the scene, bewailing her lot and claiming that her daughter will be abandoned by her son-in-law's family.

Despite recent international events and any threat to political correctness that may have ensued, the tension between our desire to be tolerant of all traditions and cultures, and our distaste for the treatment of women in Islamic countries is more relevant than ever. It is difficult to stomach the thought that merely because of her gender, the birth of a baby girl could be seen as tragic. Jafar Panahi's latest offering, Venice Film Festival winner *The Circle*, exposes the irreconcilability of the ideologies of Islamic and Western regimes in this respect. It also represents a bold cri-

tique of Iranian society by an Iranian filmmaker and a courageous break from the strict cinematic and narrative codes imposed by the government.

The representation of women in Iranian cinema has been problematic ever since the resumption of film production in 1983, five years after the Islamic revolution. Although unopposed to cinema as a discipline, the new regime decried the moral corruption that it claimed the medium could generate. An Islamisation of cinema ensued, involving an active censor to ensure Iran's on-screen image was that of a perfect Islamic society. Women's bodies were veiled, even in situations where, in real life, it would not be required. Men and women were forbidden to touch each other. More incredibly, in an attempt to deprive their image of sensuality, close-ups of women were banned.

Like Hollywood filmmakers under the Hayes Code, Iranian directors have found ways to work with the evocative possibilities of cinema, whilst sticking to the letter of the law. Restrictions have failed to eradicate the sensual aesthetic quality of the films, and the use of children as principal characters has allowed directors to touch on otherwise unapproachable subject matters.

*The Circle* is Panahi's most mature film to date. Unlike in his previous works, women have replaced children as protagonists. The opening story of the unwanted baby girl is abandoned for that of two women, Arazou and Nargess, evading arrest outside the hospital, the first in a circular chain of scenarios depicting the plight of women in Iran. Along their perilous route they scuttle behind parked cars, huddle in doorways and hide themselves in the fold of their chadors. These

are marginalised women attempting to escape by effacing themselves. Other threads deal with a prison escapee trying to abort the unborn child she has conceived in jail by her now-executed husband, a mother forced by poverty to abandon her daughter, and a jaded prostitute.

Throughout, a direct approach replaces the traditional use of allusion. Created in spite of official disapproval, this film not only criticises the social prison in which Iranian women are forced to live, but deliberately transgresses codes and taboos.

Never static, *The Circle's* strongest aspect is also its weakest. By constantly moving and depicting in rapid succession a range of different stories, an overview of the suppression of women is created, but our attempts at identification with the characters are continually disrupted. Nevertheless, the beauty of the film is never undermined by its movement, and

within the long takes by which the film's circularity is evoked, the camera poignantly lingers, emphasising details that might otherwise be lost. One particularly prolonged close-up of the prostitute in the prison van underlines the director's sympathy for one who would be traditionally despised. A landmark film which both challenges Iranian convention, but is a cinematic breath of fresh air for us in the West too.





# Rhapsody

Charlie Phillips lives in Bohemia

Stroll about the winding film-going lanes of the world at the moment and hear a rallying cry from every corner. "Truth, Beauty, Freedom, Love" are the words being shouted from every rooftop. *Moulin Rouge* has opened our eyes once more to the joys of the bohemian. Smash open the bottle of absinthe, place a Dandy Warhols 12" on the record player and project celluloid images of romantic yearning onto your wall. Bohemia is back and ready to slap 21st century indifference in the face. Welcome it into your life.

Truth – Cinema that reflects upon what is real and most honest and makes it special. The films of Harmony Korine (*Kids, Gummy* and *Julien Donkey-Boy*) harkening back to Italian neo-realism. The filmmaker who can only express himself on screen and cannot pretend. Forget the faceless, heartless, modern action movie with the happy ending and bad guys vanquished. Celebrate David Lynch because the struggles are in the everyday and entertainment must be tempered by the bitter aftertaste along with the moments of incandescent joy.

Beauty – The luscious dreamscape of *Amélie* with its desire for the nuances of peoples' tiniest habits obliterates the gross-out perversity of *American Pie 2*. Watch again *Singin' In the Rain* and remember that whilst it may rain a lot over the next few months, the most beautiful thing is to get out there and dance in it. Beg for the casting of Johnny Depp and Chloe

Seigny in every story not because their faces fit but because their souls are heavenly and they can fill the screen with beauty.

Freedom – Grab a video camera, dream a story and go make it the next day. No longer the domain of privileged opportunity, film-making power is given to the masses. Through the ease of the digital camera, the bohemian has his most powerful tool yet. He doesn't need the budget of *Pearl Harbour* – he wouldn't know what to do with it. Read any biography of Derek Jarman (*Jubilee, Blue*) and marvel at the artistic inspiration to get an image into screen as soon as possible.

Love – The most important of them all. Love for the details, love for the grandiose. Know which cinematic sensual kiss you love best (is it Bergman and Bogart? Is it Monroe and... anyone) and also know the little moments you have loved. Watch *Before Sunrise* – the most bohemian film of the last twenty years until *Moulin Rouge*. Two characters – Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy – discovering Vienna by night, together for only a matter of hours. Films that love their subject, love people despite their faults, love the big city and most of all, love the unique power of film to show us more than the eye can see.

If you love film, channel the power of *Moulin Rouge*. Be a bohemian this year and for evermore. Be true to yourself, be beautiful inside and out, free yourself and, despite (perhaps because of) its faults, love the world and its cinema.

# Mise en scène

Kate McNaughton on Britain's greatest director

**Who?**

Alfred Hitchcock.

**Where and when?**

Great Britain, 1920s and 30s; Hollywood, 40s to 60s.

**Classics of the genre?**

So, so many... Amongst others, though: *Vertigo, Rear Window, Psycho, The Birds*.

**What's it all about?**

When a tortured Bergman approached him to discuss her role's motivation, Hitchcock famously replied: "Ingrid, it's only a movie." His tongue-in-cheek approach to his own films (look out for those walk-on appearances) and a shrewd sense of marketing (he cultivated his image as the 'Master of Suspense' through a mystery magazine and a TV show) made him one of the first directors to be widely recognised by cinema viewers. He would also be proclaimed one of the first *auteurs* by European critics, particularly those writing in the *Cahiers du cinéma*, in the 1950s and 60s. They admired his ability to combine a strong personal style (mainly marked by his love of creating suspense and having the audience squirm in their seats) with formal diversity and experimentation.

Hitchcock started working in Britain in the 1920s, where he was exposed to many different styles of European filmmaking which would have a great

impact on his own: French Impressionism, German Expressionism, and particularly Soviet Montage, which placed an emphasis on a complex and unconventional use of editing techniques (notably challenging the Hollywoodian one-shot-per-action rule). Such technical virtuosity is visible in the two contrasting films *Rope*, which consists of only eight long takes, and *Rear Window*, in which hundreds of shots are edited together. These films were both produced after Hitchcock's move to Hollywood in 1940, but his early European experience was to retain an influence throughout his career. Skilfully taking full advantage of the Hollywood studio system to produce his own very distinctive features, Hitchcock built an impressive artistic career for himself, without ever losing his sense of humour. As he

put it: "A film is not a slice of life but a slice of cake."

**How to find out more?**

Christ's Films are showing *Dial M for Murder* at 10pm on Thursday 1st November. A perfect crime that goes wrong, starring Grace Kelly – what more could you ask for?



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# An Eagleton has landed

Sameer Rahim interviews Terry Eagleton, "A Prole among the Patricians"

Terry Eagleton opened his talk at The Shirley Society with a wry disclaimer: "This is not a cynical marketing exercise," said the former Cambridge undergraduate and Marxist literary critic. But of course even a Marxist must bow to market forces when publicising his latest book. Most English undergraduates know Eagleton for his seminal *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, or perhaps those more ideologically minded have read his works on materialist theory or the function of criticism. Eagleton has never been a dry academic and his prose style is both witty and disarmingly blokeish. Bespectacled, with a salt and pepper beard and a friendly demeanour, Eagleton read from his forthcoming memoir entitled *The Gatekeeper*.

The title of the talk was "A Prole among the Patricians", which seemed suitably polemical for an academic of his reputation. What we heard, however, was a witty but affectionate description of the "infantile" and "ignorant" upper-class dons that had taught Eagleton. Forty years ago Cambridge seemed even more removed from the outside world than it is today. This is a place where the promotion of an academic had more to do with his background than his skill. They were "effortlessly upper-class



Photo: Sameer Rahim

dons" with a huge amount of knowledge but little inclination to use it. They preferred the social aspect rather than the vulgar concept of publishing books or forming ideas. According to Eagleton, ideas were anathema to a certain section of the Cambridge English department. For a young, working class ideologue like Eagleton this proved a curiously fruitful arena in which to formulate his own ideas about what he now terms "a crisis point" in English Literature. Their insouciant attitude infuriated him, but he still obviously has some affection for them.

Eagleton's readings from his book showed both his satiric wit and literary elegance. In one anecdote he described how he supervised a prim "young fogey", as he put it, who always referred to authors by their formal titles rather than surnames, for example Mr. Shakespeare or Mr. Dickens. On one occasion he handed in an essay which related the poem *Kubla Khan* with the rest of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry in an intricate cross-referenced analysis. Eagleton had the good heart to let him read out his entire essay, before informing him that he had confused Mr. Wordsworth with the actual author of *Kubla Khan*, namely Mr. Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In another anecdote he relates how his fellowship at Oxford, was granted mainly due to the erotic sensibilities of one of the dons who wished to ingratiate himself with the handsome young prole. His recent spat with fellow academic Harold Bloom, who accuses him of being the leader in critical school of "resentment", was apparently engendered when Bloom accused him of stealing his wallet in New York. This is an allegation the Professor vehemently denies.

Despite his droll delivery and witty banter, I still had some gnawing questions that I had the opportunity of put-

ting to him after the talk. The problem of a Marxist critic working in the marketplace was presciently encapsulated by the purpose of the talk, namely to sell his book. Cultural critics and radical academics are now no longer rare at Oxbridge. Oxford was a centre of student protest in the late 1960's and Terry Eagleton was a prominent part of that. Ironically it seems that 'giving students what they wanted' was a reason why radical critiques of society were possible even in such establishment arenas as Cambridge. Market forces overtook conservative values and forced them to teach more wide-ranging subjects. Eagleton explained that we are living in a time when theorists need to recognise their own limitations and also widen their readership with more readable prose. These are parts of his efforts to 'flatten out' culture and theory; to make it more palatable for the masses. He explained proudly that he had been thrown out of the Oxford Labour party and was fearsomely committed to radical politics. Although the passion of his politics is clear and his intelligence undoubted, the impression that the packed crowd received was of a humorous and warm-hearted individual always ready to mock himself as well as the society around him.

