

VARSITY



CUSU has a new officer for students with disabilities. Unfortunately, the University still hasn't provided a students' union building with wheelchair access.

A look at Cambridge life for disabled students

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Uni condemns admissions advice for cash

Chine Mbubaegbu

THE UNIVERSITY'S Admissions authorities have condemned the recruitment of students by a company whose aim is to 'demystify' the Oxbridge admissions process.

Oxbridge Applications, based in Mayfair, London, has offered students £20 each in return for the completion of a questionnaire in which they are asked to detail their interview experiences and provide information such as names of interviewers and a description of their 'main characteristics.' The organisation recruited current undergraduates to act as agents in finding other suitable students.

The company, founded by Oxford graduate James Uffindell in 1999, has said that it will use the information collected in its forthcoming book *Real Oxbridge Applications*, which will include sections on each college and case studies on particular subjects, and will be sold in major bookshops.

Geoff Parks, Director of Admissions for the Cambridge Colleges, has criticised the recent events, saying: "The level of detail of information requested is considerable: much greater detail than you might think necessary for a book seeking to demystify the interview process, but exactly the sort of information that would be very helpful for coaching applicants for interviews with specific Cambridge interviewers." He added that "Oxbridge Applications were portraying their reasons for collecting the information they were seeking as being charitable, in the best possible light, and there were clearly other uses to which it could be put which were not highlighted. There was no guarantee that the information provided by students would not be sold to their clients, in addition to being used to compile the book that is apparently being researched."

CUSU's Access Officer, Naveed Anwar, also voiced his concerns. "A thorough examination of the small print [of the interview questionnaire] will reveal that payment is dependent on satisfactory performance, as defined by them...We would urge all students to refrain from working with this company." Wes Streeting agreed, calling the venture "morally bankrupt."

James Uffindell defended his company's actions against the University's claims, saying: "We never portrayed it as being charitable. We're a commercial organisation." He also reacted strongly against what he called the 'fundamental misconception' that Oxbridge Applications 'coaches' people in order to prepare them for Oxbridge interviews. He said that the company merely aims to tell people what admissions tutors are looking for in a potential applicant.

Since the company's creation five years ago, it has worked with close to 4,000 applicants and its clients now constitute 5% of the total applications to Oxbridge. During this period, Uffindell's company has come under fire from Admissions officers at both Cambridge and Oxford.

Parks disagrees with Oxbridge Applications' message, which he perceives as: "the only way to get a place at Oxford or Cambridge is to buy our extremely expensive services." Services are priced at up to £180 for private consultations, £800 for an interview preparation weekend in a luxury hotel, and £4,000 for the "premier service."

Uffindell told *Varsity*, however, that his company is not geared towards getting rich people into Cambridge. He pointed to the fact that a significant proportion of his clients come from state schools, and the fact that this weekend the company has subsidised an event for a group of youngsters from less conventional backgrounds, which will "only cost them £60 a head." Most admissions interviews take place at the beginning of December.

Damned if they do: Church anger at Xmas event



James Dacre

CAMBRIDGE CITY Council's decision to invite 70's punk rock group The Damned to switch on the city's Christmas lights has met with fierce opposition from local Church leaders. The Church of England have condemned the council as "insensitive." Lambeth Palace told *Varsity* that "we are unhappy with the event," adding that "you cannot separate a Christmas event from the fundamental meaning of Christmas." CUSU and local junior schools have also expressed concern. But a spokeswoman for the band told journalists that the response to their booking was 'laughable.'

There are almost 100 places of worship within three miles of Market Square, many of which have expressed grave dissatisfaction with the event. Last year's ceremony focused around a short Christian service. The event has

been tailored towards families with children in the past.

The Damned have achieved notoriety for their controversial performances, lyrics and publicity stunts. They are known for a host of anti-religious songs, including 'Anti Pope' which contains the line "Religion doesn't mean a thing; it's just another way of being right wing." The Damned have previously described Christians as "weak," saying they are "plain ignorant and just don't understand." Members of the group responded to criticisms of their involvement with the event by saying that Christmas "is a time to behave disgracefully and slob out in front of the TV, The Damned are particularly good at that sort of thing and the church stuff just gets in the way."

The Church of England asked "if the Damned realise that they are involved with something that is about the coming of the light into the world?"

Comparing the symbolism of Christmas lights to that of the Christian emphasis upon light, the Rev. Stephen Leeke, vicar of St Martin's Church, said that "it would be more appropriate for The Damned to switch them off."

Cambridge City centre manager, Annette Joyce, responded that "It is actually a mixed cultural event that promotes what's happening in Cambridge. Some think it's blasphemous, others think, 'don't be ridiculous.'" St. Mary's church called for the event to be restored to a "short religious service," adding that last year's event was "a completely mixed cultural event."

The Salvation Army band, the Collegium Choir and the cast of *Cinderella on Ice* will also be involved. Previously, Christopher Biggins, Big Brother's PJ and Spencer and the annual pantomime cast have flicked the switch. The Damned are to perform at the Junction after the ceremony.

Off with OFFA, says Howard



Jennifer Scott

CONSERVATIVE LEADER Michael Howard made a keynote speech in his electoral campaign at Emmanuel College last Friday, provoking strong reactions within both the university and local community.

Howard outlined the Tory policy on higher education, stressing its prominent position in their overall political agenda: "Our ambition is excellence in higher education as it is the key to British competitiveness in the global market place". Howard denounced the Labour government's "interference" in universities, and was heavily critical of the Office for Access to Higher Education, branding their proposed strategy as 'coercion'.

Howard also unveiled plans for bursaries to encourage able students to study core subjects such as mathematics and chemistry. He pledged to spend £20m per annum from 2009 on such bursaries, with around 10,000 students receiving £2000 on completion of their studies. Howard also proposed an increase in interest on student loans to replace top-up fees, and claimed that the gap between private and state schools had widened under Labour.

Local MP Anne Campbell responded to Howard's criticisms by insisting that "since 1997, the percentage of children achieving expected standards in literacy and numeracy in Cambridge has risen considerably." CUSU Higher Education Funding Officer Joe Powell told *Varsity*: "The Conservative Party and Michael Howard have always opposed measures that widen access and give kids from poorer backgrounds the opportunity to study at our elite institutions... Ultimately Michael Howard is wasting his time trying to woo the student vote. Students will never vote in their masses for a party that has consistently stood for cuts in higher education and our public services."

Sarah Marsh

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Animal rights campaign collects £500,000 a year

Amy Goodwin

IT WAS revealed this week that animal rights protestors are collecting up to £500,000 a year in street stall donations. This money is being used to finance the ongoing campaign against Cambridge-based Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS), with a significant proportion directed towards splinter groups and individuals involved in direct action against researchers and their families. The finances of SHAC, or Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty, are not monitored in any way as the organisation is not an officially registered charity. The disclosure of the scale of their funding has thus caused immense concern, particularly as the extent and quality of SHAC's internal democracy has come into question in the past.

Police are in the process of launching an investigation into the large sums of money amassed by senior figures in the organisation, which subsequently disappears from sight. A considerable amount is held in cash and used to finance actions against employees of companies connected with HLS, but it is unclear exactly how much funds illegal activity and at present SHAC is under no obligation to disclose details of its internal organisation.

Such alarms come against a background of mounting disquiet regarding the tactics of animal rights protestors. Since plans for a £32 million primate research laboratory at Cambridge were abandoned in January when protests reached unmanageably virulent levels, campaigners have refocused their actions on Oxford. Believing that research they prevented taking place at Cambridge may now simply be relocated, SPEAC (Stop Primate Experimentation at Cambridge) have joined the coalition against Oxford's planned biomedical research facility, along with SHAC.

The battle between Oxford researchers and protestors has escalated in recent months. Building contractor Walter Lilly pulled out of the proj-



Do the animal rights protestors have something to hide?

ect after intimidating letters were sent to shareholders in July, and earlier this month internet service provider Yahoo removed a site which listed the home addresses and telephone numbers of Oxford staff, including Chancellor Chris Patten, at the request of the university. A spokesman for the university said that the site represented an 'incitement to harass' staff. Although SPEAC condemned the listings, its leaders have reaffirmed their commitment to legally exposing the 'catalogue of lies' emanating from the university. Robert Cogswell added, 'I'm not saying there hasn't been illegal action against contractors and subcontractors but that it has in no way been condoned by SPEAC'.

Last week Oxford University won the latest round in its battle to prevent obstruction when an injunction was passed protecting its staff and buildings from activists, although Mr Justice Grigson rejected the university's demand for a 100 yard total exclusion zone and an anti-harassment clause preventing protestors from 'loi-

tering' near students. He claimed that the injunction did not prevent anyone from expressing his views, but restricted 'to whom and where he expresses those views'. The university's lawyer said that the injunction was 'a win for liberal democracy'.

Scientists have expressed their fears that extremist activism could hinder efforts to find cures for diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. Commenting on the Oxford judgment, Simon Festing of the Research Defence Society stated that 'the research community is pleased that the courts are waking up to the gravity of animal rights extremism'. John Curtin, a founding member of SPEAC, was recently charged with desecrating the grave and stealing the corpse of an elderly woman whose son-in-law is involved in research. The case has only increased pressure on the government to introduce legislation to protect scientists. An amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill may be announced in the Queen's Speech on the 23rd.

Our own enterprising young Brit RAG fundraiser protest

Charlotte Forbes

A PhD STUDENT has won nationwide acclaim for her pioneering work in global healthcare. Sonja Marjanovic, 26, has recently been announced as a finalist in the 'Enterprising Young Brits Award', in recognition of her company's work.

She is the joint founder and CEO of DiagnovIS, a company launched in 2002 to address the healthcare needs of developing nations in what Marjanovic stresses is a team effort. The company has developed a digital microscopy and optical recognition unit for use in the diagnosis of serious diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, and the sexually-transmitted diseases gonorrhoea and chlamydia. The ability to rapidly test blood samples in remote areas will increase the speed of both diagnosis and treatment, and will potentially save lives.

The project received a massive boost when the company won the 2003 Cambridge University Entrepreneur business plan competition in May, sponsored by the Cambridge-MIT institute. "It had a huge impact and inspired us to carry on. It validated our efforts and gave us confidence that the project was both feasible and worthwhile", she said.

Currently DiagnovIS is working towards placing the units in around 11,000 hospitals, clinics and airports over the next two years, which will create an estimated revenue of over £37 million. This money will then be re-invested to aid expansion of the project over the next 3 to 5 years. This could be done by increasing the number of illnesses that the unit tests for, and extending its use across the world. It is initially to be used in Africa, after which it could be tested in other areas, such as Latin America and south-east Asia.

At the 'Enterprising Young Brits' award ceremony on Monday, DiagnovIS beat 1000 nominees to make it to the top five finalists. Marjanovic was grateful to her backers: "I got incredible support from the University, but I think that more could be done to publicise such entrepreneurial opportunities. It is a very worthwhile cause to promote... the potential social and economic benefits cannot be overstated."



Charlotte Forbes

Prize-winner Sonja Marjanovic

Chine Mbubaegbu

SOME COLLEGE RAG committees have come under attack this week for promoting a so-called 'Lady Pulling' event to raise money for Children In Need. The event involves students bidding for their favourite female candidates to kiss in public. The proposals led to a series of complaints at the colleges involved, Sidney Sussex and Corpus Christi. CUSU's Women's Officer, Jo Read, and the central RAG committee have also received complaints. Concerns have arisen from the interpretation of such an event as using women as objects, there for men's pleasure.

Sidney Sussex's RAG committee sent out an email earlier this week, stating: "There will be seven tins with seven ladies' names on them in the bar from tonight, and the two girls you give the most money to will

pull each other next Monday."

Dom Hinton, President of the central RAG committee, has decided to change the event in response to the complaints. As it now stands, both men and women will be involved and the two people who raise the most money, regardless of sex, will kiss in public. However, there is some confusion as to whether this was the original intention.

Paula McBride, organiser of the event, assured students that the Sidney Children In Need Auction was a purely charitable event and was not meant to cause offence. Fundraising events will also be taking place at other colleges. St John's will be holding 'Miss St John's', their annual drag queen competition, whilst Trinity Hall will be trying to make a coin train through the front court of college. More conventional charity events at colleges include various cake sales and raffles.

They wish it could be Christmas every day



A GROUP of musicians from Selwyn College are eagerly anticipating the release of their first single to kick-start the new charity organisation, Recorded Aid. With the support of Cambridge University Radio, the musicians will spend this weekend re-recording two tracks from the Wizzard and Slade 'Christmas 1973' hit collection, for release on Monday.

Kit Hobbs, who said he initially put forward the idea as 'a barmy scheme at a CUR social evening back in October', describes Recorded Aid

as Cambridge's answer to the 'Band Aid 20' project. The proceeds will go to RAG and Jimmy's Night Shelter.

The Recorded Aid musicians (four of whom are pictured above) aimed to 'do something on a local scale that people can appreciate and see'. With Selwyn's Dean of Chapel Ian Thompson agreeing to offer his services, the group has not shied from the inclusive spirit of the original. Other musical talents that will feature on the new single include lead guitarist Mike Baker and

CUSU President Wes Streeting.

The recording will hit the airwaves early next week. If the single proves to be successful, the band plans to organise a much larger scale event next term which would involve many more musicians, in a similar vein to the 1985 Live Aid concerts.

Tom Ready

The single will be available on Monday priced £3. To obtain a copy, email info@recordedaid.org.uk. Cheques or cash can also be posted to U. Monaghan at Newnham

Costs of international student visas to rise

Rachel Cooper

CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS are fighting back against the government's plans to raise the cost of applying for an international student visa for the second time in a year.

CUSU and CUSU International have announced their intention to present a united front in a bid to lobby the government to rethink their plans. A motion was passed at the last CUSU Council meeting to support CUSU International's campaign.

The first step in the campaign was taken on Wednesday 17 November with the launch of International Student Action Day. Petitions were distributed nationally, including to all Cambridge colleges. Cambridge's drive to prevent the hike in costs is part of a wider national campaign, co-ordinated by the Aldwych group - the students' unions of the Russell Group - and the NUS. The Aldwych group met last Friday, and a joint consultation paper is currently being prepared for submission to Parliament early next year. Individual student unions will also present their case to the government.

CUSU President Wes Streeting said that he is currently trying to set up a meeting with the Immigration Minister, Des Browne, to voice his concerns about the government's plans. Members of CUSU International are intending to lobby local MP, Anne Campbell at her student surgery next week.

Kerry Tang, CUSU International President, told *Varsity*: "The Home Office's decision to double renewal charges adds insult to injury. By deterring students from applying to the UK and damaging access, we will be doing international students a massive dis-favour and threatening the UK's reputation as an international research centre of excellence. These charges are unfair and exploitative".

Andrei Mihai Pogonaru, CUSU International Welfare Officer, added: "Increasing the cost of applying for a visa is a discriminatory and hostile move. The brightest and poorest students will suffer as bursaries will not cover the increase in costs".

Streeting voiced his support for the campaign: "CUSU and the university are appalled by the government's plans. International Students pay through the nose for their education in the UK and contribute enormously to our universities. Diversity amongst the student population and the contribution of international graduate students to research for our University is something we should all cherish and value".

Last year the Government introduced charges of £155 for a basic application and £250 for a premium service without any consultation with universities or students, attracting significant criticism. If the new fees structure is introduced in April 2005, fees could increase by as much as 30%. The consultation deadline falls on the 8th December.

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Access Denied: A Spotlight on Disability at Cambridge

Cambridge has around 600 disabled students, the majority of whom have an 'unseen disability', but who have to adhere to the same deadlines and attend the same lectures as everyone else. For some, this can cause an untold number of problems – and not merely in the case of restricted access to those with limited mobility. The Disability Resource Centre also includes those with impaired vision and hearing, mental health difficulties and dyslexia in its statistics, all of which may make study more difficult unless there is adequate provision and understanding. Various acts of legislation have been passed in recent years to address this need, most recently the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act of 2001. This states that no disabled person should be treated less favourably without justification. It also states that reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that the disabled people are not placed at a substantial disadvantage whilst at university. The *Varsity* news team investigates the level of provision at the University, and whether disabled students think that enough is being done to help them.



Andy Sims

Case study: Rachael Wallach

Rachael, a third year Philosophy student at New Hall, has been in a wheelchair for four years after sustaining a spinal cord injury.

Rachael thinks that the problem for those in wheelchairs is "not physical access so much as organisation and cooperation within the University". She suggested that the University were using its old buildings and expense as an excuse for what could be done by staff at all levels to accommodate disabled students.

She cited problems such as accidentally being put in a second floor room in college and being unable to attend lectures due to broken lifts or fire regulations.

In her first year Rachael remembers her room cleaner complaining about the tyre marks on the floor of her bathroom and when she asked for help down the stairs, being told by the cleaner "That's why people like you need carers."

Rachael feels that she has missed a substantial number of lectures and supervisions because of her disability as well as socialising with her peers. She now lives in her own flat in Cherry Hinton and drives to and from the University in a specially adapted car. She admitted that "there have been big improvements since I've been here but it's more about people's attitudes and willingness to accommodate."

She thinks spending thousands of pounds on physically making buildings accessible is unnecessary but suggested that the University focus on training all employees about disability. She added, "it shouldn't be up to the student to sort out a broken lift."

Case study: Jon Begg

Jon, a third year Land Economist at Downing was involved in a car accident over the summer and spent the first half of this term in a wheelchair with two broken legs.

Jon explained how he was unable to go to all his lectures during his time in a wheelchair. He said "the [University] buildings I've had experience with have been pretty bad." He described the Land Economy Department as "absolutely appalling for wheelchair access" but said that the lecture theatres on Mill Lane were "not too bad". It was unfortunate that all his lectures were on the third floor, to which the lift did not go up to.

Jon described his disabled room in Downing as "fantastic" and was able to get to the college bar due to a ramp but anywhere else in college was more difficult due to the number of staircases. But he added, "Downing bent over backwards to support me - where the access physically was not there I was given personal help from the tutorial and admissions office."

"Getting around Cambridge itself was difficult due to thin, uneven pavements and cobbles." He cited his frustration at not being able to get past lamp-posts with bicycles chained up to them.

Jon described how more University wide support and co-operation is needed – "It wouldn't have been hard to move some of my lectures and supervisions to more accessible places." He is keen to see that many of the University's older buildings are not ruined by too many ramps and lifts but believes that there "must be a compromise solution".

Individual Faculties

THERE IS much inconsistency in the level of disabled access across the University's faculties. New buildings such as the Law Faculty, English Faculty and Judge Institute of Management have ample provision, including hearing induction loops, parking facilities, adapted toilets and lift access to all floors. But several departments, mostly those situated in historic buildings and converted houses, have much less provision. The Architecture and History of Art departments on Scroope Terrace have 'steps to the exterior, numerous steep staircases within the building, and many narrow corridors', according to the University's Disability Resource Centre. There are also no disabled toilets. The DRC cites lack of funding and listed building status for this.

Other departments such as Geography and Land Economy also lack facilities. The Geography department has steps up to the entrance, heavy doors leading in, and then further steps. There are at least eleven steps to each floor, three steps to lecture theatres and steps in the middle of corridors. There are also no adapted toilets, no induction loops and no adapted computer equipment. A lift feasibility study was carried out a few years ago, but found there was no suitable space in which to install one. But in 1999, a neighbouring building also used by the department was refurbished and now has increased accessibility, together with improved toilet facilities.

CUSU's approach to disability

CUSU PROJECTS a pro-active stance with regard to disabled access. The Disability Officer holds a part-time post on the executive committee, and a campaign for the disabled is promoted on the CUSU website.

But there has been no Disability Officer for the majority of this term after the previous officer resigned, feeling that the burden of responsibility was too great. He was not replaced, leaving disabled students without a fixed and reliable point of contact at the Student Union.

The CUSU website does not detail the disabilities campaign, suggesting that students contact the Disability Officer for further information. The main role of this officer is to increase awareness of the problems that disabled students might face. Other student unions have led campaigns, such as the "free to pee" campaign in which all normal toilets were closed off, so that students appreciated the difficulty in locating disabled toilets at times. There has been no such campaign in Cambridge.

The CUSU offices on Trumpington Street are currently inaccessible to disabled students, presenting narrow corridors and several flights of stairs. The Welfare Officer claimed they were seeking to move, evoking the Union's long-standing bid for a new Student Union building. Yet this bid is indeed long-standing and it is questionable as to how long the situation will be left to moulder before something will have to be achieved under the new Disability Discrimination Act.



