# VARSITY

#### Friday January 16th 2009

»p6 News We talk to grad Loyd Grossman The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

»p20 Arts Cambridge Graffiti: best of the streets, margins & loos Issue no 686 | varsity.co.uk

»p16 Fashion 'In Print' at Kettle's Yard

# *Research funds under threat*

#### » Cambridge is top university for research, says study » Millions in funding for top universities at risk

#### Andrew Bellis

Despite Cambridge being named as the UK's top university for research in a seven-year study, millions of pounds in scholarly funding could be at risk.

The Russell Group of top universities has warned that its members face "haemorrhaging money" when the government's funding allocations are announced in March. Currently 82 per cent of govern-

Currently 82 per cent of government funding goes to just 29 universities. But the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), a government study into the quality of university research, found "world-leading" research in 150 of the 159 participating institutions.

The RAE is used to help allocate £1.2bn of government funding for universities. Estimates suggest that the Russell Group could lose 10 per cent of its "quality-related" funding if the government funds all research deemed to be 'world-leading' or 'in-

E112m Amount Cambridge received in "guality-related" government funding

**10%** Percentage the Russell Group could lose in funding ternationally excellent'. This would equate to a cut of roughly £140m a year. The Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) for England will announce this year's funding in March.

Almost two-thirds of Cambridge's government funding last year was based upon the previous RAE in 2001. The University was given almost £176m, a 2.3 per cent increase on the 2007 allocation, of which £112m was quality-related.

Dr Wendy Piatt, director general of the Russell Group, said: "We're very worried about a haemorrhaging of money from research-intensive universities and we're keen to remind people of the importance of critical mass and maintaining world-class universities."

The 1994 Group of universities has called for funding to be spread more widely. Paul Marshall, executive director of the group, said: "We support research concentration but the RAE is a competition in which there are, and have always been, winners and losers. We expect HE-FCE to stick to its commitment to fund recognised research excellence wherever it is found."

The RAE found that 71 per cent of Cambridge research was world-leading or internationally excellent.

Engineering and Computer Science both had 90 per cent of their research classified in one of the top two categories. Linguistics, however, fared less well, with ten per cent of their researchers classified as 'substandard'.



#### Ready... Teddy... Lift-off!

Four teddy bears were launched into space from Churchill last month. The bears, wearing special 'teddy-naut' suits made by students at local schools, spent just over two hours on the mission before landing near Ipswich. Cambridge University Spaceflight led the project to help promote science and engineering in education.

## *ITV pulls back from Boat Race*

#### Caedmon Tunstall-Behrens

ITV confirmed last month that it is dropping coverage of the annual Boat Race between Cambridge and Oxford. Despite record viewing figures of 7.6 million last year, a 76 per cent increase on the year before and a figure only fractionally below the 8.1 million who tuned into the FA Cup final, ITV has decided not to renew its five-year contract with the Boat Race Company.

The BBC monopolised television coverage of the day for 50 years before ITV took over in 2004. It is believed that the company are dropping their coverage of this particular event and others, including the Grand National last year, as part of a cost-cutting plan: the helicopters required to film the race raise expenditure significantly.

race raise expenditure significantly. Peter Fincham, ITV's director of television, said, "We've been very proud of our coverage of the Boat Race. Unfortunately, we're living in tough economic times and this inevitably leads to difficult decisions."

Andrew Gilbert, a second-year rower from Jesus, said, "It's a long standing institution of the country. It would be quite a big thing for old boys and members of the public not to be able to watch it. Unlike current students, they are unlikely to travel to do so."

ITV is planning to focus instead on football rights, Fincham said, "You can't have everything and money is a factor."

The BBC refuses to comment on the progress of the negotiations, but Channel 4 is also believed to be involved in the discussions.

The event has been taking place on the Thames between Putney Bridge and Chiswick Bridge since 1829. During the 180 years it has been taking place, there have been 154 races. Cambridge has won 79 of these, and drew the 1877 race with a dead heat. The next race is scheduled for March 29th this year.

## Homerton 'ready' to become University's newest College

#### Andrew Bellis

Homerton, currently an "approved society" of the University, has moved towards gaining full College status.

The University Council has recommended that Homerton should become a full college, despite not having a large enough endowment.

More details on page 3

Homerton's Principal, Kate Perry, said she was pleased by the news. "I'm delighted that we have reached this stage and if the university gives formal approval the Privy Council may well be in a position to approve Homerton's application for collegiate status." After considering a report from a committee, set up to consider Homerton's request, the Council declared itself "satisfied that the college is in a sound position, in terms of educational provision and otherwise, to move to full College status".

The decision comes despite Homer-

ton's failure to meet the financial guidelines for founding a College. The Council observed that its "financial resources fall somewhat short of the minimum endowment for a College of its size and composition". Their most recent accounts, showing sufficient endowments, were published before the full impact of the economic slowdown. Homerton has pledged not to draw funds from the central Colleges Fund in the first five years after becoming a College.

If successful, Homerton will become the first College to be established since Hughes Hall was granted full collegiate status in 2006.



Varsity Fashion is holding a casting day for potential models, illustrators and hair & make-up artists. Come to the Shop at **XVIII Jesus Lane** from 2pm to 4pm on **Sunday 18th**.

### Contents

### News »pp1-8

*Cambridge Spies » p7* Prepare to be scandalised by a well-boiled serving of hot gossip.

*Council take a punt » p8* The City Council puts a space in its budget for a 'Punting Enforcement Officer'. Marvellous.

### Comment »pp9-11

*The Essay* » *p31* Prof. Richard J. Evans argues against the criminalisation of Holocaust denial.

*Credit what?* » *p33* Students are safe from the recession.

### Magazine »pp13-28

*Ed at large* » *p14* Ed Cumming talks about nothing in particular.

*Blind tours of the Tate Modern » p19* Laura Freeman joins a ground-breaking new initiative bringing art to the blind.

### Sport »pp29-32

*Cooney's Marathon* » *p29* Join Lauren Cooney at the start of her epic adventure, training to run the London Marathon.

*Twickenham review» pp31-32* The Blues ('students') lost, the U21s (actual students) won.

## Get involved

Weekly meetings are held for anyone interested in writing for Varsity.

*News Sunday, 4pm in the Maypole (Portugal Place)* 

*Comment Monday, 1pm in the Maypole* 

*Magazine Wednesday, 5.30pm in the Maypole* 

*Sport Sunday, 7pm in the Baron of Beef (Bridge St.)* 

## Eight is enough

So we return to the old *canard* of nine-week terms, as CUSU argues that students need to be able to "take a step back from the intensity of term". At the same time, we learn that Cambridge has possibly the best research of any university in the country; this is according to inspectors hired by the government – not, perhaps, traditionally best friends with this institution – and is all the more telling for it. Yet might not the quality of research in the University be intimately linked with the intensity of termtime? Most obviously, having eight-week terms leaves half the year for dons to concentrate on their own research; however, there may also be more psychological benefits to the brevity of the terms. Cramming into eight weeks what some universities do in twelve creates an atmosphere of manic activity which encourages students and researchers to challenge each other and themselves, as well as encouraging the idea that Cambridge and her equally-brief-termed sister Oxford are exceptional, and require higher standards than other universities. A nine-week term would dull both these effects.

This is not to deny that the current system has its drawbacks. The non-stop nature of the term can create huge amounts of stress, occasionally leading to students becoming depressed and possibly de-grading; before proper student support systems were instituted, indeed, that stress could lead to suicide. Moreover, the elitism fostered by Oxbridge exceptionalism is often seen by the rest of the world as a very bad thing. However, most students are healthy and happy, even taking pride in the amount of activity they can cram in to the two months of term; and elitism cannot be all bad as long as it continues to produce world-leading academic research, pushing scientific boundaries and expanding the limits of human self-knowledge.

To his credit, CUSU President Mark Fletcher has opposed a change in term structure, pointing out that this change would do little to tackle "wider problems" of student stress. After all, it is almost certain that a nine-week term would simply fill itself with nine weeks' worth of work: students would be under no less pressure, and would simply have to contend with a reduction in the length of holidays which can already seem absurdly brief. The proposal would offer no respite from deadlines and essay crises, while threatening the foundations of the University's excellent recent performance. It should be opposed by all who wish to protect Cambridge's reputation.

## A travesty of a tribute

CUSU's book 'celebrating' the 800th anniversary is a disgrace. After an introduction on the students' union's history – perhaps the only section into which CUSU, or any student, had any input – we proceed to find the Colleges' respective prospectuses, followed by a series of prospectuses from an arbitrary selection of private schools. The bulk of the book is puff for graduate employers, ending – surreally – with four pages on the Freemasons. CUSU clearly saw an opportunity to make easy money, but at the expense of its good name. The existence of this book is embarrassing for the Students' Union, and for the University as a whole.

## Win a bottle of wine

*Complete Varsity's online Wealth Survey at www.varsity.co.uk/wealth for a chance to win.* 

Next week: The Proctor & Gamble Varsity100 2009

letters@varsity.co.uk Submit your letter for the chance to win a bottle of wine from the Cambridge Wine Merchants.

Dear Sirs, I would like to question the pertinence of your article 'Engineer is BNP Member' (Issue 684, November 21st 2008). I do not support the BNP myself, however I do support the basic civil rights to

Leave British Nationalist alone

privacy and freedom of speech. I am appalled that the University employee in question has been publicly denounced for a belief that has apparently never before appeared to affect his work life. This article does no more than sensationalise a politically ridiculous and invasive situation. Furthermore, the encouragement to publicly 'name and shame'

underground. Personally, I would expect more from a newspaper run by such allegedly well-educated people.

members of radical political parties sure-

ly encourages the members to go further

Yours faithfully,

Joy Stacey

Varsity has been Cambridge's independent student newspaper since 1947 and distributes 10,000 free copies to every Cambridge College and to ARU each week.

Editors Hugo Gye & Michael Stothard editor@varsity.co.uk Associate Editors Clementine Dowley associate@varsity.co.uk & Robert Peal magazine@varsity.co.uk News Editors Andrew Bellis & Cædmon Tunstall-Behrens news@varsity.co.uk Comment Editor Robert Stagg comment@varsity.co.uk Sport Editors Jenny Morgan & Jamie Ptaszynski sport@varsity.co.uk Features Editor Joe Hunter features@varsity.co.uk Arts Editor Emma Mustich arts@varsity.co.uk Theatre Editor Joel Massey theatre@varsity.co.uk Reviews & Listings Editor Laurie Tuffrey reviews@varsity.co.uk Fashion Editors Kate Womersley, Alice Newell-Hanson & Katy King fashion@varsity.co.uk

Senior Reporters Christos Lavidas, Timothy Leung, Beth Staton & Lizzy Tyler seniorreporte@varsity.co.uk Science Correspondents Rose Powell-Tuck & Arthur Turrell science@varsity.co.uk Food & Drink Editors Jono Franklin & Amanda Palin food@varsity.co.uk Interviews Editor George Grist interviews@varsity.co.uk Theatre Critics Victoria Ball, Nicholas Beck, Nathan Brooker, Lauren Davidson & George Reynolds theatrecritic@varsity.co.uk Music Critics Lucy Bryant & Paul Smith music@varsity.co.uk Film Critics Isobel Finkel & Tom Morris film@varsity.co.uk Visual Arts Critic Laura Freeman visualarts@varsity.co.uk Classical Music Critics David Allen & Andrew Browning classical@varsity.co.uk Literary Critic Colette Sensier literary@varsity.co.uk Editor-at-large Ed Cumming large@varsity.co.uk

Sub-editors Colm Flanagan, Sheli Levenson & Charlie Pearson subeditor@varsity.co.uk Photographers Patrick Garety, Tim Johns, Sean Jones, Tom Moriarty, Lizzie Robinson, Charlotte Runcie, Dhaneesha Senaratne & Zing Tsjeng photos@varsity.co.uk Illustrators Alice Edgerley, Tom de Freston, Sallie Godwin, Jane Hall, Emma Lough, Giles Smith, Katherine Spence, Christiana Spens, Claudia Stocker, Anna Trench & Oliver Watson illustration@varsity.co.uk

Business & Advertising Manager Michael Derringer business@varsity.co.uk Board of Directors Dr Michael Franklin (Chair), Prof. Peter Robinson, Dr Tim Harris, Mr Tom Walters, Mr Chris Wright, Mr Michael Derringer, Miss Lizzie Mitchell, Mr Elliot Ross (VarSoc President), Mr Thomas Bird, Mr George Grist, Mr Patrick Kingsley, Miss Natasha Lennard, Miss Anna Trench, Mr Hugo Gye & Mr Michael Stothard



Varsity Publications, Old Examination Hall, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RF. Tel 01223 337575. Fax 01223 760949. Varsity is published by Varsity Publications Ltd. Varsity Publications also publishes BlueSci and The Mays. ©2009 Varsity Publications Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a maximum strain and the may form or by any means electronic, mechanical photocopying, recorrusive without prior permission of the publisher. Printed at Cambridge Newspapers Ltd — Winship Road, Milton, Cambridge CB24 6PP. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. ISSN 1758-4442





# Cambridge is top university for research, says government report

» Seven-year study says 71% of Cambridge research is 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' » Report will be used to allocate £1.5bn of government funding for universities

#### Lizzy Tyler

Cambridge is the UK's best university for research, according to an influential

seven-year government study. Both Cambridge and Oxford achieved high results in the Research Assessment Exercise, a review used to allocate £1.5bn of government funding to universities.

Cambridge submitted 92 per cent of its permanent academic staff, 71 per cent of whom were classed as 'worldleading' or 'internationally excellent', compared to 70 per cent for Oxford.

Work submitted to the study was judged by a process of peer review, and given a mark between 1\* and 4\*. In a ranking compiled by Times Higher Ed-ucation, Cambridge finished as the topperforming university, with an average score of 2.98 out of 4. Oxford and the London School of Economics tied in second place, with an average of 2.96. York and Essex are the only non-Russell Group universities in the top ten.

CUSU has pulled out of its LBGT club night and the future of its live music

evening is still uncertain after a week

a statement on Wednesday announc-

ing that the event would not be taking

place this term since there was not "sufficient demand for a live music night on a Friday night among our members". But the CUSU Ents Officer,

Mat Morgan, told Varsity that this was

a result of "miscommunication". Al-

though he was in contact with Union

officers about the event, his messages

never got passed on to Rosie Shimell,

In a revised statement on Wednes-

day night, the Union said: "Follow-

ing continued negotiations between

CUSU and the Union, the most likely possibility is that Cam Live will go

ahead at the Cambridge Union this term in some form." Although the revised statement said that Cam Live

would be taking place at the Union tonight, this is no longer the case due

The Cam Live nights are likely to

run in future only on those Fridays

for which the Union has not already

scheduled bops such as today's Save

the Rave Bop, and the St Valentine's

bop. Mat Morgan, Ents Manager for

CUSU, said that he hopes Cam Live

will be held during other days in the

CUSU has also pulled out of its

LBGT night, Thrust, Paul Whitbread,

of Thrust Promotions, told Varsity

that the night will continue to run on

Tuesdays at Life, although CUSU will

no longer be involved. James Beattie,

week when Friday is not an option.

to technical problems.

the Union's entertainment officer.

The Cambridge Union, which hosts the Cam Live music evening, released

of confusion at CUSU Ents.

**Christos Lavidas** 

All assessed research was graded either 4\* (world-leading), 3\* (internationally excellent), 2\* (internationally recognised), 1\* (nationally recognised) or 0 (sub-standard). Cambridge's topperforming subject areas were engineering and computer science, both of which achieved either 4\* or 3\* in 90 per cent of their research. Linguis-

#### UK's best research universities

- Cambridge (1)
- 2 =Oxford (3)

- 6
- 10 University of Edinburgh (16=)

tics achieved the highest percentage of sub-standard research, with 10 per cent of their research being rated 0.

The RAE in 2001 also rated Cambridge as the top UK research university. The 2008 study will be the last of its kind - the government has announced plans to replace it with a new assessment, the research excellence framework, from 2013.

The RAE studied 159 institutions across Great Britain. The results, released on December 18, show standards in 67 different subject categories.

Ian Leslie, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research at Cambridge, said that the RAE results reflected "the strength, depth and breadth of the research at Cambridge, and we are pleased that the global quality of our academics has been recognised".

"This assessment is useful as it provides insight into where we could make effective changes. The process of evaluation has served the university sector well," he said.

The report will be used to assist the allocation of £1.5bn of government funding for universities and is important to the life of the University.

With the increased number of institutions excelling in the report there are fears that Cambridge will experience a cut in funding when allocations are made in March.

The government has welcomed the RAE's findings. John Denham, the universities minister, said: "The latest RAE reinforces the UK's position as a world leader in research. The fact that over 50 per cent of research is either 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' further confirms that the UK continues to punch above its weight in this crucial field."

NUS president, Wes Streeting, said the results "highlight the significant improvement in the quality of research by UK universities since the last RAE in 2001, and this is due in no small part to the increase in research funding".

### In Brief

#### CUSU profits from book

CUSU has made £10,000 from a book published to commemorating Cambridge's 800th anniversary. The 788 page volume, produced by PR firm St James's House, contains sec-tions on CUSU itself, profiles of all 31 colleges of the University and pro-spectuses for "feeder" schools. The final two-thirds of the book offer a guide to firms recruiting graduates in a number of career paths. CUSU was paid £10,000 for the project; however this figure represents the amount of only one of a number of ventures St James's are carrying out for the stu-dent body. A spokesman for the University commented: "It is a very nice publication.'

#### Oxford loses £100m

Oxford University has revealed that it has lost more than £100 million as a result of the global economic recession. The past year has seen investments in the university fall from £689 million to £593 million, and it is thought that the slump in share prices and property values have contributed to the losses. The university still has £30 million in savings frozen in Icelandic bank accounts after the Icelandic banking collapse last October, the return of which is still unclear. A spokesman said: "The university has sound policies in place to mitigate the impact of any longer term declines," but some claim that the financial losses hitting many universities as a result of the economic downturn may lead to an increase in tuition fees paid by students. Oxford's Vice-Chancellor, John Hood, said that the "grave deficit" in the University's accounts meant that a rise in top-up fees is "inevitable" if the quality of an Oxford education is to be maintained.

#### *Grad vacancies plummet*

A new report has confirmed that vacancies for those graduating in 2009 have been reduced significantly and most positions have already been filled. The Graduate Market in 2009, a study of graduate vacancies and starting salaries at Britain's one hundred leading employers conducted by High Fliers Research, shows that this year's intake of new graduates is to be cut by 17 per cent due to the continuing economic downturn. The situation is worst in the City where there are 47 per cent fewer entry-level jobs in investment banking this year. However, there is some better news for those who do manage to find a graduate job in 2009: graduate starting salaries are expected to rise by 6 per cent this year.





operation between the two parties on the naming of the night, the unhealthy working relations and the irrelevant airline-oriented branding. Both parties claim that their co-

promotion was forced by the club management and that neither of the two actually wanted to work together. In response to the problems as-

sociated with the name of the night Mr Whitbread said: "Thrust Promotions took on board all the views of CUSU and CUSU LBGT with regards to the name 'Thrust' yet it could not

President of CUSU's LesBiGayTrans Campaign blamed the end of the co-considering CUSU has another night standing invoices. Mr Morgan said: "The invoices are being processed; considering CUSU has another night called 'kinki".

Another issue raised by CUSU was the fact that the night was allegedly aimed more towards a town crowd. Mr Whitbread explained, "From the market research we have conducted we have found that attendance was split with 60 per cent being locals and 40 per cent being university students." Mr Morgan said: "From the feedback we received, the town people seemed to alienate the students.

Thrust Promotions is considering legal action against CUSU for out-

The invoices are being processed; however there are some questionable charges."

Thrust Promotions also claimed that part of the issue was CUSU's reluctance towards the involvement of a transsexual hostess. CUSU refuted the allegations saying they never objected to the hostess, but did not agree to the use of male erotic dancers.

"We were concerned that the atmosphere was not overly appealing to many university students and wanted more of a neutral feel," said Mr Beattie.

2= London School of Economics (4) Imperial College London (2) University College London (6) University of Manchester (n/a) University of Warwick (6) University of York (18)

### University of Essex (10)

CUSU faces yet more ents confusion

» Cambridge Union retracts Cam Live cancellation as CUSU pulls out of Thrust

Source: Times Higher Education (2001 positions in brackets)

### In Brief

#### Plagiarist kicked out

A graduate student has been expelled from Cambridge after being found guilty of seven counts of plagiarism at the University's Court of Discipline. Following a complaint by the Senior Proctor, the court met to consider the charges made against the student. He was accused of submitting work for a Master of Philosophy Examination in 2008 that had been lifted from other candidates and passed off as the student's own work. The defendant pleaded guilty and was subsequently sentenced to disqualification from the examination in question, and forfeiture of all opportunities of candidacy for any qualification offered by the University in the future.

#### *Testosterone traders*

Cambridge researchers have found that traders exposed to higher levels of testosterone in the womb make on average six times more profit than those exposed to low levels. The study, part of a growing body of research showing how biology plays an important role in economic risk-taking, shows how the effects of testosterone, including increased confidence and quickened reaction times, make individuals particularly suitable for careers as high frequen-cy traders, a job requiring the ability to look for fleeting price anomalies and making snap decisions in seconds. Some have raised concerns about the effect the study may have on the process of employment, but scientist leading the experiment said that it was "unlikely" that their research heralded a dystopian future in which hiring by major trading companies is decided by biological factors.

#### Student loan rate cut

The interest rate applied to student loans has been dropped for the second time since December 2008. The loans are classed as "low interest loans" under the 1974 Consumer Credit Act. As such they cannot charge more than 1 per cent above the highest base rate of one of a selection of banks, including the Bank's most recent base rate cut from 2 per cent to 1.5 per cent, in response to the flagging economy, has meant that the rates charged to students have dropped to 2.5 per cent, from the 2008/09 rate of 3.8 per cent, where it must stay until the base rate is raised.

#### Third bin gets go-ahead

The council's decision to replace the city's recycling boxes with dark blue wheelie bins has caused controversy amongst locals, because of the new colour's association with Cambridge's arch rival, Oxford University. One dissenting councillor has said, "Dark blue is an inappropriate colour for Cambridge - why not light blue instead?" But the council have stood by the measure, due to be introduced in October, claiming it will increase recycling rates and prevent confusion amongst residents. A spokesperson said, "We're really keen to make sure that students use the bins whatever colour they are. Brown was another colour suggested, but this is used in other parts of the country for garden waste?

## Students and academics turn to drugs

» More people use cognitive-enhancing drugs to cope with busy lives, says journal study

#### Rachel Stratton

With the ever increasing pace of everyday life, more people are turning to cognitive enhancing drugs to stay on top, according to a report in a scientific journal.

The controversial report, published in *Nature* last month, spoke of the widening use of drugs such as Ritalin, Adderal and Modafinil amongst sportsmen, students and academics.

In an informal survey, Barbara Sahakian, professor of neuropsychology at Cambridge and author of the report, found a number of colleagues to be using Modafinil as a means of fighting off jet lag, improving their academic performance and aiding their social ease at parties.

Modafinil is generally prescribed to counter the symptoms of Narcolepsy. When taken by otherwise healthy people, it is also found to stave off fatigue and improve concentration and short-term memory.

The drug is only available on prescription, though it can be bought online. Its use without a prescription is illegal.

It has become the favourite of academics because the side effects are relatively mild when compared with other "smart" drugs.

Side effects include the occasional headache, the odd bout of diarrhoea, a touch of nausea perhaps; not particularly ailments you want to get at a party, but nonetheless gentle compared with the potential heart problems, strokes or tumours that can occur from drugs like Ritalin.

As a relatively new drug, approved in the UK in 2002, the long-term effects of Modafinil are still unknown. The drug is stocked by the army to keep combat troops alert.

One Robinson student, who wished to remain anonymous, told *Varsity*: "I've tried Modafinil a couple of times. With the Cambridge workload I frequently have to stay up until the early hours to reach deadlines.

"It definitely made me focus on what I was doing but I don't think my essay was any the better for it."

The report has sparked a debate as to whether the drug should be made available over-the-counter.