## LIT SHORTS

### ADC

David Hare will be giving what may be the last public reading of his play *Via Dolorosa*. Saturday, 20th October. 3pm. Student tickets are £7.50, or £12.50 if you want to go to the champagne reception afterwards.

### Heffers

Tim Page, author of *The Mindful Moment*, gives a reading and signing. Tuesday, 23rd October. 6.30-8pm. Advance ticket required. Free.

Fabulous Harbours, a celebration of sci-fi writing, with various authors. Thursday, 25th October. Advance ticket required. Free.

### Waterstone's

Jurassic Park fans, unite! Martin Jones, a bio-archaeological researcher, talks about his recent book, *The Molecule Hunt: Archeology and the Hunt for Ancient DNA*. Tuesday, 23rd October. 6.30-8pm. £1 ticket redeemable against Jones' book on the night.

In order to support the Tibet Society, Mary Craig, author of *Tears of Blood, Cry for Tibet & Kundun*, will be speaking on "Writing about Tibet." Wednesday, 24th October. 6.30-8pm. Free, but donations to the Tibet Society and Tibet House trust are encouraged.

# The New York City of Rushdie

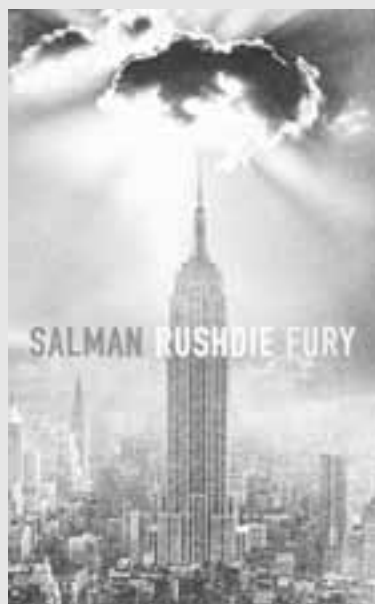
Marcus Omond gets a guided tour around the city: loveless puns, magical lists, mingled yarns, and a dollmaker

"Not since the Bombay of *Midnight's Children* have a time and place been so intensely and accurately captured in a novel", reads the blurb. But Rushdie's turgid opening, with its dreary satire of cosmocratic life – "limited-edition olive oils, three-hundred-dollar corkscrews, featherlight shawls made from the chin-fluff of extinct mountain goats" – is rather *Evening Standard*, circa 1996. The magical lists of *Midnight's Children* have each item selected with warmth and care: "my poor body, buffeted by too much history, mutilated by doors, brained by spittoons"; New York, though, is plodded out by a tired tour guide: "a musical about loveable lions, a bike race on Fifth, Springsteen at the Garden" – more Dorling Kindersley than *Rough Guide*. The puns are so loveless – "the tribunes with their hand up the mayor's and police commissioner's Coriolanuses" – that their creator apologises: "the crude pun shocked him when he thought of it". However, after the first six (crap) pages, Rushdie is back to his best;

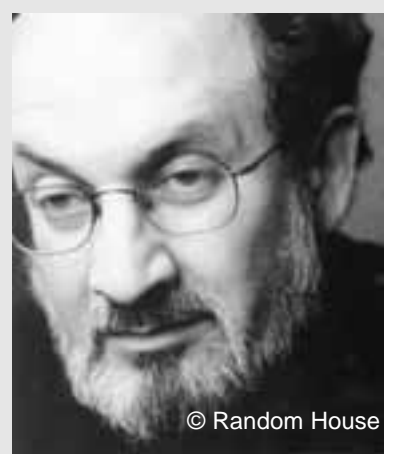
when he's at his best, he's untouchable. As ever, there are complex matrices and networks of cross-reference: the Fury of the title becomes the *Eumenides*, and immediately New York's digital age becomes ancient Greece. A Cambridge don becomes Winnie the Pooh becomes the doll at the centre of a multimillion-dollar TV show. The webs spiral, locking together the novel's different loci and themes; fiction becomes fact, one character becomes another. Counterpointing these mingled yarns, Rushdie continues with the lists and puns of the first six pages; but when he's writing well, he can spend pages setting up a pun and still get away with it: "We're living in a retro world and I am a retrograde girl". As this is a short novel (just over 250 pages) there's less intricacy of interrelation than in, say, *The Satanic Verses*. This creates room for things less usual in Rushdie, such as linear storytelling and extended meditation.

Central to the thought is the tender complex of feelings involved in breaking relationships, especially with chil-

dren as collateral. This was tentatively hinted at in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, where the narrator talks of divorce as the "pain of realising that something once so beautiful no longer



exists", but here it's of primary import. Malik Solanka, dollmaker and historian of ideas, has left his wife and son in Hampstead and fled to New York. Solanka has been seen as a thinly-veiled Rushdie; the novel has been fodder for diarists as much as for reviewers (even they write things like "we must assume that 'the literary groupie Perry Pincus, an unashamed sexual butterfly' signifies someone formerly close"). But reading the book as a *roman-à-clef* is pointless: the writing is so good that it doesn't matter who's behind the voice; Rushdie forces sophisticated, subtle reactions. Solanka's prick, but in reading the book, seeing the world in his words, you become him, and as Rushdie points out, "like all of us he believed himself to be a good person": it's difficult to hate him. All three of Solanka's women have their more and less attractive traits – they're all loveably real – and yet Solanka can only choose one. Suffering is necessary, and the reflective, measured prose (unusual for Rushdie) brings this out: "The decision to leave had been entirely his;



still, he grieved for his old life". It's this new-found reserve which makes this book so attractive. Whereas he blew *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (like DeLillo blew *Underworld*) by ending one paragraph too late, here the coda refuses to reach conclusion: it leaves everything up in the air, Solanka bouncing on a trampoline. No need for "a few words of unctuous, polished commentary"; this is plenty.

Photo: Sarah Savitt



## Literature on the bedside table

This week Sarah spoke to three women who work at Indigo, the tiniest (but coolest) Cambridge coffee-shop.

Claire Hawkins (owner of Indigo): I've been meaning to read *Catch 22*, a book that an ex-boyfriend gave to me. I want to re-read *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, too, but Charlie's ex-boyfriend has it and I've been trying to get it back!

Sara Charrot: I'm currently reading *Fred and Edie* by Jill Dawson, and *The Age of Reason*, by Jean-Paul Sartre. I'm always meaning to read Nelson Mandela's autobiography as well.

Charlie Roberts (Emma alum): I just read Martin Amis' *The Rachel Papers*; he's a pretty interesting writer. At the moment I'm reading *One for the Money*,

by Janet Evanovich. It's kind of comedy gangster stuff – trashy and brilliant. I'm going through my housemate's bookshelf, so I've got about four books on the go. I've been reading the autobiography of Mary Ann Fitzgerald, a female journalist who lived in Nairobi for years and got thrown out for writing politically sensitive stuff. Also a book of short stories by Chekov. I've got a pretty big collection of books on Antarctic exploration, and I just applied for a job at the Scott Polar Institute. I read *Mrs Chippy's Last Expedition*, about Shackleton's *Endurance voyage*, but from a cat's per-

spective; it's not just kid stuff, but really good. I went to Australia from January to April, and wanted to get a feel for the country, so read a lot of Australian literature; Ben Rice writes really good stories and I found one of them when I got back in a copy of *Granta*. I like reading about real people and real stuff – I don't usually read novels or Janet Evanovich! I'm really obsessed with Bruce Chapman, too, and I've been meaning to re-read him since going to Australia. His novels tread a fine line between fiction and reality. I can keep talking about books all night if you like...



# The musical is political

Clare composer Joseph Finley discusses the politics of music

Most people's conception of music is of something unworldly and utopian, something that we can escape to when we wish to run from the real world. Literature very obviously deals with the world around us, visual art to a lesser degree, but music, particularly instrumental music, is consistently seen as abstract, by its use of a language that is far removed from our everyday lives.

A handful of composers are celebrated for their political standpoint. Shostokovich's extraordinary popularity rests almost entirely on the criticisms of the Soviet Union contained within some of his compositions. Musically, his symphonies do not merit the attention given to them, but the concept of oppressed composer, subtly criticising the system is a very romantic image that has lasted well.

Shostokovich



Beethoven also wrote music that is considered political, most famously in the hymn to universal brotherhood that is the *9th symphony*, but also the celebration of Bonapartism in the *Eroica Symphony*, a tribute that the composer was later to retract on hearing of Napoleon's later actions. Overall however, the music loved by the public is escapist and reactionary in character, and composers who deal with social and political issues in some way are marginalized.

Schoenberg's system of 12 note composition has been described as 'socialism in music' and it is not hard to see why. In tonal music there is always a dominant note, with the others arranged in certain hierarchical orders: a class system of sorts. 12 tone music has a liberating effect, creating an equality between notes that can be seen to reflect an ideal of how we might like society to be. The problem with Schoenberg (as later avant-garde composers pointed out) is that he was too attached to the Germanic romantic tradition to drop it altogether, the result being that his use of rhythm, timbre and orchestration hold back his pioneering use of melody and harmony. It is not difficult to see his love of romantic tradition as representing his wish to be accepted in mainstream society, which as a Jew in an anti-semitic world he was never fully going to be.

Concepts of musical socialism came to be important to experimental composers in the 60s and 70s, to Karlheinz Stockhausen, with his pluralistic egalitarian vision in the extraordinary electronic work *Hymnen*, and to Cornelius Cardew, who set up the improvisatory 'Scratch Orchestra' in London, dedicated to free, leaderless music.

Since the early radical of modernism, a more 'libertarian socialist' ideology has taken hold amongst composers, one that tends to reject the doctrinaire Marxism implicit in Schoenberg's thinking. This has led to the free atonality of Harrison Birtwistle, the gorgeous polyphonic soundscapes of Gyorgy Ligeti and the musical multiculturalism of so many contemporary composers, using folk and pop sources from around the globe.