COMMENT

JAMES DACRE

"When a lecture hall cannot accommodate the disabled, a lecture can be moved; when this is not possible, it can be recorded"

This University's early infrastructure clearly wasn't designed with disabled access in mind. That any new building must be is a truism. As one of the largest Heritage sites in England, it is inevitable that Cambridge struggles to update its many buildings to contemporary access requirements. Following the Disability Discrimination Act in 1996, it is to be expected that Fitzwilliam, Churchill and Robinson, as the University's newer colleges, have some of the best access. It is regrettable that it will take next years enforcement of this to update many of the older ones.

There is no uniform policy throughout the university on improving disabled access. Whilst this matters less with regards to colleges, as disabled students may apply to those colleges with decent facilities, it is of vital importance where

faculties are concerned as it will deter bright students from applying at all. The restriction on what a disabled student might or might not apply for is quite arbitrary: it seems absurd that disabled lawyers might abound, whereas disabled Cantabrian architects will be few and far between. One only needs to walk around their respective departments to understand why this might be.

The University should not need to make academic exceptions for disabled students, but it should seek in every way to provide them with the same academic resources as every other student. A neglect of disabled access is not exclusively about infrastructural barriers. All such barriers can be overcome with adequate administration and appropriate attitudes. When a lecture hall cannot accommodate the disabled, a lecture can be moved; when this is not possible, it

can be recorded. The many disabled students that we have talked with have explained how all problems can be overcome, but that the issue at stake is the University's attitude. And perhaps the problem here is that the institutional attitude, although evidently one of working towards disabled access, is to do so in a localised way, leaving it up to individual departments, organisations and colleges to cater for the needs of their own members with disabilities.

The University seems to have an admirable record for disabled access and support schemes, yet different people have had different experiences of access within their individual departments and colleges.

Where disabled access is not available, it is glaringly obvious. It was a great embarrassment last week when a stu-

dent had to be carried up the Union Stairs to visit the opening of the Cambridge Student Art exhibition. CUSU, *Varsity* and *TCS* have absolutely no disabled access to their Trumpington Street address. The Architecture and History of Art buildings hold serious problems for the disabled, whilst Geography and Land Economy are notably lacking in disabled facilities. No university-wide initiative has sought to alert the general student body to these problems. Other universities regularly lead high-profile disabilities campaigns. Cambridge always uses the excuse of the collegiate system to avoid leading a university-wide campaign.

Whilst the University should make the initiative, it is clearly necessary to involve disabled students in the planning and administration of disabled access schemes here. Many students

have described the countless benefits achieved from touring their colleges with their Senior Porters and Maintenance officers, describing the intricacy of the problems they face from day to day. Effective disabled access within the University requires real persistence and communication with the disabled from the University. Ultimately, a sense of consistency throughout the University can only be achieved through co-ordination. Now that CUSU finally has a Disability Officer, who, let's not forget, won't be able to reach her own workplace without great difficulty, the signs are there that the issue may at last be high enough on the agenda to act as a catalyst for change. If not, next year's enforcement of the Disability Discrimination Act could see the University hit by a barrage of legal cases.

Architecture fights back

Charlotte Keane

THE DEPARTMENT of architecture has rejected the second report to the School of Arts and Humanities, proposing to shut the department down. It claims it was not given enough time to finish implementing the changes it had begun to make after the initial report in July 2003.

After the first report in 2003 the department embarked on a radical restructuring process in order to recoup the money lost with the downgrading of their Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) rating from 5 to 4. Before these reforms were finished though the General Board published its second report recommending that the Department be closed.

"Frankly we were shocked," said the new head of the Architecture department, Professor Marcial Echenique. "We fully accepted the first report and were working to improve our research and funding. We were maybe three-quarters of the way through these reforms when we were given this second report however. We do not accept it and will fight it all the way."

The Department has the support of both the local and the international community with letters being sent to the Vice Chancellor from respected architects around the world who trained at Cambridge, such as Sir Richard McCormack. The Cambridge Futures Project, with whom the Department has worked

closely, has also registered its shock and displeasure.

There has been considerable contention about the way the RAE evaluated the Architecture departments, as there was not one practising architect on the 2001 Built Environment Panel. Moreover the RAE considered Architecture alongside Construction and Surveying but has since been forced by outside pressure to recognize Architecture as a separate unit.

The Department of Architecture is confident it will do much better in the next evaluation in 2008. The achievement of Matthew Barac in winning the 3rd International Bauhaus Award was an encouraging start. The board asserts that even if the Department of Architecture were to be closed, it would not be the end of Architectural research and teaching; staff and students would be dispersed throughout other departments such as Engineering.

Professor Marcial contends this would not be a workable plan as it would destroy the arts aspect of Architecture and "would mean the virtual end of the visual arts in Cambridge. The department of Art History is far too small to survive without the Architecture department as we carry all its libraries and resources." The closure of the Architecture Department will also sever links with the local community and industry.

GU president elected

Lucy Phillips

RUTH KEELING was elected President of the Graduate Union on Wednesday. She beat off competition from Alex Broadbent and Konstantinos Oikonomou by a clear majority to take up the sabbatical post. Jane Ding was elected Women's Officer and Elizabeth Disley and Fatima Wang were elected as executive members. Three positions as Executive Officers remain unfilled and no candidates stood for Vice-President, General Secretary or Treasurer.



New GU President Ruth Keeling

A total of 706 ballots were cast in which Keeling polled 383, Broadbent 202 and Oikonomou 72.

On the eve of her success Keeling commented: "I'm very satisfied with the result. There was a really good turnout and a clear majority in the end." She said that the campaign had

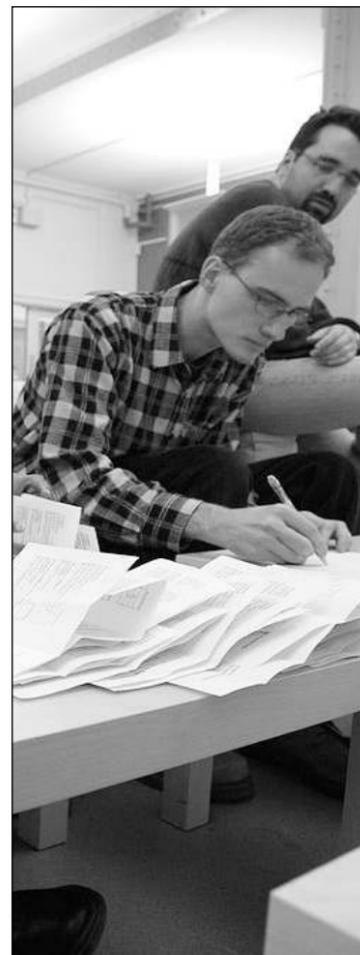
been "good natured and good spirited".

She added, "I'm not euphoric in that I realise there is lots of work to do" and joked that she would not be allowed "a honeymoon period" – five minutes after being elected Keeling had to deal with "issues with the buildings". Keeling also said that she hoped "to work quite positively" with Broadbent and Oikonomou.

After the sacking of her predecessor, Ribu Tharakan, a fortnight ago, Keeling is looking to the future and hoping to turn around the GU's misfortunes. She plans to work closely with CUSU and other bodies in the University whilst ensuring the existence of an independent graduate voice to recognise the needs of the student community.

Keeling hopes to "have solid plans before Christmas outlining how the GU will move forward". She feels that the GU "may have isolated itself from the student body" in the past and stated that she did not intend "to be locked away from avenues of support".

A meeting took place on Thursday with the new executive committee and members of the old exec in which Keeling outlined her immediate action plans. She said that their priority at the moment is to plan the next few weeks, to get basic things such as computers and cleaning rotas up and running. They are also looking at organising small scale Christmas events at the Union to generate interest and enthusiasm from students. Keeling summed the meeting up as "very productive".



Graduates count the ballot papers

Lucy Phillips

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Heritage Fund supports 'Save the Psalter' campaign

Courtesy of Arts Fund



AN APPEAL to save the 'Macclesfield Psalter' for the Fitzwilliam Museum has today been given a huge boost by the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF). The unique fourteenth century East Anglian illuminated manuscript was sold to the Getty Museum in California at auction in June, but the UK's government's export system has given the Fitzwilliam Museum until 10 February to raise £1.7 million to keep the manuscript in this country.

Last week the National Art Collections Fund (Art Fund) launched a 'Save the Psalter' campaign and pledged £500,000 towards the acquisition of the Psalter. Today the NHMF has given a substantial grant of £860,000 to the Fitzwilliam.

The Fitzwilliam Museum has pledged £100,000 and the Friends of the Fitzwilliam raised £50,000. Since the appeal started members of the public have sent in donations totalling over £20,000.

The Psalter was produced in the 1320s, at a time when East Anglia was one of the foremost artistic centres in Europe. The manuscript consists of 252 richly illustrated pages containing miniatures and marginal scenes in gold and precious pigments.

Tanera Bryden from the Art Fund described the Psalter as "a major piece of English medieval art, important to our national heritage." She told *Varsity* "We're hoping that the public will respond enthusiastically to our appeal." £180,000 is still urgently needed by the February 10 deadline. LP

Trust them

Lucy Phillips

THE MENINGITIS Trust has issued a warning that students in Cambridge could be at risk of a new outbreak of the potentially deadly illness Meningitis. They say that the recent outbreak of mumps among university students could lead to an increase in cases of particular strains of viral meningitis because the viruses which cause both illnesses are closely linked.

The number of cases of mumps in the University since October has reached 56 and affected 18 colleges. Bridie Taylor, Community Service Manager of the Meningitis Trust, told *Varsity*, "As cases of mumps are on the increase so are cases of mumps-related meningitis." She urges students to "tell friends if they are feeling unwell and get someone to keep checking up on them. It is quite possible to get viral meningitis soon after having mumps".

Although the strains of meningitis concerned are rarely lethal, they can lead to severe side-effects such as headaches, fevers, joint pain and stiffness in the neck, diarrhoea, vomiting and aversion to light.

There is currently no vaccine that covers all types of meningococcal meningitis and some that exist are not effective in all groups of people. Taylor encouraged students to receive the MMR vaccine and urges anyone who is worried about meningitis to seek medical advice or phone the 24 hours Meningitis Trust helpline on 0845 6000 300.

News in brief

Ban on nuisance touts

Cambridge City Council is expected to introduce a bylaw to prevent nuisance touting in public places. It is hoped that the bylaw will resolve the rising problem of punting touts in the city. During peak periods as many as thirty touts, who often annoy members of the public, fill streets such as Bridge Street and King's Parade in their efforts to urge people to go punting. The bylaw would not ban touting altogether but it would regulate the manner in which it is conducted. An Enforcement Officer and Rangers would monitor the touts code of practice and if they breached the new law a fine of up to £500 could be imposed.

New Hall Art on tour

New Hall has provided a rare exhibition of paintings by female artists for Agnew's Gallery, London, as part of the college's fiftieth anniversary. It is the first time that any of the paintings have been shown outside college since its formation. The collection is the second largest of its kind in the world, beaten only by the Museum of Women in the Arts based in Washington DC. The exhibition runs until November 26.

Live radio marathon

BBC Radio Cambridgeshire's Max Rushden is competing to record the longest ever continuous radio broadcast. He started last Monday to raise money for Children In Need.

This year the MAYS editors are welcoming submissions for poetry, prose, and graphic literature. We hope to publish a broad range of writing, both creative and non-fiction. For twelve years the MAYS has published the best student writing from Oxford and Cambridge. It is sold across the country and distributed to literary agents and industry professionals.

Deadline for submissions: 30 January 2005

The editors of Mays 13 are looking for an enthusiastic sub-editorial team for both poetry and prose to discuss and select submissions. Please e-mail an application of no longer than 150 words specifying your committee preference (poetry or prose), literary interests and relevant skills.

Application deadline for sub-editorial team: 23 November 2004

We are also seeking an arresting cover design and innovative ideas about the book's overall presentation.

Application deadline for publication designer: 24 January 2005

MAYS 13

mays@varsity.co.uk
 www.varsity.co.uk/mays

When you're online and lonely

Group hugs have never been so much fun: a new website makes confessing your sins easy and painless



Ned
Beauman

'He could do so much for me if he just would. He could do everything for me. It's like everything in the world for me is inside a tub full of guts, so that you wonder how there can be any room in it for anything else very important. He is a big tub of guts and I am a little tub of guts and if there is not any room for anything else important in a big tub of guts, how can it be room in a little tub of guts. But I know it is because God gave women a sign when something has happened bad. It's because I am alone.' - *As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner

'My girlfriend is probably going to die, she suffers from some kind of cancer and they (the doctors) have no idea about how to stop it, the problem is that I should be depressed and all that, but I'm not, actually, it's a relief that she may be gone soon so I won't have to go through with the marriage that everyone around us was expecting.' - www.grouphug.us, confession number 352294177

You read these confessions and you see humanity flayed bare by shame and frustration

Pity the novelist. The death of privacy wasn't when our cities were infected with CCTV. It was far earlier in the twentieth century, with Joyce and Faulkner and Woolf and their trepanning of the soul. They knew how we thought, and for a long time the stream-of-consciousness novel was the most uncompromising insight into the human mind you could ever hope to read. But now we don't need them any more, because we have the internet and www.grouphug.us.

Go to grouphug.us. Click 'confess'.



And type in your secrets. You do so anonymously - the only thing to identify your confession is a randomly-generated serial number. Someone checks each confession to make sure it contains no personal details or 'obvious lies', and then puts it up on the site. You can read the newest confessions or a random selection of old ones. (I've corrected the spelling and punctuation on the confessions I reproduce because some are almost unreadable in their original form.)

Some are funny - ('I'm a vegetarian but secretly I wish I was a cannibal.' - 244585812) and some have an awkward accidental poetry that makes me want to cry even though I don't know what they mean ('I just need to meet a girl from the future.' - 343757996). There's no way, of course, to tell if a confession is true, and some of them you don't want to believe: 'One day, while driving in a secluded neighbourhood, I saw a strange man in a car lure a child and

open the door. The kid got inside kind of warily, and the man sped off. I kind of just sat there for a second in a state of shock, and then went to the record store.' - 988482345. Others are even worse: 'I killed a man the other day. I'm sure of it. I hit him with my car, but I drove away. I don't know what to do, should I call the cops? Maybe he's ok. I don't know, but the guilt is tremendous.' - 995111678. That last sentence, to me, has a shiver of reality to it.

Many aren't about things people have done, but just thoughts people have that they can't tell anyone: 'I couldn't care less if something disastrous happened in the world, as long as it doesn't affect me. I thought 9/11 was an interesting turn of events for this dull world. I've always hoped some of the action we witnessed in movies happened in real life. I secretly hope some other disaster, or a follow-up, would happen in the States simply so that there would be something interesting and new on the news for once.' - 245832473. And some condense all life's bleakness into a few calm phrases: 'At the age of thirteen I made a girl moan on the telephone until I reached orgasm. She has since passed away and that was the last conversation I ever had with her.' - 103247507.

So some are funny or magical or awe-inspiringly dark, but those are the exceptions. What grouphug.us really teaches you is that there are three oily fuels on which all of human civilisation runs: masturbation, infidelity, and, most of all, unrequited love. Nobody is sleeping with who they want; everybody is sleeping with who they shouldn't. The single most common story is the boy paralysed with love for his best female friend. Spend even a few minutes reading the site and again and again you'll see 'I wish I could tell her...', 'Sometimes I wonder if...', 'She's always got boyfriends...', 'I don't want to lose her...'

There's never been anything like this. Never before has the guarantee of anonymity been so complete. There's no priest, nor his secular equivalent, the talk-show host. On grouphug.us you confess to no one, but at the same time to everyone. People want to make a connection, but they don't care to whom. Here, on the internet, we find human interaction at its most grim - no names, no sympathy, no joy. This is perdition.

Pick up a textbook of criminal law, and you'll be surprised how enthralling

Never before has the guarantee of anonymity been so complete... You confess to no one, but at the same time to everyone

it can be. Each case summary is a short story of human desperation and downfall. One paragraph per life ruined. Strong stuff. But grouphug.us is even more addictive.

You read these confessions ('I can't stop reading through these confessions and hoping one of them will be someone confessing they love me.' - 370801033) and you see humanity flayed bare by shame and frustration. At least you can find out if you're normal. A lot of television comedy these days is about people at their most pathetic and vulnerable: *The Office* and *I'm Alan Partridge* and *Peep Show*. But as good as those programmes are, they are nothing to grouphug.us. This is the future of television. On TV, the beautiful people will get more and more beautiful. We know that. But remember, also, that the ugly people will get uglier and uglier.

'It's hard for me to feel any real emotion lately.' - 293243758

'I like telling my secrets to people I don't know.' - 680481251

'The truth is no one is listening. This is very sad.' - 287701366

Why Tory top-up plans don't add up



Tom
Ebbutt

Standing at the back of the room as Michael Howard regaled us with the story of his humble roots and generally shuffled around education telling us how wrong Labour were, it was almost possible to be taken in.

There are undoubtedly some very strong aspects to the Tories' plans for higher education; but the centrepiece, their pledge to abolish top-up fees, is a huge mistake. Howard told Friday's audience, made up of carefully picked young Conservatives, that "when you are discussing our plans with your fellow students and their parents, remind them of one thing. It's not too late to stop top-up fees. The battle is not yet lost. If there is a Conservative government next year, there will be no top-up fees."

Stirring stuff indeed. But before you go running down the road to cast your vote, it'd probably be best to see what that will actually mean. The Tory pledge to scrap fees will be paid for by increasing the rate of interest paid on student loans, so that instead of the interest rate being designed to simply keep the loan at the same real value as prices rise, it will match the rate you'd get at a high street bank. At present, on a £10,000 debt, that would equate to about £500 extra in interest per year. Take about two decades paying off your loan and you'll have paid as much as you would have under top-up fees. Obviously if you take less time you pay less, though it isn't clear where the funding shortfall this will create will be made up from. Students will still pay back nothing until they start earning £15,000 but, unlike with top-up fees, just because you're not paying the loan back doesn't mean you're not piling on the interest.

Howard went on to pledge that "we will also scrap the unpopular means testing of loans and treat every 18 year old as an independent adult." But to assume every student at 18 is an independent adult is to ignore reality. If these plans are put in place those from less well off backgrounds will be saddled with debt, which will accrue three times more interest than it would at present, whereas those whose parents have deeper pockets will be able to tap mummy or daddy for the money and won't have to carry that albatross when they leave university. This contrasts with the situation under top-up fees where everyone on a course pay back the same fees once they have started working, when any normal parent will have left their child to its own devices. This would hopefully create a more level playing field.

When I questioned Michael Howard on this difference between his and Labour's plans after his speech on Thursday, he responded robustly: "that is complete nonsense". Unfortunately it isn't. If these plans go ahead, despite the impression they create, by abolishing fees they will actually penalise those who deserve to be penalised the least.

Howard was called to the lectern on Thursday with the rallying cry that he is "hopefully the next Prime Minister of Great Britain". If he is, universities may well welcome his election; students should only do so if they are happy with the wool being pulled firmly over their eyes.

Oh, the horror!

Garth Merenghi: schlock hack or comedy genius?
 Either way, he talked to **Nicky Buckley**

How many horror novels have you written, Garth, and what are some of the highlights among these?

Garth Merenghi: Many, many, many, my friend. In fact, I'm one of the few people you'll meet who's written more books than they've read. My oeuvre includes *Black Fang* (rats learn to drive), *The Ooze* (can water die?), and *Afterbirth* (a mutated placenta attacks Bristol). All done and dusted, I must have penned a tonne.

A previous production penned by you, *Netherhead*, won the Perrier Award for Comedy in Edinburgh in 2001. Does it worry you that people have been misinterpreting your horror as humour ever since?

GM: Not in the slightest. When the 82nd Airborne Division parachuted into flak-infested skies on D-Day, the majority of them were laughing. That's what fear can do to you.

Dean Learner (Garth's publisher): There's a fine line between laughing and screaming, and an even finer line between screaming and soiling yourself. Be grateful you're on the dry side.

What inspired you to set your current series, *Darkplace*, in a haunted hospital?

