

Welcome to the best university in the world

Samantha Sharman
NEWS CO-EDITOR

The University of Cambridge has enjoyed unprecedented success this year as it topped table after table of university rankings, for both quality and satisfaction alike.

The University was named the top university in the world for a second year by the annual QS World University Rankings, leaving Oxford lagging in fifth place.

Harvard University lost the top spot to the University of Cambridge last year for the first time since tables began. However, this year Cambridge maintained its global reputation and held on to its position despite a noted dominance in the top 20 from its American competitors.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz said: "As one of the world's leading research universities Cambridge makes a unique contribution to society and to the individual, not just here in the UK but globally. We help to uphold the reputation of the UK as a centre of excellence internationally.

"Cambridge is proud of the world-class education we offer through our colleges and faculties. Our students benefit from intensive tuition, exceptional individual support and some of the best academic facilities in the world, and they have excellent career prospects."

Despite its apparent success on the global stage, the University had previously been beaten in national tables by the University of Oxford.

However, this year, the University of Cambridge has taken the number one spot from Oxford in all three of the biggest annual national tables: *The Guardian* University Guide,

Declared #1 in four university rankings tables

Cambridge tops *The Sunday Times*, *The Guardian*, the Complete University Guide and the QS world rankings

the Complete University Guide and *The Sunday Times* Good University Guide.

The Guardian awarded the University the top possible score, 100/100. As well as being named the best university overall, Cambridge has pulled ahead of Oxford in a number of specific courses, including Philosophy, Law, Politics, Theology, Mathematics, Classics and Modern Languages. Oxford still maintains its lead in some subjects, including Medicine and Economics.


The University of Cambridge also received the top score in the Complete University Guide, which named it the country's best university for the first time since 2007, and only the second time in a decade. It was also considered best in more than 40% of specific subject ranking tables.

The Sunday Times Good University Guide was the most recent university league table to place the University of Cambridge at the top. The Guide also revealed an 83.9% teaching excellence score at the University of Cambridge, in comparison to an 82.6% score at Oxford.


John O'Leary, editor of the Good University Guide, described Cambridge as having "by far the greatest breadth of excellence of any university", and Cambridge led in 31 subject tables out of 62. The tables, he described, also "reassert the stereotype of Cambridge's dominance in the sciences", and it was named top in all science subjects except Medicine.

In addition to the University's clear academic success, it has also excelled in student satisfaction levels. Recent findings from the National Student Survey (NSS), in association with the

News p4
Where did your college come in the Tompkins Table? See full scores inside




Reviews p22
"The beauty and sincerity of this film lies in the depth of its characters"



Alice Bolland
on *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*

Sport p31
President of the Cambridge Pythons talks to *Varsity* about their epic comeback



Varsity

Established in 1947
Issue No 741

Old Examination Hall, Free School Lane, Cambridge, CB2 3RF
Telephone: 01223 337575 Fax: 01223 760949



Fresh starts

As our front page boldly proclaims, we are all embarking on a new year at the best university in the world. Plenty of quibbling will undoubtedly ensue over this claim: is *The Guardian* University Guide, for example, really the most authoritative voice we have on the matter? Perhaps not. But let us not repine; there is a great deal to celebrate here (and an overall score of 100/100 is not to be sniffed at with occasional references to the “artificial” nature of such guides).

The rate of accumulation of Nobel prizes has not ebbed, research conducted in Cambridge University laboratories continue to play a pivotal role in the advancement of scientific knowledge and the fellows remain terrifyingly intelligent.

And yet as you turn the pages of this paper, cracks emerge in the veneer of self-congratulation: independent schools continue to dominate Oxbridge entry.

While these are not surprising claims, they do perpetuate a sense of helplessness that characterises

Cambridge University’s attitude to admissions. It is a helplessness further compounded by the inevitability of cuts to Higher Education spending, which dons have this week written vehemently against.

But responsibility, indeed blame, must be shared on this issue. The stagnation of upward mobility and the calcification of middle-class dominance of Cambridge admissions is not solely the fault of this university. Admissions procedures are always subject to criticism; it is time more scrutiny was given to the source of the problem. Secondary education is far from blameless.

For many readers, however, these will simply be details in an ongoing (and possibly never-ending debate) – important, certainly, but a sideshow compared with the circus of emotions that is Freshers’ Week.

It might be of some comfort to the hundreds of incoming students to note that they will not be alone in their trepidation. The novelty of Cambridge will be shared by a new Chancellor.

Not since 1847 has this position been subject to a contested election; surely not since the inauguration of the University has the range of candidates been so various and baffling. In his bid for the position, David Sainsbury – the official candidate – faces a bombastic actor, a local greengrocer, and an outspoken barrister. In this battle of the good, the bad, and the ugly, Cambridge alumni have a choice between candidates running for quite obviously different reasons.

Whoever wins will face all the challenges that new students will encounter over the next few turbulent weeks. But this role remains merely decorative.

This is true also of the league tables. Cambridge, your new home, *is* the best university in the world, but it is nothing to do with employment figures, research or any of the other banal measurements of these rankings.

Ultimately, it is because the university has the best students in the world, and freshers should be proud to be one of its newest.

Sunday 9 October, Cambridge Union Society, 5-7pm



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

EDITORS Rhys Treharne & Laurie Martin editor@varsity.co.uk **ASSOCIATE EDITOR** Andrew Griffin associate@varsity.co.uk **DIGITAL EDITOR** Joe Robertson digital@varsity.co.uk **DESIGN EDITOR** George Shapter design@varsity.co.uk **NEWS EDITORS** Tristan Dunn & Samantha Sharman news@varsity.co.uk **CHIEF NEWS REPORTERS** Matt Russell & Joanna Tang deputynews@varsity.co.uk **COMMENT EDITOR** Felix Danczak comment@varsity.co.uk **SPORT EDITOR** Matt Blythe sport@varsity.co.uk **DEPUTY SPORT EDITOR** Michael Taylor sport@varsity.co.uk **MAGAZINE EDITOR** Louise Benson magazine@varsity.co.uk **FEATURES EDITOR** Kirsty Gray features@varsity.co.uk **ARTS EDITOR** Zoe Large arts@varsity.co.uk **THEATRE EDITOR** Sophie Lewisohn theatre@varsity.co.uk **REVIEWS & LISTINGS EDITOR** Madeleine Morley & Helen Cahill reviews@varsity.co.uk **FASHION TEAM** Yinsey Wang, Chloe Spiby-Loh, Lucia Corsini, Aurién Compton-Joseph, James Evans fashion@varsity.co.uk **VARSTV EDITOR** Millie Riley vtv@varsity.co.uk **PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR** Joseph Snelling photos@varsity.co.uk

CHIEF FEATURES WRITERS Clemmie Hain-Cole and Freya Berry features@varsity.co.uk **THEATRE CRITICS** Anna Souter, Oliver O’Shea, Fred Maynard, Jack Hudson theatre@varsity.co.uk **FILM CRITIC** India Ross & Alice Bolland film@varsity.co.uk **LITERARY CRITIC** Charlotte Keith literary@varsity.co.uk **VISUAL ARTS CRITICS** Holly Gupta & Louise Paterson visualarts@varsity.co.uk **MUSIC CRITIC** Rory Williamson music@varsity.co.uk **CLASSICAL MUSIC CRITIC** Hanna Grzeskiewicz literary@varsity.co.uk **FOOD CRITIC** Jessica Donnithorne food@varsity.co.uk

PRODUCTION MANAGERS Alice Hancock & Natasha Pesaran production@varsity.co.uk **CHIEF SUB EDITOR** Felicity Davies subeditor@varsity.co.uk

BUSINESS & ADVERTISING MANAGER Michael Derringer business@varsity.co.uk

VARSTV BOARD Dr Michael Franklin (Chair), Prof. Peter Robinson, Dr Tim Harris, Mr Chris Wright, Mr Michael Derringer, Miss Alice Hancock (Varsity Society President), Miss Charlotte Wu, Mr Rhys Treharne & Mr Laurie Martin



Varsity, 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. ©2010 Varsity Publications Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the publisher. Printed at Iliffe Print Cambridge — Winship Road, Milton, Cambridge CB24 6PP on 48gsm UPM Matt Paper. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. ISSN 1758-4442

DIGITAL DIGEST



VARSTV

Cindies Stories: 2011

It’s brash, boozey and occasionally belligerent, but most importantly it’s back. Starting next week, Cindies Stories takes over from Facebook in offering an uncertain mix of shame and good memories.



A Glance At Google+

Google’s latest project has caused fascination and revulsion in equal measure. David Wescott explores the website and ponders whether it represents a revolution in social networking or just Google reinventing the wheel.



FASHION

The Varsitorialist

Though the weather seems to think otherwise, Autumn/Winter is on its way, bringing with it new clothes and new Varsitorialist updates. Check the website if you don’t want to be left out in the cold.



VICE

The Swearbox: Goodbye

It’s a new year and a new term, and with it comes a new generation of Varsity bloggers. Check out Kat Griffith’s final goodbye and have a skim through the blog archives to whet your appetite for the new band of bloggers.

Thursday night is club night

Four student club nights run in direct competition

Emma Potter
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

This term students will have a much greater choice of where to go clubbing on a Thursday night as Lola Lo, The Place, Fez and Revolution will all be running student nights.

Big Fish Ents traditional Thursday club night – Fuzzy Logic – runs at Life while Fez holds Jagerrox. A newly refurbished Revolution launches Plastique and Polynesian club Lola Lo runs Let's Kill Disco.

Big Fish Ents has long enjoyed a virtual monopoly on Thursdays with Fuzzy Logic regularly pulling in large crowds. However the arrival of Lola Lo last Easter term and the

Lola Lo's 'Let's Kill Disco' night is battling to be the main student party on a Thursday evening



recent renovation of Revolution look set to challenge this well-entrenched tradition.

Thursdays at Lola Lo will see disco “rearing its camp, glittery head in Cambridge” and the launch of a student discount wrist band looks set to entice students away from the city's other clubs.

Sian Smith of Downing College told Varsity, “It's all about Lola Lo's on a Thursday night!”

Advertised as “the biggest student night” in Cambridge, Thursday night at Revolution – called Plastique – is also set to be popular with their new club room ‘Revolucion de Cuba’.

The website declares that the opening of “a new rum bar concept” means that students can “expect the widest range of premium rums and Cuban inspired cocktails.”

Simon Burdus, Managing Director of Big Fish Ents, rejected claims that Plastique would be the biggest student night this term.

“From my perspective it's not really that much more competition... Revs has always been open on a Thursday night and has never been any concern of mine as Cambridge students seem to favour Cindies, Life and Fez and now Lola Lo.”



The four contenders: (left to right) David Sainsbury, Brian Blessed, Abdul Arain and Michael Mansfield

Chancellor election day approaches



Varsity News

The race for the Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge has been gaining momentum over the summer in the lead up to the election this October.

It is the first time in 163 years that the election for Chancellor has been actively contested.

The University's official proposal for the Chancellorship was Lord David Sainsbury, who was nominated in May.

If uncontested, Lord Sainsbury, a Cambridge alumnus himself, would

have succeeded HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, as Chancellor on 1st July.

However, local shopkeeper Abdul Arain quickly announced his intention to oppose Lord Sainsbury in the election, in protest against plans to open a new Sainsbury's store in Mill Road, and received the necessary backing of 50 members of the Cambridge University Senate.

Shakespearean actor Brian Blessed then secured a successful nomination after a popular Facebook campaign was begun by Cambridge graduates.

A group of Cambridge academics secured a successful, albeit late, entry into the race for barrister Michael

Mansfield QC. They nominated the self-described ‘radical lawyer’ in opposition to Lord Sainsbury's candidacy, saying in their supporting letter that Mansfield's campaign would “be able to articulate very clearly the fundamental opposition between what these two men stand for”.

Hustings will take place prior to the elections at the Union Society, commencing with Brian Blessed on 10th October.

The election days will be held on Friday 14th and Saturday 15th October at Senate House.

Follow *Varsity* for complete election coverage and interviews with the candidates over the coming weeks.

COMMERZBANK

Are you ready for a company that offers more than you would expect?

Apply now for the Corporates & Markets Graduate Programme

Corporates & Markets

At Commerzbank Corporates & Markets you can get a head start to your career in an international investment bank which is part of the second largest bank in Germany with over 59,000 employees worldwide. Our Corporates & Markets Graduate Programme offers you the opportunity to join our investment banking team in various positions such as Corporate Finance, Sales, Trading, Structuring and more. Right from the start you will be part of the action, where good ideas get recognised and you can make a real difference.

Ready for a career that puts you at the heart of global markets? Take the next step, meet us on 12 October at the Banking and Finance recruitment fair.

www.commerzbank.com/career

Achieving more together

What you missed over the summer...

A round-up of this summer’s top headlines selected from *Varsity* online

Gilmour jailed for 16 months

Girtonian Charlie Gilmour was sentenced in July to 16 months in jail for drug related violent disorder during tuition fees protests last December. Gilmour, adopted son of Pink Floyd’s David Gilmour, was sentenced after a series of incidents which included leaping on the bonnet of a Jaguar in

Charlie Gilmour’s infamous Cenotaph stunt landed him with a 16 month prison sentence



the royal convoy and throwing a rubbish bin at the vehicle during a drink and drug fuelled rampage. Another incident, which sparked public outrage, in which Gilmour hung from the union flag on the cenotaph, was condemned by Judge Nicholas Price QC, but was not part of the violent disorder sentence. Price told Gilmour that his "behaviour [gave] a clear indication of how out of control you were that day." Further, he told Gilmour that "For a young man of your intelligence and education and background to profess to not know what the Cenotaph represents defies belief.

Plans submitted for £16m university sports complex

Cambridge University is now one step closer to first class sporting facilities after plans for the West Cambridge sports complex were submitted to the City Council last month. Described previously by the University’s Sports Syndicate as “an ambitious project”, plans for a university sports centre have been circulating since 1995. Calls for an improvement to the University’s sports facilities received a boost in June when the University



Proposed design images submitted to Cambridge City Council

announced that it had approved £16 million of funding for the first phase of the Madingley Road site. A statement accompanying the planning proposal said that the “sports centre will provide a contemporary environment and much-needed facilities for training, exercise and competition for the 21st century community and visitors.” It is hoped that the main indoor sports complex will be completed by 2013.

Starkey sparks student scorn

Cambridgestudents called for Fitzwilliam honorary fellow David Starkey to lose his post after allegations of racism following an appearance on Newsnight in August. Historian Dr. Starkey, who graduated from Fitz with a First in History argued in a BBC discussion on this summer’s riots across England: “What has happened is that the whites have become black. A particular sort of violent, destructive, nihilistic gangster culture has become the fashion. “Black and white, boy and girl, operate in this language together. This language, which is wholly false, which is this Jamaican patois that’s been intruded in England. And this is why so many of us have this sense of literally a foreign country.” He went on to claim that “This type of black male culture militates against education.” The University of Cambridge refused to comment on the situation, stating that to do so would be “inappropriate”. However, students and staff expressed strong criticism of Dr. Starkey’s opinions. Former CUSU president Rahul Mansigani said, “David Starkey’s comments were confused and offensive.”

Olympic torch in Cambridge

Cambridge has been selected as one of the locations to host the Olympic flame on its 70-day tour of the United Kingdom next year. The torch relay is due to start on 18 May 2012, when the flame will arrive in the UK. The Olympic torch will be lit by the sun’s rays at the Temple of Hera in Olympia, Greece. Cambridge will host the Olympic torch as part of the City Council’s Big Weekend celebrations on Saturday, 7 July. The three-day annual event, which includes free music, sports and cultural entertainment, will have an Olympic theme in 2012. The city will join 65 other destinations in the UK, in staging an evening

The Olympic torch will pass through Cambridge in the run-up to the games



celebration, which will showcase the unique Olympic sporting and cultural heritage of the local area. The Olympic flame is expected to serve as the focal point of the festivities.

Cambridge still on top

Continued from page 1 Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), revealed that University of Cambridge students were the most satisfied in the United Kingdom. The University of Cambridge received an overall satisfaction score of 94 per cent, a 3 per cent increase which allowed it to overtake the University of Oxford, at 93 per cent. The University was over 10 per cent higher than the overall average, which rose to 83 per cent this year. Around 265,000 final-year students responded to the survey from 154 higher education institutions (HEIs) and 99 further education colleges

(FECs), the highest rate of response since the NSS started running seven years ago. Students were asked about areas including teaching, assessment and feedback, academic support, organisation and management, learning resources, personal development and overall satisfaction. In response to the NSS’s 2011 results, Director General of the Russell Group, Dr Wendy Piatt, said: “We welcome this endorsement from students. Our courses receive an 87 per cent student satisfaction level compared to a sector average of 83 per cent, and one Russell Group institution tops the university table.”