The director of the Institute for Science, Ethics and Innovation at the University of Manchester, John Harris, has said that the government should "seriously consider" making such drugs available to students without a prescription.

## Corpus Clock heralds 'the beginning of the first terror'



#### Lizzy Tyler

A Christian group has posted a video on YouTube claiming that the recently unveiled £1m chronophage is a UFO that marks "the end of the world".

The ten-minute long video goes into a detailed explanation of the links between the design of the clock and the apocalyptic prophesy in the Book of Revelation. The distinctive grasshopper atop the clock is said to represent the locusts of the first "Great Terror" of the Apocalypse, with its "gold crown", "armour" and "fearsome teeth". The group say that locusts will come down in a plague and attack all those without "the mark of God on their forehead", as was written in the Bible.

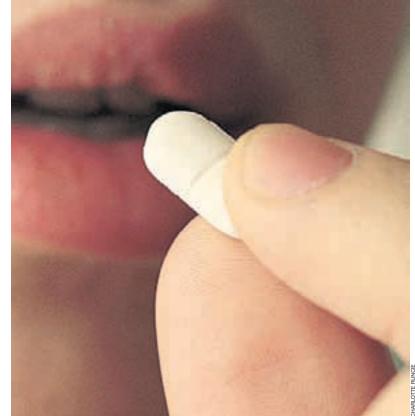
The grasshopper design, modelled by sculptor Matthew Sanderson, was inspired by medieval armour, with the main clock as an interpretation of the first chronophage invented by the Georgian clockmaker, John Harrison.

The man appearing in the video, and narrating throughout, compares the clock on numerous occasions with the book of Revelations and a Renaissance painting depicting UFOs. The grasshopper's "reptilian eyes" and those surrounding the dial are also said to be linked to the "fallen angels" of the Apocalypse.

The clock is alleged to be sending a message to "all of the rich, and all of the Freemasons that they are about to lose everything". The presenter claims that the horns at the bottom of the clock symbolise the "mark of the beast" and the sign of the Freemasons, a secretive society with more than five million members worldwide. It is claimed that "Satan's minions" are coming for them and it "serves them right" for wanting to have "a share in Satan's great new empire". The Freemasons refused to comment.

The clock was purported to have been designed by the creator for these purposes by John Taylor, who "wanted" to "release" the timepiece onto "the unsuspecting people of Cambridge". A picture of Stephen Hawking at the opening of the chronophage is alleged to have been engineered so that he is obscuring a crucial segment of the clock. "We are in the last hour" the presenter warns.

A post from 'crazycardfreak' comments that these "coincidences are too many" to be a "coincidence".



## *Council sues to reclaim* £620,000 *for festival*

#### Matilda Bathurst

Cambridge City Council will go to the High Court on Wednesday to try to reclaim almost £620,000 from a firm hired to sell tickets to a folk festival. In December 2007, the council con-

In December 2007, the council contracted the company SecureTicket UK to sell tickets for the Cambridge Folk Festival 2008 over the internet. Proceeds from ticket sales were scheduled to be paid to the council in August 2008. But almost five months later, the council has still not received the £618,000 it is owed.

External accountants are reviewing the festival's ticket sales process, and in a bid to avoid similar risks in the future, the council has commissioned an independent review to investigate the protection of its finances.

But the debacle has led many Cambridgeshire residents to voice concern about the council's management of public money. Several critics have said that the council should not have allowed SecureTicket UK to hold the money for such a long period of time.

The first festival took place in 1964 and quickly established a strong reputation. Last year's festival was broadcast on BBC Radio 2 with selective highlights on BBC Four.

Councillor Ian Nimmo-Smith, leader of Cambridge City Council, said: "We are taking this matter extremely seriously given the large sum of public money involved.

"This company sold folk festival tickets for us in 2007 and they did a satisfactory job. They were appointed again for last year's festival after a competitive process.

"They haven't paid up even though we have given them extra time to do so."

Cambridge City Council's financial situation has also suffered from the recent Icelandic bank crisis. It had  $\pounds 5$  million invested in Landsbanki and  $\pounds 4$  million in Heritable. The overall loss of  $\pounds 9$  million makes the council one of over 60 local authorities across Britain which have cumulatively lost over a billion pounds in Icelandic banking investments.



### *Top grade in Pre-U is worth more than A-level A*\*

#### **Beth Staton**

Top achievers in Cambridge's new Pre-U exam will receive more UCAS points than those who get top marks in Alevels.

UCAS has announced that a level two distinction in the Pre-U, roughly equivalent to the new A\* grade at Alevel, will earn 145 points, compared to 140 for an A-level A\*.

Students taking the exam are graded at three bands, distinction, merit and

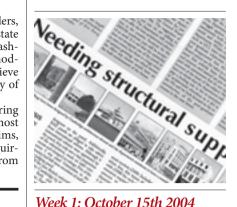
pass, with each separated into three levels. UCAS has yet to announce the tariff for the very top grade, but it will be worth substantially more than an A\* at A-level.

"The intention is to differentiate more finely amongst students who would achieve an A grade at A Level, while ensuring that a pass at Cambridge Pre-U is accessible to the full range of students," said Kevin Stannard, director of Cambridge International Examinations, the body that is managing the Pre-U. "Pre-U was designed specifically to develop the skills and dispositions that will secure success in higher education," he added. The qualification is awarded after a final exam rather than modules and retakes, like A levels.

Concerns have been raised that the qualification will create fragmentation and lead to inequality of opportunity amongst students. Despite being slightly degraded, the IB attracts the most UCAS points at a maximum of 720. John Fairhurst, chair of the Association of School and College Leaders, didn't take up the exam in his state school, saying: "Because of its old-fashioned hue, it wasn't a goer for a modern comprehensive sixth form. I believe that will be the view of the majority of comprehensives."

Out of the 50 schools now offering the Pre-U, 15 are state-run, but most of these are selective. The CIE claims, however, that nine out of ten enquiries it receives about the exam are from maintained-sector schools.

#### From the Archives



Week 1: October 15th 2004 After the last Research Assessment Exercise, the Architecture Department was threatened with closure. This was Varsity's appeal to save it.

## The beacon in multi-million dollar investment decisions

**Bain Capital** is one of the world's leading private equity funds, managing approximately \$80 billion of leveraged buyout, public equity and credit funds. **Sankaty Advisors** is the debt focused hedge fund of Bain Capital and is one of the leading private managers of high yield debt obligations. With approximately \$33 billion in committed capital, Sankaty is a world-class team of over 70 investment professionals with extensive experience analysing and managing high yield investments.

Representatives from Sankaty Advisors will be available to speak with students about internships and full-time positions that will put your education to work on global, multi-million dollar investment decisions.

Please look for us in the coming months to learn more about the great opportunities we offer in London and Boston.

Summer Internship Presentation: Thursday, 22nd January | 6.30pm | The Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cambridge

**CV Deadline:** Thursday, 29th January

First Round Interviews: Thursday, 12th February



For more information, visit us at www.sankaty.com.

#### Sankaty Advisors a member of the BainCapital group

ambridge will seriously damage Cher academic reputation, and risks jeopardising the teaching of Architecture as a subject across Britain, if she chooses to proceed with proposals to close the Department of Architecture on December 8th. All current anxieties about the future of Architecture at Cambridge began in 2001 when HEFCE (the Higher Education Funding Council for England) graded the department with four out of an expected five points in a Research Assess ment Exercise (RAE). Despite this, the research performance of the Department of Architecture is in the top ten percent of the UK. A number of other departments in the University, including Physiology and 'Politics and International Studies' received the same score, but have not been threatened with closure. Architecture must not be made an example of, nor neglected, as no real problem with its academic profile exists.

The RAE is widely thought to fail in its duty to fairly assess subjects that cannot be clearly classed as either Arts or Sciences. Architecture is by definition an inter-disciplinary academic method; a mother to the arts and sciences. HEFCE fails to provide a category for the assessment of Architectural departments nationwide, and so the subject is bundled in under the assessment category of 'built environment,' which is dominated by construction and surveying courses. Architectural research is consequently directly compared to quantitive scientific research.

Of the 11 members of the 2001 'Built Environment' panel that assessed the architecture department, only two had interests focused on architectural research. There were no practicing designers on the panel.

There is no significant reason why the Architecture Department cannot survive and prosper. The closure of any department would be highly detrimental to the reputation of the University and the reputation of the staff in the department. The closure of the department would be an obvious sign of weakness that would deprive the higher education sector and the Architectural industry of a centre of teaching that is undeniably at the forefront of its profession. It is because of a legacy of poor support and a confusion of priorities from the University that the department is in this supposed crisis. The university management have a duty to sustain the department until the next RAE report.

## Autism study could lead to prenatal screening

» Cambridge study suggests testosterone link

#### Tim Leung

A Cambridge team has brought the possibility of prenatal screening for autism closer.

Research led by Professor Simon Baron-Cohen and Dr Bonnie Auyeung has shown links between high testosterone levels in the womb and the development of autistic traits in children. The research raises the possibility that an amniocentesis, a prenatal test similar to the one used to test for Down's syndrome, could be an option for pregnant women.

The study has attracted extensive press coverage, fuelling public debate on prenatal screening for autism.

But researchers warn that a more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between foetal testosterone levels and children with a clinical diagnosis of autism is necessary. The findings of a second study, involving collaboration with the Biobank in Denmark, which has stored amniotic fluid samples from thousands of pregnant women since 1990, are expected later this year.

Baron-Cohen himself is emphatically against the idea that parents might one day opt for termination of foetuses that stand a greater chance of developing autism. He said, "The value of a person's life cannot be judged by characteristics such as whether they have good or poor social skills, or whether they are talented or ordinary or have learning disabilities. People don't have to earn their right to life by having the skills to make a contribution. They have a right to life. Period."

The study sourced amniotic fluid samples from 950 women in the Cambridgeshire region. Samples from certain types of pregnancy, including cases in which chromosome abnormalities had been identified, the pregnancy had ended in termination, miscarriage or significant postnatal medical problems, or there was a twin pregnancy, were then excluded. The remaining women were asked to evaluate the extent of autistic traits such as impaired social development, difficulties with empathy and social interaction, and improved attention to detail.

The researchers found, as expected, that foetal testosterone levels in the amniotic fluid were higher for pregnancies carrying males than for those carrying females. More significantly, high levels of foetal testosterone also showed a positive correlation with the development of autistic traits.

This supports Baron-Cohen's Extreme Male Brain theory, which argues that autism is a pronounced form of the male brain type, characterised by impaired empathising and superior systemising relative to the female brain type.

Baron-Cohen is the director of the Cambridge Autism Research Centreand Bonnie Auyeung is a senior research associate. Vanessa Macdougallneed to be c<br/>worried by<br/>Concern's ch<br/>er. "Howeve<br/>nary commID Wetherspoon slashed its prices thisneed to be c<br/>worried by<br/>Concern's ch<br/>er. "Howeve<br/>nary comm

month. The move, which has provoked concern from alcohol campaigners, means that The Regal, on St Andrews Street, now sells pints of San Miguel and Greene King IPA for 99p.

Although Wetherspoons normally holds a January sale with special deals on food and drink, this year the chain has announced that prices will continue "indefinitely". Bottles of wine are available from £4.99 and certain meals are being offered at £2.99.

Alcohol campaigners say the decision is irresponsible, something the chain denies. "Understandably in the current economic climate businesses need to be competitive and people are worried by living costs," said Alcohol Concern's chief executive, Don Shenker. "However, alcohol is not an ordinary commodity like bread or milk. Alcohol causes harm to the nation's health and economy and there appears to be a strong link between cheap alcohol and the high levels of binge drinking in the UK."

The managing director of Greene King, Justin Adams, has also expressed his disappointment at the pub chain's decision. "Greene King Brewing Company has no say over what JD Wetherspoon, or indeed any pub operator, decides to charge for its beer over the bar," he said.

"That does not stop us from being extremely disappointed about [the] decision to apply such hefty discounts to Greene King IPA. We are not funding the promotion or supporting this promotional tactic in any way."

The head of the Federation of Licensed Victuallers' Associations, Tony Payne, says the offer will harm the industry. "It's leaving us open to attack from the health lobby," he said.

The leader of Cambridge City Council, Councillor Ian Nimmo Smith, is considering whether the The Regal's license should be reviewed.

Wetherspoon's chief executive insists that the firm is only trying to ease the impact of the economic slowdown. "People enjoy going to the pub, however I appreciate that the economic downturn means that they now have to be more careful with their money," John Hutson said. "I believe the new food and drink prices will allow people to visit the pub without it costing them too much."



### *Varsity Profile* »Week 1: Loyd Grossman, graduate student and pasta sauce magnate



£50m The current annual turnover of Loyd

28 vears Lovd has been putting-o

man sauces

years Loyd has been putting-off coming to Cambridge

"The funny thing about Wikipedia," Loyd begins, "is most of the time it is completely fabricated. For years on my page it said I went to this great private high school in Ontario. They invited me a couple of years ago, as one of their most 'esteemed alumni' to a cocktail party they were holding. And I had to write back and tell them I didn't actually go to their school." A long low laugh is emitted at the end of this sentence. He was not an extra in *Grease*, though he wishes he had been, and definitely did not invent the Mc-Flurry.

Your eyes have not deceived you, however: he has appeared on multiple television shows and on the shelves of almost every supermarket in the country.

Having been on television for twenty years, Grossman thought he had left his *Through the Keyhole* days behind him. "There are just so many cookery shows on TV at the moment, I flick past them and inevitably end up watching *The Hills.*" He took the offer of BBC2's *Step up to the Plate*, he says, because it involved serious chefs and didn't just imitate the cookery template already there.

In the summer of 2008, Grossman decided to stop putting off coming to study history of art at Magdalene. He has been planning to apply since 1980, when he postponed it because "the" magazine of the time, *Harpers & Queen*, offered him the post of design editor.

His father was an art dealer and he was always surrounded by interesting art as well as being taken to museums from an early age. He is passionate about buildings, and full of praise for Cambridge. His favourite spot? "This place [Auntie's Teas] isn't too bad, is it? It's great to sit here and look out at Senate House."

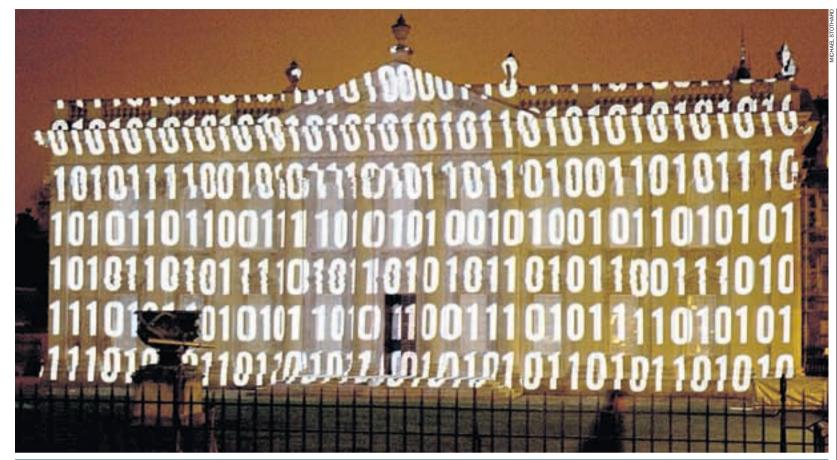
He has reformed his band, Jet Bronx and the New Forbidden, and is currently playing three gigs a month. "Yeah, we're gigging hard," he says. "My aim though is to play here in Cambridge. I hope to be able to do that before the end of the year." The band includes two of his oldest friends: their ages range from 30 to his own 58 years, and Grossman describes their music style as "alternative, in your face, high energy rock".

He insists that he is totally involved in his sauce enterprise. "People buy products because they trust them. With my name on the pot I feel personally responsible and accountable for what is contained in the jar." Unlike so many other celebrity-endorsed products, for Grossman it has never been about cashing in and leaving. Perhaps that's why the business is now grossing almost £50 million per year.

His favourite of all the available sauces is Puttanesca. "It's my pet really. The market research said it wouldn't sell because 'it's got too much flavour and people won't know how to pronounce it. But I thought food was all about flavour, no?"

Caedmon Tunstall-Behrens





#### Senate House illuminated to launch 800th anniversary celebrations

Cambridge begins to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the University's founding this weekend with a lighting show and a specially-commissioned piece of bell-ringing. The lighting show at the Senate House will begin at 7.15pm tomorrow and 5pm on Sunday and Monday. It has been designed by world-renowed lighting artist Ross Ashton. "The ideas, concepts and inventions that have flowed from Cambridge have changed the world. I intend to give the viewer a glimpse of the depth and breadth of this incredible body of work and to show that this same innovative genius will continue to shape our world in the future," he said.

#### **Conference Assistants Required**



from 30 March through 2 April 2009 to support a conference sponsored by the University Computing Service and JANET(UK).

We need pleasant, friendly and willing people who can use their initiative where required, are comfortable when dealing with the public, and are flexible in their approach to work.

Previous experience in working at conferences will be useful but not essential.

If interested, please email *jdh51@cam.ac.uk* for full details. Initial interviews: end of January.



## CUSU to consult on reading week and nine-week terms

#### Beth Staton

CUSU will launch a consultation on extending the length of terms in Cambridge.

CUSU's welfare team, who proposed the move, want to consider lengthening terms to nine weeks. The team will also consult students about whether to campaign for a reading week.

An open meeting at the end of Michaelmas voted in favour of the consultation. Terms for Cambridge and Oxford students are unusually short at just 8 weeks, whilst most other universities have terms of ten or even twelve weeks.

Many other university terms also incorporate a reading week, where no work is set and students can catch up on study or conduct wider research.

In Cambridge the situation is often worsened by limited periods of residence – whereas nationwide most students will rent accommodation for the whole year, students housed by their colleges are commonly expected to leave their rooms within a week of full term.

Combined with a heavy workload, many feel the short terms are a major cause of stress for students, and most will feel the pressure at some point.

The CUSU paper points to a significant increase in the workload of welfare and university counselling during week four and five as evidence of the notorious fifth week blues, a major symptom of overwork.

The paper also argues that a longer term would be conducive to an improvement in academic achievement for many students. The possibility of a reading week mid-term when lectures, supervisions or practicals would be suspended to allow for independent study and catch up is a serious consideration.

Concerns have been voiced, however, that a reading week would only lead to an

increase in the overall workload of students, with supervisors just setting more reading in the extra time. In the past the proposal has been dismissed by the claim that students would just go on holiday, but CUSU disagrees, arguing that "students are dedicated to their studies", and citing the amount who take vacation residence as evidence.

A statement from the welfare team added that "allowing students to take a step back from the intensity of term may even be a positive" that allows them to "come back refreshed and more enthusiastic about their work".

They stressed that any action to lengthen the term must not be counterproductive in terms of workload, nor encroach on freshers' week.

Although many students were favourable towards the 9 week term proposal, some, including CUSU president Mark Fletcher, spoke against the motion.

"The issue at hand is that Cambridge is stressful, and the workload is heavy," he said. "Although the proposal seeks to address this, these wider problems are our concerns – not the length of term – and this motion doesn't tackle these issues."

Although he was absent, a paper by Fletcher at the open meeting objected to the motion on the grounds that it would create a financial burden for students, increasing rent and limiting their earning capacity outside of term.

It was agreed that the proposal for a nine-week term should go into consultation stage, and no action has yet been taken in relation to the rest of the University's administration. "This is an issue that has been raised by Welfare, and other co-opted positions, so it does have support," said Fletcher.

"Obviously, we're a students' union and want to represent the wants and needs of students, so we want as much feedback on this as possible."

### *Cambridge Spies*



Val Thorens Voulez-vous igloo avec

moi?

Rave paint and spotlights aglow, the week's final climax was quite a night. Our heroine, however, purported to be unsatisfied. Sighting across the room an object of her desire, she joined him by the window. Overcome at the sight of so much surrounding snow, our titillated totty led her beau out into the cold, entering a shelter more akin to those housing Inuits in seal-skin. Numb with passion, the adventurous twosome embarked on the most personal of acts, only for an unsuspecting undergraduate from the other place to look in upon the festivities. It was later revealed that he had been given the wrong address for his own booty call. Undeterred, the deed was successfully completed, causing no harm from the frost to his pieces.

#### Clare

#### This sex is on fire

Having effectively enticed a strapping lad back to her room, no doubt through use of serenade, the scene for this musical enthusiast changed from casual conversation to a reclined and intimate position. Amid the writhing, an appendage happened upon a unsuspecting side lamp, toppling it to-wards their heads. Narrowly missing her flowing locks, the pair continued their biology practical. Moments later a siren was sounded, not to entice our male towards the rocks, but to warn of the flames that were now engulfing their pillow but centimetres away. Addenbrooke's was not the final destination our male lead had expected that evening.

#### Scotland

#### You take the high road and I'll take the low road

Frolicking in the Highlands this holiday, a lack of conventional entertainment led a group of second years to turn to some rather debauched activities. Having tired of same-sex encounters and locking prospective pairs in cupboards with no resultant hilarity, attention turned to the prawns left over from the evening's main meal. On bending over, one poor lad had inserted into his rear-end one such crustacean. We can only hope no-one was deceived into eating it later.



## Leeds bans bottled water

#### Joshi Eichner

University authorities are being called to ban the sale of bottled water in its bars and cafes after one of the country's biggest student unions took similar action last month.

In an unprecedented ballot, Leeds students followed the example of colleges in the United States in prohibiting Unionrun cafes, shops and bars from selling the increasingly controversial product by 2010.

The bottled water industry, which is worth more than £1.5 billion per year and whose products account for 5 per cent of drinks sold nationally, has come under fire from the environmental lobby.

Their concerns were highlighted by a BBC Panorama programme aired last year which estimated that drinking 1 litre of bottled water has the same environmental impact as driving the average car for a kilometre. The Environment Minister Phil Woolas has described the industry's side effects as "morally unacceptable". David Lowry, President of Jesus College Student Union, indicated his sympathy for the removal of bottled water, citing the "unnecessary environmental damage" caused by its production and pointing out the progress Jesus has already made in removing it from vending machines within the college: "What to drink is an individual choice, however if tap water is readily available, there is no need to sell bottled water."

CUSU has pointed out its limited scope for intervention on the issue due to the relatively small commercial sector.

Whilst encouraging students to avoid the "excessive packaging" associated with bottled water, Ethical Affairs Officer Emilia Melville gave assurances that CUSU is "working with college green officers" to find solutions to the problems concerned.

But not everyone will relish the prospect of a potential ban. Some student bars would almost certainly resist a measure which is expected to cost the Leeds Student Union £32,000 a year in lost revenues.

## Council's £10k for punting officer

#### David Stansbury

While the recession has forced many to make drastic cutbacks, Cambridge City Council seems to be splashing the cash.

Its 2009 budget-setting report proposes to allocate £10,000 to the role of Punting Enforcement Officer.

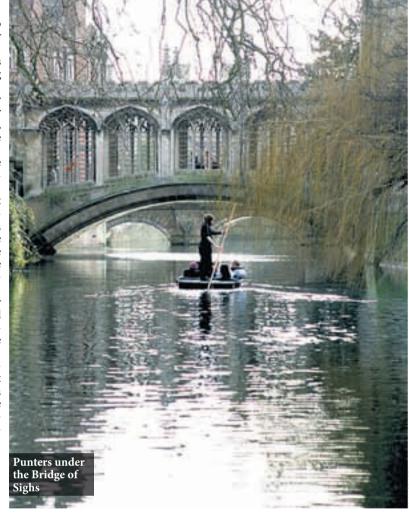
The officer has already been in post for six to eight weeks and is responsible for enforcing the council's policies on punting, explained Alistair Roberts from Cambridge City Council.

Punting operators must apply for a license from the council to trade from a "safe" landing stage in a bid to stop illegal firms.

Tom Lohman, from Cambridge Punt Tours, was pleased about the new arrangement. "Because others are limited without a license, there will be less touts in town. The situation was getting out of hand for quite some time and needed regulation, so we see it as a good thing. With the extra enforcement, competition will be limited."

