

Erinsborough Ethics: One (more) Good Reason to read on

# VARSITY

JAMIE MARLAND



## Trinity Parcel

Recipient released on bail as police say drug was GHB

**Jamie Munk**

LAST WEEK, *Varsity* exclusively revealed that an illegal drug had been delivered to Trinity College on Wednesday January 25, intended for delivery to a college student. This student has since been arrested on suspicion of possession with intent to supply the drug gamma hydroxybutyric acid.

The drug, commonly known as GHB, can be used recreationally and is sometimes called "liquid ecstasy". In small doses it has a euphoric effect, but in larger quantities it acts as a sedative and there is evidence it has been used to assist in sexual assaults. It was the acidic properties of the drug that caused it to burn the hand of the porter handling it when it leaked from its package.

Cambridgeshire police told *Varsity* "a 22 year-old man from Cambridge has been arrested on suspicion of possession of drugs with the intent to supply". The student has been bailed without charge until February 27, when he will either be charged or released. They added "the information we've been given is that it is GHB".

The student in question wishes to remain anonymous, but informed *Varsity* that "it was certainly not an illegal substance". Mr Paul Simm, the Junior Bursar at Trinity added "my understanding is that it is some kind of cleaning chemical", corroborating the view of an anonymous Trinity fourth year, who said "it was computer cleaning fluid".

Gamma butyrolactone (GBL) is a legal solvent chemically similar to GHB, and can be used as a cleaning fluid. It is readily available to buy on the internet and is used for a variety of purposes, including removing nail polish and stripping paint. But, when taken internally it can have similar effects to GHB.



Trinity Senior Tutor Dr Douglas Kennedy said "Trinity takes the welfare of all its students very seriously. We are looking into the matter and will be co-operating fully with the police enquiries." Dean of College, Prof. Michael Proctor, refused to respond to *Varsity* on the question of GHB itself; "I haven't spoken to the police about that". But Proctor stressed "we're very concerned if anything in the college is injurious to the welfare of our students".

GHB was classified as a class C controlled drug in the Misuse of Drugs Act 2003. The maximum sentence for supplying the drug, the offence for which the student was arrested, is 14 years. Possession can result in two years in prison. A Home Office spokesperson said "The government is aware that these drugs are misused recreationally and there is some evidence that they have been used to assist in sexual assaults."

Michelle Nuttall, CUSU Women's Officer, was keen not to worry students unnecessarily. "There is every possibility that this was intended for recreational use", she told *Varsity*. "There isn't anything to suggest it would be used for sinister purposes." Last week, a CUSU Welfare email was sent to JCRs warning of recent cases of drink spiking. However, Nuttall reassured that "people shouldn't be afraid, they just need to be aware."

## Walsh scrapes through

CUSU President survives 'no confidence' motion

**Raj Bavishi**

CRISIS WAS AVERTED at Wednesday's CUSU Council when an emergency motion of no confidence in President Laura Walsh fell by twenty-six votes to twenty-eight, with ten Council members abstaining.

After the vote, a relieved Walsh commented, "obviously I'm glad that the motion did not get the two-thirds majority it required, but that it actually fell proves that Council think I should remain as President. I genuinely believe it is right for me to continue; if I thought otherwise I would have resigned before Council."

Having brought the emergency motion, Vicki Mann, CUSU Welfare and Graduates Officer, declined to comment on the vote.

Mann brought the motion as a result of

anger towards the two motions highlighted by *Varsity* last week and widespread frustration with Walsh's failures during Michaelmas.

The motions entailed the restructuring of the CUSU Executive including the possible abolition of the Women's Officer as a sabbatical position, on which referenda would be held. This last motion was originally proposed by Walsh and both motions were withdrawn by their proposers before Council.

Other smaller failings include the poor handling of the late arrival of NUS cards as well as perceived flaws in her style of leadership and relations with Executive members.

Council members were also angry at the fact that Walsh had erroneously withheld the document requesting central funding for CUSU, which *Varsity* made public last week.

Walsh is adamant that CUSU must move forward together. At last night's Executive meeting, she said she would apologise to all students and accept responsibility for her mistakes.

In a further sign that tensions have subsided, the CUSU Executive will issue their own statement stressing that they are keen to move forward in unity. Two days ago, many of them had favoured the call for no confidence, but have now chosen to fully support Walsh's narrow endorsement by Council.

The President was upbeat about the Union's future, "it will be hard at first, but I am confident the Sabb team can and will work together." When asked if the recent turmoil would affect nominations for the upcoming CUSU elections, she said, "there are enough people in Cambridge who fancy themselves as a President and

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

### Feature

Yesterday two Cambridge musicians released a song about the Facebook. Despite being rubbish it seems to have taken the Facebook world by storm. We meet the creators and pit them against their American rivals. >> page 7



### Interview

Renowned poet Seamus Heaney delivered the annual Clark Lecture to a packed Lady Mitchell Hall. In an exclusive *Varsity* interview he talks about his past, his new work and still feeling like a beginner. >> page 10



### It's sew easy

Lifestyle drinks to customised chic >>

### Pedal Pushing

Confessions of an organ scholar >>

### State of the arts

*Varsity* asks whether there's cause for concern >>

### Man cleared of raping student

The man accused of forcing a 21 year-old Anglia Ruskin University student to have sex in an alleyway has been cleared of rape. Throughout his trial Mohammed Idris maintained that the woman, who was described as being "very drunk," had gone willingly to a passageway on Market Street and was enthusiastic for sex. The woman, who broke down in the witness box while giving evidence, claimed that Idris had led her to the alleyway and raped her after offering to help find her a taxi home. She was distraught at his acquittal and refused to comment.

### Police charge two teens with Cam grad's murder

Two teenagers have been charged with the murder of a Cambridge graduate Tom ap Rhys Pryce, who was stabbed to death in January. The 31 year-old London lawyer, was attacked in the road where he lived as he walked home late at night. Donnel Marcus Carty, 19, and an unnamed 17 year-old will appear before West London magistrates charged with robbery and murder. A third youth was bailed by police pending further enquiries.

### Violent police raid to capture hostage gang

More than 150 armed police officers raided a travellers' site in Cambridgeshire yesterday morning. The raid took place following an aggravated burglary during which a family in Cambridge were held hostage in their own home. During the attack a ten-year-old girl as held at knifepoint for several hours, and a 16-year-old was hit in the face with a pickaxe. Police have arrested three men, aged 30, 26 and 19.

### Oxford don murdered

Dr Barbara Johnston, a medical researcher at Oxford University, was found murdered in her flat in the north of the city last Thursday. The 55 year-old woman was strangled with a jumper and stabbed 49 times. Detectives have charged a 42 year-old man with her murder. Dr Johnston had only returned to Britain in September after living in New Zealand for 23 years.

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CUR 1350

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in some ways the situation could prove to be a good thing - people are more aware of CUSU and many of its problems. What we really need now is to draw a line under everything that has happened, ensure it doesn't happen again and move on."

A lengthy, emotional debate had preceded the vote which was held in the Long Room at New Hall, with strong opinions voiced by critics and supporters of the motion alike.

Adam Colligan, Selwyn JCR Vice-President, called the motion a "personal and petty" attack on Walsh. He stated, "while the President is not blameless, to blame this disaster solely on Laura is like blaming the sinking of the Titanic on the rudder."

Tim Lewis made an impassioned speech, declaring "I have always been unhappy with the politicisation of CUSU Council, but have always been impressed with how much [Laura] was willing to do for the Union."

But one of Walsh's Exec members criticised her management, arguing "last term there were a lot of problems, many specifically with leadership."

Kate Ward asked Walsh, "Did you not think at any point that it would have been productive to email all students to say that despite the situation, CUSU is ticking over and not falling apart?"

During the debate, Walsh defended herself, "I believe everything I proposed was for the benefit of students and as soon as I realised that I had gone about them the wrong way I withdrew my motion."

The motion of no confidence has raised wider issues that have concerned many Council members.

If Walsh had been voted out or resigned, the responsibilities of the President would have been shared between the remaining Sabbatical Officers, until a by-election could be held. This eventuality is not foreseen by CUSU's constitution

and it is not clear with whom responsibility would ultimately lie.

By Walsh's own admission, "it is likely no-one would have stood in a by-election and so the job would have been offered to the two losing candidates in last March's presidential elections - Tom Dye and Robin Sivapalan." Referring specifically to Sivapalan, a number of JCR officers expressed concern that the Presidency could be offered to someone who had received only 515 votes.

Sivapalan told Varsity, "I wouldn't have accepted the position even if I was offered it. I'd hope that there were people who were still students who felt strong enough about their Union to run for President."

While Council voted on Walsh's future, Downing JCR voted overwhelmingly to remain affiliated to CUSU. But later this term the benefits of the Union will come under further scrutiny when St John's JCR hold a referendum on disaffiliation.

Yesterday, Michelle Nuttall, CUSU Women's Officer, summarised the feeling in Council, "Things have to get better because the next six months cannot be like the last week." She added, "I'm willing to forgive and forget but that doesn't mean we will be shoving things under the carpet."

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Voting at Council on Wednesday night

### Flying without wings

Scientists at Cambridge have published research suggesting snails ride thousands of miles between Atlantic islands on migratory birds. Published in Nature last week, Dr Richard Preece's study on the snails' DNA indicates that snails on islands in the Azores and on the Tristan de Cunha islands, which lie between South Africa and South America 9000 kilometres away, share a common ancestor. He discounted human activity alone; "These islands were only settled by humans in 1816, so it's impossible that so much variation could have taken place since then." Certain species of flightless insect are also found dispersed across oceans.

# Cambridge cadet combats terrorism at US Conference



Trinity Hall historian Richard Kimmens in his roles as conference speaker and officer cadet



### Jamie Munk

RICHARD KIMMENS, a second-year at Trinity Hall, addressed senior military officials, academics and NGOs at a conference in America last week. The historian and officer cadet became the first British undergraduate to present a paper at the Joint Services Conference on Professional Ethics in Washington DC. He spoke on the subject of legal constraints in combating global terrorism.

JSCOPE has run annually since 1979 and attracts a range of military and academic experts from across the United States. This year's keynote speaker was Dr Sarah Sewall, an advisor to the Clinton administration from the Carr Center for Human Rights at Harvard. Other papers were delivered by political scientists, military thinkers and senior members of the US armed forces. Many international organisations, including Oslo's Peace Research Institute and

the Netherlands' Defence College, also attended, with speakers coming from Canada, Australia, France and Greece. The themes for this year's discussions were "Military Education and Moral Development" and "Citizen Responsibility and National Defense".

Kimmens and two members of New York's West Point military academy were the only students who were invited to speak. He lectured briefly on "Playing by the rules: must state actors constrain themselves to operate within the law when countering terrorism?" before answering a range of questions.

Kimmens told Varsity that he chose the subject of international terrorism as "it's highly relevant, with the amount of political and media attention it currently receives". In his paper, Kimmens stated that "using the law is the only protection we have from becoming terrorists ourselves; arbitrary justice is not the answer in the War on Terror" and he believed "if we act outside of the law, we

just encourage more people to turn against us".

"Before I went I was really worried, because the talk wasn't particularly pro-American", admitted Kimmens. Fortunately it transpired that "the Americans are keen to learn what other people think of their policies and of America in general". "What interested me most was the fact that West Point and Canadian cadets all came to ask me what the British thought of the Americans. Their media doesn't tell them what's going on in the rest of the world."

The Commanding Officer of Cambridge University's Officers Training Corps, Lt. Col. Darren Bowyer told Varsity "The [OTC] exists to communicate to students the values and ethos of the British Army, so it seems to me entirely appropriate to afford this opportunity for one of our members to participate."

Kimmens has been invited to write another paper for JSCOPE next year, and also intends to submit one for an upcoming Dutch military conference.

### Carol Vorderman to open science fair

Carol Vorderman will be opening the 2006 Cambridge Science Festival, and delivering an inaugural talk on Saturday, March 18. The Cambridge Science Festival is the UK's largest free science festival and will be held March 15-25 2006 in and around the University.

### Students believe they "get what they pay for"

According to a UNITE Student Experience Report, published last Tuesday, two-thirds of students are in debt. The good news is that for the first time in six years the amount of debt has stabilised and 89 per cent of students believe the money they spend on their education is a good investment for their future. Most respondents said they would turn to their family for help if they got into financial difficulties. 85 percent receive some kind of financial help from their parents without being obliged to repay the amount, with many parents giving more than £1,500 per term to their children.

## "In short, CUSU needs to go pro"

Peter Parkes, former Emmanuel JCR President, on this week's events

"Communications have broken down" - not something you'd want to admit at a public meeting. I'd certainly have phrased it differently. The statement conveys only one of the problems CUSU faces. I could talk about the challenge of effective communication; after all, how do the CUSU Exec make sure students are kept informed of policy developments, or indeed the myriad of services on offer? The truth is they do neither very often, nor very well.

This is a problem faced not only by CUSU, but by JCR and MCR committees across Cambridge. Inevitably a small group will enthusiastically set about organising or campaigning, only to be faced with the usual result: no-one turns up or

no-one cares. I could discuss at length the possible approaches to solving these problems, many of which I tried myself - with varying degrees of success - as a JCR president, but it would hardly be useful in terms of concrete suggestions. Unfortunately, student organisations will have to cope with the simultaneous problems of apathy and ignorance for some time.

What student bodies can do, is smarten up their act. Recently, we've heard allegations of conspiracy and wilful misconduct within CUSU, and have endured countless versions of events, all different, many from the same people. Questions have been answered sloppily and frustration has

mounted accordingly. But it is not the political crisis that has prompted the complete disarray we see now; the events of the past week were instead precipitated by attitudes prevalent in student politics at every level.

CUSU must improve in two ways. Firstly, it must learn to convey information much more efficiently. Why invest time and effort co-ordinating schools' visits if you give JCR access officers only a few days to find volunteers? Why organise a societies fair if you don't inform JCR presidents or colleges of a change of date?

Secondly, members of the Exec need to remind themselves of the constraints on their activities. It's all very well pursuing a policy you believe is cor-

rect, but if you do it without inviting any criticism, you erode not only the trust of your constituents but also the tenability of your own position.

In short, CUSU needs to go pro. To imagine employees of a private enterprise or even a public sector organisation displaying the same degree of niggling incompetence or blinkered dogmatism that we see in student organisations is inconceivable. If executives were just a little bit more methodical and comprehensive in their organisation, and just a little bit more open and consultative in their representation, then I think we would be more inclined to trust them. We need a more professional CUSU Exec. After all, we pay their wages.

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Tom Kingsley  
a total crane  
in the neck



### The Week In Weather



FRI



SAT



SUN



MON



TUE



WED



THUR

# Pricey pottery shattered at the Fitz

- Shoelaces blamed as visitor trips and falls into priceless vases
- Museum staff "determined to put the pieces back together"

Steve Elliott

A VISITOR to the Fitzwilliam Museum broke three priceless Chinese vases after tripping on his untied shoelaces last Wednesday.

The man stumbled on his laces and crashed into the Qing dynasty vases, which were displayed on a windowsill at the foot of a staircase.

Onlookers said the man lay among the vases' fragments for several minutes, before sitting up and pointing to the loose shoelace exclaiming, "There it is! That's the culprit!"

Bystander Steve Baxter told Channel 4 News, "We heard this enormous crash, so I rushed to the stairs and there was a chap sprawled there, down below. I couldn't believe what a comprehensive job he'd done of the vases."

"It's a nightmare", Museum director Duncan Robinson lamented, "I have been here for 40 years and now that nightmare has happened." The enamelled and gilded artworks from the late 17th century had been in the collection since 1948 and were among the Fitzwilliam's most recognisable exhibits. Although the museum would not put a value on the vases, pieces from the same

period have sold for up to \$5 million at auction.

But the staff's first concern was for the welfare of their shocked visitor, not for the shards of delicate porcelain underfoot. They called an ambulance and after receiving first-aid the unnamed visitor left on foot. "It was a most unfortunate and regrettable accident, but we are glad that the visitor involved was able to leave the Museum unharmed," said Robinson.

Attention then turned to the remains, which took a further two days to count, package and document. "They are in very, very small pieces," admitted assistant director Margaret Greeves, "but we are determined to put them back together." Staff are optimistic that restoration could make the vases appear unscathed, as the British Museum in London has successfully restored similar items. Piecing together Cambridge's thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle using black and white photographs will take several months.

Henry Ryder, a Downing third year who often frequents the museum, told *Varsity* "I'd been looking at the three vases just the day before and they were pretty awesome. I was perhaps one of the last people to appreci-

ate them. I'm a regular visitor to the Fitz but I've got no idea who was responsible, all I can say is that it certainly wasn't me!"

The Fitzwilliam's policy of minimising barriers to exhibits is now under review. A spokesperson stated that one of the things that the museum was most proud of was that objects were displayed "almost within reach." The museum do not want this "freakish accident" to change that although they will carry out further risk assessments of where the objects are placed.

The Museum declined to say if the pieces were insured, or to name the clumsy visitor, who will not be expected to pay for the damage.

The museum has an illustrious history founded in 1816 by the bequest of the VIIth Viscount Fitzwilliam of Merrion and contains magnificent collections of works of art and antiquities of international importance.

According to its website, "the Fitzwilliam Museum is one of the greatest glories of the University of Cambridge. Like the University itself, the Museum is part of the national heritage, but, much more, it is part of a living and continuing culture which it is our statutory duty to transmit."



STIEVE BAXTER

The unnamed man, lying amidst the ruined vases he smashed after falling down the stairs

## Arts Picturehouse cinema and The Regal pub at war

Rebecca Greig

THE ARTS Picturehouse cinema and the Cambridge branch of Wetherspoons, The Regal, have clashed over the latter's application for a music licence.

Tony Stevens, The Picturehouse's general manager, told *Varsity* he only discovered that the application had been made when The Regal, with whom they share a building, closed for three days to carry out major work on the venue.

A DJ booth was installed, as well as a dance floor and powerful sound system. Stevens described the decision to introduce music without warning as "astounding to say the least". He went on to say, "we share the same premises, and our biggest screen is directly above one of the main seating sections of the pub. Despite the license having not actually been granted yet, The Regal went ahead with changes to the venue."

Stevens went on to stress that although "every effort" had been made by the Picturehouse to discuss the situation with the pub's management and their operating company, Wetherspoons, their calls had not been returned: "all it would have taken on part of The Regal was simple communication. Had they spoken to us early, we would have worked with

them so that they could still provide music and entertainment, and we could still screen films." He believes this will be impossible should the licence be granted, given that the sound system would be located so closely to one of



JAMIE MARLAND

their screens. "The very nature of a cinema is to provide a totally neutral environment to watch a film. Who is going to want to watch a film at our cinema now when you can't even hear it? We will not take this lightly or go without a fight. The very survival of our business is at risk here."

Steve Strange, The Regal's manager, will meet with council environmental and health representatives today to discuss potential problems, although Strange remains optimistic that the licence will be granted: "In the long run, the music is for the ben-

efit of the people of Cambridge. We should be able to go ahead with the licence and iron out any problems in the mean time."

After the meeting, the council will review the issue and a final decision will be made in around two weeks. The Picturehouse is determined to defeat the application, Stevens informing *Varsity* that legal action would be taken if the licence was granted.

The Picturehouse have drummed up support from local students. As the only cinema in Cambridge dedicated to screening independent, foreign and art-house films, they enjoy a strong student clientele.

One Churchill student has already started a petition in opposition to the application, and Cambridge council have received a huge number of complaints.

Theo Bard, a Jesus second year, told *Varsity* "The Picturehouse is a really amazing and unique place where students and non-students alike can appreciate a wide variety of cultural events. The café is also a great place to hang out. It would be a real shame if it was forced to close."

The final deadline for complaints is 5pm today. To voice your concerns email [env.health@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:env.health@cambridge.gov.uk)

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## Oxons contracted to learn

- Cambridge VC "unaware" of changes

Rachel Cooper

OXFORD UNIVERSITY announced this week that as of October, it may require students to sign contracts obliging them to attend lectures and tutorials.

This move follows fears that the introduction of top-up fees could prompt an increase in student litigation. Universities are concerned that increased fees could cause a rise in the number of complaints by students who demand better value for money, and increase the risk that students who do badly could sue them.

Despite the proposed contracts being widely reported in the national media on January 31, Cambridge University's Vice-Chancellor Alison Richard claimed to have "no knowledge" of Oxford's proposals when questioned at a public lecture that evening. Professor Richard asked whether it was certain these proposals were going to happen, and later contacted *Varsity* to apologise for her inability to comment on the proposition, saying it had been a "very busy day and [she] hadn't had time to look at the papers." *Varsity* subsequently received a series of phone calls from the University Press Office who issued the following statement on behalf of Professor Richard, "This is an internal matter for the University of Oxford. Cambridge has no plans to introduce a similar scheme."

The proposed contracts mean that Oxford students

could find themselves in court if they do not attend lectures. The legally-binding agreements could make attending tutorials, classes and lectures compulsory. The contracts have been under discussion for five years and were recently approved by the Conference of Colleges - a university-wide body. If the proposals are passed by colleges, students



Cambridge VC Alison Richard

matriculating this October will have to sign a document, which states they must "pursue such studies as are required of you by any tutor, fellow, or lecturer, or other qualified person assigned by the college to teach you." Undergraduates will be told they risk breaching the contract, if they fail to fulfil these obligations and could end up in

court. The contract only commits a college to "make such teaching provision for undergraduate students as it reasonably decides is necessary for their courses of study", but later adds, "Given the variation in courses of study, it is not possible to specify a minimum amount of teaching for undergraduates in all subjects." Oxford University said the contract will codify measures that are already in place - a claim backed up by Michael Scholar, current Chairman of the Conference: "The intention was to set down in an orderly way a contract which already existed informally."

But Oxford JCR Presidents have reacted angrily. One told student newspaper *The Oxford Student*, "We can understand the colleges wanting to sign an agreement, but this threat to use the legal system to enforce these contracts smacks of heavy-handedness and unnecessary intimidation." Emma Norris, President of the Oxford University Students' Union indicated to *Varsity* that she had real concerns about the contracts and was particularly uneasy about the one-sided nature of the contract. Norris expressed anger that current students have not been consulted on the proposals despite promises in November 2004 that any graduate and undergraduate contract would be shown to OUSU before being implemented. She acknowledged that many colleges had agreed to co-operate with OUSU in order to negotiate the terms of the contract.

JAMIE MARLAND

## On Campus

### New Fellowship for African students

Clare Hall and the Schlumberger Foundation are introducing a year-long visiting science fellowship for African students. The fellowship is open to African nationals at African universities in the early stages of their academic career. It is contingent on their return to Africa afterwards, so the natal academic community can benefit from their expertise.

### Students Support Street Kids

The Cambridge branch of Students Supporting Street Kids (SSSK) was launched last weekend with a champagne breakfast at Jesus. SSSK is a project based in South America offering meals, entertainment, introductory education and regular health checks to the large population of orphans and homeless children. 40 people attended the breakfast raising £132 for the charity.

### HIV babies been given chance of life

Cambridge scientist Dr Helen Lee and her team have developed the first low-cost test to diagnose whether a baby is HIV positive. The test analyses a pinprick of blood and gives results instantly. Immediate treatment gives newborns a 50 per cent greater chance of living beyond the age of 5.

### Wolfson only to serve Halal chicken

Wolfson College have decided to serve only halal chicken in their kitchen. The animals have their throats ritually slit and bleed to death, causing it to be classed by many animal rights groups as torture. Wolfson told *Varsity* they were anxious to provide catering that best meet the needs of its diverse student body. The proposal to offer only Halal chicken is currently under review and the college said, "we will of course take into account any concerns raised by our members".

### Nobel Prizewinner gives talk at Law faculty

Nobel Prizewinner and former World Bank chief economist Professor Joseph E Stiglitz gave a lecture on fair trade at the Law Faculty last Tuesday. The lecture was the first in new series of on Economics and Public Policy aimed at encouraging synergy between business and academia. An unexpectedly high turnout meant that many students did not get to see the lecture.

### Professor passes away

Professor Sir Nicholas Shackleton has died at the age of 68. An Emeritus Professor at the Department of Earth Sciences, Professor Shackleton specialised in the study of the Earth's climate.

## Cross Campus

### Skeletons at Christ Church

Last Wednesday, 11 skeletons were dug up by maintenance workers in Tom Quad at Christ Church in Oxford. The remains are the bodies of three adults, six children and two babies. The bone have been removed from the college for further inspection.