University value grows

Robin Šmíd
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The value of universities to the UK economy is continuing to grow despite the Government’s cuts to university funding, according to a recent report by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). Figures released by HEFCE this September showed that the value of the UK Knowledge Exchange – the flow of research and information from higher education institutions (HEIs) to business and wider society

– increased by 4 per cent from £2.97 billion in 2008-09 to £3.09 billion in 2009-10. The figures also reported that £1 of investment into HEIs returned between £4.90 and £7.10. Universities and Science Minister, David Willetts, said the report “shows that our universities have a key role to play in our future economic growth.” In 2009-2010, the combined income of universities and other HEIs from research activities rose to a 7-year high of £1.732 billion. While the number of patent applications fell slightly, the number granted rose

Trinity trumps Emma on Tompkins

Edward Couzens
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Trinity has come top of this year’s Tompkins Table, regaining the spot that the College lost to Emmanuel last year. The table, published in July, ranks the colleges of Cambridge according to their performance in university examinations. This was the second time since 2009 that Trinity has topped the table, with an impressive 37% of Firsts. This meant that they saw off stiff competition from Emmanuel, who maintained their strong Tompkins performance over the last decade

Trinity (pictured) attained 37.2% Firsts, beating Emma into second place with 31.8%



with a second place finish. Clare College rose to fourth place, having finished eighth in last year’s table, but the biggest rise this year saw Jesus climb eight places from 16th to eighth. Meanwhile, Peterhouse slid down 11 places to eighteenth in the table. Commenting on the result, Professor Worster, Senior Tutor at Trinity, ascribed Trinity’s success to the “social and academic environment

created by our students for each other”, although recognised that the “facilities and teaching are important factors”. This sentiment was echoed by James Henry Metter, a second year undergraduate at Trinity who said “Obviously it feels great to be at the best college at the best university in the world”, but hastened to add that “it’s less of a pressure-cooker than some other colleges which have done worse”. He maintained that, contrary to popular opinion amongst members of other colleges, the atmosphere at Trinity is not “particularly pressured” and said that it may simply be that the reputation of the College attracts candidates who are “clever and will work hard for exams”. Whilst there may have been a great deal of movement at the top, it was the usual suspects that propped up the bottom of the table, with mature colleges Lucy Cavendish, St. Edmund’s and Hughes Hall finishing 29th, 28th and 27th respectively. Homerton was the lowest scoring college which accepts students of all ages. Emma will be hoping to return to the head of the table next year. The Tompkins Table was created in 1981, by Peter Tompkins, a mathematics student. The points are calculated by awarding colleges points according to classmarks.

Tompkins Table 2011				
Rank (2010)	College	% Point Score	% Firsts	
1 (2)	Trinity	70.94	37.2	
2 (1)	Emmanuel	69.79	31.8	
3 (4)	Trinity Hall	68.40	29.3	
4 (8)	Clare	67.51	26.9	
5 (10)	Pembroke	67.49	28.9	
6 (12)	Christ’s	67.41	27.7	
7 (6)	Selwyn	67.11	26.3	
8 (16)	Jesus	66.51	27.2	
9 (5)	Magdalene	66.22	23.6	
10 (3)	Churchill	66.16	25.1	
11 (9)	St. Catharine’s	65.94	26.7	
12 (13)	Corpus Christi	65.88	24.5	
13 (11)	Gonville & Caius	65.36	23.5	
14 (17)	Queens’	65.14	23.7	
15 (20)	St John’s	64.30	22.1	
16 (18)	Sidney Sussex	64.21	21.0	
17 (15)	Downing	64.02	19.4	
18 (7)	Peterhouse	63.51	22.1	
19 (19)	Robinson	63.18	18.6	
20 (14)	King’s	63.08	20.9	
21 (22)	Fitzwilliam	62.62	20.4	
22 (23)	Murray Edwards	61.51	15.5	
23 (21)	Girton	61.38	16.3	
24 (25)	Newnham	60.96	13.8	
25 (24)	Wolfson	60.69	17.1	
26 (26)	Homerton	59.39	14.3	
27 (27)	Hughes Hall	59.27	12.7	
28 (28)	St Edmund’s	56.32	10.8	
29 (29)	Lucy Cavendish	55.38	9.5	

Source: The Independent

Independent schools still dominate Oxbridge

A report published by the Sutton Trust this summer shows that four schools and one college sent more students to Oxbridge than 2000 schools combined

Joanna Tang & Matt Russell
NEWS CORRESPONDENTS

Students from private schools are seven times more likely to be accepted by Oxford or Cambridge than students from a comprehensive, a new report by the Sutton Trust reveals.

It also showed that the top 100 schools, all of which are independent or grammar schools, account for over 30% of places at Oxford or Cambridge, but make up just 3 per cent of the UK's sixth forms and colleges.

Over the last three years, a total of four schools sent more than a third of their University and College Admissions Service (UCAS) applicants to Oxford or Cambridge.

On the other hand, the top ten state schools, all of which are selective grammar schools, could send no more than 22% of their applicants to Oxbridge. However, these schools still fared well when compared to more than 1,300 schools that did not send a single student to Oxbridge.

Perhaps one of the more striking statistics from the report is that five schools – four independent Westminster School, Eton College, St Paul's School, and St Paul's Girls School, and one college, Hills Road Sixth Form College – together sent 946 students to Oxbridge over the last three years.

This number equates to more than the bottom 2,000 schools and colleges put together.

Westminster alone was responsible for 235 of these Oxbridge entrants.

Unlike the others, Hills Road Sixth

Eton ranked 10th with 211 successful Oxbridge applicants over the 3 year period



Form College in Cambridge is a selective college which does not charge fees. Hills Road sent 204 students to Oxbridge over three years, which ranked it third in aggregate terms however, this only accounted for 8.6% of its higher education applicants and so it does not feature in the Sutton Trust top ten.

This dominance in entry to Oxford and Cambridge by students from independent schools is partially the result of better A-level grades, but there is also a vast difference in the ways that schools prepare their students for applications and interviews.

Pedro Vila de Mucha, an undergraduate at Downing College, studied at St Paul's before coming to Cambridge. He told *Varsity*: "St. Paul's offered additional lessons for those applying to Oxford/Cambridge, aimed at preparing for interviews and the extra tests."

This view was echoed by Alexander Betts of Trinity College, who attended Hills Road Sixth Form College. He said: "The main thing that Hills Road did to help Maths applicants prepare was have very regular practice interviews, every other week or so.

"This helped us not only get an idea of what we might face in terms of questions, but also for us to become used to the interview format so we could relax more."

One reason for the different success rates may be that compared to independent schools, non-selective schools are often inexperienced at sending students to Oxbridge.

Roxann Holder is studying Natural Sciences at Murray Edwards and attended Diss High School, a non-selective state school. She said: "My school advised me not to even bother applying to Oxbridge, but I was lucky enough to have a teacher whose children all went to Cambridge and she encouraged me to apply.

"The school arranged a practice interview with the head teacher, however, seeing as she was an English teacher, this didn't really help me at all." I had nobody to talk to about which college to apply to." The report also revealed overwhelming discrepancies in the number of state school pupils entering Oxbridge by local area, with a student from Reading or Hammersmith more than 50 times more likely to be accepted than a student from Hackney or Rochdale.

The statistics found in this report will likely bring up questions regarding the state of access within the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford. Universities are already under pressure from the government to improve access due to fears that the increases in tuition fees will deter students from poorer backgrounds from applying.

A spokesperson for the University of Cambridge stressed that it is only the strength of an application that decides students' success.

The spokesperson pointed to the fact that their research "shows that the state and independent school students we admit go on to perform equally well in their degrees."

However, Taz Rasul, CUSU's Access Officer told *Varsity* that: "The fundamental barrier to admissions at Cambridge remains the decision to apply in the first place.

"At the interview stage a state educated and independently educated pupils have pretty much the same chances of success."

These embarrassing figures are depressingly unsurprising

Analysis
Andrew Griffin



The numerous facts that this Sutton Trust report finds should be shocking – but they're not. Expensive, exclusive and elite schools continue to ensure that the real decider of Oxbridge entry is not potential or intelligence, but personal wealth and connections.

Oxford and Cambridge graduates



Top 10 UK schools	Total Oxbridge acceptances over 3 years	% of HE applicants accepted at Oxbridge
St Pauls Girls School	129	45.7%
Westminster School	235	44.4%
The Stephen Perse Foundation	42	41.2%
St Pauls School, London SW13	167	35.6%
North London Collegiate School	107	32.5%
Winchester College	106	32.4%
Wycombe Abbey School, High Wycombe	74	32.3%
Oxford High School GDST	70	31.0%
Magdalen College School, Oxford	69	29.2%
Eton College	211	28.1%

Top 10 UK state schools	Total Oxbridge acceptances over 3 years	% of HE applicants accepted at Oxbridge
Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet	88	22.0%
Colchester Royal Grammar School	72	18.8%
Reading School	64	16.7%
Colyton Grammar School	45	15.4%
Kendrick School	45	15.2%
The Tiffin Girls School	63	15.2%
The Latymer School	103	14.7%
Pate's Grammar School	75	14.7%
Henrietta Barnett School	45	12.9%
St Olave's Grammar School	61	12.3%

Source: Sutton Trust

continue to mill around the corridors of power, and as long as a college tie is still a quick ticket to influence we can't expect the country to be run fairly. This is why these statistics – four schools and one college send more students to Oxbridge than the bottom 2000 – which may appear dull and tired, still continue to matter; it is a basic question of fairness. Clearly something needs to be done, but it is not for want of trying. In Cambridge and Oxford, an army of access teams and schemes try to encourage promising potential applicants that Oxbridge are not the bastions

of exclusivity that they can appear from afar. But while these are noble efforts, they are futile ones. There are other, more extreme, options available to the university, such as systems of quotas and incentives to encourage admissions tutors to pick students from other schools. The real work, though, is much grander than this: these statistics represent only the conclusion of a vast conspiracy of multiple factors – class, wealth, location – and whose solution will need to be as radical and vast as those problems are widespread and ingrained.

Cambridge fails to recruit poor students

Varsity News

Cambridge has failed to meet its own targets for recruiting poor students, a new report has found.

22 other universities failed to meet the goals, according to a report by the Office For Fair Access (OFFA), the body intended to ensure that universities' admissions are impartial and equitable.

This means that in total 23 per cent of universities have failed to meet the goals they have set for themselves.

The report examined the money that universities spend on attracting students from poorer backgrounds, and how effectively the money has been used.

OFFA director of fair access Sir Martin Harris said: "The large majority of universities and colleges are also meeting their statistical targets. Where they are not doing so, I am concerned to understand the reasons why.

"Over the coming months, we will therefore be discussing performance with a range of institutions, including those that have reported the least progress."

A spokesman for the University said: "The University of Cambridge is determined to admit the best and brightest students regardless of their background".



twitterati
What's happening in Cambridge?

@AhirShah
Ahir Shah, Gentleman Wit
Would be watching Clegg's speech, but had to flog the telly to pay for uni.

@kj_corcoran
Kieran Corcoran, Tab News Editor
Just finished reading The Odyssey. Shame that all Western culture pretty much goes downhill from there.


@felixdanczak
Felix Danczak, Varsity Comment
Losing a game of scrabble. Ignominious.

@jwrobertson1
Joe Robertson, Varsity Online
how do you turn a duck into a famous soul singer? Put it in the microwave until it's Bill Withers...

Follow us @VarsityUK



How do I adapt my business model to an ageing population in Europe?*



What brands should we use to take advantage of rapid growth in China?*



Is US oil refining a loser's game?*

Marakon

A Charles River Associates Company

If you are interested in working with some of the world's leading companies on their most important questions, then visit us at:

*Consultancy Careers Fair (13th Oct) • Downing College (31st Oct, 7pm)***
www.marakon.com/graduates

And apply by the 6th Nov

* Questions we have helped clients answer in 2010/11; ** Please book via our website

Extraterrestrials and extraordinary claims

Lord Rees, esteemed cosmologist and Master of Trinity, speaks to Tristan Dunn about tuition fees, the Chancellor's election and the end of humanity

It is a warm September day when I ring the doorbell of the ivy-covered Trinity Master's Lodge. As I wait outside, I begin to wonder what sort of person will answer the door of this impressive building. It is not long before I find out when a smiling Lord Rees opens the door.

Martin Rees, or Baron Rees of Ludlow to give him his official title, is one of Britain's most celebrated and pre-eminent scientists. A contemporary of Stephen Hawking he was, until his term ended last year, the 59th President of the Royal Society. A man of extraordinary intellect but one who has, in the past, been accused of alarmism: his 2004 popular science novel is entitled *Our Final Century: The 50/50 threat to Humanity's survival*.

Lord Rees ushers me through to the Lodge. As the building that houses the

'I do think David Sainsbury is an extraordinarily good candidate'

Master of the richest Oxbridge college, the Lodge does not disappoint; the rooms are vast with the walls oak-paneled and adorned with grand portraits.

We walk and talk. I ask Lord Rees whether he can verify the credibility of a myth that surrounds the Trinity Master's Lodge. It is claimed that this building is the official residence of the Sovereign when visiting Cambridge. As with all Cambridge myths there appears to be some truth in it; Lord Rees explains that, though the present Queen has never stayed here, Queen Victoria was once a lodger.

We settle into one of the lounges where I begin by asking Lord Rees about the current state of Higher Education funding and the rise in tuition fees. Rees tells me he thinks that "the government's scheme was not fully thought through before it was implemented" and he goes as far as to say the policy "will have very damaging consequences for the university system in general".

Although Rees sits as a cross-bench peer in the House of Lords, his political views are most closely aligned to 'Old Labour', he tells me. To Rees it is important for higher education "to be open to anyone" and for it not to be the privilege of a select few.

With these political views, it comes as no surprise that Rees does not view the US university model with particular admiration. He tells me that he has seen these universities but has "never felt tempted to move."

He adds: "When you look at Universities, it is one of the few areas where Britain is strong. Britain offers far more 'brain-per-buck' than the big US universities."

We move to the subject of the Chancellor election where I have a chance



Lord Rees reclines in the lounge of Trinity Master's Lodge

to find out Rees' view on the University's official candidate, Lord Sainsbury.

"I personally do think David Sainsbury is an extraordinarily good candidate in that he is very committed to education and science."

It is quite clear from our conversation that Rees has great admiration for Lord Sainsbury and respects how he has used his family's great wealth to help many worthwhile causes.

With regards to the first actively contested Chancellor election in 163 years, he believes there is no harm in it. He cites Oxford where they routinely have contested elections for the Chancellorship. However, he says it is true that the candidates running against Sainsbury are not credible, which is perhaps neither desirable nor beneficial for the University.

It would perhaps not be proper to interview one of the world's greatest scientists without speaking about Science itself.

I ask Lord Rees about the recent news of neutrinos supposedly traveling at speeds greater than that of light; an impossibility in Physics as the speed of light is viewed to be a constant. He tells me: "I would bet overwhelmingly that this is a measurement problem. My view is that there will almost certainly be some uncertainty in this measurement. I think it a misjudgment of the group to even release this result."

He quotes an old dictum that "extraordinary claims require

extraordinary evidence."

I decide it is time to ask Rees about his alarmist reputation and ask him why he thinks there is a 50% chance of a setback to civilisation in the next century.

"What is clear is that we are collectively putting more pressure on the environment. Furthermore, with modern technology, small groups can have a more disruptive effect," he says.

PROFILE

1942

Born in Shropshire on the 23rd of June, the son of two teachers.

1964

After attending Shrewsbury School, graduates from Trinity College, Cambridge with a First in Maths.

1979

Becomes a Fellow of the Royal Society.

2005

Joins the House of Lords, as Baron Rees of Ludlow.

2011

Wins the £1 million Templeton Prize for "affirming life's spiritual dimension".

This year, Rees released a book entitled *From Here to Infinity* which consolidates and adds to his 2010 Reith lectures broadcast on BBC Radio 4. This brief and highly readable book gives an update on Rees' views of these issues.

Another issue raised in Rees' book is his view that we should devote resources to searching for extra-terrestrial life. He tells me the discovery of new planets is one of the most exciting developments in science and poses a serious question of whether there is life on these planets.

Before ending our interview I ask Lord Rees to provide some thoughts on his time as President of the Royal Society. He describes his five-year term as a privilege. It was "an opportunity to raise the profile of science" and brought him into contact with a great range of issues.

What becomes apparent after speaking with Lord Rees for a considerable amount of time is his eloquence. He has a uniquely clear way of engaging with you and puts great thought into answering questions.

In June next year, Lord Rees will finish his term as Master of Trinity College. He is a fascinating man that appears to have done more in one lifetime than many could muster in two. His passion for Science is palpable and it is thus no surprise that he plans to devote a great deal of time to promoting science in the House of Lords after leaving Trinity next year.

Academics do battle over 'misguided' HE policy

Ayaz Manji
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of academics have launched a damning attack on the Coalition Government's program of higher education reform, branding it misguided, ideologically motivated and a catalyst for moral decline.

A working party of academics and students released an alternative white paper aiming to expose the "serious threat to social, political and cultural life" that they fear is a consequence of the government's approach to education.

The group includes the Campaign for the Public University and the Cambridge Academic Campaign for Higher Education (CACHE) who last year came out in vocal support of the occupation at Senate House.