In 2007, the council introduced a bylaw to curb anti-social touting and last April installed hidden CCTV cameras to monitor trade along the council's river frontage at Jesus Green.

Save Independent Punting, the Cambridge organisation, was set up to prevent large established companies exercising a monopoly on the famous and lucrative punting trade. The council appear determined to make life difficult for the independent punters. Local businessman Richard Taylor said: "Competition needs to be preserved – if Scudamores had a monopoly, students, especially those from colleges without punts, would suffer from the higher prices."



#### We need volunteer guides, opening ceremony producer and script writers, and event newsletter editors

### 41st International Chemistry Olympiad 18th - 27th July 2009

In July the UK will host the 41st International Chemistry Olympiad, a competition for preuniversity students from all round the world. Around 70 countries compete, which means almost 280 students arriving in Cambridge to test their skills in chemistry, experience our culture and enjoy the unique Cambridge atmosphere. We are looking for volunteer students for the following jobs: **1. A producer and script writers:** Required to create a pantomime-style production for the Opening Ceremony which will be held in the Corn Exchange.

**2. Editorial team:** To prepare and manage the production of the Catalyzer, the daily official publication of the Olympiad.

**3. Guides:** Each student team will need a guide to accompany them for the whole ten days of the Olympiad who ideally will speak the team's language.

The guides will also participate in all the events and programmes during the Olympiad. Chemistry knowledge is not essential! If you are interested in one of the jobs or for more information please contact us:

Can you entertain in Arabic or get by in Greek?

www.icho2009.co.uk info@icho2009.co.uk

## The Essay



## Holocaust denial should not be a crime Richard J. Evans

Holocaust denial makes headlines, from the trial and imprisonment of David Irving (pictured below) to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's speeches. One of the world's leading historians of the Third Reich argues that scholars must be unfettered in their researches, even if their conclusions cause offence.

There is currently strong pres-sure within the European Union to make 'Holocaust denial' into a criminal offence across the whole territory of the EU, as it is already in a number of member states. If the proposal is implemented, then any-one who claims that the number of Jews killed deliberately as a consequence of Nazi policies and actions during the Second World War was not six million or anything near it, that gas chambers were not used as a major instrument of this genocide, or that there was no general intention or programme of extermination steered centrally from Berlin, will be liable to criminal prosecution and imprisonment if found guilty. Last year the German justice min-

Last year the German justice minister Brigitte Zypries proposed to the justice and home affairs council of the EU that in all EU member states, "publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes" should be "punishable by criminal penalties of a maximum of at least between one and three years imprisonment." The proposal was approved in principle by the European Parliament in November 2007.

These proposals thus go much further than the criminalisation of Holocaust denial. Some countries indeed have already brought the law into action in other areas of history. Thus France has introduced a law making it a criminal offence to deny that the mass murder of the Armenians by the Turks in 1915 was an act of genocide. Increasingly, historians have to watch what they say. Among other things, it depends on exactly where you are saying it. In Turkey itself, which has long harboured the ambition of joining the EU, it is precisely the claim that the mass murder of the Armenians was genocide that constitutes a criminal offence.

Governmental and legislative interference in historians' freedom of speech and argument has gone even further in some parts of the EU, above all in France, where in 2001 yet another law required teaching and research into the history of slavery to recognize it as a crime against humanity. Yet another French law has laid down that history teachers and researchers should pay due recognition to the 'positive role' played by the French overseas, above all in Africa. In the UK, a leading Conservative politician has recently urged schools to focus on the patriotic presentation of 'our island story'. Perhaps this will become government policy if the Conservatives come into power. How justified is such interference?

Will it actually achieve anything? Prescribing how teachers and researchers interpret or present the past is almost impossible in practice. The difficulties of defining such concepts as trivialization or even genocide suggest that the laws in question will not be easy to enforce. Moreover, the objections of EU states with a strong tradition of free speech, including the UK, to the Zypries proposal succeeded in watering it down with the proviso that "Member states may choose to punish only conduct which is either carried out in a manner likely to disturb public order or which is threatening, abusive or insulting." Nevertheless, the threat remains.

Yet prosecutions for offences such as Holocaust denial provide neo-fascists and anti-Semites with a golden opportunity to present themselves as martyrs for the principle of free speech, distracting attention from the fact that freedom of speech is more often than not the last thing they would honour in principle if ever they came to power. One well-known British denier made full use of this opportunity when he was imprisoned in Áustria for denying the Holocaust, attracting a good deal of media sympathy, though he himself had attempted to silence his own critics not long before by suing them for libel.

Holocaust deniers exist nowadays mostly in the more obscure corners of the internet. Old-fashioned, neo-fascist anti-Semitism does not make much running these days; even in Austria, where the far right recently won more than 30 per cent of the vote, the issues that brought it popularity were hostility to immigrants and disillusion with the currently dominant political parties; Austria's failure to come to terms with its Nazi past made it possible for radical right-wing politicians to use positive allusions to Nazism to signal their intention to be tough with minorities, but this is still a world away from serried ranks of brownshirted stormtroopers marching through the streets of Vienna.

For modern, Islamist extremist exponents of Holocaust denial, what happened in the Second World War is ultimately only of relatively minor interest; what is happen-

Miłośnik Hitlera

na targach książki

ing today in

ing Holocaust denial gives deniers the oxygen of publicity which they crave, and which they live from. It is almost always counterproductive.

Let's be clear: Holocaust denial, and more generally the denial of crimes against humanity, massacres, genocides and other terrible events in history is objectionable and offensive. Historians need to argue these points and establish the truth against those who claim such things never happened. But freedom of speech is meaningless unless it also includes the freedom to be offensive. And historical truth will never be established unless historians have the freedom to research it without fear or favour. That means considering all hypotheses and dealing with them rationally, not trying to wipe them off the map by a crude use of the

criminal law.

Of course, states and

nations should face up

to the crimes they have

committed in the past.

But to do so requires unfettered debate in the

present. That is why I

have joined with

many other leading Eu-

ropean

histori-

ans,

such as Pierre Nora, Eric Hobsbawm and Timothy Garton Ash, in signing the Appel de Blois published a few weeks ago in *Le Monde*, against governments trying to dictate what historians can research and write. If you want to do the same, email contact@lph-asso.fr and take it from there.

Richard J. Evans is Regius Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Gonville and Caius

College. He was an expert witness in David Irving's libel trial. His books include Telling Lies About Hitler (Verso, 2002) and In Defence of History (Granta, second edn, 2001).

the Middle East is far more significant to them. Holocaust denial is only one of a variety of arguments they mobilize to deny legitimacy to the state of Israel, and a relatively minor one. Criminalis-

### Foreign Correspondence

Cambridge goes all over the world in a riot of semi-imperialist journalism



Week 1: Israel

As my plane touched down in Ovda airport, the Israeli Air Force had begun hitting Hamas targets throughout the Gaza Strip. Safe in the chic resort town of Eilat, I was anxious to see what impact Israel's war on terror would have on my week of sun, sea and sand.

Security, as always, was tight. The people of Israel live under the perpetual threat of attack, whether by Grad missiles from Gaza, kidnappings from Lebanon or suicide bombers in Tel Aviv. Yet they carry on, hopeful of respite and perhaps even a lasting peace. In my hotel, Sofia, the Ukrainian-Israeli waitress, shrugged. "They attack us every day; we have to defend ourselves. Maybe if we free Gaza from Hamas we can make real peace."

Three days later it was New Year's Eve. The calm seafront, bejewelled by sprawling hotels and glitzy restaurants, played host to a dazzling fireworks display. I could not help but think of the Israeli towns of Ashkelon and Sderot, and Gaza City too, their terrified populations witness to a very different exhibition of rockets and explosions.

To the south-west of Gaza is Eilat, some twenty kilometres from Saudi Arabia, a short swim to Aqaba in Jordan, and a hike to Egypt's Sinai desert. Its existence is only possible due to the hard-fought peace that has been forged between Egypt, Jordan and Israel. Even Israel's frosty relations with the House of Saud have begun to thaw: both oppose the Iranianbacked terror of Hamas.

Whilst on a day trip to Petra on New Year's Day, I began to realise that the region - home to many bloody battles during the Arab-Israeli conflict - offers an image of coexistence and prosperity, a model for peace. That peace was shattered in January 2007, when a resident of Gaza detonated his suicide belt in one of Eilat's shopping malls, murdering three civilians. Two years on, Hamas continues to terrorise civilians - Israeli and Palestinian alike.

In Israel, business has to carry on as usual; tragically, Israelis have become accustomed to defending themselves. Planeloads of tourists still fly in, market stalls remain open, and waitresses continue to speculate on the prospect of peace. As Sofia reminded me, Israel's treaty with Egypt came six years after a terrible war; perhaps the humbling of Hamas may permit Israeli and Palestinian alike to lead the peaceful life that should be the right of all. Mark Wolfson



How's your credit crunch? Mine's great, thanks. Sure, I panicked to begin with, when *The Times* started printing black and white pictures of Canary Wharf wreathed in moodylooking clouds and The Telegraph led with headlines such as 'Staring Into The Abyss!!!!!!' (my exclamations, though felt by all). I even economised, opting for narrow- instead of wide-ruled A4 paper at Ryman's, making sure to use my 10% student discount. And it turns out that normal salad is actually much tastier than rocket.

But the student credit crunch has been non-existent. We have no property portfolios to topple, no stocks and shares to tumble. There is nothing more basic than Sainsbury's Basics, unless you're prepared to cycle up to Aldi, which is nearly as far as Fitz. The only businesses to go bust have been rubbish ones, like Woolies and Zaavi. If anything, I've actually grown comparably richer thanks to the Current Economic Climate and Rob 'Recession' Peston's scaremongering, because everyone's downsizing to my level. And it's even respectable these days to receive massive amounts of government cash with no possibility of ever repaying it, as every student has known for a long while, and the banks are quickly catching on.

Nor is recession anything particularly unusual. Even ignoring the oft-cited parallels of 1976, 1945 and - whisper it the Great Depression ('Great' as in the 'Great War', i.e. completely shit), classicists can take solace from the examples of history, where such was the response to similar events under the reign of the

## **Recession?** Sort of

Students have never had it so good

despotic Tiberius: "The decree requiring land purchase and sales, envisaged as relief, had the opposite effect since when the capitalists received payment, they hoarded it, to buy land at their convenience. These extensive transactions reduced prices. But large-scale debtors found it difficult to sell; so many of them were ejected from their properties, and lost not only their estates but their rank and reputation.

A failed rescue plan, falling house prices, home owners unable to meet of paid employment. Freshers need have no worries and may even rejoice at Wetherspoons offering a 99p pint, albeit of IPA; second years may be anxious, but can take succour, or at least enjoy schadenfreude, as they watch the huddled ranks of us third years charge over the top into the worst job market for a generation. For there is an army of us, educated to the teeth, but with so small a chance of survival in the real world that the government has had to come up with a rescue plan, again.

our *alma mater* for the chilly embrace

"Ancient Rome's recovery, leaving aside that stuff about decline and fall, offers hope for the markets. The important thing is to stay calm and speak Latin."

their payments: it's a familiar story. While not one of us would ever compare the crabby, moody and paranoid figure of Gordon Brown with the Emperor Tiberius, Ancient Rome's subsequent recovery, leaving to one side that stuff about decline and fall for the moment, offers hope for the markets. The important thing is to stay calm and speak Latin.

I fear, however, that such an approach can only take us so far, especially those of us about to swap the sweet bosom of

At Cambridge, we're better off than most, but if unemployment hits the expected 3m mark, 1.25 million of that number will most likely be graduates. These are big numbers, big enough to make me go down to the Careers Service and plan a future the other day. Having arrived, I was told not to worry too much, though maybe to correct a few 'blind spots' on my CV (a polite way of pointing out my total lack of relevant work experience, I can only think). But there's still an apprehensive

confusion at Stuart House: "If you were leaving last year I would have recommended Lehman's as a good employer, so it's hard to say anything definitively," my advisor told me.

This confusion, though, might very well be the disguised blessing. (Great thing with disguises is that you can't really tell. It might very well not be too.) Rather than drifting aimlessly into highly-paid city jobs, those applying for employment are having to think hard about what they really want to do. There's nothing wrong with investment banking - no, you're right, there is, they're all bastards who had it in for Woolies from the start - or management consultancy, but the huge rewards and ease of transition from one institution to another lead to lazy thinking. Hopefully we'll see more people entering teaching and academia; some might only enter these professions to weather the storm of recession for a year or two, but some will stay, for their own and others' benefit. The same goes for the civil service, so that we might see the same calibre of economist at the Treasury as at Goldman Sachs and thereby avoid such sticky messes in the future. And if in six months time you still don't have a job with your English degree, have no fear: this would have happened anyway, but the Credit Crunch gives you a cast-iron, concreteas-concrete excuse for unemployment. In this graduate army, you can be the best, simply by not doing the expected thing and instead thinking about what, not how much, you want to make in your life.

James Wan

#### According to a poll I just took in my head, 85% of Brits believe that political correctness has gone too far. It does indeed seem that we are never short of new outrageous stories of the PC brigade throwing their weight around. 'Winterval', created to replace Christmas, avoids excluding all those who don't believe in Santa; children now sing 'Baa Baa Rainbow Sheep' to avoid perpetuating our perennial under appreciation of the diversity of our woolly livestock; and we are no longer allowed to 'brainstorm' because epileptics literally have miniature storms in their brains during a fit. Fact. To plagiarise right-wing writer Richard Littlejohn's catchphrase, You Couldn't Make It Up. Well, actually, you could. Although I didn't. I wish I had. But I didn't. But you could.

Few would dispute the ridiculousness of some of these measures, but far from gradually creating an Orwellian Newspeak, the surface tendency towards a narrowing of vocabulary has been accompanied by rumblings in art, comedy and our own student-privileged lives. To a large extent, humour consists of breaching expectations and conventions; after all, much of comedy has relied on its ability to shock to get laughs, from the bawdy innuendo of Shakespeare to Frankie Boyle's single entendres about haunted vaginas.

In everyday life our capacity to be

## Joking Aside... Should we be concerned about our ironic language?

humorous is similarly based on flouting normal conventions and there are few more practised routes to this than plunging headfirst into taboos. People draw on racial, gendered and other sensitive stereotypes for day-to-day comedy, although this is usually done in an ultra-ironic social-satirical manner and remains within the confines of a close friendship group (take note, Prince are epitomised by a few university events such as Oxford's 'Bring A Fit Jew' party and the NYU party game of 'Catch the Illegal Immigrant'. Comfortingly, these events rarely go unnoticed and many people complain. Equally comfortingly, more private comedy can still be divisive, as experienced by the wealth of dead baby jokes that seem to split people roughly down the gender divide.

#### "One way of pushing boundaries is the increasingly expert execution of irony."

Harry). Furthermore, we feign racial prejudices not only for comic effect, but to show that we are most definitely not racially prejudiced and to highlight the preposterousness of such beliefs. We are politically incorrect to reveal how politically sensitive we really are; we ridicule prejudice by appearing to adopt it.

But with us becoming desensitised to these no-go zones, being funny requires us to push the boundaries ever further; mild political correctness is a thing of the distant past. One way of pushing said boundaries is the increasingly expert execution of irony, although irony can become self-consuming and everything gets carried away. These developments

A potentially worrying development in the satire plus edginess combo, however, is the fairly mainstream and unchallenged use of one of the few relative taboos left among university students. Rape is one of a diminishing number of issues that remains largely untouched by the jaunty insights of comedy. The reasons for this are fairly apparent, yet this dangerous topic forms the basis for the now generally accepted metaphor for when someone goes onto your Facebook account and sends funny emails or gives you a silly status. The unsettling thing about this? The use of 'rape' is not in the form of a joke – which necessarily requires an audience to respond and

react, either positively or negatively - but of a definition.

Metaphor and euphemism inevitably affect our perceptions of both the describer and thing described. The euphemism of 'ethnic cleansing', for example, as a referent to genocide blunts the impact of the culling of a people and a similar effect may subliminally take place with rape. Using the analogy of rape in such casual ways must (inevitably) affect our unconscious perceptions of it, especially as we now probably hear of Facebook-rapeage more than actual rape.

Controversial humour and political incorrectness may rarely be offensive, but it is nevertheless acknowledged and occasionally divides opinion. The metaphor of rape to describe a prank, on the other hand, has seeped into our student lingos without any retaliation or broader realisation, for it is very difficult to get offended by a definition. We can now, therefore, talk casually about rape - the Facebook kind - without batting an eyelid even with strangers, as long as they are in our generation. Should this concern us? Or should rape - the definitional kind – proliferate? Are there more rape-tastic issues we should be thought-raping? Has this piece unnecessarily raped your day or has it perhaps been a welcome rape from work? I do not claim to have an answer.

## Is there Life on Mars?

#### Ben Slingo

In Birds, Beasts and Flowers, D. H. Lawrence declared America to be "the evening land". It is not, I hazard, a description that Barack Obama would care for. As it was bestowed in 1923, it has little claim to geopolitical prescience, a failing to which Lawrence himself was doubtless indifferent. Yet despite its perversity when first conferred, the poetic title is becoming ever more appropriate. For all the optimism that suffused Mr Obama's campaign, and for all the belligerent

confidence that too often marred that of his opponent, the country over which he will soon preside is not about to a witness a new dawn of vitality and hope: it is already in the grip of a long and inexorable decline. Thus far the descent, apparent in the bloodshed of Iraq and the carnage on Wall Street, has not been an edifying one. Mr Obama's calling is not to arrest it, but to conduct it with a little more dignity.

**Decline** and Fall

Obama will be managing America's decay

A decade ago, such a gloomy prescription would have seemed as dubious as it did when Lawrence composed his epithet. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the successful prosecution of the first Gulf War, America seemed triumphant; at

the very least, as the work of Francis Fukuyama indicated, she was certainly triumphalist. Yet the victory, if not the crowing that accompanied it, was illusory, based as it was on twin oillars of sand. For the two facts that appeared to underpin American hegemony - irresistible American values and invincible American strength - have proved sadly fragile.

The 9/11 attack on the Pentagon may have been less starkly memorable than the atrocities in New York, but it was no less freighted with symbolism: in the past few years a crater has been blown in the walls of American power, and the limitations of American force have been painfully demonstrated. For years in Iraq, a basketcase that remains unstable, the full might of the US military was confounded by a guerrilla insurgency both heterogeneous and primitive; in Afghanistan US forces are mired in bloody but inconclusive combat while the American-sponsored government remains impotent outside Kabul.

Embroiled in these conflicts with no clear end in sight, the world's only superpower must stand by powerless as Russia recovers its imperial status, Pakistan slips into turmoil and an Iranian president who denies the reality of the Holocaust strives for nuclear weapons. Worst of all, this portrait of a burdened and faltering superpower will soon be far too charitable. The meteoric rise of China, dramatised at their Olympics and evidenced more substantially in her neo-colonial programme for Africa, denotes a return to a multipolar world of competing great powers that would not be entirely foreign to Metternich or Bismarck. America is not only suffering under Kipling's burden; she will soon have it snatched from her back.

Coupled with this material wane is something still more disheartening. America has always represented an ideal more than military might, and the latter was conspicuously absent when that ideal was first proclaimed. Yet as the iron fist of American power has begun to rust, so the velvet glove of American principles has begun to fray. *Pace* the placards of priggish protesters, America's recent wars have been about sowing the seeds of liberty as well as securing oil. As the enduring dominance of autocratic regimes in the Middle East and elsewhere demonstrates, those seeds have fallen on barren ground. The presence of democracy, indeed, has been as damning as its absence: the electoral success of Hamas, Hezbollah and Ahmedinejad shows non-Western peoples having mordant fun at the American idealists' expense.

As America's values have foundered abroad they have been diminished at home for the sake of wire-tapping, water boarding and Guantanamo Bay. Worst of all, however, the most seminal creed of the new millennium has not been the liberal capitalism that should have ended history but a mediaevalist perversion of Islam that abhors everything America stands for. More than ever before, perhaps, the American ideal resembles the 'bleached skeleton' Lawrence imagined it to be.

As the United States has been entering its old age in the past few years, one of its most distinguished scholars has been coming to the end of his. Samuel P. Huntington, who was most famous for his best-selling book *The Clash of Civilisations* and who died on Christmas Eve, gazed upon America's future with an unsentimental percipience that Mr Obama is yet to display. His cold realism demolished the myth of universal Western values, while the world order he delineated implied the end of overwhelming American strength.

Since we began with a poet, however, we might as well end with one, one whose bleak message is a century older than that of D. H. Lawrence. On the first of many peace missions to the lone and level sands of the Middle East, Mr Obama should visit that spot in the desert where Ozymandias invites the mighty to look upon his works – and to despair.

### Spk yr brains

The Wit and Wisdom of the World



Week 1: Prince Harry

I have two grandmothers; one who used to use the word when I was growing and the other who didn't. I always found the word terrible, I have always preferred my grandmother who didn't use the word. Also, I was taught by my nice grandmother "if you can't think of anything nice to say, then don't say anything at all" Maybe prince Harry should take on this advice, because I don't use the word, even when I am joking. Janet Smith, rome

Who really cares, i think it's quite sad that a comment made 3 years ago makes headline news. No-one was hurt, i mean the saying goes 'stick & stones will break my bones but names will never hurt me'. Whoever brought this to light is obviously only interested in making some money from the papers and as usual they're happy to shell out. I'm sure Prince Harry has been called worse !! **1van, Kirkcaldy** 

I can't believe this is even news! Harry is a great Prince! *Phil the American, US of A* 

Given that Prince Harry is a member of our Royal Family who represent this country I think he should know better. It is offensive and no an apology is not enough. Perhaps he should have some diversity training. *Penny, London* 

Ethnic immigrants rule Britian!!!! - yes he made the comments but anyone who has been involved in the Army will know that commerades all have knicknames for each other - it's part of the team building and if the person is offended by the name they change it. Admittedly, because he is Royalty he should not have madebut it was not made with malice - Welsh people are called Taffy and nothing is done about that. Sandra Lyford, Pembroke

So what is the carbon footprint made by this revelation and the uproar it has caused? What a waste of space. I would have been concerned if, instead of using normal military banter with a colleague, the prince had insisted on using his rank, name or title. This would have made him a total snob instead of showing him as completely normal! [cunnind], La Chatre - expat, France

O-please! How about some real news, people are dying in Zim and Gaza and many other countries for crying out!! *Steph of Africa, RSA* 

## Careers Service



## **Publishing Careers Evening**

Thursday 22 January, 6.30-8.00pm, Mill Lane Lecture Rooms Overview of careers in book, journal, magazine, and electronic publishing

## **Media Careers Evening**

Thursday 29 January, 6.30-8.00pm, Mill Lane Lecture Rooms Overview of careers in film, journalism, science communications, broadcasting

Use these events to gain information so that you can get the most out of the annual main media event:

#### Working in the Media 2009

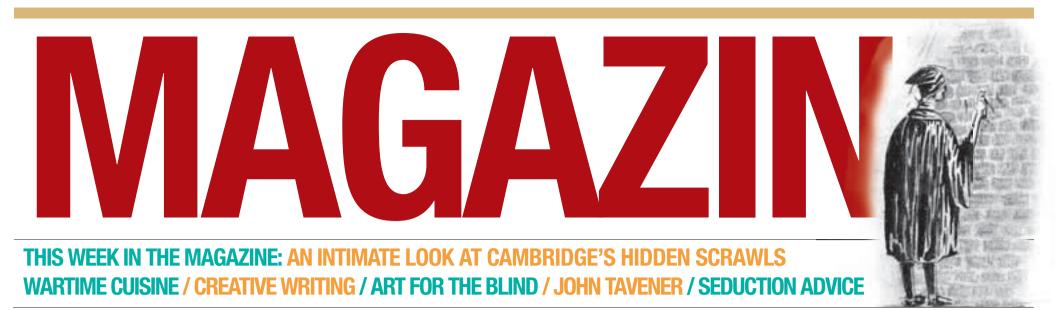
Wednesday 11 February, 6.00-8.30pm, Exam Halls, New Museums Site, Downing Street

Full details of all three events and more on the Careers Service online diary at www.careers.cam.ac.uk

Entry is restricted to current University of Cambridge students (and alumni) – bring your University id card with you to these events Statistics from different years and courses allow us to improve our events in future. We will email requesting feedback but personal data will not be passed to anyone outside the University.