### Sail the high seas aboard the Scholar Ship

The Scholar Ship, a semester-long academic programme on board a luxury cruise ship, will set sail on its maiden voyage in January 2007. Students from around the world will be able to spend a semester on the ship, studying a range of subjects intended to "enhance their personal and professional development". The experience will not be a cheap one, costing just under \$20,000.

### University of London criticised for degree awarding

The higher education watchdog, the QAA, has criticised the way in which the University of London awards degrees in report published this week. The QAA places "only limited confidence ... in the soundness of the present and likely future management by the University" in awarding degrees on behalf of its constituent col-

leges. The university rejected the criticism, arguing that, "under our federal system the Colleges and other constituent elements of the University have an individual and collective responsibility for maintaining and guaranteeing the quality and standards of the University of London degree".

### Drenching for Boris in Edinburgh

Boris Johnson had his pint poured over him last week while out campaigning for the position of Rector at Edinburgh University. Johnson was posing for a photo when a member of the university's Scottish Socialist Society emptied the MP's pint glass over his head. Although some students greeted Johnson with signs reading "Bog Off Boris", his supporters vociferously dedicate themselves to his cause. Elections for the position are set to take place on February 15 and 16.

### Imperial lifts ban on hoodies

Under pressure from its student union, Imperial College has lifted its ban on wearing of hoodies and scarves on campus. The measures were introduced in November due to worries about safety at the London college. But the ban on wearing the Muslim hijab, passed at the same time, was not lifted, which has caused "extreme concern" from the Federation of Student Islamic Societies.

## Animal rights group: "students are targets"

Rachel Cooper

ANIMAL RIGHTS activists opposed to the construction of an animal research facility in Oxford entered the grounds of St Anne's College on Saturday.

Protestors with placards entered the college at 4.35pm, before being escorted off the premises by porters a few minutes later. The incident follows renewed threats against university staff and students.

Martin Jackson, St Anne's Bursar, said there was "no targeting any particular individual. It was a muted protest," adding "we live in a free society and this is perhaps part of the price we have to pay".

Animal Liberation Front supporters were urged to "fight against the university on a maximum impact scale" by a recent posting on their 'Bite Back' website. The radical campaign group want to stop the construction of an £18m building attached to the Department of Psychiatry. Their website proclaims, "We must target their construction companies and the university's current and future building projects. We must target professors, teachers, heads,

students, investors, partners, supporters and anyone that dares to deal in any part of the University in any way."

A University spokeswoman said, "It is of great concern that a small minority is willing to use intimidation, harassment and threats of violence as part of their campaign. It is totally unacceptable that individuals and companies engaged in entirely lawful activities are being attacked and threatened in this way."

The University has been subjected to threats to staff and students since 2004 and has taken out injunctions to protect them.

Jackson said that members of the ALF might have been involved in the St Anne's protest, but "there was no way of confirming whether this was true." Robin Webb, ALF Press Officer denied involvement, saying "ALF, by its very nature undertakes unlawful activities such as burglary and arson therefore it wouldn't participate in identifiable protest."

Oxford University has experienced a number of protests following the resumption of work on the laboratory site in November last year. All but two percent of the facility's work



St Anne's College, Oxford, upon which protests have centred

would involve rodents and the remainder fish, ferrets and primates.

Animal rights pressure group, SPEAK said, "We are not going to let that lab on South Parks Road be built" and declared its intention to "battle on the streets of Oxford". Last month, over 400 protestors marched through the city in a demonstration organised by SPEAK. Their website claims that further protests, including surprise demonstrations, can be expected. A representative of SPEAK denied any knowledge of the incident at St Anne's and could not confirm whether their activists had been involved.

In 2004 SPEAK, the precursor to SPEAK, caused Cambridge to shelve plans for a primate laboratory, when the university decided that security measures needed to protect the facility from protestors would make it uneconomic.

An Oxford University spokesperson said, "The University of Oxford remains fully committed to the completion of a new biomedical research facility, which will allow us to continue to conduct vital research directed at the alleviation of human suffering, whilst ensuring the highest possible standards of animal care and housing."

## Journals in jeopardy



University Librarian Peter Fox

### Gabriel Byng

A NATIONAL ARCHIVE of academic works could prevent a 280-mile shelving deficit.

The Consortium of Research Libraries in the British Isles proposed a National Research Reserve to avoid the feared gridlock in the stacks in the next decade. The report published, in December, outlines that the Reserve would hold one copy of ever British academic journal and book, with another complete collection housed in the British Library. This would allow university librarians to destroy their own copies and free shelf-space.

Although shelf-space is a costly issue, some librarians worry that the planned changes would increase the risks to research. A. C. Harper, a sub-librarian at the UL warned, "if [the Reserve] burns down, then at a stroke you've lost half the nation's copies."

The UL recently spent £6 million on an extension to house for ten years' worth of publications and another £7 million project is planned. Oxford and Cambridge

University Libraries are the most sceptical about the Reserve and seem unwilling to give up any volumes acquired through the Legal Deposit Act. Peter Fox, University Librarian, told *Varsity*, "one copy is not enough. A disaster, natural or otherwise, could destroy it, and we can't take that risk." An alternative would be for the nation's six 'copyright libraries' to specialise, so fewer duplicates would be held in each.

But other libraries, at or near full capacity, support the idea. Helen Hayes, Chair of the Steering Group, said, "we think about half of research libraries will want in".

Researchers would be able to read journals electronically or, unlike the British Library, request them to be delivered to a local library. The report suggests that the costs, including the construction of the archive, would be outweighed by savings on extensions to existing libraries. The Reserve would probably be built on British Library premises in Boston Spa.

A steering group will develop the plans and issue a report in May.

## Drugs op success

### Jo Trigg

FIVE PEOPLE have been convicted of supplying Class A drugs on Cambridge streets following a six-month undercover police operation.

Operation Spinney smashed the notorious 'Magic' cartel by catching its London ringleader Clement Akwabeng, 26, and his partner Eva Kasumba, 24. The pair supplied large amounts of crack cocaine and heroin destined for Cambridge from Akwabeng's London base.

The drug-dealer arranged sales on his 'Magic' mobile number and instructed runners to meet the addicts in public locations across the Cambridge, including Harris Road, Perse Way and the St Alban's Road recreation ground. Undercover officers met the suppliers 17 times between October 2004 and March 2005. They were told a single dealer could make £4,500 from 40 deals a day and the organisation used supermarket style 'buy one get one free' offers to fuel their customers' addictions.

The two traffickers were arrested at their home in south London on June 28 last year, where police

seized the important mobile phone. In Cambridge Crown Court last week, Akwabeng pleaded guilty to conspiring to supply Class A drugs and was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. Kasumba will face three years in jail and five-year sentences were given to his runners, Michael Chalkley and Gary Barratt. The two Cambridgeshire men, both in their 30s, used dealing to pay for their own heroin addictions.

Detective Chief Inspector Tony Ixer said, "Much of our proactive work is a result of information provided by the community and Operation Spinney was our reaction to community concerns and information about criminals from elsewhere selling hard drugs in Cambridge."

Another key player in a different Cambridge drugs organisation was also jailed. Londoner Daniel Quarry was sentenced to six-and-a-half years for five counts of supplying heroin and crack cocaine in Cambridge.

Detective Chief Inspector Tony Ixer commended the Drug Squad's work, "Today's jailing is yet another victory for the police and the community, and is good example of the hard edge of neighbourhood policing".



# Tensions at King's resurface

## Students express discontent at evidence of private schools push

Rachel Cooper

WHILST KING'S students have voted to repaint their bar soviet red, *Varsity* has obtained evidence that the college has been courting independent school applicants.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, *Varsity* has seen figures which show that during the 2004-05 academic year, the King's Schools Liaison team under the auspices of Dr James Laidlaw visited top independent schools including Radley, Fettes and Eton.

Over 20 independent schools visited King's under the liaison scheme. The figures confirm what a number of King's students suspected. Liz Bradshaw, KCSU Access Officer said, "it is widely known and deeply resented that King's have been targeting private schools. A lot more work needs to be done in encouraging people from less advantaged backgrounds to apply."

She admitted that the college had been quite open about their desire to improve relations with independent schools but students did not know what initiatives were in place.

Dr Laidlaw, who was Senior Tutor during the academic year 2004-05, demonstrated his commitment to rebuilding the college's relationship with private schools when he addressed senior members of the Headmaster's Conference, which represents leading public schools.

It has been suggested that Laidlaw was courting independent schools in a bid to boost King's position in the Tompkins table. The college's position has fluctuated between 20th and 10th place over the past five years.

Dr Nicolette Zeeman, Admissions Tutor at King's

denied this was the case, "There is no question of us targeting certain types of school with a view to raising 'academic standards' - and indeed there is little evidence that any such targeting would have that effect."

"We remain proud of our record on access for students from non-traditional backgrounds and are completely committed to sustaining this record", she added.

At the moment, 74 percent of undergraduates at King's are state-educated. Dr Zeeman commented, "Although I have not yet compiled statistics on this year's Admissions I have no doubt that they will, as in other recent years, reveal our continued commitment to students from the state sector and non-traditional backgrounds."

She continued, "we also try to retain cordial relations with the independent sector: we are proud to consider for entry any suitably skilled and qualified student with the potential to make the most of what Cambridge has to offer."

Dr Laidlaw, who is no longer senior tutor, endorsed Dr Zeeman's comments.

A King's student said that "in some ways it is a good thing that they are seeking to change their reputation amongst pri-



The bar wall is adorned with the hammer and sickle, *Varsity*, January 17 2003

vate school pupils and it is good that they have an equal policy."

But he quickly added that "it goes against what the college stands for and in the past, people who got into King's might not have got into any other college."

Bradshaw agreed that King's should continue to open up to state schools.

King's radical spirit was in evidence again this week when a motion was passed to hold a

"fabulous and opulent" party on the death of Margaret Thatcher.

But the motion may be short-lived. A small group of King's students are proposing to overturn the decision.

Fresher Tom Deacon said, "the joke was in incredibly bad taste. My main objection is that it is immoral to celebrate someone's death in any form." Onur Teymur, who tabled the motion, responded that it was unfortunate that people had got their priorities confused when more important motions had also passed.

The response to the Thatcher motion and the courting of independent schools has exposed tensions within King's. Bradshaw remarked that "the college and the student body are out of sync". Tensions have been evident since the controversial appointment of Dame Judith Mayhew as Provost. She resigned in the summer of 2005 at the end of a two-year tenure. Dame Mayhew was perceived as attempting to move the col-

### Flashpoints

- In 1999, a rent strike was called in King's in response to plans to raise room rents. Over 70 per cent of undergrads withheld their college bills.
- In 2002, four students were rusticated for allegedly participating in a squat.
- King's most recent provost, Dame Judith Mayhew left in 2005, leaving behind a wave of controversy. Her resignation was surrounded by rumours that she may have been forced out.

lege in a corporate direction, symbolised by the repainting of the college bar with an assuming shade of beige.

Bradshaw pointed out that "a lot of people are saying we need someone to lead the college who understands and respects what King's stands for."



The 'airport lounge' style bar - its most recent guise

## RAG Blind Date jeopardised by Facebook

Lucy McKeon

THE BLIND date: the words conjure up images of the glittering highs of Saturday-night television and the lonely lows of singledom. But this stalwart of British romantic life must now fend-off a new enemy - Facebook. Cambridge's RAG Blind Date returns on Tuesday, with organisers promising "the Cambridge cupids will find your match". RAG are seeking to top the £8,000 raised last year for

charities including Link Africa and Cancer Research UK. Last year 3,000 students took part in the fun, which will again offer cheap drinks and the chance of romance - or at the very least finding someone to hold your hair back for you in Ballare.

Thousands of students looking for love will meet in bars all over the city, but the most exciting part of the date - the anticipation of what their partners look like - is threatened by the American peer-networking website, Facebook. In previous

years this did not cause a problem, because Facebook's membership was smaller. But expo-

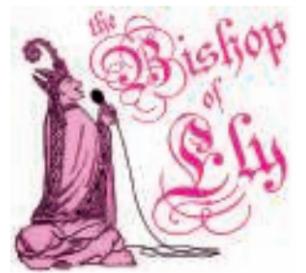


MICHAEL DERRINGER

mental growth in the number of users over the last year could spell disaster for the ambiance of the event. "The fact that you can search for your date when you get their information does pose some problems," admitted Homerton RAG reps Charlotte Whitaker and Sophie Bennett, "especially if people don't like the look of what they see for whatever reason." The RAG team claim to have taken this into account, by requesting those taking part to restrict access to their profile or photo

until the big day. The reps added, "we do think Facebook does have some great advantages - mainly the fact it encourages bribing!" The 'bribery' of the fundraisers, who - in return for a larger donation - are happy to make arrangements for you to be paired up with that mysterious stranger you have been poking all term, is a worthy price for the opportunity to turn a metaphorical poke into something more physical.

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A recent phenomenon which has trickled down through the communion wine grape vine is an alarming trend for fast food fights. One incident featuring a famously debauched blond-haired Eagle regular (previously noted for his exclamation to a mild-mannered grad upon entering a party: "I'd like to come on your face") was particularly salient. Our hero was picking up bikes which had

been knocked over by a resentment-filled-ex-minor-public-school Johns rugby player, when he was confronted by his petit-bourgeois nemesis: "Why are you picking up those bikes?" The almost-albino character replied, "Because you, my man, are knocking them down." The upper-lower-middle-class yob/hooray Henry then responded in fine fettle.

### Ecclesiastical offerings from our man in the pulpit

In his left hand was a burger, one of Life's finest (as his old school song would have it); his right formed a fist. He shoved the coagulated cow-

mess into our champion of the cyclist's face, and followed with a right hook, which floored the public spirited Celt. The assailant was identified when he boasted about the occurrence in Magdalene Bar, and the authorities were notified. A cogent defence was mounted, hinging on the undeniable fact that the aforementioned burger/fist combo was the most sustained piece of quick thinking ever exhibited by the defendant. All we can advise from the pulpit is that parents really should not waste money educating people like this; or, as a friend of ours remarked when asked by his public school for a donation: "Fuck off, you're the reason there are so many stupid people in Cambridge."

In another case of this rampant trend, an alarming incident occurred outside the other trailer, given the hopeful moniker by its proprietors: "Night Life Van" - or "Death," as more style the sobriquet. A seemingly innocuous comment made by a graduate student about the effect on the price of cocaine rendered by recent drug busts, both local and nationwide, elicited a furious response by a man with some chips. Claiming to be a "bouncer" - although closer inspection of his ear piece proved it to be an electronic tagging device - this rather more echt-ASBO-case pushed the poor chap up against the van, exclaiming "fucking students" and muttering about his ex wife and the Dean of a College (we can

only speculate, I am afraid...but his old squeeze and the frisky Fellow were clearly involved in some sort of sordid coke fuelled sex binge). Our somewhat timorous anti-hero tried to ease the situation with dialogue cribbed from an Alan Sillitoe novel, in a bungled attempt at class solidarity. Sadly, four and a half years at Cambridge had smoothed his accent, and the cuckolded commoner was having none of it. The situation was only saved by a female friend of this misguided grad geek, who spilt the man's chips with the exclamation, "Oh look at your French fries," causing him to flee to the safety of his Escort minivan, where no more comestible deprivation could occur.



weekdays

PAWEL CHWIEDACZ  
MANAGER  
TRAILER OF LIFE

### Monday

DAY OFF  
Went to Ballare, Fez and Club 22 with friends.

### Tuesday

I really like Tuesdays because at around 2am we get all the people in fancy dress from the gay night at club 22. They are very nice, and sing us songs.

A girl complained about customer service in the van, but this is very rare. All the other students we have spoken to seem more than happy.

### Wednesday

Today was very busy in the burger van, which we didn't expect. We didn't have time to chat to people like we usually do, but everyone seemed to understand.

Early in the evening a group of students brought half a chair into the van and took pictures of it stood on top of the fryer.

### Thursday

During the day I cleaned the burger van, so it is nice and shiny. We also changed the tyres and had the van serviced.

It wasn't so busy this evening so I had a chat with some Politics students. The great thing about working here is that you meet such a diverse group of people - any question you have can be answered by a Cambridge student.

### Friday

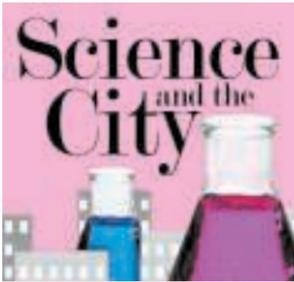
I didn't sleep, then decided to go to London for an adventure at around 5am. I came back around 12, and started getting ready for the last student night of the week. Cambridge students are really friendly but they are always drunk! I was a student once too, but I didn't drink half as much as they do.

### Saturday

I sold my car at 6am. Other than that it was a normal Saturday dealing with drunk people. We normally serve around 1500 people throughout the evening, and it can be pretty hectic because the locals are out. They are very rowdy and argumentative, and seem to be unable to politely buy food like the students. If they are particularly rude we just send them round to Uncle Franks.

### Sunday

The quietest and nicest day of the week. We only have nice chatty students and regulars. I love this day after a hard week in the burger van!



## MULTIPLE LOVES

Picture this: A Golden marriage anniversary, yet the devoted husband is canoodling with the au-pair girl, whilst the wife is lusting after the body guard. Expressions of love are certainly diverse. In a society where long-term relationships and fleeting affairs are not mutually exclusive, is it possible that a confused love-life is a reflection of multiple loves? I couldn't help but wonder, is it just greed or are our brains wired to love more than one person at a time?

Dr Fisher believes that love comes in three forms: lust, romantic love and long-term attachment. She also argues that they are independent, controlled by distinct molecules in discrete brain areas and that they have evolved for different reasons. Lust is the craving for sex, and is driven by the hormone testosterone in both men and women. The higher the blood testosterone concentration, the stronger the libido, although depending on age and time of the month, these levels tend to rise and fall. Sexual desire for men peaks in the early twenties and for women during ovulation, when testosterone levels are most elevated.

Intriguingly, dopamine, the addictive romantic love-molecule (see last week's column) stimulates the release of testosterone, and vice versa. In other words, 'romance triggers lust' and 'lust triggers romance'. This explains why casual sex might not always remain so. Frequent intercourse results in increased testosterone, which leads to more dopamine release, and before you realise you might find yourself in love.

Long-term attachment, by contrast, is characterised by a sense of security and emotional union with a long-term partner. It is associated with oxytocin and vasopressin. Referred to as the 'cuddle chemicals', they are secreted by the brain during stimulation of the genitals and during orgasm and promote the feeling of union and attachment experienced after sex with a beloved. The theory goes that the more sex a couple has, the deeper their bond will be.

Dr Fisher envisages that these independent love-states represent mating strategies, which have evolved to ensure our DNA is successfully passed on to future generations. Lust evolved to motivate sexual reproduction, romantic love to single out an eligible partner to have children with, and long-term attachment to stay with that person for a sufficient amount of time to successfully raise the offspring together.

So the problem arises. Neurologically we are adapted to love more than one person at a time. Jealousy, adultery and divorce often result. This ain't easy, but understanding the evolutionary reasons of why we stray helps stave off cynicism. Dr Fisher's words ring true: 'We were not built to be happy, but to reproduce'.

Christina Geijer

# THE BEST MEDICINE

LAURENCE HUNT and OLIVER JARDINE look at laughter

"If we may believe our logicians, man is distinguished from all other creatures by the faculty of laughter." So claimed Joseph Addison, poet and founder of the *Spectator*, in 1712. Few would disagree. Laughter is universal – it is one of the most common things we humans do; a behaviour that transcends cultural boundaries. Children begin to laugh at two to three months old, which is at least twelve months earlier than they begin to speak. Even deaf and blind children, with no way of learning from the behaviour of others, will laugh when tickled.

This suggests that laughter, like many of our other behaviours, must be hard-wired in some way in our genetic make-up. But unlike most of our other hard-wired behaviours, laughter is unusual in that it serves no obvious purpose. Evolutionary psychologists have had great difficulty explaining why it is that natural selection has chosen to make us tense up our facial muscles and emit a staccato, hyena-like panting several hundred times a day. As the alien Spock in *Star Trek* observed (in one of his many critiques of the human race): "Humour – it is a difficult concept. It is not logical".

So, if it is so strongly conserved, what possible role could laughter play in our lives? Freud believed that the telling of jokes produced a build-up of psychic tension, and laughter was a safe way of releasing this energy when the punchline was delivered. Like many of Freud's theories, this has strong intrinsic appeal, but is hard to justify when examined under the joint spotlights of experimental psychology and neuroscience. Other theorists have suggested that laughing is nature's idea of a put-down: a way of expressing superiority, and advertising this to potential mates. This is true in some cases: Americans, one study suggests, are one of the few cultures in the world whose favourite jokes tend to involve someone else looking

stupid. But, far more, laughter serves as a force for social bonding, not climbing.

Some behavioural biologists have started to suggest that the key to this distinguishing

“IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY WE EMIT A STACCATO, HYENA-LIKE PANTING SEVERAL HUNDRED TIMES A DAY”

'human' trait might, surprisingly, be found in animals. Jaak Panksepp, JP Scott Centre for Neuroscience, Ohio demonstrated that, so long as

they are feeling playful, rats emit a 50kHz chirping when tickled. He describes this as 'rat laughter'. Panksepp also managed to induce the chirping by chemical stimulation of the dopamine reward system (a system shared with addictive drugs). Similar traits are known to exist in great apes, and to some extent dogs.

The idea is that nature might use these noises as an "OK signal". Even though the rats are being touched in vulnerable parts of their body, their 'laughter' indicates that they are at play, and there is no actual danger. It is therefore a method for animals to communicate without the need for language, so that other animals involved can interpret their behaviour as playful, not malicious. This converges neatly with evidence suggesting that circuits for laughter in the brain pre-date those for language.

How does this theory translate to humans? We laugh around thirty times more frequently when with other people than when alone, and most of this laughter is not at 'jokes', but as part of conversa-

tion. It's therefore pretty clear that most of our laughter is for communication, rather than for our own benefit. Human laughter may, similar to the rats' chirping, have evolved as a way of quickly and clearly expressing one's emotional assessment of a situation. This would help avoid unnecessary conflict, which might harm your ability to pass on your genes to the next generation.

It's easy to get carried away with such ideas, and they must be heavily scrutinised for flip-pant anthropomorphism. The existence of many emotions in animals has long been recognised, and was documented by Darwin in "The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals." But it must be appreciated that these 'emotions' are simply the driving force for animal behaviour, and are very much different from the emotional feelings that we humans experience.

Nevertheless, Panksepp's provocative theories have by no means been dismissed by the scientific community. It may be that, despite what Addison believed, the animals will have the last laugh.

Varsity asks: What has made you laugh recently?



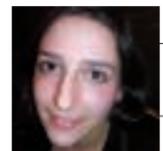
Laetitia Eich Homerton

"I was on a train and dropped my iPod down the toilet, which opened out onto the tracks. Tragic but funny."



Alex Habers Queens'

"I went to a dinner party and was served half a boiled onion with grated Parmesan as the main course."



Ilana Berjsagel Clare

"A certain person who didn't appreciate my cooking ended up with the noodles down their trousers instead."

Varsity asks Footlights: Why did humans evolve with the ability to laugh?



Simon Bird President

"I don't believe that man has evolved with the ability to laugh. I don't believe that man has evolved. I believe we were created by God exactly as we are now. Laughter is simply the spirit of God moving through us and out of our faces."



Raph Shirley Ex-President

"Laughter is the most advanced social mechanism in the animal kingdom. To laugh at someone shows you accept them and welcome them or that you see yourself above them. The differences between these two and its plethora of other uses is a massive subtlety."



Tom Sharpe Committee

"Laughter started with a neanderthal choking on a dinosaur bone. He exaggerated to gain sympathy. The others thought it was ridiculous. So they copied him. That was the death of sympathy and the birth of humour. It serves no practical use except as the equivalent of a skunk's fart."



TOM KINGSTLEY

ANDY TURLEY tries to get serious about LAUGHING GAS

For most people laughing gas is synonymous with the dentist's chair. The chemical has enjoyed widespread usage as an anaesthetic, where it was quite common for patients to experience its curious side-effects. Today laughing gas, or nitrous oxide, has largely been supplanted by more effective anaesthetics, but it remains part of everyday life thanks to one or two more surprising applications. In particular the very first use of nitrous oxide, that of a recreational drug, is experiencing a rapid return to popular culture.