GM: The whole thing is a metaphor for human evolution. Man, in the process of healing his fellow man, is forced to confront the chaotic forces of darkness within Him, symbolised in the programme

by the gates of hell opening underneath *Darkplace*. Each week the human race is led one step closer to enlightenment.

DL: It was also cheaper because I already had some nurse uniforms left over from my previous film *Dr. Thrill Dare*.

It was penned in the Eighties. Why was it not aired then?

GM: Society wasn't ready. The so called 'powers that be' were scared of my vision. I believe that MI8, which is actually three levels above MI6, pulled the plug. Even last week someone sent me a dead fish in a jiffy bag. The truth, it seems, continues to hurt.

DL: We made the programme, gave it to them, and they told us they never asked for it in the first place, and could we leave reception. I said, "How dare you – we've spent two months of our lives making this show." They said that "wasn't their concern". I said, "What happened to initiative in this country?" They said, "We're calling security."

Can you recall any incidents from your production meetings?

GM: I remember it as an exhilarating exploration of possibilities. Each day I dreamed harder and higher. Unfortunately, I eat cheese in order to dream, so by the start of production I'd put on four stone and couldn't fit into my strides.

DL: I was drinking quite heavily at the time, so I can't recall too much of

anything, really.

What would you say to accusations that the acting is a bit wooden in *Darkplace*?

GM: The acting is heightened, as it is in all works of the fantastique.

DL: I must admit that I sometimes let the squad down.

Why did you give Dean Learner a starring role, when he's clearly no actor? In fact, he's your publisher.

DL: Look, I appreciate the fact that I'm not an actor – I'm no Shane Richie. However, I told myself that all I had to do was get Garth's magical words in the right order, and with the intonation more or less there, and the script would speak for me.

There's a rumour that you, Garth, Dean Learner and your *Darkplace* co-star Madeleine Wool have some sort of previous association with Cambridge University. Is this correct?

GM: It's not incorrect. Dean and I once pissed on the steps of the University Library because someone had refused to let an undergrad write about my books. As far as I know, Madeleine once shopped here.

DL: As far as I'm aware, Garth's still banned from the city.

What would be your advice for today's young students looking to break into the world of horror writing?

GM: If you find your story running out of steam, gut one of your main characters.



www.garthmerenghi.com

DL: Or put in more titty.

It can be hard to get hold of some of your classic books in the shops. This week, for instance, Heffers had neither *Tomb Boy* nor *Crab!!* in stock; nor could they order them for some reason. What do you suggest?

GM: There's a good reason for this. I am currently trying to renegotiate my reprint deal so I garner 90% of all royalties until I die (Led Zeppelin had this for their gigs). So far, no-one's budging. Also the new cover designs are proving a problem. I want all the spines of the books to be made with real-imitation plastic moulds of mini-human spines, but at present the preci-

sion moulding required is proving uneconomic, and some of the fumes are currently dangerous.

Do you have any plans for some more bookshop in-store readings?

GM: Not until bookshops read the small print on the contract and provide me upon entry with:

- One full tray of meat and mustard sandwiches,
- a selection of preferably German bottled beers,
- access to private washroom facilities.

*Garth Merenghi is ex-Cambridge Footlights and is responsible for the Channel 4 series, *Darkplace*.*



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Varsity is now accepting applications for the Lent 2005 team.

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VARSLITY



It snowed last night! For about ten minutes. Albert went outside and took a photo

Heat and hate go hand in hand, so stop feeling guilty

Being a misanthrope is so much easier once you've abandoned a few bad habits

A healthy interest in silly voices and the ability to convincingly counterfeit regional accents, (when the anecdote requires) are the two essential qualities I demand in a friend. I also have a soft spot for people who laugh too loud, and I hold no qualms about judging a man based on his shoes alone. Any of those other fancy qualities – loyalty, honesty, sense of humour – I consider showing off and will not countenance. Arbitrary criteria on which to base relationships, perhaps, but I must have some way of streamlining what would otherwise be a ridiculously ramma-jammed social schedule.

There is no more reliable sign of a thoroughly bad judgement than having too many friends, because other people are a bit shit, really aren't they? I'm sure their mothers love them, but really.....their opinions are trivial, they invariably have terrible taste in music and some of them don't even read this column. Making friends too quickly is an equally unwise habit. The beginning stages of friendship should be like a particularly restrained courtship in a Victorian novel. A fleeting glance here, the odd nod of recognition there and certainly no Christian names until after the first five years. Even now, my very best friends frequently forget my name and I respect them all the more for it. Nobody wants to devalue the currency of their affection by bestowing it too generously, after all.

“The real beauty of hate is that it asks for no justification and needs no proof”



Ellen E. Jones

Not that I can wholeheartedly recommend the life of the misanthrope. It's hard being the only person left in this miserable and sordid world with any integrity. It takes effort and commitment.

“The joys of misanthropy come at a heavy price”

Rarely does an obvious object of scorn present itself. The airwaves are filled with not bad, pretty good, alright really, bands and the cinemas with so-so, passable, entertaining enough films, but there's nothing that really seems worth expending any energy on vitriol.

When I was a teenager hate came so easily to me. I hated everyone and everything. I hated Friends, cheese on chips, The Smiths, people who like The Smiths, people who like people

who like The Smiths. Oh to have those glory days back again! Now, as the heart mellows, I find increasingly I'm having to invent reasons to dislike things, just so I can give the impression of having a little discernment.

Fortunately, the real beauty of hate is that it asks for no justification and needs no proof. The will alone is enough. It can seem especially difficult to find something repulsive in the average perfectly decent human being, for instance, but all it really entails is giving up bad habits. Endeavour to leave unquestioned the groundless links your mind makes between physical appearance and personality traits, learn to cherish your irrational first impressions. Then, maybe, if you lavish your prejudices with enough care and attention, they will grow into strong, sturdy trees of hatred.

A little creativity in this respect can also go a long way. When at a loss for a sufficiently trivial reason to

revile someone, celebrity magazines often provide some imaginative suggestions. *Heat* magazine recently had a feature on celebrities with freakishly large hands. Who'd have thought the ostensibly talented, gorgeous and intelligent Uma Thurman was in fact a malformed beast than even daylight shuns? She hides it so well! But the proof is there, for all to see, in a large colour photograph (helpfully captioned with the word 'ENORMOUS' in scarlet letters).

Celebrity magazines and low-brow documentaries, god love 'em, are the very lifeblood of hate. They allow us to develop very firm opinions about the characters of people we've never met based on nothing more substantial than their inability to co-ordinate a Louis Vuitton hand-bag with a Missoni dress.

It goes without saying that the joys of misanthropy come at a heavy price. Us haters are doomed to be lone riders of the night bus and shouters of unheard punch lines to turned away backs over too loud music. But therein lies the glory of our martyrdom. Everyone else is far too busy frolicking to notice us glowering pointedly in the corner. But at least we have our principles. Was the man who cut of his own nose to spite his face foolish? Or was he in fact a self-sacrificing hero? It probably did hurt like hell, but at least now he stands out from the crowd (and spurts them with blood from a distance).

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To get involved in a section, email the relevant section editor listed above, and come along to a meeting. No experience necessary.

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VARSLITY

Money for nothing

If *Varsity* could make commercial endorsements, we would, of course: nothing would make us happier than, for example, our very own competitor to the George Foreman grill. But even if the Oxbridge Applications company offered us all of the £4,000 they get for their top rate interview guidance in exchange for a really quotable bit of support, we still wouldn't touch it with a bargepole.

There is something fundamentally unscrupulous about a business like this. Most obviously, it simply makes the already pernicious inequalities worse: if you charge for them, it is disingenuous to argue that offering discounts for state schools will do very much to counteract the built-in imbalance. Just as dishonest is the view of the interview process such a business seeks to perpetuate, which runs approximately thus: getting into Oxford or Cambridge is a lottery, and more dependent on your techniques and local knowledge than anything so obvious as your academic merit or hard work. So, instead of reading books, pay us money to tell you about Professor X's idiosyncrasies and why you shouldn't apply to Y college if you come from a private school. It's easy when you know how!

Well, for a start, it most likely isn't any easier, actually. This newspaper is not an unquestioning supporter of the university's policies, and the administration has some distance to go in improving the interview method – compulsory interviewer training, especially for those who think they don't need it, would be a start. Nevertheless, whatever the inherent unfairnesses in such a divided educational system, when it comes to the actual entry process, it is hard to avoid the conclusion: those involved are generally working their hardest to make things as fair as they can.

No-one would criticise those who offer casual, friendly advice – generally along the lines of, relax, they aren't trying to catch you out, and, read more books – to prospective students who make enquiries. This is perfectly natural, and commonplace. But when money is involved, things inevitably change. To sell such information to a company which intends to use it to make dossiers of information on the best tactics for individual colleges is a pretty miserable course of action. The Oxford graduate running the company should be ashamed of the small but significant contribution his entrepreneurialism is making to the inaccurate public perception of the way these two universities are run; any Cambridge students who are grateful for the opportunities this place has given them, and who would like to believe that they are here on merit, should think twice before helping him out.

Damn it all

There is something farcical about The Damned turning on the Christmas lights. The first observation most of us would make is how embarrassing (albeit fascinating) it is to watch deeply minor celebrities acting like they're proper famous, and Christmas-light-turning-on (except in Oxford Street) is a key opportunity to enjoy a good cringe at this sort of behaviour. The Damned will probably not like the comparison, but they are of approximately the same order of notoriety as Peter Andre. Before his jungle Jordan dalliance.

Except, that is, in Cambridgeshire. (God: imagine being Big In Cambridgeshire. This is Alan Partridge territory.) The Damned are local stars now, sort of. Guitarist Captain Sensible seems in possession of a healthy awareness of the absurdity of the situation, limiting himself to the dry observation that "they could have booked Cliff Richard instead"; but other quarters have been taking the whole thing much more seriously.

If this was a fight, and you were the church's mate, you'd probably say, leave it, Dave (or whatever) – they're not worth it. The thing is, this is the wrong battle. This is in no way to belittle the beliefs of those who are offended at this choice – rather, to suggest that the Damned, whose 'outrageous' posturing is blatantly commercial and insincere anyway, are not really a very significant part of the debate. But debate is the wrong word, because the argument is over.

The sad fact is, the 'celebrities' chosen to turn on the Christmas lights are not as inappropriate as their critics believe; rather, they are an ideal embodiment of what Christmas means today. The shops which sponsor the lights don't do it out of the kindness of their hearts, after all. The Damned are no worse than any of the other myriad manifestations of the meaning of a modern Christmas: 'tis better to shift a few units on the back of a handy PR boost than celebrate what it's meant to be about. To which *Varsity* can only respond: Bah. And, humbug. And, fingers crossed for an iPod.

Gillagain: an apology

Last week Andrew Gilligan had to cancel his appearance at the Varsity Society, but we found out at very short notice, and some of those planning to attend didn't see that day's *Varsity* before going to the proposed talk. Idiotically, we neglected to inform the Emmanuel porters or put up a notice outside the auditorium: we are extremely sorry to those who waited for so long. It was the editor's fault.

Letters

letters@varsity.co.uk

Letters may be edited for space or style

Ethical Investment

Dear Sir,

Alex Williamson (Letters, Nov 12) appears to be grossly misled about the ethical status of the arms industry and ethical investment in general. Firstly, to suggest that the British arms industry is morally justified because the Russians sell weapons to the Sudanese is absurd. Our government uses tax-payer's money to promote arms sales to oppressive regimes, such as Saudi Arabia and Indonesia, which use those weapons in the abuse of human rights. We do not need to support genocide in order to be morally degenerate.

The reason why the arms industry is deemed unethical is because government policy promotes arms sales, thus creating a market which does not meet the actual demand. At a time when governments around the world spend between \$800-900 billion p.a. on arms and the military, the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (which would cost \$50 billion p.a.) look likely to fail due to underfunding. In short, we can find any amount of money to fund the proliferation of arms around the world but struggle when it comes to the alleviation of poverty.

The notion that ethical investment would disadvantage poor students is highly dubious. Firstly, if the government spent less money on subsidising the arms trade and more money on education then the poor would be first to benefit.

In any case, I cannot believe that the most practical solution to higher education funding is to invest in arms companies. By Alex Williamson's logic, FACT should launch a pro-war campaign to ensure maximum returns. Secondly, the notion that ethical investment involves financial loss is a matter of economic debate and is a view which is by no means authoritative.

Several charitable organisations have adopted ethical investment policies already, demonstrating that it is both financially viable and legally sound. On this basis, there is no obvious reason why Cambridge Colleges should not adopt ethical investment policies.

However, the real battle lies in changing government policy to ensure the British arms industry values people before profit. Such a positive change would not only be in accord with the United Nations Charter (article 26), but would show a belief in a future world that favours peace and security over fear and militarism.

Yours,

Stuart Jordan
Homerton College

Remembrance forgotten

Dear Sir,

I would like to take issue with the letter in your last issue entitled 'Remembrance Forgotten' (Letters, Nov 12). I wonder how Stephan dares to presume that he can pass judgement on the way other Robinson students (who are, after all, like those who have fallen in the wars of the last century, of many different faiths) choose to remember Armistice Day. For his information, I spent the two minute silence reading Wilfred Owen's poem 'Strange Meeting', the strongest evocation of the real 'pity of war' that I have ever found. I am also certain I was not alone in my house of Robinson students in observing the silence.

Furthermore, I am sure I have no need to remind Stephan of the rather ambiguous role that the leaders of the Christian church had in propagating the myth of holy sacrifice that sent so many young soldiers to their deaths in the First World War: Siegfried Sassoon quotes the Bishop of London's belief, expressed as late as 1916, that 'those who were serving at the Front would return with their souls purged and purified', an opinion I find hard to stomach. Personally, I do not want to spend my time remembering the war dead in an institution that expressed such views as these, and I would thank Stephan to keep his presumptions about how every individual should remember Armistice day to himself.

Rachel Yarrow
Robinson College

Bugger the Bush bashers

Dear Sir,

I am an American and I graduated Cambridge in 2002. I was in the midst of my second year during the 2000 election. I had arrived in England, from my home in America, Bush/Cheney sign ready and excited to put it on my door. I knew my conservatism was something of a joke to my friends, and I suspected my forthright expression of it would just be the foundation for more banter. I came with a supply of 5 stickers and within a month I had none. They were all taken from my door in protest. I, however, never got a knock on my door from anyone who wanted to know why I supported the Republican ticket. No one cared to try and understand.

Upon reading *Varsity's* election columnists (Opinion, November 5) I realize that, still, nothing has changed. Europe seems to want to force their ideals on a country that is fundamentally different. It is condescending and ignorant to simply label Americans as "stupid" for re-electing

Bush. The United States is more religious, morally driven, and more educated than the European, liberal elites want to recognize. And, just because you do not agree, does not make me – and those 53 million like me – wrong.

I believe in the market economy. I believe that preemptive attacks make me safer. I believe that societies and governments have a role as moral guides. I believe that my government cannot ameliorate all social ills and the traditional notions of charity play a larger role here than in Europe. I believe in limited government with more power to the states.

I invite you all to disagree, but engage me in the dialogue. Do not write me, and those like me, off simply because you disagree. The United States, in general, is a successful society, so those of us who compose it must be doing something right.

Middle American
Devon Runyan
devonrunyan@hotmail.com
(Newnham 2002)

Union reform

Sir,

I write to clarify your article on the Union last week (News, Nov 12) which suggested I had broken my election pledges by not introducing online voting. In fact – as is shown by the Union's Standing Committee minutes which are published every week – I actually tried to bring in online voting for this term's elections. I am however *primus inter pares* and have to abide by what the standing committee as a whole decides, and I could not have done more to try to change the electoral system, and for sound technical reasons the standing committee decided online voting was not possible.

Regardless of this, most Union members care more about our events than our elections, and this term our debates have been better attended than ever before, membership is at the highest level for years, and our bops – a new initiative in line with my manifesto pledge – have revolutionised Union events for the better.

Yours,

Bobby Friedman
President, Cambridge Union

**Arts
Picture house**
www.picturehouse.co.uk
for listings

This week's prize
goes to Rachel Yarrow

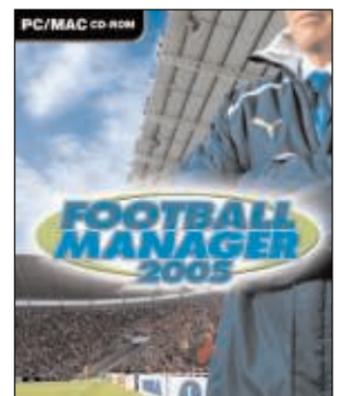
Don't say we aren't good to you

Win a copy of Football Manager 2005!

If you hate football, or computer games, look away now. If, on the other hand, you think *Championship Manager* was the best thing since since Geoff Hurst's, and your teenage years were spent hunched over a computer screen watching a glorified spreadsheet simulating Accrington Stanley winning the double, this one's for you: the kind people behind *Football Manager 2005* have given us a lovely pair of copies of the game to pass on to you, The People. Developed by the people behind *Championship Manager*, after an acrimonious split with old publishers Eidos, the new version features an unbelievable 235,000 players and staff from 145 different countries. It's like porn for soccer geeks. If you want a copy, just answer this incredibly easy question:

Who won the FA Cup in 1976?

Answers to editor@varsity.co.uk with 'football competition' in the subject line by November 25. Correct entries will be entered in a draw. The editor's decision is final.



Raving lefties storm the lecture halls

Mark Morris wonders why the sinister set are everywhere

According to an episode of 'The Simpsons' where Ned Flanders opens up a specialist left-handers shop, one in nine of us use that very extremity as our dominant writing, cooking, and racquet-sport tool. The actual statistics vary from nine to eleven percent, depending on which source you read, so we'll assume Ned to be pretty accurate.

Until a few years back, I'd never paid much attention to the fact that the world's population can define two opposite practical methodologies as both being correct, or that there would be any problems with it; it just simply didn't bother me. Then one day I found myself in a rather compact lecture theatre, and upon trying to take notes I found the person on my right had an annoying tendency to keep jabbing me with her elbow whilst she was writing.

After this happened for the seventh or eighth time she looked up, and apologised for the inconvenience, but she was left-handed and couldn't really avoid it. I was stunned. The fact that being a lefty could actually cause such issues had never occurred to me, the fact that this girl was apologizing for something that clearly was not her fault was even more striking. Perplexed by this matter, I began to do some research.

My quest was initially helped along by a friend I had met in Canada, who studied applied health sciences, and was doing her post-graduate research on a very similar topic. Contrary to my right-sided ignorance, the curses associated with using your left hand can strike nearly all the time. Such simple measures as using scissors, trying to un-cork a bottle of wine, signing a cheque – the list of tasks in which trying to use the other paw generates difficulties are endless. How many designers realise that a left-handed ruler needs to read

from left to right? Perhaps this was a beginning to explaining why a lot of lefties end up highly ambidextrous; the need to fit in with the rest of society is so great.

But deconstructing the evidence further, my friend went on to tell me that left-handedness was far from the curse one could possibly imagine, and that in many circles it was beginning to be seen as a great blessing. Consider the world of professional sports, where according to the numbers a cricket team should have one, maybe two left-handed batsmen. Most will field three, maybe four. In baseball the ratios go even higher.

This may well be mere physical illustration, but certain research is starting to show that being left handed is, for some unknown reason,

being a leftie could make you a sporting hero

more likely to get you to the top of your chosen field. Take for example the film industry – over half the leading actors in "The Matrix" trilogy wielded their weapons in their left hand, discounting the sections where Keanu Reeves appeared to have four guns on the go at once.

Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman, Robert DeNiro, Julia Roberts, Bruce Willis, Steve McQueen, Marilyn Monroe – the list goes on and on. George Lucas is unofficially rumoured to have cast Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker solely on the basis that the light-sabre scenes looked so much better with different-handed duellers. One interesting sideline is that a lot more villains are actually depicted as left handed characters even if the actor is not. Curious.

Moving onto other fields, the statistics are equally disproportioned.



Albert Mockett-con-dem-Buscbe

Left-handers are more likely to be successful in their careers. 40% of NASA's astronauts are left-handed

Politics seems to attract more lefties than average, with seven of America's forty-three presidents signing off on bills of congress with their pens on the wrong side. That's considerably more than the one in nine notion expressed earlier.