## VARSITY



## Photograph of the week by Tim Johns



This photo was taken in spring 2007 just upstream from the Green Dragon pub whilst I was on a walk. It was a very cold day, and you can see the crispness in the air that comes with it, along with the smoke of the coal fire burning on the barge in the distance and drifting across the river, filling the air with that smell you get in old country pubs around Christmas. And the bare branches reaching down to the water complete the wintery theme."

If you have a potential photograph of the week, please submit it to features@varsity. co.uk, along with a brief account of how the photo came to be taken.



**Wednesday** I had been really looking forward to today. Wednesday night working on the door means drunk students, no locals and random acts of pugnacity on my part. Put on my most aggressively black shirt, wet shaved my head and applied my favourite violent smelling aftershave. Got into the mood by listening to a bit of Necro and Ill Bill, and practiced a dozen half nelsons on the dummy in my kitchen.

Got to Cindies and – massive disappointment – it was dead. Empty pavement outside and a few lecherous middle aged men inside. That was when I realised, I wasn't at Cindies at all, it

## *My week by Darius Bunk, Cindies Bouncer*\*

was still Ballare. The students were no where to be seen. Later on, some lanky blokes with bad breath and acne came to the door, fair assumption that they were students. I asked them why they were already back, they said they were 'boaties' – God knows what that is. Probably student slang for some sort of sexual deviance. I let them in anyway.

#### Friday

The real weekend has begun, so all of the real people in Cambridge were out. Drinks were half price so people were twice as drunk. Some steaming teenager had passed out on the pavement and his friend started to piss on him. I waited for him to finish, then walloped him round the back of the head, bent his arm behind his back and marched him away to wash his hands. I hate bad hygiene.

#### Saturday

Decided it was time to take advantage of the January sales. Went to the Grand Arcade and bought a new pair of black trousers in Gant, a great black shirt in Top Man, and a long black trench coat and a pair of black boots in John Lewis. I then brought a black cardigan in H&M, some black boxers in M&S and a black sweatband in Foot Locker. I decided to treat myself by visiting Hugo Boss, where I thought about buying a grey tie. Opted for a black one instead.

#### Sunday

Walked around town this afternoon. Something was in the air. Lots of people in ill-fitting hoodies walking around carrying books and a profusion of bicycles. I think the students are starting to return.

#### Monday

My girlfriend told me to lose weight again today. As usual, I try to explain it's not my choice to eat five meals a day and snack on jumbo hot dogs; it's just that being a fat knacker is part of the job requirements. She wouldn't listen. Kept going on about how sexy Vernon Kay is, but as I have tried to explain before, I can't help having a face like an overweight angry baby.

#### Wednesday

Students were back in force tonight. Club was packed – never seen such a concentration of chinos and pink shirts in my life. Some were talking about being on a swap – I've often wondered what those are. I think it's the teen equivalent of a swingers' party. As usual, all these people in ridiculous multi-coloured blazers – I can never work out if they are wearing them ironically. Pretty unbelievable – cleverest students in the land but still stupid enough to dress for a nightclub like a middle-aged bachelor at a drinks party.

Around ten Í got bored and started playing Snake on my phone. Forgot to let anyone in, so the queue stretched back to John Lewis. I had to pretend it was 'one in, one out'. This always happens.

Some floppy-haired student barged past me, but I grabbed him – told him he was too drunk. He then tried to bribe me. I couldn't believe it, arrogant bastard. I grabbed him by the collar of his T M Lewin shirt, threw him to the floor, took of one of his loafers and smacked him round the face with it. He nearly pissed his chinos! It's moments like that that make the job worthwhile. \*As told to Rob Peal

BIG BROTHER ADVENTURE (STARTS HERE): It's halfway through your beginning-of-term DoS meeting and your phone's ringing. "Go on, answer it," your DoS smiles (she's one of those chilled out, fourth generation DoSes). So you do. It's your brother. But you have several: which one can it be? "p14 Little Brother. "p15 Big Brother."

# Ed at large

People tend to be suspicious when offered things they obviously really enjoy. So just as the Women's Institute would be suspicious if you offered them a barrel of cock, or Barack Obama would be suspicious if you offered him a barrel of coke, I had immediate reservations when offered the Varsity restaurantreviewing gig.

'What would it involve?" I asked like a complete tard after they approached me in a moment of weakness outside Ta Bouche, where I was enjoying a mid-morning Harlem Mugger.

"Reviewing restaurants." "Would it be free?"

"Sure," they lied, with all slither and guile of a younger, gayer Malfoy and Crabbe.

"Could I take girls?"

"Sure," the taller one said. The taller one is a little more refined but somewhat simpler than the short one, who has quick fingers.

I was quite overcome by a vi-sion of myself in the shire's finest eateries, with some of the drunkest freshers in the whole country laughing across the table and then not snogging me. Not only this but, and here was the important part, random strangers would briefly think I was going out with said girls. In an era where impressions are everything, this could only be good news for me.

It was a gift horse, I concluded.

And I've never been one for looking them in their mouth. I mounted it with the customary rigeur of the man about to get drunk without paying. But by Tuesday I was having reservations, mostly due to the fact that, despite my pleading phone calls, I was unable to make any.

So perceptively low is the standing of this organ amongst the patrons of Cambridge that nowhere I rang

would give me anything for free. They say there's no such thing as a free lunch (and many of them did), but surely elevenses wouldn't have been too much to ask for (as I suggested in return)?

I became increasingly anxious. Was I to have to pay my own way?

Ít didn't bear thinking about, particularly after I'd told everyone at the Varsity beginning-of-term dinner in Café Rouge not only that my meals going to be free, but also that I was earning £50 a week for the column, making me the only member of the Varsity team to be paid for their contributions. This isn't true. It is also one of the saddest lies ever told. At least as sad as the squabble between the rather glamorous French waitress and the editors over the definition of 'discretionary' in the service charge.

So I would have to pay for it myself. Unfortunately this financial dilemma coincided with some issues with the mobile phone services, and none of the first twenty people I called were able to pick up. I asked the long-suffering Ginger

Roommate if I could have supper with her. "Please?" I said; "It'll

be really nice." "Alright," she replied gingerly, after pausing to reflect that she wasn't going to have any fun. "We're going to Strada, but it was supposed to be a date. Who with?"

I asked, amazed. Nobody has ever, to my knowledge, offered to take the Ginger Roommate on a date. "Your Obnoxious Large Friend", she replied. This was slightly less

amazing. "Fine," I said, "I'll wingman you." "Please don't," she whimpered, gingerly.

In the end (I suspect for fear of

what might happen should I 'wingman' the Ginger Roommate) the OLF brought his own roommate, who is far more civilised than I am. What none of us counted on was a large group of banshee women, apparently on some sort of care-inthe community outreach wine-tast-ing, occupying the entire mezzanine floor.

EDITOR-AT-LARGE ED CUMMING WELCOMES IN THE NEW YEAR WITH A TRIP TO STRADA AND

SOME THOUGHTS ON HIS SINISTER EDITORS

"I'm sorry about the noise," our waitress said rather sweetly, before fetching my 'cotto' pizza. This is quite a boring meal, easy to prepare and serve. (There, editor, so I

reviewed the meal). "Is your 'cotto' pizza ok?" she asked, a few minutes after I'd received it.

"Yes," I said hastily, "of course," because as everyone knows pizzas are like blowjobs, in that it's very hard to admit at the time that you're not

enjoying yourself. After I'd eaten it the OLF began to shout "You all met in an abortion clinic," at the banshees, a significant step-up in brinkmanship from my muffled "You're not supposed to

drink at a tasting!" To cap it all off, when we got home the Ginger Roommate refused to give me a massage because I "smelt bad", despite having taunted me with her fragrant oils for a whole week. She said she was saving them for the OLF.



#### FOODIES FRANKLIN AND PALIN BUST RECESSION-DEPRESSION WITH SOME HELPFUL HINTS FROM LLOYD GEORGE AND THE MINISTRY OF FOOD

<sup>•</sup> T is the season to be fucking I miserable. Christmas is over, the goose has made you fat, and every magazine worth its salt is telling you to BLITZ YOUR FLAB!, TONE YOUR ABS!!!, or at least get off the sofa and buy some Magic Pants. Stomachs and credit are being crunched, so what kind of idiots start a column about consumption?

Only idiots that understand the vagaries of the rationing system, and went on too many childhood trips to the Imperial War Museum. Having completed all the quizzes, jumped off the tanks, and trembled in delight at the Blitz experience, we read up on those small cream cards that every old person on the bus seems to hold more dear than their (blinging) wedding rings. Suddenly, this potentially useless knowledge is becoming helpful. It's beginning to feel like we might be living on the Home Front.

Not of a serious 'Raze every house in East Anglia' war, or an 'I do but bite my thumb at thee, Catholics' war, but there is definitely a little tension in the air. Gran recalls that London during the "Last War" (I think she was probably cooking stews and watching repeats of The Bill during the Falklands, Gulf, Six Day, Iraq) was a place of self-control and unprecedented generosity (although being in Dublin

at the time, I think we'll have to say she also got that impression from ITV).

Beneath the arthritis is some good sense; leave off the butter, cut back on the sugar and keep the red meat for another day. Besides, the CUSU Ethical Affairs team are going vegan



for February, and where our students' union are leading, we must follow Vegetables are back in vogue, but this isn't a reason to flee to the Tuscan hills. Delia is one of our main lines of

defence, her recently re-published 70s classic Frugal Food our shield. And

what better emblem than the cover shot for the new edition, the gloriously wrinkly and somewhat unseemly savoy cabbage.

It's an ideal time for the valorisation of careful domesticity. Which is not to say that the goddess Lawson has had her day, only that good cooking needn't rely on marinated baby octopus from the nearest deli. Forget poised tongues and luscious lips, this is a heartfelt call for loose knits and condensed milk.

For your more prudent delectation, we've provided a few downturn treats, just to help you remember that whatever troubles you're packing up in that old kit bag, there can be happiness in the mess hall. Fudge can be made with that wartime classic, condensed milk. And what better to follow it with than our new discovery from the mixology department? The P45 is the poor relation of the B52. and just the ticket to keep spirits up when all else fails.

But as the Vicomte de Mauduit reminds us in You Can't Ration These (which boasts "all those armed with a copy of this book" will be able to "live in comfort... even if all banks, all shops and all markets be closed for indefinite periods"), edible frogs abound in Cambridge. So no complaining about a lack of luxuries during the recession.



#### **FUDGE**

1 lb granulated sugar 1 large can whole condensed milk

- 1/4 pint water 2 oz butter (or margarine, for that
- wartime feel)
- Dissolve the sugar in the water in a cooking pot.
- Add the condensed milk and butter, and begin heating.
- When the butter has melted, bring the mixture to the boil.
- Boil steadily for 1 hour, stirring continuously to prevent burning. Remove from the heat. Beat until the fudge is thick and
- creamy. Pour into a well-greased tin.

Mark into squares. Cut when cold and set.

#### P45

50 ml of Sainsbury's Basics Vodka 200 ml of milk 1 tsp of drinking chocolate Aero Mint

Mix the chocolate powder into the milk and shake with vodka. Crumble the Aero over the top. Consume in excess because no one has a job to go to anyway.



#### MICHAELHOUSE CAFE £3.95 for a hot plate, 2.30-3pm

The afternoon was grey, my back-to-university heart greyer still. I was unenthused, therefore, when my co-editor suggested we meet for our first food experience of the term in a church.

Neither was I immediately appeased upon entrance. In fact, the bright lights and wipe-clean plastic surfaces left me wondering whether I wasn't still in South Mimms Service Station. However, a look to the counter revealed the sort of trendy-looking dreadlocked staff one might expect in Wagamama, except these cats stood calmly behind an array of hearty looking home-made dishes.

In fitting with some resolution or other, I chose a salad, and my date the butternut squash soup. The 'Health Bowl' included enough pulses to pack out all the green (and purple, and white - no iceberg here), and the sweet soy dressing lifted my detox-tired spirits. The date meanwhile deemed his soup "two steps up from Cup-a-Soup", which must be a compliment, as he has rather long legs.

Beneath our sofas on the balcony, a choir was belting out (or would have belted, had they been a few years younger) 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow'. This was no marketing strategy, but it so brightened my companion that he ordered tea and scones. A good call, as these were luxe scones, with a sugary crust. We left satiated, convinced of just a hint of blue in the Cambridge sky...

## Fix Up, Look Sharpe

#### MUCH TO JAMES SHARPE'S REGRET, WE ALL HAVE A BODY. HE TELLS US HOW BEST TO PRETEND OTHERWISE

The body is the most reputere thing imaginable. No one should he body is the most repulsive have to have someone else's physical being forced upon them without prior consent. If you feel the need to do something unseemly, it should always be done discreetly.

The principle of discretion is simple. No one should ever feel compelled to say something in response to your actions. The purpose of etiquette is to ensure that people are always at ease with each other; hence, the following rules governing the body.

**Public grooming** One of the benefits of being of the more evolved variety of the higher primates is that we have developed handy equipment to avoid the need of grooming each other. But many people fail to appreciate that this also means that we can groom ourselves alone. If a hair is out of place, do not get out a comb and correct it. The only exception is for those with make-up. If some mascara is running, by all means fix the problem, but try not to draw attention to the fact.

#### Spitting

Spitting has had an interesting history. For centuries in Britain it was perfectly acceptable as long as the perpetrator rubbed the mucus into the floor with their foot afterwards. But now we have carpets and spitting is definitely out – everywhere.

#### The nose

A sneeze, by its very nature, is impolite. The best thing to do when con-fronted with it is to hold the top of the nose very hard and hope for the best. Otherwise, use a clean handkerchief.

Nose blowing is also best avoided, but it is better than persistent sniffing. In this case, take the handkerchief in one hand and blow once. If it will avoid you having to blow again, holding the handkerchief with two hands is advisable. The handkerchief is then hastily removed from sight.

#### Hawking

It is often said that a decent wife is one who can stand her husband's infidelities; but no wife should have to stand hawking. Hawking is the noise made when trying to clear a lump of catarrh from the back of the nose into the throat, and seems to be something of a pastime for some men of my acquaintance. It makes an unpleasant sound and should only ever be done out of earshot.

#### Smells

Offensive smells infecting people's nostrils are far too common these days. Scrupulous cleaning is a necessity, and this includes clothing. Too many students think that they can get away with wearing the same pair of jeans for three weeks in a row. Everyone can tell and it is not pleasant. Your loved one may like to wallow in your miasma, but your scent is probably as welcome to Joe Public as Joe Public is welcome in your bedroom, so make sure it stays there.



#### Scratching

Itching is allowable depending on where the itch is and where you are. Only at the most formal occasions would gently scratching your arm be objectionable. However, scratching intimate areas is offensive, scratching your foot is odd, and scratching your head near food is repulsive.

#### Gardez l'eau

Based on the principle that one should never use a French word when an English one will do, it is 'lavatory' or 'loo' and not 'toilet'. But, if you have to go, unless you need directions, none of these terms should ever issue past your lips: you should only ever say "Excuse me" and then scurry out.

Once upon a time, no one would leave the table unless it was absolutely urgent. Indeed, in the medieval period, this was taken to such extremes that men would simply pee into their boots. Luckily, however, we live in more civilised times. The younger you are, the more your temporary absence will be tolerated. Even so, the earlier you can master holding it in, the bet-ter. Personally, I would like to see this as a government campaign to help end binge drinking.



#### MISSION: TO DELVE INTO CAMBRIDGE'S SECRET ORIFICES. WEEK 1: CAIUS COLLEGE BAR

Walls within walls my friends, walls within walls. When I look out of my window, what do I see? A large, dark, forbidding bastion that confronts me daily with an aura of exclusivity. They call the place Gonville and Caius, and it's the first port of call for the Cambridge Invader.

"In that place, they scorn outsiders," I told H as I marched her up Senate House Passage. I could see a look of apprehension in her eyes, and I realised my voice was notched a few decibels too high, and that flecks of spittle were threatening to leap forth with every plosive I uttered. I adjusted the volume, and resumed my lecture.

"They don't let non-Caius students into their June Event. Why? What have they got to hide?"

As we crossed the threshold I sensed that H did not share my enthusiasm for this enterprise; but the Sainsbury's Basics Cider I had ingested earlier was bubbling away nicely in my stomach and everything was perfectly clear.

"If they don't want us in their bar, that's EXACTLY where we should be. I didn't come to this town to

be turned away from anywhere," I muttered, before greeting the porter on guard with a confidence that was wonderful to see. It's possible I held eye contact for a little too long, but I could tell he was impressed.

When we entered the bar, I was appalled to find it empty. "Aha," I remarked loudly, "they must have seen us coming." H gently suggested that perhaps it was too early in term for the place to be busy, but I had already gravitated towards the barman. He was eyeing me in a manner that made me feel ill at ease, so I tried to speak to him in a jocund tone but my words got mashed on their way out and I only managed to leer at him whilst making a strange gurgling noise. This wasn't going to plan.

"Are you members of the College?" he asked us, politely. Too politely. I had a sudden vision of a finger hovering over a panic button and answered rapidly in the negative, immediately following that with a challenge.

"Why aren't we allowed in here?" I demanded, taking the edge off this somewhat abrupt question by leaning rakishly on the bar. That told him, I

thought; and I waited for the spluttered response with a knowing smirk. Five minutes later, I filled H's

glass to the brim with an unsteady hand and demanded she imbibe the college-crested plonk as quickly as possible. I had a sudden desire for inebriation that I felt compelled to share. The answer I had received had bothered me, and I needed to think things over.

After the wine I was able to reach a decision. These were not walls worth breaching, and we should leave at once. Or perhaps that was what they wanted us to do? I'll never know. I suddenly remembered that I had once hurled an empty glass over the wall of this place in the early hours of the morning. I had done so under the impression I was attacking Trinity, but they weren't to know that. I grabbed H's arm and hurried past the porter with averted eyes. You never can be too careful. This time I was lucky, but you can bet your balls that next time they'll be on the lookout. I've played my part. Now it's your turn. Walls within walls my friends, but it doesn't have to be this way.



Week 1: Short story exercise. Two old friends meet on a train and have a long conversation. But something crucial has changed in one person's life – and initially, the other doesn't realise it. In 500 words, can you show the realisation through their conversation?

The coffee cup perched on the triangular shelf jutting out of the wall. His eyes fixated on it, and then on the discarded chewing gum wrapper next to it, and then on to something else equally mundane. Anything, as long as it wasn't her face.

"Are you sure you're alright sitting facing backwards?" "Mm-hmm."

Though he had filled the first hour of the long train ride with slightly awkward chatter, now she was having to carry the conversation. The pressure to recapture their tight friendship drove her on, making her fill up silences with empty comments about overpriced coffee and the ticket collector's accent.

The occasional grunt escaped him, punctuating her speech. She gradually became aware of his reticence, and then finally stopped talking, daring him to suffer the stillness of a conversation lull.

She had always been in love with him, nursing him when hungover and quietly adoring him through the banter, despite his romantic indifference. Their friendship had been partly built on this; they had both enjoyed flirting, and it was left unspoken that anything more would ultimately lead to rejection and discomfort. But he had always known that she was there as a backup plan. She was the one he had drunkenly claimed he was going to impregnate should he find himself childless at fifty

.It's really good to see you again. This was a really good idea." Yeah. I think so too. Edinburgh will be great at this time of year."

"Have you ever been before?"

"No." "Neither have I."

"Mm."

After university jobs abroad had separated them and eventually the e-mails stopped.

But now luck had brought them back to live in the same city again, and he had suggested a weekend trip away to 'catch up', hinting and hoping that they could pick up where they had left off, though also knowing that they would never go back to their old world of Ryvita dipped in tea.

Now she was sitting opposite him in a grimy train carriage. She was there, in the flesh, and paralysis had taken hold. He didn't know what to do.

Part of him had not been expecting her to appear; away in foreign lands of business suits and blackberries, over time he had mentally transformed her into a wonderful being, far beyond the realms of a real person capable of

- existence. "What did you miss most?"
- "About what?"
- 'You know London, England. Home."
- "Oh... Um. I don't know. What did you miss?"
- He had intended to do this on the train journey home, to avoid the possibility of two days of unbearable humiliation were she to reject his advances. "Probably Radio Four. Nothing like a bit of Desert Island Discs."
  - 'You. I missed you."

She smiled, slightly embarrassed by his sudden display of affection. He finally met her eyes. She suddenly had a craving for Ryvita and tea. But then she broke away from his gaze, fixed her eyes on the coffee cup and chewed her lip. 'Sorry. That sounded weird. Sorry.' Soumaya Keynes

Next week's competition: Villanelle. A villanelle is a nineteenth-century French form divided into 5 stanzas of 3 lines each, rhyming aba, and a final quartet rhyming bbaa. It must have two repeated lines. The same line of verse is used for lines 1, 6, 12 and 18. Another line is repeated at lines 3, 9, 15 and 19. The repeated lines should rhyme with each other. Confused? Look at Dylan Thomas' 'Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night' to see it in action. It's a complicated form, but can be rewarding. Send submissions to Literary Critic Colette Sensier at literary@varsity.co.uk for the chance to win two tickets to the following week's ADC main show, and be printed in next week's issue.

#### 16 Fashion Editors: Kate Womersley, Alice Newell-Hanson & Katy King fashion@varsity.co.uk

brogues, model's own.



At Kettle's Yard

Friday January 16th 2009 varsity.co.uk

#### Contribute to Varsity Fashion: Fashion@varsity.co.uk Fashion 17







Save the Children; trousers and hirt, S

vest, model's own. Lara wears dress, 'See by Chloe' at Giulio; belt, 'Miu Miu' at Giulio; tights, Tabio; boots, mode

own. Isabel wears dress, 'Temperley' at Giulio; boots, model's own. 50% sale on now at Giulio.

Make-up by Natalie Castro and Ley Tsang Using MAC. MAC will be available from March at Unit 23, St Andrew's St., Cambridge. For more information on MAC please visit www.maccosmetics.co.uk.

## THE VARSITY WEEK THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS.

#### Theatre

#### Friday 16th & Saturday 17th Hamlet

Friday 16th

£19.50)

Richard Thompson

Saturday 17th

The Indie Thing

Sunday 18th

Monday 19th Frank Turner

**Tuesday 20th** 

Over the Bridge

ADC: 11pm (£4 conc.)

Wednesday 21st

at Cindies? Essential.

aturdav 17

Robinson.

£5 after)

Teenage Kicks

Corn Exchange: 7.30pm (from

Corn Exchange: 6.45pm (£7) Five of the east's best unsigned

bands: A Girl Called Kate, A.R.T.,

Tell It To The Marines, the Maver-

icks of Love, the Shills, plus special

Kambar: 10pm (£2 before 10.30pm,

Kambar's weekly celebration of all

The Cricketers Pub: 8.30 pm (free)

Sax-led modern jazz from Ellington

to Shorter from an ever expanding repertoire, in a new, larger venue.

*The Junction 1: 8pm (£9 adv.)* 

Former member of punk rockers

Million Dead, Turner brings his

bridge following his two critically-

This new a capella group kick off a

week-long jazz festival at the ADC, performing everything from soul

and jazz, rat-pack and classic bar-

ber shop to modern pop in a firmly tongue-in-cheek style.

Ballare: 9pm (£4 before 11pm, £5)

Where would you be if you weren't

King's College Chapel: 8pm (£5 conc.) Beethoven believed the Missa Solemnis

was the greatest work he had ever

composed. A work that transcends

any dogma, doctrine or specific reli-

gious intent, the Missa resides in the most profoundly inspired regions of Beethoven's imagination, containing

music of eternal beauty and lumi-

nosity. Conducted by Christopher

Rumboogie - The Institution

Beethoven's Missa Solemnis

acclaimed albums. See POTW.

acoustic rock and anecdotes to Cam-

things indie returns for the new

year. Are you edgy enough?

Andy Bowie Jazz Quintet

guests Hamfatter and the Foxes.