Laughing gas was first synthesised by the English chemist Joseph Priestley. It wasn't until the 1790's when a young Humphrey Davy was sufficiently unhinged to test it upon himself that he discovered its analgesic qualities

along with a distinct sense of elation. In the years that followed many chemists discovered they could make a profitable living offering nitrous hits to paying customers. The drug would be administered in shows, where people would pay to breathe the gas whilst the crowd jeered at the hilarity that ensued. It was during one such show that the dentist Dr Horace Wells observed the compound's painkilling qualities. The subject of the demonstration injured his leg whilst 'under the influence', but it was not until the effects began to wear off that he noticed the injury. Wells tested the drug by breathing the gas and then having a tooth extracted, with positive results.

It is the compound's use as a recreational drug that is now

finding increasing appeal. Following in the footsteps of Davy, today's thrill-seekers are turning to laughing gas as a pleasant, affordable alternative to conventional drugs. It has found popularity at summer festivals and some clubs are rumoured to sell balloons of the gas for less than the price of a drink. The compound works as a dissociative: it blocks signals to the conscious mind from certain parts of the brain, usually those that deal with sensation. This manifests itself as a feeling of extreme euphoria that often results in uncontrollable fits of laughter. The hit is almost instantaneous but lasts only a few minutes. As well as medical grade gas, cans of whipped cream are also sources. The gas functions as an aerosol, its high fat permeability allowing it to generate

smooth cream bubbles upon release. Inhalation direct from the dispenser can cause freezing of the mouth and throat leading to suffocation due to the extreme pressure of the gas. The effects of prolonged usage can be considerable. Deprivation of oxygen can lead to anaemia and other problems associated with vitamin B12 deficiency and the central nervous system. An overdose can be fatal as the inhalant literally suffocates due to the low oxygen environment. What is attracting users in such high levels and causing those in the medical profession considerable concern is the apparent legality of the chemical. It is a trivial matter to obtain the gas and equipment needed, although anyone selling nitrous oxide to someone who intends to inhale it faces prosecution.

for more on laughter go to [www.varsity.co.uk](http://www.varsity.co.uk)



Ed Bainton, Pete Foggitt and Tommy Hewitt-Jones poking

# FACEBOOK OFF

**"FACEBOOK! Everyone together in one PLACEBOOK! Adding friends till I've got no more SPACEBOOK!"** Yeah. Yesterday saw the launch of the Facebook song. **HANNAH FLETCHER** and **TOM KINGSLEY** bop along with its creators

Let's get this clear first. The song is shit. It really is shit. We went over to Tommy's recording studio – his room – on Tuesday night. We didn't know what to expect, but we were excited. A song about Facebook! Brilliant! Let's hear it. We hear it.

"Yeah, it just... sort of... fades out there... at the end..." said Tommy Hewitt-Jones (169 Cambridge friends), a third year organ scholar at Caius, trying to fill the silence. We were underwhelmed. Pete Foggitt (247 Cambridge friends) a music finalist at King's and the other half of the composing team, reassured us that not all the instrumental tracks were there, and the vocals hadn't been properly recorded yet. Sure. "It's in A major," says Tommy. "It's got relatively complex harmonies," adds Pete.

Tommy and Pete's Facebook song, 'On the Facebook', started life as a joke in a bar. "For about five minutes", says Tommy, because then he decided they should actually make the song. "I've got a bad habit of doing that." He'd written some lines in choir practice earlier: "When I'm bored and lonely / I want someone to bone me". They scrapped that, and had new lyrics and music by the end of the night. "I had the sound of the song in my head", says Hewitt-Jones. "'A' major." "Which is the same as 'The Way to Amarillo'", adds Foggitt. "And it's exactly the same speed." Tommy pauses to think. "No no, Amarillo's in... 168... I think we're in 170, maybe 171." We nod. Yes.

"The point is, we're faster. Our pulse is racing a bit faster than Tony Christie's." They admit it has got some similarities with 'The Way to Amarillo', but nothing that would get them into copyright trouble if they become famous. "We've lined the two tracks up, and gone through them very carefully with a lawyer in case of copyright infringement. There

aren't any similarities apart from the general mood."

Lucky that. Because Hewitt-Jones and Foggitt are definitely prepared for fame. At 5pm yesterday, On The Facebook exploded onto the Oxford, Cambridge and Harvard Facebooks with a barrage of banner adverts and cryptic wall postings warning that "something is going to happen this Friday on Facebook. WATCH OUT..." Both the song and the video (Yes, there's a video. More on that later.) will be available for download. After Ed Bainton (298) did the initial mix, they sent the recording to a professional mixer in London who reworks "proper pop music like Britney Spears" so it will sound good on car stereos.

Their enthusiasm just might be worth it. After all, the song is marketed at people who are members of the Facebook, and thus have no taste, and it's marketed at people who are actually online, and therefore bored, and therefore likely to be entertained by anything. Even this. Six hours after going online, they had 3500 hits on their

website - 68% of which were from Cambridge. Tommy and Pete have already been stopped in the street by their fans, who point at them, and shout "Facebook" adoringly. One of them said it made his day. Bless.

Facebook is even bigger in America – and Americans just love our crazy British humour. The song's already spread from Harvard, and randoms from random colleges in random states have sent fanmail to their new English heroes. Part of the appeal is that Tommy and Pete have, cunningly, been very open about the fact that the song was written in Cambridge. The video starts with a tricky bit of singing on top of King's Chapel before moving on to a tramp madly strumming the song on his guitar and throwing things at innocent pedestrians, before finishing with a bit of midnight singing in Gardies. They've encoded the mp3 file so that it's small enough to be emailed. It could end up with every member of the Facebook world within a week. Would they like that? "Well, apparently the guy who made the Crazy Frog song really regrets it," says Tommy breezily, as if he wouldn't mind regretting anything. Still, we can't help thinking that the Crazy Frog's an uncomfortably good analogy.

But then, something as awful as the Facebook sort of demands an awful song. It's not meant to be good. It's probably ironic, or, at least, a bit of cheesy fun. It's catchy, it's got ridiculous pastiches of 70s and 80s cheese – tinny orchestra hits every time someone says "Facebook", and demented piano flourishes before the chorus kicks in. Tim Dickinson (202) does the vocals. A brilliant singer let down by his material. He's got a nice bit about poking someone, getting messaged back, and then sleeping with her "cause it seemed like the right thing to doooooo". But even Tim can't save the

song from breaking down into a stream-of-consciousness: "you and me and you and me and you and me and you and me on the facebook facebook facebook facebook ooooh oh ho facebook facebook facebook".

Couldn't they have done any better? "The problem is everyone likes the Facebook," sighs Pete, "Standard, heavy Cambridge irony just isn't suitable."

"I'll tell you what is ironic," adds Ed ironically. "We all waste time on Facebook, so we decided to waste time writing a song about wasting time on Facebook, which people are now going to waste more time listening to."

The song's too enthusiastic to be hateable, and Tommy, Ed and Pete are so endearingly excited about the whole thing that you'd feel bad to be cruel about all their hard work. And yes, we feel bad.

The creators are undeniably talented. Pete has composed music for the last two Footlights Pantomimes and completed Mozart's Requiem (thank God), while Tommy has written for the Proms and was last year's principal composer for the NYO. They point out that they're very much classical composers, not pop people. "We've been standing in the corner of discos for the last ten years," says Pete, "and so you kind of just absorb it." Tommy says that when they go to the cinema, they find the plot secondary to music. They both share a scary sense of perfect pitch – they share jokes about key changes. We have no idea what they're giggling about.

Maybe the joke about the Facebook song is lost on us too. It's not amazingly bad, sure, but then that means that it can't be so bad that it's good. We promised we'd plug it though, so go listen for yourself.



[www.fbsong.com](http://www.fbsong.com)



**But what they didn't realise was that there are other Facebook songs.**

There's a crap one ([www.facebooksong.com](http://www.facebooksong.com)) and a rap one (just google Nsami Facebook song). We set them upon each other.

## ROUND ONE

**Cam song on Crap song**  
*Ed, Pete and Tommy crowd round the computer*

**Ed:** Not sure about the production values.

**Tommy:** Quite a nice overdrive sound. *He turns down the volume. Pete runs over to the piano*

**Pete:** You can add harmony!  
*The lyrics are completely inaudible*

**Pete:** Mm. That's really profound. Next!

**Ed:** So what do you think?

**Pete:** ...Every song's a child of its time.

## ROUND TWO

**Crap song on Cam song**

*On MSN to the\_dherrmanator @yahoo.com (creator of the limp rock Facebook effort)*

**Varsity says:** hi daran

**dherrmanator says:** Hey...what's up...is this Hannah?

**Varsity says:** yep

**Varsity says:** this is hannah

**dherrmanator says:** cool

*After half an hour of rubbish banter:*

**Varsity says:** anyway, this song

**Varsity says:** your website says you're working on a final version?

**dherrmanator says:** I just threw it up quickly...

**dherrmanator says:** haven't done much to it

**dherrmanator says:** but we are going to do some stuff with it

**Varsity says:** yeah? like what?

**dherrmanator says:** well, first we plan on recording the song professionally and then I am going to make a cool website with a forum and such

**Varsity says:** so it's been popular with everyone there?

**dherrmanator says:** yeah...everyone has really liked it...

**Varsity says:** wow

**dherrmanator says:** it started as just a joke, you know, making fun of the site and the people that are crazy

**dherrmanator says:** (which is kinda us)

**Varsity says:** so you guys are big facebook fans?

**dherrmanator says:** ohh yeah...I probably log on 5-10 times a day

**dherrmanator says:** even when I was on vacation skiing...I probably checked

it 3 times a day

**Varsity says:** hmm is that normal?

**dherrmanator says:** yeah

**Varsity says:** do most students in america do that?

**dherrmanator says:** deffiantly

**Varsity says:** so how many friends do you have?

**dherrmanator says:** let me check...

**dherrmanator says:** one sec

*Four minutes later:*

**dherrmanator says:** 363

**dherrmanator says:** total

**Varsity says:** wow. that's a lot

**dherrmanator says:** I would say that I know about 290 of them

*Bit more rubbish banter. Then:*

**Varsity says:** this cambridge song

**Varsity says:** what do you think?

**dherrmanator says:** well...its different

**dherrmanator says:** a little weird...but a good weird

**dherrmanator says:** I really like it though. It made me laugh quite a bit

**dherrmanator says:** but...is it an old guy and older girl singing the song?

**Varsity says:** no, they're both music students

**Varsity says:** quite posh

**dherrmanator says:** posh? I don't know what that means

**dherrmanator says:** popular?

**Varsity says:** no

**dherrmanator says:** and say "no worries mate"

**Varsity says:** no

**dherrmanator says:** I am going to send it to all my facebook people...that way everyone can hear it here

**Varsity says:** no

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# QUIETLY UPLIFTING THINGS

CHRIS OFILI takes EMILY STOKES into a darkened room to talk about style, elephant dung and the power of painting

It is nine-thirty, and Tate Britain hasn't opened yet. Chris Ofili and I are sitting inside *The Upper Room*, a cycle of thirteen paintings of (rather dandified) rhesus monkeys, each painted in a different colour scheme and delicately balanced on two sturdy lumps of elephant dung.

Chris Ofili is explaining the process of combining apparently disparate ideas to make a work of art. (He is master of the analogy, and at one point compares the concentrated simplicity of Matisse's Vence Chapel to "a glass of water".) "When I work, I have lots of different ideas and somehow in my mind I put them into one big pot and they become something. But, as I put the bits in, I'm not actually trying to cook something." (He looks at me, firmly). "I'm not like: 'now I'm going to make a risotto.'" He enacts picking out ingredients from the air with his fingers as he talks. "I just put in anything that I consider to be interesting and relevant – and I trust in instinct and trust in time that it will produce something that I think is worth committing myself to."

*The Upper Room* represents a huge act of commitment. Making sure all these paintings stayed together after their first showing at the Victoria Miro gallery in 2002 has been a tough job; it would have been easier for Ofili – and undoubtedly more profitable – if the

family of monkeys had been split up and sold to different buyers. But once the Tate had expressed an interest in acquiring this work in its entirety, he was determined to make it happen; he likes it being shown in a place where everyone can see it for free. The controversy over the Tate buying this work while Ofili was an artist trustee made him sad and annoyed. "Unfortunately people have a way of remembering controversial things rather than quietly uplifting things."

Ofili's interest in quietly uplifting things is evident as he sits in *The Upper Room* – a calm, delicate space. He seems at home in here, and talks about his monkeys in almost the same way he talks about his new puppies. His first monkey was the red one. Then he made the green one and the black one. "I lived with three, and they were my red, black and green monkeys," he says, factually.

He thought that they would be in the same line of paintings as his red, green and black paintings – like the flags he subsequently made for his exhibition in the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2003. But then he made another monkey, and then another, until he decided that he would need twelve, and that the monkeys would be the disciples of The Last Supper, all holding their chalices (with elephant dung "host" floating above) up

towards the final, golden monkey who sits, as if at head of the table, at the end of *The Upper Room*. Somehow each monkey developed a secret identity as a disciple (he's still not quite sure which one is which, although he knows who Judas is, and is keeping it a secret.) The secret identity of each monkey, and not knowing who Judas is (I tried to persuade him to tell me, but no) "is a celebration of mystery and imminent betrayal." (I still want to know.)

The room itself is like a chapel, and was designed by Ofili and his friend the architect David Adjaye, who he met at the Royal College of Art. It's not an "installation", Ofili explains, but a controlled setting where you forget all other work around you. In this quiet, slightly chilly room, panelled with dark, refined, walnut wood, you're never going to be distracted by an incongruous juxtaposition with work by another artist or by someone working their way through the collection with a Tate audio-guide. The corridor leading to the room is lit only by spotlights at floor level, and the quietness in the room makes me want to whisper. The room itself is dim but each painting is brilliantly lit by a carefully focused spotlight. The light bounces off the surface of the paintings, casting colourful projections onto the walls and floor, so that the paintings look as if they themselves are the source of light, like stained glass windows.

If you peer into the paintings rather than looking at them, you can just see a web of tiny delicate lines drawn in pencil or pen under the first wash of colour, and trapped below the glittering resin surface. Ofili talks about painting as if it is part of his nature. Each of his tiny pencil marks is like a fingerprint. "I just found it important to do something that is so quiet and gentle and can be lost. It's a way of building up a real intimacy with the canvas. And also like putting two fingers up at time, and saying 'I'll do this forever if need be.'" You can feel that the artwork has been a product of long hours of concentration; the sense of it pervades the room.

He suits his work. He is outwardly almost flamboyant and fantastically well-dressed in a crisp yellow shirt under a bright green jumper, yet he is simultaneously refined, and supremely gentle, with a quiet northern accent and unflinching attentiveness. The motifs and images in all of his work are as bold as Pop Art images. The twelve

rhesus monkeys of the Upper Room have subtly cheeky expressions and hold their chalices with pride, Captain Shit and the Legend of the Black Stars of 1997 has a huge afro and funny lapels, Ofili's watercolours depict women with big earrings, lots of lipstick and men with long beards and bulging foreheads. But they are not Pop Art; they are made with sensitive and loving devotion to the craft of painting.

In some ways, this work may seem less socially conscious than his other works, which refer more directly to black culture. *The Upper Room* feels almost visionary, and seems more closely related to the work of William Blake (whom Ofili greatly admires) than it does to his other points of reference: hip hop, jazz, blaxploitation films, magazines. When I ask him about his favourite works of art, he remembers a painting in the Tate called 'The Fairy Feller's Master Stroke' by Richard Dadd: "It's like a wood scene. And there's a wizard with a big hat. And central to the painting is a nut or an acorn and there's a man with a big hammer, and he's just about to crack the nut." I am at first a bit puzzled as to why Ofili might like this sort of painting; there seems something rather incongruous in this young and decidedly twenty-first century artist talking about fairy fellers. But I go to see the painting later, and see why Ofili likes it. It is folksy, but very alive, tiny, immaculately crafted, a concentrated rectangle of paint, interwoven imagery and stories.

And perhaps this interest in the magical or visionary does have a social relevance to it. Ofili is very aware of the way in which black artists are limited by being defined as "Other" or, as he said a few years ago, as "the voodoo king, the voodoo queen, the witch doctor, the drug dealer, the magicien de la terre, the exotic." Rather than trying to reject this stereotypical labelling, he decided to embrace it, to make the exotic "part of my palette." This is most emphatically expressed in his signature use of elephant dung, which he decorates with coloured map-pins and sprinkles with glitter like a child's careful scrapbook. But it would be missing an important part of his work not to see that, in depicting the black man with a huge afro and a snazzy suit, he is deliberately provoking us to recognise the stereotypes we have constructed.

The Tate opens its doors and two members of the public walk into *The Upper Room*. Ofili

thinks we should leave so as not to disturb them. We sit in the café and talk about his past work: the book *Black* (Imprint in 93, 2000) that gathered together newspaper reports of crimes described as 'black', his *Shit Sale* of Elephant dung in 1993. We talk about his experiences of racism, about films, about William Blake, about his future projects (so far he has the title, *The margin: the gap between ourselves* and laughs at my mystified expression.)

I ask him about the development of his style, and he corrects me with another of his perfect analogies. "Style is a funny word. Because I see it as – as things unfolding. If you see yourself as one big crumpled up piece of paper, you can carefully unfold facets of yourself. In time it spreads out and becomes flatter." And how crumpled is he? "I've no idea. I would hope that I'm still quite crumpled and that there's more to see." This quiet faith that he will continue to develop, but in his own time, is very characteristic of Ofili. He often uses his own work as inspiration next, and his calmness and trust in himself could make you think of him as methodical. But I get the feeling that he is still amazed by the power of *The Upper Room*, as if it has taken him by surprise. We say goodbye, and he joins the trickle of silent viewers to visit it again to spend just a bit more time in quiet contemplation.

## A life in pictures

**1968:** Born in Manchester  
**1987-1988:** Thameside College of Technology (Foundation Course)  
**1988-91:** Chelsea School of Art, London (BA Fine Art)  
**1991-3:** Royal College of Art, London (MA Fine Art)  
**1993:** *Shit Sale*, Brick Lane, London  
**1996:** *Afrodizzia*, Victoria Miro Gallery, London  
**1997:** *Sensation*, Royal Academy of Arts, London  
**1998-9:** Awarded Turner Prize, Tate Britain, London  
**1998:** *Pimpin' ain't easy but it sure is fun*, Serpentine Gallery, London  
**2002:** *Freedom One Day*, Victoria Miro Gallery, London  
**2003:** *Within Reach*, British Pavilion, Venice Biennale  
**1995-2005:** *Afromuses*, The Studio Museum Harlem, New York  
**2005:** *The Blue Rider*, Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin  
**2006:** *The Upper Room*, Tate Britain, London



“IT'S A WAY OF BUILDING UP A REAL INTIMACY WITH THE CANVAS. AND ALSO LIKE PUTTING TWO FINGERS UP AT TIMES, AND SAYING 'I'LL DO THIS FOREVER IF NEED BE'”

”

# SPILLED ROMANTICISM

Lucy McSherry talks to Seamus Heaney about the old and new

Seamus Heaney is wearing a blue woollen knitted tie. For a while I can't prise my eyes away from it. Later I will think how his choice of tie reflects his personality: quirky, homely and not without a sense of irony.

Heaney is about to deliver the annual Clark Lecture (past speakers include T.S. Eliot and Ted Hughes). He describes his lectures and his critical pieces as "poetry with spin-offs", and says they were initially done out of "a sense of obligation" to Queen's University, Belfast, and then as "an ongoing sense of discovery, adventure and standing up for poetry." But poetry remains his starting-point. "Any entitlement I have comes from poems and I would see myself first, as a poet."

Heaney tells me about his new collection, *District and Line*, and describes the process of dreaming up new poems, 'Polish Sleeper'. He sets the scene in his garden in elegiac tones: "I was getting a bit of land fixed, and the landscape gardener said, 'you should put in railway sleepers.' And then what was supplied were these Polish sleepers, and they were very black, you know, and menacing and you think – my God – of trains in Poland in the second World War, of Auschwitz and so on. You're in the garden and the pastoral level has changed. It's less pleasurable."

Heaney's awareness of his surroundings remains sensitive and lyrical. He admits that his poetry is "spilled Romanticism." He pauses for a second. "When a poem is good you are animated – brought to life." Talking about poetry,

Heaney is at ease.

Coming from Northern Ireland and having studied Heaney's poems from an early age, I feel close to the settings and politics that have defined him. He nods at me knowingly and uses phrases like, "as we would say in Northern Ireland." But it seems that the themes of Northern Ireland no longer inspire him to write. "I think with poetry you are waiting for something to excite you, something slightly different." He has written "wee bits of prose in the newspapers" about the political situation – the Omagh bombings, the ceasefire

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**TED [HUGHES] USED TO SAY, 'A WRITER HAS TO ESCAPE HIS OWN SECRET POLICE'**

”

– but this this type of political commentary is not what Heaney's wants his writing to be about. "Ted [Hughes] used to say, 'a writer has to escape his own secret police.'" He laughs. "Anyway, I don't feel as I did in the 1980s, that 'Jesus, something has to be done.' I don't feel that."

Heaney comes from a farming family. "It was by no means an illiterate family but there would have been a shyness of

poetry as a high art form." The post-war era in which he grew up gave him a wider range of opportunities than previous generations. He won a scholarship to boarding school and subsequently moved to Queen's Belfast to read English. He graduated with a First and a few years later found himself back there, teaching students no more than five years younger than him. "I was a BA when I went to teach in Queens. Most had PhDs and MAs – I had that insecurity."

Despite being eager to downplay the impact of the Troubles on his life, Heaney could not ignore the political situation. He even gained a reputation as a political writer. He reflects, "it took a while to align whatever I wrote to what was happening. The poem 'Punishment', from his 1975 collection *North*, deals with paramilitary castigation:

I who have stood dumb  
when your betraying sisters,  
cauled in tar,  
wept by the railings,  
who would connive  
in civilised outrage  
yet understand the exact  
and tribal, intimate revenge

This collection was lauded in England, but greeted with suspicion in Northern Ireland. Belfast poet Ciaran Carson called Heaney "the laureate of violence – a mythmaker – an anthropologist of ritual killing." When I refer to *North*, Heaney nods with the confidence of someone sure of the answer before they hear the question. Was he surprised by the reaction in Ireland? "I was surprised but I wasn't daunted by it." He thinks for a second, then says emphatically, "I think I was mistaken. I think that the reac-

tion to the book was mistaken, but I would add that I was the cause of it because, before the book came out, I was relating the oddity of these poems to the prevalent conditions too explicitly, and making out they had something to say." But didn't they have something to say? "They had but – in a strange sort of way." He sighs. "They weren't prescriptions, and they weren't explanations." Has he any regrets about the actual poems? "I am very fond of them. They are completely strange. I think they've held up well. I like them still. I have no unease about them."

When I arrive at the Lady Mitchell Hall, the auditorium is packed. When Heaney begins to talk there is tangible sense of reverence from the audience. I didn't hear as much as a cough during the entire lecture. Heaney called his Clark lecture 'Stance and Distance', joking that he felt it was an "appropriately Cambridge title". His new poem 'The Blackbird of Glenmore' echoes the ideas that appeared in one of his first poems, 'Mid-Term Break', in which he remembers the death of his younger brother. The poem does not simply take a backward look at an older topic. Rather, it revisits the memories that the older poem explored with the heightened awareness that a few decades have given him.

Seamus Heaney's new poems are due for publication in May. The ones he read on Wednesday suggest a fresh and emotional revisiting of familiar territory. So how have they changed? "It's hard to say – I still feel like a beginner."



HANNAH FLETCHER

Discover  
2006

Want to find  
out more about  
management  
consultancy?

**Discover 2006** could be for you. **March 30th until April 1st.** This, all-expenses paid residential event is for all non-finalist undergraduates. You will get the chance to experience the way we define and solve a business problem. In addition, you will also have the opportunity to work with professional coaches on personal impact, self-awareness and teamwork. To find out more please visit our website at [www.mckinsey.co.uk](http://www.mckinsey.co.uk) or email us at [london\\_discover@mckinsey.com](mailto:london_discover@mckinsey.com) before the application deadline of **February 14th.**

McKinsey&Company



# La Belle Crane Sans Merci

It's big, it's rusty and it hath me in thrall

Tom Kingsley

Some people find electricity pylons quite ugly. But I say, if you imagine them as friendly metal stick-children tied together in a long line on a school trip, you'll find them innocent, if not rather loveable. Because with a bit of imagination, you can come to like anything. And that's why I love those cranes in the middle of Cambridge.

None of your tacky red or yellow cranes, these ones. By night, they're lit up in crisp shining Persil white, like a frost pattern on a window. And by day, grey against the grey that passes for sky in Cambridge, the cranes are like cranes. Bird-like, long-legged, flapping in the wind. They're visible from absolutely everywhere in Cambridge and probably in Cambridgeshire. They're probably the tallest things in the county.