The paper, 'In Defence of Higher Education', accuses the current administration of "having no vision" for higher education and of relentlessly pursuing its commodification at the expense of the public good. Universities themselves, the Russell Group and the 1994 Group, also draw fire for their "lack of leadership" and "defensive approach" towards the cuts.

In the wake of the London riots the paper insists that impending changes will only intensify the "slow-motion moral decline" that David Cameron pledged to reverse.

The paper argues that he is "responsible for pushing forward rapid changes to higher education that will put the market at the heart of the system."

These changes will encourage students to think of themselves as consumers, investing only in their own personal human capital with a view to reaping high financial rewards."

Simon Szreter, a Cambridge professor of History and Public Policy who worked on the paper added: "It is illogical that a financial crisis brought about by market failure should be used by government as the occasion for the marketisation of our system of public higher education, a system which has hitherto successfully served both the market and wider society."

The paper also suggests its own vision for universities, setting out nine propositions about the wider social benefits that come from a publicly funded higher education system. These include the idea that universities are needed to maintain public debate, that similar courses need to be funded at similar levels, that a university education is about more than just training, and that a university has a responsibility to regional and local interests as well as international ones.

Campaigners hope the report will be a springboard for a proper debate on higher education, the very kind of debate for which they believe universities are so crucial.

News in Brief

Varsity journalists shortlisted

Two Varsity writers have been short-listed in the 2011 Guardian Student Media Awards.

Alex Gruzenberg was short-listed in the Critic of the Year category for his blogging in the Vulture section of *Varsity* Online.

Joanna Beaufoy made the short-list in the Broadcast Journalist of the Year category for her work on VarsiTV in Lent 2011.

From a total of 648 entries across nine categories a judging panel chose the shortlist. Winners will be announced in London on 23rd November.

UK students 'most distracted'

Nine out of ten British students are distracted by Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites at least once per hour, a new survey has claimed.

The report, commissioned by Cisco, showed that British students were the most distracted in the world.

Nearly 75% of British students said they would rather have internet access than a car.

The data also showed that students in Britain were the second most connected in the world, only beaten by the Chinese.

Record number of first-class results

A total of 47,000 students, or nearly one-in-seven graduates, achieved a first-class degree from Cambridge this summer.

The total number of students gaining a First has leapt by more than a third in the past five years.

In 2006, fewer than 35,000 students graduated with the highest grade. Critics have argued that grade inflation makes classification "meaningless".

Cambridge scientist: is testosterone fuelled banking bad for economy?

John Coates' research suggests 'hormonal diversity' could be one way to stabilise financial markets

Siobhan Coskeran
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Hormones drive investment decisions to a greater extent than previously thought suggests new research conducted by John Coates, a neuroscientist at the University of Cambridge.

Coates, a former derivatives trader himself, proposes that raging hormones have made excessive risk-taking common in market trading.

By taking saliva samples from the male-dominated trading floors of London, Coates recorded the changing testosterone and cortisol levels of individuals in their working day.

His results found that traders with above-average testosterone levels reaped the largest profits and that testosterone levels in the morning could predict afternoon success.

It is not known exactly how testosterone acts on the human brain, but in animals it has been observed to cause a 'winner effect'. When two males compete, their testosterone levels rise to prepare them for the fight – and the winner's testosterone level rises even more.

Traders' cortisol level can fluctuate as much as 500 per cent in a day.



However, performance reaches a peak, after which the hormone begins to impair the animal's judgement. It is just the same for traders. Testosterone builds up when they are making profits, and can cause them to take excessive risks.

When traders are not being successful, a surge in the stress-induced hormone cortisol dramatically alters their behaviour. Coates found that traders' cortisol levels fluctuated by as much as 500 per cent in a day, in direct correlation to trading expectations.

The role of cortisol is to prepare humans for danger, but high levels over a long period of time can be harmful, paralysing traders in the face of risk and leaving them blind to money-making opportunities.

Coates advises that 'hormonal diversity' could ease the volatility of the trading environment. On average, women have only one tenth of a man's testosterone and do not experience drastic changes to their cortisol levels in response to competitive situations – for example, making and losing money. Testosterone also decreases with age.



Hormones drive investments

Perhaps a more diverse trading floor, with men and women, young and old, could stabilise financial markets.

Corpus Christi is 'Great'

Jack Carrington
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A government campaign to promote Britain abroad features Corpus Christi college on one of ten new posters.

Designed to highlight Britain's strength in higher education, the poster features a large photograph of Corpus Christi's 14th century chapel and the words "Knowledge is Great. Home to four of the top ten universities in the world".

Speaking to *Varsity* about the college's prominence in the "GREAT" campaign, Corpus JCR President James Black said: "Obviously it's a real honour for Corpus to be held up to the world as an example of the academic excellence Britain has to offer.

"Of course, it's just one example,

of which there are many more in Cambridge, let alone the rest of the country."

Other themes emphasised by the poster campaign include heritage, shopping, sport, music and entrepreneurship.

Launched by David Cameron at the New York Stock Exchange last week, the £500,000 project aims to attract an extra four million tourists to Britain in the run-up to the the London 2012 Olympics.

Mr Cameron said that the campaign will "send out the message loud and proud that this is a great place to do business, to invest, to study and to visit".

He added: "In 2012 there will only be one place to be. We are determined to make the most of this opportunity".



Clockwise from top left: Al Murray, Jeremy Paxman, Vince Cable and Laurie Penny

The Union is set to play host to TV stars, politicians, journalists and controversy this term. See varsity.co.uk for details of the Michaelmas lineup

Ed Miliband proposes lower tuition fee cap of £6,000

Henry Marshall
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Ed Miliband has announced plans that would see tuition fees capped at £6,000 under a Labour Government.

The proposal would see the cap on tuition fees fall from £9,000 to £6,000.

The cut of a third would be partially paid for by the introduction of a graduate tax, in the form of a higher interest rate on those earning more than £65,000 – a proposal supported by Miliband last year. Additional funding would come from the reversal of planned cuts in corporation tax cuts for banks.

Miliband was keen to emphasise the links between this educational policy and economic policy. Speaking

on the Andrew Marr Show, he said, "We should invest in the future of our young people... putting an end to the fast buck era." He added that the priority for Britain should not be cutting taxes for financial services.

However, the Labour leader refused to guarantee that the proposal would be included in the next Labour manifesto in 2015. Instead he said of the proposal: "It is a policy we would do now if we were at an election."

Miliband's decisive comments follow the publication of results of opinion polls earlier this month that show 63% of the public cannot imagine him in Downing Street, despite having been leader of the Labour party for a year.

Critics have argued that this is a

reversal in Labour Party policy as they initially opposed the government's increase in tuition fees.

The universities minister, David Willetts, said, "Ed Miliband has now accepted that tuition fees should be doubled to £6,000 a year. This monumental U-turn is evidence of weak leadership."

Labour's move is aimed at winning support among young people who feel disillusioned with the Liberal Democrats after they reneged on their pre-election promise to abolish tuition fees.

Some students feel the plans are not realistic or fully thought out. Yasmin Walters, a second year medic at St. Catherine's, told *Varsity*, "What's the point of cutting fees if you're going to

NEWS IN FIGURES

£1bn

The cost of implementing Miliband's proposals

63%

Proportion of the public who cannot imagine Miliband in No.10

solution should be to lower them back to the original level. Ed Miliband is a wet blanket and is just covering behind the views of others or what people want."

The average tuition fees for students starting degree courses from next year are believed to be around £8,400, but students at Cambridge will be charged the full £9,000.

A spokesperson for the University said: "As the Labour party are not in power, this policy is currently not relevant. While the University regrets the cut in funding to teaching, in order to continue providing for students, Cambridge must charge the full amount, which is currently set at £9,000."

then put more interest on higher earners? It could work out you're paying not much different in the end."

She added: "If Labour really disagreed with the rise in fees then their

Hawking joins local hotel protests

Ross Kempself

NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Professor Stephen Hawking has shown his support for a local protest against plans to enlarge a hotel complex on the River Cam.

The physicist, age 68, and many other local residents object to plans to build a three-story extension at the Hilton Doubletree Hotel than overlooks Mill Pond on the River Cam.

The Cambridge luminary attended a campaign picnic near the Hilton Hotel last Saturday, joining around 30 local residents.

Hawking and the residents argue the development would ruin a riverside area of natural beauty, once a favourite walking spot of Charles Darwin and other distinguished alumni. Blue Badge tour guide Ruth Lambert, who organised Saturday's action, said: "All the literati and scientists found it to be

an extraordinary green finger into the centre of Cambridge and it's anathema to have it covered in bling."

But London-based hotelier The Ability Group, which proposes to develop the site, argues that extra rooms could be constructed "without detriment to the conservation area while also seeking to meet commercial aspirations and the wider economic needs of Cambridge".

Cambridge MP Julian Huppert did

not attend the picnic protest but added his support to the campaign, saying in a statement: "It would be a great shame to spoil the natural beauty of the area further".

A petition against the proposed development has already gathered more than 100 signatures, including those of Hawkins and Huppert. Residents have until this Friday to register their objections with Cambridgeshire County Council.

Record fee increases for foreign students

Kurien Parel

NEWS CORRESPONDENT

New international students commencing this year are going to be charged University fees substantially greater than last year. This is in spite of David Cameron assuring students in China last year that there shouldn't be significant increases in overseas student fee rates.

Most hit are pre-clinical medicine and veterinary students. Students enrolled last year paid annual university fees of £14,073, while students enrolled this year will pay £28,632. Further, engineering and science students will be charged £18,000 p.a. compared to £14,073 last year.

The fees for arts students though have not been significantly altered. The university fee is in addition to a college fee in the range of £5000, which overseas students, unlike most home and EU students, have to pay.

These increases, unlike the rise in fees for home and EU students commencing in 2012, are not due to loss of government higher education funding as overseas students were never subsidised by the UK government.

According to the University the average cost of an undergraduate student per year is around £18,000.

For Home and EU students the University claims to use its own endowment to pay approximately half of this amount - the rest being paid by the student and government subsidy.

In contrast with overseas students, the figures suggest that the University makes a substantial profit. This has led some to suspect a violation of the Equal Opportunities Policy of the University.

A spokesperson for the University of Cambridge told *Varsity*: "The decision was taken in order to secure the continued excellent quality of educational provision for our students."

The spokesperson added, "Numbers of applicants from international students remain at near-record levels, and our fees are internationally competitive. The University has increased its annual contribution to the Cambridge Trusts in support of international students from poorer backgrounds."

International students admissions in recent years have tended to be very competitive. According to the Undergraduate Admissions Policy statement this was because of the University's contract with the Higher Education Funding Council for England. This contract required in effect an upper limit on the number of places for overseas students, making "the competition for places particularly fierce among international applicants."

Cambridge Undergraduate Admissions remain unfazed: "For the foreseeable future it [Cambridge University] will remain primarily a national university at undergraduate level."



Grow Further

MAIN BCG CAMBRIDGE PRESENTATION

**20 October – 7pm
Peterhouse**

The Boston Consulting Group is a global management consulting firm, and one of only three companies to appear in the top 15 of Fortune's "Best companies to work for" report for six consecutive years. Currently listed in second place, BCG is the only top-tier consulting firm in the top 100.

We are looking for people to join across our 74 global offices. Find out more about BCG on campus at the following events:

PhD and advanced degree workshop – 10 October
6.15pm, Pitt Building

Main BCG Cambridge presentation – 20 October
7pm, Peterhouse

CV coffee chats – 21 October

For more details and to sign up for these events please visit:
www.bcg.com/join_bcg/oncampus/cambridge.aspx

Application Deadlines
Full-time: 1-31 October 2011
Internship: 1-29 January 2012

apply.bcg.com/ukuniversity

BCG

THE BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

Comment

Comment Question

The Sutton Trust report highlights a well known fact: Independent school pupils are more than twice as likely as pupils in comprehensive schools to be accepted into one of the most 30 highly selective universities in the UK. In other news, bears have been known to defecate in sylvan environments.

But the question remains – should society be doing something about this? And what should we be doing? Quotas? Direct Access? Lower acceptable pass grades for students from disadvantaged backgrounds?

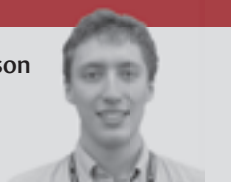
Here at Comment, we just pose the questions... but you give the answers. Let us know what you think on Twitter @VarsityUK using #Comment



A laboured wake-up in Liverpool

Labour has redefined itself under Ed Miliband. It is ready to take the fight to the Coalition

Richard Johnson



Bereft of a leader and reeling from our worst loss in years, the Labour Party spent the summer of 2010 grappling with the legacy of the previous thirteen years in government. Although culminating in the exciting announcement of Ed Miliband's victory in the Labour leadership contest, Labour Party Conference 2010 was still fundamentally introspective. Feeling both sombre and apprehensive, many in the party were preoccupied with licking old wounds and exorcising the ghouls emerging from the pages of newly published tell-alls.

A year has gone by, and the mood has changed distinctly. With the fastest and largest cuts implemented in Europe after Iceland and Ireland, the British public has suffered severely. The mood in the country is unambiguous. People don't care about tell-all memoirs or petty in-fighting. They need a party that is serious about fighting for the country's economic future. And,

as all credible economists agree, that is by constructing the path to a growth economy.

At this year's Labour Party Conference, there is an unmistakable mood of seriousness. Gone is the idle gossip about jollies during the leadership election season and about what Gordon Brown said in the back of a car. The quality of the debates, forums, and fringes suggest that both the Shadow Cabinet and party members are utterly determined to take on the Tories and LibDems, building up to an election victory in 2015. Many remember what eighteen years in opposition was like, and

“There is an unmistakable mood of seriousness”

none want to repeat it. All present are fixed on one goal: to make this coalition a one-term government.

Many speakers have been impressive. Both Jim Murphy on defence and Harriet Harman on international affairs excelled. Murphy rebutted the claim that the Conservatives are the party of Britain's armed forces, and Harman urged the coalition not to waver in

providing assistance to suffering peoples around the world.

The debates on 'Refounding Labour' revealed unanimous consensus about structuring Labour as a campaigning party that can fight effectively on the ground. Delegates were encouraged by the successes of the past year in this regard, including forcing U-turns on the government's policies to sell off Britain's historic forests to the highest bidder and reversing the proposed cut on funding books for young readers. Unprecedented successes in local elections (including huge swings from the LibDems to Labour in places such as Cambridge) have given delegates much hope.

The stars of the week were undoubtedly the two Eds. Sometimes portrayed as a good-cop, bad-cop routine in the press, Ed Miliband and Ed Balls were united on presenting a clear and credible alternative to the government's anti-growth, austerity measures.

On Monday, Ed Balls took on key Tory-LibDem critiques. Ed highlighted the fact that Labour's deficit before the crisis was lower than under John Major. He challenged the Coalition narrative that the global financial crisis was a result of British profligacy, asking how, exactly nurses and teachers in

Britain caused Lehman Brothers in New York to collapse. Finally, his five-point plan completely undermined the criticism that Labour has no policies.

The pressure of the week, though, was clearly on Ed Miliband. Since the Coalition's budget cuts have begun to hit, Labour has enjoyed a consistent lead in the opinion polls. Nonetheless, Miliband's personal approval rating has been somewhat lacklustre. Ed had two key tasks at Conference: eschew the unfortunate 'Red Ed' label the press had placed upon him and convince the party that he was serious about becoming Prime Minister in 2015.

Arguably, he succeeded. The key motifs of the speech – ethical capitalism, a welfare state for working people, responsibility, and community – spoke to the values of the vast majority of the British people, not some imaginary 'loony left' periphery. Uninterested in reliving past glories, Miliband focused on offering a credible alternative for the British people.

The task ahead is to take this message to the country, but if his conference performance was any measure, the response will be a good one.

Richard Johnson is Chair of the Cambridge University Labour Club

Comment Listens

Varsity Comment brings you a weekly guide to the best talks in Cambridge. You might even end up with a free lunch, or glass of wine...

Monday

Playing God: Who Should Regulate Reproductive Medicine?

Time: 19:00

Location: Institute of Continuing Education, Madingley Rd

Why: Britain remains a leading nation in stem cell and reproductive medicine, but this position is threatened by misguided attempts to cut expenditure for regulatory bodies. Who will fill the gap?

<http://talks.cam.ac.uk/talk/index/33167>

Thursday

In The Land Of The Free (Film + Talk)

Time: 13:30-16:30

Location: LG17, Law Faculty

Why: 39 years ago, three black men were silenced for trying to expose segregation, corruption, and horrific abuse in the biggest prison in the US: Angola. Two remain in solitary, continuing to fight for their freedom. The film will be followed by a talk from the only released member of the 'Angola Three' on his time in prison.

In defence of Free Schools

We should not reject Michael Gove's project, but instead look to America for success



Free schools will benefit some children at others' expense", writes Fiona Millar, one of the loudest voices against the free school movement. She is joined by the NASUWT and the NUT in deploring the scheme. Yet institutions aside, the most frustrating additions to this chorus of criticism are those who decry Gove's plan as a terrible idea without understanding what they are complaining about.