Thompson performs his '1000 Years

of Popular Music', bringing his vir-

tuoso guitar style to everything from medieval ballads to the Who.

ADC: 7.45pm, Friday and Saturday *matinee 2.30pm (£9/£7)* European Theatre Group presents a raw and visceral Hamlet that is immediate for a twenty-first century audience. See p. 24 for review.

#### Happily Ever Improv

ADC: 11pm (£6/£5) Improvised Comedy Ents brings you the fairytale you wish your parents had read you as a child. See p. 24 for review.

#### Portraits of Artemisia

*Mumford Theatre: 7.30pm (£6/£4)* Powerful drama based on the life of Artemisia Gentileschi, a pioneering seventeenth-century female artist.

#### Kursk

The Junction: 8pm (£8/£5) Drama inspired by the tragic event of 2000 when Russian submarine, The Kursk, suffered a huge explosion and sank to the seabed. Possibly not a feelgood. This is the final stage of touring before opening at the Young Vic.

#### Tuesday 20th

Beauty ADC: 7.45pm (£9/£6) CU Contemporary Dance Workshop explores the nature of beauty. Runs until Saturday 24th.

#### Wednesday 21st

Suitcase Cabaret Jesus Chapel: 8pm (£5) CUADC presents an evening of glamour and spectacle with live music. Runs until Friday 23rd. Performances on Thursday and Friday are at Clare Cellars and the Shop, XVIII Jesus Lane respectively.

#### *Thursday 22nd Cosi Fan Tutte*

Great St Mary's Church: 7.45pm  $(\pounds 7/\pounds 4)$ Shadwell Opera in collaboration with Gonville and Caius Music Society present a new production of Mozart's classic opera. Runs until Friday 23rd.

### Music & Nightlife Art & Classical

#### **Ongoing Exhibitions** *Fitzwilliam Museum:*

- Sir Sydney Cockerell and The Fitz
- (until March 17th) • Palaces in the Night - Whistler's
- Prints (until January 18th) Picasso Prints – Dreams and Lies (until February 8th)

#### *Kettle's Yard (free):*

• The roundhouse of international spirits (until March 15th)

#### Scott Polar Research Institute (all free):

- John Gale & Sons (until February 14th)
- British Antarctic (Nimrod) Expedition, 1907-9 (until April 4th)

Saturday 17th The New Zealand Chamber Soloists Clare Hall: 7.30pm (free) The trio perform pieces by Babadjanian, Rachmaninov and Shostakovitch.

Beethoven's Missa Solemnis King's College Chapel: 8pm (£5 conc.) See POTW.

#### Sunday 18th

Animated Wysing Arts Centre: 12-5pm daily (free) The Arts Centre's inaugural exhibition explores notions of energy and movement through moving image,



#### Talks & Events

Film

Slumdog Millionaire

Daily (not Sun): 12.45pm, 3.20pm,

6.10pm, 8.50pm Sun: 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm Oscar-tipped film from British

director Danny Boyle. A boy is

Daily: 1.50pm, 4.50pm, 8.10pm

Daniel Craig breaks the mould and

plays a tough guy with a machine gun in a forest, only this time with a Russian accent. Actually fairly good.

Daily: 12.10pm, 2.25pm, 7pm, 9.15pm Down and out Mickey Rourke

makes a big comeback by playing a

down and out wrestler making his

big comeback. A Golden Globe in

Daily: 2pm, 5pm, 8pm (Not Mon)

power to change seven people's lives,

Daily: 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

Sat only: 11.40pm (post-lash showing)

They're grown men! They're meant

to be responsible! They're not! Aha-

haha. Paul Rudd writes and Sean

William Scott stars as yet another

character with a one-word name.

St. John's Film Society

Sunday 18th; 7/10pm

Burn After Reading

*Thursday 22th: 9pm* 

Hunger

presumably while smoking a cigar and kicking aliens in the head. Well received and probably worth a look.

Will Smith as a man with the

the bag and quite possibly an Oscar

cence. See p. 27 for review.

Defiance

The Wrestler

on the way.

Vue

Seven Pounds

**Role Models** 

Vue

Fri/Sat only: 11pm

Arts Picturehouse

Vue

accused of cheating on the Indian

version of Who Wants to be a Mil-lionaire?, and protests his inno-

Arts Picturehouse

#### Friday 16th

**'The Making of the Fittest'** Lady Mitchell Hall: 5.30pm (free) As part of the Darwin College Lecture Series, this talk looks at how the 'fittest are made' - the adaptation of some amazing animals to various environments, from freezing Antarctic waters to lava flows.



#### Sunday 18th

#### **Tropic Thunder**

Yusef Hamied Theatre, Christ's New Court: 7.30/10pm (£2.50) Three egotistical actors making a Vietnam War film get sent to the jungle, where filming takes a turn for the weird.

#### Monday 19th

Wolfson Howler A showcase of the best student stand-

### 'Does Cambridge University need

**Policy?** Cambridge Union: 7.30pm (free) A talk jointly hosted by Cambridge University Amnesty International and CUSU's campaign for socially responsible investment.

#### Frank Turner

Mondav 19th The Junction 1: 8pm (£9 adv.) After splitting from Million Dead in 2005, Turner rediscovered artists from his youth, such as Johnny Cash and Counting Crows, and traded his electric guitar for an acoustic. Following this, he's been shortlisted for the XFM New Music Award, as well as being branded the "Billy Bragg for twenty-something punks". In association with the Cambridge Folk Festival.



BIG BROTHER ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): "Right you are," says Bill – he's the CBBLB producer – before arriving at your DoS meeting ten minutes later with a keg full of your regurgitated breakfast. "Mmm... digested All Bran!" he exclaims before violently submerging your head in the keg. You drown. Adventure over.

Cambridge Union Pub Quiz Cambridge Union Bar: 7.30pm (free) Come test your knowledge with the Union's famous (and very competi-tive!) pub quiz, which features a different specialist round based on that week's debate topic.

Wolfson College Bar: 8pm (£6, £2 Wolfson Students) ups including Keith Akushie.

#### **Tuesday 20th** a Socially Responsible Investment

# Bright Eyes at the Tate

#### THE NATION'S ART COLLECTIONS ARE BECOMING ACCESSIBLE TO BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED VISITORS. LAURA FREEMAN FOLLOWS CURATOR MARCUS DICKEY HORLEY ON A 'TOUCH TOUR' TO SEE THE TATE MODERN WITH NEW EYES

There's a tax term, known as 'Morton's Fork,' which refers to a choice with two equally unpleasant outcomes: the choice between a rock and a hard place, the devil and the deep blue sea, death and taxes. The classic Morton's Fork question asks, would you rather be deaf or blind?

For the artist, the answer is simple. To be robbed of sight, to lay down your paintbrush, to find the Tate and the National Gallery inaccessible, would be a monstrous injustice. There are 152,000 blind and partially sighted people in the UK for whom this is no theoretical question, and the Tate has devised an extraordinary new programme for their benefit. Over the holidays, I took a 'Touch Tour' at the Tate Modern, and learned how works of art can be brought to life for those who cannot see in the conventional sense.

The 'Touch Tour' scheme is the brainchild of the irrepressible Marcus Dickey Horley, Curator of Access Projects at the Tate. In his hands, all the gallery rules are broken: dogs are welcomed into the Tate's hallowed halls as Horley exhorts, "*Do* touch the art." A typical tour combines visual descriptions with the tactile handling

#### Darkness into light

There are four different 'Touch Tours' at Tate Modern: Poetry and Dream, Material Gestures, States of Flux, and Idea and Object.

*Tours are given during gallery hours. Book a week in advance by calling Marcus Dickey Horley on* **020 7401 5114**. of sculpture and installation work; such an initiative stretches the guide's powers of description as he conjures the frenetic slashes and spatters of Pollock's paint or the pellucid clouds of a Monet for a blind audience.

Marcus brims with adjectives, anecdotes, and analogies: for instance, Monet, who himself suffered from cataracts, is remembered for leaving his wife languishing in police custody so that he might paint undisturbed, and the rhythms of Pollock's Summertime are likened to jazz riffs. To illustrate the size of a monumental canvas, Marcus will "Halloo" from either end so that the distance can be measured by ear, and, in the case of Louise Bourgeois' Maman, a walk beneath its spindly legs conveys the piece's arach-nophobic breadth. The Tate has also imitated the distinctive brushstrokes of the great masters on small canvases, so that raised impastos or silkily blended oils can be made accessible through the fingertips.

The current Turbine Hall installation, Dominique Gonzalez- Foerster's *TH* 2050, provides rich fodder for Marcus' 'Touch Tours.' The premise is elaborate: the year is 2050, it rains incessantly in London, and this unremitting stream of rain water has caused urban sculptures to grow. To curb this growth, sculptures such as Bourgeois' Maman have been moved inside the Turbine Hall. The installation plays sinister games with the senses: rain water drips from the ceiling, leaving treacherous puddles on the concrete floor; the ceaseless drumming of the rain reverberates from loudspeakers; and the sculptures are approached through a tangle of plastic butchers' curtains.

David Johnson, an early acolyte of Marcus' scheme who lost his sight during his Art A-Level, is keenly aware of these sensory tricks as Marcus leads him through the Turbine Hall. He stops to feel the concrete scar of the Hall's floor, through which Doris Salcedo's crack used to tear, and to test the slippery puddles where the rain of 2050 has seeped through. He gingerly explores this strange landscape of sculptures grown like triffids and rows of bunk beds which are meant to house refugees from the deluge. He pauses to feel the chill iron of the bunkbeds, to pace the regimented rows, and to press his ear to a wireless playing songs from a happier age. Some of Marcus' sketches prompt recollections from David's school days; running his hands over a swollen Henry Moore, David is full of recollections of Reclining Figures seen in childhood.

An exhibition on the fourth floor of Tate Modern by the Brazilian artist Cildo Meireles also engages with blind viewers. *Blind Mirror* is a work of sticky, malleable mastic, which encourages the visitor to prod and probe and manipulate its waxy surface, while Through is a labyrinth of glass panels which crack and splinter disconcertingly underfoot.

David is forthcoming with his opinion of detractors who dismiss Marcus' initiatives and argue that the very nature of art demands that it be seen with the eyes; his own evident delight in Marcus' tour is resounding proof that art is more than mere *looking*. While others race through the galleries, ticking items off their mental list of artworks-to-see-before-you-die, David and Marcus take time and care to craft a truly eye-opening experience.



## Negotiating Survival

#### IN DECEMBER, POZNAN IN POLAND HOSTED THE UN'S CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS TO MARK A HALFWAY POINT BETWEEN KYOTO AND COPENHAGEN IN 2012. AMY MOUNT, A DELEGATE FROM CAMBRIDGE, WAS THERE TO HELP HEAT UP THE NEGOTIATIONS

This December, fifteen young Brits caught a train to Poland. Along with 400 others youngsters from more than 50 countries, we arrived with a modest plan to stop world leaders from negotiating away our future. We staged creative stunts, bringing

We staged creative stunts, bringing life to the blue-branded landscape of the conference venue. We met our national representatives, sat in on hours of plenary sessions, and followed the minutiae of policy developments, blogging and drafting endless press releases along the way.

This was the Fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – or COP 14, in UN slang. The youth delegates had overcome baffling acronyms and the cold Polish winter, to demand that our political representatives take action on an issue that will define our generation.

The pace of negotiations was sluggish, but this was not for lack of try-



ing. Many, mostly poorer countries, were putting forward concrete proposals that were then stalled by the foot-dragging of others, mostly richer countries. The EU, which only a year ago was pushing for strong emissions reduction targets, was reneging on its promises following lobbying by industry, particularly in Germany and Poland. Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the US opposed provisions to protect indigenous peoples' rights in deforestation policy.

In the youth speech to the highlevel plenary session, Taryn from the Canadian Youth Delegation said, "I feel ashamed when countries like mine who have so much, do so little... Developed countries must show leadership. If they don't it will be the most unconscionable act in the history of humanity."

Meanwhile, industrialising countries are increasingly leading the way: Mexico unveiled a plan to halve its emissions by 2050, and Brazil pledged to cut deforestation by 70 per cent within a decade, potentially saving 4.8 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

The UK is seen by many as a leading light, after it brought in the world's first ever Climate Change Act last November. The recently-appointed Climate and Energy Minister, Ed Miliband, told the UK Youth Delegation that countries must act unilaterally on climate change "otherwise everyone will wait for everyone else. He said "we need to be on a different economic track - and that's a big ask." However, when pressed to make clear whether such an economic track would mean going ahead with the proposed coal-fired power station at Kingsnorth or plans for a third runway at Heathrow, he admitted he had "no script" for what a greener world would look like.

The Alliance of Small Island States, who are most at risk from sea level rise, as well as the G77 and China, called on international politicians to take their lead from hard science. This call was taken up by the international youth delegation in our 'Project Survival', in which more than 80 countries signed a pledge committing to "safeguard the future of all countries and peoples." The pledge was included in the official outcome of the Poznan conference.

As the youth delegates partied the night away in a Poznan bar after the conference ended, shaking out the frustration, there was a cloud of anticlimax hanging in the air. However, that cloud fizzed with a buzz of anticipation. With one year to go before the next global deal on climate change is signed, there is a growing movement of young people calling on their governments to safeguard their future, in a voice increasing in volume as it repeats 'Survival is not negotiable'.

BIG BROTHER ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): "Sacre bleu!" exclaim the CBBLB people. "We're coming to save you!" Sure enough, up they roll and producer Bill is soon giving you a mouth-to-mouth. He saves your life and in return you must join the celebrity panel. "p22 You're not famous..." p23 ... but you'd like to be.

# Cambridge Graffiti

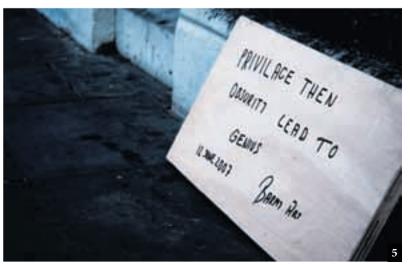
The ruins of Rome, Athens, Pompeii, and other ancient cities that were once home to vibrant communities of artists, philosophers, and scientists are covered in graffiti scrawled on the walls by the occupants of those cities, long since dead. Pithy phrases such as "Gracchus has a ten foot cock", accompanied by crude sketches of said cock, light up the landscape. Graffiti is an impersonal method of communication, and as such allows the author genuine freedom of speech. This week, Varsity takes a look at what invisible scribblers have to say around Cambridge.











#### Street Level

'To the River' (1), written in chalk at the turning into Trinity Lane; sterling work it has done for many years aiding wandering tourists in their search for the Cambridge Experience. From a skate ramp on Jesus Green, (2) is perhaps more typical of 'true' graffiti, recording as it does its author's momentary frustration with the inclement weather. The artistic merits of (3), stencilled near a church on Mill Road, suggest propertarian conspiracy. The artist behind (4) demonstrates frustration at a supposed paucity of worthy graffiti, while the existentialist ramblings of (5) hint at either a hidden genius or a pretentious twat (you decide). The recent appearance of (6) and (7) suggest that there are at least a few Cambridge inhabitants who have shaken off modern day political apathy.





ADVENT ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): Spot on: it's the rozzers. "We're the rozzers," they explain. "The what?" you reply. "The rozzers. You know, the fuzz, the pigs, the scum, the filth, the 5-O, the po-po, the bacon, the Barney." You're still confused. Who are these guys? "24 The police. "p14 They're actually the TV people after all. They were just fooling around with that totalitarian crap.



CONTRIBUTIONS BY JOE HUNTER, ROB PEAL, TIM JOHNS, DHANEESHA SENARATNE, TOM MORIARTY, SOUMAYA KEYNES, TOM HAMILTON, CHARLOTTE WILCOX, JULIA COLLINS AND TIM BAZALGETTE

ADVENT ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): Yup – it's the Big Bruvva lot. They think you'd be a good Celebrity Big Brother's Big Mouth presenter – apparently you've got a bloody massive gob. So massive, in fact, that on route to their HQ for an interview you start abusing the police. Big no-no: say something to placate them. »23 "Sorry, I was just showing how enthusiastic I am." »24 "Oh – are you the police?"

#### Friday January 16th 2009 varsity.co.uk

# Reach for the Tsars

WITH THE PHRASE 'COLD WAR II' BEING BANDIED ABOUT, RELATIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST ARE AS FROSTY AS THEY'VE EVER BEEN. HOWEVER, DR LESLEY MILLER, SENIOR CURATOR OF TEXTILES AT THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, INFORMS HELEN RITCHIE THAT WHEN IT COMES TO MOTHER RUSSIA'S IMPERIAL PAST, THE KREMLIN HAVE DECIDED TO LOWER THE IRON CURTAIN

Following a landmark exchange with the Moscow Kremlin Museums (Russia's oldest Treasury), the V&A is currently displaying lavish historical coronation dress, previously unseen even in Russia. Highlights include outfits from the extensive goldand silver-embellished wardrobe of the boy emperor Peter II, who reigned for just three years, and the coronation uniforms of the succeeding seven emperors ending with the last Emperor of Russia, Nicholas II. Some of these pieces have only recently been studied, but all display the work of the most eminent master craftsmen of the period, providing British visitors to the museum with a taste of the legendary magnificence and luxury of the Imperial Russian court. In return



for this wonderful selection, the V&A has loaned out a selection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British clothing to furnish the Kremlin with its first ever fashion exhibition, which drew in over 70,000 visitors in just ten weeks.

The Victoria & Albert Museum is often regarded as the epitome of 'Britishness', both past and present, but in fact, like Victoria and Albert themselves, the museum has strong countries, which have to place an importance on national collections, V&A collections can span cultures and continents, although an emphasis is placed on European countries renowned for their craftsmanship. Indeed, in the future, the V&A will be focusing more on what makes things 'European' and about what makes Europe as a whole."

This exhibition has gained atten-tion in the press because of its lack of Euro-centricity, its emphasis on the glorification of the days of a powerful, isolated and independent Russia. Perhaps unsurprisingly, parallels have been drawn between the era of the Tsars, the USSR, and the current state of government in Russia, under scrutiny for its recent conduct in Georgia, the current dearth of opposition from either the public or the press to the Kremlin and the unequal spread of wealth across the nation. It has been argued that this exhibition is either "showing off", reminding the West of Russia's capacity for greatness, or that it is an olive branch, reaching out to the West to make up for recent "damage" to our not-so-special relationship. In a press release, Mark Jones, Director of the V&A, recently expressed his opinion that "this exhibition is a cultural exchange and it's a good thing, as it shows cultural relations can be maintained even when state relations may be difficult". Dr Miller expands by saying: "One would hope that this kind of exchange can transcend political matters and bring people together, instead of creating hostility?

Dr Miller seems to place great importance on people, both in groups and as individuals, and tells me that she believes "the main reason costume is so appealing is because people can relate to what they're seeing: there is a very clear human dimension to it". Hopefully, this direct appeal may be prove useful in the future, and I ask how the museum is planning to weather the current economic climate. "The footfall in museums is of key importance, especially in times of recession. The V&A is constantly expanding its website in order to reach

#### "THIS EXHIBITION HAS GAINED ATTENTION IN THE PRESS BECAUSE OF ITS LACK OF EURO-CENTRICITY, ITS EMPHA-SIS ON THE GLORIFICATION OF THE DAYS OF A POWERFUL, ISOLATED AND INDEPENDENT RUSSIA."

links all over Europe, the former empire, and the world. Speaking to Lesley Miller, the museum's Senior Curator of Textiles, I ask if exhibitions such as this one are chosen to reflect this. "Actually," she replies, "the Kremlin approached the V&A in this particular instance, and it's a programme which our Russian colleagues are keen to pursue, as exchanges like these allow both sides to introduce the other to things they wouldn't normally see. And unlike other decorative art institutes in other audiences who would not normally visit a museum. Free entry into national museums also encourages this, so some visitors stay only for the free exhibits, some come for the 'blockbusters' which are more expensive, while others come for exhibitions like this, which charge a small fee."

It is not, however, just the number of visitors that is of interest to V&A curators, but also how much visitors "get out of the exhibits". Curators prefer people to learn things, not merely come and admire beautiful objects on

#### Diamonds are Forever

Nicholas II, the last Tsar of Russia, was recognised as a martyred saint in 1981 by the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church itself was not so keen, agreeing only to name them 'passion bearers' as opposed to martyrs. This was because Nicholas and his family had not died as a result of their Christian faith, but were rather the victims of political circumstance. The last Tsar's family were speared to death with bayonets in prison by the Bol-sheviks (who had overthrown the Tsar in the uprising of 1917), while Nicholas himself was shot multiple times in the head and torso. In true Imperial style, the reason his family were not shot was that the large quantity of diamonds they were wearing (over a kilogramme each) acted as body armour, rendering them semi bulletproof.

a purely aesthetic level (although this is obviously part of the experience). 'The Magnificence of the Tsars' is accompanied by a talk given by eminent historian Simon Sebag Montefiore on March 13th. When asked about the role of education in the museum, Dr Miller assures me that "the V&A have an entire department devoted to learning and interpretation. They make sure that every exhibition is accompanied by an event, as there is only a certain amount you can do with an object, when it stands alone and only so much information you can put on a panel. People will only read so much!" In fact, the V&A is always evolving due to its close relationship with designers and creators, a relationship that began with the founding of the museum in 1850. Indeed, it still works that way. "Teachers bring students here to draw from objects and collections, it's a crucial part of our activity."

This close alliance with designers is about to become even more public, with the unveiling of 'Hats: An Anthology by Stephen Jones' on February 24th. Jones, one of the world's foremost hat designers, has picked out 300 of his favourite pieces from the V&A's collection, forming the first ever exhibition there purely devoted to hats. On display will be hats ranging from an Egyptian Anubis mask dating from 600BC to 1950s Balenciaga hats and couture creations by Jones and his contemporaries. To demonstrate the universal appeal and delight of wearing hats, Jones has included a wide variety of styles including top hats, berets and a child's plastic tiara.

<sup>\*</sup>Magnificence of the Tsars' exhibits at the V&A until March 29th. 'Hats: An Anthology by Stephen Jones' is exhibiting from February 24th to May 10th.



BIG BROTHER ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): "Oh, don't worry," interjects Bill, "No one on the show ever is." You're persuaded and are soon having a rollicking time, fielding questions like "Does Coolio's hair look like a turnip?" (answer: "no, a pineapple"). But during an ad break, you're phoned by a weird group of people. Who the hell are they? »p23 You don't know, but you'd love to find out. »p20 The rozzers.

# THE SUS LANE

#### IN AN OPEN LETTER TO VARSITY READERS, GEORGIA ARTUS, CO-ORGANISER OF THE SHOP, TALKS ABOUT THE PLETHORA OF EVENTS PLANNED FOR THIS TERM - AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED

This week 'The Shop' on Jesus Lane, opens its doors once again to the creative minds of Cambridge. An 'open' space in every sense of the word, the Shop attempts to support anyone who wants to be involved in the arts; this is evident in its potential for constant evolution. One minute an art studio, the next a dance floor, an exhibition space, a gig venue, an experimental theatre, even a knitting arena – it is The Shop's versatility that has sparked such interest in both the local and student artistic communities. January marks the start of The Shop's second year, and the incredible talent and variety that have already surfaced there in the last twelve months suggests that the venue will go from strength to strength with the New Year.

In between its metamorphoses, The Shop's home might seem, to the untrained eye, more like an empty classroom than the vibrant multipurpose space described above. But those in the know (including, from now on, you) will know they are seeing The Shop in its incarnation as an open studio for all. Any background, any age, and any degree of talent, pure and simple: you pay your annual £6/£12 (unwaged/waged) membership fee, and for at least two hours a day, Monday to Saturday, you can sit with a cup of tea and use the materials on offer to make a mess or a masterpiece as you see fit. It is an opportunity for anyone to work inexpensively and creatively, as its founder, Paloma Gormley, originally intended.