Ideally, there'd be some kind of website where someone would take a picture of the cranes every two hours, so those unlucky enough not to have a view of the cranes from their window would be able to see what new abstract shape they'd swung into. The cranes are so improbably close to each other that they interact like some giant sculpture. They can't be anything more practical than a sculpture, because the four cranes are so cosy with each other that if they swung their arms by very much, they'd collide, like a slow light-sabre battle between two geriatric Jedi. And since cranes exist to lift things high up in the air over obstacles, it's puzzling as to why, on that flat and barren building site, there's anything for them to do which couldn't be more easily accomplished by a large



SIMON CALDER

“

Suddenly four tons of metal 80 metres up in the air swings into action. With that power rush, you'd feel like a God.  
The God of Cranes

”

truck.

So they're not there as useful engineering tools, but as art. From afar, the cranes seem gracefully flimsy, until you cycle underneath them, when their hulking fuck-off-ness gives them the awesome

majesty of a super tanker mowing down a dinghy in a shipping lane. I try not to look up at them as I cycle past for several reasons. Partly because I feel like the dinghy, partly because I might fall off, and partly because I

feel sure I suffer from reverse vertigo, whereby looking up at tall buildings is scarier than looking down from them.

Looking up at a crane swaying in the breeze makes me particularly nervous. If that big arm fell off, it could

hammer Emmanuel. On the one hand a tragic loss etc etc, but on the other – it would look smashing to have a fallen crane in the middle of your main court and the roofs of all the adjacent buildings. Some kind of conceptual statement about modernity, and destruction and power. Everyone will want one.

Still, my suggestion that the cranes would fall over is without foundation because the cranes are with foundations. They're firmly concreted into the ground. Technically, they're not building, they're buildings. And what's more, they're greater than the buildings they're building. Compare the simplicity in purpose and design of the cranes to their creation, the pompous “Grand Arcade” with its “52 inspiring shops”. “52 inspiring shops”. Shut up.

I say we should keep the building site as it is, with the floodlights and the rubble, and the way the surrounding houses end abruptly with hastily-tacked black plastic covers. Maybe open it up to the public as an apocalyptic garden, with pony rides and a pond with little model boats in it. We'd keep the cranes there, obviously. In fact, for a pound a time, you could climb up the ladder to the top of the biggest crane, sit in the cockpit and press the little plastic button.

Suddenly four tons of metal 80 metres up in the air swings into action. With that power rush, you'd feel like God. The God of Cranes. And for an extra pound, you'd be allowed to lower the hook and pluck people from the streets below, like one of those dodgy arcade games with the dangling claw and the pit of toys. Amazing.

THATCHER PARTY



KCSU SECRETARY Stuart Smith

The recently passed KCSU motion to hold “a fabulous and opulent party” upon the eventual death of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has generated much controversy within King's this week.

In one corner, many feel that the gathering of students to ‘celebrate’ the life of our dear Baroness, while wearing bandanas sporting the slogan ‘Thatcher, Thatcher, Milk Snatcher,’ is a deeply amusing and rather gratifying prospect, in the best traditions of left-wing protest. In the other, many consider that whatever opinion one may hold of Margaret, a party to celebrate her death is in rather bad taste, even offensive. There is the additional worry that what started out as a student joke may be construed as being extremely distasteful by a wider field of opinion, and could cause King's to be seen in a less than favourable light.

Certainly if our dear Mrs Thatcher were a genocidal dictator, there might be grounds to say that her passing would legitimately call for immediate festivities. However, given that Margaret can only really be described as a mildly odious figure whose social policies were rather disagreeable, it is surely going too far to say that her death should be officially celebrated in the way proposed, at the expense of the normal decency which accompanies anyone's passing. The promise of Garibaldi biscuits and lemon squash at the party, although tempting, does little to mitigate this feeling.

Even so, the facts of the matter are that this motion was passed democratically at a scheduled open meeting, to which all undergraduates were invited, the agenda of which was publicised well in advance. It was neither proposed nor decided by any members of the Union executive. Those who objected to the motion should have been more willing to share their views, as well as ensuring that they were present at the meeting to vote the motion down. And it is difficult to argue that such a motion may be offensive when nine-tenths of the undergraduate population did not even attend the meeting at which it was being proposed.

Apathy about student Union activity is a huge problem, even in a traditionally politically active college such as King's. The KCSU executive is continually making efforts to engage students in the activities of their Union. But as long as students stay away, and do not engage, motions like this may continue to be passed. Those who did not attend have no right to complain.

Perhaps we could view the proposed party in a different way; not as a macabre celebration of a death, but as the nostalgic commemoration of a distinguished political life. I am sure that as Cambridge students, our overflowing levels of sophistication and ‘ironic’ postmodern cultural awareness will allow us to do so. Even if we didn't get free milk at school.

## The Foul Stationery Shop of the Heart

Buying our identities on the high-street

Adam Swersky

So it turns out that Ryman offers a student discount. Cool. Of course, as a store, they are probably pricier than almost any other stationery shop in Cambridge. But flash them a blue card and they'll flash you back a smile like you've never seen, press their magic button and – my God – the thrill of pocketing a receipt with a minus sign. You have to feel it to understand.

Ryman is not the only way to get that freebie pleasure. Marks & Sparks, that well known discount supermarket, offers racks upon racks of glorious plastic cutlery. All free. *Tutto gratis*. A pint of milk for £2.50 (prices quoted may be hopelessly exaggerated for effect) and you too could be stirring it into to your Gold Blend tea with an M&S teaspoon. Pardon me – a free M&S teaspoon.

It's hardly a new tale. Discounts, freebies, Buy One Get One Free offers and the like are the most basic of marketing techniques. Basic, but effective.

Next time you go into Sainsbury's, check out the products on sale. More likely than not, at least one central stand will be filled with discount wine. That's because wine is one of the most sensitive products in the supermarket to marketing promotions. Cut the price, shove it in people's faces and watch the shelves clear.

It's not that you believe you're getting some great deal just because someone stuck a whopping “Save Save Save” label out front. But dammit if you just can't help ignoring everything your head tells you. You rip that Chablis off the rack like a contestant on Supermarket Sweep.

It's not just wine and, bizarrely, Ritz crackers that appear to defy the rationality economists like me assume in *Homo Economici* like you (I, for one, have reached so sublime a level of rationality I wouldn't buy a fig without performing differential calculus on my utility function). The multi-billion dollar marketing industry survives on our weak-

willed preferences for products with jazzy advertising and supposedly discounted price tags.

One more example before I come to the long-awaited twist that will make your heart stop, your mind buzz and your time spent reading worthwhile. Cars. A car is a great thing, especially if it takes you from A to B in safety and relative comfort. But do we buy cars on that basis? Oh no.

Rather more important is whether it's been endorsed (or perhaps, *unendorsed*) by Michael Winner, used in a classic Bond film high speed chase, or – if neither of the above – just how closely it comes to resembling a phallus. A big dollop of obvious impracticality is another positive feature, as any owner of a (two-seat) sports car will tell you.

And so, you may think, do I conclude by decrying the advertising executives with their slicked-back hair and Gucci suits, slamming their irresponsible attitudes and calling

for laws to stop this rot in its mouldy tracks.

But nay, I do not. Because in our society, the things we buy represent more than just their functionality. They reflect our character, our desires, our hopes and dreams. From the food we eat, to the clothes we wear to even the stationery we buy, we make our purchases as the people we want to be.

In choosing a car, the ideal that car represents for us is just as valuable as its ability to take us to work in the morning. In selecting discount wine and, indeed, Ritz crackers, we buy into the image of ourselves as cost-conscious, successful bargain-hunters with one-up on the fat cat chief execs who, ironically, benefit from our decision.

It's not a bad thing. It may involve self-deception and a bit of foolish pride but, as John Locke pointed out, property is an extension of self. Marketing just makes it all the more meaningful.



# Israel and chips

MEMBERS OF THE BLOG COMMUNITY ATTACK EACH OTHER WITH THE NAMES OF NATIONS

Just wanted to say, how ironic, given all the time we hear America spouting on about politics, that Hamas - a political party - should win the election. Just too, too perfect: a good chance for us Brits to have the last laugh for a change!  
**browser**

Tell me about it - I think I'm still pissed this morning! Magic - makes all the bad times worthwhile  
**east\_londoner**

America knew the Palestinians were Muslims, and it did nothing. Now it's too late: they've elected a Muslim party. We'd better hope China doesn't get the internet: maybe they'll research democracy, and then maybe they'll elect Hamas as well  
**Doxy**

China don't want democracy? Hey, leave them to it. Bring our Google boys home. I don't want another death  
**Southern\_californian**

Happy to leave you to your dreams, cloud-eyes ;) This is the real world  
**Elephant**

If China gets the internet it won't make any difference. Same old story with Iraq. They spent all that time searching and looking like idiots. The U.N. shouldn't be using Google  
**internal\_combusion\_engine**

In fact, China had had the internet entirely, given the technology at least five months previously to the initial memo. Just thought I should clarify this  
**tech\_help**

Yo Southern Californian. I'd be worried about taking what you said seriously if I hadn't realised you were from Southern California. I'm fed up with bumping into you moon-shaped leaf-eaters who think they own Avalon. Nothing changes - I should have known you were a tent-peg  
**east\_londoner**

We've all been elected by Hamas at some random stage! It's the 21st century! I don't even know where my shoes are! p.s. I collect pin-badges! Anybody got any?  
**oatcake**

I know a great pin badge website! Check it out - it's seriously fun www.pinbadge-junkie.com. p.s I hope you don't mind I typed your name into Google to make sure you're not part of China - I think it's terrible that Google won the election when some of their websites continue to call for the destruction of Israel. It's okay - it's all clear! (for now!)  
**Damsel**

There's no point in typing anything into Google at the moment because it's on vacation in China. The message you read would have been an automatic mail delivery relating to the destruction of Israel somehow. If you're interested in the destruction of Israel you need to use Google.com, not Google.cn  
**tech\_help**



Party at King's: Hammer and Sickle, Ham and Pickle, and only herbal tea – because proper tea is theft

## Where Ignorant Hamsters Clash By Night

When thoughtless laughter corrodes our moral codes

“What rhymes with hamster?”

Tensions were running high in the *Varsity* office.

“Gangster?”

“Hamster Wrapped’. Like gangsta rap.”

“You can’t trivialise it like that,” said the editor.

“Hamster Rap’. As in “rap on the knuckles’.”

“Genius.”

“You’re still trivialising it. It’s not funny,” said the editor.

“Tragic Hamster Atrocity’.”

“Then people will think we’re being sarcastic.”

“Gotter-hamster-ung’,” I suggested. I was ignored, as usual.

“Grave Hamster Incident’?”

“No one will read that.”

“It’s just that hamsters are intrinsically funny. We wouldn’t have this problem if it had happened to more serious animal, like a vole.”

Ladies and gentleman, this is journalism. We were trying to find a headline for the news article about the two Cambridge students who drunkenly sent a live hamster in the post as some kind of lunatic act of revenge on an unknown enemy for an unknown insult. We knew we weren’t meant to laugh, but we couldn’t help it. I was against fox-hunting; I don’t like defenceless animals being tortured for fun; I hated what those students had done; but I laughed anyway.

And that’s the problem. When we’re kids, we have the following value system: if our friends laugh at something, it’s right. If they don’t, it’s wrong.

Hence murder by happy-slapping.

When we’re older, we know better - unless we’ve gone to public school, in which case we’re fairly likely to stay like that for the rest of our lives - but we still sometimes get lazy. It’s like we have three boxes to tick on the survey: ‘Right’, ‘Wrong’, or ‘N/A’. And the power of laughter is to keep things ‘N/A’.

Human beings have moral intuitions,

and sometimes they use them and sometimes they don’t. We use them to decide what we think about political issues like capital punishment and personal issues like eating meat. But the rest of the time we ignore them. Most of what we do, we like to think, isn’t wrong, but it’s also not right, in the sense that it’s not commendable or noble. We just do it and it doesn’t matter. That’s why it’s so startling when you see headlines in the *Guardian* like

“Is it all right to drink orange juice?”, because it simply doesn’t ever occur to you that drinking orange juice is a moral issue. It’s not right or wrong, it’s just with-bits or without-bits.

Same goes for the hamsters. Because hamsters, with their little fluffy twitchy noses, really are intrinsically funny. Which means you can do awful things to them and, at least until someone points out the inconsistency, no one will bother to wonder whether it’s right or wrong, they’ll just laugh.

And this happens all the time in Cambridge. Look at drinking societies. Nobody thinks that bullying new initiates into drinking a bottle of port out of a used condom is right - they’d never do it themselves. But they don’t think it’s wrong, either. There may be a token moment of ‘God, that’s disgusting,’ but it’s always followed by

“But you’ve got to admit it’s fucking funny!” Which is an attitude that drinking society members deliberately help to cultivate because they know otherwise they’ll get run out of Cambridge.

If you don’t believe me, look at the calculatedly jokey and over-the-top answers they gave to *Varsity*’s questions in the drinking-society run-down a few pages on from the hamster article. The ability to laugh at yourself is supposed to be one of those great British assets, but it’s also one of the great British ways of getting out of trouble. Ridicule is not the same as condemnation. If someone mocks you, then you just have to learn to take it until they get bored and move on, and you end up with a reputation as a good sport, and nothing changes. When you ridicule something, you take pleasure in it, and that makes you complicit. Applying your moral faculties, cold and hard and serious, is the only way to change anything. (‘It’s all consensual,’ says Mr Drinking Society. ‘Yes, well, so’s prostitution,’ say the rest of us. ‘What’s your point?’ says Mr Drinking Society.)

This is also why racist and sexist jokes are so harmful, even if - especially if - no one is in earshot who’ll be offended, and even if they’re ‘ironic’ in the mode of Jimmy Carr. There are some things you just have to take seriously. Laughter anaesthetises our moral faculties better than anything except lust.

When someone drunk does something brutish, there’s no need to go out of your way to give them a talking-to. You just need to withhold your laughter. Because then, for once, the question ‘Are you proud of what you’ve done?’ won’t be drowned out by giggles.

So you might be thinking, ‘Oh, he’s just got no sense of humour.’ But look back at the beginning of this article. The bit about the hamster. Could someone with no sense of humour have mined that ingot of comedy gold? No. The answer is no.

Varsity has been Cambridge’s independent student newspaper since 1947, and distributes 10,000 free copies to every Cambridge college and ARU weekly. Varsity is proud to be the holder of numerous student media awards and a vast number of alumni now working in international media. Varsity also publishes *BlueSci* magazine, *The Mays*, and an online edition at [www.varsity.co.uk](http://www.varsity.co.uk), and broadcasts weekly on CUR1350.

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VARSTY

TOM KINGSLEY

# VARSITY

## Walsh's Week?

Approved by a majority of two, CUSU Council's sparing of Laura Walsh was anything but a ringing endorsement of her presidency thus far. Indeed, criticisms made by many speakers present on Wednesday night brought to the fore several deserved condemnations of her tenure.

Our Union has often seemed lacking in leadership and direction, allowed to dwindle into struggles over politicisation led by those voices who happened to shout loudest. But *Varsity* believes that at such a stage in this executive's life, the loss of its President would have been an even further hindrance, bringing chaos at such a sensitive moment in its history. Talk of disaffiliation and reality of referenda has not been so widespread in years.

However, the quite overwhelming decision to remain affiliated by Downing JCR, CUSU's most troublesome in recent years, offers further cause for optimism. *Varsity* welcomes the choice of their majority, and implores the students of Trinity Students' Union to seriously consider the benefits of 'staying in' as they go to the polls.

Welfare and Graduates Officer Vicki Mann insisted on the necessity of the No Confidence motion against her friend because she could no longer work under her. It is perhaps strange, then, that there has been no suggestion whatsoever that her position may no longer be tenable. Hopefully, enough reconciliation can take place for such important work to continue.

Finally, praise must go to those members of the Executive who have quite clearly held their committee together over the course of the past week. Thanks in part to their endeavours, CUSU has a future to look forward to.

## Houses, Picture and Public

The apparent threat posed to the Arts Picturehouse cinema by the development of its sprawling superpub neighbour throws into relief some traditionally difficult issues.

Perhaps clichéd Cambridge battles between town and gown, and beery lad versus weepy student aesthete, are more perpetuated in the minds of their respective sides than grounded in reality. But few situations in recent memory have seemed genuinely to threaten real polarisation along such lines as this. Peaceful co-existence should be the ideal way forward, but peace - rather important to the enjoyment of cinema - is not easy to come by in close proximity to a mega woofer and a will to inflict Cheese Party 2006 *ad infinitum*.

The Arts Picturehouse is apparently under-used out of Term. And, Cambridge is not known for its numerous nightspots. As such, it is understandable that Wetherspoons might feel justified in taking advantage of the greater flexibility made possible by new licensing legislation.

But scarcer still, in Cambridge and across the UK, are independent cinemas - wonderful places, where challenging works of art can flourish amongst multi-million dollar blockbusters, and its devotees can meet to pay homage. And nervously take first dates, because there's nowhere else.

The entire building now housing The Regal and the Arts Picturehouse was once a temple to film. *Varsity* believes it would be a tragedy if its last remaining corner were drowned in sound, and as such will be voicing our concerns before 5pm today.

Do you have a passion for writing, taking photographs, designing, illustrating or producing publications? Do you want to show your work to 18,000 readers across Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin Universities every Friday?

*Varsity* is always looking for new contributors. The team's contact details are on the left. Email the relevant section editors today and get involved - no prior experience is necessary.

**MAYS 14 DEADLINE IS TODAY!**

Submit your prose & poetry by midnight to [mays@varsity.co.uk](mailto:mays@varsity.co.uk)



Correspondence  
email us: [letters@varsity.co.uk](mailto:letters@varsity.co.uk)

or write to: Varsity, 11-12 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QA

### The Perfect Blend

Dear Sir,

The column on *Neighbours* (*Varsity*, 27th January) is the best piece of student journalism I have ever read. Finally a student newspaper that is offering students the range of news and commentary that we are interested in. There must be thousands of Cambridge students who watch *Neighbours* on a daily basis and who have a wide range of opinions on the programme.

I hope *Varsity* will continue the column and perhaps widen its scope so as to offer students a forum for discussing this awesome programme. Good on ya, *Varsity*.

Yours faithfully,

Catherine David  
Trinity College

### CUSU Under Fire

Dear Sir,

Laura Walsh's personal pledge when she stood for the presidency of CUSU was to run an "accountable, visible, and sensible" Union. As reported (*Varsity News*, 27th

January), Laura Walsh, Jennifer Cooper (absent due to illness at CUSU Council on Wednesday) and Drew Livingston (resigned from his post on the Development and Planning Committee at CUSU Council on Wednesday), without consulting the CUSU executive, tabled a paper under CUSU's name to the Standing Advisory Committee on Student Matters requesting that CUSU be centrally funded. Laura Walsh commented: "we didn't think the University would accept our proposals and so didn't bother consulting. Had they passed our request for central funding, we would have been acting outside of our remit."

Ignoring the fact that she has (openly) acted unconstitutionally and has consistently failed to clarify exactly what she did, there remains the fact that until now Laura Walsh has considered her position tenable, even though she commands only a minority of support from CUSU Council (28 out of 64).

How is this reconcilable with her pledge to be accountable?

Yours faithfully,

Ranald Lawrence  
Jesus College

### Science For All

Dear Sir,

In response to Jamie Horder's article regarding the Cambridge Science Festival, I thought I would clarify a few points. The Festival is the UK's largest free science festival, and aims to encourage children to study science, as well as to engage the adult public on issues of scientific concern. It is an important part of the University's outreach programme, attracting those who may not normally be interested in the research here.

The Festival includes events for all ages in departments from Astronomy to Zoology. Such initiatives are vital at a time when the number of pupils taking A-level Physics dropped by 34% between 1991 and 2000, and the decline in numbers taking Maths over the same period was 22%.

In the newspapers, you will find significant scientific research covered by journalists with science degrees. Beyond these outlets, science journalism often favours health issues, and I would encourage scientists to come up with creative ways to communicate scientific research in more populist

outlets.

Yours faithfully,

Nicola Buckley  
Co-ordinator  
Cambridge Science Festival

### The Shelves Are Weeping

Dear Sir,

I am for the second week justifiably swollen with ire and wrath following my discovery that whoever stole the copy of Erasmus' *Ciceronianus* from the North Wing of the University Library has been at his/her nefarious pilfering yet again. This week, Tyndale's *New Testament* appears to have been swagged from the reverend shelves of the English Faculty Library.

Where will this end? Why must this person concentrate their kleptomaniacal tendencies upon Henrician theological controversy? The culprit, when found, should be clapped in irons.

Yours faithfully,

Incandescent  
Corpus Christi

Letters may be edited for space and style



## Letter of the Week

### The Tightrope Of Terrorism

Dear Sir,

Natalie Whitty describes an interesting discussion with Tony Benn (*Varsity Features*, 27th January). However, I cannot agree that the following analogy proposed by Benn is "one of the best metaphors...ever heard" or "enlightening": "...the human race are like survivors in a lifeboat after a shipwreck with one loaf of bread. There are three ways to distribute it. You'll sell the bread so the rich get it, you fight for the bread so the strong get it, or you share the bread. I think that's the reality. And if you don't share it then the people who haven't got it fight for it. Now that's what we call 'ter-

rorism'."

This is not "enlightening"; this is not "amazing": this is a naive and illogical analysis, and could lead to a serious misapprehension of a complex problem. Terrorism in the forms the West has experienced over the last years is evil and cannot be excused on socio-economic grounds. Death is death and maiming is maiming.

Deprivation is also wrong, but it does not negate the horrific nature of murder on the scale of New York, Bali, Madrid, or London. Just because Benn is a 'kindly old gentleman' and elder statesman of the left is no reason to overlook and condone his, frankly, irresponsible views.

I recognise the contingent nature of my opinions, but I do feel that pieces on inter-

national politics in *Varsity* ought entail a really disinterested approach, rather than a purely superficial show of balance, in future.

Yours faithfully,

David Marusza  
Corpus Christi

Letter of the Week wins a specially selected bottle from our friends at Cambridge Wine Merchants, King's Parade



## "The hypocrisy was mind-bending"

### The Anonymous Student

This Week: The Cynicism of the Cambridge Audience



About half way through last term, there was an interesting sounding night on at the Union. Some bands were playing, and some poets were reading.

The bands played, and it would appear that people listened - you don't tend to get much choice with 300 watts coming at you from either side - but the poets were ignored or heckled. The scene in the union was offensive.

Whilst the short poems were read, the polite audience did that Cambridge audience thing: a painfully self-conscious look of 'I'm-only-here-because-I-normally-am, and a refusal to engage with what's being put before them. They lolled at the bar, and talked in concentric

circles around their drinks. Worse, at the end of every poem, they turned to face the poor person they'd just been talking through, and applauded condescendingly.

The hypocrisy was mind-bending; perhaps the man who shouted 'wank' deserves more credit. But not really. What we have here is not a single incident, but one example of a pervasive complacency and small-mindedness that drags cobwebs across this small town.

This is not just an issue of politeness; it's one which radically affects the creative health and prosperity of any institution or community.

If people don't listen, then performers don't feel listened to, and if a performer or writer

doesn't feel listened to, and therefore scrutinised, then they don't improve, at least not on a public level. With a healthy, secure audience, you have the makings of an artistic, critical community and, dare I say it, scene.

Every week an article crops up in *Varsity* or TCS wondering, in what would appear to be genuine puzzlement, why there have been no famous student bands from Cambridge. The answer is that it's down to a lack of proper places to practice and gig, but it's equally down to a lack of audience.

The town has an audience, and as a result has a pretty healthy music scene, but here in the university there aren't enough people willing to get

behind those who are doing something with potential, and then interrogating those performers so as to help them hone their art.

A lack of honesty and trust, coupled with a misunderstanding of the creative process blinds the Cambridge audience. In its cynicism, it negates the necessary pretext of an artistic community; that the person who presents something to an audience does so because he or she believes it contains some objective worth.

When you put a Cambridge audience in front of something as delicate as one person reading a poem you quickly see what kind of organism you are dealing with; and it ain't a pretty one.

# SWEET CHARITY

Student style has always verged on the eclectic. Now it's become socially conscious. With an ever-increasing proportion of Cambridge students buying fair-trade and carefully putting those blue plastic boxes out on recycling day, fashion has started to reflect this new ethos.