## Every piece of music portrays some kind of ideology or system of thought

Other, lesser known figures are equally interesting, such as Michael Tippett with his attempts to weave his Jungian philosophy, socialism and pacifism into his music. Of course it is not always the music that provides the political element; texts are used to give the listener a clear idea of the concepts behind the sounds. Berio, however, has gone further, trying to assimilate politics into his musical argument. The 'pluralism' of much of his work is created by superimposing different pieces of music on top of each other, different themes, rhythms and harmonies sounding simultaneously. In his *Sequenza* series, virtuosic pieces for solo instruments, he frequently manages to make a single player sound like many. In doing so, he has taken the most 'subjective' musical form, the solo work, and moved it from one that celebrates the romantic idea of the hero/individual to one that deals with society and how we interact with one another.

It is the feeling that a composer should not put their personal beliefs aside when they put pen to paper that inspires me in my composition. I firmly believe that

every piece of music portrays some kind of ideology or system of thought, whether the composer intends it or not, and that some abstract sense of musical 'beauty' is simply not enough. My new work *Many and Always* may not seem obviously political. It has no polemical texts, no national anthems to parody, and no oppressive regime to which I am specifically referring. It is a piece that deals with society, rejecting the notion that any single voice can

sum up the human experience. The ten soloists play music that constantly overlaps and interweaves, with no one part ever coming to dominate. I have also tried to reflect the concept of gradualism: there are few grand shifts and no concept of progression. Changes happen, not in one direction but in many simultaneously. The overall effect, I hope, is a not a fear of pluralist society but a celebration of it, with the notion that diversity rather than homogeneity is the route to a better society.

Of course many listeners will not hear, or choose to ignore these ideas in the music. That is fine – we all respond to art in entirely different ways. But whether or not we choose to look for it, art is always linked to concepts in wider society, and it is entirely legitimate to create music that is designed to provoke thought, rather than providing the listener with an escape into fantasy. To paraphrase a brilliant slogan of the 1960s: The musical is political.

*Canvas: New music by Joseph Finley  
Sunday 21 October, 8pm at the  
Queens' Building, Emmanuel*

# Forgotten masterpiece

Benedict Taylor on *The Golden Legend*, neglected masterpiece of English music

Over the last decade or so a pleasing amount of unjustly neglected Nineteenth Century British music has been given a welcome resuscitation. Now at last, British music has been paid a deep service by Hyperion, recording what must be considered the greatest work to have emerged from this country during that era: Sullivan's cantata *The Golden Legend*, receiving what is incredibly (and disgracefully one might add), its first commercial recording. The result can justifiably be called a triumph; a vindication of all the effort put in by Hyperion, the performers and the charities supporting this venture.

*The Golden Legend*, for long considered Sullivan's greatest work, emerges as a genuine masterpiece. Groundbreaking in its day for its continuity of musical form and setting of a secular, poetical text, it marked the conclusive move away from the antiquated set-pieces of the Handelian-Mendelssohnian oratorio to a subtler, orchestrally underpinned, almost Wagnerian conception. It is a widely held view that Elgar's achievement in *Gerontius* would simply not have been possible without Sullivan's earlier example. The highly chromatic, experimental *Prologue* is remarkable for its harmonic daring and modernist/constructivist techniques (what an earlier musicologist called, "unsophisticated atonality" (he was only half)). The rest is not so progressive but consistently overwhelms by the sheer

beauty of so much of the music. This is probably the best way of appreciating Sullivan: to equate him with a Mozartian beauty rather than Wagnerian sublimity. He does not storm the heavens, rather his music touches some deep humanity inside us.

Nowhere is this more true than the passages at the end of Scene 3 and Scene 6; passages whose atmosphere, beauty, emotional depth and profundity are matched nowhere else in Sullivan's output (and by English composers only Elgar and perhaps Vaughan Williams at

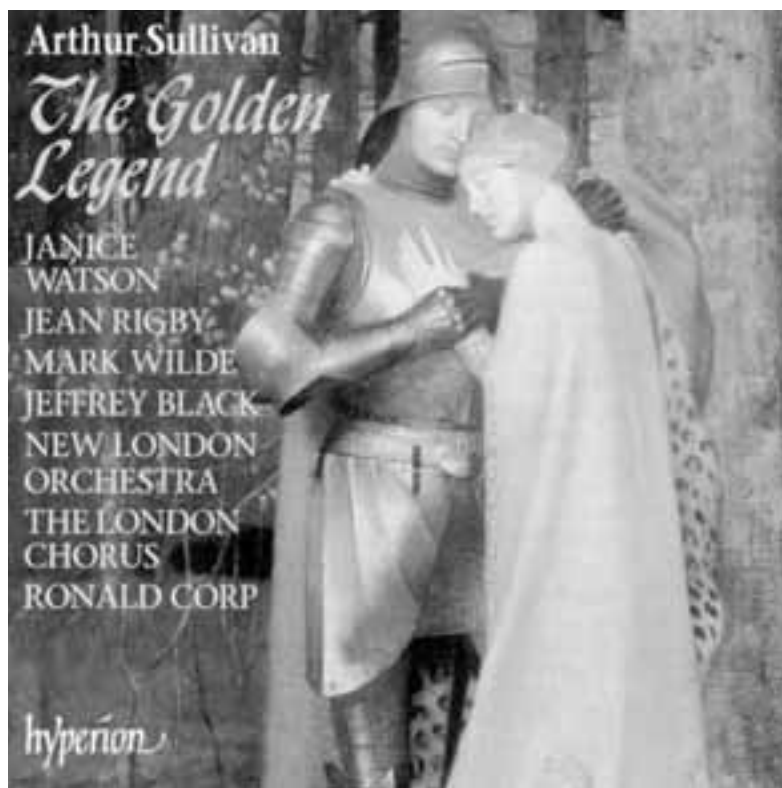
his most visionary). Though Tennyson is the poet most associated with Sullivan, the deeply moral aesthetic expressed here shows more of an unexpected affinity with Matthew Arnold. Only Scenes 4 and 5 disappoint, their lapses in musical invention probably stemming from inescapable dramatic flaws in Longfellow's original poem, yet these sadly mar the true greatness of much of the rest of the piece.

The performance is on the whole superb. Particular mention should be given to Mark Wilde for his ringing, youthful tenor, bringing such nobility to the part of the suffering Prince Henry (hear the unforgettable passage in Scene 3 "It is the sea"). Jeffrey Black's Lucifer is slightly shaky, but not worryingly so. Ronald Corp has evidently approached the work from a textural standpoint, bringing great clarity to the textures. One might feel at times that a more dramatic, impulsive conception and rubato would have been even more expressive, but his result is highly convincing in its own way, allowing us to hear so much of the score and thus perhaps ideal for a first recording. To anyone with an interest in English music (or indeed any great Romantic-moralist work of art) this is, surely, a mandatory purchase.

*Sullivan: The Golden Legend Hyperion 2001*

web  
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www.hyperion-records.co.uk



## PREVIEWS

### Friday 19 October

Lunchtime Concert, Kettle's Yard 1.10pm, free – Chris Brown (viola)

APU Lunctime Concert Series, Mumford Theatre 1.10pm, free  
Linda Merrick (clarinet) Philip Mead (piano) and Paul Jackson (sound projections). Contemporary music

Cambridge Orchestra, Corn Exchange 7.30pm, £14/£12/£9  
Symphonic screen classics featuring Tom Poster (piano)

### Saturday 20 October

Fitzwilliam Museum Prom Concert, 2.30pm, free  
Sonatas by Rachmaninoff and Debussy with Naomi Waltham-Smith (cello) and Alisdair Hogarth (piano)

Cambridge University Opera Society, Robinson College Chapel 7.30pm, £8/£5/£3  
Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice* by Gluck in a semi-staged performance – conducted by Oliver Rundell and featuring David Clegg

Cambridge Univerity Chamber Orchestra, St. John's Chapel 8pm, £12/£6/£3  
Wayne Marshall conducts the University's premier orchestra in works by Stravinsky, Verdi, Copland and Ravel

### Sunday 21 October

Selwyn Evening Recital, College Hall 8.30pm, £2.50, £1.50  
Alisdair Hogarth (piano) plays music by Liszt and Rodney Bennett

### Monday 22 October

Lunchtime Recital, Clare Chapel 1.15pm, free

### Thursday 25 October

Kettle's Yard Subscription Concert, 8pm, Hugo Wolf Quartet

BW

## KCMS

King's College Music Society gets off to a lively and diverse start this year with their first concert on Sunday 21 October, featuring a diverse programme including music by, amongst others, Handel, Varèse, Martinu, Mozart and Rihm. Conductors are Daniel Hyde, Dominic Neville, James Olsen and George Saklatvala.

Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* is complemented by a new work by King's student composer Olsen, which re-enacts the disastrous first performance of Handel's piece. Wolfgang Rihm, today's leading German composer, is also featured. Finally, two antithetical works from the 1920s – Varèse's magnificently stark miniature and Martinu's jazz ballet about kitchen utensils – an entertaining evening awaits.

*Tickets can be reserved in advance from Cambridge Arts Theatre box office: tel. 50333. The concert is at 8.30pm in the Great Hall.*

JO



## INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE OF PREACHING

## Dave Thorley talks religion and war with a Super Furry Animal

Being in the presence of a Super Furry Animal is immediately relaxing. Guto offers us a drink – along with instruction to help ourselves from a fridge stocked, bizarrely, with soft drinks from all corners of the international market. “You live in style,” I remark, head and shoulders buried in ice and aluminium. He smiles meekly. “We try,” he supposes back.

When we barge into the dressing room, Guto’s drinking coffee and thinking. He seems as though he’s constantly ready for casual conversation.

Seeing as he’s obviously not the singing one – who is conspicuously absent – and nor is he the tall guitar playing one – mucking around in the corner with a ghetto blaster – we refrain from asking him which Super Furry Animal he actually is and plunge straight into the murky waters of record companies.

It seems to me a simple proposition: Sony are allowed to release SFA records in exchange for which, the band are allowed to spend Sony’s money on releasing 7”s with only one groove in them, LPs one side of which plays inside-out, stupidly expensive DVDs and inventing their own ‘surround’ sound system. Fair’s fair. But Guto isn’t entirely convinced – “I don’t think you’ve ever got Sony over a barrel,” he draws, Welsh-ly.

And they are very Welsh. But, as is pointed out, “if you grow up and go to school in Wales, its political”. They’ve been lumped in with mediocre Welsh

strum-alongs throughout their Super Furry existence but that does nothing to dissuade them from being overtly Welsh. And why should it? If anything, it spurs them to a disposition towards the crazed and the confusing.