With their freedom to hire and fire teachers, it is unsurprising that the unions hate the idea of free schools. But for those who complain that the current state education system is broken, to condemn this project before it has lifted its feet off the ground, simply because "this is just change for change's sake – we don't want or need them" is obstinate and counterproductive.

British children rate 16th in the world for science, 25th for reading and 28th for maths, according to the OECD's 2009 report. The 2000 report ranked them 4th, 7th and 8th. We now spend over £80 billion a year (double what we spent in the 1990s) on education, yet standards have nose-dived. The British education

system is broken – things must change.

Free schools have been proposed as part of a solution. If we dare to be optimistic, considering both the success of the schools' American counterparts and the promising start to those opened in England last month, we might just conclude that this programme is not the meddling middle-class apocalypse that it is made out to be and should at least be given a chance.

The USA based, 'Knowledge is Power Programme' (KIPP), aimed to prove that children from low income families are just as capable as their richer peers, but are held back by inferior schools. Seventeen years on, with 109 new schools and endorsements from Bill Gates and Barack Obama, KIPP has had some

"We must give this solution a chance"

staggering success. Statistics tell the story. Over 80% of KIPP students are from families on benefits, and by the eighth grade 98% of KIPP schools are outperforming their local districts in reading, and 66% in mathematics.

The counter-argument is obvious – cold statistics say little about the quality of a child's experience. Yet frequent praise from visitors on the interested and well-mannered nature



Free schools: just another brick an expensive and selective wall?

of pupils corroborates what the stats imply - children do well from these schools.

Hopping back across the pond, the 24 free schools that have opened in Britain since September –state-funded, non-selective and free of Local Authority control – have had a turbulent but ultimately promising start. Toby Young's West London Free School offers the best elements of innovation and tradition – with Latin and IT both parts of the curriculum. Sajid Hussain's Science academy in Bradford, where the population is 60% Pakistani, and Woodpecker Hall in Enfield by their very existence dispel the myth that free schools are the domain of the white middle classes.

When asked about what would happen if the new schools fail, Michael Gove said: "If they falter, if things go wrong, if there's any

jiggery-pokery, schools will close."

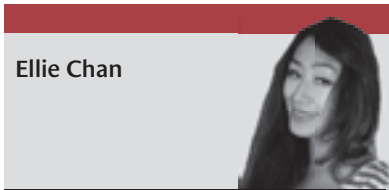
No one, even their 'creator' is painting free Schools as the magical solution to all of Britain's educational problems.]

Like KIPP schools before them, they will face strong and genuine criticism from those who worry that these schools will not help those who really need it. Teething problems must be ironed out – Millar is right, for instance, to criticise Gove's mixed messages about the level of regulation. But we must commend the government for recognising that things cannot carry on the way that they are, and we must give this solution a chance. The damage done by previous governments to our "education, education, education" system has been an expensive lesson to learn.

We must not waste it.

Going green: a liberal fantasy?

Have the Green Party proved their mettle as more than ideological dreamers?



Brighton Pavilion is an odd constituency. Its inhabitants belong in a Richard Curtis film; they are ex-City types or commuters who arrived looking for an escape from the rat-race and were seduced by the village-esque aesthetic of the local Bakers', Butchers' and Candlestick Makers' long before it was fashionable (darling). They raise their children on organic, and often exotic, vegetables. One of its schools once put on a musical about a wolf with dreadlocks who campaigned successfully to prevent a forest from being chopped down, complete with concluding rendition of Dylan's Blowin' In The Wind. Truly, it is an eco-liberal paradise. Where else would the Green Party gain its first seat?

It has been eighteen months since Caroline Lucas was elected to

parliament. What has been achieved over this time is a policy of 'No Meat Mondays' in all Council-run canteens, and vague suggestions for drug legalisation. Whilst this may sound disappointing, it is only to be expected: the Green Party is a party of abstract ideology.

Reading through their manifesto, you are unlikely to uncover much that is objectionable. Indeed, they are the only party currently represented in parliament which believes that there cannot be unlimited economic growth – a standpoint which must be applauded given the continuing economic climate. This is only slightly eclipsed by a beautifully understated, if not dubious, immigration policy (I quote: 'Migration policies should not discriminate directly on grounds of race, colour, religion, political belief, disability, sex or sexual orientation').

The buzzword, you'll soon discover, is 'fair'. It is not 'fair' that public pensions should be so small. It is not 'fair' that the rich should get richer and the poor get poorer. It is not 'fair' that the people should bail out the banks. Anti-rhetoric at its finest, 'fairness' is not a case of

good and evil, of moral corruption. 'Fairness' is not even quite 'just': it is the gentle acknowledgement that there are a few unpleasant things in this world. It is the judgement of apolitical liberalism.

Jose Maria Aznar once claimed that the ecological movement is the communism of the 21st century, the new incarnation of anti-capitalism. Yet the very key to the Green Party's success – and their fundamental flaw – is their apoliticality. They are not out to incite the workers of the world to lose their chains; indeed, it seems they have yet to address the substantial issue that living ecologically is not economically viable for these 'workers', and for a large number of people in the UK – surely a consideration which should come high on their agenda.

They represent not so much defeatism as a turning away from the nasty, dirty world of British politics. It is communism minus communism's driving desire to overthrow the status quo.

Much has been achieved under the current government in advancing sustainability, but this

has been as a result of international agreements set down under previous government, not the new Green presence in Westminster. It

"They are not so much apolitical party as symbolically political"

is a mistake to envision the Green Party as the liberal offspring of the middle-ground, or as a viable liberal alternative. The fact is that in its present incarnation, the Green Party are unlikely to make an impact as a political party. Indeed, they are not so much a political party as symbolically political.

Until they address the fact that the political world necessitates compromise in order to make progress, until they recognise that the world of ideals is incompatible with the reality of Westminster, the Green Party risks remaining just that: an apolitical-liberal symbol.

Dawkins, double standards and dualisms

Richard Dawkins is dealing in double standards. In last year's Channel Four documentary *Faith School Menace?* he urged society "to respect a child's right to freedom of belief." Simultaneously he was working on his latest book *The Magic of Reality*, reformulating his brand of militant materialism for a "family audience".

Throughout the book, Dawkins is hesitant to mention religion by name. Instead, he alludes to it in passing, tarring the established theologies of the major religions with the same brush as quack remedies, magic tricks and even Cinderella's pumpkin coach. Critics accuse him of "the public abuse of faith." When he describes the Virgin Mary as "a kind of goddess of the local religion," you can see why.

Religions have much experience teaching children about the 'big questions'. Dawkins has caught on and is copying their model of indoctrination. But what rankles is that he doesn't admit as such: he hides his metaphysical agenda in a lavishly illustrated tome about the wonders of science; religions tend to be slightly more open as to what they're about.

Yet there remains something unsettling in both cases: neither the theists nor the atheists are letting children think for themselves. In fact, Dawkins' latest move raises an interesting question. How should we be educating young children about the variety of worldviews on offer?

Dawkins modestly admits his limits in the realm of science, saying he isn't a cosmologist so he doesn't understand the big bang himself. But he fails to avoid a dictatorial air of authority on matters of underlying philosophy; as one review aptly put it, he has "shifted into 'wise grandad' mode". The writing is symptomatic of Dawkins' position at one extreme of an unnecessarily polarised media debate. The question of science or religion is a false dichotomy, a dualist approach fortified by extremists on both sides. They either preach to the converted or quarrel with their enemies; rarely does anyone change their mind as a result.

The more interesting distinction is between those that think that everything is knowable and those that don't. Dawkins asserts that it is "lazy, even dishonest" to suggest that "no natural explanation will ever be possible". It is also anthropocentric, even arrogant to suggest that humans can understand it all. In education and in debate, it is perhaps those that bear their knowledge with humility that are most likely to influence opinion.

Tim Middleton

British theatre has reached a nadir - expensive and out of touch. The cause? Our obsession with the new. It would never have happened in Shakespeare's day, decries **Neil Fleming**

The Unasked Question: why the hell should you go to the theatre? Whatever the opposite is of a Golden Age, that's what British theatre is living in today.

Government cuts have bitten deep into the Arts Council; London's West End is awash with soundalike musicals; every other theatre in the country is stuffed to the gills with stand-up comedians; theatre tickets can cost eight times what you pay for the cinema; and no one can name more than a couple of contemporary playwrights. Most of those are Alan Bennett.

If, like me, you try to earn a living in this environment, this is the cue for wailing and wringing of hands. The world of theatre is misunderstood; we have been betrayed; the government is out to get us; and if only we could reach the right people, all would be well. And so on.

But here's the unasked question: why should anyone go to the theatre in Britain today? There are plenty of really good answers, of course. And as a playwright and the co-owner of a theatre production company, I am well versed in all of them. I also believe several of them.

But that's not the point of this article. So it seems like a good idea for British theatre to stop and take stock – take a long, hard look at itself, and ask if it really deserves to exist. Isn't cinema more fun? And cheaper. Television is (almost) free, even if *Downton Abbey* goes down like a low-fat Mars Bar. Isn't online gaming more interactive than the most interactive theatre performance in the world?

Maybe we should just give theatre a decent burial. It starts with the descent of the West End from drama to spectacle. Audiences at this year's London production of *Pygmalion* were heard to complain that the director had unaccountably cut out all the songs. Elsewhere, the subsidized theatres of the minor towns and cities of Britain have been seemingly cowed by their aging audiences into an endless round of *The Importance of Being Earnest* and outdoor productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The RSC looks in danger of being bought by Madame Tussauds and turned into



a Heritage Experience. The National Theatre builds lavish sets and stages improbable plays from the 1930s.

But the really worrying part of the story is that the once-cutting edge of British theatre, the avant-garde and the fringe houses, have fallen into a seemingly bottomless pit of their own digging.

This pit is called "new writing".

Cards on table: I am a "new writer" myself. I know this because, although I am fifty years old, I wrote a new play and it was on for several weeks at one of London's leading "new writing" venues earlier this year. So it may seem ungrateful of me to bite the hand etc..

But here is the vital Unasked Question #2: Why is British theatre so obsessed with new writing? Lavishly funded programmes exist to foster the development of "new voices" – schemes that have no parallel in other art forms (and no, the X-Factor doesn't count). Music venues don't book unknown bands unless you twist their arm; publishers do everything they can to dodge the risk of signing up a new novelist; Hollywood has as much interest in fostering new talent as Vladimir Putin has in giving up power.

Theatre is different. It has fallen victim to a piece of bogus reasoning, which goes like this: Theatre is

boring; we need more excitement. Where shall we get excitement? Why, from new things. Where shall we find new things? New people of course. Where shall we get new people? Young people are new(ish). Let's get plays from them.

There are three serious problems with this.

One: people under the age of twenty-one have fewer than twenty-one years' experience of the world. Not their fault. But the result is that staggering numbers of new plays in recent few decades have been about the pain of growing up. There's only so much you can take of the evils of other people's parents. Especially when "experimental" structure lets the story stop in the middle.

Two: the system, in its eagerness to foster the New, has failed in its duty to figure out what happens once you stop being new. Writers who at twenty-four are convinced they are the next Harold Pinter wake up a year later and discover no one wants their work any more. The up-and-coming are betrayed and spat out by the machine just at the moment when they might be getting quite good.

Three: er, actually, the whole thing is stupid, because all writing is new. Just because William Shakespeare is on his 33rd play, doesn't mean it isn't

a new play. It's brand new. Obviously. It's also probably a bit better than his first play. But had Shakespeare had the misfortune to be born in 1990, he would probably have found that not much of his stuff after *Two Gentlemen of Verona* actually made it to the stage (let's not even get started on Unasked Question #3: Was Shakespeare really as good a playwright as we think he is?)

Thus until we find a way out of this particular trap, it's likely that theatre will continue to flounder. The reason we don't have a replacement Harold Pinter right now may just be that we've condemned him or her to one of two paths: writing East Enders from his or her mid-twenties; or teaching creative writing.

This is a horrific waste, and condemns us to a theatre which never evolves. We need a renewed focus on what theatre is for, and what the best way is to make it excellent, different and interesting. Theatre needs to wake up, or risk being mistaken for a corpse.

Neil Fleming is a playwright, poet, and co-founder of Hydrocracker Theatre Company, which this autumn is co-producing, with The Barbican, The New World Order, a site-specific re-working of five of Pinter's late plays about torture and political oppression.

This week's featured blog, *The Reluctant Pragmatist*, explains why he's still a Lib-Dem:

What am I possibly doing still a member of the most hated group for students and left wingers everywhere, given that I am also a member of those two groups?

Well, let me tell you, it is not an easy choice. Nor does being a member of a party necessarily mean you support what it is doing. What it does mean is that I support a set of principles I think that a Liberal, Social Democratic party can represent. Currently the people in charge of the party are far more Liberal than Social Democratic – the people referred to as the Orange Bookers; including Cable,

Clegg, Alexander and Laws, they are the ones who suggested a set of policy prescriptions that swung uncomfortably close to free-market neoliberal dogma at times.

These are the MPs most comfortable in coalition, and the people behind most of the negotiations and thus actual policy that has made us so unpopular.

Does this mean I should leave the party because this side of my party is currently ahead? I am sorely tempted to, yes. I am extremely angry at Clegg, not just because his comfort with Tory ideology goes against my conception of the party, but also because his public relations strategy has been facepalmingly incompetent.

Continued at blogs.varsity.co.uk

TASTERS: THE CANAPÉS OF THE BLOGGING WORLD

Some Thoughts That Came To Me in The Shower: How the upcoming London mayoral elections might be understood as Bayesian probabilities.

Doing Right: Philopsohy and Politics: If you're an egalitarian, how come you're rich?

Read more at blogs.varsity.co.uk

**SEE MORE ONLINE AT
@ VARSITY.CO.UK**

the essay

VARSLITY

BLOGS

COMMENT

This term, Comment brings you a selection of dedicated bloggers whose sole aim is to debate, disagree and rage against each other for your reading pleasure.



V2

The Varsity Magazine

FASHION, FEATURES, ARTS & REVIEWS

THIS IS MY
CAMBRIDGE

P18

PLUS ANYA REISS INTERVIEW P.28, FASHION P16-17 AND V GOOD V BAD P.19

TAKE

Five of the best...

Cambridge Cafes

Sick of Starbucks? Not keen for Nero? *Varsity's* finest caffeine addicts seek out the cream of the Cambridge cafe scene

Savino's Café



CHEESE AND TOMATO BAGUETTE - **£2.70** TAKE AWAY/ **£3.85** EAT IN

AMERICANO - **£1.65**
SMALL/ **£2.40** LARGE

Owner Peter embraces the city's hustle and bustle inside this family-run, Italian cafe - and you couldn't find somewhere more Italian. Walk in and you could be in a *bar* in a Milanese backstreet. The *espresso* comes short and sharp and the pastries are best fresh from the mornings bake. Peter's keen to get involved with student life, sponsoring the football team from Emmanuel - the college where most of his regulars study. This venue probably suits customers who want a quick bite to eat more than a relaxing lounge, but Peter's wife is keen to emphasise that 'all Fresher's with hangovers are very, very welcome!'

Benets Coffee



HALLOUMI AND TOMATO SANDWICH - **£4.20** TAKE AWAY/ **£4.95** EAT IN

AMERICANO - **£1.85**
TAKE AWAY, **£1.95** EAT IN

On a hot day, students and tourists alike form a long queue outside Benets', eager for a taste of the cafe's home-made ice-cream (*Varsity* would like to particularly recommend the Jamaican Rum & Raisin). With two branches, one on Kings Parade and one next to The Eagle, you can take your pick of location. A wide variety of milkshakes and crepes are also available, along with sandwiches and snack foods in the next door area. Only five years old, the electronic music and Pop-art inspired wall decor might seem at odds with the cosy cafe concept but in fact give the space a lively, modern vibe.

Indigo Coffee House



CHEESE AND TOMATO TOASTIE - **£3.30** TAKE AWAY/ **£4.95** EAT IN

AMERICANO - **£1.70**
TAKE AWAY/ **£2.30** EAT IN

Indigo cafe is the tiniest of Cambridge's independent cafes, but it's the venue's commitment to ethical values which make it stand out. Owner Claire opened it back in 1990, and has been buying all coffee directly from a co-op in Brazil ever since - all profit goes directly back to the workers.

The service will only ever take as long as it makes to prepare the food, which is sourced from local markets as often as possible. Great coffee and a range of teas make this a perfect stop gap between library and college but be sure to check for a table before you order - there's no standing room in this jammed joint.

Fitzbillies



WELSH RAREBIT - **£5.50**

AMERICANO - **£1.80**
TAKE AWAY/ **£2.20** EAT IN

Having re-opened this Cambridge treasure just six weeks ago after a dramatic closure in February, owners Alison and Tim have aimed to 'capture the best of the old Fitzbillies, but in a better environment'. The breakfast cafe opens at 8am, providing tired locals with what Alison describes as a 'bloody marvellous coffee!'