Cambridge's Oxfam stores have long realised that retro ranges grab in student customers desperate to add a bit of personality to their Topshop head-to-toe ensemble, but now there's a new direction to this more obscure branch of the Cambridge fashion scene. Some students, myself among them, have been working on a new customisation range for the Burleigh Street Oxfam shop, near the Grafton centre. Both tops worn by Quentin in this week's shoot have been borrowed from this range. An anonymous white t-shirt from Zara now has pearl beads and cute spring-like flowers splashed across it.

Fashion doesn't have to be superficial, through it you can support good causes in more imaginative ways than by wearing a charity wristband. As with the Emmeline Childe range at Oxford Street's Topshop, which utilises recycled fabrics and then transfers the profits back to the Salvation Army, new ways of supporting the eco-friendly lifestyle are currently emerging which also provide you with a fashion fix.

It's the ultimate relaxation exercise. You walk into Oxfam, pick up some clothes you fancy experimenting with, transform them from highstreet has-beens to Cinderella couture, and drop them off again to be sold for Oxfam profits. Use the opportunity to check out what others have done (last time, I found the most gorgeous vintage handbag for £8) and feel virtuous. So next time you're cackling with the girls over a steaming cup, why not get creative with pretty ribbon, colourful beads and huge 'statement' buttons? Oxfam are looking for more aspiring fashion designers, so take some time out from your UL exertions and settle down for a sew and scandal session over your afternoon tea.

Fiona Walker Doyle



site: Cambridge University Botanical Gardens, hair: Reeds, stylist: Fiona Walker Doyle  
Quentin wears white t-shirt, £4, Oxfam customized range; white skirt £39.99, Cult; white jacket, £59.99, Cult; cardigan, £39.99, Cult  
Jackson wears white shirt, £65, Reeves; grey trousers, £50, Reeves; jumper, £60, Reeves

# CUSTOMISE ME

## Review: Auntie's Tea Shop, 1 St Mary's Passage



There are few things quite like afternoon tea. Having tea out is the perfect occasion to catch up with old friends, while avoiding the overly casual coffee break. It is essential to find a home from home, a place where one can customise the experience and relax in the ritual. One must be cautious not to be seduced by the pseudo-Italian charm of the coffee chains. Remember that once the ten minute queue for your over-priced coffee is complete, you have the problem of where to sit: do you enter the fog filled attic of smoking tourists, or do you squish in between non-smoking yuppies and their offspring.

Perhaps you already understand how pleasant it is to come across a quaint little tea house, which seats and serves you with an old-school English charm. Auntie's Tea Shop, somewhat of a Cambridge institution, is the perfect place to meet for afternoon tea. From the outside the dollhouse-like interior is warm and inviting, and once inside the experience does not disappoint. The tables are lace covered, the cabinets filled with china, and the waitress's uniform matronly. A wide range of cakes and scones are available, and a satisfying selection of teas. The die-hard tea drinkers may be upset to hear that the tea comes in bag form, rather than loosely

brewed. If tea itself does not appeal, there is other tea-time fare, such as good fresh orange and apple juice, and coffee if you must. The scones are delicious, but let down a little by the non-clotted (and dare I say aerosol can) cream. However, the shortbread and decadent chocolate choux bun more than made up for this. There is also a choice of sandwiches, ranging from the traditional mini crust-less variety, to the hefty baguette.

Let this be the year of the tea break. We must take the time to be English and turn our backs on coffee culture.

Quentin Jones

# LIATSONS

We may all think that we want love at first sight, but look how well it turned out for Romeo and Juliet. Feuding families, dead cousins and suicide are not my idea of a pleasant term at Cambridge. To make it easier for us to keep all the balls in the air, maybe we should try to come up with a DIY relationship as a pair of jeans: you generally narrow down your search to a particular size and style, so why not do this when looking for your Cambridge liason?

Step One: Pick a College. This is the size of your jeans, and you need a good fit. In a relationship context, this means that you don't want a college too close or too far away, just for sanity and convenience's sake. Fancy being close to your favorite restaurant or to your faculty for an extra fifteen minutes in bed? Long for the spires of King's, a Trinity Ball ticket or Sidney's proximity to Sainsbury's? Think of it as choosing a second college but without the daunting admissions procedure.

Step Two: Pick a Subject. This is the cut of your jeans and it is very important that they are right for you. Date someone who has a first in your subject and see your grades soar as you treat dinners as extra supervisions. It is also possible to tailor other subjects to your advantage. Broken laptop? Find a lovely CompSci boyfriend who is eager to help. In trouble with the police? Take a lawyer out to dinner to discuss the intricacies of criminal law.

Step Three: Finishing Touches. Once you have a pair of jeans that you are comfortable with, you can start customizing with his extra-curricular activities. A rugby player is most suited to carrying you back after a drunken from formal hall. Avid rowers - besides the early mornings, will you truly be able to sympathise when he is upset about having caught a crab when you learn it is not the sexually transmitted kind? Actors may be well spoken and charming, but if he can act well, chances are he can lie well too.

In the end, though, you have to go with your instincts. If he finds it endearing that you occasionally cry when you drink too much, he might be worth keeping. Like a good pair of jeans, if a man can make you feel good about yourself, does anything else really matter?

Jenny Stocks

# GENU TOMORROW

Bridehead Revisited  
Oxbridge chic has had its day. Now that it's been whored on the Milan catwalks, what's the point? What IS the point? Best leave the brogues in the dressing room until you degrade and can wear them for their ironic value.



The upcoming seasons have preached subtlety in makeup matters. Choose a feature and highlight it and it alone. Let's see the girl behind the geisha.

The Cambridge thesp scene used to be all about beauty, now it's supposedly about talent. At least the Union is sticking to its guns.



# Dior-I-Y

To bead or not to bead, that is the question. Owning the latest pair of Seven Jeans or the classic Mulberry Roxanne handbag no longer tops the wish lists of the Hollywood A-listers. If it hasn't been customised especially for them, they don't want to know. Why settle for, dare I say it, 'off the rack' Juicy Couture when they could be sporting a tracksuit with their very own name plastered across the back in jewel encrusted diamantes? Why conform when they can create?

But please refrain from letting rip with the scissors quite yet. Many an attempt to customise with lace has ended up looking less like an elegant Proenza Schouler gown and more like an old tablecloth. Sometimes buttons and bows will make you look like a pimpled up present rather than a stylish trendsetter.

Look to the Spring/Summer 2006 catwalk for guidance. Ruffle like Cavalli but keep it slinky like Balenciaga. Crochet like Chanel (pictured) but stay away from Kenzo's tea cosy chic. Combine Alexander McQueen's penchant for pleats with Dolce and Gabbana's delicate trappings for a soft, youthful effect.

Customisation could not be easier for those domesticated goddesses who can manoeuvre a needle and thread with poise and agility. But the rest of us who don't even know how to sew on a button should not despair. Simple touches, such as delicately wrapping organza or a string of pearls through the hair, are often the most sophisticated. Boys should think belts, buckles and brooches to embellish an ensemble. Innovative male designers have recently been spotted with colourful silk handkerchiefs tied around each wrist to show that this trend is not only for the ladies.

Allegra Kurer



# HERE TODAY

The barefoot thing is as over-hackneyed as Strokers-wannabe-pins on lapels. The label on everyone's lips is Fisher Price. Strap them onto your Converse and roll on to lectures overtaking the jealous masses on their bikes. You'd be crazy not to do it.

Customisation is not just a fashion thing. In some cases, words can be as important as buttons. Why not scatter your sentences with Yiddish words for a phrasing that's truly you. It's so bshert!



Lace has officially shed all granny connotations. A lace collar placed over a tank top can smoothly take you from day to evening and speaks of a new generation's formalwear dear to our hearts.



# Recipe for delishes

answer is simply no. But to find out why the delish is the only gastronomical delight that comes close, start with 10 crushed digestive biscuits in a medium sized bowl.

Next, add one and a half tablespoons of cocoa, and the same amount of desiccated coconut, and mix well. Moisten the crumbly mixture with 150 grams of melted butter, before adding 3 tablespoons of condensed milk, and working it in until you have before you a textured mound that is malleable, but not wet.

If you find you have an oozing, pourable mixture on your hands, give up - it's too late. But do start again, because it's worth it. Separate the mixture into ten ping pong-sized balls by rolling them in your hands, then place them in the fridge overnight to set.

And that's it: eat (them all, probably), drink (tea, perhaps?), and chew, don't gulp, because it's all in the consistency.

Emma Paterson

From their humble origins in my very first home economics class at the age of eight, to their long overdue immortalisation on the pages of this newspaper, the decadently titled 'delish' has come to encapsulate the titillating sensations of food.

'Is chocolate better than sex?' the pre-menstrual female pondered. The

# Arts



## Theatre

Ranjit Bolt on how to lose your virginity in Hampstead

>>page 17



## Classical

Organ Scholars drink pints too (or do they prefer real ale?)

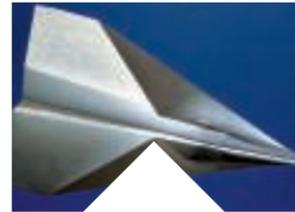
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## Screen

Giant gorillas may be destroying art in the twenty-first century

>>page 21



## Interviews

India Knight warns of the dangers of 'faffing about' at Cambridge

>>page 21

# buildings in the sky

**Estella Shardlow** and **Olly Wainwright** look at the future of visual arts and architecture in Cambridge and ask: are they taken seriously enough?

## Olly Wainwright on Architecture

Last week, Cambridge Architecture went to London in celebration of the fact that it still exists. Like a small-town highschool entering the national spelling bee, the department has been bubbling with talk of the metropolitan outing for weeks.

The exhibition started life as a student initiative, an attempt to wow London with the creativity latent in our strange village of punts and spires. Following the raw urban model of designersblock and other East London warehouse shows, it was to assert a place for our much-maligned provincial ghetto amongst the established metropolitan schools – proving that Cambridge Architecture had risen like a deconstructivist phoenix from closure's threatening flames.

The idea was taken on by the department, only to be reconfigured into a fundraising initiative addressed primarily at deep-pocketed alumni, a retrospective 'Where Are They Now?' catalogue of those associated with the school. Sterilised, smartened up and now politely occupying the gallery of the Royal Institute of British Architects on Kensington's embassy-lined Portland Place, 'Compendium: The Work of the University of

Cambridge Department of Architecture' has become a corporate-oriented appeal-driven window on the school – what you might expect from a Russell Group University sales pitch.

The exhibition takes the form of models, videos and a big book of studio work, surrounded by four enveloping black walls inscribed with an endless list of names – a taxonomy of teachers and alumni to date. With its dim lighting and sober atmosphere, it's disturbingly reminiscent of a war memorial. In honour, perhaps, of those who fell in Cambridge Architecture, 1912 – 2005. But designer Tom Holbrook wincing at this suggestion, preferring to think of the wall as a Japanese garden, maintaining "the names are like the gravel, punctuated by the 'rocks' of photos which create thematic islands." This is a novel way to describe what is essentially a big illustrated list stuck on a wall.

But he has a point. It's an ambitious graphic project, incorporating various layers and scales of text and image to allow multiple readings and imply the cross-fertilization that the school fosters. The walls cope with vast quantities of information, synthesising biographic details, work by practices new and old, plus examples of current research, creating unlikely juxtapositions from drastically different fields. Filmmakers sit alongside shel-

ter specialists, while mystical poetic theorists confront urban economists. James Mason and Lord Snowdon both grace the list, as do a handful of vicars. It's a messy but vital mélange, typical of a discipline that negates conventional classification and doesn't really fit in. But, however enthralling, this wall represents an enormous exercise in name-dropping, a literal explication of the old boys' network – surely something the University is trying desperately hard to escape.

Addressing more weighty matters, the question of what we actually do in Architecture is tackled, if slightly obliquely, in an artistic film of various studio activities, a series of recorded conversations (presented on monitors in quaint plywood boxes) and in further essays in the accompanying catalogue. Intended as a window on debate around such issues as cities, sustainability and disaster relief, the conversations fall short of their potentially provocative agenda. The school is home to many divergent opinions – this was a missed opportunity to have them thrashed out in public. Some talking heads are informative, but reminiscent of dating videos, researchers desperately trying to make their work sound worthy of endowment and sources of funding.

Conforming to the expectation of academia, the accompanying catalogue is perhaps the greatest strength

of the exhibition, featuring essays by all the usual gurus on what an architectural school means – and, of course, why Cambridge is so great. The work explores the heady world of research and its slippery relationship to both practise and studio life, addressing many of the difficult issues that brought on the threat of closure and continue to confound the University today. Occupying an impure position between academic inquiry and practical apprenticeship, refusing to adapt to research assessment criteria and attempting to span political, cultural, social, technical and economic spheres, Architecture is a difficult animal for Cambridge, as it found to its cost last year.

But perhaps the most difficult thing of all – so troubling, in fact, that the exhibition practically denies its existence – is the student body itself. With the growing emphasis on research, the department is soon to be remodelled, seeing all undergraduate studios downsized and symbolically relocated to a single shed in the back garden.

As with the exhibition, there has been no consultation. Holbrook isn't concerned, joking that research is "this year's black." But when will the department realise that today's students are next year's black – and the very people that will soon furnish the self-indulgent wall of names.

## Estella Shardlow on Art

History of Art graduate Vanessa Hodgkinson is currently artist-in-residence at Christ's College studio. The Levy Plumb scheme grants her the funding and space to focus on creating her own work for a nine-month period. She laments the poor provisions for students who wished to paint or draw when she was a student at Emmanuel – especially when compared to the active sports or drama scenes – reflecting "there's no equivalent of the ADC for us – no forum, no centre for it". It is no surprise then, that she has been so proactive in establishing new opportunities for students to practice art. In addition to the weekly life-drawing classes that provide a constructive workshop environment, Vanessa has established a separate studio space which "any student from any college" can utilise. It is free of charge and one is able to store any work produced in the spacious facility: all she asks is that students purchase their own materials and "don't have a party up there!" Another event in the pipeline is C.L.A.E, a project intending to unite various elements of

the arts and give students an opportunity to "exhibit new work".

Each term a broad theme is selected as a starting point, leading to a showcase of what the motley crew of dancers, writers, musicians and painters have come up with. Last term saw students showcasing their collaborations on the concept of 'Golden Sections.' Poetry workshops have been arranged in the studio, with the first scheduled for February 8th.

The artist herself works in the studio below producing intricate patterned paintings inspired by the beautiful Islamic tiles she encountered on her gap year in Kuwait. She describes them as "structures in which I can place my thoughts", again highlighting the therapeutic effect art can offer, as Vanessa muses "I'd have been a much healthier student if I'd had an outlet". Studying in Cambridge can certainly pressurise one into jumping on the career ladder as soon as possible, consequently forgetting that there are "so many avenues, not just one route out". So whether you're contemplating a career as an artist, or simply want to splash some paint around as a release after cramming for yet another essay, it's definitely worth your while to check out the exciting creative prospects going on at Christ's.

# Hot Tickets

Writers of two of next week's most anticipated shows talk to *Varsity*. First, **Matt Knott** talks to **Julian Mitchell**, writer of *Another Country*...

"That film about gay cowboys": how many of us have heard or read that somewhere in recent weeks? When a film, or play becomes attached to a particularly striking label, it can be a mixed blessing. *Another Country* is never far from the 'Cambridge spies' tag. But its importance as a play is based on far more than that scandalous association.

The play imagines the school days of Guy Burgess, a key member of the Cambridge spy ring, and speculates as to just how formative his school experiences may have been.

Mitchell was moved to write the play after Sir Antony Blunt, Art advisor to the royal family, was unmasked as another member of the spy ring in 1979. "I felt that lots of people were simply getting it wrong" explained Mitchell. "At the time, people seemed to accept that these men becoming spies was something that was entirely understandable in the 1930s." Mitchell, however, was convinced that there must have been stronger

emotions at work behind such a total betrayal. Every member of the Cambridge spy ring had been to traditional public schools before Cambridge, as had Mitchell himself 20 years later, and he was convinced this was a significant factor.

Mitchell attended Winchester college in the 1950s and in the writing of his play had clearly engaged with his own experiences in neither sentimental nor sensationalist fashion. He remembers being aware at the time of terrible cruelty, recalling one practice where the boys had to walk in twos, and there being one boy who nobody would ever walk with.

He still remembers thinking how sad that boy must have been, and believes that this could help explain why the play was such a hit with audiences; at the heart of whatever social and political implications it contains, is the tragedy of the destruction and neglect of young minds.

Take the central friendship of Judd and Bennett. Judd's character is based on John Cornford, a public-school

educated poet and communist who died in battle in the Spanish civil war aged 21. In the play, Judd finds a natural ally in Bennett, the thinly disguised Guy Burgess (right) character. The tensions between them are those of any two friends whose lives begin to head in different directions. But the knowledge of their destinies makes their relationship more compelling.

"Don't you think you're better than everyone else?" Mitchell asked me provocatively. He was referring to the tendency of elite academic institutions to instil in their pupils a feeling of superiority. It is a reality that probably affects more of us than we'd ever admit, and Mitchell believes it is one of the key factors in understanding the lost potential of the boys in his play.

When, in that case, the consequences are so devastating, it is a sobering thought to consider just how similar we are to the characters of *Another Country*.

*Another Country* is on at the ADC theatre Tues 7th - Sat 11th February at 7.45



...while **Vivienne Story** asks **Ranjit Bolt** why he wrote a fairytale about sex

What inspires a man to write a book about a girl trying to lose her virginity, and whose attempts include meetings with a time travelling witch, Dick Turpin, Casanova and Julius Caesar? What inspires him to put it in rhyming couplets?

Ranjit Bolt's *Losing It* is a poem about beautiful young Lucy who "was at eighteen - don't be shocked at this / as virginal as Artemis". In an attempt to speed up her deflowering she goes to stay with her Great Aunt Alicia in Hampstead and along the way encounters (with a bit of magical help) an amazing array of characters, all played by five actors in less than 90 minutes.

Ranjit Bolt is a fascinating character who is the nephew of the playwright and screenwriter Robert Bolt, who wrote

*A Man for All Seasons*. On leaving university he became a stockbroker but was constantly bored and wrote the beginnings of novels and plays under his desk. Despairing at the quality of translations of French verse drama into English, he decided to do it himself. Jonathan Miller, then artistic director of the Old Vic, chose to perform Bolt's versions and thus began his career as a writer.

Bolt claims his inspiration for *Losing It* was "perhaps Byron's *Don Juan*, of which I am a huge fan. Verse is my 'thing' and I wanted to write something in verse that, unlike the translations, was entirely my own".

Bolt's ability to create a novel in short rhyming couplets is extraordinary. Not only is *Losing It* very clever, it also has some hilarious moments and

brilliant rhymes such as a description of Baroque Venice "Where Casanova in a gondola / Would woo a girl and stroke and fondle her". But Bolt states that "Verse writing is simply a knack. If one has the knack then, at the risk of seeming boastful, the writing process isn't that tough". Bolt certainly doesn't seem to struggle: he completed the first draft in a fortnight.

To actors it is a gift to work with and we hope that the audience enjoy it as much as we have done devising it. Bolt says, "I find the idea intriguing. I'm looking forward to seeing the result". If you would like to see it too, go along to the Corpus Playroom next week.

*Losing It* is at the Corpus Playroom Tuesday 7th - Saturday 11th February at 9.30



## Sado-Maratism

Marat/Sade whips Ben Hadley into submission

As a guy who enjoys a good spanking, *Marat/Sade* is my kind of play. It is at once disgusting, beautiful, harrowing, hilarious, violent and uplifting. In the words of the eponymous Marquis, "take to bits great propositions and their opposite". This in mind, my regret with regards to the production at hand was that I wasn't getting it rough enough, like I'd spent money on a dominatrix who'd then recounted bedtime stories for two hours.

The plot is simple: the Marquis de Sade, committed to the Asylum at Charenton, has written a play about the assassination of French revolutionary Jean-Paul Marat, to be performed by the inmates. They act out the story under the eyes of the bumbling - yet self-righteous - asylum director (captured perfectly by Alex Dawson). A philosophical battle waged between Marat and Sade about the nature of the French revolution is then interspersed with songs about decapitation and copulation.

As a 'play inside a play' the production does well: the very front of the stage (where the asylum director is seated) is separated from the main area of action by wires descending

from the ceiling. The area belonging to the inmates is presented as a cage, masterfully lit by ADC lighting legend Tom White, who alternates between sickly greenish hues and shafts of pale, white light which focus the audience's attention on relevant areas. The scene is set for onstage anarchy, the battleground for the extreme ideologies of

“  
THE SCENE  
IS SET FOR  
ONSTAGE  
ANARCHY  
”

Marat and Sade. However, no such mayhem is forthcoming. Instead, the audience might wonder why they have been physically separated in such a way from inmates who, for the most part, appear to be slightly kooky, but basically harmless. Surely the moral of the play cannot be that we needn't be afraid of those quaintly off-the-wall?

The problem is, the audience is led to believe that the

implications of the play go no further than a bunch of endearing patients embarrassing the director of the asylum in which they are interned. This impression - if partly rectified by the pathos and beleaguered ranting of Marat (a strong performance by James Smoker) and of his exchanges with the Marquis de Sade (Harry Adamson). However, whilst the latter dominates the stage marvellously during his speeches and is gifted with an impressive stage presence, he does not give a sense of the issues at stake. Instead, it seems he is merely engaging in an exercise in rhetoric and showmanship which, though at times captivating, is not faithful to the tortured character created by Weiss.

Overall, the production is too much of a tease and not enough all-out S&M, suffering occasionally from a lack of pace and skewed priorities. There was much promise in the performances and their staging, but the production ultimately failed to deliver through being too tame and inadequately expressing the play's key thoughts and ideas.

*Marat / Sade* is on at the ADC until Saturday at 7.45

## View from the gods



The Varsity Elect Pass Judgement with **Miriam Foster** & **Tabitha Becker-Khan**

An excitingly ambitious theatrical programme was mounted this week: a combination of new writing, controversial drama and comedy, striking varying degrees of success. Yet the most impressive performance of the week was not found at any of

Cambridge's main playhouses but in the English Faculty. *Fiona Shaw On Tragedy* not only delighted with breathtaking performances of Shakespeare but raised some intriguing points about the nature of Cambridge drama. In the mind of one of our greatest actresses, eight weeks of rehearsal is the minimum required for a truly successful production. In our world, where we produce essays in a lunch break or plays in a fortnight, this seems an inordinately large commitment but the shows we saw this week suffered from a lack of rehearsal time.

Overhearing an audience member leaving *Ismene* exclaim 'Theatre just shat on my face', we approached the auditorium with apprehension the next evening. The first minutes of this performance produced one of the most visually arresting pieces of theatre seen this year, but the overall experience failed to live up to the promise of the opening scene. Particularly surprising given the consistently strong cast and the brilliance of Stacey Gregg's script.

*Henry IV* at the Corpus Playroom offered some moments of light relief to an initially enthusiastic audience. Yet moments of comic potential were disappointingly lost

in a disorganised, lacklustre production which quickly saw the show grinding to a frustratingly slow pace. It is particularly damning of this production that we managed to stay gripped to Bush's *State of the Union Address* until four in the morning after an epic post smoker ADC bar session and yet *Henry IV* couldn't coax me to stay awake for the duration.

Of all the plays *Marat/Sade* is particularly challenging, making exceptional demands on director and cast. Such an intellectually and politically motivated play requires those involved to possess an understanding of the historical and social context. In order to keep her audience focussed director Victoria Scopes has created a stimulating production, but too often the various quirks and twitches of the inmates became distracting. Which brings us to the songs... The musical numbers were, with one exception, out of tune and out of time. With more rehearsal, this might not have been such a struggle.

So to the *Smoker*: funny as ever with all the usual faces. After being left feeling slightly uncomfortable by this week's theatrical endeavours it proved just how crucial it is for a production of any genre to have the time for cast and crew to evolve.

for first night reviews go to [www.varsity.co.uk](http://www.varsity.co.uk)



## STREET BEATS DJ SKETCHY & DJ RIP

Welcome to our fortnightly offering of news, views and reviews on all things urban.

This term was set to start with a couple of big nights. The promise of **DJ Semtex**, 1Xtra "big dog", filled out **Clare Cellars**, but he disappointed with an unexplained no-show. Déjà vu all over again – he also managed to double book on **Urbanite** last term. The night was rescued by the wordplay of the Word Association.

Last week saw **Roll Deep** hit the **Junction** and deliver the goods...it's just a shame that their enigmatic top-boy, Wiley, never seems that bothered, despite being one of the most talented MCs that the UK has seen.