A perplexing trend appeared to be on its way when Ronald Reagan, George Bush Senior, and then Bill Clinton rolled up to the oval office championing the cause of the underdog. Then the younger George Bush arrived, putting at least one thing back to 'normal' as the White House aides moved the inkwell back to other side of the presidential desk.

It was also rumoured that a staggering forty percent of NASA's astronauts were left-handed, but then again, a prerequisite for being placed in orbit by Uncle Sam is a certain level of ambidextrousness regardless of which hand you choose to write with on a Sunday.

Attempts to explain these results have suggested that the very fact that being left-handed can be seen as such a challenge, what with all those tools and other implements designed for right-handed folk, actually makes it an advantage as well. Having to work harder to overcome difficulties from an early age makes people more confident, and more likely to succeed in a wide variety of applications.

At least, that's the theory, one that's not that easy to test. The old notion that the left and right sides of the brain deal with different aspects of an individual's persona still holds some weight, although recent research has shown higher levels of symmetry than previously thought. The truth is that nobody really knows yet.

One final intriguing insight, one that has kept me thinking for ages, is that some scientists believe the population is actually born with a near

fifty-fifty split of left and right handed people, but society seems to inflict the norm upon us.

Parents and schoolteachers, through no faults whatsoever, are prone to placing a crayon in a child's right hand, something that would seem to make sense after all. This, they argue, is why some people can pick up a pen whilst in their twenties, and begin to write half decent characters with their weak hand. A bit far fetched perhaps, but that's how most theories begin.

So if you ever find yourself sitting next to one of these people in a cramped lecture theatre, with their legs crossed the wrong way, notepad on opposite side, and pen clutched in the left paw, stop and think for a moment. Maybe, just maybe, it is you who is performing things the wrong way instead. Probably not, but it can't hurt to try.

Why Belmarsh is a bit like Billy Elliot

20 years on, Wil James finds a precedent for 'Britain's Guantanamo' in the miners' strike

At a time of powerful political division, it can be easy to lose perspective. As debate rages about the civil liberties of prisoners held in HMP Belmarsh and questions are raised about the power of the state, how many of us reflect on the perhaps even more divisive battle that raged between the State and the advocates of civil liberties twenty years ago?

Even the oldest undergraduates today will have no clear recollection of the fierce battles that raged across Britain for a year from the Spring of 1984. Yet, many of us will have seen, if only in the film 'Billy Elliot,' the vivid images of mounted riot police herding crowds of protestors, of men and boys running from charging police and perhaps the much repeated image of a police officer hitting an unarmed man around the head with a truncheon. The images of the year long Miners'

Strike are amongst the most iconic of that decade of turmoil. Yet, what use is this now long dead conflict to our understanding of current concerns about Belmarsh internees?

For some of those involved in the legal battles that surrounded the miners' protests back then, the actions taken by the Conservative government created a precedent that has led us to what has frequently been dubbed 'Britain's Guantanamo'.

In 1984 Margaret Thatcher famously described the striking miners led by Arthur Scargill as, 'the enemy within'. Her battle to crush the miners' union and push through her programme of pit closures is now widely recognised as the defining social conflict of the postwar years. On the most violent day of the clashes, 93 miners were arrested for rioting, and other breach of the peace offences at Orgreave,

south Yorkshire. They were simply a few amongst the 11,300 strikers arrested by police during the conflict.

One of those who represented the Orgreave miners was the civil liberties lawyer Michael Mansfield QC. Speaking recently at a film retrospective on the period, he argued that the use of antiquated laws, deceptive evidence and the force of 'popular opinion' drummed up through a pliant media allowed the Thatcher government to hound miners, prevent them from participating in strikes or imprison them for attempting to defend their way of life. There are those who continue to argue that this was justified in order to improve the economy. But from the perspective of those imprisoned, it was a moment at which previously unquestioned civil liberties were no longer protected by the state.



Which brings us back to Belmarsh. Why exactly is it that under the Terrorism Act (2000), people deemed to be members of terrorist organisations are considered guilty until proven innocent? Why are some of those detained under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (2001) still awaiting trial without knowing what evidence is being held against them?

Despite the case put by Mr Mansfield, it remains unclear to what extent we can draw clear links between the limits placed on union

organisation in 1984 and the detention of suspected terrorists after 2001. What is clear is that 1984 created a precedent in the public mind whereby people seen as an 'enemy within' could be treated with less than the usual legal respect. But we hear so little about it. Clearly, the legal debates are intricate; yet as in 1984, the media seems scarcely interested in the stories of those behind bars. For people bemoaning the state of society in the wake of the Bush re-election, this may be food for thought.

Keeping up scientific appearances

Do race and science mix? **Krystyna Larkham** looks into a past which the men in white coats would rather forget

Skeletons are big in science. Piltdown man, Lucy, the 'Hobbit' - you name it, they've got it, filed away in cupboards or out on show, neatly catalogued and tagged. Some skeletons still rattling in the closets of Science, however, history is not so proud to display. A backbone of racism runs through the history of science, from the 17th century slave trade to the Nazi's experiments on twins, the spectre of which still haunts the scientific community today.

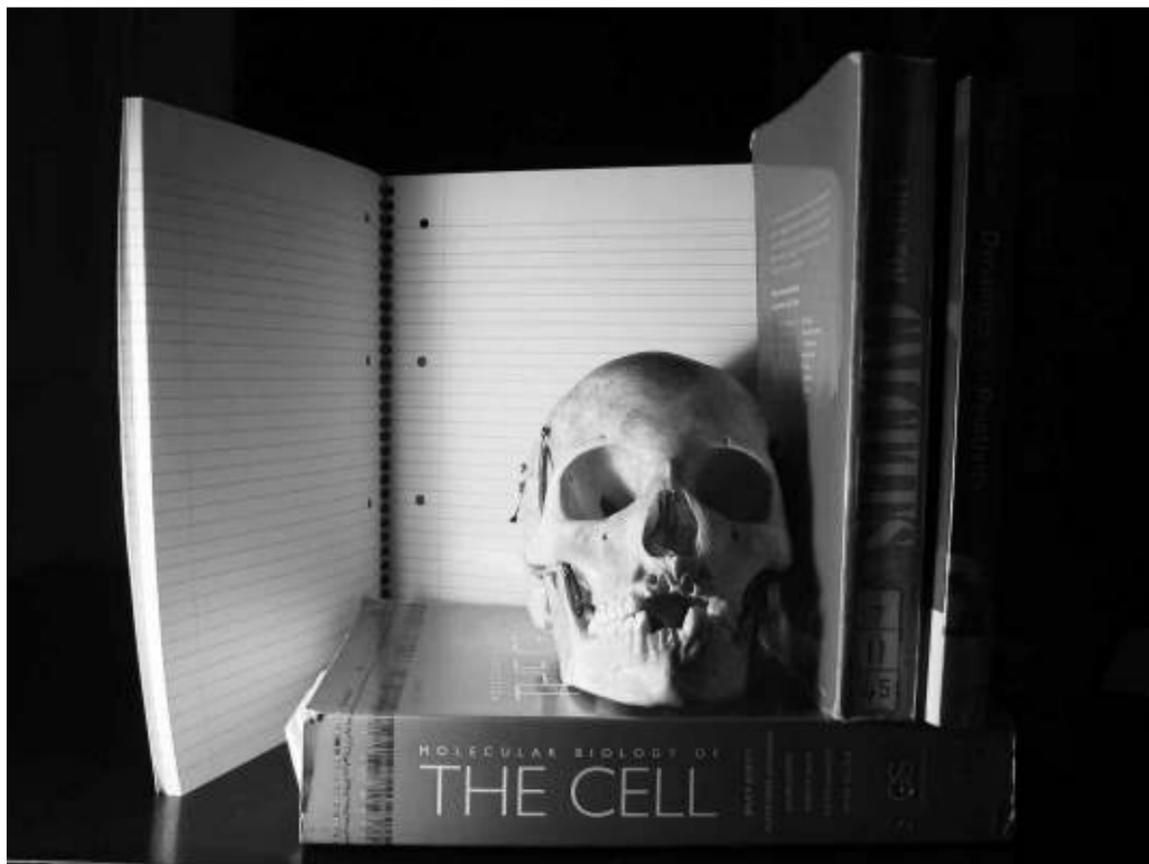
In the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, craniology and physiognomy were the new black. By examining the skeletons and skulls of different races, 'conclusions' could be drawn from the dimensions of these bones about which race was the most evolutionarily superior. A classic example of such 'research' is that done in the 19th century by Paul Broca on the foramen magnum. The foramen magnum is a hole at the base of the skull into which the spine is inserted. In upright animals, the foramen magnum is found further forward, balancing the skull on the spine; in animals it is located at the back of the skull. The foramen magnum was found to be further forward in black than in white skulls, indicating a more 'advanced' skeleton. And yet Broca published that this more prominent position was actually an indicator of lesser intelligence; the position of the foramen magnum resulting from a smaller brain size.

'Scientific evidence' such as this was used as an authoritative counter to the opponents of the slave trade, and as sciences such as craniology gained in cre-

dence, so did Anthropology. Authors such as Montesquieu and Voltaire published works describing 'amoral' behaviour in Africa caused by human reactions to heat, despite never having set foot on the continent. Cornelius de Pauw, a physiognomist, wrote that heat caused 'damage' to the 'original' (European) form, drawing on the differences in appearance between Africans and Europeans. De Pauw's writing implied these differences spread into the brain, obviously, as in the case of Broca, these differences falling always in the favour of the European mind.

Move forward three hundred years, and the new black is genetics. We use genetic techniques to draw our evolutionary family tree - we as the scientifically literate are proud there is no space for racism when your third cousin twice removed is an amoeba. And yet genetic studies suggesting that one race is more susceptible to disease x than another appear to take no account of social and economic factors. The Human Genome Diversity Project, working to log variation between our 7000 or so official ethnic groups, has sparked great debate within the scientific community.

Quite apart from the fact that Cavalli-Sforza, one of the main scientists within the study has previously publicly classed Europeans into 'ethnic groups' but Africans into 'tribes', the suggestion of racism has also crept into discussions over who will own and use the information once processed. As more and more projects such as these spring up to protect the genetic futures



Krystyna Larkham

The exact point of intersection of the skull and spine is entirely contingent on race

of 'minorities', we risk falling further into the trap of intellectual colonialisation, taking 'responsibility' for information which certain groups may not even be aware exists.

The scientific community has come a long way from its open belief in the

powers of craniology and physiognomy. But whilst ethnic minority research scientists still have papers rejected under their own name yet accepted under a 'white' title, and drug companies still perform large scale pharmaceutical experiments in the

third world while investing only in the diseases of the white and rich west, scientific research remains a minefield of political incorrectness. The skeletons in the closet are still rattling. Maybe ours is the century in which they are finally laid to rest.

Obsession and Chocolate: student soulmates

Zoe Smeaton loves a bar of Dairy Milk...

Hurrying down Tennis Court Road feeling decidedly like an Eskimo in my enormous winter coat, I wondered exactly what I was doing on this cold drizzly night heading to hear a talk on chocolate. Still more importantly, though, what free chocolate did I have to look forward to?

Upon arrival I was shepherded into the Pharmacology Lecture Theatre where Professor Malcolm Mackley took centre stage to talk about his work on the heavenly substance, as he had fondly christened chocolate. No sign of any freebies yet.

Professor Mackley began the précis

of his work describing a laboratory dedicated to Nestle chocolate, a place I imagined must be reminiscent of a real life Willy Wonka factory. In this chocoholics haven the Professor works on chocolate using a rather unusual process to mould it into all sorts of impressive shapes.

The method involves pumping the chocolate sample to a high pressure (as he demonstrated using a car jack) to yield a flexible, filamentous chocolate which can be, for instance, tied into knots, and will re-harden gradually afterwards. The Professor explained that within a relatively narrow temperature window (15-25°C),

chocolate can become flexible without actually melting it. The structure of chocolate - sugar and cocoa particles embedded in a crystal structure of cocoa butter - means that when pressure is applied in this temperature range, some of the crystalline butter melts into the liquid phase rendering the overall structure flexible but not yet gooey.

In this form the chocolate can be forced into moulds, with the advantage that many chocolate types can be artistically combined without the mixing which would be unavoidable using conventional melting techniques.

Professor Mackley believes that the process will be of commercial value in developing more intricate chocolate designs, and based on the 700 tonnes of product already produced by the method and sold in supermarkets, it seems that Nestle agree. With a second product in the pipeline, the Professor has certainly proved the worthiness of his work to the many Cambridge sceptics. But what of the promised free chocolate, I felt my stomach ask, as the good Professor's talk ended? Relief followed almost immediately, as were directed upstairs, where piles of Nestle chocolate bars lay ready for collection to shorten the homeward journey. Phew.

...but at least she's not obsessed with it

Being in Cambridge it's easy to find people who aim to achieve the very highest standards, and given the intense work environment it's hardly surprising that many students adopt this attitude. Perfectionism, often within the contexts of time management and work standards, is encouraged, and with an ever increasing number of Cambridge students being exposed to the world of Commerce - which promises to reward the very highest achievers only - the trend looks set to continue.

Unfortunately, whilst a certain degree of perfectionism should be commended, it seems that all too often the desire to do well can become problematic. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) sufferers have been described as extreme perfectionists, and with an estimated 2.5-3% of the population having an OCD, the problem is more widespread than most people imagine.

So how do we distinguish between harmless perfectionism and an OCD? Physiologically, the differences are clear. Magnetic Resonance Imaging shows that OCD patients' brains tend to be deficient in the 'white matter' responsible for many inter-cranial communications; and low levels of the neurotransmitter

serotonin seem to be important. It has been suggested that in OCD patients a so called "worry circuit" is created within their brains, linking the caudate nucleus, the area of the brain that helps us to switch rapidly from one thought to another, with the cingulate gyrus (associated with feelings of dread) and the thalamus, which processes sensory information. It is hypothesised that in this way the subject may become accustomed, as is common amongst obsessive patients, to associating certain seemingly unrelenting thoughts with feelings of intense dread.

Studies have suggested that environmental factors such as being first born or experiencing a strict upbringing may contribute to OCD, whilst experiments on mice have revealed a possible genetic link - disruption of a gene known as Hoxb8 caused excessive and possibly obsessive grooming, and it has been proposed that a similar genetic disposition may be important in human OCDs.

Without a medical diagnosis though the distinction is not quite so clear cut and many OCD sufferers can go undiagnosed for years. With a strong correlation between perfectionism and the presence of OCDs in patients, we should certainly question our need to make that essay perfect.



Krystyna Larkham

/guide
/the rest

SATURDAY 20

20:00 **PhoCUS Talk**
Mong, Auditorium, Sidney Sussex
"Close up to Nature".
Macrophotography of the natural world by Dr John Brackenbury.
www.phocus.org.uk

SUNDAY 21

13:15 **LUNCHTIME PROMENADE CONCERT**
Gallery 3, Fitzwilliam Museum
Chris Willis (piano) plays keyboard sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti.

MONDAY 22

19:45 **Cambridge Mumpers**
School of Pythagoras, John's
Talk on TV script-writing with Dan Sefton

20:00 **Naked Science Presents The Science of Secrecy**
Borders Bookstore, Cambridge
Simon Singh, author of The Code Book will be discussing and answering your questions about the history of cryptography and privacy in the Information Age.

Cocktail Society: Cocktail Party.
Sidgwick Hall, Newnham College
Tickets must be bought in advance (cheques to N M Munro at Caius, £2 - members, £5 - non members)

/clubs

FRIDAY 19

FEZ	Down & Dirty	Patrick Cavaliere plays filthy house music
CLARE	C.R.Y.P.T.I.C,	Rat Records special with DJ DeeKline
QUEENS	Marvel	Super Hero Cheese
KING'S	King's Affair	African Drumming, Jazz and Hip Hop

SATURDAY 20

FEZ	Nick Bridges	The Bestin UK House Music
CLARE	Amnesty Bands Night	In association with CUR1350
QUEENS	Dilate	4 Deck Hip Hop

SUNDAY 21

LIFE	Sunday Roast	Cheese and Chart
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MONDAY 22

FEZ	Fat Poppaddaddys	Mix of Funky Grooves
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TUESDAY 23

BALLARE	Top Banana	CUSU's Best Cheese
COCO	Licked	That urban flava
LIFE	Unique	LBGT extravaganza

WEDNESDAY 24

BALLARE	Rumboogie	Sports Men and Women come out to play
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THURSDAY 25

COCO	Urbanite	C USU Hip Hop and RnB
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DON'T FORGET.... Deadline for section editorial applications is... SUNDAY 21st NOVEMBER
www.varsity.co.uk for more information **VARSlTY**

/guide **/stage**

FRIDAY 19

19:45	ADC	CUADC present A Small Family Business
23:00	ADC	CUADC present Finding the Sun
19:45	Arts Theatre	Home
20:00	Christ's College, New Court Theatre	Autumn in Han Palace and The Soul of Chi'en Nu leaves Her Body

SATURDAY 20

19:45	ADC	CUADC present A Small Family Business
23:00	ADC	CUADC present Finding the Sun
19:45	Arts Theatre	Home
14:30	Arts Theatre	Home
20:00	Christ's College, New Court Theatre	Autumn in Han Palace and The Soul of Chi'en Nu leaves Her Body

TUESDAY 23

19:45	ADC	Footlights and ADC present Great Expectations
19:30	Arts Theatre	The Pirated of Penzance
20:00	Homerton	HATS present The Tempest
19:30	Fitzpatrick Hall, Queens'	BATS - The Remembrance of Things Past
23:00	Fitzpatrick Hall, Queens'	BATS - Shooting the Chandalier

WEDNESDAY 24

19:45	ADC	Footlights and ADC present Great Expectations
19:30	Arts Theatre	The Pirated of Penzance
20:00	Homerton	HATS present The Tempest
19:45	Christ's, New Court Theatre	CADS present The Sunshine Boys
19:30	Fitzpatrick Hall, Queens'	BATS - The Remembrance of Things Past
23:00	Fitzpatrick Hall, Queens'	BATS - Shooting the Chandalier

THURSDAY 25

19:45	ADC	Footlights and ADC present Great Expectations
19:30	Arts Theatre	The Pirated of Penzance
20:00	Christ's College, New Court Theatre	2 Chinese Plays
19:45	Christ's, New Court Theatre	CADS present The Sunshine Boys
19:30	Fitzpatrick Hall, Queens'	BATS - The Remembrance of Things Past
23:00	Fitzpatrick Hall, Queens'	BATS - Shooting the Chandalier

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Escape

Cornish Capers

Tom Elkins

Ignoring the overtures from 'character building' volunteer work placements in Peru and lucrative City internships, I opted to join seven friends on a lads' holiday in Newquay during the long vacation.

Having been whisked to Newquay at (an often illegal) speed in a grossly modified Vauxhall Corsa, the roaring twin exhausts and tinted windows turned the first of many heads as we pulled up at our campsite.

A baptism of fire into the cult of 'laddism' ensued beginning with a swift trip to Safeway to stock up with whatever beer was part of the weekly deals and then back to camp to consume it. An attempt to read *The Economist* was quickly ditched for a more conforming muse over football transfer speculation in the tabloids.

A boisterous trip into town later, I found myself presented with a plethora of clubs and pubs; more than one would expect a quaint Cornish village to offer. Over the week we found venues to accommodate most tastes in music and enough drinks promotions to satisfy even the most alcoholic of the group. Bars and clubs such as The Newquay Arms, The Beach, Tall Trees, and, in particular, Sailors, which provided us with a set of brilliant nights out and friendly people to meet. Even the taxi drivers allowed us to MC over their radios on the trip back to camp.



Tom Elkins

Tranquility, waiting to be disturbed

Daytime in Newquay was largely spent nursing hangovers and participating in meaningless banter relating to the previous night's frivolity - a wonderful escape from any academic conversation or exposition of ideas to a supervisor. In addition, we sampled the beaches Newquay had to offer, the outright best being the classic surfing beach, Fistral.

And there were even mementoes to take home. Journeying into the town centre, we found many shops selling surf boards and apparel as well as samurai swords, that classic Cornish tradition. We bought a set.

This was not exactly an intellectually stimulating trip - but a break away with good, easy-going friends provides the perfect contrast to what was a stressful first year at Cambridge. Subject to gaining a lucrative internship next summer, I will definitely be returning.