Old customers will notice that the cafe's seating area is more spacious and vibrant than before, yet the vintage-sourced furniture retains the traditional loyal customers have known and loved for generations. For the truly committed Fitzbillies purists, they have even kept the world famous Chelsea Bun recipe to the letter.

Trockel, Ulmann & Freunde



MOZZARELLA AND SUNDRIED TOMATO BAGUETTE - **£2.60**
TAKE AWAY/ **£2.95** EAT IN

AMERICANO - **£1.70**
TAKE AWAY/ **£1.90** EAT IN

This bright venue was opened by a German couple 20 years ago and is still going (very) strong. Decorated with art they collected during their time at university, it makes a perfect stop on the lecture route. You'll find a huge range of soups, sandwiches and cakes on offer, all freshly made on site. It can get jam-packed during term time, though big front windows and classical music keep the atmosphere relaxed. And it's just as well, because the collection of coffee books and board games invite customers to stay and chill for as long as they like.

Clean Bandits

Pioneers of 'electronic chamber music', Clean Bandit have never been afraid to break the mould. Fresh from Cambridge, the band chats to **Freya Berry** about what's in store



Clean Bandit: Streed cred for the strings

We all love telephone banking", say Jack "Wandek" Patterson and Grace Chatto from their Kilburn studio. Not the words you'd expect from one of the hottest up-and-coming bands around; but then Clean Bandit, who have "five to seven" Cambridge degrees between them, ranging from Russian to Architecture, are not the people you'd expect to go into making seriously cool electro-classical tunes.

All the members of the group – Grace, Jack, Shiry, Ssegamic, Milan and Lydia – studied at Jesus. Ssegamic, lead singer and vocals writer, was recently made the youngest-ever nominee at the global Institution of Chemical Engineers Awards, exhibited photography in Boston, and spent a month in Haiti researching the possible use of sugar-cane charcoal as an alternative fuel. "He gets around", Grace says in a thoughtful tone.

The band formed in 2008. Grace, the cellist, and Wandek, who writes most of the music, went on a year abroad to Russia and found the band's name in the English translation of a nickname given by Grace's sister – "it actually translates more like, 'ultimate bandit'". Though they hate the word "fusion", Clean Bandit have somehow managed to create what they call "electronic chamber music" – electro merging seamlessly with the classical segments by Chatto's eponymous quartet which predates the band.

They haven't been afraid to sample the greats, as track Mozart's House shows, but Wandek has recently begun to compose the string parts too, as in Telephone Banking.

Even so, their new, as yet unnamed single, relies heavily on Mozart's D Minor quartet. It doesn't get more – and less – Cambridge

than this. They've been described as "playful" by the Guardian and variously as "highbrow" and "dope" by the blogs, but how do they describe themselves?

"I don't know about highbrow", Chatto laughs. "When we started, we just wanted to make music we and everyone else could dance to, that was a bit different."

So what can you expect at a Clean Bandit gig? Their low point so far was having the power cut out at Hay-on-Wye: an increasingly enraged band and crowd watched the sound engineer scurrying around for ten minutes, until Ssegamic began spontaneously singing and got the quartet playing.

Meanwhile, Wandek fought it out with the engineer – "until I realised

"I don't know about highbrow... When we started, we just wanted to make music we and everyone else could dance to"

I'd just kicked the plug out with my foot", he laughs.

How does it go when they're not accidentally sabotaging themselves? "We tend to do a couple of covers every time we play – Sunshine by Dario G, and Stand by Me which is actually going to be on our EP", says Grace. Ah yes, the coveted and

elusive EP.

Are they signed? For Clean Bandit, that would be too easy. They shunned Warner Brothers and Mercury for spending more time on their songs and releasing them on their own production label, Incredible Industries. What happens if they hit the big time? "It's not complicated stuff", says Chatto. "We're all into fun", says Wandek; "there's still quite a strong direction amongst the members; it's quite hard to push stuff through".

They've now played at St John's four years in a row, but otherwise the band has come far since Cambridge.

They have just set up their own production company, cleanfilm.co, so they'll continue to make their own videos, for themselves and other artists. Telephone Banking is a Sledgehammer-esque whirl of stop-motion shots, whilst Mozart's House features slower, more thoughtful clips and Japanese kids brandishing cellos. Since Telephone Banking, they've even been approached by Channel 4 to make something "fictional and hopefully interactive".

Their website has the usual cryptic polygons that have come to signify hipster chic – except these make sounds when you run your mouse over them and are, Chatto says, a template for future instruments: "we're going to make a diamond-shaped green cello and a small, round violin.

In terms of the image, we don't want people to think that we're trying to be cool". One wonders how long it takes before Clean Bandit realise they don't have to.



Hip-Hop does freshers'

Ever since Kanye brought the campus into conversation back in '03, college hip hop has never looked back. Brash, hormone driven and hipster friendly, here's a playlist for your Freshers', complete with a few nods to the old school.

Chiddy Bang- Opposite of Adults

Way back when I was a fresher, this MGMT sampling number made me dance like a crane on crack. Apparently I'm a finalist now with a dissertation and Earl Grey tea-bags. Nothing has changed.

Eric B & Rakim- Don't Sweat The Technique

Your parents never gave you such good advice as the East Coast's finest duo do here. From first strawpedo to first supervision, don't let it stress you out.

J.Cole- Villematic

Roc Nation's young spitter lays his wisdom out for young freshers over the beat for Kanye's 'Devil in a New Dress'. Best line: 'life's your professor damn that bitch is gon' test ya'.

Hoodie Allen- White Girl Problems

'My parents forgot my South American nectar infused coffee beans!'; 'These heels hurt so much!'; 'Have you seen the size of my reading list?' 'I vommed outside Cindies!' Hoodie understands what Freshers' is really about: #whitegirlproblems

Young Prince- Strange Times

All the hangovers and efforts at self-reinvention can make life feel

like an Arctic Monkeys song towards the end of Freshers' Week. So why not bang on current U.S campus favourite Young Prince's rhythmic number and try not to laugh at the line, 'and I'm that fly genius in the lab Jimmy Neutron'.

Ludacris- Child of the Night

When it comes to mattress music, James Brown and Marvin Gaye are just so passé. Surprise him or her with some Luda when Fresher's gets sleazy.

Nas- Carry on Tradition

Nas likes tradition; Cambridge likes tradition? Are the two related? Almost certainly not.

Asher Roth- I Love College

I'm pretty sure he means Churchill College.

Kanye West- Through the Wire

Chipmunk soul goodness from the finest College related album ever made. Dropping out of college: not cool. The College Dropout: cool.



Academic Alignment Week

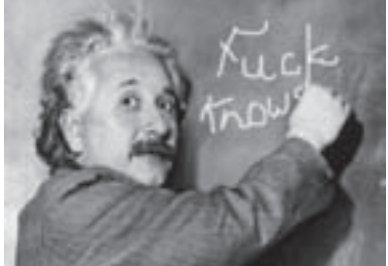
Queen's may have tried to re-brand Freshers' Week last year but no matter how you swing it, it still means one thing: guilt-free partying.

Women - It's official: women are not only the fairer, but the stronger sex.

Scientists have worked out that women are genetically better than men at resisting infections and cancer. Girl power.

drawastickman.com

This is the furthest away you'll ever be from exams, so might as well start procrastinating now.



Albert Einstein

Potentially wrong about pretty much everything he's famous for. Excellent - the perfect supervision excuse and the bar for 'genius' status effectively lowered. Cheers, Al.



Ankle bracelets

Yeah, yeah, yeah, we get it - you had a life-changing gap year. Now take it off and have a shower.

Bicycle acclimatisation

You've spent all summer in a town where people actually drive. Listen out for that dangerous whirr coming up behind you.



The Downton Abbey hype

Reminding us on a daily basis that we really should have got around to watching the-most-talked-about-thing-on-TV when it first came out.





Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.



Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.



Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.

NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY

INSPIRED BY ROBERT FROST | PHOTOGRAPHED BY YINSEY WANG & TRINH QUAN | MAKEUP BY CHRISTINE KANG | MODELS: JENNA F. & RANDI M. | STYLED BY YINSEY WANG | LOCATION: TRINITY COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, CANADA



This is my Cambridge

It's the top university in the world, academically, but there's another, less talked about side to Cambridge that goes far beyond the libraries and lectures. As a fresh term kicks, *Varsity* talks to four students proving that it's possible to have it all.

The Director

People think the theatre community is hard to break into but there are infinite opportunities, for non-actors at least, if you look for them. At Freshers' Fair, I bagged my first stage-managing experience on a sell-out production of *Rent* and I've barely left the ADC since!

As a director, I have an overview of the organisation but would say my main role is to have the overall vision and see it brought to life. I've already been in Cambridge for the last two weeks rehearsing *A Picture of Dorian Gray* and have lots more projects lined up.

I study Biology – which is rare among the drama crowd – but I find it's easier to juggle directing responsibilities around set lab hours although, inevitably, something always loses out.

The drama scene does get stressful and it's not unheard of for the techies to pull 32-hour shifts. But everyone's here for the atmosphere; because they're dedicated and because they love it – we're not paid after all! The incredible theatre network makes Cambridge drama second to none.

Perhaps I've missed out on getting involved with other things but I know I'd rather choose something I love and put my all into it. Term time is my chance to dabble in theatre – when I graduate, I want to work in Film or TV and, ideally combine my love of science through creating documentaries and Sci-Fi movies. This industry is about getting your name on the map but I'd rather spend my life doing something I adore than just becoming a researcher or doctor for the money.

If I could be like Steven Moffat, the writer of *Doctor Who*, that'd be my dream!



KT Roberts (2nd year, NatSci)

The Sportsman

We've just been on tour in Dublin, where we played a game, started getting to know each other and preparing for the season.

It's quite full on this term, we've only got ten weeks until Varsity (the huge face-off with Oxford), and we've got to come together as a team.

We've been here since early September, training twice a day, together as a squad of thirty-five. It may sound a lot, but we're more of a club than a team. We're best off the pitch, we're a really tight knit bunch and still an amateur club so we try to keep that relaxed ethos.

There's always going to be that element of competition, that fierce rivalry to get in the team and get a Blue. Not only because of the prestige and honour that goes with the

Blues, but because you're doing it all for your mates, for team spirit, and winning.

Varsity is going to be everything, it's what we're building up for and what we want so much. This term the only thing I really care about is rugby; it's my social life.

Not to say that we don't work; rugby gives you a real sense of discipline and timekeeping. It's not all hard work though, there are some perks that come with the Blues reputation. We've got a really good sponsorship deal with Jack Wills, all our new kit has come from them, we get free entry to Life and Cindies, and girls like Blues which is a big plus for some of the guys. We've got these new polo shirts and it's ridiculous, they love it!



Oliver Wolfe (2nd year, Theology)

The Vice-President

As a PPS student, academics were never really going to be the biggest priority. In fact, I had a brilliant DoS who advised me that the busier I was, the better I'd work.

Having put her theory to the test, I'd have to agree.

It wasn't like I'd intended to get so involved with the Union before I got here but I have held a position here since my second term, managing those commitments around being elected as JCR President of Easter Term the same year.

It's easy to get sucked in by the opportunities but I'm looking forward to holding a more long-term position as Vice President for a whole year, having mainly had to deal with day-to-day concerns in the past.

My role is to provide continuity amongst the termly elections and reshuffles and oversee the long-

standing projects.

I did have to give up four weeks of my summer but I enjoy having multiple things going on. I probably should be concentrating more on my work now that this year actually counts towards my degree but, having said that, I'll still be holding this position through my finals...

It's fun being able to attend trustee meetings but the major pro to my role is getting to wine and dine the famous speakers and debaters!

I've no idea what I'll do after university, but I do know that I don't want to be in the City, become a lawyer, or be sucked into management consultancy.

Having volunteered over the summer, maybe I'll just spend



Sophie Hollows (3rd year, PPS)

my whole life doing that – who knows? I guess, with no set career aspirations, I'm the odd one out here – at least stereotypically.

But, right now, I'm just really looking forward to the year ahead.

The Chorister

Being a choral scholar meant that I had to come back a week early to sing Evensong with chorister alumni at a St. Catherine's reunion event. During term, we'll spend an average ten hours a week in rehearsals plus three services a week but I don't think it affects my work, it just forces me to get it done more efficiently!

You do have to deal with the negative cliché of being a choir-girl – people assuming you'll be slightly geeky and just generally a bit too keen – and, I suppose some atheists might find the religious nature of the music problematic.

But there are plenty of perks to the dedication I have to show. The college provides free singing lessons and the opportunity to tour in amazing places: Paris, China, Japan...but my favourite was definitely New York. Even performances closer to

home can be rewarding – it was really moving to see the patients in a Cambridgeshire dementia unit respond to our music.

Choir tends to attract interesting and creative people from across all year groups but the main advantage is free food! But the weekly formals are a mere warm-up compared to the free five-course dinners!



Helen Hugh-Jones (3rd year, Classics)

It's on them...

Whether it's a mark of celebration, pride, concern, or just sheer obligation, it's a fresher's duty to ensure that their first step on the pathway to independence is marked by a celebratory meal. Allow *Varsity* to help you to make the most of it

If they'll have abandoned you by lunchtime



We've heard the excuses before: it's not that your parents don't love you... it's just that the car park is very expensive. Oh, and they've also got to be home in time to prepare that delicious roast dinner they'll be tucking into tonight. Without you. Fear not – there are still plenty of possibilities for an indulgent brunch.

Bill's, Green Street
If you want to be ahead of the crowd, start making friends at Bill's. New to Cambridge this year, finish off your boiled egg and soldiers by stocking up on an assortment of their jars, jams and juices to see you through that oh-so-tough first term.

Patisserie Valerie, Bridge Street
Unless you're a real dab hand with the microwave, it's unlikely you'll be whipping up poached eggs, toasted

brioche and Hollandaise sauce any time soon. Just be sure to add an éclair or two to your parent's bill for a light afternoon snack...

If they insist you still get your 5-a-day



In mere hours, your parents will be waving you goodbye in the full knowledge that you can barely boil an egg. How on earth can they expect you to master a *salad*? There's precious little time to fill you with eight weeks worth of nutrients.

Rainbow Café, King's Parade
This basement restaurant, hidden down an alleyway off King's Parade, offers purely vegetarian grub that's so nutritious, your skin will be glowing as bright as the tablecloths. The cheesecakes and brownies ensure that even the most meat-loving sceptics leave satisfied.

Sticky Beaks, Hobson Street
The sort of independent café with so many oak tables, organic salads, nourishing soups, pretentiously-flavoured teas and could've-been-made-by-your-Grandma brownies that it's enough to make you sick...if the food didn't taste so damn good. Creamiest cappuccino in town and Cambridge's best kept secret.

If they want the Cambridge experience



You did it. You got into Cambridge. You've bought the gown. You've been on a punt. Now your parents are insisting on taking you somewhere traditional to dine. "Ooh, d'ya think Stephen Hawking's ever eaten here?"

The Eagle, Benet Street
Some claim it is the oldest pub in England. Watson and Crick announced the 'secret of life' here. Even the graffiti on the ceiling dates back to World War II. But it's The Eagle's incredible Ploughman's Lunch that will really get this local favourite into the history books.

The Maypole, Portugal Place
If you're hoping that Cambridge will be your springboard to thespian/comedic/journalistic/artistic success, then you might as well start getting acquainted with the pint-pullers at The Maypole. Entertain your family by pointing out Mitchell, Webb, Fry et al in the Footlights photos decorating the walls.

If they feel out of their comfort zone



But then there's the other type of parent. The one for whom 'this whole Cambridge thing' is a bit too much. There comes a point – around lunchtime – when you have to take pity on your mum as she stumbles nervously through a conversation with a Fellow. Take her somewhere more familiar.

Jamie's Italian, Wheeler Street
Reportedly serving 600 diners each day in its opening year, there's not a mother in the country who cannot be charmed by somewhere endorsed by the Dalai Lama of the culinary world.

Loch Fyne, Trumpington Street
Reliably good food at reliably good value. Google hard enough, and you're sure to find some sort of discount voucher online.

If they think you'll be slumming it



They've seen the headlines. They've examined the student finance figures. They've checked it all on their calculators. But it's only when you reach university that the reality will dawn on them – for the next eight weeks, their little darling is going to be living off of baked beans. *Sainsbury's Basics* baked beans.

Midsummer House, Midsummer Common
2 Michelin stars. It's hard to argue with that.

Cambridge Chop House, King's Parade
Deliciously overpriced traditional favourites and the C-word stamped above the door - a sure-fire parent-pleaser offering a posh twist on homely dishes in a 'Cambridge-y' location.

Browns, Trumpington Street
The reassuring white pillars of Browns offer familiar branding and inarguably decent food. If you forget to book, prepare to eat inconveniently early. But at least it means Dad will be well on his way home by 6pm.

And where not to take your mother



The Mahal, Gardie's and Curry King.
Fun they may be, but family places they ain't. Don't peak too soon.