Suddenly, though, the conversation takes a dive towards the depressing. Distractedly, I bring up politics, and the

**“If someone says they’re a Christian, I respect them until they say something right wing.”**

mood plummets beyond my grasp, never to be retrieved. The ghost of light-hearted banter makes a brief cameo appearance when, quizzed on the sloganeering ‘Run Christian, Run’, Guto claims not to have anything against Christians – “If someone says they’re a Christian, I respect them until they say something...right wing”. Quite so. But otherwise the usual culprits rear their ugly heads. George Bush – “evil, evil man” – Pat Buchanan and his fundamentalist Christian chums – “scary people” – and (surprise, surprise) Mrs Thatcher – “That woman single-handedly destroyed South Wales”. We make our excuses, snap a few photos, and leave, hoping we didn’t do so much psychological damage as to upset the show tonight.

No fear. It takes more than a gaggle of sententious undergraduates to throw the Super Furry Animals off their stride. The SFA audio-visual experience, in full Technicolor, swells like a big, digital, bubble-gum bubble as blown by a character from Welsh Manga. The slogans remain – nothing like so humourless as the Manic Street Sweepers, though – and the ‘song for peace’ – illustrated by footage of exploding mushroom clouds – unhinges some, which can’t be a bad thing.

Musically, their agenda is clear. As Guto was at pains to point out, “We’re a techno band”. They are. They’re an enormous, orange plasticine techno band. They never succumb to boring journalism calling them “a parody of themselves” because they’re constantly metamorphosing (and in extraordinary directions). From their backstage group hug – broadcast over the big screen – (and processional smaller tellies dotted around the venue) – to the viscous sample syrup which brings everything to a head (with no musicians left on stage as the lights come up) – everyone moves through the evening, wrapped. Wrapped, but uncertain quite where they stood with regard to the spectacular nonsense verse onstage. Uncertain whether to dance, or to pogo up and down, or to body surf, or just to cut their losses and have an epileptic fit.

I suggested to Guto that one of SFA’s great strengths was the ability to confuse. Another meek smile; another supposition: “We try.” And then we went home.



Photo: Tom Catchesides

## STICKIN TO THE NITIN

## Mark Shilton makes peace with Nitin Sawhney at The Corn Exchange

We haven’t had an official ‘War on Terrorism’ protest song yet. But as the visuals spark into life on a huge screen behind the band to show grainy images of anti-aircraft fire and snatches of BBC news captions from the past week, it seems as though Nitin Sawhney may be about to launch into one of the first protest gigs. However, as Chandrasonic from Asian Dub Foundation once said, it doesn’t matter how political your music is, if it’s shit then no one will take any notice. Luckily for the anti-war movement, Nitin and his band immediately grab the audience with a haunting surround-sound a capella performance, which stuns the audience into silence and then roars of approval. Despite the political feel to it all, the greatest ideological point of all was made in the music itself. Samplers, Indian tabla, conventional drums, a bass guitar, classical Spanish guitar, human beatbox and white, African and Asian vocals were used in as many ways that you could possibly imagine. One moment it seemed to be ambient synths and sultry vocals, the next, an impressive four man a capella somehow morphs into a nu-metal style jam, complete with pogoing bassist on the edge of the stage in front of a pocket of baying fans. By the end, the biggest barriers broken down weren’t those in the world at large but the ones between the musical genres that had been, far more obviously than on his CDs, ripped to pieces and thrown back together to produce the most exciting and different fusion of musical styles you will have seen for a long long time.



Photo: Tom Catchesides

## Pulp in the Park

## May Glover Gunn on the new outdoor Pulp



One of my favourite photos is of me walking naked through the Botanic Gardens in Cambridge. Don’t worry, there is a rational explanation: it was a hot day, and so I took my clothes off.

Anyway, enough about me. The divine Jarvis Cocker has been taking walks in the park too – you only have to scan the track listing of *We Love Life* (*Weeds*, *The Trees*, *Birds in your garden*, *Sunrise*) to see that he has become pretty fond of nature and the world in general. The new album sounds green and lush; the songs are about vegetation, hazy dawns, horny birds and unmitigated lust. And, as ever, Pulp carry it off like no-one else.

Jarvis’ breathy soliloquies are strangely seductive (“Come on, do your dance, come on, do your funny little dance” being a case in point) and the lyrics are confessional and intriguing. As a record, it’s somewhere between the accessible appeal of *Different Class* and the sleaziness of *This is Hardcore* and it works brilliantly. Nature is sexy.

So go for a wander amongst the trees, enjoy the birds singing, and strip life down to the basics. Maybe leave your clothes on though...after all, I was only two when the photo was taken, and I’m not sure where the law stands on such issues.



# The fanish inquisition

Hilary Tacey probes the murky territory of fandom



Given that you're reading this article, I would guess that you have at least a passing interest in music. Either that or you've reached the point of desperation that means reading every single article in *Varsity*, including adverts, is preferable to starting that essay due in tomorrow. (Not that I've ever done it.)

You like music, then, but would you go so far as to describe yourself as a 'fan'? I wouldn't. Though I've gone to gigs, bought records, written and read about music for as long as I've been able; though music has been my soundtrack to growing up, falling in and out of love, probably one of the most potent and memorable forces in my life, I'd always stop short of saying that I was a music 'fan'.

Why? The thing is that all that being a 'fan' entails signifies a loss of touch with reality, whereas music for me has always been about the absolute opposite. 'Fan' conjures up images of screaming Beatlemania, Brosettes and Take That fans, tears and make-up streaked down their faces, taking comfort in the delusion that Paul or Matt or Robbie will be theirs, one day...

Perhaps this isn't a particularly good example – it's not that there's anything wrong with making up dance routines and memorising the lyrics to Westlife, aged ten. It is, however, undeniably immature, which makes it excusable when you, by way of your very age, are too. But beyond that? Well, it becomes a bit of a problem. Which means that although they may have been derided to the point of cliché, the much older fans of bands like Belle & Sebastian, Manic Street Preachers and the Smiths are particularly disturbing examples of obsessional fandom.

Here things become much more complicated, because whereas Five fans don't (usually) claim anything more than wanting to get inside Jay's pants, and it'd be a rare Boyzone fan who claimed that Ronan was the songwriter of a generation, 'adult' fans have the mask of musical credibility to hide behind. Paradoxically, the problem

isn't that some of the music produced by bands who inspire slavish devotion isn't good, it's the aura they propagate that unless they're the focal point of life then there's no point in listening that's unhealthy. Whether this is intentional on the part of the bands is questionable; though Belle & Sebastian's own indie cult mentality does seem to be reflected in their fanbase, and bands like the Manics undoubtedly find a captive audience in the emotionally vulnerable, of which they can't fail to be aware.

Few music lovers I know, however, would pigeonhole themselves as fans of particular bands, all too aware of the stigma it attracts – begging the question of whether it's more acceptable to be a generalised 'music fan'. I have problems with this too, however, probably harking back to a boyfriend who insisted on alphabetising his record collection. Crude generalisation it may be, but people who call themselves 'music fans' do tend to be male, 'High Fidelity' types who seem more interested in the technicalities of production, of collecting and labelling back catalogues, than actually enjoying the sounds themselves.

My issue with fandom, then, is not that music is unimportant and only incidental to life, rather the opposite. The joy of music is in the extremes – closing your eyes and giving yourself up to it absolutely, being consumed by it. Being a fan, whether of 'music' or a particular band, seems to negate the value of this experience, concentrating instead on the details and trivialities, failing to see the big picture, devoid of a sense of humour.

Music is important, but life is more so. Music can highlight the best bits, be your companion during the worst, and have undeniably profound effects. But, in itself, it means nothing. What fandom ignores is that music should be about enhancing life, not escaping from it. Knowing that sometimes you'll only be able to hear the really important things when you turn the record off.

## PREVIEWS

This week's musical line-up couldn't be more diverse if you cross-bred Talvin Singh with Mike Oldfield and pitted their offspring against Jools Holland in a musical battle to the death on National Let's Make an Inadvisable Attempt to Sound Really Different Day.

The Junction opens the proceedings on Saturday as Warning (10pm to 4am, £10 advance, £13 on the door)

returns to satisfy your drum'n'bass desires, before shifting down a gear or four with Heather Nova on Monday night (£8 advance, £9 on the door). Monday also sees Panic offering the usual indie-type stuff at the Q Club. More live music is provided by The Hudson Sound (Monday) and Kenisia (Saturday) at the Portland Arms. Kenisia, a Ska Punk band, claim, "The time has never been better for The Hudson Sound to make the impact that their fans believe to be inevitable."

Since the absence of reggae and a good helping of frazzled jazz more-or-less precludes the use of the word 'eclectic', it's just as well that the Man on the Moon presents its reggae night on Wednesday and the Corn Exchange comes up with the goods in the shape of Dr John on Friday, or the theme of this column would have fallen flat on its face. A ticket price of £20 for the last may discourage the faint of heart, but your mission is clear: go forth and diversify.

Tomas de Catchesides



For most bands, producing bland, forgettable, stadium rock takes time. Even the masters of the genre, Travis, took until their second album to get the dreary thing off to a tee. However the ever-precocious Starsailor have managed to produce one of the most complacent and moribund albums this year – at the first attempt!

Considering Starsailor are just out of their teens, it is truly disturbing how drably efficient *Love is Here* is. It attempts to recall a golden age that never existed; those halcyon days of 'real' music, before punk. Predictably, the results are gormlessly trad, redolent of a karaoke Van Morrison, and the only lasting impression it leaves is one of utter indifference.

Indeed, it is difficult to remember an album this side of Moseley Shoals so utterly backward looking. Whilst most bands use their debut album to signal some kind of intent, Starsailor seem content to party like it's 1972.

Starsailor  
*Love Is Here* (Chrysalis)  
Out Now

JIM HINKS



What we already knew all about Natalie Imbruglia, even, before listening to her new single: she used to be in Neighbours; she sang a quite catchy song about love and loss called 'Torn' which was actually a cover of an obscure Norwegian chart hit; she's quite pretty.

What we know about Natalie Imbruglia after listening to her new single: she's been listening to the latest PJ Harvey record; she's not as good as PJ Harvey; she's started wearing flouncy pink dresses and high heels; she's still quite pretty.

Despite the new togs, it's the same story from Nat – pain, rejection and isolation – only this time with more jangly guitars and an absence of melody. She's trying desperately hard though, with her oh-so-serious lyrics and her oh-so-sexy-breathy vocal style. The overall effect, however, is only that of a mildly pissed-off Andrea Corr.