When one Thai-ers of Tourism

Michael Fordham wanders off the tourist trail in Thailand

Thailand seems to occupy a happy niche in the travel community. Its main airport in Bangkok is one of the major stop-off points in that part of the world, and Thailand is especially popular with that gap year sort who like getting cultured in whistle-stop tours of the globe. Khao San Road, backpacker capital of South-East Asia, is a place to meet people from the world over and even, occasionally, a Thai person. This is the tourist capital of South East Asia.

Tourism, though, is not such a bad thing. One of the areas I enjoyed most was a trip to Kanchanaburi in the west, the location of the film *Bridge on the River Kwai* and the death railway, including the haunting Hellfire Pass, now given over to a tasteful museum. There are some regions though, barely touched by the infectious hand of tourism, that give some real insight into Thailand beyond the sightseer route.

In Bangkok, English is spoken by a fair number of locals. Head a few hundred miles to the east, and you'll be lucky to find someone who even understands your poor attempt at sa-wut dee. Ubon Ratchathani lies close to the Laos border, and a bus ride and pick-up will take you to Pha Taem. Here, from atop a cliff face, you can look over the Mekhong into Laos. This, the first point touched by the sun in Thailand, is one of those places where for a moment you forget the pack on your back and that you are actually quite hungry for that next meal of sticky rice.

Descending down the cliff face reveals that stone age man was also partial to such a view. One section of the cliff is adorned with cave paintings of hunters, chasing down some bison-like creature, whilst others fish, one can only imagine, in the river Mekhong.



Michael Fordham

Looking over the Mekhong towards Laos: it is well worth venturing off the traditional tourist route for such views

Pha Taem has a nice visitor centre now, though it was deserted when we arrived, and there was not a sign in English. But getting off the tourist track does not always mean heading to some remote national park. Part of my time

So it was that I went to a rice farm and a fish farm, those two staples of Thai cuisine, which, by the way, is particularly good. Few realise just how labour intensive rice is to produce. Most will have heard of the conven-

Even on the tourist route you can find hidden marvels. On Koh Tao, an island in the south, most go to dive or to sit on the beach. But an hour's walk will take you to one of the highest points on the island: a jungle covered mountain. On top is not only to be found a commanding view of the island and beyond, but also a small deserted village.

So do go to Thailand. Do go to Bangkok, barter on the markets and visit the Wats. Do go north, to see the forests, and south, to admire the tranquil beauty of the islands. But remember there is more to Thailand than the tourist route, as it true of any country. So go and visit locals and travel to the national parks where some of the most awe-inspiring and striking regions of the country are left relatively untouched by the shutter-release-happy hand of tourism.

Unfortunately most people who go to Thailand don't see much beyond the normal tourist route

was spent in a small town to the north of Udon Thani, a city in the north-east. Here it was possible to do that other thing tourists rarely do: experience the everyday life of Thai people.

tion of leaving a little food on their plate so as to indicate that they are full; I was chastised, though, for leaving rice, over which the farmers had laboured for so long.

Try Vietnam for Cultural Enlightenment

Ella Ide

Having had the sneaking suspicion that it was about time I did something with my summers for the benefit of someone else, I did some research on the internet, found a company that organised volunteer placements I liked the look of and - easy as that - flew to Saigon. Officially renamed 'Ho Chi Minh City' by the Communist State in 1975, this was where I met the other volunteers.

From Saigon we took a ten hour train ride to Nha Trang. We were sharing a tiny carriage of six fold-down beds, until a guard commented on the cramped conditions and kindly suggested that we might like to bribe her to give us a nicer carriage; we did, and subsequently had a fun trip down (though the lesson to be learnt is to take your own provisions and under no account touch the highly suspicious meal given to you!).

Eating local food is a great way to get an insight into everyday Vietnamese life and meant that we could try such delicacies as prawn heads, raw meat wrapped in banana leaves and chicken foot and head stew. The downside was the violent reaction of the Western stomach, which appears to be unreasonably conservative. But you can't let a raging inside hold you back, so we rent-

ed bikes and went to visit stunning Buddhist temples, where the dark interiors, choked with incense smoke, utterly enchanted me.

At the end of my placement I travelled to the capital, Hanoi, in the north of the country and then back down the coast to Saigon. On my travels I discovered that the Communist State did not view all its citizens as equal. The end of the war found Ho Chi Minh and his Viet Cong hailed as heroes while those who had allied (or were suspected of having allied) with the Republicans were sent to 're-education camps'.

Bizarrely enough, everyone, whether from the North or South and whatever their supposed allegiance in the war, had much praise for 'Uncle Ho' whom they hold in great esteem. Uncle Ho - Ho Chi Minh - lies in state in the Mausoleum in Hanoi and Vietnamese from all over the country make the pilgrimage to the capital to pay their respects to the Great Leader, who is worshipped almost as a deity. Justly so, one might think, if Communism had rid the country of financial inequality and had improved basic services for all such as health care; but it has not. I saw impoverished wretches living in squalid, crowded huts, their sewage often running freely into the nearby rivers in which they

wash and from where they draw their water for drinking and cooking.

In some towns majestic houses with brightly painted facades rose towering above muddy shacks, starkly out of place on the dirt tracks. Corruption has become an integral part of the country's way of life. We had to pay extra to get anywhere or do anything in the country, even leave. Owners of businesses are obliged to pay protection money in order to survive and people find themselves having to bribe state officials in order to get permission for as mundane events as having a relative to stay.

The question is why the Vietnamese sing the praises of their Communist leader rather than bemoaning their troubles. It appears that the answer is simple: complaints would bring retribution, and the cries of those being 're-educated' still echo through the mountains and streets and along the beaches. Those crippled by Agent Orange are as silent as those assaulted by the Viet Cong. Under the superficial hubbub of the market stalls, street sellers and impatient motorists, Vietnam is muted. The vibrant colours of the Buddhist temples, silk shops and coral reefs hide a much darker reality, a culture utterly unlike our own but one I would urge everyone to go and explore.



Traditional fishing is still practised

Why there's not always something to cry about

Let **Ellen E. Jones** dry your eyes for you as she explains the tear-jerker...

You can laugh in the faces of orphans, throw rocks at OAPs, or even join the Young Conservatives, but as long as you cried in Titanic, no one will ever accuse you of lacking basic human compassion. Which is why, even this most maligned of cinema genres, the tear-jerker, will never go out of fashion. In everyday life, other people's problems are grimy, unattractive and often carry a high risk of infection, but when subjected to the transfor-

mative powers of cinema even a chip falling into the gutter becomes an event of tragic proportions.

Considering you could achieve roughly the same effect by poking each member of your audience in the eye with a stick, it's perhaps unsurprising that the makers of weepies are rarely showered with critical acclaim. But there is an art to making people cry and it principally revolves around soundtrack. A subtle

sonic warning that your heart strings are about to be pulled, is only polite. But too much violin, too soon and it can feel like being hit around the

As long as someone eventually contracts a terminal illness, anything can happen

head with a large hammer labelled 'Cry Now.' Very likely, you will burst into tears, but for different reasons entirely. That said, seminal weepy, Beaches, somehow got away with

blasting The Wind Beneath My Wings at the audience every five minutes, so perhaps there are no hard and fast rules.

When it comes to plot there's a lot more room for manoeuvre: Sometimes it's a close-knit circle of female friends spanning the generations, while other films deal with life-long, lasting friendships between women, and on other occasions, still the film concerns ladies coming together to face all the trials of life, over the years. In fact, as long as someone eventually contracts a terminal illness, basically anything can happen.

Once the path to your heart is as well-trod as the M11, accessing your

compassion needn't even cost the price of a cinema ticket. A good soap opera wedding ought to have you in floods, and consummate weepy watcher that I am, I can even find something indescribably sad in the chord progression of Sean Paul's Like Glue.

The genius of the tear-jerker, be it film, TV programme or pop song, is how it wages war against our critical faculties. Tears blind the eyes, emotion clouds the brain and the only recourse left is to sit back and marvel at the resilience of the human spirit. It just will go on loving and finding joy, won't it?

pick of the week

In France, they call it Royale of the week



Christmas Lights Switched On Outside Guildhall, Sunday 21 Nov, 5pm

Okay, so The Damned aren't exactly in the spirit of the season. But hey, it's nearly Christmas and watching those lights go on will give you a warm fuzzy feeling inside.



La Strada Arts Picturehouse, 19th-21st November

The third in a trilogy of Fellini films. One of the greatest directors EVER an unmissable chance to see yet another masterpiece on the big screen.



Great Expectations ADC Theatre, 22nd-27th Nov, 7.45pm

Miss Haversham, a pantomime dame; the ghost of Christmas pluperfect, a pantomime cow. Written by Footlights regulars, Simon Bird and Joe Thomas.



DJ Dee Kline Clare Cellars, Friday 19th Nov, 8pm

Rat Records bring a breakbeat showcase to C.R.Y.P.T.I.C. this week fusing garage, hip hop, party breaks and Miami bass with support from local favourite Kermit



Jools Holland Corn Exchange, Saturday 20th Nov, 7.30pm

The stalwart pianist and presenter of Later... brings his Rhythm and Blues Orchestra to town with special guest Sharon Eusebe, who's been dubbed 'the new Nina Simone'.

image of the week



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'Close up to Nature'
Talk this Saturday 6:30pm

Baracoa, Cuba. By Ashley Rawlings

Expect pantomime greatness

Harriet Walker was not disappointed

As a story, Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* delivers all the goods that we have come to associate with the encroaching festive season: a disillusionment with material wealth; the values of friendship, charity and justice; and a character-bashing of London and its inhabitants. As a pantomime, it delivers all this, plus an intellectual cow. The Footlights panto is upon us once more, with the usual array of japes, eye-rolling and not-quite-placeable accents.

Written by Footlights regulars, Simon Bird and Joe Thomas, the production is a heart-warming and pant-wetting selection of high-quality absurdity, satire and slapstick. From tranvestite marital angst to sword-obsessive blacksmiths, the team give us a lively and unpretentious slant on a literary masterpiece, resplendent in high-camp buffoonery and jaunty piano accompaniment.

The songs are, as ever, fantastic in their wittily understated lyrics and Broadway routines, and the performances are consistently funny. Oh yes, they are. There is so obviously a shared and very much throbbing comic vein between the cast members

that it is delightful to see the actors having such a great time.

The script and cast are both versatile enough to withstand moments of improvisation, which means that the production never gets stale. When those on-stage are enjoying themselves so much, the audience cannot fail to do likewise. The energy and enthusiasm of the players are infectious, as are the giggles their antics demand.

One potential danger in re-writing and re-working such a well-known story is that the po-faced purists will be out in force over the somewhat irreverent changes made. It is difficult to see any literary pedants appreciating Zack Simons' startling interpretation of Miss Havisham, who becomes a randy and Yorkshire-bred incarnation of The League of Gentlemen's Papa Lazarou. Suffice to say, she is nobody's wife now.

But this production is not really about doing justice to the text – although Dickens' own humour is certainly treated with respect, and is embellished if not followed to the letter – it is about getting people together for an end-of-term release of tension. And Jonny Sweet's cerebral bovine has more than enough of a supervisor about him.



Lois Parker-Smith as Pip leads the way for daftness

Under the careful and thorough direction of Sam Kitchener, an old-hand at panto ventures, having starred last year as the crucial Sir Trumpalot in *Alice in Wonderland* (not to mention as Richard III, that other great pantomime dame), the production is a cohesive and fun-packed blend of humour and pathos.

The lead performance from Lois Parker-Smith as Pip is a strong basis for the ensuing daftness. Too often,

lead characters in pantomimes are played straight and find themselves bereft of good lines. Thankfully, the profusion of wit throughout allows Pip some great moments, without losing any of the audience's sympathy. The title of the production leads us to expect great things. Does it disappoint? Oh no, it certainly does not.

At the ADC Theatre from 22nd November to 4th December at 7.45pm

The fabulous tale of the angry inch



Sassy, irreverent and deeply moving: Joe Swarbrick as Hedwig

Wil James revels in the outrage

"To be free, one must give up a little part of oneself... and I know just the doctor to do it!"

The moral of the tale of Hedwig (nee Hansel) Schmidt will be ringing in your ears as you leave next week's Pembroke Players' production of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. Part rock musical, part stand-up, part fable, it tells how young Hansel, trapped in a repressive East Germany, undergoes a semi-successful sex change operation (hence the angry inch) as a means of escaping her homeland and finding happiness in the USA.

Yet, crossing the wall does not provide fulfilment for Hansel, now Hedwig, as she continues to strive to find acceptance and love. The musical draws upon the idea of a primal search for love and wholeness, seen from the unique perspective of, as she puts it, 'a freak.'

The joy of this production is its striking lack of pretension, with the intimate location of Pembroke New

Cellars providing an evocation of the Berlin Cabaret of celebrated myth.

Central is the sassy, irreverent and deeply moving performance of Joe Swarbrick as Hedwig. In an intensely challenging role, he succeeds in gripping the audience whether screaming thrash rock lyrics or recalling the most intimate memories of childhood. He brings to life an often outrageous script with liberal improvisation, yet ultimately holds the attention through a profoundly human and affecting performance.

A funky rock quartet and snazzy backing vocals are complemented by some very cool graphics (including fornicating Gummy bears) to create, in my opinion, the theatrical event of this term, if not the entire year. *Hedwig* is unlike anything else you will see on the Cambridge stage and if don't you go to see it, you really will have missed out.

At Pembroke New Cellars from 22nd - 27th November at 8pm

All dressed up and somewhere to laugh

Roz Gater

The elegant yet relaxed formality of the Pembroke Black Tie Smoker jarred pleasingly with the standard Footlights foray. This usually begins outside the ADC, shivering with excitement and pneumonia whilst queuing for tickets, and culminates in raucous laughter, loud musical intermissions and potential heckling from the rowdy audience fished for a belly-laugh. This seems to be the natural habitat for that species who enjoy being ridiculed by a tough crowd on their comedic flair.

So perhaps it was a little dicey attempting to replace this environment with a champers sipping, live jazz, black tie clad setting, the audience sitting smart cross legged on straight back chairs.

However, the warm friendliness and

unpretentious atmosphere carefully created by the Pembroke Smoker team, led by the charming James Drinkwater, ensured that they were not attempting to elevate Cambridge comedy into the dizzy heights of an exclusive, black tie clique. Anyway, this is how it was done in Pembroke in the 60s, in the heady days of Bill Oddie and Peter Cook.

Forty years on, whether it was the way the team greeted their guests with casual familiarity, or the nibbles at the end of the room, the Pembroke team created an atmosphere of warm smiles and attention to detail.

The hour of stand-up, improv, song and sketch was introduced by the booming voice of Fred Crawley, whose neat little speech tantalised our taste buds in readiness for the following acts, of which there was a broad range. From the

absurd, (but arguably genius) intellectualism of Chris Fenwick's 'Lecture', (during which his flickering smile illustrated how amusing he found himself) to Oliver Robinson's song of a madman in love with his 'Road-kill Badger'.

Although the overall impressive standard of comedy, and indeed the comedians themselves, did not differ greatly from the ADC Smokers, with favourites like Jonny Sweet, Simon Bird and Dan Mansell guaranteeing to tickle our funny bones, perhaps some new faces and more experimental work would have been beneficial to an audience who left satisfied, but perhaps not challenged.

Only ICE (Improvised Comedy Ents) took a real risk, as always, in relying on their spontaneous comedic talent to provoke giggles, but even they at moments appeared to be falling into a pattern previously used. Playing it safe

and succeeding in, at moments, getting the audience really roaring was probably advisable, and I have no doubt that the success of Friday evening will provoke a consequently more original line-up.

At the end of the performance, we were asked to vote for our favourite comedian. Drinkwater's ultimate aim in engineering this night, was to 'enliven the Cambridge comedy scene', and encourage comedians to write for an audience who will judge them, and for whom the winner may receive a small cash prize.

This, in conjunction with the black tie theme, takes Cambridge comedy into a whole new league of professionalism and polish, giving comedians a real incentive to pen their best work, thus encouraging the very innovation the framework, if not the content, of the evening illustrated.

Ask the audience

A SMALL FAMILY BUSINESS
at the ADC Theatre until Saturday



Flora Joll King's

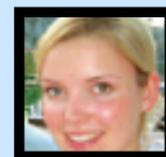
The set design and stage management was excellent. Lewis Reynolds was very funny. Tabitha Becker-Khan was self confident and simmered with sex. The lighting was a bit off at places but the stills were fantastic – whole thing was very smooth.



Danielle Trigg King's

It was very, very slow and monotonous, and much too long; not sure what the moral tale was. The Italian was beautiful and the mum was funny at times. There were some wonderful vignettes. A lot of leg, not enough cleavage.

THE SOUL OF CHIEN NU LEAVES HER BODY/AUTUMN IN HAN PALACE
at Christ's New Court Theatre until Saturday



Nina Bowden Christ's

Two beautifully directed plays, outstanding performances, great to see some original theatre in Cambridge.

WIT
at St Chad's Octagon until Saturday



Clare Kurtis Newnham

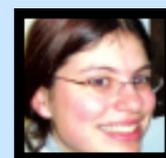
Exceptionally moving. It was great. The cast handled a difficult topic with extreme sensitivity.



Elly Barton KCL

It was fantastic. The lead was incredibly powerful. I thought it was really thought-provoking.

FINDING THE SUN
at the ADC Theatre until Saturday



Hannah Wright Queen's

I really enjoyed it. The acting was great. But I wanted to know what happened to Fergus in the end.



Sam Rose John's

The end was immensely moving. I thought Ben Seidler gave profound feeling to Daniel's struggle with his sexuality. And John Lau was great.

Brainstorming

Alice Harper undergoes a theatrical education

There are rumours surrounding *The Tempest*, produced jointly by HATS and the ADC. Some say director Sam Yates has cast twelve Ariels – surely just a theatrical gimmick. This is a gross exaggeration: there are in fact only six.

But Yates' production, though innovative and adventurous, is not novel for novelty's sake. Under the auspices of his own company, Blank Theatre, Yates has set himself a hard task. He is striving to create 'total theatre', an amalgamation of physical theatre, naturalism, mask theatre, puppetry, verse, music, dance and voice.

The ultimate aim of Blank Theatre is to produce what Yates calls 'Theatre in Education'. Not just a worthy title, this sums up the desire to make a story clear and entertaining, within the framework of doing something theatrically different.

These theories infuse the production and behind every idea is a meticulous thought process. The decision to cast

six Ariels, for example, is so as to have a character unrecognisable as a normal human, drawing on the fact that Ariel is written as a force we do not wholly understand. The singing and dancing actors representing Prospero's minions are female, balancing the male forces of Caliban and Prospero. This balancing is lent weight by the casting of Monique Cornwell in the usually patriarchal role of Alonso.

Even in the rehearsal stages, it is evident that Yates had assembled a talented cast to bring his many ideas to life. Caliban (Tom Sharpe), reminiscent of Gollum, evokes much sympathy. The polarity of his character will be emphasised by a mask covering half of his face.

Set design has been given as much thought as casting. With the help of architect, Sarah Anderson, Yates has conceived a world in which nature and artifice are at odds with each other. A cave and a dying tree, representing Caliban's lair, is set against a raised



Blank Theatre

Members of the cast of *The Tempest* practicing with masks. Yates' ambitious production includes six Ariels

platform, arched by an arrangement of books, to hint at Prospero's study. The production is given a Tim Burtonesque feel, with touches of magical realism, by suspending black boots and barbed wire at the back of the stage.

One idea, though, has come about quite by chance. Val Widdowson, literal ADC veteran, is stepping in

to play Prospero in the latter stages of the rehearsal process. Widdowson's age gives credence to the authority and experience which Prospero has. From a practical point of view, Yates claims the cast have felt they've had to raise their game.

There are no gimmicks in this exciting production, without much

thought behind them. This promises to be a production which will appeal to school kids and theatre lovers alike, of which Blank Theatre should be proud.

At the Homerton Auditorium from 23rd to 27th November at 8pm

Telling tales

Chris Adams goes back to childhood



Robin Frampton

Esme Harwood (Matilda) in Debbie Isitt's adaptation of Hillaire Belloc's tale

We all had our favourite fairytales as children. But we're all grown up now. Like the sophisticated students that we are, we have to be mature about these things, so we pretend that at some point all that childhood naïveté subsided into too-cool-for-school cynicism and disparagement. So why is it then that, for example, the ADC's *Peter Pan* still managed to hold an enthralled audience of grown-up students when it returned to Cambridge, drawing as many gasps and secret grins as their playschool counterparts in Edinburgh?