As for new releases, the True Tiger record label has been making some serious waves in the grime scene over the past few months, and their mixtape, **Eye of the Tiger Vol. 1**, is without a doubt the best grime compilation we have heard. With the brains behind the operation, **Scandalous Unlimited**, producing some of the most professional and upfront grime-y beats yet seen, and bigshot artists such as **Wiley**, **Dizzee**, **Skepta** and **Plan B** also featuring, no wonder BBC Radio 1Xtra and others have been backing this so hard.

Hip-hop wise, we can't recommend enough the new **Bless** mixtape by **Shameless** (out now on *Dat Sound*). A relatively unknown Irish MC with a passionate delivery – and with guest spots from the likes of **Plan B**, **Foreign Beggars** and **DJ Mentat**, he's onto a good thing. I guarantee we'll hear a lot more from this kid. Our r'n'b pick this week has got to be **Ne-Yo**, with his forthcoming single *So Sick*. After helping write one of last year's biggest r'n'b tunes – **Mario's** *Let Me Love You*, he starts the new year with his second single. 'Smooth and sexy' RnB borders on farce sometimes – as embarrassing as it is to admit liking this sort of slowjam, we can't help it.

There are a few exciting events happening over the next couple of weeks. The Bollywood themed **Churchill Spring Ball** (10th Feb) has done well to secure "Desi Beats" DJs **Bobby Friction** and **Nihal** from Radio 1.

**Rawganics** returns to the **Junction** on Thursday 16th February (it really isn't that far people!). Headliner **Sway** is one to watch at the moment, with hype surrounding him now reaching the mainstream media, and his latest release, *Little Derek*, receiving some serious airtime.

Catch **Sketchy & Rip** at **Urbanite** every Thursday @ **The Soul Tree**, Fri 3rd Feb at **The Union**, Fri 10th Feb @ **Churchill Ball** and Sat 11th Feb @ **Queens'**

# Not the same old Soviet Chic

Alex Nice listens to Evgeny Pasternak, son of Doctor Zhivago author Boris

Last weekend offered a glimpse into the inner world of great Russian poet Boris Pasternak. The 'Weekend With Pasternak,' presented by the Russian Speaking Society, offered two talks by the poet's son, Evgeny Pasternak, on his father's life, work and his relationship with the composers Shostakovich and Scriabin.

There was much to tell, but it was perhaps the simplicity of the son's account that was most appealing. There is a tendency to turn the lives of all Soviet writers into political thrillers, presenting them as martyrs to art and truth. Pasternak's life was not short of drama. Like all public figures he lived in fear of being purged through much of the thirties and forties, and he was unable to publish for long periods. Along with tales of literary and political intrigue, however, Evgeny Pasternak was able to give a rare sense of the writer's private world.

His talk also featured readings of Pasternak's poetry as well as some expert English translations. Translation was a very important part of Pasternak's literary work. One of the curious by-products of censorship in Russia has been an extremely strong tradition in literary translation. As the state increased its efforts to subordinate literature to Party purposes during the thirties, Pasternak, like so many writers, found himself forced into dignified silence and reliant on translation to make a living.

*Hamlet* was a particular favourite of Pasternak. Translating *Hamlet* became a lifetime preoccupation and its influence is strongly felt in *Doctor Zhivago*, the novel which won him international fame. Pasternak wrote his prose masterpiece in his second period of self-imposed silence after the war. According to his son,



Evgeny Pasternak this week

Pasternak attempted to earn enough through translation in two months to sustain himself and his family, so that he could devote the rest of the year to his novel. By the time it was finished ten years later, Stalin had died. Along with Akhmatova, Pasternak was the only major poet to live through the Stalin period in the USSR. He could now hope for a return to publishing. The post-Stalin thaw, however, was not kind to

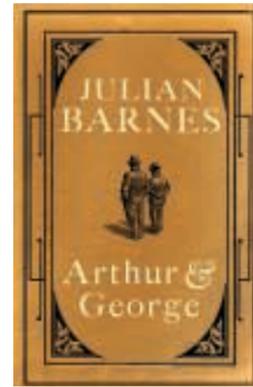
Pasternak.

He submitted *Zhivago* with hopes of acceptance since, as his son pointed out, there was nothing explicitly anti-Soviet in the novel, only a truthful depiction of the horror of civil war. No publisher would touch it. According to Pasternak's son, the reason behind the novel's rejection lay in the writer's defence of fellow poet Mandelstam, arrested in 1934 and later died in the gulag. Desperate to see his work published, Pasternak took the fateful decision to send his manuscript abroad. The authorities were quick to take revenge for this act of betrayal, launching a slanderous and threatening campaign against the poet. In 1958 Pasternak was awarded the Nobel Prize, but in the face of increasing persecution and threat of exile Pasternak officially declined the award. Thus *Zhivago* played a double role in Pasternak's literary life, winning him worldwide fame but finally destroying his career at home.

As his son stressed in his talk, Pasternak walked by himself throughout his life. He avoided artistic schools; his battle was not with literary movements or the state, but for truth. When he could speak the truth as he saw it, he spoke; when it was physically impossible for him to speak the truth, he was silent. In a revolutionary age Pasternak looked beyond the immediate struggles to what was really important in the world.

## Arthur and George ★★★★★

Rhona Brown reviews Julian Barnes' latest, newly released in paperback



As I pulled *Arthur and George* by Julian Barnes out of my Christmas stocking, I hoped it wouldn't be one of those presents you wished you could give back. I wasn't disappointed.

If you've read Barnes and enjoyed it, you'll likely find this to your taste. If you have not, you'll probably find it refreshing. Even if you don't like his work, you might be pleasantly surprised. It's probably not like other novels you might have read over Christmas.

Barnes has a unique and versatile ability to take subject matter that might seem an unusual choice for a novel. This is true in this biography (of sorts) of Sir Arthur Conan

Doyle, and the real-life miscarriage of justice against a part-Indian solicitor named George Edalji which Sir Arthur took it upon himself to overturn. Despite this, as usual, he creates a surprisingly compelling work that begs many questions, not least about what constitutes a novel.

The plot works its way back and forth between the lives of the two 'characters'. Suspense is built up and knocked down both in the individuals' predicaments and in the narrative as a whole, as we are ripped in and out of Arthur and George's lives at their most intriguing moments.

The reader becomes compassionately involved in the quiet, methodical mind of George, as his fate unfolds like a train crash. On a more voyeuristic note, we are given genuinely surprising details on the life of the household name that is Conan Doyle.

*Arthur and George* - the characters and the novel - are preoccupied with identity. Consequently, as well as providing readers with a truly touching narrative, they also require the constant posing of larger questions, such as what comprises 'Britishness', dignity and honour – three concepts both these fascinating characters based their lives on.

## the Story

**It's a bloody mess. A story that started so simply has turned nasty at the cruel hands of Cambridge students. Rhiannon Adam tries to bring some sense back to it all. If you have a creative streak send us the next 400 words to [literature@varsity.co.uk](mailto:literature@varsity.co.uk) by February 8th and see it printed here.**

Avery...I repeated the name, feeling my lips contort as I uttered it, and once more the tenant, that unrelenting and mysterious impression of the tenant kept on seeping back into my sleep-addled brain. I glanced back at the bill, another bloody bill. I slid it along the corner of my desk, into the rapidly growing heap and slumped back onto my haunches, hiding from the harsh light that entered through the moth eaten net curtains.

The name was still puzzling. I couldn't remember who or what Avery was...but some link between the name and my lodging was beginning to crystallise

in my mind, and something I had heard in the restaurant led me to think of that ghostly estate agent who led me to this



grim corner on this grim street. Even in daylight the place reeked of last night's drunken brawls, kebabs and the street

sounds clamoured for attention. I could hardly feel my own breathing between the slams of doors, and raised voices and the occasional uncategorisable thumps emanating from my neighbours walls. I digress: that's the trouble with living here. I can't think, I'm driven to distraction - the only thing that makes sense is Sophie. Luscious, red lipped Sophie.

Something she muttered seemed to make sense though, something about this place. She had been watching me, just as I had been watching her, and she knew where I lived. And, she knew about the mounting pile of mail that belonged to some-

one by the name of A. C. Smitson. Avery, could Avery be that initial? Or was it her real name. It was so hazy, but the clues seemed to be forming as I trudged across the room in my old slippers - Ah, the old comforts of home.

There were facts, ones that I cannot change. One being that I have just moved here amidst a mountain of chaos, and another that the past resident haunts me. Yet the last fact, and the most disturbing one, is that my memory seems to exclude me. Paranoia and self-obsession are taking over, and I panic. It seems as though everything hinges on this Avery.

# A Day in the Life of an Organ Scholar

What do these superhuman musos actually get up to? Francis Letschka finds out



Paul Provost is Senior Organ Scholar at John's. He is in his third year reading music. His duties as Organ Scholar consist of playing, conducting, and rehearsing for choir services. He is assisted by a Junior Organ Scholar, Léon Charles, and works alongside Dr David Hill, the Director of Music at St John's.

### 08:10 – 09:10

David Hill, Léon and myself take the boys' rehearsal at St John's School. Normally Léon and myself will train the probationers (trainees) in sight-reading and other skills, but if David is away, we will take the full practice. The boys are usually well-behaved – they really enjoy what they're doing. We aim for a more feminine sound when training them, not the 'angelic sound' which King's has – in many ways our top line does not sound that much different from a mixed choir. Boy trebles are part of a fantastic tradition and it keeps boys singing; they are our future altos, tenors and basses.

### 10:00– 12:00

Lectures in the Music faculty.

### 13:20 – 14:00

St John's Music society meeting. Both Organ Scholars are members of the committee for the Music Society, and we play a large part in planning concerts and recitals, and playing and accompanying for them.

### 14:00 – 16:00

Supervisions. My supervisors are very understanding when it comes to getting work done. They acknowledge that although in theory my first priority is my academic work, in practice it rarely works that way. We have services every day and have to be thoroughly prepared for them – whether it is learning the organ parts or preparing the music for conducting. Sometimes it becomes impossible to get all the work done – like last term, for example, when I had to take two

weeks off to prepare for the live radio broadcast of our Advent Carol Service.

### 16:00 – 17:15

This is usually when I do my organ practice, practicing both the music I am accompanying the choir for and also the organ voluntaries – pieces before and after the service just played by the organist.

### 17:15 – 18:15

The choir rehearse. Both the gents and the boys are fantastic musicians and sight-readers so not much rehearsal is necessary.

### 18:30 – 19:30

Evensong. We sing evensong every day except on Monday. On a Sunday we also sing Eucharist at 10:00am with a rehearsal beforehand. David,

Léon and myself will share the playing and conducting, though it is more usual for David to conduct. David encourages us to conduct – if there is a piece that one of us really wants to rehearse and conduct he will be only too happy to let us.

### 19:40 – 21:00

I rehearse the St John's Singers, which is a mixed non-audition choir, something that I really enjoy doing. They are a great choir and it is a fantastic experience to conduct non-liturgical music, whether sacred or secular.

### 21:00 - Last orders

Drinks with the gents in the Maypole – not all organists spend all their life in organ lofts – some try to have a social life too!

# Too Many Kooks

spoil the broth for **Lowri Jenkins**



## BLATHERWICK

For those that missed *NME's* 'shock and awe' top 100 British albums last week, they declared after only two days of release that the **Arctic Monkeys'** album was the best of this decade and nicely distilled the 00's into indie, **Dizzee Rascal** and **The Streets**. Whatever the shocking omissions from the whole list (*Loveless?* *Metal Box?*) the albums chosen from the past six years nicely sums up the mainstream view of the world; moaning guitar-pop white guys always gain more cred. It's the only explanation I can find as to why, for example, **Goldfrapp's** *Black Cherry* isn't present, whilst two **Coldplay** albums and an abominable **Kaiser Chiefs'** album are. Check them out at the Corn Exchange on Saturday. Tickets are scarce, so if you're left short, why not nip across to ARU and see **Mew** (£8.50)? They're huge in Denmark, but don't expect **Aqua**; they're more on some kind of indie-prog-rock trip. Relatively listenable though, which isn't really where Portland's **Yellow Swans** come from. Doing the "I'm not quite sure what to make of this" style reasonably well, they've decorated their website with eyeballs. They'll be down at CB2 tonight with local legend **Um** in support (£5). **The Feeling** hit ARU next Thursday (£5), fresh from being called the third hottest new act in the world by BBC News. Quite enthusiastic pronouncements of resurrecting middle-of-the-road soft rock sound scarier than Pete Burns' plastic surgery. Perhaps that's the intention. On the cellar-scene, King's will be having an electrorock night on Friday (£1 King's £2 Non-King's) followed by the free launch night for the June affair on Saturday. Clare has d'n'b from **DJ Liquid** on Friday night (£4) and Queen's has bhangra, dub and hip hop on Saturday night (£4).



## The Kooks and The Automatic

ARU 26th January



To read our interview with Kooks drummer Paul Garred, see [www.varsity.co.uk](http://www.varsity.co.uk)

In the week when Arctic Monkeys' over-hyped and under-written debut album became Britain's fastest seller of all time, it seems appropriate to be reviewing two newer bands gracing the career-accelerating pages of *NME*: The Automatic and The Kooks.

First off tonight, though, is Oxford band Dive Dive. I detest ridiculous Oxbridge rivalry, so it is with clear judgment and bias-free heart that I can declare them absolutely shit. Even the hint of a tune would have been lost beneath the shouted vocals and droning guitar.

After this, there is no chance that Cowbridge four-piece The Automatic can look poor. The band has enjoyed a dizzyingly successful year, signing to independent giants b-unique after only a few months of gigging.

They put out debut single 'Revolver' on limited release in November, and recently completed recording their album. As the premature success of Arctic Monkeys demonstrates, in a culture where internet, magazines and fans are ever hungry for the newest name to drop, it's easy for a band's potential to result as still-born.

But, despite their limited live experience, tonight The

Automatic are taut and energetic. Their sound recalls Bloc Party's guitars, with a hardness more reminiscent of early hardcore, and a synth-driven danceability.

It's easy to see why their career is accelerating: they are a 'now' band, with a 'now' sound, dangerously susceptible to the clawing hands of the music industry hype-drive.

But the reason I wish their career would slow down is the same reason that it is speeding



“THE MUSIC'S NOT OFFENSIVELY BAD, IT'S OFFENSIVELY AVERAGE”



up: this band has real potential. Debut single 'Revolver,' pulsing standout 'Monster,' with its insistent chorus, and newie 'Raul,' which exploits the band's vocal interplay, are confident, creative and rhythmically crisp.

The Automatic won't change the world, but they are more inventive and tighter than the tired indie which fol-

lows. The Kooks look and sound like the worst parts of Britpop: frontman Luke has the face of Cast's John Power and the unjustified arrogance of Liam Gallagher. His strumming and swearing highlights their lack of originality: the stage show is studied but soulless. He seems to think that acting like a rock star will make him one; and, worryingly, judging by the crowd's joyous reaction to every song, this might yet be true. Mellow tracks are exposed as under-written and songs like 'Eddie's Gun', passable on record, turn into bland indie pap, as The Kooks spend more time trying to look the part than play their parts.

The music is not offensively bad: it's offensively average. The guitars melt into each other, and their 'best songs' ('Sofa Song', 'You Don't Love Me') fade unnoticed into the rest of set, lacking strong enough melodies and strong enough live execution. The underwhelming performance has a similar effect to Dive Dive's set: it serves to make The Automatic look good. Tonight is an odd lesson in the power of music media and the powerful hold the *NME* has on a captive audience, but after such a night of varied performances, should we really believe what we read?

## CUCO Coup

Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht* is music which, when presented to the fertile adolescent mind, occasions something akin to a sexual awakening: it realizes long-sought harmonic fantasies, the palpitating rhythmic urges of teenage improvisation, and the youthful yearnings for the ideal melodic curve. All these nascent impulses Schönberg seems to have embraced, distilled, and then expounded on a large scale which simultaneously relieves and fulfils – even inducing a degree of shame, at the intoxicating headiness of the experience.

Age naturally brings a finer psychological insight such that the lynchpin of the Chamber Orchestra's phenomenal success in bringing off this work was the direction of Peter Stark. Revelatory in his consistently limpid lack of tension, Stark had justified faith in the individual players to shape their own

## Cambridge University Chamber Orchestra - Stark

West Road Concert Hall, Saturday 28th January, 8pm

parts (with unembarrassed conviction) and to conduct their own internal discourse, enabling him to mould the tempi, both imparting a palpable sense of rhythmic propulsion (lacking in some Cambridge Wagner playing), and allowing the music to breathe: silences in the performance, however momentary, were just as dramatic as the fullest orchestrations.

Perhaps the more homophonous passages, which were carried through by a structured Brucknerian breadth of the tone, with the first cellos pre-eminent to announce their exultation, best exemplified the shocking maturity of the performance. Of course, some phrases were a little brittle, intonation was occasionally misjudged, the early demonic viola *pizzicati* could have been meatier, but the musicians' belief in this music (and in their conductor), playing – not as if – but *because* their souls depended on it, was universally overwhelming.

Several themes spanned the interval, preceding which was Berg's Kammerkonzert. Stark's remarkable conducting here was as relaxed as in the Schönberg, despite the multiplied complexities; and the wind instruments were just as resourceful as the strings, shifting from the ethereal to the grotesque as befitted the various bubbles and sinking wells of sound (although the melodic capacity of the contrabassoon has still to be proven, I think). Athletic and cantabile pianism and violin-playing from the Japanese soloists provided welcome respite in obscurer expanses of the work.

The challenges of the whole evening though were met with unimagined bravura, and one waits with even keener anticipation for when Stark guest-conducts CUMS I with *Sacre* later this term.

James Drinkwater

### Jenny Lewis & The Watson Twins

Rabbit Fur Coat



If you don't know who Jenny Lewis is already, you soon will. From her humble beginnings in a *Jell-O* advert, the sweet faced Miss Lewis of LA became a child actress, and as she progressed into womanhood soon left the acting behind and formed a band with a couple of actor friends.

The product was the wonderful Rilo Kiley, Lewis was the quintessential member of the band, and now with a solo album on Rough Trade she has come into her own with grace and splendour. The album is co-attributed to The Watson Twins, whose matching blood

makes for absorbing vocal harmonies that warm up and mellow out the record.

The song writing is strong and confident. The instrumentation is full of niches and turns, making every song stand out as a winner for that mix tape you've been meaning to make for the new year. Sixties in sound, modern in feel, the production swells with the glory of digital clarity yet the predominantly folk influences maintains an ear-friendly, old world compassion.

Despite a rather theatrical intro and final reprise, this could be a record you grab from your parents' vinyl collection because of its beautiful, eerie cover, and for a moment you think that all the good music was made long before you were born. But thankfully this wasn't made back then. It's now, it's fresh and it's magical.

Richard Braude

### Belle and Sebastian

The Life Pursuit



For a band who have gallantly pushed past the likes of Idlewild and The Proclaimers to swiftly take gold in the race to be Scotland's most adored band, a surprisingly large collective of individuals actually hate Belle and Sebastian. There are those, from the elite of 'indie cool', who regard them as too feeble to warrant any kind of credibility. Others see the band as being far too trite to sweep enigmatically into the realms of true pop, and finally, for some, their albums exude an abundance of musical vibes that have driven many a listener into a

permanent state of annoyance.

To quickly assign yourself into one of the above categories without listening to *The Life Pursuit*, is to unfairly write off B&S. There is the usual Belle and Sebastian trademark of 'let's see how many times we can mention a girl's name and get the word 'she' into a song', they combine this with a touch of funk, big band brass, snappy drumming and synths. If you were a fan already, this is a record that will warm the cockles of your acoustic-fuelled soul. For those of you who weren't previously keen on the band, don a pair of brown corduroy flares, adopt the persona of your nearest and dearest guitar strumming friend and I assure you that at some point this album will get you tapping your feet. At the very least.

Jacqui Tedd

### Helene Grimaud

Reflection



Any release describing itself as a 'compelling journey' is likely to provoke a response of indignant irritation, suggesting an album devoted to pseudish gimmickry rather than serious music-making. Grimaud, though, confounds such cynical thoughts; her programme is a reflection on the love that Robert and Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms felt for each other and expressed in their music. Whether one would agree with Grimaud, that love is 'a dynamic between a "you and a "me", between two beings that

passion reveals in their uniqueness', her playing is much better than her syntax. The performance of the much-hackneyed *Schumann concerto* is revelatory, as is her *Brahms Rhapsodies*. Highlights must be the Brahms 'cello sonata with Truls Mørk, both artists scaling ecstatic peaks, and above all else, the lieder Clara Schumann sung by Anne Sofie von Otter. These are as good as anything her husband composed – take the turbulent 'Am Strande' for Dichterliebe-resonances and apposite word-painting. A stunning release then; supremely performed by stellar artists, well-chosen repertoire and a heart-wrenching inner core. As Valentine's Day approaches, this is the perfect gift for that muso in your life.

Francis Lestchka

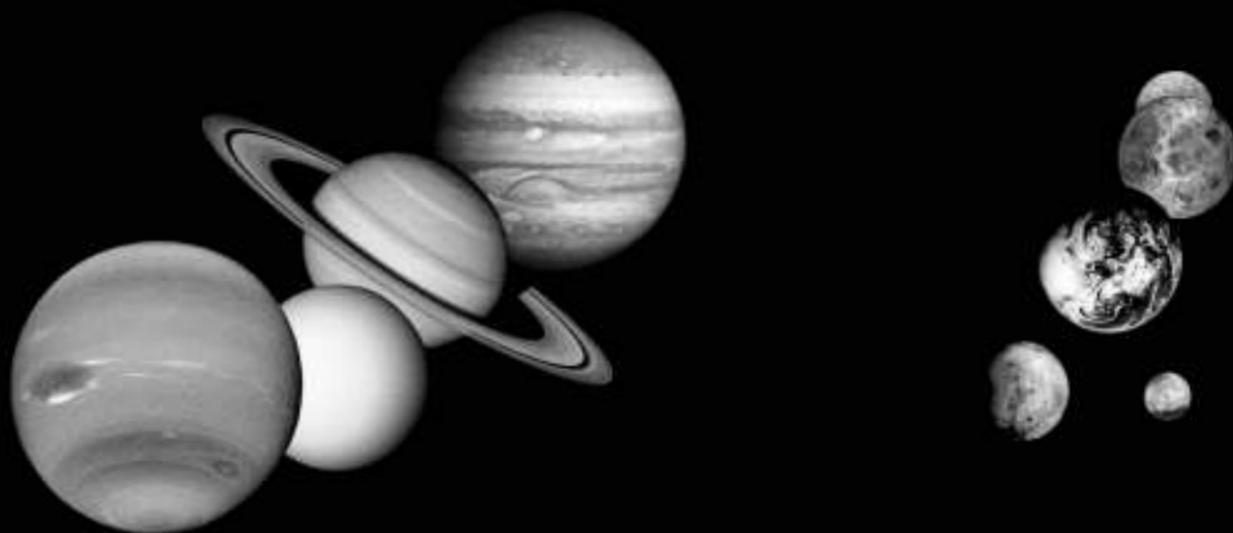
# The Works

A World of Alternatives

a Cambridge University Careers Service event

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2006

1pm-5:30pm New Museums Site, Pembroke Street



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# Film: the art of the future?

Simone Westermann and Jonny Ensall on what the market is doing to cinema

We've reached a point when technology seems to be seriously changing the cinematic experience. Walk into a modern multiplex and you'll get popcorn, a cola and a comfy seat, but you'll be paying through the nose for the privilege to watch a giant, lovesick, CGI-animated Gorilla ape about on a big screen. Alternatively, you can borrow your mate's *La Haine* DVD and then spend an equally enjoyable (and less culturally dubious) hour-and-a-half sitting in front of the luminescent glow of your laptop with a bowl of cornflakes.

Technology is giving the film-watcher as well as the filmmaker a whole series of new options. As digital technology looks set to replace celluloid in the movie theatre and Steven Soderbergh releases his new film *Bubble* simultaneously on DVD, cable TV and in cinemas, it's clear that the ways in which we watch and make films will never be the same again. So how far have we come from the starting point of cinema? And how close are we now to achieving the aspirations of the first cinematic pioneers?

Answering these questions is Ian Christie, Professor of Film and Media History at Birkbeck College and the first film historian to deliver the prestigious annual Slade lecture series. He takes André Bazin's theory of 'The Myth of Total Cinema' as the starting point for his reflections on 'Film as the art of the future'.