Natalie Imbruglia  
*That Day* (BMG)  
Out 22 October

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# A Knight's Tail

Nick Moran gets his kit off for Sarah Pencil

If, before Monday, someone had told me that a medieval drama infused with schoolboy toilet humour and a sprinkling of homoerotic suggestion could ever work on stage, I would have immediately made them an appointment at the nearest mental hospital or told them to don a black polo neck and work with some bizarre, experimental theatre group. However, *Four Nights in Knaresborough* cleared away these clouds of disbelief to enlighten my philistine taste and left me only surprised no-one had thought of such an obvious formula for success before.

Nick Moran, of *Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* fame provided the show's obvious star billing, and his impressive performance brought both well-timed humour and thought-provoking insight to his character, the sexually charged youth, Breto. However, he was by no means the only cast member to shine and was matched throughout by his fellow knights, Traci (Robert Cavannah), Morville (Joseph Millson) and Fitz (Tim Dantay); not to mention Joy Brooks' powerful portrayal of Catherine: Breto's lover, torn between

him and the wealthier Morville. All of these provided vaguely familiar faces from the worlds of TV drama, soap opera and, of course, that perennial breeding ground for the best of British stage talent – *The Bill*.

The interplay between the comic aspects of the play, carried mainly by Moran's cheeky cockney character, and its more serious elements, at first through the reflective Morville, worked well throughout, never allowing you to settle into any one reaction. There were several moments when the appreciative audience did not know whether laughter, groaning pity, or disturbed disgust was most appropriate and a mixture of them all could be heard. However the use of 'fuck' in a schoolboy 'oooh aren't we being naughty' way did become tired after the first five minutes, but perhaps this was intended to add to the portrayal of the youthful naivety of Moran's character.

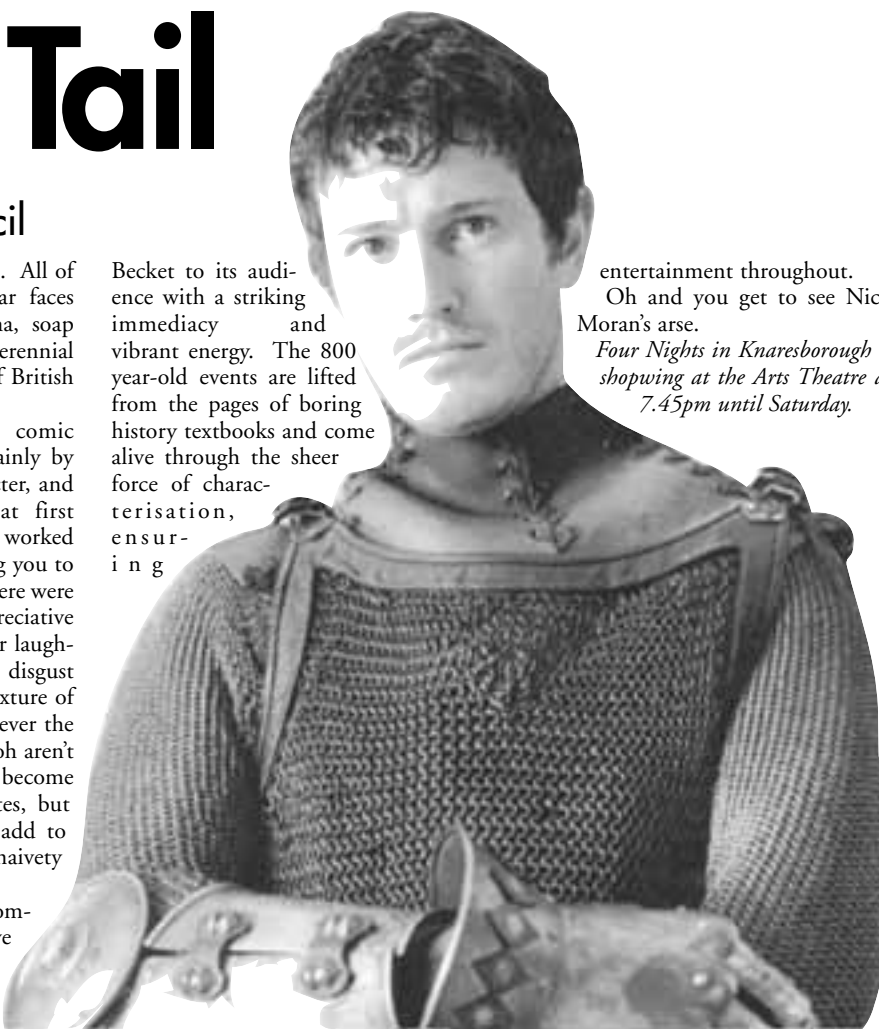
I would wholeheartedly recommend this brilliantly evocative and thought-provoking play that manages to bring the historical fact of the murder of

Becket to its audience with a striking immediacy and vibrant energy. The 800 year-old events are lifted from the pages of boring history textbooks and come alive through the sheer force of characterisation, ensuring

entertainment throughout.

Oh and you get to see Nick Moran's arse.

*Four Nights in Knaresborough is shopwing at the Arts Theatre at 7.45pm until Saturday.*



# Compromised by silliness

Ed Lake looks at the new Greek Tragedy playing in Pembroke New Cellars

Sad to tell, but much of the good work on display in Ed Richardson's new *Medea* has been compromised by silliness. Yes, he has divided the title role in three, and yes, this does seem pointless and contrived, groping after invention where none can be found, but there are still many things to admire. While some self-consciousness has afflicted the design of the whole, there is a steel and undeniable style about the show which must be acknowledged.

By and large the cast have dignity and control, and seem easy with the formality of the production style. Presumably this slickness comes in part as a result of the show's feted stint at Edinburgh, but however it is achieved, the effect is frequently commanding, and rarely less than diverting. Special praise must be given to Katharine James's Medea Love, who, without exceeding the bounds of the performative style, achieves eeriness and tenderness in equal measure. Sameer Rahim as Jason also deserves recognition for the spirit with which he tackles those weird oscillations in tone which mar his lines in particular. Richardson, replacing absent members of the Edinburgh cast, impresses with a hushed and haunted stage presence.

Despite all of the above, a lot about the show is bloody annoying. The division of Medea into three aspects is intended, I suppose, to highlight conflicts within the character of the estranged, tender, murdering, witch-mother-wife. All three Medeas performed with impressive poise, but I was left with the feeling that the pathos of her defiance might have been better emphasised were she one woman confronted by a sea of opponents, and not an intermittently synchronised trio. This is not the sound of "purists screaming from the rooftops" that so perturbs Richardson in his hysterically kooky director's notes. This is a matter

of algebra. Medea, if she is Medea at all, will have a threatening quality. She is a sorceress and a murderer, and her hard edge is not in question. But by attempting to segregate her characteristics (that is, into Love, Revenge and mask Medea's) the vulnerability that makes her character complex in the first place is dissipated, and a key tension is lost.

Similarly, having the chorus dressed in ordinary clothes as opposed to fancy costumes seems about as tired and obvious a comment on their function as seating them in the audience. Almost unbelievably, Richardson wants to tell you about both the normal clothes of the chorus, and their orientation towards the audience. Retaliate. You are a chorus member: talk loudly

about the action of the play throughout.

An air of listlessness hangs over the production, intensifying as the show proceeds. This is due in large part to the entirely superfluous wind and sea noise tape that plays throughout (cutting, as it happens, only when someone opens a door. Canny representation of the claustrophobia of Medea's studied desolation?). While initially the tape contributed to a sense of Medea's possible derangement and dislocation, it got boring after half an hour, and there were still fifteen minutes left. Vacant stares and shell-shocked monotones are already in place from the start of the show, meaning that there is nowhere the director seems happy to go when the shit really hits the fan.

When it does, in the oddly muted account of Jason's new wife Glauce, exploding when she puts on her poisoned cloak, the restrictions of the performance style cripple the possibility for real excitement. There seems to be little correlation between the words said and their delivery, in yet another instance of the unreasonable belief that, for the seventy billionth time on a Cambridge stage, talking about something quietly must still make it a bit more shocking than taking the plebby, shouting-about-it-and-getting-excited route. Since in this particular case the topic of the discussion is how Jason's bride has just blown up, a little more pep might be useful for the credibility of the scene.

Far from throwing the dramatic structure of the play into relief, the director's commitment to vogueish sparseness ultimately diminishes its impact and reduces its range. Still, go and see it, ignore most of what Richardson has to say, and enjoy some assured, arresting performances.

*Medea is showing at Pembroke Cellars at 8pm until Saturday.*



## TRINITY TRAGEDY

Usually the main kind of spectacles to be seen in Trinity Great Hall are the less-than-formal drunken acts of legless medics or too-well-watered boats. In January, however, acts of a different kind are coming to the Hall in the form of Henry 6 part 3 – The True Tragedy, the Dryden Society's annual show; and this year it is set to be truly spectacular.

Built in 1601, the Hall is several years older than the Second Globe, and, elegant and grandiose as it is, few spaces in the world could be more perfect for a unique period re-enactment of Shakespeare's version of the Wars of the Roses. Add to this impressive backdrop a set that is part English garden brought indoors, and the scene will be set for an equally impressive play.

Nick Clark

## DEATH AND THE MAIDEN



Photos: Tom Catchesides

Emily Howes

*Death and the Maiden* is a play worried about truth, redemption, judgement and reconciliation. In a country struggling to escape from a scarred history, are any of these things possible? Is it even desirable to tell or learn the truth? The play is set in an unspecified South American country, just beginning to recover from years of dictatorship.

The opening scene is a bit wobbly. Emily Howes shows signs of the good performance she will deliver later in the play, but Jon Higgs lacks confidence as her husband Gerardo, seeming slightly uneasy in his role. However, his performance grows in later scenes into one of quiet resignation and weariness, a man who is finally realising the impossibility of truth-telling (or in fact, of saying anything at all). When his character has an incredible outburst of anger in the second half, it works all the better because of the contrast with his earlier reticence.

Ben Jewell as Dr Miranda, the voice from Paulina's past, is not as good as the other two members of the cast. His facial expression for much of the play strikes an uneasy balance between menace and distaste at an unpleasant smell, and his delivery is a bit rushed. Despite this, the play is on the whole well done, and acted with conviction and skill. It raises questions about what truth is, and how it can be told and why it should be told. It shows us the impossibility of escaping our history.