If the thought of being left to your own creative devices is a little too daunting, The Shop holds workshops and classes to help to you find new methods of artistic procrastination (or even hone in on skills you've been hiding). Most tastes are catered for, but if you can't find something you fancy, the team is flexible and open to suggestions. The workshops charge a minimal entrance fee to cover costs and are held weekly; Life Drawing, for example, is taught on Fridays from 2 to 4, and 'The Stitch Up', a sewing and costume workshop hosted by student designers along with textile artist and co-organiser of the Shop Nikki Goldup, is held on Thursday afternoons from 4.45pm to 6.45pm. Free sessions held during Open Studio hours, run by volunteers, include 'Making Sense'- two hours of personal exploration through art, with Lorna Collins (Mondays 11am-1pm) - and the popular Cambridge Comic Creators Collective with Luke Surl (Saturdays 2pm-5pm).

What is perhaps most compelling about the space is its inherent capacity for diversity. At its roots, The Shop aims not simply to bridge the divide between 'town' and 'gown', but to bring together people of all sorts. Luckily, when finger painting and cups of tea are on offer, it seems that



little extra effort is needed in order to unite people, however different their backgrounds. From children to sophisticates, architects to mathmos, all are welcome here; one class last week united a cupcake maker, an illustrator, three crocheting second years, a young mother and son, two photographers and a man originally searching for the country store (a previous use for the premises) who decided to stay and play in the welcoming atmosphere.

For the performers in our midst, The Shop hosts an eclectic selection of events in which one can participate by either watching or taking part. Unheard Of', a series of poetry open-mic nights organised last year by Amanda Palin, has achieved a large following, and we look forward to its muchanticipated second season. Similarly successful are the frequent gigs held at The Shop, such as that hosted last term by CU1350's 'Tape Modern', with Micachu supported by Boy Mandeville and Dan Michaelson. A piano will be arriving shortly, and spontaneous musical outbursts are sure to follow. This term also offers theatre, in

the form of the Suitcase Cabaret (CUADC), which will take

over the space at 8pm on Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th January, as well as a piece of new writing based upon André Breton's manifestoes of surrealism, which will be performed towards the end of term. The team supports local performance artists by allowing the space to be used for rehearsals and set and costume building out of hours. The success of event days such as The Shop Fairs, 'Make Do and Mend' and 'The Christmas Fair', has prompted the organisation of a Valentine's Day event for February 14th. The soirée will include tea, cake, subversive knitting and a burlesque boudoir to get you in the mood for romance. And if you are up for a bit of burlesque yourself, you may want to take part in the lingerie-making series beginning on Thursday February 5th.

For those wishing to become active in other ways, we host an artist-inresidence programme and a popular volunteering scheme. Current artistsin-residence are Miriam Austin (a sculptor, in residence for a year), Emily Taylor (a performance artist with us for two months), and Sarah Lüdemann (a video artist, also here for two months). Their work can be seen in their residency shows this term, and they are available to offer advice and tutorials.

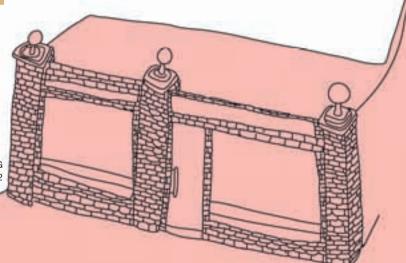
With singing lessons, debates, lectures, tango, salsa, tai chi, and the promise of even more this term, The Shop is sure to provide for even the most exotic of interests. Look at it this way: even if the art, the events, the workshops, the architecture, the music and the atmosphere are not to your taste, there's always a cup of tea and the promise of interesting and surprising conversation. Check our online Calender in the 'What's On' section of www.theshopjesuslane.co.uk to find something for you.

The Shop would like to thank all of its contributors for their continued support. For those with time to give, please see our information regarding volunteering, as The Shop is always in need of helping hands.

#### This fortnight at The Shop

Friday 16th - Monday 19th: "Clouds III" Window Show by Sarah Lüdemann Saturday (17th & 24th): Comic Creators Collective Monday (19th & 26th): 'Making Sense' Open Studio & Salsa Beginners Wednesday (21at & 28th): Tango Thursday (22nd & 29th): Tai Chi Thursday 29th: 'The Stitch Up' Textiles group Friday (30th & 6th): Life Drawing

> ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX CURTIS, ARTIST EXHIBITING IN 'POSTER ROAST', AT THE SHOP FROM 20/2-22/2



#### Round Up



Joel Massey tells us what's what in theatrical week 0

My favourite quote by a senior Nazi (don't panic, I have favourite quotes for every political party in Western Europe) was always the line "when I hear the word 'culture', I reach for my gun". Here at *Varsity*, we hope to survive another hectic season of Cambridge drama without shooting ourselves. This shouldn't be too hard, as it's shaping up to be a cracking term.

The early weeks are admittedly quiet. Rounding up a week that has only two shows by Cambridge students feels a bit like writing a detailed summary of a comma. Of course this week is not all doom and theatrical gloom. I am particularly excited about the home run of ETG's *Hamlet*. It is a well-known dramatic principle (second only to "the show must go on") that any play featuring a tank of water and a giant puppet voiced by Sir Derek Jacobi, is an absolute must-see.

Looking ahead to the term, you might be forgiven for thinking that we live in a world of Shakespeare and musicals. True enough, *Hamlet* (week 0), *42nd* Street (week 3), Richard II (week 6), *Romeo and Juliet* (week 7) as well as *Guys and Dolls* (weeks 8 and 9), are all among the biggest shows of the term. Don't let that fool you though. New writing is alive and well. Rory Mullarkey's translation of Chekov's *Three* Sisters in week 5 is one of the eight (by my count so far) student written plays that will be making waves this term. If you include Smokers and devised pieces, the number is far higher. The Cambridge drama scene is not quite as conservative as many like to make out.

What about the *Varsity* Theatre pages, what's new here? Well, six stars is history. We thought about moving it down to four... or maybe four and three quarters. But as you can see, we compromised with five. So my sincere apologies to any directors that had their heart set on a six star review.

The theatrical event of the break was certainly the death of Harold Pinter. The production of *Old Times*, at Kettle's Yard in week 4, now has added significance and poignancy. I was somewhat alarmed to see Pinter widely heralded as the greatest playwright of his generation; for the sole reason that I happened to spend the entirety of last summer telling total strangers that the accolade belonged to... Tom Stoppard. Don't ask.

## *THEATRE*

*Hamlet by William Shakespeare ADC, January 13th-17th Dir. Dave Brown; CUETG* \*\*\*\*

"S ince brevity is the soul of wit, I shall be brief": See the play, it's really bloody good. But my editor wanted 600 words, so I suppose I shan't be brief. Nor witty, then.

Don't be confused when you walk into the theatre; at first I thought the people on stage were still setting up for the show, and my second thought was one of worry that we were being hijacked by men in jumpsuits and scary masks. Turns out they were actors – to be expected in a theatre I'm told.

I'm always impressed when actors can hold character while the audience are filing in in dribs and drabs, but I'm not sure how well it worked in this situation. Quote guy sitting next to me: "Why is there a guy in a mask tossing off a pole?"

The other thing you'll see is a large tank of water. I was a bit dubious of this at first, but it works fantastically throughout the play, with planks of wood on top of it being constantly moved around to give the tank different functions. Ophelia's tragic death is the obvious one, but a couple of the play's funniest scenes revolve around the tank too, including a conversation between Polonius and a semi-naked Hamlet and the later scene with the Gravedigger (hilarious).

In his introduction the director puts the use of water imagery down to a couple of quotes from James Joyce's *Ulysses* which he had just happened to be reading (pretentious, moi?!). I guess he couldn't admit that he just felt like plonking a fat tank of H2O in the middle of an Elizabethan revenge tragedy and seeing how that worked out.

The cast on the whole were fantastic, with the athletic and nimblefooted Jack Monaghan leading the group as Hamlet and delivering some poignant and emotive soliloquies, a task not easily done. Joey Batey (Laertes) got several laughs from the audience with his subtle and comical facial expressions and Patrick Warner as Claudius was powerful and convincing.

and convincing. However, I think the prize goes to Kate O'Connor for her outstanding representation of Ophelia, from her childish relationship with Hamlet to her developing insanity and culminating in her drowning.

Mention must also go to David Brown, not only for his directing, but for his self-acclaimed "old man looks" which cast him as Polonius, a choice that was not erroneous.

The technical side of things was also impressive: techno music, shadows, thunder and lightning. And blood. Look out for the blood. I liked the blood.

Of course, no show is perfect, and *Hamlet* had its flaws as well. A candle fell into the water tank. Due to said water, there was a lot of hoovering and mopping between scenes and even while acting was going on.

My favourite flawed moment has to be when the convincingly dead Polonius was being rolled off stage by Hamlet; his knees suddenly found life in them again as he lifted up his legs so as not to collide with the stage. Somewhat less convincing.

However, the faults are few and the good bits far outweigh the bad. There's also a great sword-fight at the end; if we have to watch the majority of the cast perish dramatically, we might as well get some good swashbuckling out of it.

"Perchance, t'will come again" (actually, it will, every night until January 17th) and you should be there. But now, for me, to sleep. Perchance to dream. Lauren Davidson



#### Happily Ever Improv ADC, January 13th-17th Dir. Jill Dye; Improvised Comedy Ents \*\*\*\*

I'm not going to lie. This isn't the first play I've reviewed drunk. And I'm not saying that in a banterous, selfregarding way. It's just that there are very few plays that aren't altered and, to be honest, improved by a few pints of Landlord (got to love The Mitre) and an ADC-special half-pint of wine. *Hamlet*? Hilarious! *Three Sisters*? Stop moaning and get it on!

But I digress. This show is harder to review than your average play because it doesn't really fit in to your normal "play" blueprint. Every night will be different to its predecessor; there isn't even any guarantee that the performers will be consistently good: it all depends so heavily on the material the audience gives them to work with. And this is where being drunk comes in. At times this show is a mess: performers falter; the singing doesn't hold up to even the gentlest scrutiny; jokes miss their mark. But this is to ignore entirely the sort of atmosphere that Improvised Comedy Ents (or ICE, if you're being really cool) are trying to create. It's all about having a good time.

Go in with this mentality, and you won't be disappointed: compared to the usual comic performances you get on the ADC stage, members of the ICE troupe really are very impressive when it comes to essentials like timing, pace, and (duh) the ability to improvise in a genuinely funny way. The night I saw it, the story revolved

The night I saw it, the story revolved around a young woodcutter's quest to get to the magical kingdom of Lidl in time to stop the evil Joe from precipitating economic crisis through a cunning plan involving nailing all the kingdom of TK Maxxia's cat flaps shut. That probably sounds as funny as a Prince Harry term of endearment, but the fact is that this is done with a verve and enthusiasm that defies all attempts to focus on its weak points (see above).

My new editor won't let me talk about the star system, but really if you go to this in the right frame of mind there's no limit to the amount of praise you could heap on it. I've tried to be objective, and realise that there are more 'professional' productions being put on on a regular basis. But honestly, I don't care: given a choice between this and *Hamlet*, I know where I'd rather be. *George Reynolds* 



BIG BROTHER ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): "Yes, of course we're the police, you muppet." Which is all well and good, but why are they ringing you? »p25 They're angry because you filmed your fellow soldiers to a soundtrack of racist and homophobic abuse and then leaked it all to the News Of The World. »p26 Wrong number.

#### CAN'T WAIT TILL FRIDAY? BE THE FIRST TO READ THE REVIEWS ONLINE AT VARSITY.CO.UK/REVIEWS

#### Mark Watson

The Junction, January 14th & 15th

#### \*\*\*\*\*

Regular appearances on both *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* and *Mock the Week* are beginning to cement Mark Watson's reputation not as a household name exactly, but at least a household face. Beginning the first of a 56-date tour last night, Watson had seemingly returned to Cambridge, his old stomping ground, to test the water and light the proverbial touch paper. After studying at Queen's and cutting his comedy teeth with the Footlights, this must have been a home-fromhome for that chap what's-his-name who's off the telly with Russell Howard and is often on Buzzcocks.

The evening began in what can only be described as confusion. The guys at the Junction, lovely though they are, decided to forego the age-old numbering system on the seats and just let people sit where

they wanted. This act of complete whimsy meant that, if you weren't amongst the first 15 people in the auditorium, groups had to be split up, scattered and manoeuvred around the stalls like blocks in a game of Tetris.

Watson compounded this bewilderment by opening the show up on the balcony: "Hello, it's me, I'm up here. I'm the comedian; we've started." Nice curve-ball opening I thought. Of course, the only problem was that, thanks to the layout of the auditorium, to about a third of the audience including myself, he was totally obscured from view. This floating voice continued up on the balcony for about ten minutes before he talked himself down; it's okay, I thought, this is just like listening to his show on Radio 4.

The first half was really rather

**Ophelia's** Aria

great. Watson's jittery, neurotic personality soon zipped into life and he was very, very funny. The show fired along with Watson catching the shinny glint of some thought or other and bouncing off on different tangents. Not really one for gags and punch-lines (though there were a few), it's Watson's speed and turnof-phrase that seem to make him so hilarious and endearing. Loosely, I think the show was

structured around how Watson has tried to lower his stress levels but, this being the first show in the tour, that idea seemed to fall a little by the wayside. It mattered little, there may have been little structure to last night's show, but there were laughs and they came thick and fast. If you missed this, Nick Moham-

med is at the ADC on February 3rd. Nathan Brooker



Mumford Theatre, January 11th & 12th Dir. Joanna Bucknall; Anglia Contemporary Theatre \*\*\*\*\* •• Help me!" was not only the collective cry of the 20 odd actors on stage as another image of a girl slitting her wrists was shown on the screen behind them – it also echoed my inner feelings as I watched this play's exploration into suicide and gender. Ophelia's Aria takes the theatre goer into a world devoid of happiness and laughter, a world where one actor will sob into a microphone for 15 minutes, a world where Hamlet will declare in the climactic scene that he wants to be a woman (how can all those Shakespearean scholars have missed

that one?). Ophelia's Aria is clearly not one for the faint hearted. It aims for profundity. It singularly fails. It presents an ensemble cast detailing various episodes in their supposedly

tragic lives. And yet what struck me was the mundane nature of these characters' issues. This problem was exacerbated by the dialogue: it appeared to be lifted out of a bad Carol Ann Duffy poem. While at-tempting to address the difficulties of expression in modern language, it ultimately succumbed to these difficulties. The worst element, however, was the ensemble pieces. The cast writhed about on stage as if performing some demented version of the Macarena, making weird sex noises and wearing masks that looked as if they had been stolen from Halloween costumes. The first time they performed this was, at best, a novelty. By the tenth occasion I could barely restrain myself from walking out.

mended for its ambition and for its desire to deal with complicated, interesting issues. However, this production reduced these issues to clichés in order to fuel the gratui-tous performances on show. Alas, I am no expert on the 'physical theatre aesthetic. And as the play went on, I did begin to wonder if this was part of the director's 'post modern-ist' intention; to batter the audience into agreement through misery and banality. But if this was the intention, I can't help feeling it was lost on the audience. The self indulgence ended up isolating us. As one punt-er whom I overheard leaving the theatre noted it was just 'a big waste of everyone's time'. Ultimately, it was difficult to see anything worthy of praise in this overly long preten-

#### Context



#### Week 1: Harold Pinter (1930-2008)

Over the Christmas break, we lost the man regarded by some as Britain's greatest living playwright: Harold Pinter, author of 29 plays, in addition to poetry, screenplays and a novel, died on Christmas Eve, aged 78, and was buried on New Year's Eve. His death came just two weeks after he had been made president of the Central School of Speech and Drama - one of many honours, including the Legion d'Honneur, a rejected knighthood, and the Nobel Prize for Literature, which studded a fifty-year career.

I first encountered Pinter's work as part of the A level syllabus, when we studied his 1957 play The Birthday Party. I remember being struck by how familiar the dialogue sounded: Pinter captures perfectly the eerie banality of daily conversation, and fills it with sinister, deeply disturbing undertones to create an effect which has entered the language under the term 'Pinteresque'. Much of Pin-ter's work deals with what became known as 'comedy of menace' apparent triviality masking a sense of disordered or censored society – and reflects a political interest which was central to his life.

Starting as a conscientious objector refusing National Service in 1949, and in 1985 thrown out of an American embassy dinner in Ankara, together with the guest of honour, Arthur Miller, for speaking against the imprisonment of Turkish writers, Pinter always kicked against the status quo – and was particularly vocal in his criticism of the US administration, and of the Iraq war.

Pinter began his career as an actor, but soon turned to writing, beginning with a student play 'commissioned' by a friend at Bristol. The Birthday Party, his second play, was reviled by audiences and rubbished by critics – who were later forced to eat their words when he became one of Britain's most respected playwrights. In ad-dition to writing, Pinter directed over 50 productions and wrote poetry prolifically, asserting that T've been writing poetry since my youth and I'm sure I'll keep on writing it till I conk out. In 2005 Pinter announced his

decision to stop writing plays, choosing to dedicate himself instead to poetry, acting, and political activism. As one of the founders – together with Stephen Fry - of Independent Jewish Voices, a group acting as a forum for Jews critical of Israel's actions, he would almost certainly have been writing angry letters around now regarding the situation in Gaza. In Pinter's death, we lose a powerful dissenting voice, a profoundly eloquent mind, and a great and influential playwright. **Colette Sensier** 

PREVIEW Breakfast at Night ADC Theatre, January 28th-31st

The ADC is being transformed into a live recording studio for *Breakfast* at Night, the morning radio show for 'people who are not awake in the morning.' Written, directed and starring Matt Bulmer, Daran Johnson and Liam Williams, old hands on the Cambridge comedy scene, this lateshow sounds as if it might be just that little bit different

You might be intrigued to see how the huge cast and crew – seventy or so in total – fit onto the ADC stage. You might be intrigued by the rumoured nudity. You might be intrigued by the live band. The ADC staff will become staff of the production company Chan*nel YES* and there will be a different stand up comedian every night (Rory Mullarkey, Keith Akushie, Abi Tedder and Tom Williams) to loosen up the

Written & directed by Matt Bulmer, Daran Johnson & Liam Williams

audience before the curtain goes up and the 'On Air' sign lights up.

Within an hour of the audition notice being posted, over 40 thesps contacted the directors, keen to be involved. It is a full length version of a shorter show put on during May Week last year. The idea for Breakfast at Night came about after the trio became determined to get into May Balls for free. Astounded by its success, the three Homertonians met up and worked on producing a longer version that still retained the vigour and exuberance of the shorter pilot. The writers want the audience to be bombarded by punchy, fast paced jokes throughout the performance to ensure they go home having had fun; which is, after all, what comedy is surely all about. Victoria Ball

Ophelia's Aria should be comtious twaddle. Nick Beck PREVIEW Suits of Solemn Black ADC Larkum Studio, February 18th-21st Written and directed by Adam Hollingworth; Pembroke Players

Theatregoers in Cambridge often L seem dubious about new student writing. Luckily, Adam Hollingworth has already proved with *Union Flag* (at the Corpus Playroom last year) that he can write insightful and (crucially) watchable theatre. Now he is upping his game with his production of Suits of Solemn Black, to be staged in the new ADC Larkum Studio space. Don't be fooled by the 40 seat intimate venue:

with BIG subjects. Subjects like death, love and family bonds - in case you were wondering. The play opens with the recent death of an overbearing father and focuses on the individuals left in his wake, or at the eve of his funeral, to be exact. As the night wears on, his family finally begin to reveal to each other their true feelings

this is an ambitious play that grapples

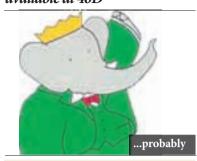
about this patriarch. And you've guessed it, he's not exactly dad of the year.

But don't let trifles like corpses and coffins put you off, the play looks set to be more in the tradition of Ibsen or Strindberg than Albert Square. Hollingworth is committed to avoiding melodrama and is adjusting his script throughout the rehearsal process as he works with his cast. Emotion will be played out in understated moments of stillness as well as in larger group scenes. There is also promise of some flashes of humour or 'light relief', as it's known in this context. Most importantly, the characters and their experiences will be realistic and convincing. There will be something here that every audience member, with or without psychopathic fathers, can relate to. Cait Crosse

BIG BROTHER ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): You protest vehemently: "You've got the wrong man!" They reply sadistically: "Proof it, ginger pubes, by correctly answering the following question: is your Dad called Prince Charles?" »p27 Yes. »p28 No, he's called James Hewitt.

#### iWatch

Week 1: Could You Eat An Elephant?, 10pm Wednesday, available at 40D



Television is at its best when it confronts pressing issues of national importance, and demands frank and unforgiving answers. Being of such an opinion, I was delighted to see that *Could You Eat An Elephant?* was being aired this week. Two eccentric and apparently nationally renowned chefs, Fergus Henderson and Jeremy Lee, travel to Vietnam, Italy and Sub Saharan Africa to push their gastronomic audacity to the limit in a series of niche meats culminating in the ultimate elephant tusk.

Despite its whimsical title, the show did make an attempt to key into the current food obsession in the affluent west. For most of us, meat comes from Sainsbury's, sanitised on a polystyrene tray and shrouded in film. This show confronted the actuality of carnivorous life by showing monkeys, dogs and horses go from running wild, to on a plate, in montages of wince inducing gore. Our two luvvie London chefs showed their wimpish western stripes as it turned out the main deterring quality was not vileness, but cuteness. Whilst perfectly happy to eat still-beating snake heart or maggot-infested pecorino cheese, the chefs just could not stomach the monkey brains. I think it had something to do with the dish looking like a dead baby's skull.

The show was greatly aided by its inspired narration, courtesy of East End rent-a-thug Alan Ford, best known to us as Brick Top from Snatch. He was on hand to berate the viewers for the absurd vagaries of ethical consumption. In his sardonic cockney twang, he claims that "we tend to be squeamish about food that's gone off" or, even better, "pigs are best when fed on human waste, so why not eat sewer rat?" The show would, of course, have been all the better if Alan Ford had actually been there, on screen, so that whenever Fergus and Jeremy's namby pamby Guardian-reading consumer ethics got the better of them, he could chop 'em into six pieces and feed 'em to the pigs.

At best, this show demonstrated how irrational some of our food taboos are. Jeremy and Fergus happily sampled dog in Vietnam, but the experience turned sour when they then visited the farm. Although they were kept in battery cages identical to those which pigs and chickens suffer in Europe, it was just too difficult to see a cute little puppywuppies being thrown around a mesh cage.

As for the elephant, you'll just have to watch the program to see. But suffice to say that Babar and the Jungle Book loom large in the moral quandary. *Rob Peal* 

## MUSIC

The Killers Day & Age Vertigo, out now

\*\*\*\*\*

If you spoke to me after the release of *Hot Fuss*, I would have told you that The Killers were one of the most exciting, important bands of the last ten years. On hearing *Sam's Town*, I was convinced they were. *Day & Age* makes me question my own judgment.

'Losing Touch' is a promising start to the album. Its twinkling opening bars blend seamlessly into the most addictive bass line on the record and it finishes with a beautifully grand guitar solo. Adding the generous helping of brass, there are shades of Roxy Music. It hints at a great album to come.

That anticipation makes the transition to 'Human' incredibly disappointing. This song never takes off; there are points when you think it

#### *Merriweather Post Pavilion Animal Collective Domino, out now* \*\*\*\*

 $\mathbf{S}$  o Geologist is in his bedroom on the communal MS-DOS machine from '91, slowly loading up some optical illusion websites like amazeyourbrain on 56k. "Hey Noah!" he calls out still facing the screen. He can't look away. Noah rushes in, looking down at something in his hands and says "Hey man, look what I picked up round the back of the..." and as his eyes catch the CRT monitor, his excitement for his new acquisition immediately subsides, his shoulders "No. Way." Countless breaths are taken until "I've seen that before. Backstage at the Merriweather in Maryland this chick gave me this dot. I think she called it a Windowpane or something. She took one too and until the next day I was seeing THAT," might, but they persistently fail to deliver. 'Spaceman' summons up memories of Bowie, which only serves to remind you how poorly it compares. On the first play it seems like it might be a (reasonably) sunny, upbeat Killers pop song, but it actually gets duller with every time you hear it.