There's a growing interest in the adaptation of children's tales to stage. Of course, there are the straight page-to-stage productions deliberately aimed at kids, but there are also some incredible modern classics which take the traditional fairytale and add that pinch of mature scepticism, subverting our expectation of the fairytale – to take the tale and turn it into something we can relate to in the real world.

Sondheim did it skilfully with *Into The Woods*: the first act seems like nothing more than a fairytale compendium spilling out on to the stage. The second act, however, is where

things get nasty – we learn that every selfish action has a consequence and there's no such thing as happy ever after. Carol Ann-Duffy adapted *Grimms' Tales* for the theatre, staged last May Week to an enthralled audience of toddlers and students alike in Emmanuel College Gardens.

Matilda Liar!, a play by Debbie Isitt, adapts a tale from Hillaire Belloc's *Cautionary Tales for Children*, an anthology of stories which provide grisly warnings to misbehaving youngsters. *Matilda, Who Told Lies And Was Burned To Death* was harrowing enough, but retained a touch of Belloc's trademark wit which softened the warning – Isitt's tale is, in her own words, 'a comedy and a tragedy – just like life', transporting Matilda (who herself has shielded herself in her own fairytale fantasy) to the modern family home, where Belloc's gruesome fable is turned on its head, and soon finds that sometimes, lies are far, far better than the truth.

Next time you see a play, look closer. There's a fairytale in there somewhere.

Chris Adams is the director of Matilda Liar, at the ADC Theatre from 24th – 27th November at 11pm

Theatre of times past

Tess Riley

Set in Paris during the flourishing cultural period known as the belle époque, preceding the First World War, this adaptation of Marcel Proust's eight-volume novel, *A la recherche du temps perdu*, details the intricate comings and goings of the main protagonist as he struggles his way through life.

Loosely based on Proust's seminal literary investigation into the power of memory and the unconscious, Suba Das' production of the Harold Pinter adaptation explores the apparently beautiful and luxurious world that Proust is embroiled in, to reveal the truth behind the façade. Cruel back-stabbing nourished by jealousy, explicit lesbian love episodes, and alcohol-fuelled parties are just some of the components of the French aristocratic society on show.

Harry Williams' intimate portrayal of the intensely fragmented mind of Proust shows a man haunted by memories as he is trapped in such a world. Images of his childhood, intermingled with flashbacks of more recent events, leap out from the video screen behind him, allowing the audience a glimpse into his deepest thoughts.

Back in the real world, the reminiscence of these visions jar with his contemporary surroundings leaving a



Suba Das

From left: a repressed lesbian, a glamorous lesbian, a bisexual actress

man unable to inhabit either his past or the present hollow society in which he finds himself.

Disturbing issues concerning class, homosexuality, love and childhood are raised as the tone strains to remain sweet, glossed over by the beauty of the culture-rich era. However, cracks soon start to emerge as the reality of human experience breaks through.

Clare Judkins is outstanding as Albertine, Proust's lover, and gives one of the finest performances I have seen in Cambridge to date. Also, a notable performance from Joe Marsh as Saint Loup pinpoints the damning effect that social order – or disorder – can have on a person's per-

sonal life. Finally, Bella Heesom's portrayal of Charlus, a hardened victim of sexual desire, should not go unrecognised. She demonstrates that with passionate, considerate acting, the audience's opinion of a character can alter violently.

Proust's examination of time paradoxically deduces that the progression of his life can be marked out by the deaths of those who surround him. In this brilliant exposé of a man's struggle to cope, the audience will never be trying to kill time but shockingly watching time kill.

At the Queens' College's Fitzpatrick Hall from 22nd – 27th November at 7.45pm

How to come out in style

Mic Wright

In a world characterised by *What Not To Wear*, *How Clean Is Your House?* and more appropriately *Queer Eye For The Straight Guy*, a piece entitled *How Not To Come Out To Your Parents* seems fairly appropriate. How can the hapless David come out to his parents in the chaos of his mother eloping with a bisexual dentist and his American cousin leaping out of the closet?

Alex Williams is a talented writer, spinning a web of farcical situations and surreal occurrences that suggest *My Family* should be written by far braver writers. Although the show deals with

difficult issues like homosexuality and broken marriages, they are handled with a lightness of touch and a delightfully skewed perspective making for a piece that audiences will accept far more readily than a heavily politicised polemic.

The show is almost instructional in its presentation of three examples of coming out that fail and one that is an ideal: as insightful as it is funny.

New writing in Cambridge is strange, often characterised by exercises in intellectual skill or work outs in bad taste comedy, despite some very creditable recent efforts. But this does not seem to be the case with Williams' play. Working with his company in a very open and

democratic framework, the original script has been work-shopped and developed in rehearsal to increase the sense of physical comedy.

In the fairly straight world of Cambridge, it is wonderful to see a company attempting to bring under-represented gay issues to a mainstream audience. Williams says that he wants to send the audience away "laughing, smiling and star-jumping" and I have no doubt that he and his cast will achieve this. Make sure you come out to *How Not To Come Out*...

At the Pembroke New Cellars from 22nd – 27th November at 10pm

The Decemberists

Jon Swaine has a drink with Portland's most promising pirates

The bar is awash with tracksuits, bum-fluff moustaches, Burberry accessories and swear-words: City have triumphed in the Cup, and there's nothing getting this lot away from their shandies any time soon. Promoters and roadies, struggling under flight cases, are battling furiously through the be-Niked hordes, desperately attempting to set up any sort of stage or entrance point. Which, as well as meaning pouting, tousled indie kids are soon happily walking in gratis (disdainful reactions at later attempts at retrospective fee collection are quite hilarious) makes being enthusiastically beckoned over for a chat by Colin Meloy (vocals, guitar) and Nate Query (bass) of the Decemberists all the more surreal.

Not wishing to be the next to accidentally declare class war, I cannot help but agree with Colin's cute summation that this must be 'what you'd call Chav Central, right?' Indeed, and fresh from dazzling 2,000 Cake fans nightly, opening on their European tour of sold-out theatres, their decision to play such *Phoenix Nights*-style environments requires some explanation. 'We realise it's difficult for you to actually get the records', helps Nate, 'so we're really trying to go places we didn't last time we were here, at the same time as searching for a label who'll have us', their prestigious Kill Rock Stars home enjoying only limited distribution in these parts.

Formed in Portland, Oregon 'about five years ago', the Decemberists' two albums, *Her Majesty* and *Castaways and Cut-Outs* are stunning, seemingly

casually thrown-together collections of shanties, vivid biographical laments and odes to fallen comrades. Imagine a depressed British Sea Power drunkenly re-recording the songs of the Coral and you're nowhere near, really, but it'd be a start. Aided by championing magazines like *Magnet*, *Devil in the Woods* and *pitchforkmedia.com* - 'invaluable', even if it does mean their 'reporting each time Nate goes to the bathroom' - they are determinedly making their name through rousing shows, even if it means driving themselves across Europe in a Sprint van.

thrown-together shanties, vivid laments and odes to fallen comrades

Talk seems destined to lead to recent political happenings back home; both seem quietly devastated, not least since they've been in Europe ever since. 'I just can't see how tolerance and liberalism are such dirty words to people in my country' snaps Colin, dismissing my presumption that murmurings for coastal secession (Portland pipped for Kerry) might have been exaggerated en route across the Atlantic. Seeking solace in desperation, I venture that the resolute siege mentality of the artistic reaction might be emboldened by Four More Years. 'There is

something in that, for sure...we certainly seem to get these pockets of like-minded American support turning out for us wherever we are' offers Meloy, rescuing us all from the verge of an embarrassing, tipsy soul-search on the future of the Democrats, of the Left, of...mankind, man.

Having reportedly split up following a disastrous London set the previous night, support band the Unicorns are clearly still together, remarkably coherent and present a fantastic set taken from 2003's *Who Will Cut Our Hair When We're Gone?* The perfect openers to force the crowd from the floor and interact, one only hopes that recent reports of their demise are at least premature; they certainly deserve a better chance. But it's soon growing very late. Hurrying onstage and breaking into 'Shanty for Arethusia', there is clearly deep unspoken rapport and chemistry between the Decemberists; the base provided is so tight that accidental drunkenness only improves things. Underpinned by Rachel Blumberg's marching rolls and Nate's thumping double-bass, Colin and guitarist Chris Funk are granted license to looseness, decorated by Jenny Conlee's gorgeous accordion. Salty, wistful maritime drama seeps effortlessly from every bar of 'Oceanside', the sparked imagination visible in watching eyes.

If there's any fault, it's Meloy's habit of over-introduction. His songs' narratives are stronger than any I've heard in years, more than telling their stories themselves. Yet he seems anxious to make sure, often

Jon Swaine



explaining things away to the point of awkward quiet: the preservation of some mystique would be welcomed. But it's a small price to pay; tunes like 'Legionnaire's Lament' and 'Los Angeles, I'm Yours' are magnificent, thoughtful pocket-epics to sway to, eyes closed while you dream of another century in another world. The Decemberists' marrying of vast escapism with such earthly accessible, addictive hooks and refrains is surely unrivalled today. They gently but steadfastly demand your immediate attention, and I concur.

So what of the future? Following their collaboration on this year's *The*

Tain EP - an 18 minute song in five parts, 'not meant pretentiously at all, just purely us seeing where we could go, unrestrained', Nate is later anxious for me to understand, a new album produced with Death Cab For Cutie producer Chris Walla is ready for release in the Spring, apparently the product of a much more driven, rapidly-completed recording process. 'He was just indefatigable', chimes Colin, 'there was so much energy and focus. We can't wait for people to hear it.' Nor, presumably, for a long-overdue chance to return in more luxurious circumstances to present it to us.

Ain't Got Grime to Waste

Ned Bauman meets MCs Lady Sovereign and Crazy Titch

They speak in your voice, Londoner, and there's a shine in their eyes that's halfway hopeful. Lady Sovereign and Crazy Titch are two of the most creative and fiery MCs in grime, although neither are yet known outside the scene. Do you want me to make it simple for you? Lady Sovereign is the next Ms Dynamite, Crazy Titch is the next Dizzee Rascal. Except these kids are so talented they can do what they like, not what journalists expect them to do.

The best thing about covering grime is that most of these people have hardly done any interviews before, and it shows. Every indie band you talk to will tell you the same things in an eerie monotone: they're really excited about the new album, they're really grateful to their fans, touring is really fun but it's also really tiring... Crazy Titch couldn't be more different. Appropriately for an MC, he can't stop talking. There is a My Fair Lady moment when he tries to teach me the glottal stop at the end of slang word 'neck', which apparently means 'cool'. ('Neck?' 'No, nec.' 'Neck.' 'No, like nec.' 'Nec?') Yeah, nec!' 'NEC!' 'All right, boy.' I could have daanced all night, etc.)

When I get my facts wrong, he mocks me affably for being 'miseducated', and when I mention the recent grime night in Cambridge he asks how it went with genuine interest (look out for a report next issue). Later, he apologises that in his newest track 'I big up a lot of places but I don't big up Cambridge because I haven't there yet.'

I ask Titch whether grime will ever be as big as garage or drum'n'bass. 'Nah.

The government won't let it. Also, grime sounds scary. The average Joe Bloggs isn't going to want to buy grime. "What is grime? Blargh!" We're just trying to get established, but people are trying to shut our scene down.' Still, he's optimistic. 'If you think people in grime aren't going to make it, you're dead wrong. It's a majority, it's not a minority no more.'

Titch got his start on pirate radio. 'I always wanted to be on the stage, I always liked mics, my mum got me a karaoke machine and I used to bang it out.' Lady Sovereign 'got kicked out of school and sent to a drama class, and they were making this low budget film. I got the main part and I had to do one song on the soundtrack, and [producer] Medaysn heard it and got in touch with me.' That resulted in 'The Battle', an outstanding grimey garage track where Sovereign and Shystie swapped sex-war jibes with male MCs Frost P and Zuz Rock over epic strings.

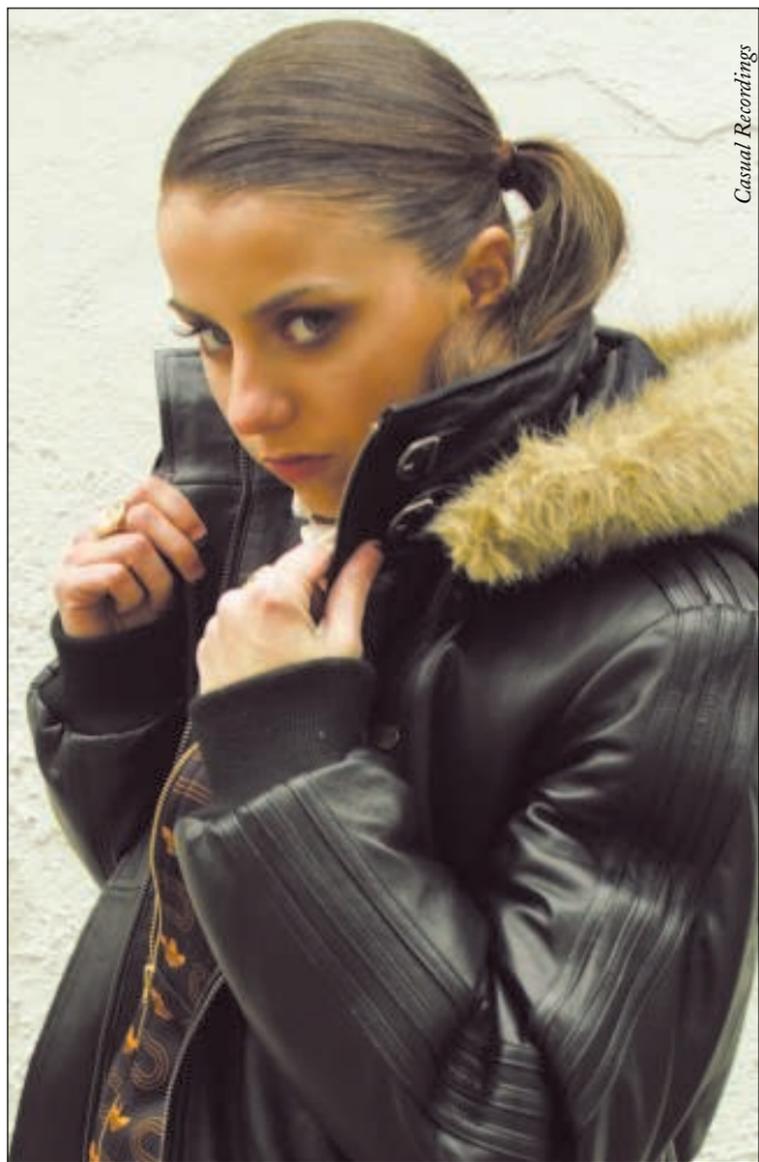
What makes a good MC? 'There are so many MCs out there that sound the same,' says Lady Sovereign. 'A good MC is different.' Are grime MCs too fixated by violence? 'Maybe, but the lyrics are starting to change, people are starting to talk a bit more sense, MCs are starting to realise that if they want to move up in the game they've got to start changing their subject matter.' Titch agrees: 'It's about originality. People think grime is all about "I'll cut your head off" and all the violence, and it's not. You have to be raw in the beginning but you don't have to be raw all the time. A lot

of MCs talk about guns, but they haven't really got them!'

Plasticman told me that for producers, 'the scene is so open, you make a great track and you could be the biggest name in grime overnight.' Is MCing so easy to get into? 'It's not easy right now,' Titch says. 'It opens and closes, and now it's closed again. If you're not in it when it closes you have much harder times than if you rolled in when everyone else rolled in.' A lot like a secret temple chamber in *Indiana Jones*, then. 'Some people have been MCing for five or six years and they still haven't got a break.'

Both have albums out next year, which will bring them to a deservedly wider audience, and both are excited about how the scene is expanding outside London. 'I've been to Ipswich recently, Cornwall, Scotland, Wales, there's a grime scene in all those places.' This subject is what gets Titch most animated (which is saying something): 'They just don't want you to believe the scene's big! It is big! It's ours! They know about me in Glasgow, in Dublin. Those kids are mad! People saying "I love you" in an Irish accent is the best thing I've heard this year.'

Titch wants to be big. 'And when I go through, I want to bring the scene as well. It must have been boring for Dizzee all this time, by himself, being a pioneer. People like Ms Dynamite, they left the scene behind and they forgot about it, but I'm not going to do that. And I want world domination! But I need to stop saying that,' he mutters, 'because people are going to clamp down on me.'



Casual Recordings

Lady Sovereign: "A good MC is different"

Plectrum Spectrum

Varsity reviews Cambridge's best acoustic and open mic nights

Acoustico Musicale at Jesus

The 'JCSU Party Room' has been refurbished to make it a middle-manager's conference room, but the effect of the bland decoration was easily remedied by subdued lighting. Yet the best medicament for an acoustic night is talent, which was provided by the performers, especially brothers Matt and Dominic Bunning. Their set provided a counterpoint to the otherwise sombre mood, which is enjoyable but endemic in acoustic nights; sometimes variety is all that is needed to make an average night successful. The brothers' energy and musical ability brought a smile to the room, as they covered 'Don't Look Back Into The Sun' and 'Up The Bracket' by The Libertines, with added Tourette's-style shouting. Younger brother Dominic dominated the duo, providing the vocals and, sometimes, musical cover for his alcohol-addled brother.

Andy Acred provided standout moments during his set with a cover of 'Slide' by the Goo Goo Dolls. Salman Shaheen and Ruben Rosenberg presented perhaps the first self-penned political song seen at Acousto Musicale, 'Peace One Day', in support of the group of the same name (www.peaceoneday.org), in a musically-accomplished and spirited performance. The night would benefit from non-Jesuan participation, but was nonetheless popular and deserves to continue to be so.

Moreed Arbabzadah

Selwyn Sessions

As yet one of the most underrated and little-known open-mic nights in Cambridge, Selwyn Sessions is fast becoming a renowned gem of the Westside. Run twice termly in the college bar – itself growing in notoriety for being actually rather good – Sessions has recently seen a huge increase in demand for performance slots from acts based in Homerton, Pembroke and Newnham, each battling to upstage the best of Selwyn's own talent.

Michaelmas' first, held in Fresher's Week, saw amongst others the long-awaited return of Nick Massey, who stunned onlookers with gorgeous Russian folk, before college favourites Tom Stoddart and Paddy Massey proceeded to bring the house down with such classics as 'The Bifta Song' and other restrained odes peppered with interludes from the Vengaboys and the Tetris theme tune. Finally, the beautiful Charlotte Hodgkinson wowed with her acoustic cover of Britney Spears' 'Toxic', replete with cello accompaniment from Gregor Riddell. The second outing of the term is to be held this Sunday evening – anyone wishing to perform should contact Will Morgan at jcrentz@sel.cam.ac.uk. Selwyn Sessions strikes the perfect balance between spontaneity and actually being able to hear music, making this is an acoustic night not to be missed.

Jon Swaine

The Living Room at CB2

The Living Room, with a bill occupied by well-established local artists creates a more professional and polished atmosphere than its college counterparts. Acoustic opener Stewart 'Badwell Ash', despite clear ability and pretty arpeggiating harmonies like that of 'London Bridge', struggled to compensate for a David Gray-esque bellow that in the close confines of the Living Room was akin to Metallica playing Addenbrooke's Intensive Care Unit. An electro acoustic and double bass gave Adette Michell's mellow folk unexpected warmth and depth, that despite a tendency to sound like a *Dawson's Creek* soundtrack was accomplished and often affecting. Modal Monk swept onstage with a whiff of sweat and cheap beer. The night's only electric guitar provided an excellent blues and slide backing for an incomprehensible but charismatic lead singer – a promising act. The last group, Siskin, created a rich sound with impressive drumming and two guitars, but failed to disguise the blandness of a singer providing the vocal equivalent of tofu, and the banal lyrical equivalent of *Troy's* dialogue. Inoffensive, but as cramp spread over my nether regions, I couldn't help pondering whether I would rather push knitting needles slowly into my retinas than watch their set again. However, despite the Living Room's slick setup, the central dilemma of such nights remains – when an



Jon Swaine

A rapt audience at Selwyn bar, where open-mic sessions are held twice a term

embryonic artist strums inches from your face, it is difficult, without being wilfully cynical, to criticise too harshly. Given this, and the impossibility of predicting the quality of what will be on offer, the Living Room is still strongly recommended.

www.livingroom.cambridgebands.com

Was Yaqoob

Songs in the Dark at Clowns

Surely there can be no better place to be on a Sunday than Songs in the Dark? Thanks to the warmth of songwriting and creativity cultivated by hosts and artists Jeremy Warmley and Simon Mastrantone, the event is fast becoming a Cambridge institution. This evening of beautiful acoustic, gentle ambience and the best cappuccino in town, is improved only by the

humour of local poet Niall Spooner-Harvey (who also, it seems, writes ditties on request). The week I saw the remarkable debut of Michael Berk (no, not the former newsreader-cum-999 Lifesavers presenter, but an incredible guitarist whose adroit fingerwork would rival that of Eric Clapton Unplugged. Live at the Rubicon. On steroids.) Don't believe me? Make it down to Clowns café for the next event on Sunday 28th November. Get there early, swap a fiver for a bottle of the famous house red, plonk yourself down in the corner, and warm yourself by the tealights and the wisdom of SITD's boho philosophy students and the warmth of humanity. You won't regret it.