*Death and the Maiden is at the ADC until Saturday, showing at 7.45pm.*

Ariel Dorfman



## Whose line

Zoe Strimpel

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear, oh... Well, maybe I should start on a positive note. There is no doubt that this kind of thing has major potential to be hilarious and clever. In fact, it quite often is on the famous versions. But, with that potential comes the possibility of embarrassment on a level not really associated with funny.

The show is in a *Whose Line is it Anyway?* improvisational format (Yes, improv, having to be able to think on your feet, and be funny about it – ouch).

Basically, there was some exhibition of fast thinking especially on the part of the boys (hate to say it), but quite often I was left thinking faster than the girls and the American guy, Lane Schwartz. To be fair though, Lane did put his false and cheesy show of stage excitement and competitive ferocity aside, to deliver an admirable attempt of being a guy with flatulence. Admirable, until, like a lot else in this show, it stopped being funny quite quickly, this aided on by a selection of infantile toilet “jokes”.

Getting back to that positive note that I mentioned earlier: Philip Stott, the host, was really energetic and endearing, and believe me, he had to work hard to keep the thing flowing. All in all, a few chuckles to be sure, but probably more grimaces.

## American Shite



John West

To label this production ‘cultural genocide’ would almost be too kind. Ill-conceived, facile and vacuous, *Lear: American Pie* tried desperately hard to be both a successful and faithful adaptation of the original *Lear*, and a devastatingly zeitgeist-defining modern cultural critique of American politics. It failed on both counts.

And all this, after the play had alleged-

ly been “entirely rewritten, recast and rehearsed” since the events of September 11th. Well, judging from the previous Edinburgh fringe review of *L: A P*, (con-juring up a whole star is no mean feat) this was probably no bad thing. It does, however, beg the question of just how bad it was before those changes? Certainly, there was no comprehensible allusion to the so-called “war against terrorism” – save a textbook rant about ‘Nam (still, hardly relevant) and a hammed-up death from the Alan

Rickman School.

More importantly, though, the play did not engage the intrinsic themes of Shakespeare’s original. The rationale behind its conception seems easy to find: *Lear* is a story of the corruptive nature of power, etc, etc, etc. (see mental GCSE notes), and – hey wow! – it is just like that today, most notably in the media driven politics of the USA. The Bard’s offering is, however, a profound analysis of the human psyche, and does not, therefore, need tampering with. The fact that it seems so relevant is a testament to the fact that it needs little adaptation.

Aside from the main drive of the plot (as I’ll optimistically term it), some curious soliloquies and odd set pieces did offer some hope and the occasional good line. Even these, however, seemed utterly contrived in context and could scarcely save a play doomed to wallow in its own ridiculous juices.

To give credit where it is due – the acting was good (most notably the devotional Cordelia, played by Laura Stewart) and the direction was slick (Jennifer Tuckett, who also wrote *L: A P*). But as my ol’ Ma used to say to me “You can’t polish a turd, son!”

Doubtless I’m blind to the sheer genius of the play – and I have shunned it as some dismissed Brecht. Well, if this is true, so did my companion, who fell asleep, bless her!

*Lear: American Pie* is showing at ADC until Saturday at 11pm

## Chekhov

Hannah Gingell

After a long hard day, a nice sit down and some quality entertainment seems the order of the day. And these two excellent (and short) Chekhov plays, currently on at Churchill, definitely fit the bill.

Both *The Bear* and *The Proposal* are energetic, paced and witty offerings. Mez Arif-Adib (both the women) and Chris Inglis (Smirnov and Choobkov) had fantastic on-stage chemistry, working well as a strong and hilarious team.

*The Bear* got off to a typically shaky first night start, with several mix-ups with the lines. But the consistent improvement maintained the audiences attention. Mez was particularly good in the first play, helping to carry a performance which occasionally lacked the confidence to pull off the humour and suffered from some slightly dubious stage direction. A high point had to be Dan Sanders pleading, “take pity on an old man”, then falling to his knees and crawling nimbly off-stage at top speed.

*The Proposal* got off on a better footing, and maintained this confidence throughout. All three actors gave excellent comedy performances. The sets for both were impressive and completely in tune with the atmosphere. The costumes were also to be commended.

All in all it comes highly recommended.

*The Bear* and *The Proposal* are showing at Churchill at 7.45pm until Saturday

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# An unresolved perspective

Claire Bodger takes a closer look at Frank Auerbach at the Royal Academy

Auerbach's paintings are wiped, daubed, scraped, thrust and almost tickled into being. Then, in his search to capture the raw energy, the essential vitality of his sitters or the North London environs that dominate his work, Auerbach is quite likely to scrape off this heaving mass of viscous oil paint and start all over again. What appears to be swiftly spontaneous, casual and often nonchalantly childlike – the features of his wife Julia Yardley Mills suggested by merely the briefest dab of black paint, the trees in Primrose Hill hastily zigzagging in red paint across the canvas to join the acrid yellow expanse of grass below – in fact reveal a consummate and almost operatic performance. Painting becomes a process of discovery, a hard physical grind. His brush never merely traces the outline of a subject, but assumes a kinetic energy, inquisitively and incessantly chasing after the raw and tantalisingly elusive truth.

Take Mornington Crescent for example. The route taken by the artist as he makes his way to the studio flat each morning for now more than 50 years becomes a constant source of inspiration, the never-ending changing moods of the urban landscape demanding avid and obsessive attention. The fall of light on the stuccoed facades, the arcing shadow cast by a flickering street lamp, the angular mass of newly erected scaffolding, a dog lazily sniffing a tree, the autumnal sludge of wet leaves, the clanking of a shop sign caught in a gust of icy wind. All have to be captured, and then recaptured with a furious and dogged energy as if the artist is forever running to keep up with the infinite flux

of images that shape the outside world. The drama of London unfolds in slow motion before our eyes, and the observer can assume a certain sense of familiarity with the landmarks that appear again and again in the paint-

ings. Often likened to Monet for his faithful devotion to capturing even the subtlest changes of mood in a single subject, Auerbach however, is not a series painter. Rather each painting is a palimpsest of countless others, the

fragments of previous memories, sensations and reactions layered beneath fresh interpretations to form a living composite whole as the artist strives to pin down a single fleeting moment.

Paint for Auerbach is there to be lay-

ered and moulded into place. Applying layer upon layer of dense and glutinous industrial paint, what emerges is a synthesis between paint and painted image that is just short of a three-dimensional modelling. The portrait of *Sow* painted in 1961 is an almost sculptural effigy. Hideously pocked and hollowed cheeks daubed with a bulbous red masses to form eyes and mouth, paint left curling over in a bid to leave the canvas, Auerbach rejects superficial appearance in favour of the mass of swirling energy and emotions that reside within the psyche of his sitter. The interior world is just bursting to get out. Even the armature of inch wide crude black lines that secure the vibrant acrid yellow mass of his *Seated Figure with Arms Raised* (1973-4) fail to confine the almost palpable essence of the figure. Furiously rushing at his easel in a never-ending battle to find an adequate expression for the infinite vitality of his multifaceted world, the work of Auerbach leaves the casual observer feeling disturbingly exhausted. You leave the gallery with a sense of frustration before a project left still unresolved, a sense of weariness in the face of the difficulty an artist encounters day after day in his quest to capture the resolutely elusive nature of the visual truth. Yet at least we do know that Auerbach, an artist capable of devoting two years and 300 sittings to one portrait, will never be fazed by the impossibility of his task. He will just pick up his well-worn brush, scrape the detritus of yesterday's efforts from his canvas and start again from scratch. *Frank Auerbach's work will be exhibited at the Royal Academy, Piccadilly until 12th December 2001*



©Royal Academy

## Are you an art critic?

Vanessa Hodgkinson questions whether you have what it takes to review art

As the formal critic is displaced by the casual reviewer, and the artist becomes his own critic, the job of writing objectively on the visual arts becomes all the more difficult. Whose viewpoint bears more weight? The expert, or the once-in-a-while gallery visitor? In an attempt to raise questions rather than to provide answers, I offer my opinion and invite you to forward yours.

"Art Journalists should give their readers some indication of what matters, some idea of where their values lie. We have had enough of judgement based on the evaluation of the relative," says John Tusa.

When was the last time you read a scathing review? One that was to the point, that was concisely against its subject? Or for it? The last time I did was in 1997. And yet this was not a criticism of any work of art, any play or book, this was a direct hit on those people who wrote about them, namely the art journalist.

John Tusa, the managing director of the Barbican Arts Centre in London, and former director of BBC World Services, pointed out that the arts can be good, bad, or indifferent, but let us make honest judgements on them.

Many people visit the Turner Prize at Tate Britain to look upon Tracey Emin's *Bed*, or Damien Hirst's dismembered ani-

mals, and make the honest judgement that 'this is rubbish'. No questions asked, fair enough.

For the majority, the concept of an installation is almost irrelevant unless it appears on a little piece of paper stuck to the gallery wall, explaining what it is sup-



My Bed by Tracey Emin

posed to be. When examining contemporary visual arts in particular, it is easy to make a judgement of the work from our initial reaction to it, and leave it at that. Walking around an exhibition of Rachel Whiteread's new plastercasts of negative spaces, having no idea what she is doing, is about as enthralling as hoovering fluff from under the bed.

But for much of contemporary art, it is the concept that is paramount.

In terms of aesthetics, what is beautiful and what is not, the concept plays very little part. So if an artwork is not able to

stand up in its own right, if it cannot survive outside the white washed walls of a gallery space, if you could not see it hanging in your room, is it really art?

'New Art History' allows us to put the artwork in a context. It also makes writing about art a great deal easier in my opinion. We must examine the artwork's position in society, in history, in cultural perspective to understand its importance and its relevance. But as we broaden the scope of context, perhaps we lose the Old Art History, the ability to isolate the object from its surroundings and examine its worth in its own right.

However, there could be a play or a book or a piece of music that was so informed with current sensibilities that everyone must agree that it is 'good'. "Such a process reduces criticism to judgement by performance indicators. In the absence of a tick in every appropriate box, any sense of judgement is disarmed, virtually invalidated." (To quote Tusa again.)

The word critic has become too loaded, and becomes almost obsolete. If anything, arts journalism is more a process of mapping what is out there as opposed to evaluation. Perhaps that's because there is simply too much to take into consideration, too many boxes to tick.