Bazin claimed that the idea of cinema had existed long before the medium actually appeared and that the development of cinematic technology 'little by little made a reality out of the original 'myth'. At its first conception, film was an edgy new art form, longed for by many modernists, rejected by traditionalists and full of potential. However, the initial promise of the cinematic



**DOES THE FILM INDUSTRY RECKLESSLY PLUNDER ITS OWN CULTURAL HERITAGE?**



avant-garde has been steadily curbed by Hollywood's domination of the art form. Now cinema has reached its popular height with blockbusters cashing in on reclaimed and rehashed ideas from the cinematic past to make phenomenal amounts of money. Has the film industry become, as Christie asks, 'the enemy of art in the 20th century', recklessly plundering its own cultural heritage?

To an extent, the real development of cinema has shifted venues. You're more likely

now to see technology padding out the 'myth' of film in the art gallery than the movie theatre. Film has quickly become the favourite medium of both the established artist and the aspiring art student with galleries and degree shows everywhere now awash with video installations. The digitalisation of the film-making process has made it easy for anyone to make a film, and talented 'indie' film-makers with handy-cams are increasingly entering the arthouse consciousness. Moreover, the cheapness of digital projection compared to expensive celluloid reels means cinemas can now afford to show more films other than ubiquitous, crowd-pulling blockbusters.

Christie argues that in the beginning, film was never really considered serious 'art'. The crudeness of the first mechanical processes afforded little room for subtlety. But now technology – although bringing us a variety of giant, unsubtle, computer-generated monsters – is also letting the human element into cinema.

Film's essential

role in defining our post-modern culture makes Christie's lecture series an important intellectual milestone. His lectures are engaging even for Film Study layman due to their chronological structure and are peppered with entertaining film extracts. Also, not to be missed are the complementary films at the Arts Picturehouse every Wednesday at 1pm. They are free, there are no gorillas and you'll get a big screen, a cola and a comfy seat.

**'Cinema Has Not Yet Been Invented: Film as the Art of the Future' continues on Tuesday with 'Competing Avant Gardes' 7pm. Mill Lane Lecture Rooms.**



## DVD: Lost

★★★★★



Few series have captured the public consciousness so completely as J. J. Abrams' *Lost*. With a wafer-thin high concept stretched across 25 episodes – plane crash survivors try to escape island – the series has proven itself anything but lightweight. For both avid followers and those dwelling under a large rock for the past year, the release of the first season on DVD is something to be excited about.

Boasting a huge, but well-defined character roster, each episode is partially devoted to a flashback from a character in their pre-plane crash civilian life, allowing the series to both have its cake and eat it. The flashbacks show our heroes in various real-world situations, but there is still time to explore the island, where the characters interact with each other.

The second hook – and the series' potential problem – is that nothing is quite what it seems. As with Abrams' other series, *Alias*, what at first seems grounded in reality soon reveals itself to be something a little more 'out there'. This is fine, and for those that buy into the central mystery of it all the constant guessing can easily make watching addictive. The problem is that the drip feed of revelations is just far too slow. This aside, the series is rarely anything less than highly entertaining.

Stuart Smith



for a full review, see [www.varsity.co.uk](http://www.varsity.co.uk)

## Munich

★★★★★



For a film which has stirred such controversy, Steven Spielberg's latest – about the Israeli government's response to the murder of eleven Israeli athletes by Palestinian terrorists at the 1972 Munich Olympics – is surprisingly underwhelming.

The opening, showing the hostage-taking and murder of the athletes, is superb. For the first fifteen minutes or so, it's hard to pull your eyes away from events. But after the tragedy, we are introduced to the film's main characters – a secret team of Mossad agents, headed by Avner (Eric Bana), sent to Europe to hunt down and assassinate the Palestinian perpetrators – and the film begins to unravel.

Taking artistic licence to new heights, Avner meets an 'old friend,' who, conveniently,

knows a Frenchman – Louis – who, for a fee, is able to tell Avner the whereabouts of all eleven Palestinian assassination targets. And for the next two hours we are treated to the rather unexciting prospect of watching Avner and his group tediously and repetitively plot and carry out assassination after assassination.

For each killing, of course, something rather predictably goes wrong at the last minute, presumably in a bid to add a touch of suspense and keep our interest (it doesn't). One particularly patronising example is the introduction of a little girl who almost gets caught up in the bloodshed (a clichéd technique plundered from his



**DON'T EXPECT ANY NEW MEDITATIONS ON THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS**



otherwise excellent Schindler's List. Yes, the girl in this film is also wearing red.) Predictably this serves to make the characters question the morality of their actions – as if they and the audience can only realise the magnitude of this if a child might get hurt – which they do on a fairly regular but irritatingly superficial and simplistic basis. Don't expect any new

meditations on the Middle East crisis and how to solve it: this film barely gets beyond the level of apportioning equal blame to both sides and suggesting the futility of violence, as if we couldn't have worked out those old chestnuts on our own.

Particularly annoying, though, is Spielberg's conscious decision to recreate 1970s style filmmaking, so we get plenty of pan-and-scan and zoom lens shots, shots of men standing on street corners looking sinister, and outdoor meetings over coffee in the cafes of Paris/Rome/Amsterdam. The direction is so self-consciously slick and 'retro' that at times I felt like I could be watching *Oceans Twelve*, except with assassinations instead of bank heists. The direction, then, creates a highly inappropriate, almost flippant tone that just doesn't fit with the film's serious intentions.

There are some wonderfully subtle moments though: we get a character singing "Papa was a rolling stone" just before a murder, perhaps to remind us that the rolling stone gathers no moss.

The film's final scene brilliantly reinforces the stubbornness at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute and the opening and closing fifteen minutes are richly engrossing and absorbing. It's just a shame the rest of the film is so plodding, clichéd, unsubtle, simplistic, patronising and unengaging.

Tom Hannan

## When I was

# 21

India Knight



India Knight is a columnist for the *Sunday Times*, an author and a shopping guru.

**In what year were you 21 and what were you doing?**

1986. I was at Cambridge (Trinity), in my third year, reading Languages and drinking too much. I wonder whether everyone still drinks as much as we did – we were practically alcoholics.

**Where did you live?** New Court, in rather nice rooms, next to a boy who became a spy.

**How did you celebrate your 21st birthday?** I had a dinner at Langan's in London. How Eighties is that?

**What was your favourite outfit?** Anything black and Lycra – also quite Eighties. A stripy blue and white T-shirt. And I had a floor-length (fake) fur coat that I was rather fond of. In retrospect, I suspect it made me look like a drag queen.

**What were your illegal activities?** I didn't really have any – I'd done the druggy thing by the time I got to Cambridge, if that's what you mean. And the youthful shoplifting, too. But like I said, we did drink an awful lot.

**What made you angry?** Margaret Thatcher. She made me practically levitate with rage.

**What were you afraid of?** I was afraid that I'd end up jobless – everyone was doing the milkround, applying to hideous merchant banks and the like, which was never going to be an option for me. And then I'd get anxious that I'd wasted three years at university reading Proust and lolling about on the Backs when I could have been making the tea on a newspaper and worked my way up instead.

**Who were your heroes?** The embarrassing but true answer to that is Madonna and Nelson Mandela. In that order.

**Who were you in love with?** Some bloke at King's.

**What did you eat?** Pasta with tomato sauce. Every single day. And occasional hideous takeaways from a place in Rose Crescent called The Oasis.

**What was the most rebellious thing you did?** Can't

remember. I got arrested for cycling the wrong way down Trinity Street, which seemed petty in the extreme. I didn't turn up to one of my Finals, either, though this wasn't so much rebellion as extreme lassitude.

**What are you ashamed of having done?** I was quite bitchy for a while. And cliquey. I regret not having been kinder or more tolerant. I worked for a magazine called *Broadsheet* for a bit, and once we printed a cut-out-and-keep badge of some poor man we didn't like, with the caption 'Am I grotesque?'. We wore it on our coats, thinking it hilarious.

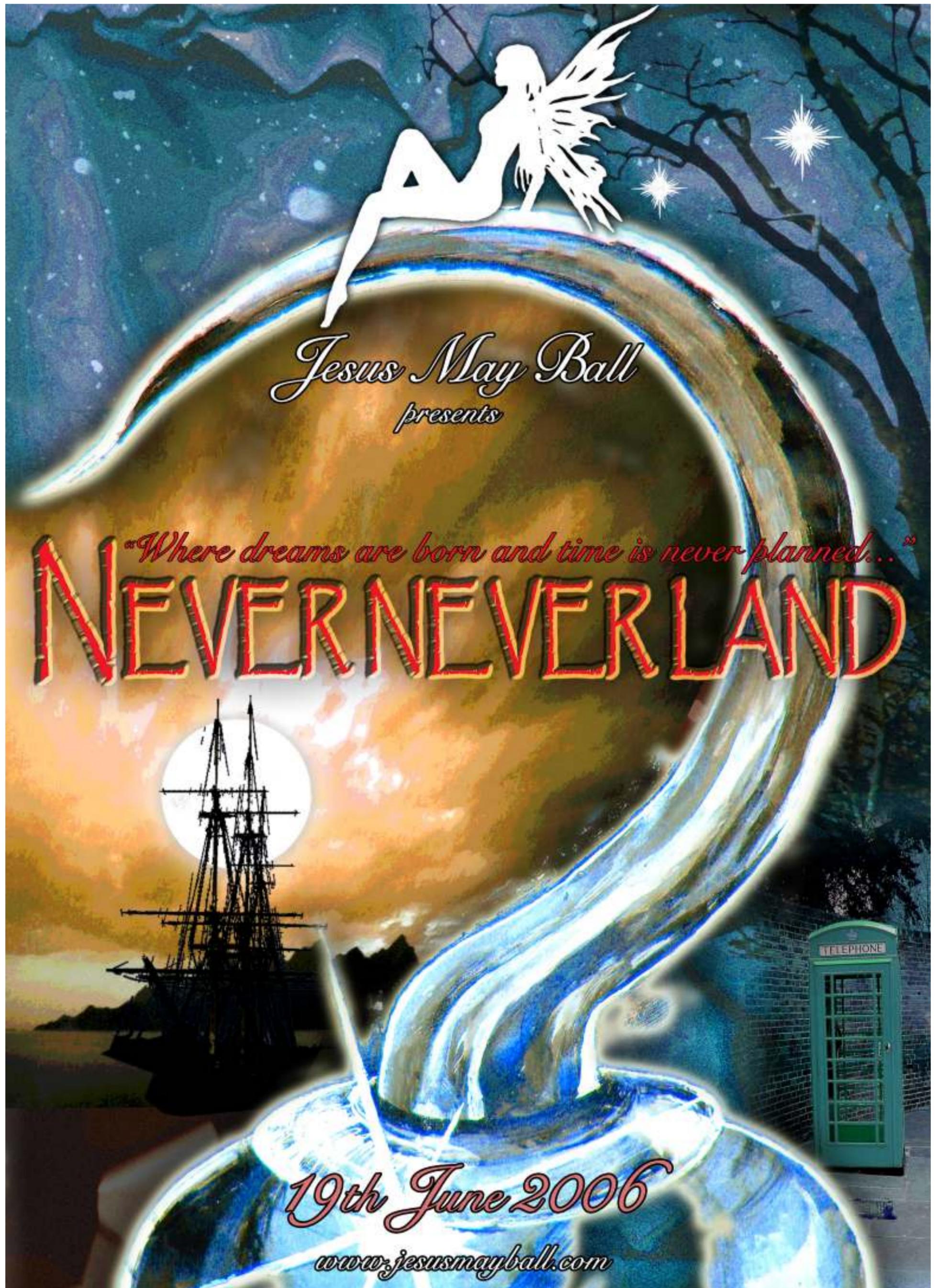
**What was your most political action?** Marching for the poor old miners. In my fur coat and vintage stilletoes. Nice look.

**What made you cry?** Boredom. It made me sob.

**What did you hope to be?** A writer. And lol! It came to pass.

**What do you wish you had known then that you had now?** That it's not a terrific idea to waste the incredible privilege of being at Cambridge by faffing about. That intellectual laziness isn't something you ever look back on fondly. That I had an amazing opportunity to go to lectures in subjects other than mine, and I should have taken it. That Cambridge is actually heaven and that patience is a virtue – by my third year I was feeling really claustrophobic and itching to get to London.... I was in too much of a rush for everything.

Emily Stokes



*Jesus May Ball*  
*presents*

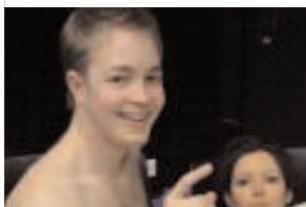
*"Where dreams are born and time is never planned..."*  
**NEVER NEVER LAND**

*19th June 2006*

*www.jesusmayball.com*

# Pick of the Week

The essential events of the next seven days... and the best of the rest



## Losing it

A dramatisation of an adult fairy tale about a girl trying to lose her virginity in London. Written in rhyming couplets sparkling with wit, it also pertains to be a modern day 'Rape of the Lock'. And just look at that publicity photo.

Corpus Playroom Stage, 9.30pm, £5.50 / £4, Tue 7th - Sat 11th Feb



## A Woman Alone

By Dario Fo & Franca Rame. Four women present four pieces of dramatic, grotesque and tragic explorations of female sexuality and individuality. Laughter and despair, with the emphasis on the latter.

ADC, 11.00pm, £3 / £4, Tue 7th - Sat 11th Feb



## Bash

A three-play cycle written by award-winning playwright Neil LaBute. A set of superficially unconnected stories linked by the horror of witnessing seemingly sane people commit horrific actions. Simple, brutal and shocking, the theatrical equivalent of a kick to the balls.

ADC, 11.00pm, £3 / £4, Wed 8th Feb - Sat 11th Feb



## Amnesty SVAW Campaign

The official launch event for Stop Violence Against Women (SVAW) an evening of comedy from Footlights comedians Tom Sharpe, Oli Robinson and more - headlined by BBC New Comedy Awards 2005 Finalist Luke Roberts.

Michaelhouse Cafe, Trinity Street, 6.45pm, entry free, bank open and serving drinks (!)



## Napoleon Dynamite

It might be like, so last year - but this hilarious yet nigh-on plotless comedy manages to elicit both uneasy squirming and gales of slightly fascist laughter. Coming across like a 'nerd' study directed by ameaning (and crueler) Wes Anderson - this is hilarious.

Arts Picturehouse, 10.50pm at Fri 3rd Feb and Sat 4th Feb



## Elbow

Book now to claim your slice of miserabilist melancholia. At least it'll be better than watching another emo band cry all over their amps and electrocute themselves (I wish). Swooping, maudlin indie and the smell of rotting oak. Probably.

The Corn Exchange, Thu 16th January, 7.30pm, £13

## A Taste of Honey

By Shelagh Delaney. In a squalid bedsit in the North, 17 year old Jo is forced into premature adulthood by her alcoholic mother and an unwanted pregnancy. An uncompromising 1950s study of teenage pregnancy, racial prejudice and homosexuality.

Corpus Playroom 7pm, £5.50 / £4, Tue 7th - Sat 11th Feb

## Another Country

By Julian Mitchell. Another country is a fictional version of the school days of infamous Cambridge spy Guy Burgess. Aside from being a fascinating re-evaluation of a controversial figure, this will also be an intimate, (read: homoerotic?) vision of male adolescence.

ADC 11.00pm, £3 / £4, Tue 7th - Sat 11th Feb

## Oleanna

A university professor tries to help a struggling student - she complains of sexual harassment. An excoriating critique of politically correct culture.

ADC 11pm, £3 / £4, Wed 1st - Sat 4th Feb

## Translations

By Brian Friel. Students at an Irish school speak Latin & Greek - but not English. Then English soldiers give everything English names with humorous consequences. An eye-opener injustice in 19th century Ireland.

Robinson College Auditorium 7.30pm, £4, Tue 31st Jan - Sat 4th Feb

## Improbable Fiction

By Alan Ayckbourn., directing his new comedy about unfettered ambition in a poetry circle.

Cambridge Arts Theatre, 7.45pm, £10-£20, Mon 6th - Sat 11th February

## Songs from the Musicals

Numbers from hit West End and Broadway shows performed by CUMTS - looks great

Cambridge Arts Theatre, 7.45pm, £10-£20, Mon 6th - Sat 11th Feb

## Arts Picturehouse

### Friday 3rd February

A Cock and Bull Story (15): 12:00, 14:00, 20:20  
Atash (Thirst) (15): 16:00, 18:10  
Hidden (Cache) (15): 12:30, 15:00, 17:30, 20:00  
Memoirs of a Geisha (12A): 15:15, 20:50  
Napoleon Dynamite (PG): 22:50  
The Beat That My Heart Skipped (15): 23:00  
The Constant Gardener (15): 12:15, 18:15

### Saturday 4th February

A Cock and Bull Story (15): 12:30, 20:20  
Atash (Thirst) (15): 16:00, 18:10  
Corpse Bride (PG): 11:00  
Hidden (Cache) (15): 15:00, 17:30, 20:00  
Memoirs of a Geisha (12A): 15:15, 20:50  
Napoleon Dynamite (PG): 22:50  
The Beat That My Heart Skipped (15): 23:00  
The Constant Gardener (15): 12:15, 18:15

### Sunday 5th February

A Cock and Bull Story (15): 13:10, 20:20  
Atash (Thirst) (15): 16:00, 18:10  
Good Night, And Good Luck. (PG): Free Screening 11:00  
Hidden (Cache) (15): 15:00, 17:30, 20:00  
Memoirs of a Geisha (12A): 15:15, 20:50  
The Beat That My Heart Skipped (15): 12:00  
The Constant Gardener (15): 18:15

### Monday 6th February

A Cock and Bull Story (15): 12:00, 14:00, 20:40  
Hidden (Cache) (15): 13:00, 16:00, 18:30, 21:00  
Memoirs of a Geisha (12A): 15:15, 20:50  
Screaming Masterpiece (12A): 16:30, 18:45  
The Constant Gardener (15): 12:15, 18:15

## Tuesday 7th February

A Cock and Bull Story (15): 12:00, 14:00  
Familia Rodante (15): 13:30  
Hidden (Cache) (15): 16:00, 21:00  
Memoirs of a Geisha (12A): 12:15, 18:00  
Screaming Masterpiece (12A): 16:30, 18:45  
Small Faces (15): 21:15  
The Constant Gardener (15): 15:15, 20:50

## Wednesday 8th February

A Cock and Bull Story (15): 14:20, 20:40  
Hidden (Cache) (15): 11:00, 16:00, 18:30, 21:00  
Memoirs of a Geisha (12A): 12:15, 18:00  
The Beat That My Heart Skipped (15): 11:00  
The Constant Gardener (15): 15:15, 20:50

## Thursday 9th February

A Cock and Bull Story (15): 12:00, 14:00, 20:40  
Hidden (Cache) (15): 12:00, 14:30, 19:00, 21:20  
Memoirs of a Geisha (12A): 12:15, 18:00  
Screaming Masterpiece (12A): 16:30, 18:45  
The Constant Gardener (15): 15:15, 20:50

## College Films

St. John's  
Corpse Bride (PG)  
Sun 5 Feb, 19.00, 22.00  
Touching the Void  
Thu 9 Feb 21.00

Robinson  
Enter the Dragon  
Sun 5 Feb, 18.00, 21.00  
City of God  
Thu 9 Feb, 21.00

Christ's  
The Constant Gardener  
Sun 5 Feb, 20.00, 22.30  
King Kong  
Thu 9 Feb, 22.00

## Fabian Society Talk

David Zeichner, UNISON Labour Link National Policy and Campaigns Officer, will be discussing whether there is a future for the trade union movement in a talk held by the Cambridge Student's Fabian Society.

Linnett Room, Robinson College, 7.30pm, free entry, Wed 8th Feb

## Art for Mailing: Wildlife Stamp Designs by Ian Loe

From sketchbook to the postbox this exhibition charts the detailed and exacting process of researching, designing and creating postage stamps.

Fitzwilliam Museum, free entry, 26th January - 23rd April

## Slade Lectures on Film (featured on page 21)

A Cambridge first: film historian Prof. Ian Christie presents a free annual art lecture series surveying ideas about film as the art of the future. Under the pleasingly dramatic title of *The Cinema has not yet been invented*.

Eight week lecture series - every Tuesday at 5pm in Mill Lane Lecture Rooms - next one Thu 9th Feb

## The Antarctic Photographs of Herbert Ponting

Taken from the original negatives of the intrepid photographer that accompanied Scott's expedition to the Antarctic in 1910-1914.

Scott-Polar Research Institute, free entry, running till 31st March

## CICCU talks on 'Identity'

A series of talks aiming to discuss important issues of identity and the Christian faith - organised by the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CICCU) over 3 lunchtime and 3 evening talks. An opportunity for an intelligent investigation into the claims of Christianity. See [www.ciccu.org.uk](http://www.ciccu.org.uk) for more.

Holy Trinity Church (opposite Borders), free entry, Mon 6th - Wed 11th Feb, 1.10-2pm and 8-9pm

## CU Islamic Society and CU Hindu Cultural Society jointly present Vande Mataram: The Life and Story of India's National Song

Speaker is Julius Lipner., Professor of Comparative Study of Religion and Hinduism  
Lecture Theatre LG 18, The Law Faculty, free entry, Mon 6th Feb, 6.30pm



stage

screen

events

## Newnham Comedy

'Down the Avenue' 8.30, free entry  
Newnham Bar

## Fez Fridays

eclectic... 9-3 £6 or £5 with flyer  
The Fez Club

## Fat Poppaddys

...eclectic too 9-1 £4  
Clare Cellars

## Express Yourself

'freestyle dance competition' 9-11.30 £1  
The Soul Tree

## Mew + The Perishers

Excellent swoon rock 8pm, £8 adv/£10 door,  
The Academy @ ARU

## Soul Power

Dynamic live musicians - soul, funk and beats 9-4 £8  
The Soul Tree

## King's Affair

Launch Party Boozey booze 9-12.45 free entry  
King's Bar + Cellars

## Sunday Roast

the weekend stops here and so does your dignity 9-2 £4  
Life

## Songs in the Dark

Music, poetry, love (the last is unlikely) 8.00 free  
Clowns Cafe

## Songs in the Dark

Music, poetry, comedy, love (the last is unlikely) 8.00 free  
Clowns Cafe

## Acoustic open mic

dubious 9.00 free  
CB2

## Fat Poppaddys

eclectic...again? 9-3 £3/4  
The Fez Club

## International Student Night

pohjanmaan kautta! 9.30-2 £5  
Life

## The Violets + The Fucks + The Vichy Government + The Resistance

Band named after cuss. Golly gosh! 8.00 £4  
The Portland Arms

## Captain Everything

Boys with guitars 8pm £4  
The Portland Arms

## Unique

LBG Night 9.30-2 £4  
Life

## F.I.S.T.

gabba/noise/jungle and none the nicer for it 7.30-12 £2  
The Geldart

## The Ivories + New Rhodes + Rotating Leslie at Club Goo

indie band + DJs 8-2 £5  
The Soul Tree

## Rumboogie

OH GOD 9.00-2 £4/5  
Ballare

## International Student Night

na zdravje! 9-2 £4  
Ballare

## Urbanite

is killing Cambridge 9-3 £3  
The Soul Tree

fri

sat

sun

mon

tue

wed

thu

## EDINBURGH FESTIVAL 2006

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The Executive Committee of the ADC Theatre wish to appoint a technical manager and a marketing/bar manager for the 2006/2007 academic year.

Potential applicants should contact the Theatre Manager, Michael Nabarro, on 01223 359547 or [michael@adctheatre.com](mailto:michael@adctheatre.com).