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Twenty-something? Be very afraid...

Rachel Willcock talks to Hannah Adcock, author of a unique kind of survival guide



Varsity Archive

It can't last forever, you know...

Before I met Hannah Adcock, I was frightened about leaving Cambridge. Now I am petrified. Life outside of this town isn't for the faint-hearted. I find it surprising to learn that Hannah Adcock has only been a twentysomething for four years. Seemingly this short time has taken its toll already – she looks tired and slightly nervous as she greets me, though she smiles. This summarises Adcock's approach to life and the motivation behind her new book *20something: The Ultimate Survival Guide*.

We will all hopefully leave this place armed with shiny Cambridge degrees waiting for employers to snap us up – but what if they don't? What if you, like me, haven't got the foggiest

'Life outside of this town isn't for the faint-hearted'

idea how to chart the next decade of your life? Then Adcock's book is for you. With chapters such as 'Skipping the Country: pack up your troubles', 'Back under the duvet' and 'Tax counsel' it is clear that this is a book that can help you on a number of counts.

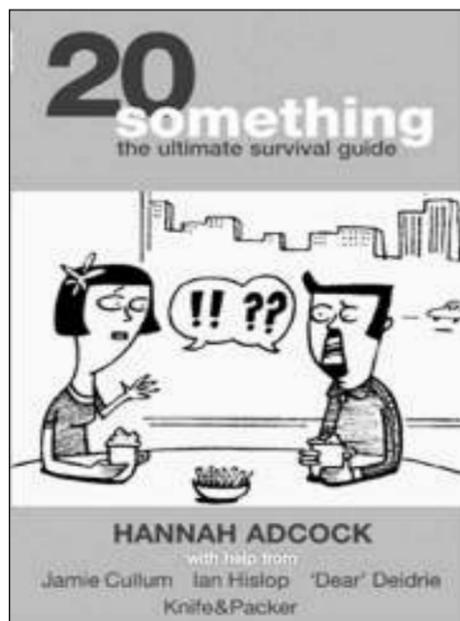
The book is, in Adcock's words, 'a mixture of real advice and humour'. With pithy anecdotes from stars such as Ian Hislop, 'Dear' Deidre and Jamie Cullum, it makes for amusing reading. It is perhaps the only book marketed towards helping young people at what is possibly the most daunting period of their lives – the time after tertiary education. Adcock saw the gap in the market when she left university: 'While I was at College, I couldn't walk five metres without being given some literature on what to do next or what careers presentation to attend and then when I left and I really needed it, there was nothing.'

From this she maintains the idea for the book just came naturally. Her research is mostly from friends who are in the same situation – she protests 'This is not an American-style self-help book, I like to teach from experience.' She has certainly got that. You can quickly tell on meeting her that this girl is older than her years and well qualified for advising people on the wilderness of post-education depression. On leaving university with a Cambridge English degree she completely disregarded it and thought she would try her hand at jewellery design. 'I know, I know!' she protests on seeing my bemused face, 'but I always enjoyed art at school.' Needless to say, this plan was short-lived and on being rejected without interviews for a multitude of jobs she packed her bags for Australia. Here Adcock worked on a local paper whilst training horses – gaining some inval-

able experience. On return to England she dabbled more in journalism, editing a small circulation newspaper in Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland, something of which she is proud. 'Everyone feels this pressure to move to London,' she explains, 'but some of the best experience comes from moving further afield. I mean I'm twenty four and I now know what its like to edit a paper, better than making the tea on a larger publication.' After completing her first book, *20something*, she set off for Greece to help produce a film adaptation of *Twelfth Night*.

Is the case of the angst ridden twentysomething a new phenomenon? Adcock seems to think so. 'There is a huge disparity between our generation and our parents and this often leads to a lack of empathy. Our parents don't understand that there are many more graduates now going for the same jobs. Furthermore, they weren't saddled with thousands of pounds' worth of debt when they left university.' Ah yes – that issue, money. Adcock freezes me with fear when she reminds me of the reality of the overdraft. 'When you finish university the money stops coming in.' As stupid as it sounds, this hadn't really occurred to me before – I always expect the magic student loan cheque to clear away all my troubles, but that doesn't happen in your twenties. Instead you have to repay it. Oh dear.

On a more serious note, the problems dealt with in this book are real ones that can lead to serious mental strain for young people, often completely ill-equipped for dealing with the real world. For three years we have pretended we are independent whilst having all our meals cooked for us, no job and people chasing us up about



missed essays. For some, leaving university is a transition too far. Adcock deals with the hazards and joys of this special time of life sensitively and always humorously. 'The most important thing to learn from this book is that you are not alone. Don't be afraid to admit you are confused and seek help.' And this book doesn't seem a bad place

'This is not an American-style self-help book'

to start. The contributors seem to feel sympathetic to the readership and even Hislop lets down his guard to give a frank account of his struggles as a young journalist.

So what's next for Hannah Adcock? It seems that this is anyone's guess. 'I'm moving to Scotland in a couple of months but I'm not sure exactly what I'll be doing, I feel as lost as ever.' Hmm – it seems that the book hasn't solved her own problems then. It appears that Adcock doesn't need a life plan, just a sense of humour. 'I have come out of my experiences with a mixture of optimism and cynicism, and learnt that you can't take knockbacks too seriously.' I believe this shows a healthy philosophy to hold in life, towards Cambridge, as well as what comes next. 'What will I be doing when I am a thirtysomething?' Adcock giggles, 'I haven't a clue but hopefully I'll be able to write a book about it...'

20something: the ultimate survival guide is available from all bookshops now in paperback

Hannah's top tips



1. Don't allow yourself to be funnelled - there are many more options that you may first consider.
2. Greet setbacks with a smile - if you don't laugh you will cry.
3. In the immortal words of Dear Deidre, 'Don't be too posh or too proud' - we all have to start somewhere.

Good luck!

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Flora wears: Brown and gold pin-stripe Phillip Treacy beret (£82) and diamante charm neckwear (£156) both from **Ally Lulu**, Pink Sequined vest (£25) from **Dix's stall**, Jeans Diesel mini-skirt (£59) from **Catfish**. Belt and shoes models own.

Tim wears: Blue embroidered T-Shirt (£43) from **Dogfish**, Black chord trench-coat (£49.99) from **H&M**, Black plastic charm bracelet (£169) from **Ally Lulu**.

A. C. Berwick wears: Grey pinstripe trilby (£42) and Diesel brown and green striped cowboy shirt (£95) both from **Dogfish**.

Simon wears: White Balloon T-Shirt (£63) from **Dogfish**, Snazzy Glasses Sally's own, Trousers models own.

Photography by Adam Fudakowski
Styled by Johanna Z- Sharp & Sally Jennings.

The tricky art of on-screen adaptation

Emma Patterson talks to *Enduring Love* director Roger Michell about accepting inevitable failure

What was it about the novel that made you feel it should be brought to screen?

What appeals to me most about the novel is that although it's got a wonderful thriller structure, it's also a series of meditations on love, almost in a medieval way. They talk about love and become so academically interested in what love is, what the patterns of love are. In the same way, the novel is very interested in examining whether love endures, what it's like to endure being loved, what are the chances that love is a real, spiritual thing? How much are we fooling ourselves that love is anything other than a bit of Darwin to keep propagation going?

Did you think, then, that because the novel is so much about philosophical contemplation and meditation, it would be very difficult to bring these things, which are so at home in the novel as an artistic medium, to screen?

Well, that's one of the particular challenges of adapting Ian's work, which is very dense, very discursive, and full of science - full of ideas. So we had to find lots of different strategies for dramatising the ideas.

Do you feel that sometimes you lose the subtlety by dramatising these ideas, and articulating what is, in a way, inarticulable?

When you make a film from any book, you can only make a version of that book. And when you read a book, you make the greatest film ever out of the book; you cast it yourself, you pace it yourself, you light it yourself. And you can never compete with that imaginative experience of reading a novel. And once you face up to that terrible finality of failure that you're sure is hovering over you, all you can do is make a version, and you really have to make your version of this novel. I think what we've done, though some of the intellectual structure is less subtle, is we've been very faithful to the spirit of the book, to the super-idea of the book.

Daniel Craig, who plays Joe in the film, is quite the pinup of the moment, far younger and more attractive than his character in the novel. Was the decision to cast him in the role made in order to popularise the film?

My last film, *The Mother*, was with Daniel. I think he's poised on the brink of becoming a star. We use him

because he's an incredible actor and very good for this role. He's not the classic academic geezer with patches on his corduroy jacket, but I don't think most academics are like that now, anyway.

In the film's penultimate scene, Joe and Jed share a kiss. Do you think that it was right to sexualise the enduring love that the character of Jed feels for Joe?

In the novel, the love that endures is very much a spiritual, non-physical one - it's almost metaphysical. I'm not sure that it is that sexualised. I think that the kiss is - although it's not a non-sexual kiss - a kiss which is informed by pure, lofty feeling. It's not a lascivious kiss, and although it has a sexual component, it's more of a loving kiss than anything else.

Generally speaking, the number of people who watch a screen adaptation of a novel will surpass the number who have actually read the novel. Do you think that film therefore goes some way to diluting an intellectual elitism that is inherent in the reading of literature?

I think, on the contrary, that more people will go out and buy this book because they have seen the film. In



Ian McEwan and Roger Michell

fact, that is the pattern. Hundreds of thousands of people here and in America will go out and buy this book, and read it as a result of seeing the film, and hopefully be pugnacious,

be satisfied, be angry, be discursive about it, and then go out and buy every other book by Ian McEwan. It's all part of the happy symbiosis between literature and film.

Enduring? Not quite



Will Rhys Ifans ever escape the curse of those grey underpants?

A hot-air balloon, out of control, drifts past Joe (Daniel Craig) and Claire (Samantha Morton), a couple picnicking in the English countryside. Joe and three other men rush to pull the balloon to safety. Suddenly, the wind washes over the field. The balloon is thrust skywards, carrying the men with it. One man fails to let go, and is lifted far above the ground, soon falling to his death. Bound together by the accident are Joe and fellow rescuer, Jed (Rhys Ifans), whose consequent infatuation with Joe lies at the centre of the film.

When I saw *Enduring Love*, I had not yet read the Ian McEwan novel from which it had been adapted. I was probably the only one. But I felt it was important to come to the film with a blank page. My plan, however, proved futile; my overriding instinct was that in the process of adaptation, something had been lost - or added - and wrongly so.

The film asks: How do we define love? How long can love last? And if it lasts at all, how does it last? These questions, in the novel, are raised as McEwan journeys through the minds of the characters.

For the adaptation to work, the screenwriter, Joe Penhall, attempts to externalise these meditations by forcing the questions at hand into the dialogue. He fails. As the characters proceed to

articulate what should be inarticulable, contemplations of 'Love' and 'Meaninglessness' just seem unnatural, clichéd and only pseudo-philosophical.

The acting, however, is a success. Craig, as ever, is a potent and energetic cinematic presence, effortlessly alternating between guilt, anger and paranoia. Morton's performance is one of emotional delicacy. Ifans, though, carrying with him an unshakeable comic persona, seems slightly out of place as the infatuated stalker. And at times, Craig's turmoil is irritatingly undermined by the 'bathos' of Bill Nighy (playing Robin), apparently oblivious to the fact that he is no longer on the set of 2003 rom-com, *Love Actually*.

Most impressive is Roger Michell's direction of the balloon accident itself. Expertly alternating between adrenaline-fuelled, Baz Luhrmannesque movement, and an almost immobile peacefulness that perfectly captures the bemusement evoked by the sight of the balloon drifting, this scene more than does the novel's opening justice. And if the final ninety minutes disappoint you, these ten will surely compensate.

Enduring Love goes on general release 26th November

EP

From film to play and back again

Josh Newman

Since time immemorial (the beginning of the 20th Century) Hollywood has stolen its ideas from tons of different places. In acknowledgement, The Academy Awards give separate prizes for writing an original screenplay and an adapted screenplay. But back in 1928 at the first ever Oscars, they already got it wrong, by awarding the statue to Benjamin Glazer for *7th Heaven* rather than the now eminently more famous *The Jazz Singer* by Alfred Cohn.

Even during the Silent Era it was thought that the most obvious place to nick film ideas from was theatre. At first, one of the main uses of the cinema was to showcase Broadway plays in areas where the commute just seemed too much to see the equivalent of the new Andrew Lloyd Webber. The obvious disadvantage however, being that no synchronous sound made those long Shakespearean speeches a little difficult to render.

But the studios have also found inspiration from just about every format and form of material out there - the bible and other works of fanatical devotion (*Lord of the Rings*) have been a constant source of material for directors from Cecil B. DeMille (*The Ten Commandments*) to Mel Gibson (*The Passion*).

Cambridge film

Brighton Rock showing at Christ's, 25th November, 10pm:

An adaptation of Graham Greene's novel starring Richard Attenborough

Talk with Jack Lyons followed by a screening of *Quadrophenia* at Corpus Christi, 23rd November, 8pm:

The term 'mod' conjures up images of hip young men with expertly coiffured hair, wearing crushed velvet suits, snappily clicking their fingers and riding around on Vespa scooters. It is a word of a bygone era.

The early Sixties were a time where mods and rockers met up, fought and also notoriously rioted in Brighton, Clacton and Margate. It is this time and a mood that is expertly caught and portrayed in the classic British film, *Quadrophenia*. The story concerns Jimmy, an angry young man who loathes his dead-end job and dead-end parents. He can only find enjoyment in his scooter and his Mod mates.

Pete Townshend was inspired to write the film by one of the original mods who was christened by Townshend as the 'Modfather'. His name is Jack Lyons and he recounts his stories of growing up in London in the Sixties and his life as a mod. A very entertaining speaker with many a story to tell, this is a special chance to find out what being a mod really means.

Cinecam 48 hour Guerilla Film Competition, 26th-28th November:

Individual or group applications to be submitted by 22nd November to ksd28 if you want to write a script, shoot a film and edit it, all in 48 hours.

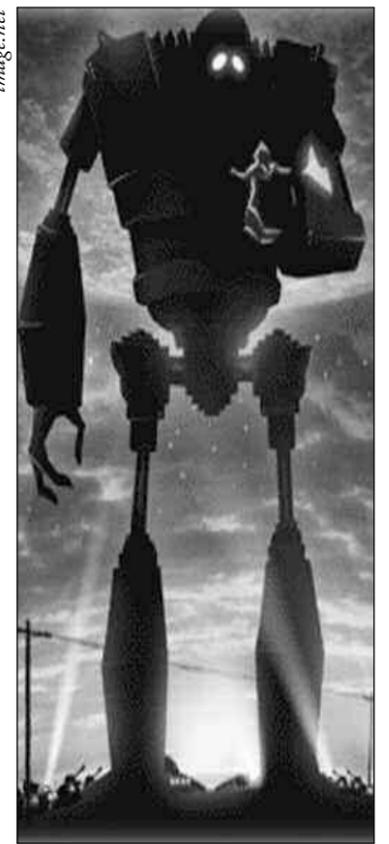
Many people have also liberally adapted historical events: Eisenstein's two most famous films glorified a different communist revolution, while the fabulously underrated Luc Besson comedy *The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc*, taught us that the French do have a sense of humour when it comes to marauding packs of Englishmen.

Novels of course have continuously served to provide work for Merchant Ivory Productions, who raided the works of both Henry James (*The Bostonians*, *The Europeans*, *The Golden Bowl*) and E.M. Forster (*Howards End*, *Room With A View*, *Maurice*).

Even MTV got in on the novel bandwagon recently with a 'high octane' adaptation of *Great Expectations*. At least that's what the PR line says. I fell asleep.

And poetry is not sacrosanct either. Before making *The Incredibles*, director Brad Bird's CV included *The Iron Giant*, a (frankly fantastic) version of Ted Hughes' *The Iron Man*.

But perhaps the strangest adaptation of all is about to start shooting: Mel Brooks' classic *The Producers* was adapted into the most successful musical in recent memory only a few years ago, and now because of this success it is being adapted back into a film! Ah, Hollywood: you've gotta love it.



The Iron Giant

London Jazz Festival: the lowdown

The London Jazz Festival is a seminal UK jazz event - **Nicola Simpson** looks at this year's line-up

This week sees the 12th London Jazz Festival in association with BBC Radio 3, from the 12th - 21st November. A huge event in the UK



jazz calendar, it crams a wealth of premieres, commissions, collaborations and new talent - along with a celebration of the jazz tradition - into 10 days.

This year features a plethora of events dedicated to inspirational artists of the past - Dizzy Gillespie, Tony Williams, Sun Ra - alongside some key figures that have shaped the course of jazz - Sam Rivers, Cecil Taylor, Tony Oxley, Bill Dixon, Anthony Braxton, Sunny Murray, the Ganelin Trio, Jack DeJohnette and Lennie Niehaus.

Looking forward, the Festival concentrates on cutting edge talent from the global jazz scene. Vijay Iyer, Mike Ladd and Enrico Pieranunzi play their first UK gigs; plus new projects from Matthew Bourne, Nitin Sawhney & Britten Sinfonia, Carla Bley, the Future Sounds of Jazz, Dhafer Youssef, Matthew Herbert, FIRE and Jack DeJohnette, John Scofield & Larry Goldings.

There is also a mass of activity in the Festival behind the concert listings. Thousands of young people will be touched by the EDF 'Energy New Audiences' scheme. This year it expands to take in a French connection with workshops in Paris and London as part of the Entente Cordiale celebrations. There'll also be vocal workshops and, building on last year's success.

Jamie Cullum, the 'Sinatra in sneakers', still fresh from stellar success will be making a welcome return to the festival following his sellout gig at the Royal Festival Hall last year. However, there are still thousands of brilliant jazz musicians who fail to get due recognition outside the very specific sphere in which they work, and here we take a look at five of them.

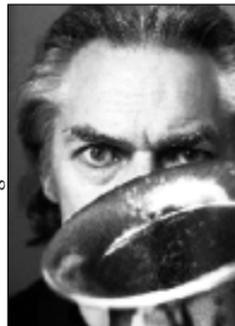
Gwyneth Herbert

This 22-year-old has been given the prestigious privilege of opening the London Jazz Festival at Queen Elizabeth Hall. She has been cited as Britain's answer to Norah Jones, and has a diverse fan club that already includes Sir Paul McCartney, Kevin Costner, Michael Parkinson and, indeed, Prince Charles. Up until six months ago, Herbert was waitressing in a bistro in Wimbledon, while playing in London's pubs and clubs with guitarist Will Rutter, who she met while studying English at Durham University. Watch this space...

www.gwynethherbert.com

Jan Garbarek

The unmistakable haunting sound of Jan Garbarek's saxophones remains one of the most distinctive voices in today's music. He is an innovative and massively influential figure, whose music inhabits a sonic landscape resonant of his native Norway, and embraces a sweep of global cultures - he has collaborated memorably with artists from South America and India - as well as delving into age-old European traditions. This Autumn sees the release of his first new ECM recording in some years, *In Praise of Dreams* - advance word suggests that this will be yet another landmark in his already remarkable career.