There is a general lack of presence; older Killers songs seem so much more powerful. Songs from their first albums command your attention. You won't find another 'Mr Brightside' or 'When You Were Young' here. 'Goodnight, Travel Well' is a splendid, almost glowing album closer, and probably the best track on the record, other than that, this album is mostly ignorable. Bonus track 'A Crippling Blow' is a nice addition to it, but I

wouldn't go so far as to say the special edition is much better than the initial release.

Brandon Flowers is a brilliant lyricist and the lyrics are this album's saving grace. They have lost no momentum since the previous record and have kept their distinctive narrative. Whether he's stretching his story-telling muscles in 'A Dustland Fairytale' or asking us irksome, grammatically-disputed questions, he rarely fails to please. Crucially, this record has its mo-

Crucially, this record has its moments, but is ultimately disappointing, especially when you consider how good The Killers can be. Having set the bar so high with *Hot Fuss*, perhaps their other releases are doomed to be always overshadowed and we'll RINGES

never give the records the attention they deserve. But as for this album, I remain underwhelmed. I am human. I won't be dancing. *Lucy Bryant* 

his nail makes a chinking sound on the screen. "Man. I thought I'd never see it again. Shit." The house should feel a little empty

with Deakin not around. He's taken

his guitars and most of his pedals, but Panda Bear got some new ones, so the lighter patches on the floor weren't bare for too long. Most of them seem to be echo or loop-pedals, but Avey Tare rehashed some of the electronics so their long black leads can be followed up the back of multiple synths. "No problem." A box of mics sits in the corner, and next to them various barrel-sized drums.

And Animal Collective have crafted a beautiful piece of music. Not moving far away from their previous works, the group have still managed to crawl deep into the uncharted crags of their imagination, and emerge with sackfuls of fresh sounds.

Heavily-relying on repetition, many of the songs sound like their bottommost layer is being played over and over on a sagging reel-to-reel tape spliced by Steve Reich. Carefully assembling myriad layers on these fragile bases, the band balance dreamy harmonies with pounding rhythms, Frankie Knuckles samples, and apparently even find time to let Lathozi Mpahleni Manquin Madosini from the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa to play a home-made instrument on one song.

What fascinates me is music's ability to create feeling. No two conceptions of ethereality can be the same, yet many people envisage the spiritual world in similar ways. Animal Collective's perfect music leaves one with the incomparable sense of listening to unique familiarity. And I thought improving on clouds was impossible. *Andrew Spyrou* 

#### *Ex Maria Virgine John Tavener; Clare College Choir, cond. Timothy Brown Naxos, out now*

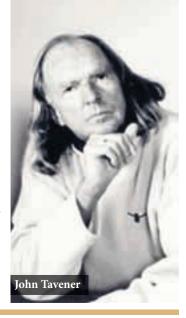
\*\*\*\*

Naxos discs have taken flak from music snobs since their conception; some has been justifiable, some less so. With the Clare College Choir, Tavener and John Rutter involved, Naxos have pulled off a fantastic record which music connoisseurs will find hard to sniff at. Tavener's musical path leads us through a spiritual journey, discovering Eastern Orthodoxy, Islam, Hinduism, Mysticism and Sufism along the way. 'Ex Maria Virgine', the main work, uses texts from Greek, Latin, English and Islamic sources and weaves them seamlessly into a multifaceted celebration of the 'Eternal Feminine'.

The atmospheric chanting of 'Verbum Caro' introduces us to the tonal landscape of the piece and the choir demonstrating an impressive clarity in their singing of the awkward melodic intervals. 'Nowell! Nowell! Out of Your Sleep' uses a Stravinskyian rhythm to enliven the music before the beautiful haunting 'Ex Maria Virgine' codetta (sung in various forms after each movement) calms us for 'Remember O Thou Man'. Here Clare showed their wonderfully full range of sounds, from intimate piano passages to joyous proclamations of praise with the bass and soprano voices particularly impressive. The frenetic 'Ave Rex' and canonic 'There is No Rose' were memorable, though the new tune of 'Ding Dong Merrily on High!' may not catch on in the country's churches. The highlight of the recording is the performance of 'Rocking', which truly evoked its maternal subject matter and may well be on the next Classic FM Toddlers' Tunes disc. The finality of a reprise of Verbum Caro completed this work: challenging to listen to at times but extremely fulfilling.

The later tracks show off more of the versatility of the choir; blended like a good Scotch for the most part, though a few wobbling pedal notes in 'A Nativity' and some sopranos struggling with a top B in 'O Thou Gentle Light' proved them to be human after all.

This collection of Tavener's works, composed over two decades, has a remarkable continuity and is a sparkling example of what British classical music can be today. It delivers an exploration of clever compositional devices and new sound worlds, in this case inspired by ancient Byzantine culture, whilst maintaining a public listenability; so often lost on modern composers striving to find their own voice. At around six pounds this disc is a steal: just listen to it to soothe away the guilt. *Andrew Browning* 



## **ART, FILM & LITERATURE**

#### Dreams and Lies

#### Pablo Picasso

#### Fitzwilliam Musuem, until February 8th \*\*\*\*

"Give me a museum," wrote Picasso, "and I will fill it." The unspoken words were 'with art', but he might just as well have added 'with people. For Picasso is a big draw. If you bill him, they will come. The National Gallery are relying on Picasso to keep them in visitors and funds in the coming year; 'Picasso: Challenging the Past' is their headline show for what promises to be a financially choppy 2009. If Picasso can be squeezed into the cultural calendar then squeezed he will be. Picasso's other great appeal lies in his prolificacy: his vast outpouring of work to suit every price range from monumental canvases to napkin doodles ensures that every gallery from Tyneside to Timbuktu has the odd Picasso knocking about the attics ready to be pressed into service. The Fitzwilliam have plundered their

Picasso store to produce a neat little exhibition: 'Dreams and Lies'. The prints were all produced in the 1930s when Franco and the Civil War provoked Picasso into a flurry of bellicose artistry. Like his forbear Francisco Goya, Picasso broaches the horrors of war and despotism with expulsions of savage creativity. The figures in his series of prints 'The Dreams and Lies of Franco' are racked, tormented, turned inside out and deformed by pain and rage. Many of these figures, the panicking horse, the spread-eagled woman later reappear in Picasso's polemical Guernica, a cataclysmic portrait of the aftermath of German bombing during the Spanish Civil War.

Elsewhere in the exhibition, Picasso's etchings take on a psycho-sexual guise with images of a priapic minotaur locked in sexual union with a Demeter

or Blodeuwedd figure. These intertwinings of Minotaur and fertile goddess are unexpectedly beautiful: a coruscating tumble of naked female flesh and tangled bull's hair. The sharpened blade held by the female figure, unseen by the minotaur, strikes an unheeded note of danger. Picasso's illustrations to

Apollinaire's Salome revisit this theme of female/male violence. An unrepentant, pirouetting Salome dances for a Herod with Borghese jowls, while a servant nurses a platter bearing the Baptist's gaunt, lank-haired head. Picasso characterises the three central characters with extraordinary economy of line and such



© SUCCESSION PICASSO/DACS 200

a virtuoso display of draughtsmanship serves as a tart rebuttal to the 'Picasso couldn't draw' camp. Well worth a visit, and after all, it might be weeks before a new Picasso exhibition opens. Laura Freeman



### Dir. Danny Boyle and Loveleen Tandan Starring: Dev Patel, Freida Pinto and Anil Kapoor

A n early scene in Danny Boyle's new rags to Rajah' saga has the hero Jamal fighting through a crowd to win the autograph of Bollywood idol Amitabh Bachnan, straight after jumping into a latrine. In light of the Oscar buzz surrounding *Slumdog Millionaire* and its Golden Globe successes, it's tempting to use the trick pulled by this endearing but shit-swathed upstart who bypasses other contenders to usurp the prize as a metaphor for the way this fun but flawed movie has duped the critical establishment.

The film opens in the orange glow of a police interrogation. Someone can't believe that a boy who serves tea to workers at a call-centre would know the answers to all the questions on the famous gameshow. How could he have cheated? Jamal is given the chance to explain himself, however,

and the voiceover leads us into his street urchin childhood to illustrate the episodes from his life in which he learnt the improbable answers to these questions.

The film dazzles with clichés of trains, Taj Mahals and hapless tourists. It is populated with a swarm of cartoon baddies who could only convince an 8 year-old ... but since much of the film is told from the perspective of the slumdog in various stages of childhood, it makes few claims to do otherwise. There's a hint of honesty about the way in which the film stereotypes India as we sit in on a call-centre workers' introduction to Scottish culture: "Does anyone know anything about Scotland?" the instructor asks. "Kilts... castles... Sean Connery. And they call lakes 'lochs'!" comes an eager student's reply. The India of this film is just as commoditised; bouts

of ahistorical religious violence are used only as a segue into multiple-choice questions that drive us closer to the 20m rupee question. But even the leeway you grant it based on its faintly-realised Bollywood aspirations can't render palatable its relentless sentimentality. You don't have to look to the fact that all the answers 'occurred' to Jamal in question order throughout his life as evidence that this movie is contrived. Dialogue that runs: "But what will we live on?" "We'll live on love" would have even the cast of High School Musical retching into their pompoms.

Accept its unabashed cheesiness, and the film might win you round with the exciting narrative structure the Millionaire device provides. But does our hero pull it off? I'll leave it 50/50. Izzy Finkel

#### Nick Laird On Purpose Faber and Faber \*\*\*\*

first discovered Nick Laird when leafing through a stack of old Mays anthologies in the bookshop in St Edmund's Passage; his poems leapt out from the pages as significant. Since graduating from Sidney a decade ago, he's published one novel and two volumes of poems: the latest, On Purpose, won the Somerset Maugham Prize last year.

The poems are like riddles, chiming with diverse reference - one poem, entitled 'Search Engine', illustrates the diversity of the writer's world with a list of phrases running from Chomsky versus Saussure to off-roading magazines to history of Powerade. Across the collection, a broad sweep of reference asserts itself with the surety that begins one poem, 'Mandeville's Kingdom', with the sigh "Of Dog-Headed Men and the Juggernaut,/ I have spoken,

I think." One poem celebrates the life of a pug puppy – "The Buddha would have liked you" – another de-scribes an Auschwitz relief worker's reaction to a surprise shipment of lipstick.

At points in this broad world, focus falls with great intensity on detail - 'Holiday of a Lifetime' contemplating a found jigsaw piece over eight stanzas, or the lawn described with "each blade/ alert and bidding for the same/ thinning, wintry light." At others, we are taken into the poet's world with a striking directness; one poem entitled 'Offensive Strategy' begins frankly "Lately the tablets are making no difference." One poem, 'Use of Spies', is faced by a blank page and describes a sunrise to an absent loved one; it ends with the isolated line, "I thought I'd have to try and tell you that." This line

could apply to the whole collection: behind a riddling web of reference and close detail, we slip behind thin lines into the poet's consciousness, in order to see through his eyes.

Laird works skillfully with rhyme and rhythm. There are examples of tight form here, including 'The Immigration Form', which uses the insistent repetition of the villanelle to eerie effect, but Laird's real strength is in his flexible rhythms and chiming half-rhymes - as in the conclusion to 'Hunting is a Holy Occupation', one of my favourite poems of the collection, "licking my hands after eating, waiting,/ to learn if God exists, I hate him." It is this faintly musical tone, close to the natural rhythms of conversation, which gives these poems their natural voice, and particular charm. Colette Sensier



#### Take V **Bushisms**



#### Five of the Best

The 'binoculars' incident (2002) See above. No comment needed.

'There's an old saying in Tennessee – I know it's in Texas, probably in Tennessee – that says, fool me once, shame on you. Fool me... you can't get fooled again' (2002) Dubya failing to make any coher-ent sense, though with a brilliant attempt to pass it off as a good ol' proverb. From Tennessee. Or Texas.

'I know the human being and fish can coexist peacfeully' (2000) A beautiful statement, if it wasn't for the fact that he delivered it during a speech supporting a stand against the destruction of fish-killing hydro-electric dams.

'Sometimes you misunderestimated me' (2009)

In his last press conference this week, George Bush reveals that even George Bush is laughing at George Bush sometimes.

'Rarely is the question asked: is our children learning?' (2000) A gem from the seemingly endless library of Bush's grammatically-inventive phrases.

#### Five of the Worst

'When I was coming up, it was a dangerous world, and you knew exactly who they were. It was us versus them, and it was clear who them was. Today we are not so sure who the they are, but we know that they're there.' (2000)

Recasting himself as a superhero, we bet they are quaking in their boots, whoever they are.

'It's clearly a budget. It's got a lot of numbers in it' (2000) It's still a puzzler how the credit crunch could have come from a country with such an astute economic mind at the top.

*'T'm the commander – see, I don't need* to explain – I do not need to explain why I say things. That's the interesting thing about being president' (2002) Sorry, how is that interesting? Oh, you don't need to explain.

'There's no question that the minute the storm clouds on t horizon were getting directly overhead' (2001)

Sadly, though Bush fails to note the irony, this statement proved to be unerringly accurate for his regime.

'You know, one of the hardest parts of my job is to connect Iraq to the war on terror' (2006) You might as well just give up, everyone else has.

BIG BROTHER ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): "Oh, alright then, we'll let you off. If you really were Prince Harry, you would have known that Prince Charles ain't really your pa." By way of apology, they give you a ticket to see CBBLB tonight. Up for it? "p23 Yes, reality television gives meaning to your life." "p18 No, you'd rather die in amusing circumstances..



### Great Works Of Art In Cambridge

#19: The English Faculty by Allies and Morrison Sidgwick Site

One of the best things about reading English at Cambridge is that you get to do quite a lot of it in the brand (and still relatively spanking) new English Faculty building, completed in 2004. It sits right at the UL end of the Sidgwick Site, as if it is trying to avoid having anything to do with the Classics Faculty across on the Newnham side.

Cambridge-schooled architects Allies and Morrison were inspired in their vision for the building by the work of the abstract painter Ben Nicholson. Many of Nicholson's paintings can be seen at Kettle's Yard; it is from these paintings that the English Faculty gets many of its colours - light olive, rusty red, ochre yellow.

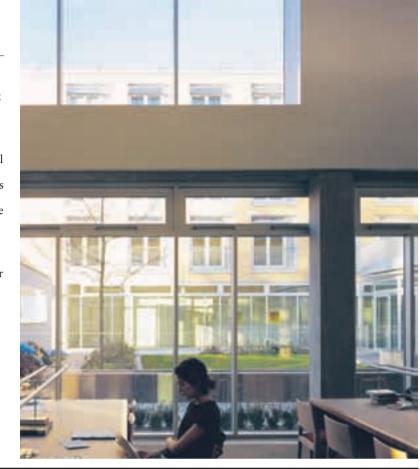
Nicholson's influence also accounts for the architects' peculiar interest in exploring the imaginative possibilities of the rectangle, the single shape which repeats itself throughout the building in surprising patterns of light, space and colour. The building interacts brilliantly with what is immediately outside of it through large rectangular windows (even the lecture rooms have them) which frame the outside world in an oddly comfort-

ing way. This sounds like a complicated way

of saying that the building has windows which you can look out of, and, really, it is. It's just that rectangles are so persistent in the English Faculty that I find myself unable to peer through a glazed one without thinking a little more about it.

Walk down the steps from the top floor of the library and look out of the tall window set high in the wall – from the top of the steps the window is full of grass and concrete and the Seeley Library. These diminish at every step until you are standing right underneath the window. Then the clutter has disappeared, and all you can see is sky.

Seeing the world through rectangles like this - trying to see it all, but only ever getting a sort of oblong picture of the sky and the world below it - makes you realise how many rectangles you'd need if you were to try and frame everything that is outside. It also shows the perspectival inadequacy of the rectangle, the basic frame through which people have always viewed their reality on canvasses, pages, stages and screens. These are all representations of a world which this building, with its crisp corners and rigid angularity, insists can only actually be seen through a circle - the eye, perhaps? Elliot Ross



Sudoku

through 9 exactly once

9

1

8 3

4

6

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 "

4

3

6 8

8

2 1

9

7

5

2

6

8

7

7 1

5

7

1

The Varsity Scribblepad

3 8 9 4

5 2

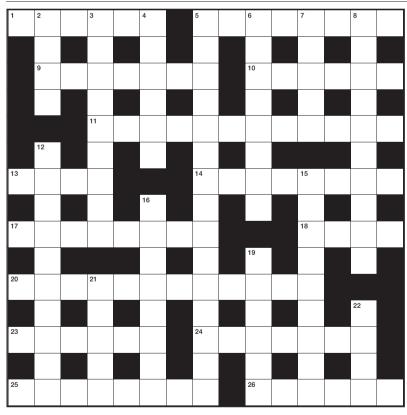
1

7 4 3

no. 495

## Games & puzzles

#### Varsity Crossword



#### Across

- A vicar that's Walter's first study (6) 1
- Muscles in the French spirit (8) The Spanish, for instance, are not 9
- trained to begin with grace (7)
- **10** Dissolve with a regular book (6) 11 Take these and it's a toxin de-
- stroyed, perhaps? (12)
- 13 Wise men, but less than charming? (4)

- 24 Hisashi enters the picture, also getting cold in pursuit of knowledge
- (7)25 And thus, in an emergency, these
- people could be anyone (2-3-3) 26 Cheapskate followed by unknown anguish (6)

#### Down

- 2 Closely observed, most people are doubly so (4)
- Again and again, and again etc. (9) The law wrongly gathered assets (6)
- 4 As it is, CSS unexpectedly gains an 5 award for people of 24 (15)
- Penguins, for instance, aurally 6 notice casual women (3,5)
- Eastern fighter not starting to hurt, so they say (5)
- 8 Pulses love organ rhythms (10) 12 Drink to beat the singular composer of Tosca? (10)
- **15** Sacrifices of iron circle a point (9) 16 Fog permeates revolutionary's
- people of 24 (8) 19 It's a gas to sing to oneself, swal-
- lowing a strange lie (6) **21** 2
- 22 I

25									26						<ul> <li>21 24 is 2, ass sence of b</li> <li>22 Listen in t</li> </ul>	suming a read (5)	a comple	te ab-				
A	Across																					
5 9	A vicar Muscle The Spa trained	s in th anish, to be	ne Fre for in gin w	ench sj nstanc vith gr	pirit ( e, are ace (7	(8) e not 7)	1	the 7 Uri hal	atmo nates f of ch	nurche	e, mo ly be es' se	ostly efore rmoi	(8) the s ns (8)	econd		Set by Hisashi						
11	Dissolve with a regular book (6) Take these and it's a toxin de- stroyed, perhaps? (12) Wise men, but less than charming? (4)							20 I m ten 23 To	iace d	iate sn aycare nwarc , beca	hor ls (8,	ribly ,4)	from	Sep-						<b>ast issue's s</b>	olutions	;
Acro	vers to last issue's crossword (no. 494) ss: 1 Programs, 5 Isolde, 9 Bayreuth, 10 Credit, 11 Inedible, 12 Unison, 14 Music-drama, 18/13 Der Ring Des Nibelungen, 22 Second, 23 Automata, 24 Column, 25 Ignition, 26 Satire, 27 Intruder. Down: 1 Public, 2 Oxygen, edit, 4 Metallurgy, 6 Serenade, 7 Ladv's man, 8 Estonian, 15 Odd socks, 16 Bracelet, 17 Misnomer, 19 Holier, 20 Varied, 21 Wagner.															9     3     7     8     6     2     1     5       6     8     2     4     5     9     7     3       4     5     8     7     2     1     6     9       2     9     4     6     1     5     3     7       7     1     9     5     3     8     2     4						

#### Sex in the Univer-City



#### Week 1: Supervisor Seduction

ast May Week, it became the ul-Limate distraction for my friends sitting finals to engage in lengthy 'Would You Rather' games concerning what, and who, one would be prepared to do in order to get a guaranteed first. However, the 'things' became so imaginatively offensive I begged the question whether they wouldn't mind just doing it anyway, first or no first. "Obv", came the nonchalant reply. I thought of all the supervisors I

had had (non-sexually speaking). One serious contender is now married with a baby, a baby I have met, who, in baldness, looks scarily like his father, or the other way round. I'm no home-wrecker. Nor am I wholly willing to sleep with a man who looks more like his baby than his baby looks like him. Another proved more promising, a passable Chad Michael Murray (saggier) lookalike who added me on Facebook. Shame about the relentless status updates. It shattered the mysterious "can't-touchthis" aura, indispensable for any student/teacher relationship. "You: tired, back in Kent, just ate tuna bake. Me: positively writhing with lust for a tired, tuna-baked, thirty-something, on Facebook, in Kent. RAVAGE ME." As sex guru Sebastian Valmont warns in *Cruel Intentions*, the internet is for geeks and paedophiles.

In this game you definitely don't want to be pursued; they have to be untouchable, far beyond your nubile charms, busy reading your essay about the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, into which you tried to insert as much as possible about prostitution at the time, just in case it made him think about sex. Not that you think of yourself as a prostitute, but it gets him to say the word sex, so it's a step in the right direction at least.

Keen on the supervisor's part is a nono; Lionel Richie's 'Hello' video should be flashing before you sort of like now. Playing a creepy professor, Richie stalks a blind student (lazy stalking, pal). The best bit is the fact that he gets someone to act the role of a criminal called 'Billy Boy'. Oh no wait, the best bit is when he telephones her but is so taken up with his ballad that he slams the phone down mid lyric. On no wait, the best bit is when she makes the clay bust of what she imagines him to look like. How on earth can she fancy him, obviously it helps that she is blind, but I mean, HOW can she fancy him when he is doing the chasing? Richie's video was voted the worst music video of all time in a poll of 8,000 music fans by UK TV music channel The Box. Supervisors, learn your lesson. Cherry Divine

ADVENT ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): "Gotchal" they cry. "What do you mean 'Gotchal'? My dad's name really is James Hewitt but he's defo no relation of the army chap who was having an affair with Diana, Princess of Wales at the time of Harry's conception. If that's what you're instituating." But there's no persuading them and so you're sent to Coventry until the real Harry's hows his face, a week later.

#### Sport Report: Varsity Skiing

## Cambridge Slip Up On The Slopes

#### Varsity Sport

The pre-Christmas snow in Val Thorens was some of the best the Alps have had for a long time and all the results reflected the quality of the conditions. Despite the disappointment of losing both men's and women's matches this year, there are always positives to take from the mountains.

In the women's competition Catherine Pelton (New Hall) skied very well, finishing third overall, with a particularly quick time in the Giant Slalom. She was, however, the only Cambridge girl to register in the top three in either competition and Oxford gradually crept away to seal a solid victory. It was a different story in the seconds, where Cambridge dominated throughout and ended up registering victory by over two minutes. In the men's Blues competition

there were very strong performances from Andy Wheble (2nd overall), Pete Calvert (3rd overall) and Evan Scouros (4th overall). After the first event (Giant Slalom), Cambridge were ahead by two seconds but Oxford skied extremely well in the second run of the slalom to clinch the Challenge Cup for another year. In the end it was Oxford's strongest skier, Freddie Clough, who made all the difference. He ended up thirteen seconds ahead of Wheble overall and but for his contribution the Dark Blues would have been comfortably beaten.

The victories for both Cambridge second teams, however, showed the

strength we have throughout this squad. Despite losing two of our strongest skiers this year, CUSSC has a real belief, with the incredibly close nature of the last two competitions, that Cambridge's time is coming.