VEGETARIAN PAELLA

*Prep time: 30 mins or less
Serves: 2 small people or 1 hungry rower*

- 1 tbsp Olive oil
- 1/2 large onion, sliced
- 1/2 clove of garlic, diced
- 1/2 green pepper
- 1/2 red pepper (for a sweeter more colourful dish)
- 1/2 carrot, sliced
- 1/2 leek, sliced
- 50g peas and green beans
- 120g risotto rice
- 300ml hot vegetable stock
- Sizeable dash of tumeric
- Salt and pepper

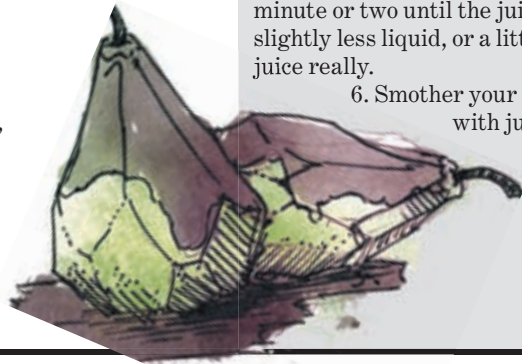
1. Put the oil, onion and garlic into a large bowl and cover. Pop it into the microwave for 3 mins until the onion softens.
2. Stir in the vegetables, making sure they all get a bit oiled up and cook for a further 2 mins, then stir, then another 3 mins.
3. Mix in the rice and the turmeric and pour the stock all over everything else. Liberally apply salt and pepper. Taste a bit.
4. Put the lovely mixture back in the micro and cook uncovered for about 7 mins, until the stock has disappeared and the rice is tender.
5. Cover the bowl and leave it for a few minutes just to finish soaking up all those flavours, whilst you start preparing your...

PEARS IN CIDER

*Prep time: 15 mins
Serves: 2*

- 4 small pears – peeled and stalked
- 150ml Sweet cider
- 15 ml demerara sugar
- ½ teaspoon almond essence

1. Arrange pears upright in a microwaveable bowl, facing each other.
2. Splash on the cider. Sprinkle on the sugar.
3. Cover and bung it in the micro for about 6 mins until the pears are softened. Pause occasionally to spoon the juices onto the pears and skip a song on your ipod.
4. Move the pears onto their serving plates.
5. Add the almond essence to the juices and microwave for another minute or two until the juice is slightly less liquid, or a little less juice really.
6. Smother your pears with juices and enjoy!



State of the arts

A Freshers' guide to Cambridge's cultural hotspots

1 Ring the doorbell and the tone is set for an especially intimate gallery experience. Kettle's Yard once housed Tate curator Jim Ede; now it remains home to his collection, exhibited just as he left it in the absence of explanatory panels.

What's on? The house permanently shows an especially strong collection of early twentieth-century work, and in the gallery you'll find Barbara Riley's abstract paintings.

3 This little gem is a must-visit for any lover of contemporary art, running a rolling exhibition programme alongside a permanent showcase for the work of official gallery artists.

What's on? Right now it's the gallery's first all-photography exhibition, *Hot Shots*.

5 Club by night, vibrant home to contemporary music, dance and comedy by day, The Junction is well worth a visit if you don't mind the walk.

What's on? October's highlights include Emmy the Great, Miles Kane and The Rifles.

7 A brilliant music venue nestled within the Faculty of Music, hosting performances from students to world-class orchestras. Concerts are usually classical, and always enhanced by superb acoustics.

What's on? Opera-lovers shouldn't miss the English Touring Opera performing Handel's *Xerxes and Flavio*, followed by Purcell's *Fairy Queen*, each for one night only on 26-28th October.

2 ADC stands for the Amateur Dramatics Club, resident company at Cambridge's very lively main student theatre. Also home to Footlights, Music Theatre Society and much, much more.

What's on? The Cambridge American Stage Tour's presents *Macbeth* from 4-8th October at 19.45, and at 23.00 it's the Cambridge Footlights International Tour Show, *Pretty Little Panic*.

4 Cambridge's largest venue for professional dance, theatre and comedy. If big names come here on tour, this is where they'll be playing.

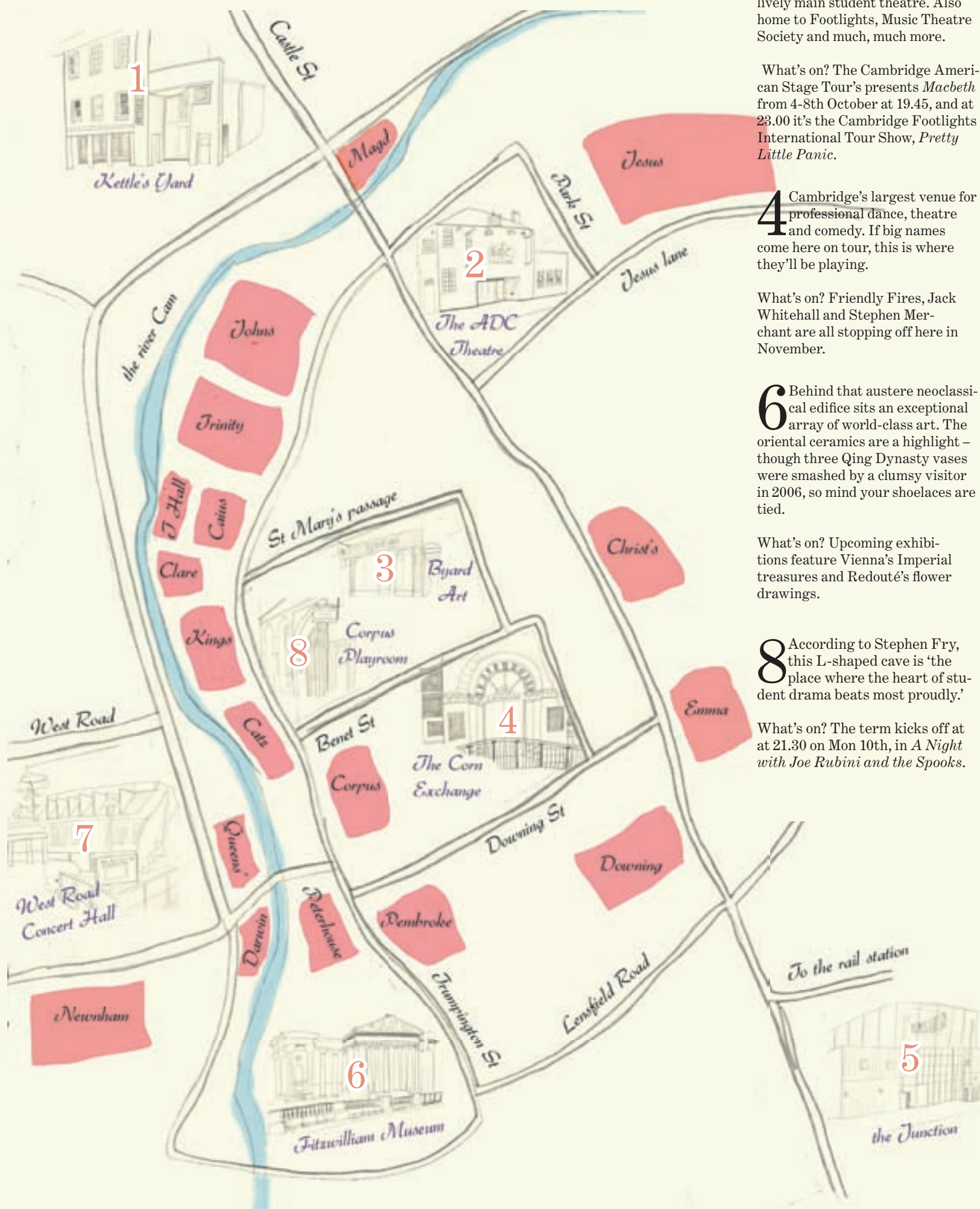
What's on? Friendly Fires, Jack Whitehall and Stephen Merchant are all stopping off here in November.

6 Behind that austere neoclassical edifice sits an exceptional array of world-class art. The oriental ceramics are a highlight – though three Qing Dynasty vases were smashed by a clumsy visitor in 2006, so mind your shoelaces are tied.

What's on? Upcoming exhibitions feature Vienna's Imperial treasures and Redouté's flower drawings.

8 According to Stephen Fry, this L-shaped cave is 'the place where the heart of student drama beats most proudly.'

What's on? The term kicks off at 21.30 on Mon 10th, in *A Night with Joe Rubini and the Spooks*.



Listings

Don't miss:



FILM
Melancholia
ARTS PICTUREHOUSE - ONGOING FROM 30TH SEPT.
Lars Von Trier's controversial new work comes out this week. See our review in the next issue. Kirsten Dunst discovers a new planet that threatens to collide with earth.

Sat
1st

FILM
Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy
ARTS PICTUREHOUSE (12.15 15.00 17.45/20.30, £7.50 STUDENT) ONGOING
This slow-burn spy thriller is a reputed must-see. You should see Page 22 for our review if you haven't enjoyed it already.



MUSIC
Handel & his European Contemporaries
PEMBROKE COLLEGE CHAPEL 12.00 (£10/£8STUDENT)
An organ recital from Mark Williams, recently appointed Director of Music at Jesus College.

MUSIC
Green Mind & The Junction present Wish You Were Here
THE PORTLAND ARMS/ THE BOAT HOUSE/ THE Corner House 15.00-3.00 (£13.50/£15)
All-day, multi-venue event. The main draw will be the intricate, raucous indie pop of Jonny Foreigner.

Sun
2nd

MUSIC AND NIGHTLIFE
Fresher's Sundae
FEZ CLUB 21.00-3.00 (£3/£4 AFTER 22.00)
DJ Phil Ashworth will be playing some music in this club. Make sure you're drunk to deal with the soul-destroying absurdity of the Fresher's week mash-up. We suggest the classic mix of Amaretto and Whisky.

MUSIC
Classical Concert: piano, tenor and flute
CENTRE AT ST. PAUL'S, HILLS ROAD 20.00 (£7)
The Trio Panoramus come from Italy to present their repertoire by Mozart, Verdi, Rossini and Donizzetti.

MUSIC
Phantom of the Opera at the Royal Albert Hall
VUE 18.30 (£15/£12.50 STUDENT)
To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the *Phantom of The Opera* a special performance has been arranged at the Royal Albert Hall. If you were unfortunate and didn't get a ticket you can see it at the Vue. Yay.



Mon
3rd

TALK
Playing God: who should regulate reproductive medicine?
INSTITUTE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION, MADINGLEY 19.00 (FREE)
Baroness Deech raises challenging moral and political questions, see our Comment section more recommendation. We like this one.

NIGHTLIFE
Jazz & Cocktails
THE UNION 20.00 TIL LATE
The Union unveils its new cocktail menu for the term with live music all night. Best of all, it's 2 for £6 on cocktails. That's £3 per cocktail.



MUSIC
Let's Whisper, Tender Trap
THE CORNERHOUSE 20.00 (£5 ADV.)
Let's Whisper are the lesser-known spin-off from the indiepop underground, band The Smittens. The duo play 'somewhat melancholic compared to the Smittens' sweetness but retain a joyful sound', apparently.

Tue
4th

DEBATE
The Made in Chelsea Debate
THE UNION 20.00-21.30 (FREE)
Arrive early for this deep, serious and stimulating discussion on political issues like the cult of celebrity with the cast of the hit E4 show *Made in Chelsea* and the Cambridge Footlights. Is Cambridge really the best place to be young? See them battle it out.



EVENT
Fresher's Fair
KELSEY KERRIDGE, PARKER'S PIECE 10.00-18.30
Come along and get your free slice of Domino's pizza, repeatedly. Don't forget to sign up for the mailing list of your favourite student newspaper, Varsity. We'll be outside Waiting. The Tab may be there too, don't say we didn't warn you.

COMEDY
Footlights' International Tour Show: 'Pretty Little Panic'
ADC THEATRE 23.00 4TH-8TH OCT (TUE, WED & MATINEE £5-£6, THU-SAT £6-£7)
Having whored themselves out to the rest of the world over the summer, the Footlights return to conclude their biggest ever tour.

Wed
5th

MUSIC
Britten Sinfonia - Death and the Maiden
WEST ROAD CONCERT HALL! 9.30 (£5-£30)
A Mozart Violin Concerto and a new work from young composer Piers Tattersall forms the starter to the main of Mahler's arrangement Schubert's Death of a Maiden.

EVENT
Fresher's Fair
KELSEY KERRIDGE, PARKER'S PIECE 10.00-15.00
Round two gives our first-year writing enthusiasts a smaller time-window to sign onto our mailing list. The crowds will be large but be patient.

SPORT
Rugby Blues VS Northampton Saints
GRANGE ROAD 19.15 (£9/£7)
Pretty self-explanatory



Thu
6th

FILM
NT Live: The Kitchen
ARTS PICTUREHOUSE 19.00 (£13-STUDENT)
The Kitchen puts the workplace centre stage in a blackly funny and furious examination of life lived at breakneck speed. One night only.

NIGHTLIFE
Now That's What I Call Kambar #2
KAMBAR (£3/£4 AFTER 22.00)
As the facebook page contends this will be a night with the best line-up that cambridge has ever seen. Leyendecker, Sam wolfson and Eddy Salsa b2b Julia Bonita. Go along to see if the quiet confidence of the organisers is justified.



DEBATE
Fresher's Debate: Has Government Failed Britain's Youth?
THE UNION 19.30 (FREE)
In the wake of education cuts and the summer riots a Cambridge academic, Government Ministers and a Daily Mail columnist come together to discuss this pressing issue. Continue the debate in the bar afterwards with special drinks.

Fri
7th

TALK
Carol Ann Duffy - Performance
FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM 18.30 (£9/£7)
The Poet Laureate closes the To the Lighthouse Festival with a reading on the day her new collection *The Bees* is published. See our review of the collection next week by Joe Harper. Our predictive meta-review: thoughtful, well-written and revealing.



TALK
LCIL Lunchtime Lecture: Challenges of International Litigation
FINLEY LIBRARY, LAUTERPACHT CENTRE 13.00
Lecture from Sir Christopher Greenwood GMG QC, Judge of the International Court of Justice. A free sandwich lunch at 12.30 too.

COMEDY
Comedy at The Union
THE UNION 20.00 (FREE)
A night of hilarity with various un-named, but probably hilarious, student comedians to entertain you.

Ongoing
...

ARTS
Bridget Riley: colours, stripes, planes and curves
KETTLE'S YARD SEPT 24TH- NOV 20TH (FREE)
Paintings and studies from the last thirty years to trace her progress through the agency of stripes, planes and curves and back to stripes.

ARTS
Morgan Howell: Wonderwall
WILLIAMS ART GALLERY OCT 4TH-16TH (FREE)
The era of classic singles such as Ziggy Stardust and House of the Rising Sun is captured larger-than-life in a series of detailed paintings that even include the time-worn wrinkles and tears of the dust-covers..

ARTS
Flower Drawings: Redouté and his Pupils.
FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, SHIBA GALLERY 19TH JULY-30TH OCT
An exhibition of flower drawings by Joseph-Pierre Redouté and his pupils, internationally famous for his prints of roses and lilies.

ARTS
Vermeer's Women: Secrets and Silence
FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM OCT 5TH-15TH JAN 2012
An exhibition exploring The astonishing intimacy of interior scenes by Johannes Vermeer and his seventeenth-century contemporaries.

Organising an exciting event? Think everyone should be attending? Need someone to go with? Email listings@varsity.co.uk, no later than Monday on the week of publication. Whole new online events callendar on its way...



THE COLUMN

Corpus Christi New Court is adopted as the face of 'knowledge' in the new Visit Britain campaign. I take this as a cue for escape.

AE. Housman once said he found this town to be “an asylum, in every sense of the word.” He wasn’t wrong. Sit down of an afternoon and watch gowned sods wandering on clipped grass. Electroconvulsive therapy is self-administered—in the form of port wine—in wood-panelled common-rooms. It is a village of so many facades. Cheers, old boy.

Suffice it to say there were no riots here. God forbid, for what would Call-Me-Dave—de facto national head of Branding—do were his beloved Oxbridge burnt to the ground? Knowledge is, after all, G.R.E.A.T.

One does feel somewhat ‘used’ seeing the college (‘my’ college) appearing as a front for this cheap and desperate campaign. Despite living there, William Wilkins’ New Court at Corpus is hardly my favourite place. Erected in 1827, a quantity of 17th-century architecture was sadly demolished to make way for it. During the day it looks flavourless, the Chapel from some angles reminiscent of a gawping stone Cyclops; at night, it’s positively frightening. Wilkins apparently thought it his best neo-Gothic work—a strange opinion, given his obviously superior King’s College screen.

But of course Dave would never use King’s. Too many lefties. Though one wonders why this particular college was chosen. Brasenose or Magdalen would be too conspicuous—too many current Cabinet alumni. Corpus, on the other hand, is discreet, tidy, bland. The College has its social capital too. Last year we played host to distinctly un-cuddly Bagpuss impersonator and grammar nazi Simon Heffer. The Master, former Kuwaiti ambassador Stuart Laing also, as luck would have it, accompanied Dave on his Arab Spring dictator re-armament tour earlier this year.