Jan Garbarek

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Vocal Sampling

An a cappella ensemble in the truest sense of the word, Vocal Sampling is made up of six young Cuban men who met at music school. Nominated for 3 Grammy awards for their album *Cambio de Tiempo*, these rhythm-driven prodigies create every chord, beat and melody of a mighty latin orchestra entirely vocal-

ly. They are a phenomenon that has to be heard to be believed.

Future Sounds of Jazz

Nominated for a BBC Jazz Award for Innovation, this 12-strong posse of the hottest young jazz guns includes the saxophones of Soweto Kinch and Jason Yarde, the rhythm section of Jade Fox, Nick Ramm (keyboards), Tom Herbert (bass), Tom Skinner and Leo Taylor (drums) as well as crashing piano interventions from Matthew Bourne, guitar breaks from David Okumu, improvised visuals supplied by Yeast and funky vocals from Bembe Segue and Zena Edwards. Their set at the LJF on Friday featured a special cameo appearance by Mercury-nominated poet, MC and hip hop star Ty.

Eska Mtungwazi

The multi-talented Zimbabwean Eska is a highly respected vocalist, performer, songwriter, musician and producer, best known for her unique vocal style; her arrangements and writing skills have been much in demand with such major names as Courtney Pine and featured on Soweto Kinch's 'Conversations With The Unseen'.

She is widely recognised as one of the most talented British soul/jazz artists of her generation.

www.eskaworld.com

Tomorrow's Warriors

Tomorrow's Warriors is a non-profit-

making organisation established in 1992 to nurture and develop talented young musicians who wish to pursue a professional career in jazz. The organisation has its roots in the Jazz Warriors, a seminal big band founded in 1985 as a platform for black 'streetwise' jazz musicians which helped to incubate big names such as Courtney Pine, and many others. Tomorrow's Warriors works with



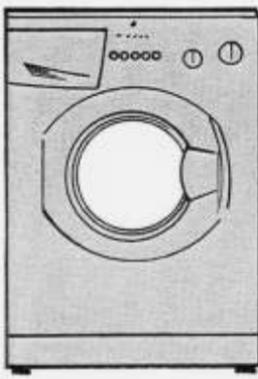
Tomorrow's Warriors

young musicians providing 'apprenticeships' and performance/educational workshops for young jazz musicians. Since inception, they have achieved a remarkable level of success in helping many young musicians to launch successful professional careers in jazz and the organisation is now widely regarded as one of the key organisations in the UK for the professional development of young jazz musicians.

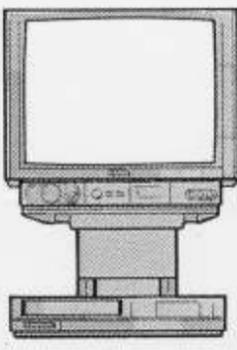
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No place like home

Laragh Widdess

Week after week, Cambridge never fails to provide a feast of classical music for us to get our teeth into. Here's a look at some of the imminent highlights.

University of Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra

The Orchestra will open their 2004/5 season with pianist David Earl performing Rachmaninoff's epic *Third Piano Concerto*. UCPO's sister orchestra, the University of Cambridge Philharmonia will be performing, as well as Beethoven and Mendelssohn, Glière's *Horn Concerto*, with soloist Jean-Luc Wietor (see text box).

UCPO: 21st November @ 8pm West Road Concert Hall UCP: 27th November @ 8pm West Road Concert Hall Tickets (£6/£4) - tickets@ucpo.org.uk www.ucpo.org.uk

Britten Sinfonia ft. Nitin Sawhney

Multi-instrumentalist, composer, producer, DJ and song-writer Nitin Sawhney blends urban R&B, Indian classical music and jazz. Here he'll be performing new arrangements of classics from his albums *The Classroom*, a new work commissioned by Britten Sinfonia. Corn Exchange 24th November @ 7:30 Tickets £12-£18

The Rosamunde Trio

Arranged jointly by the Masters of Fitzwilliam and Churchill College, this concert will feature music by Schubert, Dvorák and Beethoven. The Rosamunde trio, comprised of Martino Tirimo on piano, Ben Sayevich on violin and Daniel Veis on cello. Fitzwilliam Auditorium Sunday 28th November

Tickets: £10 (students £5) available from Porter's Lodge, Fitzwilliam College or Master's Office, Churchill College

The Zephyr Ensemble

Comprised entirely of wind-players, this ensemble will be performing an interesting programme, including music by John Barnes Chance, Saint-Saëns, Nigel Clarke and Hindemith.

£6 (£4) Tickets on the door 29th November at 8.00pm West Road Concert Hall

Cambridge University Symphony Orchestra

The Orchestra's termly concert will include music by Prokofiev and Schubert, in addition to Ravel's *Piano Concerto no.1 in G major*. 25th November 8.00pm West Road Concert Hall

Bluff the classics

Name: Reinhold Glière

Dates: 1875-1956

Nationality: Russian

Style: A direct heir to the Russian Romantic tradition, he worked on grand scale in the large forms. His music displays a monumentality of image and a brilliant aural imagination.

Influences: After 1920, he was inspired by the National Policy of the Soviet Government to make a prolonged study of

the folk music of Azerbaijan. His opera 'Shah Senen', completed in 1925, was based on a sixteenth century Azerbaijanian fable. He later drew heavily on the national music of Uzbekistan and the Ukraine. Most popular works: 'The Red Poppy' and 'The Bronze Horseman'. His Harp Concerto is among the finest concertos for this instrument. Friends in high places: Glière was Josef Stalin's favourite composer.

Adams is four goal hero as UEA crumble

University Football

CAMBRIDGE 4
UEA 1

Sam Richardson

STRIKER MIKE Adams lived up to his occasional moniker of 'thieving scouser' by stealing the show as the Blues continued their excellent BUSA form on Wednesday. The Johnian, who has been attempting to become known as Splinter, shattered the defence of a University of East Anglia side who looked as flat as, well, East Anglia. If it wasn't for the Blues hard-up cash situation, he would have got to keep the match-ball that his four goals richly deserved.

Skipper Jon Darby said afterwards, 'Mikey was tremendous today and he's threatened something like that for a while. He is very much a confidence player and hopefully this will spur him on to even better performances'.

Adams opened the scoring after just two minutes. Before you could say 'Boris Johnson', his fellow-Liverpudlian Steve Smith burst from midfield, releasing Alex Mugan with an incisive through-ball into the left channel. Mugan's perfectly weighted low cross stranded the keeper, and set up Adams to stab the ball in at the back post.

Adams nearly doubled his tally ten minutes later as he latched onto a 'through-ball' from captain Jon Darby, but fired his shot wide. After that UEA

nearly equalised. Chris Turnbull merited the mention in *Varsity* he has been awaiting for four years, by clearing the ball off the line in a goalmouth scramble, and Lincoln's main goal-scoring threat Sven Meyer lashed a shot over the bar from a tight angle.

The Blues doubled their lead on the half hour. Smith pounced as the Lincoln back four dallied, and he released Adams who played a cheeky one-two in the six-yard box with Rich Payne before walking the ball in.

Then the Blues sat back, allowing UEA to respond, forcing two sharp low saves from keeper Duncan Heath. And after half-time the Blues continued to lack killer instinct, and they would have paid the price but for two excellent saves by Heath. But the UEA pressure eventually told when Meyer ghosted round the back of the Cambridge defence and finished with German efficiency ten minutes into the second half.

A scrappy period of play ensued, with the Blues looking solid at the back, but failing to get the ball out wide to danger-men Mugan and Hughes, instead firing hopeful balls onto the head of the outstanding Rich Payne. When the New Zealander was eventually taken off after a series of bruising challenges, his only response was 'I love the pain'. Or was that 'I love the Payne'.

After Smith had nearly doubled the Blues' advantage (see picture), it was Payne whose knockdown found Alex Mugan in space in the box. His effort was well saved by the keeper, but

Adams was on-hand to drill the ball into the top corner from two feet out.

With Adams having scored his hat-trick from a combined distance of less than six yards, the UEA keeper was clearly unprepared as the Cambridge star man picked up substitute Alex Coleman's flick-on and lashed home a shot on the turn from just outside the box. It was the icing on the cake for the striker, but he was backed up by an excellent team performance from the Adams Family. Skipper Darby said after the game 'The early goal was the perfect start and the first half performance followed on well from the last forty five last week. But coming out at

2-0 after the break I think that we relaxed and let some sloppiness creep in, although after they scored we gained control again and they didn't cause us any real problems. There's still a lot to work to be done, but coming off with a 4-1 victory and not being satisfied is encouraging.'

This season, his side has shown no shortage of what Iain Dowie famously called 'bounce-back-ability'. On top of a considerable exodus of players last season, several former Blues who remain in Cambridge are resting on their laurels - Luke McNally is playing semi-professionally, Andy Hall is captaining Trinity, and Harry Hughes is

Harry Hughes. But after the humiliating 7-1 defeat to the Prison Service, the Blues have proved themselves with two draws and two wins in BUSA.

Meanwhile, the Falcons have hit form with an excellent home win against United Hospitals. But their fixture list consisting of schools and traditional fixtures is poor preparation for a Varsity match against an Oxford side who play in BUSA. With the Kestrels struggling to get a team out on a regular basis, surely the sensible option is to scrap the third team, and spend the money that is saved on putting the Falcons in BUSA, and giving Mike Adams a match-ball.



Stevie Smith almost scores a third for Cambridge as the team destroys a poor UEA side 4-1.

Sam Richardson

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Blues struggle past Peterborough

University Rugby

CAMBRIDGE 10
PETERBOROUGH 0

Sarah Lyle

AFTER DISAPPOINTING performances against Oxford and Bath over the past week, Sunday saw CUWRFC return to form with a 10-0 win over Peterborough. The team played with determination and grit which they converted into pressure and points.

Lack of coaches due to illness forced the team to take responsibility for the game, but this never appeared to be a problem for the team that stayed composed throughout.

The first half started at pace with Cambridge receiving the ball, taking it into contact and rucking over, giving the backs good ball to run moves from. The forwards were able to punch holes and expose gaps in the Peterborough defence effectively and Cambridge forced their way up the field. They then managed to score a try in the first half thanks to a great forward run by Pretty, who then helped to force Reade over the line for a forwards try.

Cambridge gained some much needed confidence going into half time 5-0 ahead and it showed in the second half. Banks and Cadwallader were loud in the back line, ordering the defence and communication in general was much improved.

The pack had their own problems

as the Peterborough scrum were much bigger. CUWRFC showed their spirit, hitting back hard and improving their scrumming as the match continued despite struggling at the end of the first half and start of the second. The Cambridge pack should also be commended for their lineouts which were solid.

The second try came midway through the second half. Number 9, Spears picked the ball up from the back of a ruck and jinxed through the back line to score. While 10-0 is a good result it could have been more. Peterborough were a slow side and CUWRFC should have made more use of their superior speed and fitness by

taking the ball out wide to stretch the opposition defence rather than trying to punch holes close to the rucks.

That said, it was a good win for Cambridge. They must be confident that they are able to play good rugby and take that confidence into games against more difficult sides.



Courtesy of Sarah Lyle

Cambridge were comfortably in control as their forwards dominated the opposition

Sport In Brief

RUGBY - After defeating Spain, the Cambridge rugby union team were hammered by a strong Harlequins side by 17 points to 80. Meanwhile Cambridge LX club scraped past Nottingham Trent by 27 points to 21.

FOOTBALL - In the battle for second place, Jesus and John's drew 1 - 1, failing to keep the pressure on the leaders. Conditions were terrible as rain reduced visibility. Jesus opened the scoring after 50 minutes with a tap in after the keeper had made a good save, but John's equalised in the last minute after the defence failed to deal with a cross.

HOCKEY - The Men's Blues side managed a 1-1 draw with Lewes this week, while the Wanderers also drew, with a 3-3 scoreline against Old Ed Ferrians. Only the squanderers managed to win, with a 2-1 victory against Norwich Union II. Meanwhile the Nomads won a thrilling encounter 4-3 with a goal in the final minutes.

AND FINALLY....

COLLEGE RUGBY - St. John's continued their total domination of the division with another 50 point haul against St. Catharine's, winning 60 - 5. Downing beat Girton 20 - 13 to cement second place though Jesus share the same points total after a 29 - 12 win against Trinity Hall.

Men's College Rugby League

Division 1

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
1	St. John's	6	6	0	0	263	17	246	24
2	Downing	6	4	0	2	105	70	35	18
3	Jesus	6	4	0	2	97	78	19	18
4	Girton	6	3	0	3	58	49	9	14
5	St. Catharine's	5	0	0	5	30	163	-133	5
6	Trinity Hall	5	0	0	5	17	186	-169	5

www.crazyaboutsport.com

Last weeks' results: Girton 13 - 20 Downing; St. Catharine's 5 - 60 St. John's; Trinity Hall 12 - 29 Jesus;

Men's College Football League

Division 1

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Fitzwilliam	4	4	0	0	16	5	11	12
2	Jesus	4	3	0	1	12	5	7	9
3	St. John's	4	3	0	1	10	4	6	9
4	Churchill	3	2	0	1	4	3	1	6
5	Trinity	3	2	0	1	5	5	0	6
6	Caius	4	1	1	2	4	12	-8	4
7	Downing	4	1	0	3	6	7	-1	3
8	St. Catherine's	4	1	0	3	4	9	-5	3
9	Darwin	3	0	1	2	3	5	-2	1
10	Girton	3	0	0	3	1	10	-9	0

Last weeks' results: Darwin 1 - 2 Trinity; Downing 0 - 1 Churchill; Fitzwilliam 8 - 1 Caius; Girton 0 - 4 St. John's; Jesus 2 - 1 St. Catharine's;

Women's College Rugby League

Division 1

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	Walkovers	PD	Pts
1	Emmanuel	7	5	1	1	0	65	11
2	Trinity	7	5	0	2	0	138	10
3	Queens'	7	3	1	1	+2	38	9
4	Churchill	7	3	0	4	0	-56	6
5	St. John's	7	2	0	4	+1	15	5
6	Caius	7	2	0	3	-1, +1	-5	5
7	Girton	7	2	0	4	+1	-55	5
8	Clare / Tit Hall	7	1	0	2	-4	-66	2

Division 2: League standings - 1. Magdalene 14pts 2. Catz/Downing 11pts 3. Peterhouse 6pts 4. Fitzwilliam 6pts 5. Sidney Sussex 4pts 6. Jesus 2pts 7. Meerkats 2pts 8. Christs 1pt

Women's College Football League

Division 1

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Newnham	5	4	0	1	14	3	11	12
2	Jesus	4	3	0	1	7	5	2	9
3	Trinity	3	2	0	1	8	1	7	6
4	St. Catharine's	3	2	0	1	5	4	1	6
5	Sidney Sussex	3	1	0	2	3	7	-4	3
6	Girton	4	1	0	3	5	14	-11	3
7	Kings	4	0	0	4	2	10	-8	0

Last weeks' results: Jesus 2 - 0 St. Catharine's; King's 1 - 2 Sidney Sussex; Newnham 6 - 0 Girton;

Blues Cruise

University Lacrosse

Elaine Berry

The Kingfishers, enjoying a full team complete with 3 subs for the first time in a while, failed to be intimidated by the Nottingham team's size advantage and walked away with an impressive 17 - 1 victory.

The game got off to a superb start, with an off-the-whistle goal that was the first of a succession of drives that saw the ball in the back of the net.

Cambridge succeeded in keeping up the momentum throughout most of the first half and used their lead to practice set plays and use of the whole width of the pitch, rather than always going for the easy option of driving up through the middle.

The midfield defence enjoyed the opportunity to practice their attacking skills, with some glorious goals and set-ups, preventing them from getting too cold.

As the half progressed, tiredness became a factor as the pace slackened, although Cambridge retained possession and managed to pick up the pace again for the last 10 minutes. This saw a glorious round of goals from all of the team's attackers, which were the result of good teamwork and passing up the pitch. Although there were a few sloppy moments when the pace slowed, good shooting and midfield drives were in abundance. As well providing a much-needed boost to team confidence, the match was also useful in highlighting several areas for improvement, such as set plays in attack. The defence did not get such a workout but were tight on the ball when it did come down and succeeded in not getting complacent.



Women's Blues stop the rot

CUWRFC beat Peterborough after losing to Oxford and Bath

Page 27

Cambridge too hot for Spain



Andy Sims

Cambridge's Wheeler charges through the Spanish backs in the build up to captain Simon Frost's second half try. A outstanding performance by the Cambridge defence helped make victory certain

University Rugby

CAMBRIDGE 38
SPAIN 23

Tom Burrell

CAMBRIDGE PRODUCED a very effective display, defeating Spain 38-23 in a competitive encounter at Grange Road on Saturday.

Before the Blue's prestigious international friendly against Spain began, their excellent and informative website (www.curufc.org), was counting down the minutes until the eagerly anticipated Varsity clash on 7th December. In light of their previous two defeats, the Blues were probably hoping it could be reversed, to count away from that date, rather than towards.

The clear, autumnal blue sky that greeted the teams was more 'Spanish soleil' than 'Cambridge cloud', and after a warming reception from the large Grange

Road crowd, it was Spain that appeared more at home. Despite putting the opening three points on the board with an early penalty, the edginess and nerves were showing in Cambridge's play and within six minutes, excellent pace from the Spanish fly half resulted in a well-worked try. Spain followed this with a neat conversion and penalty, leaving the Blues already 7 points adrift at 10-3.

Yet the proceeding 20 minutes may well be the turning point and launch pad for the Blues' season. Zealous, determined and fired up, the Blues charged into their adversaries. Frightening speed from crowd favourite and lightning quick winger Akinola Abiola secured an exhilarating try on 10 minutes. Then no.8 Wheeler's drive and aggression powered an opening for flanker Nicolaas Alberts, which was converted with great aplomb from a tight angle by Lewis, bringing the score to 15-10.

Wheeler then began to control the game. Ubiquitous and cunning, he fed captain Simon Frost for a try that embodied the team ethic that the Blues'

were now demonstrating. Such was the rapture and pleasure at Cambridge's performance at the 20-10 score-line that the players were even treated to a chorus of the 'Great Escape' chant, usually reserved for higher profile international games.

However, the celebrity and acclaim that this ovation portrayed seemed to translate into complacency, as poor handling and some neat Spanish attacks outfoxed the Blues', bringing a try and the international outfit back into the game at 20-18, as the referee called time on the first half.

Spain, currently 32nd in the world and improving, are becoming a respected international rugby outfit and they demonstrated this to the full, carrying their momentum from the previous half in to the second, with a barrage of attacks. Blues' winger Abiola has gained a reputation as a phenomenal attacking force, but it was his defensive qualities that were called into action, as he made a succession of fantastic last-ditch saving tackles, to the roar of the excited crowd.

However the Spanish were insatiable

and their forward drive proved too much with the completion of an excellent third try, although shortly after and against the run of play, Lewis converted a penalty, to render the score excitingly poised at 23-23 after 48 minutes.

The following 30 minutes possibly demonstrated some of Cambridge's best play so far this season. It wasn't that their attack was imposing or terribly dangerous, but that their defence so monolithic and solid. Colossal is becoming a cheap word in sports' journalism these days, but forwards Gladstone, Cure and McGarry unquestionably deserved this honour, repelling attack after attack, and taking the sting from their opponents. Spain's frustration was manifested, brawling with their opponents as they failed to penetrate the Blues' barricade, and one Spaniard receiving a yellow card for his efforts. As the floodlights joined the fray and the Cambridge cold descended on the ground, the Blues' began to seize control of the match, with captain Simon Frost' influence and leadership oozing through his side.

Lewis impeccably converted another penalty and excellent tries from Alberts and fullback Ufton, crowned a fantastic performance and a 38-23 scoreline. As the referee's whistle resounded across Grange Road, there was little difficulty in recognising the jubilation and pleasure on the Cambridge faces. Spokesman Chris Worsley reflected this stating that "whilst it was fantastic to beat an international side, what was more important was the way in which we achieved this". He further re-iterated the magnitude of the result stressing that "in recent weeks the Blues' had been struggling for form but this performance was a massive step forward considering the proximity of the Varsity match".

Worsley also emphasised the importance of his "man of the match" captain Simon Frost, who "lead by example". One gets the feeling that if the skipper can influence and dominate the Varsity match, Oxford might be on the end of one of Frost's' and ultimately the Light Blues' 'master-classes'.