Needless to say, this has become very

convenient. Any judgement can be deflected or rejected by disputing the terms on which it is made. "Don't criticise me for appearing stupid; can't you recognise that I am being ironic about the stupidity?" Or "Don't tell me that some previous artist did what I am doing with greater technical superiority – I refuse to be tied down in terms of the dead past." And so the role of judging and evaluating becomes secondary to that of reporting and recording.

Should we have to know about Art History to be able to comment on art? I think it is quite possible to know too much.

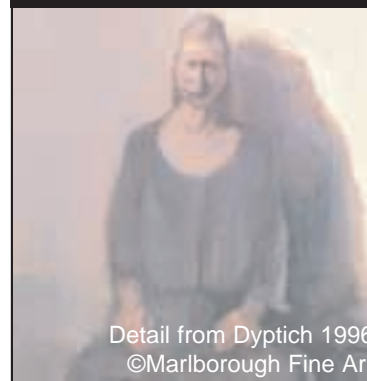
And so where does objectivity fit into this picture? To have our opinion qualified, must we have a background reading? Is our personal aesthetic enough to carry our judgement?

So perhaps the best opinions or the most objective opinions are by those who look upon the art object with no previous opinion, no knowledge of context.

Student newspapers reflect the opinions of those still investigating whether a true personal opinion still exists and where that investigation bears any weight. This is an opportunity to write honestly.

Please send your comments on this article to [visualarts@varsity.cam.ac.uk](mailto:visualarts@varsity.cam.ac.uk) for publication.

## CELIA PAUL SPEAKS



Detail from *Dyptich* 1996  
©Marlborough Fine Art

Celia Paul paints psychologically intense portraits of her family and friends. The surface of each work is charged with the history of their relationship, resulting in a resonant impression of intimacy.

Paul studied at the Slade School of Art, and her work can be found in diverse collections from the British Museum and Fitzwilliam Museum to the The Metropolitan Museum, New York, and the Saatchi Collection. In recent years she has been part of several exhibitions, including *The School of London – from Bacon to Bevan* at the Musée Mollot in 1998.

On Thursday 25th October, at 7.30pm, in Upper Hall, Jesus College, the artist and her sister Kate will be discussing selected works.





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# Have you caught the May bug?

Tenth Anniversary May Anthologies editors, Rachel Aspden and Tim Martin, get logorrhea

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Whether you're someone who can't help writing, or you have yet to set pen to paper, the Oxford and Cambridge May Anthologies are your chance to get professionally published. The Mays have been running for ten years, during which time many contributors have had their manuscripts accepted by publishers on the strength of their work in the Anthologies. In 1997 Zadie Smith (King's) was published in the Mays and went straight into the bestseller

lists with her first novel *White Teeth*. So, if you fancy yourself as the next Nabokov (Trinity) or the future Frayn (Emma), get involved: this time, it could be you!

In previous years, the Mays have consisted of two volumes, one of verse and one of prose, with past guest editors including literary celebrities such as Ted Hughes, Salman Rushdie, Stephen Fry and Seamus Heaney. For 2002, to celebrate our Tenth Anniversary and ten years of excellent writing by students, we're publishing a single large volume comprising new poetry and prose (10,000 words maximum) as well as the very best writ-

ing from the last ten years. Andrew Motion, the Poet Laureate, has kindly agreed to guest edit this special edition, and it will be sold in major bookstores in Oxford, Cambridge and

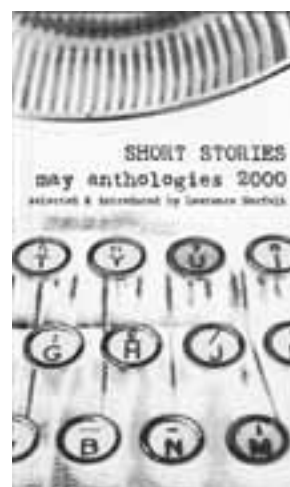
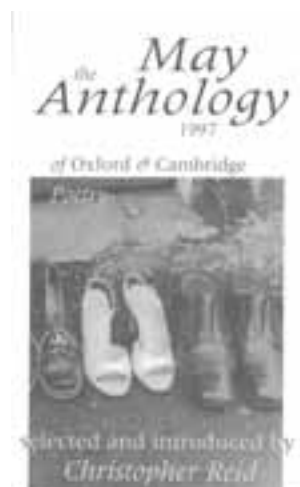
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If you're more interested in the professional side of publishing – editing, PR, design – then join The Mays team. We're looking for discerning

editors to shortlist submissions, capable PRs to help plan the massive launches, innovative designers to create the cover images and masterful web designers to sell The Mays over the Net. If you've been published in the Mays before and fancy sharing your work with this year's writers, why not get in touch and give a reading at the launch party in November? See the box below for contact details. All the rest of you, though, can use the time until 21 January to plan your magnum opus – and keep watching these pages for information on the Tenth Anniversary Michaelmas launch on November 28th. Write on.



Lord Byron, Trinity. Salman Rushdie, King's. Thomas Gray, Peterhouse. Clive James, Sidney Sussex. Christopher Isherwood, Corpus Christi. Vladimir Mayakovsky, Trinity. Margaret Drabble, Newnham. Rachel Aspden, Trinity. Rupert Brooke, King's. Alfred Tennyson, Trinity. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Jesus. William Wordsworth, St. John's. Christopher Marlowe, Corpus Christi. Andrew Marvell, Trinity. Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Trinity Hall. E.M. Forster, King's. Peter Ackroyd, Clare. Thomas Pynchon, Pembroke. Sylvia Plath, Newnham. Thomas Wyatt, St John's. Stephen Fry, Queens'. Thomas Randolph, Trinity. C.S. Lewis, Trinity. J.K. Rowling, Pembroke. Laurence Sterne, Jesus. C.P. Snow, Christ's. Angela Tilby, Girton. Siegfried Sassoon, Clare.

# The Mays 2002 Get Writing!

## MAYS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### Editorial Committee

Know your Jack Higgins from your James Joyce? Help choose the writers of the future. We're looking for keen and critical readers to prepare the final Mays shortlist. Interviews take place in the afternoon of Tuesday 23rd October - contact Rachel (rva21) for a time.

### Cover and Publicity Design

Paint? Draw? Take photos? Submit 'em to us for a chance at being on the cover of the Mays. Fancy designing the publicity campaign? All schemes and ideas welcome – email Tim (tcvm2) to know more.

### PR

Outgoing? Practical? Good at networking? Join up to work with professionals from the literary world, pitching the Anthologies, planning the huge launch parties, and much more. Contact Tim (tcvm2).

### Web design

Know how to knock 'em dead online? Update our website and spread the word about the Mays. Email Tim (tcvm2) for details.

## Stop Press!

The May Anthologies 2002 Michaelmas launch will take place in Borders Cafe on Wednesday 28 November from 7–9pm. Come along for wine, snacks, coffee and readings by special guests – and to find out more about writing for the Mays. See you there!



# Welsh whipped

## Rugby Union

17 Cambridge  
 9 Aberavon

### Hilary Weale

Despite the game clashing with the rearranged Six Nations fixture between Wales and Ireland, a good crowd witnessed last Saturday's evenly matched contest at Grange Road in the unseasonably warm weather. They were rewarded with a bright start from the Blues as they demonstrated their intent to play attacking rugby, driving through the forwards and kicking intelligently for position. One such probing kick by fly half Sam Howard set up a line out for the Blues close to the Aberavon line, but the visitors responded to this with a committed defence and strong tackling. However, they were forced to concede a penalty after just five minutes. Unfortunately, the Blues failed to gain an early advantage as Howard, who struggled to find his kicking feet throughout the match, missed.

His next chance, which was in front of the posts but drifted wide, came after Aberavon had at last got their hands on the ball and had spent some time in the Blues' half, but a drop-goal attempt failed and thus they came away with nothing to show for it. By this time, a pattern was emerging of missed chances and frustration as no moves paid off. The Blues' lively start was by and large weathered by the visitors until nearly a quarter of the way through the match, when the ever-threatening maul from a lineout rolled inexorably towards and over the Welshmen's line, with hooker Chris Collins emerging from the pile with the ball. The kick for conversion again went astray, so when Aberavon nailed a penalty through stand-off Jamie Davies not long after, Cambridge's lead did not look terribly convincing.

The increasing frustration of both sides at the number of turnovers and unforced errors creeping into the game led to further penalties and mistakes. However, both sides showed moments of creativity and pace, such as a clean break through the home defence in

their own half by Aberavon full back Matthew Back, and elusive sniping round the fringes by their scrum half Mark Davies. The Blues' defence was seemingly equal to it, but they conceded a penalty only a minute into the second half that saw the visitors lead for the first time in the match. Their response was almost immediate, and saw one of the best moves of the match. Not for the first time, Collins found himself on the left wing in space, took the pass and held his man to give Howard an easy run-in. Aberavon will rue losing the chance of a certain try

when failing to capitalise on an overlap, but a penalty for an earlier offence closed the Blues' lead to 10-9.

The clinching score came with just over ten minutes to go, when the last of a series of lineouts and rolling mauls saw James Meredith, Collins' front-row colleague, claim the try. Wry cheers, acknowledged good-naturedly by Howard, greeted the successful conversion. Importantly, this left Aberavon needing to score twice, and the Blues held firm in defence and emerged deserving victors, despite a not entirely satisfactory performance.



Photos: Catherine Harrison

# Boatie news

## Part I – Training programme on track

### Rowing

#### Charlie Ford

Two weeks ago was the formal beginning of the Boat Race programme. The 2002 clash will be the 148th Race since the event was first rowed at Henley in 1829 – the only race previous to 2001 that has been stopped and re-started. To say the campaign has “begun” is somewhat of a misnomer as in many ways the campaign to beat Oxford cannot have a beginning, just as it has no end. The very idea that post race each oarsman looks ahead to six months of quiet preparation for exams, lazy summer days, and getting a little portly in order to properly fill the ‘comfortable’ new blazer is unsurprisingly not true. Last year those hoping for selection for the GB Under 23 team were subjected to 2,000m ergo tests only 4 days after the biggest race of most of their lives, not to mention the considerable exertions of the Boat Race Ball. Since the 2001 race a lot of training has been going on, which for some has already paid off: Rick Dunn won Gold at the World Championships in Lucerne in the coxless four and Josh West rowed at 7 in the VIII which had to be content with 5th place after losing Kieran West to rib and shoulder injuries. On the U23 scene, CUBC was represented in the coxed fours by James Livingston and Alex McGarel-Groves coming 6th in the U23 Championships, and Ben Clare as Spare Man (all Goldie 2001). Aside from these high profile events those with a serious will to have a good shot at a place in the 2002 crews will have been training hard all summer, on their own and away from the positive vibes of the CUBC program. The idea that the campaign is only six months long is wrong.