In any case, we must get out of Establishment Cambridge. We have to. Fresh Kills arriving bubbly this week might have a different opinion (one, perhaps, fostered by ‘awe’), but personally, many of those familiar buildings seem today to embrace a stifling pomposity and complacency. You don’t have to go all that far to get away from the corrupt influence of Dave and his minions. There are plenty of ignored buildings and environs in Cambridge. One just has to find them. **LAWRENCE DUNN**

FILM

Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy

Cambridge Film Festival
Arts Picturehouse

★★★★★



On arrival at the opening night of Cambridge’s 31st film festival, the Arts Picturehouse was buzzing with excitement. The festival is always a hugely popular event, drawing students back early, enticing all film-lovers to drop whatever they’re doing and immerse themselves in fabulous cinematic offerings from all over the world for 10 days.

This year, the excitement was heightened by the promise of a premier screening of *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*.

To add to the thrill of the film itself, I was lucky enough to meet and interview two of the stars, the legendary John Hurt and Gary Oldman, along with director Tomas Alfredson and screenwriter Peter Straughan. Having read countless rave reviews, it was fascinating to speak to those people personally involved in the creation of the film, and to hear their thoughts.

In a world of remakes and sequels, they were particularly keen to assert that this is not just a ‘revamp’. Indeed John Hurt was especially emphatic about this point – “OK there was a book, OK there was a TV series, but this is a film, it’s a piece of cinema, and that’s why I’m so pleased it’s here.” This is refreshing to hear, and indeed it is evident throughout that, though the story may not be original, the film is utterly unique.

For those who don’t know, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* is probably the



ANTONIA STRINGER

great cold war spy thriller novel, written by John Le Carré. The film is directed by Tomas Alfredson (*Let The Right One In*). Already tipped for Oscar nominations, *Tinker Tailor* has received phenomenal praise across the board; indeed, it has been suggested that this could be 2011’s *The King’s Speech*.

“The beauty and sincerity of this film lies in the depth of its characters”

The film centres around George Smiley (Gary Oldman), a retired spy attempting to uncover a

suspected mole within MI6 during the Cold War. Yet this is merely the framework upon which the film hangs. Unlike so many espionage movies, *Tinker Tailor* is not heavy on gunfire, car chases, sex scenes – quite the contrary; it is a quiet, slow burning film which deeply explores the complexities of human relationships and betrayal, within the harsh Cold War setting.

Much of this, I’m sure, can be attributed to Alfredson, who brings to the film a level of maturity so familiar in European cinema – a far cry from the average Hollywood blockbuster

The cast, too, is superb; Mark Strong gives an especially memorable performance, as does Benedict Cumberbatch, whose recent rise to fame will surely be catapulted

further as a result of this role. Surprisingly, Kathy Burke also gives a standout performance; as the only central female figure in the film, she bears a great responsibility, and manages to portray perfectly a sense of repressed femininity in a predominantly male, at times chauvinistic, setting. The poignancy of her character and the sensitivity with which she portrays her are touching.

In the midst of this gushing praise, however, I must admit that the film itself was not entirely without fault. Despite the convincing performances and gripping script, the overall atmosphere of the film was tarnished, I feel, by the incessant “background” music. I love a good soundtrack, but for a languid, complex film the constant spy soundtrack was unnecessary, and ultimately damaging. At points it feels more like an espionage video game than a serious film. In comparison to the Bond and Bourne films – the obvious parallels – this film is, for the most part, wonderfully understated. In interview, Gary Oldman described it as “watching a lava lamp” – quietly undulating, complex, tantalizing. The soundtrack, sadly, ruins this effect.

Yet on the whole this is a film not to be missed. The storyline is enthralling, yet the film does not hang upon a great twist or shock effect; the beauty and sincerity of this film lie in the depth of its characters, and the connection the audience grows to feel with them.

ALICE BOLLAND

SEE MORE ONLINE AT
VARSLITY.CO.UK



ART

Power of Making

V&A, London
Until 2 January 2012

★★★★★

You must go - there’s a gorilla made of coat hangers.” Thus spoke a friend encouraging me to attend the current *Power of Making* exhibition at the V&A. I followed her advice and was rewarded; metal hooks curved sinuously to create a form both delicate and bestial. Similarly incredible were the six-necked guitar and giant blond lips made entirely of human hair.

The problem the V&A had with representing ‘making’ is how much we do of it. Our use of the verb is indicative of the problem: we can make toast, or love, or a pair of hair wrapped lips. This issue of variation was the point but also the downfall of the exhibition.

Instead of a genuine representation of the human power to create, the show read as a random selection of bizarre luxury objects. The pieces on display were largely chosen to shock and amaze, and they did.

I couldn’t help thinking that the way in which your average jelly or

bar of soap was made was probably quite interesting. The ordinary felt uneasy and neglected.

The show was most successful when viewed as a testament to the genius of the individual as maker. Sabrina Gschwandther’s quilt woven from film negatives of and by women used the creation of a beautiful object as a way of discuss-



ing past and present ‘femaleness’. A wooden textile by Elisa Strozzyk played with ideas of materiality, as well as suggesting the valuable role creating the useless and implausible can have.

Go, I am no closer to discovering the place of craft in modern life but I had a lot of fun. **HOLLY GUPTA**

TV

Fresh Meat

Pilot
Channel 4

★★★★★

With the advent of Freshers’ Week, we are bound to consider the hackneyed territory of starting university, and I’ve often heard people say that it could be made into a show: if you are of that belief, then wait no longer. The newest project from the creators of *Peep Show*, hallowed by those with taste as amongst the best British comedy series in recent years, is entitled *Fresh Meat* and chronicles that time we are all currently witnessing and indeed experienced one, two, three years ago.

The series mocks the young in all its folly, but through the jaded lens of the middle-aged writers, producing a cast of cliché after cliché: the cynical one, the awkward one, the pretty one(s). My personal nadir was the token cocaine scene, in which the token unbearably posh boy states, “this place is crawling with quality anus”. Please.

There are flashes of observational excellence (the “what did you do for your A-levels” fiasco), but this is thin on genuine mirth-inducement.

One of *The Inbetweeners* cast is playing the protagonist Kingsley: it’s the same awkwardness, gabbling, long, pause-punctured conversations about tea and coffee and bed sheets followed by frenetic apologies, but without the raucousness of *The Inbetweeners*. In imitating the discomfort of the mass trying to impress one another

“The programme suffers from a severe lack of energy”

combined with the apathy of one or two more nonchalant freshers, the programme suffers from a severe lack of energy.

With such a potentially rich premise, I can see why it was made into a series; unfortunately, if the pilot is anything to go by, the result is unoriginal. It describes itself as a “comedy drama series about the hilarious and painful truths of being a student”. Here’s hoping that as the characters mature, grow and improve, so does the comedy... and, indeed, the drama.

DAISY BARD

MUSIC
Feist
Metals
★★★★★



Leslie Feist's voice is a beautiful thing, but it is also curiously difficult to describe: by turns breezy and strong, not quite sweet yet never more than a touch husky. Unfortunately, this lack of a strongly defined identity plagues her new effort *Metals*, the follow-up to 2007's deservedly successful *The Reminder*. That being said, the album starts off well; the multi-layered vocal hook of "bring 'em all back to life" in 'Graveyard' brings the song to a confidently stunning climax, whilst the weighty percussion and brass on opener 'The Bad in Each Other' add just enough raw edge to Feist's description of a pair of sadly unsuited lovers. The earthy tone

established by the instrumentation here is a common thread throughout the album, which moves away from her previous record's flirtation with more pop-oriented production. It is this stripping back of Feist's sound that too often renders the record a bit like a meandering stream, a pleasant background feature that does little to pull the listener's attention along with it. Indeed, cuts like 'Bittersweet Melodies' and 'The Circle Married the Line,' seem engineered to produce an emotional response, but the way in which they drift along fails to resonate. The same can also be said for 'A Commotion,' which, with its yelp of gang vocals, ironically fails to produce the excitement promised.

The album can find beauty in subtlety, though; 'Anti-Pioneer' is a touching lament and a showcase for Feist's still considerable writing skill as she sighs wistfully, "When the month changes numbers / It's time to go home" over a sparse backing. Even more successful is the bare bones folk of 'Cicadas and Gulls,' proving that sometimes all Feist needs to enthrall is her voice and a simple acoustic melody. At moments like these the album strikes to the core its title references, but taken as a whole *Metals* never penetrates too far beyond the surface.
RORY WILLIAMSON

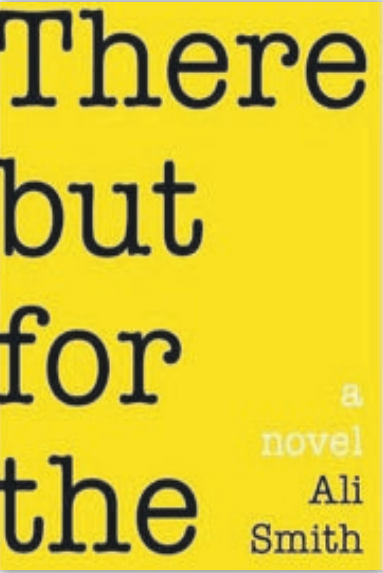
LITERATURE
There but for the
Ali Smith
★★★★★

An unknown guest comes to a dinner party and won't leave. For months. Various stories intertwine, though explanation of their connection is often deferred; multiple perspectives are brought together to thwart any expectation of a single, authoritative narrator – much like Miles the unwanted guest, (known as OUT, Our Unwanted Tenant, to the family whose spare room he invades), the absent presence at the novel's centre. The story is driven by half-formed thoughts, not events. Musings on memory, pun, metaphor, and, of course time – the novel is set in Greenwich, a detail which

becomes increasingly laboured – combined with the attempts to evict Miles and satirical descriptions of his agonisingly middle-class 'hosts' Gen and Eric (get it?). But these reflections are only briefly brought into play before being forgotten in favour of the

“Absurdly
pretentious and
comically banal”

introduction of an unnecessary new character or narrative fragment. Smith often gestures towards profundity – “sometimes what's real is very difficult to put into words” – but ends up somewhere between absurdly pretentious and comically banal. Sometimes it seems as if she is trying to tell the reader: “Here is a theme; please note the motif



I have attached for convenient recognition”. A few exquisite moments aside, (the internet is “a whole new way

of feeling lonely”), this is a novel too smug, too in love with its own cleverness to seem anything other than glib when characters say things like ‘it is important to know the stories and histories of things, even if all we know is that we don't know’. This is especially evident in the final chapter, where Smith clearly thinks that having a precocious nine year old as her principal narrator is a convenient excuse for such pronouncements. *There But For The* is bursting with intriguing stories and personalities, it's just that none of these are substantial enough to support the ‘Big Ideas’ Smith wants to explore. One of the characters imagines that digitalisation has transformed culture into ‘a great sea of hidden shallows’ – a more apt tag, perhaps, for the book itself.
CHARLOTTE KEITH

APP
Björk
Biophilia
★★★★★



To risk all is the end all / And the beginning all" coos Björk on 'Moon', one of three tracks released so far from her project *Biophilia*, one of the more daring risks taken in recent musical history. *Biophilia* comprises ten songs each with its own interactive app for an iPhone or an iPad, stunning live shows and a more conventional album release; in ambition it exceeds even the past work of a maverick like Björk. The main app's galaxy image is an apt representation of this dense and dizzying vision, which stages a meditation on the relationship between nature, music and technology. Perhaps the most reassuring aspect of the project is that the three songs released are not swallowed in the concept that surrounds them; indeed, this might be some of her strongest material since 2001's *Vespertine*. That album is the most obvious reference point for the aforementioned 'Moon', in which undulating harp figures combine with a backing choir to build to a stunning crescendo before the song slowly fades out. More exhilarating is the intense breakbeat section

of lead single 'Crystalline,' which bursts through the previously sparse arrangement with an electrifying jolt. The app for 'Crystalline' demonstrates the way in which the technological facets of *Biophilia* don't simply embellish the songs but work to deepen our understanding of and engagement with them. In the accompanying game, you control a growing crystal and choose its route through tunnels that correspond to and play different sections of the song, thus creating your own composition. Moreover, the visuals reflect the song's structure as the cramped tunnels of the verses give way to the beautiful spatial release of the chorus's open expanse of stars, something that Björk also reflects in the song's mood as she sings of the "sparkle you become when you conquer anxiety." The most effective app is perhaps 'Virus,' in which the user tries to prevent the onset of a viral infection of a cell. With each stage in the viral life cycle, a new part of the song begins, creating a simultaneous progression of song and natural process. If the user fights off the virus, the song stops playing, lending an inevitability to the lyrical story of painfully destructive human love. It is this intriguing connectivity the project taps into that is its principal achievement, something the live show, with its huge visuals and

use of a Tesla coil as an instrument, makes even clearer. This risky endeavour is currently a 'beginning' both in the sense of some of it being available and also in that it is a truly pioneering venture. It is too singular a project for it to be described as the future of music, but it does present a future – Björk has capitalized on the rise of touch screen technology to push

music into more interactive, immersive territory than ever before. All we can do now is follow her through the *Biophilia* galaxy she has created; it remains to be seen whether other artists will follow in a similar fashion, but what is certain is that Björk has paved the way.
RORY WILLIAMSON



TRACKS

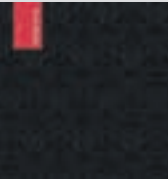


St. Vincent – Cruel



Dreamy ‘gone with the wind’ strings and sweetly slurred vocals give way to a softly insistent Pulp-like beat in this grower from multi-talented multi-instrumentalist, St. Vincent. Her voice is effortlessly hypnotic, movie-musical smooth with a glint of mad obsession. On the pop side of Baroque pop, this Pitchfork approved single gnaws into your brain.
PHILIP SHIPLEY

Mosca – Bax
& Pangaea - Hex



Mosca's 'Bax' and Pangaea's 'Hex' are anthemic wakeup calls to a scene in danger of sleepwalking into polite House Music. They come like chrome-plated wrecking balls: dangerously rough, yet dizzyingly polished.

Both work by bringing something fresh to their source musics: Garage and Jungle respectively. 'Bax' is all gotta-get-thru-this bouncing B-lines, swooning snippets of diva-vox and skipidy 4x4. And then that bass happens. SHEEZE! 'Hex' manages to evoke prime Ragga Jungle with every musical element – rolling micro-breaks, spliced-up ragga chat, dread subbass – while only using brand new sounds. 12's of the year, surely? **DOMINIC MORRIS**

Wild Beasts - Thankless Thing



Not everyone loves Hayden Thorpe's vocals. But those who do will be further impressed by what he does here. Wild Beast's songs never seem assembled in divisible sections, and neither does this one. Thorpe's voice vibrates like the chords do; he seems to breathe in time with the bass. As he said himself, the track will draw you “back to the Lake District, the soundscape of that place.” You could listen to him singing 'Thankless Thing' alone on a hillside and it would still make sense.
CHARLOTTE BARRINGTON

This term in theatre

With a staggering sixty productions this term alone, Cambridge's theatrical scene is thriving – with perhaps the most eclectic and adventurous season in recent years.

Nevertheless the usual staples form the foundations. Straight from tours of Japan and America respectively, a 1940s *Twelfth Night* and a dystopian *Macbeth* battle it out in the first week. And following their own American tour (stopping at the Fringe along the way), Footlights return to the ADC for a home run of *Pretty Little Panic*.

Sketch shows and smokers at the ADC and the (newly refurbished) Corpus Playroom continue to be well-represented throughout the term with *Act Casual*, *Broody*, and *Novellie's Nonsense*; culminating in the Footlight's panto *Treasure Island*.

For those who dislike pantomimes, other Christmas fare (which is, as ever, forecast to arrive at least a month early) is present: *Scrooge and Marley* – a two-man version of *A Christmas Carol*; and *A Children's Guide to the Birth of Christ* – an irreverent nativity musical from Jeff Carpenter.

More musicals include the wonderfully profane *Jerry Springer the Opera* co-penned by Stuart Lee, the ever-popular and gruesome *Sweeney Todd*, and a new work called *Bird Pie*, winner of the RSC/Marlowe Society 'Other Prize'.

Indeed, a pleasing amount of student writing is premièred with Donald Futer's chatshow drama *Kings*, Tamara Micner's youthful dating story *Highlight*, and comic plays *Plank* and *Theoretically* by Harry Mitchell and Lowell Belfield respectively. *Hatch*, a showcase of students' scribblings in various forms, is a welcome return to Corpus (7th Nov). And devised works, the bizarre *Dandelion Heart* and whimsical *The Orphanarium of Erthing Worthing*, are intriguing alternatives.

Unsurprisingly, a glut of classics compete for your attention: Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*, the Fresher-only production of Molière's *Tartuffe* (ADC); Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, Strindberg's *Miss Julie* (Corpus); and, deliciously, triple helpings of Pinter.