#### **OVERALL MEN**

Cambridge 1st: 15:22.32 Oxford 1st: 15:20.60 Oxford win Varsity Match by 1.72s

Cambridge 2nd: 17:51.17 Oxford 2nd: 19:49.18 Cambridge win 2nds Match by 1:58.01

Cambridge 3rd: 21:55.35 Oxford 3rd: 21:23.62 Oxford win 3rds Match by 31.72s

#### **OVERALL WOMEN**

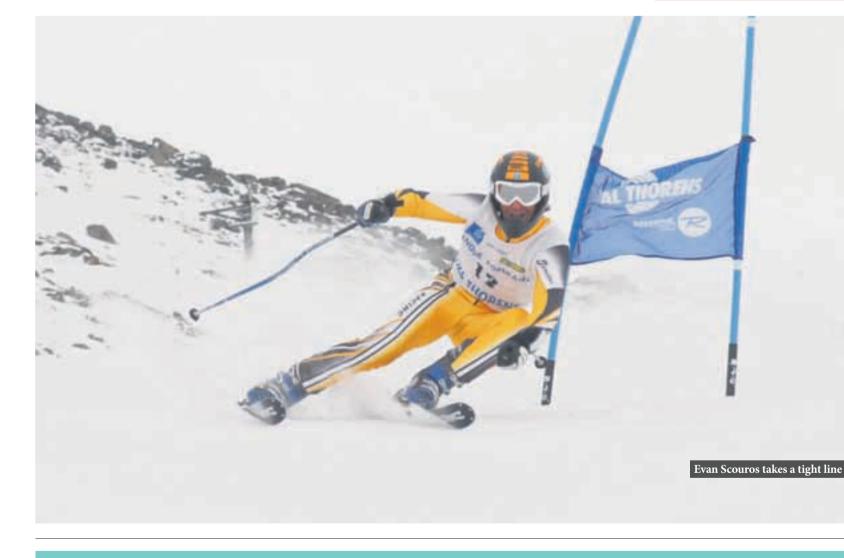
Cambridge 1st: 17:43.13 Oxford 1st: 17:25.16 Oxford win Varsity Match by 17.97s

Cambridge 2nd: 19:34.21 Oxford 2nd: 21:44.55 Cambridge win 2nds match by 2:10.34

Note: overall team time is calculated by adding the fastest 4 in each team in each event, then adding to make a total team time (teams are made up of 6 racers).

#### Coming next week...

A feature on alternative winter sports and a review of the Varsity Trip from another perspective.



### The Week Ahead

#### National

#### Heineken Cup Rugby

A cracking Saturday of European rugby with penultimate pool matches from some of the biggest clubs in the game. On-form Harlequins travel to Ravenhill to take on Ulster, Perpignan play host to the Ospreys, and Leinster look to hit Wasps at Twickenham. It WILL be rugbytastic.

*Tomorrow. Coverage starts on Sky Sports 2 from 1.30pm* 

#### University

#### Blues Rugby

So Varsity didn't go according to plan, but next year's preparation starts here. Some new faces are sure to feature as the team line up for the first time since December against Durham University. If you hang around after the match, you may even get to talk to Jon Dawson and find out exactly what went wrong for the team.

Tomorrow. Grange Rd, KO 2.15pm

#### National

#### Carling Cup Football

Derby County travel to Old Trafford 1-0 up on aggregate after their shock victory over Manchester United ten days ago. (Who knew they still had two-leg fixtures in the Carling Cup anyway? Fascinating.) The Red Devils, though, will be brimming with confidence after their emphatic victory against Chelsea.

Tuesday. Coverage on BBC1, 8pm

#### University

#### **Blues** Tennis

The men's team look to turn around their losing run as they take on Edinburgh in a relegation decider and your support could be crucial. Get there early to catch the women's firsts in action against the dominant London Met, EUSA Champions. Cambridge think they'll lose; let's hope they're wrong.

Wednesday. Coldham Lane Business park. Action starts 11am

#### Cooney's Marathon



Lauren Cooney

#### Week 1

In which Lauren takes to the tarmac for the first time...

Hello, my name is Lauren Cooney and on April 26th (so only 100 days' time) I will be running the London Marathon. That's 26.2 miles. That's tottering from Cindies to the Van of Life over 160 times.

There are three reasons why I probably shouldn't be running, at all, not ever, not even to catch a bus ...I mean taxi... or the Van: 1) I am a big smoker and a big drinker 2) My sister attempted to do it and had to pull out; Cooneys just aren't built for this 3) I am anally un-philanthropic: my gap-year itinerary was more of the Thai Full Moon "wooo! Yeah body paint, coool man" variety, than it was shovelling sand in a Kenyan orphanage. But last Easter term, in an attempt to get fit - and trendy, I mean, who didn't suddenly want membership to Glassworks? (I definitely don't go there by the way) - I joined a gym, and began to take part in aptly onomatopoeically named activities like Krunch and Kore, and Sweat and Tone. It was a laugh, and when I say laugh I mean ouch. I could get very Bridget Jones and describe the hiiiilaaaarious (again ouch) nineties-style two-step kick-ball-change warm-ups I have been subjected to, but deviation is a sin blah blah blah. Anyway, there is a very feisty seventy-six-year-old lass who also goes to these classes.

It was fun for a bit, particularly during Easter term, which really isn't very fun, but I feared the novelty factor might wear thin. Right now I will say that I was wrong, and that watching eighteen-stone men with long hair wearing lycra mouthing off about Paris Hilton whilst they squat, thrust, and sweat, and simultaneously yell at you to "squat, thrust, sweat" just doesn't get old; I even dream about it. Oh but little did I know all this, so in an attempt to ensure that I continue being active, as opposed to sedentary and smoking, I applied for an open place on the 2009 Marathon. Well yes I got it. Joy. I celebrated with a little jog to the pub. Yes, let's all jog to the pub! I'll jog anywhere, me, yeah anywhere! So now I'm doing my best to convert the three good reasons why I should never ever run a marathon into three good reasons why I should. For the next few months I will cut back on the smoking and drinking, add another thing to the checklist of inter-Cooney competitions, and become THE MOST charitable person.

Having an open place means that the philanthropy must be entirely self-inflicted. I will run for a charity, but I have not yet decided which one. All suggestions are welcome. I'll be giving weekly updates on how gloriously speedy and fit I am probably not getting, and if you see me zip on by in my new wind-proof fluorescent running-tee please, dear God, just ignore me, I am already out of breath and embarrassed. Instead, please join the Facebook group and show your support: Lauren Cooney London Marathon. Sport Feature: Sport in the economic downturn

## British Sport Feels the Pinch

## 2009 DAWNS AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS SHOWS NO SIGN OF ABATING, PROMPTING JENNY MORGAN TO QUESTION: CAN SPORT SURVIVE THE CREDIT CRUNCH?

The dramatic collapse of Lehman Brothers ahead of the 127th Varsity match threatened to shake the Cambridge sports scene to its core. As the University lost money in the Icelandic banks, and students were hit by higher room rates and food prices, the credit crisis suddenly came uncomfortably close to crunching arguably the main event in the sporting calendar.

The Lehman's fiasco had far-reaching consequences in the wider sporting world. The Royal Bank of Scotland, whose sponsorship portfolio extends from individual stars such as Andy Murray and Zara Phillips to a £4 million per annum investment in Six Nations rugby and support for the AT&T Williams F1 racing team, was caught up in the bankruptcy, and in August unveiled the first loss of its forty years as a public company. But sport remains important. After all, the global exposure of the Formula One Championship, which takes place in sixteen countries over four continents, and the growing television audiences for the Six Nations, which peaked at 8 million for Ireland versus England in 2007, is crucial for any bank, and especially one facing tough times ahead. But the uncertainty of the situation will make new deals harder to come by and existing ones tricky to maintain. A spokesperson for RBS emphasised the number of successful sponsorships they have across the globe which "meet very specific business objectives such as raising brand awareness

#### The uncertainty of the situation will make new deals hard to come by and existing ones tricky to maintain

as we enter new markets, and these are naturally reviewed on a regular basis". As markets contract, the objectives will undoubtedly change, and the reviews may just get a little bit tougher. The onus will fall heavily on the sporting individual, team, or federation to prove their worth to a more exacting and selective group of sponsors.

#### Motorsports munched

Sports which rely on actual industries for more than just sponsorship will be particularly vulnerable. The withdrawal of Honda from the F1 circuit came as a shock, despite the rumbling warn ings of Max Moseley that all was not well. With the motor industry in crisis around the globe, it is perhaps unsurprising that a venture costing up to £200 million a year to run and employing around 1000 people just to put a car on the grid eighteen times a year would be one of the first to suffer. Moreover, the withdrawal of Silverstone, Montreal, and Magny-Cours as venues in the racing calendar suggest that hosting can be equally crippling. This sport, once so intimately linked with luxury and excess, will have to tighten its belt if it wants to survive. When Subaru pulled out of the World Rally Championships at the end of last year, a visibly shaken Chief Executive Ikuo Mori told a press conference, "our business environment has changed dramatically due to the rapid deterioration of the global economy". The sporting environment of these motoring giants is changing too, as it must if it is not to suffer the same fate.

#### Football fucked

Football is another traditionally excessive game which is beginning to feel the pinch. News last year of a 'home grown' players quota to be introduced into the Championship and Leagues One and Two was the first sign of a change to patient nurture rather than rash purchase as a managerial mindset. At the other end of the scale, even leviathans such as Chelsea are seeming to adopt more of a 'make do and mend' policy in an at-tempt to break even. Manager Luiz Filipe Scolari has apparently been told in no uncertain terms that there will not be any money for new players in the January transfer window, despite his professed desire for another striker. Abramovich, speculatively reeling from losses on the Russian stock market, has asked his team to look at controlled salaries with the potential addition of a performance-related component. For example, when Michael Ballack's £121,000 a week contract expires at the end of the season, any renewal looks likely to include a bonus system for appearances or goals scored in order to protect the club from huge liabilities through injury or lack of form. Premiership footballers should

Premiership footballers should sit up and take notice: the days of wanton excess and grossly inflated salaries are over

sit up and take notice: the days of wanton excess and grossly inflated salaries are over. In today's climate, they simply cannot be justified.

#### Rugby ruined

And rugby players will soon be facing a similar situation, albeit on a different scale. Premier Rugby chief executive Mark McCafferty confirmed last autumn that a reduced salary cap might be introduced to Premiership clubs in time for next season. Bad news for Danny Cipriani: the 21-year-

£3.5m The proposed reduced salary cap for Guinness Premiership rugby clubs

**£200m** The annual cost of keeping an F1 car on the road



old is reportedly seeking £350,000 a year when his current Wasps contract runs out in the summer, which would account for a tenth of the capped salary allowance for a club. English rugby has to be careful. Only three clubs remained in the black last year, Leicester, Gloucester, and Northampton, whilst Bristol and Newcastle in particular struggled with enormous losses. The former, already operating at a £1 million deficit, fears for its Premiership position: if a club goes into administration it suffers a fifteen point deduction, which would almost certainly relegate them into National Division 1. To rub salt into the wound, they would then miss out on the expected £1.5 million injection into each Premiership club thanks to a £54 million TV deal with Sky and Setanta Sports which is set to increase the live coverage of matches from the current 33 per year to 69 in 2010. The wage cap would level the playing field for these lower table teams, though it might give European clubs something of an edge. The French in particular keep pouring money into the game: Perpignan are paying Dan Carter £30,000 a match in his six-month sabbatical at the club, with their sights set firmly on the Heineken Cup title. What England saves at home it might just lose abroad. Simon Lewis of Premier Rugby remains optimistic: "The clubs are conscious that in tough economic times, we need to be prudent as a set of businesses. If that did result in a loss of competitiveness in Europe for a couple of seasons until we have ridden the recession out, I believe the clubs would accept that?

So sport is far from immune to the current economic conditions. Sponsorship might be tighter, salaries lower, and some big names may struggle or crash out completely in the race for top performance. But there is always a silver lining. With falling ticket and transport prices it is perhaps no surprise that the stands and terraces were jam-packed over Christmas. And with the home player initiatives and controlled purchases, some real British talent might just rise from the ashes. 2009 will be a tough year for British sport, but the initiatives designed to control expenditure and focus support for the home scene ought, if put in place soon enough, to ensure its survival.



Captain's Corner

#### Jenny Morgan

#### Sport Comment

There is something very unusual about Oxbridge sport. Well, when I say sport, I really mean men's rugby and rowing (and there's a whole other column in that comment alone). Aside from the fact that there are no women (oh, and there's another), there's an unusual number of old, somewhat un-studenty people taking their place in the line up. You know them, the ones with the little # by their names in the programme. The ones with slightly less hair than you or me. The ones living somewhere on the hill doing something just a little bit obscure. There is an MSc at Oxford in 'Water Science' for goodness' sake: interested, rowers? But seriously, do these incredibly talented sportsmen have a place in student sport? Isn't there an argument that they might be pushing bright young undergrads out of the chance of a game?

Take this year's Varsity rugby. "Oliver's Army are on their way," warned the commentators as the much vaunted inclusion of All Black legend Anton Oliver seemed set to "overpower", "crush", "demolish" the previously dominant Cambridge front row. Oliver won 59 New Zealand caps in thirteen years, and turned down a lucrative contract with French club Toulon to go to Oxford. Lord knows what they offered him in the interview room. "I have been interested in biodiversity, conservation, and the environment for a while," says Anton, which is fortunate really, seeing as that's the title of his degree. But who are Cambridge to talk, with the towering presence of Australia's Dan Vickerman gracing (gracing?) their second row. And who can forget the Thorsten Engelmann fiasco: coming to Cambridge with his stern pair Sebastien Schulte for the chance to study at an academically wellrenowned institution with the 'added benefit' of a rowing programme. Funny, then, that he buggered off

Oxbridge Internationals

Do they have a place in student sport? Isn't there an argument that they might be pushing bright young undergrads out of the chance of a game?



before he was finished. The bitter accusations of foul play have unfortunately lingered just a little bit longer.

But hold on a second. If we cast our minds back once more to December 11th, who was that wonder-boy winger scorching his way across the Twickenham turf and filling the newspaper photos with his 6'3" of loveliness? That would be young Timothy Catling, undergraduate at Pembroke College, Oxford. Exboyfriend of my best mate. Standard, hard-working, hard-playing, hard-up student. And there are several key members of the Cambridge squad who still qualify for a Young Person's railcard as well. Perhaps all is not lost.

I guess there is a balance that must be reached. Oxbridge sport will never be like that of any other university, and if it was, it could never obtain live coverage from major television channels, a continued interest from the national press, not to mention the sponsorship that keeps the ball rolling, as it were. Without the big name players, there just wouldn't be the interest. Without the interest, there wouldn't be the money. And that's the crux of it. After all, has anyone else tried getting their College to cough up for anything without 'academia' in the subtitle? It's harder than Anton Oliver's abs. Who knows, maybe he really is into conservation after all...



#### William Hall

*In which the victorious U21s rugby captain talks to Varsity* 

Coming into the Varsity match after four consecutive annual defeats and after a season where their form could at best be described as erratic, there was no doubt that Cambridge U21s were the underdogs. But captain Will Hall, a veteran of the occasion, maintained his calm. "We were a better team than last year and our results improved as the match approached: I felt we were picking up momentum at just the right time."

Indeed a tough season turned out to stand them in good stead as Oxford pummelled them for the first half hour. "Not many teams could withstand that sort of pressure and only concede three points. It was pretty impressive. We kept our heads in defence and as soon as we started to get more ball we could develop more patterns and start to play the game we wanted."

But that game plan was far from certain. The team had been beset by injury troubles and Varsity was in fact the first time they had all played together. That the starting fifteen lasted the full eighty minutes is perhaps credit to team physiotherapists Tina Hale and Martin Callingham, as well as fitness coach Matt Tinsley. "With training twice a week and a match, plus whatever college commitments people have, it's just the nature of the game to face problems like we did," says Will. Nevertheless, it was a relief to have it all come together at the right time.

The team also benefited from a change in club structure this year. Now a player who does not make the Blues squad but is still ageeligible has to play for the U21s as opposed to one of the other teams. Long may this continue: according to Will; "It has been incredibly beneficial for everyone to play together from the word go."

Moreover, the heavily Johnian nature of the team (there were eight in the starting line up), whilst not being to everyone's taste, did help with team continuity. "As the dominant undergraduate side I guess it was inevitable, and it was great to have a core of players who played positively and were used to winning."

So where do they go from here? Some of the players are still able to play next year, and some may even make the transition up to the Blues. For Will, the focus shifts to his role as College captain in the busy Cuppers season, into which he will be hoping to inject a little bit of that Twickenham magic. Job done, nearly...

## Morning glory for U21 team

» Under 21s flatten Oxford in Twickenham thriller » Teams start slowly in early fixture

#### Varsity Sport

The other place may have stolen the main Varsity honours this year, but the future of rugby lies firmly in Light Blue hands if the Under 21s match is anything to go by. First out on the Twickenham turf, these teams are the cream of young undergraduate talent at both universities with everything to play for. And the Cambridge boys certainly gave the early risers in the crowd something to shout about.

But it wasn't a stroll in the park. Oxford were the first to put points on the board as early back row fumbles gifted them an easy penalty. Piling on the pressure, a Cambridge clearance was then charged down and the slippery left winger was on hand to make for an early break. Only some strong work from his opposite man, Shao-Chun Lin, was enough to take him into touch and stop him "doing a Catling", for now at least. But still Oxford advanced, and it was a full fifteen minutes before a cheeky steal from Tom Stanton gave fly half Fred Burdon the chance to boot the ball to the right side of the half way line and into touch.

But still the try line looked distant on the horizon. As half time approached, it was a long battle for possession in the centre of the pitch, with breaks from both teams halted before they had really got going. Finally at 39 minutes, Cambridge's Ilia Cherezov found a hole in the defence and weaved his way through before offloading to a sprinting Fraser Johnston who ran around to score just left of the posts. Nomura Man of the

#### Cambridge 20 Oxford 3

Match Will Balfour put away the conversion, leaving Cambridge 7-3 up as the whistle went.

The second half started as the previous had finished, this time with a Balfour penalty from the ten metre line. Cambridge were now firmly in their stride, and a fantastic try quickly followed from Luke Aylward, using his strength to shrug off three Oxford tackles and touch down right under the posts. Feeling the heat now, Oxford brought on fresh legs but failed to come up with fresh ideas: seemingly every kick found Cambridge hands and every drive ran into the immovable Cambridge forwards. Cambridge, meanwhile, had flair to spare but struggled to finish under pressure: most notably Fred Burdon's brilliant break up the middle which made over half the pitch before being caught, and Ed White's chip up the left which was knocked on at the pick up. With the front row putting in such a good performance in the ensuing scrums however, Oxford had little respite from the Light Blue assault. And when Fraser Johnston raced once more up the wing before handing off infield to a hungry supporting cast, headed by Alex Cheetham in a drive to within a few metres of the try line, the ever-growing light blue crowd were baying for



Oxford blood. Unable to find the try, captain Will Hall, by now confident of Balfour's point-delivering abilities, called for a penalty to be kicked to goal thus bringing the final score to a resounding 20-3.

The celebrations at the final whistle left little doubt as to what this meant to a Cambridge squad that seems to have spent much of the season on the physio's bench. For some, this will have been the highlight of their playing careers. For others, if they're lucky, the early morning knock may come once again next year. But for now at least, for all of them, the pride and the passion lives on, and running out of the tunnel onto the Twickenham turf that cold December morning is a memory that will serve them well. It's the stuff that rugby dreams are made of.

Varsity Man of the Match: Lloyd Rickard takes the honours for his aggressive and play-making performance in the centre.

## VARSITY

# Sport



## Sport crunched? »p30

Can British sport survive the economic dowturn?

VARSITY MATCH RUNNING TOTAL: CAMBRIDGE 0, OXFORD 2. COMING SOON: CANOEING, SWIMMING, WATER POLO.



## Varsity defeat leaves Cambridge blue

#### Jenny Morgan

There is a strange lore in Varsity match confrontations that says all previous form goes out of the window. Forget predictions: this is one match, against one team, where only one result will do. It can make or break a team; Hell, it can make or break Christmas. Eight hundred years of rivalry, they told us, settled in eighty minutes. A heavy burden for even the broadest of shoulders, but Oxford youth against Cambridge experience gave us one of the most exciting games in the history of the match.

The pace was set straight after the kick off, with the good conditions allowing both teams to look smart and quick on the ball. It wasn't long, however, before Oxford's remarkable Tim Catling started to make his presence felt, denied only by Sandy Reid connecting in a high pressure tackle in front of the posts. A few minutes later he broke again, this time brushing off tackles from Greenwood and Richards and powering over the line for the first try. Later video evidence would suggest a heel in touch, but it would also show the conversion, which was not given, looping clearly inside the

## Cambridge29Oxford33

far post. Such is the nature of the game, and Catling's try was well-deserved.

Unruffled, Cambridge were quick to respond, with Jimmy Richards' penalty failing to make the distance but setting up the play nicely for a 5m scrum in front of the posts. The forwards sucked in the defence, and quick ball out right handed Richards the chance to capitalise on his thinking bit of play with a try, duly converted for good measure.

But a lack of discipline from the Light Blues handed the lead back to Oxford through a trio of easy penalties: only the erratic kicking of Tom Gregory prevented a more punishing score line from developing. When Richards finally hoofed the ball deep into dark blue territory Cambridge struggled to move the ball fast enough and their play was too flat to threaten any serious penetration. Driving runs from Chris Lewis, Sandy Reid, even captain Jon Dawson, failed to find a way through and the error was eventually forced. Oxford were lightning quick on the return, moving the ball out left once more to find Catling on his own with a clear run back to the try line, missed tackles along the way leaving the Cambridge fans with an uneasy sense of *déjà vu*. When the Light Blues were reduced to fourteen men shortly afterwards as Richards was sent to the sin bin, Catling capitalised courtesy of a decoy run by fly half Ross Swanson to take the first Varsity hat-trick for an Oxford player since 1920. Cambridge went to the tunnel, licking their wounds.

Cambridge were in need of a little luck in the second half, and Oxford's Brendan McKerchar was on hand to supply it as his petty loss of discipline reversed a penalty within a few metres of his own try line. The Cambridge forwards were quick to punish, and prop Niall Conlon's was the eventual ballcontrolling hand in the crunching roll to the line. Oxford's retaliatory try was to be their last, as Cambridge began the fight back to end all others. Headed by a brace of substitutes, the attack began with a try for Joe Wheeler aided by the quick thinking of Rhidian McGuire and the unparalleled strength of Charlie Rees. The replacements were making all the play, boosting the energy in midfield to something more like the buzz of the Dark Blue contingent and injecting pace and vitality into a previously flat performance. And then, with five minutes left on the clock, the ball burst out of the scrum into the hands of James Wellwood who stormed through to the line and Richards converted to leave Cambridge just four points adrift. A gripping final act to which everyone by now knows the ending. Still, who can forget the palpable feeling of at least half the crowd hoping, wishing, willing for a final, glorious twist.

But it was not to be. Drained, both crowd and players stood helpless as Oxford celebrated their escape from the brink. Outgoing captain Dawson was full of praise for his men: "Some teams might have crumbled, but we kept our heads and grafted to get back in the game. I'm proud of my team and what they achieved, it's been a great privilege to be their captain." Cambridge: courageous to the last. And Oxford? Well, they were just a little bit good, weren't they? Varsity Man of the Match: Chris Lewis showed consistency and maturity both on the ball and in the tackle with a solid and intelligent style of play. Earned his full eighty minutes.



CUBC just got back from a two week trip to Banyoles, Spain. We did all the usual holiday activities: sleeping, eating, watching movies, catching up on work... and lots and lots of rowing in boats. Okay, maybe most people don't spend their vacation waking up at 6.45 to row endlessly up and down a lake, pulling their brains out for a chance to make the Blue boat. Most people don't live their holidays packed into dingy hotels with twenty smelly guys. Most people don't see the holidays as an opportunity for intensified suffering without the distraction of university. But for mysterious reasons, we do.

Rowing is a demanding sport, and a sport which rewards hard work more than talent, discipline more than imagination. Rowing is about putting in stroke after stroke, mile after mile, day after day. It is not about stars or heroes, but about assimilating and synthesizing my stroke to move myself and my boat and as efficiently as possible. A former teammate of mine used to quip: "if you don't think about quitting rowing every day, you probably aren't doing it right". He was joking, but his quip contained enough truth that it became a daily aphorism of motivation to get us out of bed for morning practice. With about 38 hours of rowing a week, 90% of the time I would describe my dominant emotion as exhausted. After a day of training, even carrying on a simple conversation can be challenging. Why suffer this? The short

Why suffer this? The short answer is that in 70 days, we want to beat Oxford in the Boat Race. I can't rightly say why, but I do know that on March 29th, I want to beat them more than anything.