However, in as much as the squad has reconvened, then preparation has certainly begun in earnest. Initial “first day” 2000m ergo tests produced some impressive scores. Ben Clare pulled 5 minutes 58 seconds putting himself at the top of the squad, well ahead of Blues Josh West (6.07) and Rick Dunn (6.10). For various reasons some of the other oarsmen have not yet been tested in this way, their

pedigree perhaps being enough for the first cut – amongst them Sam Brooks (4th at World Champs in USA VIII), Sebastian Mayer (4th placed at Sydney 2000 in 2x for Germany), and Stuart Welch (2nd to GB VIII in Sydney for Australia).

Initial plans to cut numbers down to 28 at the end of the first week were thwarted by there only being 25 potential blues who reported on the first day. Following return from training in China of ex-Goldie colour R McElroy and with some later bolstering of the squad by the men of Caius 1st VIII in recent days the squad is now up to 28. In the next few days a cut can be expected – in common with the coaches belief following the 2000 campaign that too large a squad had been maintained for too long – spreading resources too thinly and amongst too many who did not make the cut.

To come in the next few weeks the squad has a variety of treats in store. The Fours Head takes place on Saturday 10th November along the Boat Race course, backwards (although on the outgoing tide and therefore with the stream), and is guaranteed to be a joy for all competitors. One week later on the 18th is the Indoor Rowing Championship in Birmingham. Training for such events is presently the order of the day but, with the Boat Race as the ultimate objective, the programme is only going to get harder.



## COMMENT



### SPEIGHT ON SPORT

Where were you? Where did you watch that free kick? A free kick that deceived the goalkeeper so completely, he had not a chance of stopping the ball hitting the back of the net. Where did you witness one of the most important turning points in the history of English football?

The 35 yard free kick that Dietmar Hamann struck back in October 2000 was the spark of a new era. Back on that dank, wet day, England was bottom of its qualifying group and had just produced one of the most inept performances ever seen in front of the Twin Towers. Like the stadium it played in, the team needed urgent rebuilding and was in desperate need of change, right

down to its very foundations.

Enter Sven Goran Erikson. After the incompetence of Keegan, a bold yet refreshing change. Bold of the Football Association to consider a foreign coach; refreshing that they bit the bullet and actually brought in a foreign coach. The FA must have been on their prayer mats long into the winter nights of last year. After the fiasco of King Kev, they had to make the right choice and they did. It is well documented what Erikson has brought to the English squad. Septics may claim that he has inherited the team at a time when key players are at last finding their world class form. Few men though could have nurtured them quite the way he has done.

But perhaps the shrewdest move was not made by the Swede; it was done for him by an Englishman. Peter Taylor decided in his match as caretaker manager to give the captain's armband to a man long vilified by England's fans for his costly impetulence in St Etienne - David Beckham. It would have been very easy to give an old head the captaincy. It, like the appointment of Sven, was an inspired decision. Since taking on the mantle of skipper, Beckham has

led from the front. The new responsibility has seen him become the world class player we all knew he was. It is a job he relishes and that was evident in the way he covered every blade of grass on Saturday to make sure England got through that ultimately dramatic encounter with Greece. Not only did he do that but he still managed to compose himself and craft a goal of technical brilliance under the immense pressure of an expectant nation. Thank heavens for David Beckham and that free kick. Without him or it, England could have been looking back at international obscurity like in the dark days of last year.



Peter Taylor's legacy though is much more evident in the current under 21 set up. As under 21 manager, he had an unbeaten record and it is pleasing to see

that his hard work is now being continued by David Platt, who has taken the team to the European Championships. Erikson knows that there are weaknesses in the senior team and he should be thankful that there is a resource available, should he wish to utilise it.

The strength in depth can only be added to in the coming years now that the nation is exposed to this success. At long last, the FA has realised the importance of screening the World Cup qualifying games on terrestrial television. Now every young kid in the country has the opportunity to be inspired by Owen or Gerrard and go out in the garden and pretend to smash balls past Oliver Kahn. We can only hope that the fiasco surrounding the deal to secure the rights for the actual tournament next summer can be sorted out so everyone can watch Beckham grace the world stage. More importantly England are now a more available product through the introduction of the England roadshow. Following the success of an idea experimented with in other European countries, England now travel the length and breadth of the country to see its fans. It is refresh-

ing for the players to be lifted every time by a different, but nevertheless patriotic, crowd. Left behind is the crumbling Wembley, inaccessible to the majority anywhere outside of the M25 and with an atmosphere as uninspiring as its toilet facilities. The FA should keep the team on the move. Wembley should be knocked down and left to rest in peace along with the now stagnant memories of 1966.

What better way to bury those memories than for England to win the World Cup? Can it really happen this time? Installed as third favorites for the next World Cup, from international also-rans to apparent world-beaters, England's recent form suggests that the possibility of World Cup glory in the Far East is credible. In the humidity of Japan and Korea, Erikson's cool head may be the difference England has needed for such a long time. He has acknowledged he has much work to do. But, such is the way of the man and with the luck that England seem to be having at the moment it isn't an impossibility that we will see Beckham lifting that trophy. England is expectant again, but this time with just cause.





# DOUBLE DRUBBING

## Football

7 Cambridge  
1 APU

### Gid Habel

There is a school of thought that holds that no matter how many pre-season friendlies are played, at least 90 minutes must be spent in the destruction of a weaker side. Blues Captain Paul Dimmock was clearly of the same view as his new-look line up faced Anglia in their opening friendly match.

"I must admit that in the back of my mind, I was thinking about the possibility of a six- or seven-nil victory," said Dimmock. A shrewd thinker indeed, for the Blues ran out comfortable 7-1 victors in this local derby, dominating it from start to finish.

Dimmock's pre-season preparations have been far from a bed of roses though. He is quick to point out that this is the first match of the term, in comparison to most other universities who have all got their fixtures

underway. This may well be the case, but the present fitness of the squad is proof indeed of his reputation as a hard taskmaster, and full match fitness does not appear to be too far away.

The side included few of last year's successful Varsity match winning squad, but did feature the much maligned Goran Glamocak, back once more – this time in the guise of a Hughes Hall post-graduate – to torment and antagonise both colleagues and counterparts, it would appear, in equal measure. "Goran is a bit of an enigma," says Dimmock. Quite.

In this game, the mercurial front man was at his clinical best, firing in a nap hand of goals, ranging from a predatory poacher's first to a thumping centre forward's header for his fifth. And, for the most part, his teammates appeared to be more than happy with his overall contribution and link up play. A pleasing display from the man some call 'G'.

There is, however, no 'I' in team, and a team display this most evidently was. For a side playing together for the first

time, and with two relative novices in Ed Owles and Mike Brett pairing up in central defence for the first time, the understanding and communication on show was admirable. What is more, the impressive Steve Smith at right back combined effectively with Dimmock on the flank, and it is from this area that much of the threat to the Anglia defence was posed.

In the middle of the park, Tim Hall passed the ball with great effect alongside ex-Aston Villa midfielder Dave Harding, whose creative influence on the game was sorely missed after his withdrawal on the hour. The period that followed this will be of greatest concern to Dimmock. The loss of shape in the last half – hour was alarming, and profligacy in front of goal will have given the captain still more to mull over. What could Dimmock suggest to counteract such misses in the future? "Shooting practice", came the response. Perhaps a novel idea after a 7-1 victory but one that may prove beneficial over the course of a long season.



6 Cambridge  
1 Army Crusaders

### Nico Hines

Quite why eleven British officers were stumbling around Fenners on a Saturday afternoon rather than running around Afghanistan in the name of Queen, country, democracy and righteousness remains unclear. However, you felt there was more chance of Osama emerging white flag in hand from his Parkers Piece hide-away, than the surprisingly slow-witted army personnel managing to sneak anything from this game. The Blues may have rested a decent proportion of the first eleven, but despite conceding early on after a rare error by goalkeeper Joe Garrod, looked certain winners all afternoon.

It was the vastly impressive Tom Lodge who sparked the Cambridge side into life. Martin Page should have cancelled out the 18th minute Army goal, but failed to make any contact with the ball in front of an unguarded net after an attack begun by Lodge. Clearly determined to make a mark after his 10th minute goal had been disallowed for offside, the diminutive Lodge craftily created a fine opening for himself before shooting over. Cambridge didn't have to wait long though for in the 26th

minute a perfectly weighted through ball, by none other than Lodge, fell into the path of Page who was clumsily brought down in the area. The placement of the penalty by captain Paul Dimmock reflected his calm dominance of the centre of mid-field. More neat touches from Lodge followed and Martin Page was soon able to slot clinically home for his first goal of the season after half an hour. At 2-1 down the Crusaders never looked likely to recover from this 10-minute spell of incisive striking.

The army centre backs huffed and puffed like two aging Gary Pallisters and always appeared vulnerable to the inventive movement of the Blues. The balding pate of Major Vickery won much in the air but he found his feet altogether more difficult to control. Alongside him fellow Major Fitzgerald had long since had enough by the time the fourth second half Cambridge goal was nodded in by substitute Sion Lewis. The

majority of the second period was little more than the proverbial fitness test, offering few glimmers of excitement. Just two minutes after the break the Crusading goalkeeper handled a back pass and with the resultant indirect free kick Mark Walsh hammered the final nail deep into the army coffin. The next half hour served only to highlight the surprising majesty of Cambridge defender Lars Ekstrom. At first glance his only concession to the modern game appears to be his rather snazzy cycling shorts; however he showed remarkable poise. Despite, or perhaps because of, his build, he retained possession whenever called upon to do so.

It seemed unnecessarily cruel for the Blues to add three more goals in the last ten minutes of the match and take the scoreline to an unfortunate 6-1, but it demonstrated the gulf between the two sides, which Cambridge had until then not really bothered to exploit. Having said that, six goals were probably enough.

## Want to take photos for Varsity?

Varsity is looking for photographers to take photos for articles and matches. If interested, contact [photos@varsity.cam.ac.uk](mailto:photos@varsity.cam.ac.uk) or for Varsity Sport, Catherine Harrison at [sport@varsity.cam.ac.uk](mailto:sport@varsity.cam.ac.uk)



Blues squad on tour 2001

Photo contributed by Paul Dimmock