The deadline for written applications is twelve noon on Wednesday 22 February and interviews will be held on the morning of Friday 3 March. [www.adctheatre.com](http://www.adctheatre.com)



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Robinson College Auditorium  
Tuesday, February 9th 2006  
**CITY OF GOD**  
in association with "One World Wee!"  
8pm  
Robinson College Auditorium  
Admission £2  
[www.robinsonfilms.co.uk](http://www.robinsonfilms.co.uk)



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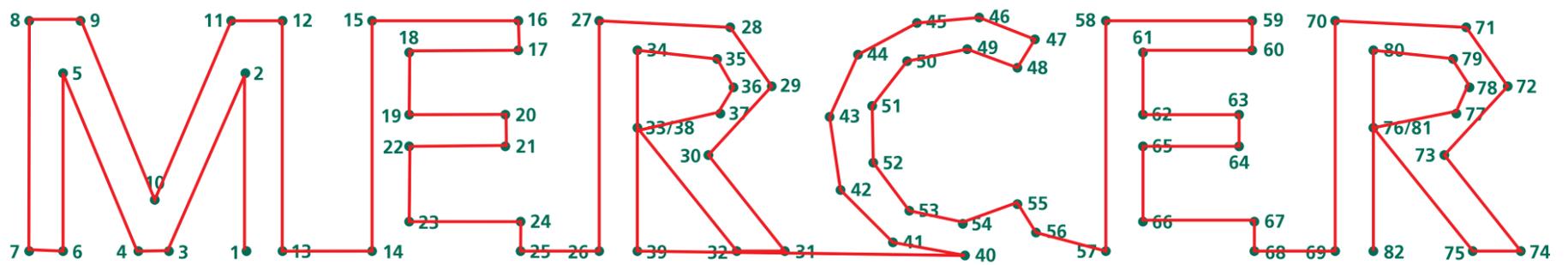
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# 'TASS' boosting stars of the future

The initiative that allows tomorrow's cream to ponder 2012 Olympic glory

## Sophie Pickford

Ever heard of Chris Greensides? How about Mary Cohen or Samantha Cutts? There's little reason why you should have, but in a few years (six to be precise) their names may well grace the front pages of our National broadsheets as heroes of the London Olympics. They are just three of nine sportsmen and women at Cambridge awarded places on the much-prized 'Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme' (TASS), a government-led initiative that aims to bridge the gaping hole in funding for elite athletes while they are students, normally during the transitional phase between Junior and Senior International level.

The list of achievements to date by Cambridge's TASS athletes is truly impressive. The majority have represented either England or Great Britain in their chosen sport, and some have already had considerable success at International level. Each has been individually nominated by their National Governing Body. This year nine athletes are spread across six sports: sailing, fencing, equestrian, triathlon, golf and cricket, representing only a small percentage of the forty-eight different disciplines currently accepted by the scheme (of which fourteen are disability sports).

The material benefits of TASS are one of its greatest

strengths. Karen Pearce, Assistant Director of Physical Education and Manager of the scheme in Cambridge, has £3000 annually to spend on each athlete. This money is spread between different services, from coaching to conditioning, competition costs to training expenses; the idea is that financial concerns won't impede athletes' progress. Mary Cohen, a fencer with a British ranking of 6<sup>th</sup> in 2005, emphasises how "the money takes a massive load of stress off us." Bethan Carden, a sailor who has just been selected for the Southern Volvo Keelboat Squad, sees another of the major advantages as her top-of-the-range kit, "so I don't get cold in the middle of the channel or when it's snowing." She is also able to attend events "without the need to have time out of sailing to earn the money back."

**"TASS's alumni are already progressing to sporting stardom"**

Some of the benefits of the scheme are less tangible, though no less important. Sam Cutts, short-listed last year for the British U21 European



Equestrian Sam Cutts in action at last May's Saumur CCI\*\*\*

eventing team, points to "the chance to meet other people on the scheme, and discuss ways around our similar major time problems" as a particular bonus. This opportunity comes twice a term, when there are workshops on issues including nutrition, lifestyle and sports psychology. A mentor is also assigned to each athlete. Chris Greensides, a fencer who has won the National Championships four times and represented Britain in the Junior European Championships, says his mentor "is particularly useful in helping me out if I'm having problems with the old sport/work conflict." The students on the scheme are

'scholar-athletes' in the true sense of the term, and the delicate balance between sport and work is an issue that frequently rears its head. Pearce stresses that the main goal of TASS is "to give athletes the chance to go to University whilst not jeopardising their sporting chances by doing so," but maintaining their dual lives is a constant struggle, which requires them to be "very determined and focussed." Richard Timms, professional cricketer and former England U18 player finds balancing his commitments "very tough in the summer" when he is "often away for three days at a time playing." Tom Savill, another pro crick-

eter, has had to negotiate special permission from his supervisors to play during the height of the season. For fencer Greensides, Michaelmas is the most pressured time, when "all-nighters tend to feature heavily." In a world where burning out is a long-term risk, the qualifications gained at University are, however, a welcome fall-back. Cutts stresses "the message [TASS] broadcasts - that you can do sport at a very high level and still get a degree - is fantastic."

The scheme was only established in 2004, but its alumni are already progressing to sporting stardom. Since leaving Cambridge last year, TASS graduates Rachel Howe and Gemma Farrell are now training full-time with the British sailing team and Olympic development squad. Their primary goal is to win Gold at the 2012 Olympics. London 2012 is a recurring theme for TASS athletes; their burning desire to succeed will be tested by this, the ultimate milestone. As Pearce says, "athletes for 2012 are very much at student age now, so it is a very valuable scheme for them." But TASS is ultimately in the hands of the government and when asked about its future, her response is only that "with politics it is very hard to predict." With the continued support of the scheme, there is no knowing the heights of achievement student athletes at Cambridge could reach. Perhaps we'll find out in 2012.

## FITZ FIND RELIEF IN CUP RUN

FITZWILLIAM CCSS 50

### Adam Bracey

A glance at the bottom end of the league table shows that Fitz have had their problems this season, but Cuppers offers them some hope of salvaging something from a poor season.

Here they had brushed their opponents aside by half-time and their total could easily have reached double-figures. Cambridge Centre for Sixth Form Studies are a college of only 170 pupils, and their football team is made up of 16-18 year-olds. An away win would therefore have been a serious shock, and the Sixth Formers were on level terms here for no more than a minute. Blues forward Brendan Threlfall struck the first of Fitz's four first-half goals.

CCSS made a game of it in the second half, with good performances from full-back Mark Leaford, midfielder Sam Mbunya and forward Will Gough. But inevitably, Threlfall had the final word, completing the scoring with his fourth goal of the match. The men's division resumes next weekend, and Fitz, minus the Blues man, will go in search of their first league win.

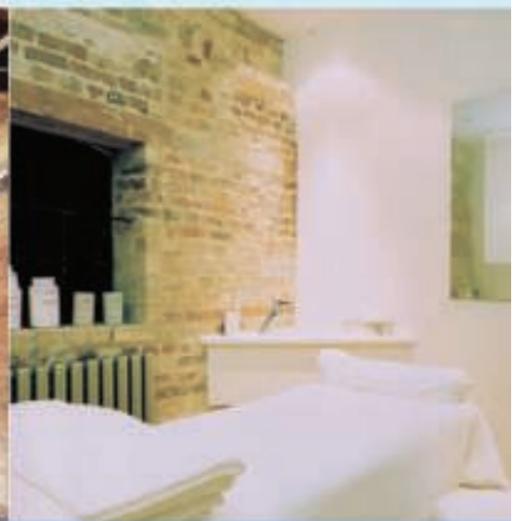


for a full match report, see [www.varsity.co.uk](http://www.varsity.co.uk)

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VIEWINGS WELCOME

# Blues display packs its usual punch

Russ Glenn reports on a night of enthralling boxing at The Union

CAMBRIDGE MET POLICE 4 2

If some crook steals your laptop while you're at lectures, you might be better off calling the Cambridge University Amateur Boxing Club (CUABC) than the police. On Wednesday evening at the Union, the Cambridge boxers showed great pluck and fantastic fitness in defeating the London Metropolitan Police by four bouts to two. The police and Cambridge, as well as guest contenders from Coventry University, the Icen Boxing Club, and the Royal Air Force, put on an aggressive, crowd-pleasing show.

Cambridge ex-captain Tom Britton set the tone for the evening in the premier bout, forcing welterweight police brawler Jon Ainsworth into the corner with well-aimed flurries of hooks. Britton's superior conditioning showed as the fight wore on, allowing him to keep Ainsworth on his heels, and he scored a unanimous decision for Cambridge.

Looking to avenge his comrade, Steve Lawrence of the Met, came out punching in the first round of the second fight, but Cambridge boxer George Vardoulakis showed his experience in countering his opponent's frenzied attacks with a series of quick left jabs in the first two rounds.

Though packing a wicked wound-up left, Lawrence was unable to keep Vardoulakis's hand out of his face, which allowed George to snap his opponent's head back in the second, scoring a standing count. A ferocious third-round assault from Vardoulakis led to Cambridge's second unanimous decision in the welterweight class.

In the light-heavyweight division, Paul Phillips of the police came out strongly against Cambridge's Simon Lehnis. After a brief stoppage in the first round, Lehnis finished the round strongly. The second saw him bloodied by a sneaky left hook from Phillips out of a clinch, but the Cambridge man retaliated with a



ANDY SIMS

furious assault in the next two rounds, forcing the referee to stop the match in favour of Cambridge.

In one of the evening's most exciting bouts, Cambridge's Jana 'The Tattooed Terror' Diemberger put her southpaw police opponent Anna

**"Britton's superior conditioning showed as the fight wore on"**

Neocleous under pressure early, with a ferocious double attack in the first and second rounds. She pushed the attack in the first half of the third, knocking the policewoman to the ground. Neocleous showed her valour by responding seconds later with a quick one-two that felled Jana in turn. Despite the passionate comeback, the Cambridge novice jumped right back up and pushed Anna back, scoring the University's third unani-

mous decision of the night, and securing the honour of 'best boxer of the night' in the process.

In the night's fifth bout, Cambridge's Konrad Andreyczyk and local Icen boxer Louis Byrnes went punch for punch through the first two rounds. Byrnes responded by attacking aggressively in the third, and narrowly bested Konrad with a majority decision.

On the heels of the first round, Cambridge's Ed Andrews, fresh off the university rugby pitch, next matched Met. Police boxer James Barry. Andrews mounted a devastating offense in the first round, bloodying Barry early. James responded ably with a series of doubles. Both boxers showed fantastic heart in the final minutes, tiring each other with quick jabs to the face. Despite his defeat, the match bodes well for super-heavyweight Andrews, who *Varsity* is confident will represent Cambridge in fine style in the near future.

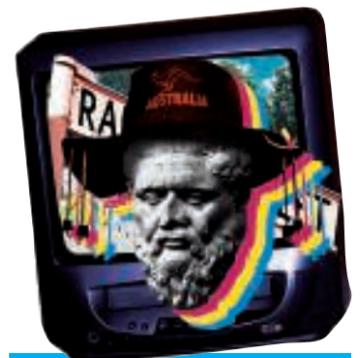
The final Cambridge-Police bout of the night paired Rich Spandl and

policeman Andrew Garvey in the middleweight division. It was a truly gutsy, fast-paced match, with both boxers unleashing quick punches from the bell. Garvey's experience won through in the latter part of the fight, earning him a unanimous decision in favour of the police.

The night was rounded off with a couple of frenzied RAF v. Police fights, and a Cambridge match in which Seb Lambert soundly defeated Richard Baker of Coventry University with a stoppage in the first round.

Cambridge coach David Byrne summed up the evening well by noting that he was "proud to see his boxers hold their own with a fluid and dynamic style that is a problem to most" The CUABC has a tough month ahead, as they prepare to defend their unique 9-0 victory over Oxford last year in this season's Varsity match, at Oxford, on March 6.

Judging by the excellent fights and superior fitness exhibited on Wednesday evening, the police would do well to prepare better for next year's encounter.



## Erinsborough Ethics

The residents of Ramsay Street have had a long and successful relationship with Neptune, the god of the sea. They occasionally sacrifice the lesser members of the cast to sate his raging appetite for human flesh. David, Liljana and Serena Bishop are the most recent victims; Marlene (who went on a three-month cruise and never returned) was one of the strangest. In return, Neptune has a habit of delivering numerous Neighbours from the clutches of the deep and onto dry land, though those people that he saves have often undergone a change in character as a result of their aquatic dramatics. Harold Bishop was washed up alive, but with no memory, and had to start his life from scratch. Dylan Timmins, the sleeveless wonder, was washed up alive, but temporarily decided to allow his family to think he had died. Still, with the help of Connor, Dylan made it back to Erinsborough in time for his own memorial service, much to the surprise of, well, everyone.

As we have come to expect from Neighbours, there is an underlying intellectualism to this storyline. Dylan's return home, and his family's subsequent reaction, served to demonstrate the fragility of the relationship between epistemology and ontology. We have a tendency to think that whatever we believe about the world is really true. People who believe in God believe he really exists. People who believe in ghosts believe they really exist. And Janelle really believed that Dylan had died; it had been too long without news, the search had found no trace of him, and she'd had that weird vision of him making a sandwich in the kitchen. But there is a gulf between what we believe and what really is, and sometimes this gulf is exposed. Janelle was wrong. Despite all evidence to the contrary, Dylan was very much alive. His return to Ramsay Street wasn't only motivated by a desire to see Stingray freed from custody, but also a desire to show Janelle that allowing her epistemology (what she thought she knew) to shape her ontology (what really was the case) had led her into error. When the two of them saw each other for the first time since the plane crash, Janelle slapped Dylan. Then she embraced him. It was almost as if she was, at first, angry at having to reassess her ontology, but then accepted that she must do so in the light of new evidence.

That was the whole point of Thursday's episode. We believe certain things, and most of the time we're right. Chairs and tables probably really do exist; ghosts and vampires probably don't. But on those occasions when we come to realise that a deeply-held and cherished belief is wrong, it's how we react that shows our true character. Do we stubbornly refuse to change our minds, thinking that we simply must be right? Or do we accept that we got it wrong, give ourselves a slap, and move on?

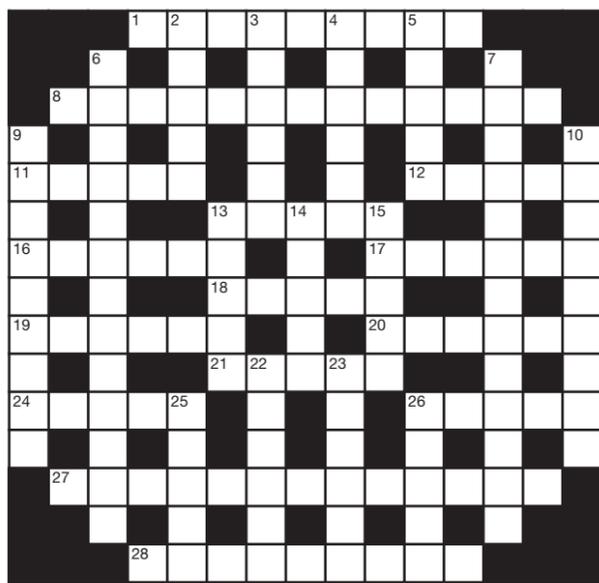
The sea plays a crucial role in Neighbours. It can take away our favourite characters or it can bring them back. Are we sure David Bishop is dead? Will Marlene's cruise ever end? Is it possible that Dee, Toadie's ex-wife, might have remained afloat on two airbags? Whatever the answers to these questions, the sea reminds us that we can never be sure what will happen next in Ramsay Street; we constantly have to challenge our beliefs and adopt new ones. That's one reason to keep watching Neighbours. One Good Reason.

WARWICK CAMBRIDGE 3 1

On Saturday, Cambridge's Blues made the journey to Warwick in search of crucial BUSA points. On paper, little separated the two sides, so it was unsurprising that the game began at a high tempo. A dynamic break ended in a Warwick player turning Brendan Threlfall's cross into his own goal.

The Blues began to exert a greater degree of control, with Coleman, Mills and Mugan showing a range of passing and set-piece delivery which stretched the home side further. But Warwick struck from nowhere on the stroke of half-time. An inswinging corner bobbled around and eventually fell to a white shirt, and the ball was poked in by the post from a yard.

The second period saw a resurgent Warwick beat at the door of the staunch Cambridge defence. Warwick moved ahead thanks to an unfortunate error from Blues' goalkeeper James Dean. The Blues responded though, haring after the ball and piling pressure on the Warwick defence for the first time in the half, with Mugan and Adams going close. However, as the away side pressed forward, Warwick stole a third goal to seal the win.



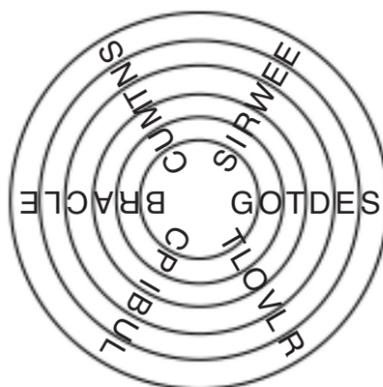
### Across

1. Mythical foot, say, on a trainline (9)
8. Early measure to prevent gaps in calendar? (1,6,2,4)
11. Trace out reply (5)
12. I dance with glee around servant (5)
13. Fuss and bother about love (5)
16. Rib-like article lost from seaside (6)
17. City's incentive to recycle discarded tin (6)
18. Free solo performed with energy (5)
19. Don may recreate device for producing electricity (6)
20. Objected bitterly right before chef's return (6)
21. Bent over gold in concern (5)
24. Elementary compound? (5)
26. German article in Chinese province (5)
27. Kind, firm friend harbours powerful emotion (13)
28. Cite as the new type of beauty (9)

### Down

2. Command hundred caught in ebb-tide (5)
3. Imprinted in wet Cheddar (6)
4. Club chauffeur (6)
5. Badger later destroyed (5)
6. One country used mules to make a killing (13)
7. Praetorian guards in yards? (8,5)
9. Zero-tolerance approach to drug and drink (9)
10. Accused fended off worker (9)
13. Let saint be decapitated (5)
14. Smell of cod our house contains (5)
15. Each really heartless girl goes on top (5)
22. Compensate for postponed games (6)
23. Vain queen slipped in gorge (6)
25. Pure senselessness about foreign currency (5)
26. Language used in North Indian states (5)

© Mathmo

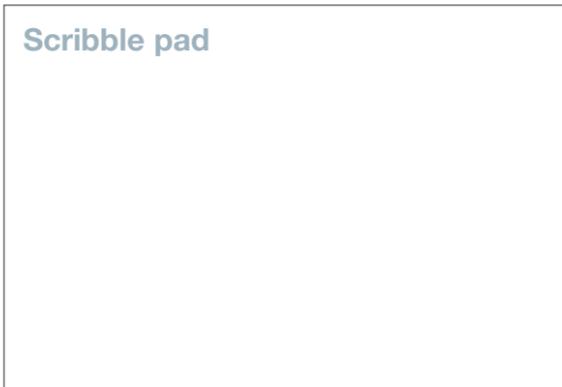


Re-arrange the letters by rotating the discs to create six separate six-letter words leading in to the centre.  
Email your answer to: [competitions@varsity.co.uk](mailto:competitions@varsity.co.uk)

© Adam Edlshain



### Scribble pad





**BOXING**

**CAMBRIDGE 4-2 MET.**

Blues edge out police in gripping fixture at The Union



**BLUES**

**WARWICK 3-1 CAMBRIDGE**

Error proves costly as Blues slip to defeat in the Midlands



**FEATURE**

**'TASS' SCHOLARSHIPS**

Sophie Pickford looks at a scheme that help athletes



**COLLEGE FOOTBALL**

**FITZ 5-0 CCSS**

Fitz on track for Cuppers' success after easy home win



**A WEEK IN THE LIFE**

KIP MCDANIEL  
UNIVERSITY ROWING

**Monday**

Monday, thankfully, is CUBC's day off. However, with an erg test the next morning, most of the day is spent relaxing, preparing, and worrying. Later I head to the boat-house to do a light session meant to get me ready for the next day's testing.

**Tuesday**

Tuesday is the true start to the week for me. Up at exactly 6:08, I cycle to Goldie Boathouse. After the 30-minute ergometer test we do 25 km on the water and head back to Cambridge, where I return to my room to finish a portfolio management project. I'm in bed by ten - frankly, I love sleeping more than finance.

**Wednesday**

6:08 again, down to a science - and down to Goldie once more. After lunch, its back to Goldie and then Ely, where we do some racing between the two boats. After a cold shower with 18 naked men, it's back for dinner and another early bedtime.

**Thursday**

The routine is broken by a visit to the Bishop of Ely, who has invited the team for tea. I pray that he doesn't detect my complete lack of faith. Followed by some tremendous finger foods and a brief side-trip to 'USA Chicken'.

**Friday**

Friday is a relatively light day - just one workout (weights and a light erg) and one class.

**Saturday**

On Saturday morning we drive to the Tideway in London, where the Boat Race will be held. Two sessions and 45 km later, my legs no longer work.

**Sunday**

Sunday brings with it two more training sessions. The only things that gets me through the ordeal are thoughts of Chicken Stuffing sandwiches and dreams of girls named Clare at Life/Twenty-Two that night.



BEN JONES

## Blaikie enjoys winning home start

CAMBRIDGE	41
RAF	6

### New captain's mission begins with comprehensive success

**Jamie Brockbank**

Before kick-off, the wag on the Grange Road Tannoy system had jibed that the last home game against the Army, cancelled due to a frozen pitch, had actually been called off because it was too chilly for troops used to spending their days in the warmer climes of Southern Iraq.

Despite the light-hearted banter, the RAF were forced to stoically concede in their programme notes that their squad had been depleted by operational pressures, a factor that showed as the Blues had little difficulty in running in an unopposed 7 tries on a bitterly cold and murky Wednesday evening's rugby.

For Cambridge and newly-elected skipper, towering Kiwi lock John Blaikie, the task of assembling a new side to retain the Varsity match has begun already, less than a couple of months after the euphoria of Twickenham. Ed Carter and his victorious team enjoyed a last hurrah together as they beat Durham by five tries to four in the traditional Captain's Match in January. But with the old guard of Ufton, Alberts, Akinluyi,

Desmond and the like moving on next year, the Lent term fixtures mark the process of breaking up the old team and bleeding fresh talent. Blaikie's task of regenerating the side is an unenviable one. Many of the finest coaches in sport have discovered first hand that sustaining success it is a delicate balancing act. The Blues opted to retain a core of experience in the front-row with Bosch and Kirkman, full debuts were granted to Ryan Harper at blindside flanker, former under-21s captain Andrew Stevenson at outside centre and Andy Davidson at full back.

In the lively opening encounters, the Blues forwards set the tone for the evening by dominating the lighter-weight RAF pack and driving deep into their opponents' 22. Relentless forward pressure in the corner allowed Blaikie to lead by example to score the game's opening try with a close-range effort in the eighth minute.

Moments later though, a lovely show of the ball and sidestep on the half-way line saw the RAF's seemingly jet-propelled right winger leave stand-in number 11 Paul Magee in his slipstream. Brought down yards short of the right corner-flag, the RAF spun the

ball out left and grubber-kicked into space in the far corner, but Magee made amends with a superb cover tackle in his opposite corner to deny the chasers.

Following a successful 30-yard placekick in front of the posts in the twelfth minute, the RAF demonstrated their long-range strike capability with another three points, this time from the half-way line, to nudge 6-5 ahead at the end of the first quarter. But more rampaging picking and driving from the Blues forwards in the loose created the platform for Steff Thomas's neat touchline show and go to earn the Blues second try.

The RAF had not given up the fight though, overzealously shown by some of the punches thrown in mauls by their loose-head prop, and a well-worked decoy move in the centres gifted them a two-on-one overlap in the corner that was squandered with a reckless final pass.

But the bulk of the possession and territory remained Cambridge's, and it was no surprise when the Blues extended their lead to 17-6 on the stroke of half-time when Thomas's half-break through the middle created the space for the ball to be thrown wide for Magee to score in the

corner.

A somewhat muted second-half began with the ball punted aimlessly backwards and forwards between opposing full-backs, before Ian McInroy seized the initiative by feinting to kick before embarking with searing pace on a solo length-of-the-field effort that was thwarted only yards short.

From the resulting scrum, Blaikie bagged his second try of the evening and despite vocal touchline support from their travelling contingent, the RAF seemed to be running on empty as the Blues rang the changes to bring on more youngsters. Whilst loose-head prop Rudi Bosch moonlighted on the left wing in a bid to add to his Twickenham try-count, tight-head replacement Tom Martin burst through under the posts in the sixty-sixth minute.

But it was McInroy who ensured that the RAF truly had their wings clipped with his hand in the final two tries, the first as the veteran fly-half horrendously miscued a close-range drop-goal attempt to allow winger Jono Murray to gratefully pounce ahead of a bemused defence, and the second as he himself cut back inside the drifting defence to score under the posts to make it an emphatic 41-6.

**Next week**

**Valentine's Day is nearly upon us - let the Varsity love-in commence**

**Quick Kakuro**

Hard

Fill the grid so that each run of squares adds up to the total in the box above or to the left. Use only numbers 1-9, and never use a number more than once per run (a number may reoccur in the same row in a separate run).  
Solution and solving aids at [www.dokakuro.com](http://www.dokakuro.com)

			16	9		
		6				
		30			18	
	9	30				9
	13			20	3	
	16			16		
				13		
		30				
				10		

**Quick Sudoku**

Hard

The object is to insert the numbers in the boxes to satisfy only one condition: each row, column and 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 through 9 exactly once. What could be simpler?

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