Reworkings of 'actual' classics, meanwhile, offer unexpected flavours: *Antigone*, *Oedipus Rex*, and the *Trachiniae* in the form of Martin Crimp's *Cruel and Tender*.

Full listings may be found at camdram.net and within individual venues' websites and brochures. **OLIVER O'SHEA**

THEATRE

Hotel Medea Edinburgh Fringe

★★★★★



When I first heard the words 'participatory theatre', I must admit I had my doubts. Not only did it sound like my worst nightmare, I couldn't see how a play which relied so heavily on the audience could be consistently effective. Nevertheless, the excellent reviews and a little cajoling persuaded me to head into Edinburgh on a Friday night and check in to *Hotel Medea*.

Hotel Medea is a 6 hour overnight theatre experience: it begins at midnight with a drink in the bar (for some Dutch courage) and finishes with breakfast with the cast at 6am. Despite the enforced all-nighter, and my initial scepticism, not for a moment did I feel I'd rather be in bed.

The play was created by a collaboration of Brazilian and British writers and actors, and is an interactive reworking of the Medea myth. The company has been performing it for around five years, and in that time the production has been polished so that each detail is executed immaculately, whilst still maintaining the feeling



CLAUDIA STOCKER

of spontaneity which makes it so effective.

“The wedding party broke down into a full-scale rave”

The role of the audience shifts as the play goes on. In the first act, we were all guests at the wedding of

Jason and Medea. Having watched a battle for the golden fleece, we were invited to play instruments and dance, until the wedding party broke down into a full-scale rave to a live DJ set: my stubborn inhibitions were certainly loosening.

After a brief recovery period, half of the audience (myself included) found ourselves being led downstairs into a room lined with bunk beds. One of the 'nurses' took

INTERVIEW

The Footlights talk to Sophie Lewisohn about joking, touring and unsolicited advances

Putting *Pretty Little Panic* together was a long process. After casting the show in February the Footlights retreated to a shack on the Isle of Wight for an intensive writing week. The team spent days coming up with premises for sketches. "The most important thing is not to let it get too academic," says Mark Fiddaman. "Just try to make the other guys laugh."

"We probably wrote sixty sketches," says James Moran, co-director, "many of which we thought weren't in the public interest to pursue." The finished sketches were aired in a two-week preview run in May Week before the Footlights set off on their tour of Europe and the US.

Touring America meant making a few changes to their comic style. Adam Lawrence explains how their US shows began with a direct-address introduction, giving the actors a chance to gauge the atmosphere of the room before launching into the show. "About 5% of the actual writing had to change, literally just because of cultural references," James tells me. "But the main difference was something less tangible - I think American audiences want to be friends with whoever is on stage, whereas British ones prefer a professional separation between performer and audience."

On the Britishness or otherwise

of their humour, Mark reckons their show is 'just a collection of jokes to which people from different backgrounds respond in different ways. We certainly didn't find that the show went less well in America - Americans are all about going in with an open mind, wanting to have a good time.'

When it comes to highlights of the tour, James tells me there was a two day period in Boston when Alex Owen got ill and had to go to hospital, which gave the company some much-needed space. But from a theatrical point of view the highlight was a gig "inside a Las Vegas gay sex shop when we got quite of lot of friendly vocal feedback during the show". Apparently this was their most enthusiastic

reception: when I asked if being a Footlight helps with the laydeez, Adam informs me he's now spoken to three girls as a result of the tour and very nearly spoken to a fourth, while Ben Ashenden shakes his head: "No. I keep asking, but no."

I ask which Footlight of the past the cast would most like to have worked with. "Ben Ashenden!" says Alex. Ben is torn between Matt Green and John Goodman. Alex confesses his dream to put together a cast comprised of "tall, authoritative performers with Tim Key playing the nervous straight man in every sketch: John Cleese, Stephen Fry, Hugh Laurie, Baron-Cohen, Alex Armstrong and Key."

The cast's advice for aspiring comedians is to "try working with

charge of me, and I was dressed in pyjamas, tucked into bed with a cup of hot chocolate and read a bedtime story. I had become one of Medea's children.

It was in this scene that it became clear that the participatory aspect of the play was not an arbitrary publicity stunt, but a fundamental part of the performance. Lying in bed, I certainly felt like I was witnessing an argument between my 'parents', Medea and Jason, from a child's perspective. Their angry words contrasted with the soothing lullaby being played, and whenever I tried inquisitively to raise my head at a new turn of events, a nurse would appear at my bedside, stroking my hair and telling me to go back to sleep.

At the end of the play, Medea's children are told to run away and hide somewhere in the building. The genuine fear on the face of one of the girls hiding with me holds testimony to the play's effectiveness; it is able to fully submerge you into its world, in a way I have never before experienced. By this point, my scepticism and my inhibitions had been washed away. I would recommend *Hotel Medea* to anyone lucky enough to get a chance to see it; despite a fairly hefty price tag, this play is an amazing experience, whether or not you happen to like their innovative theatrical style.

ANNA SOUTER

lots of different people and see who you hit it off with" (Alex), "ignore how confident everyone else appears to be, just write and perform as much as you can (not just in Footlights smokers)" (James), and "remember that it's not about churning out a flawless product" (Mark).

"It's about learning how to be a better comedian. If you screw up one day, fuck it, it doesn't matter. Be committed but don't take yourself too seriously. Above all, enjoy it - no matter how successful you are, you'll never have this much comedic freedom again!"

Pretty Little Panic opens at the ADC on Tuesday 4th October. Their West End finale is on October 10th at the Lyric Theatre.

SHARILYN JOHNSON



INTERVIEW

John Haidar talks to *Varsity* about directing *Macbeth* and playing around with Shakespeare

Like many people, I first encountered *Macbeth* at school. It's an iconic tragedy that lends itself well to re-interpretation. In setting our production in a desolate, post-apocalyptic landscape I wanted to remove some of the conventional power structures that political leaders, like the play's title character, are so reliant upon. In addition, the issue of modern dictatorship is especially relevant in the midst of current global events. In the world we have created, *Macbeth* is King of nothing.

More than any other Shakespeare play, *Macbeth* is all about



atmosphere. The set and costume design are integral in creating this. We've gone for very minimal staging to play on the idea of *Macbeth*'s royal isolation and have brought the play up-to-date with modern military clothing and assault rifles (which were a challenge to get through US customs when we toured there this summer). Lighting is also a key component: *Macbeth* is a dark play with a lot of the action taking place at night. The absence of light is key – what you don't see is often as important as what you do.

Shakespeare gives directors great creative licence. Whilst seventeenth-century verse often scares people, Shakespeare's special genius lies in the fact that many of his coinages have become part of our everyday speech. Even so, it is important (especially with a tour show that visits many schools and universities) to embody the language as well as to speak it. We work hard to physicalise the sense of what is spoken. I'm a firm believer that if the guys on stage don't know what they're saying, they're doing a great disservice to the audience.

One of the hardest scenes to make sense of was Act IV Scene III [in which Macduff and Malcolm talk at cross-purposes, trying to suss out each other's true allegiances]. We read, read and re-read this scene and dissected it meticulously until we understood every line. Only after we'd reached that stage did we begin



to act it. I had several comments from students who understood it for the first time after watching

“It was incredible, like someone had kicked open a door in my mind”

this year's tour show – to be able to share that experience with people is incredibly rewarding.

I had my first experience of

a truly great play at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-Upon-Avon - *Henry V*, directed by Michael Boyd. It was incredible, like someone had kicked open a door in my mind. To me, that's what all theatre should be about.

The new CAST (Cambridge American Stage Tour) production of *Macbeth* returns from the US this Michaelmas, having toured theatres from New York to Miami. Starring Nick Ricketts as *Macbeth* and Victoria Ball as *Lady Macbeth*, the play opens at the ADC theatre on Tuesday 4th October.

THEATRE

Belarus Free Theatre Minsk 2011

Pleasance Courtyard, Edinburgh

★★★★★

The BFT is a political theatre company. For them, that title does not mean smug satire directed at coalition spending cuts, nor impassioned pleas to do something about global warming. It means an attack on their home country's brutal government, the last dictatorship in Europe, which has exiled the whole cast for their dissent. I have never seen a performance that felt so forcefully *true* – the oppression portrayed had touched each one of the performers.

The cast presented a brilliantly innovative, at times honestly funny, series of tableaux and skits on what it means to be a sexual being in a totalitarian country. A garishly

“A man describes every scar on his body because in Minsk, scars make you sexy”

choreographed striptease was examined by a bespectacled, impassive government mandarin for any sign of "artistic merit"; a workers's canteen was transformed by night into a gay nightclub; a man described every scar on his body from his myriad beatings in detail,

because in Minsk "scars make you sexy".

In the breathtaking centrepiece, a woman reciting a monologue of how she was forced by the state into an abortion is stripped naked, smothered in black by paint rollers, and then wrapped in a vast sheet of paper, struggling to continue as her mouth is slowly constricted. The scene had a deep symbolic resonance on a level I found very uncomfortable to watch.

The end of the piece involved the cast sitting on chairs in a line, speaking as themselves. One said, "by 31st August, we will be unemployed". The date was the 29th. The cast can only work as long as they can perform in foreign countries; there is no going back for them. Another asked what they were doing this for. Belarus had nothing, he said, no natural beauty or resources or friendly people or any reason to love it. So why did he want to go back? Why did he insist on fighting for it, on speaking out? None of them answered the question. Minsk is simply our home, was the unspoken reply.

Then they slowly lifted a red carpet over their heads, drowning in a sea of blood as they sang a Belarusian folk song. They got an instant universal standing ovation, perhaps as much for the need to react, to physically agree with these people, as any comment on the performance. As we restart the regular drumbeat of new Cambridge shows, it is good to remember that there are places in the world where just the act of putting on a play remains a revolutionary gesture. **FRED MAYNARD**

THEATRE

The Monster in the Hall & What Remains

Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh

★★★★★

With little more than four microphones and a set of pink flyaway glasses, the cast of *The Monster in the Hall* (dir. Guy Holland) tell the story of Duck Macatarsne and her ex-Hell's Angels father, The Duke, who suffers from increasingly severe MS. It is the day that a visit from the social services threatens to tear their family apart.

Naturally, everything goes wrong – the flat is a mess, The Duke wakes up blind, and uninvited guests are quickly stowed in a cupboard. This is farce at its best, without set or props, just inordinate amounts of energy, brilliant mime and some desperate character doubling. The songs take the form of short, snappy doo-wop numbers (cue flyaway glasses) which give the production its Grease-style musical aesthetic and stop the story from becoming the depressing kitchen sink drama that it could have been under another writer.

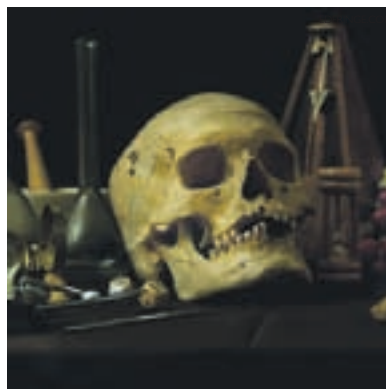
The cast of four do an incredible job depicting a variety of characters and keeping the show so relentlessly entertaining.

What Remains dreamed up by composer David Paul Jones and director Ben Harrison, was staged in the anatomy department of the Edinburgh Medical School.

The audience is immersed in the world of the Conservatoire of the Anatomy of Music, haunted by Gilbert K. Prendergast and his master (or is that alter-ego?) the Maestro. Think *The Innocents* meets *The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T*, or, if those references don't help, think horror film set in a piano school.

After an impressive rendition of Prendergast's final masterpiece the audience was led in groups into three rooms in which elements of the story were revealed. Our journey took us from a museum of creepy objects (a chalk-board suicide note, an eyeball in a fridge, a piano that played itself), via a dormitory where we were lulled into clinical sleeping bags as prospective music students, to our first ghost-led piano lesson. Finally we followed Prendergast upstairs to witness his ultimate descent into insanity at his beloved piano.

In keeping with the horror film rule that what you don't see is often scarier than what you do, much of the story was left to our own imaginations. My only wish was that it could have gone on for longer than an hour. **JACK HUDSON**



THE CRITIC

Tom Powell
casts a critical eye over the Fringe festival



The Edinburgh Fringe festival is every theatre-goers' dream. That's what I kept repeating to myself during the first show I saw, a 'one-man cabaret' at 1am in which a middle aged man unexpectedly disrobed amid strobe lighting and white noise. It was a disaster, and consequently we chose shows a little more conservatively and with a lot more trepidation.

The weird and wonderful is a defining feature of the Fringe festival. Its popularity has for years sidelined the official Festival - there are around 2,500 shows (excluding the free fringe, which is free for good reason). Such is the disparate array of the fare on offer that you can throw any adjective at the Fringe and it will stick to something: enthralling, rapturous, cheesy, terrible, everything's on offer – if you can find it.

There were some particular highlights. In *After The End* by British playwright Dennis Kelly, two actors struggle with the new realities of what appears to be life in a post-apocalyptic bunker, providing a dark exploration of power and sexual relations when everything has changed.

There was a highly visible Cantabrigian presence as Cambridge shows blockaded the Royal Mile and Footlights President Phil Wang's face was plastered over seemingly every bill board. It was impossible to see many of the pieces, but some merit a special mention – *The Curse of Macbeth* was superbly directed and visually striking with a horror film aesthetic. Footlight Ahir Shah showcased his skills, delivering a highly-honed and hilariously confrontational set about his identity. *Babushka* was beautiful and affecting.

During the festival the city overflows with people, leaflets overflow from bins to clog the drains and street performers defy gravity on every corner. A restless, energizing atmosphere arises from being in a city where there's always something to see and not enough time to see it in; while you're there you can ignore the rain and not sleep.

And of course there are disappointments: Abi Titmuss delivering drivel in an accent so stilted it was ten foot high, a few dodgy kebabs and some racist sub-comedians. But the overwhelming feeling Edinburgh left me with was deep appreciation for the many dedicated creatives who set up shop for a few weeks each year knowing they'll lose money, hoping only to entertain, amuse or inspire. And perhaps for a job on TV.

Room of one's own



Aris Komporozos Athanasiou is a post-graduate student at King's, writing a thesis on post-bureaucracy and the role of civil society in British public policy.



The Gallery Guide

Your weekly look-in to Cambridge's curators, gallerists, and archives as told by **Siobhan Forshaw** of the Fitzwilliam Museum Society

On Trumpington Street, just down the road from a little cafe called Martin's Coffee House, stands the Fitzwilliam Museum, regularly hailed as the finest small museum in Europe.

A house of contradiction, the sumptuous pillars and marble entrances are populated with sharp-edged aluminium sculptures, and inside, the modest floor space unfolds into a tardis.

This relatively petite building holds comprehensive collections in antiquities, manuscripts, paintings, drawings, prints; collections that draw together the new and the ancient, and make sense of illegible scripts.

In 1974, a group of Fitzwilliam enthusiasts formed the Fitzwilliam Museum Society, an inventively-named guild of Cambridge undergraduates dedicated to the promotion of the arts amongst the student body. Their message was

revitalised in more recent years when the FMS became the name associated with fantastically successful events involving live music, fine wine, and finer art, in perfect balance - more than two thousand people queued round the block for the 'Art After Dark' event last spring.

"Come one; come all - from earth sciences to contemporary art - you can get it here"

This year marks another exciting shift in the direction of the FMS; whilst the society remains inextricably coupled with its mother institution, the new committee are reaching out far beyond its gates; fostering new and exciting relationships



with museums, galleries, libraries, and collectors.

This Michaelmas, their termcard opens the doors behind the doors - intimate tours, led by experts, bring members the unique privilege of exploring world-renowned spaces like Kettle's Yard and the Scott Polar Institute after-hours.

Uncovering hidden gems in your Master's Lodge, sneak previews at new exhibitions, and members-only workshops give this society a special sense of exclusivity.

Come one; come all - from earth sciences to contemporary art; from botany to calligraphy - you can get it here. Against the current climate of artistic austerity, the Fitzwilliam Museum Society is at the heart of the creation of an harmonious body of museums and institutions in Cambridge.

Pick up your free Michaelmas termcard this Tuesday 4th and Wednesday 5th at the Fresher's Fair

Who is the postcard from?

It was sent by my dear friend Tom, a classicist, from his most recent exploration of Siena, Italy.

What do you think is the most important non-functional object to have in your room?

Postcards from my friends' travels, and a collection of greek surrealist poetry booklets, edited by 'Agra'.

I see you've got the Charlotte Perriand exhibition catalogue - have you been to Paris recently?

Yep, I was there a couple of weeks ago, visiting old friends. I finally saw Rodin's 'gates to hell' at the garden of Musée Rodin, and took a few snaps of the scandinavian embassies just across the street, little hidden treasures of 60s modernist architecture.

And how about in Cambridge? What do you do relax?

An afternoon pint at the tiny Blue Ball pub in Grantchester, or staring at the beautiful staircases of the raised faculty (I am obsessed with staircases).

No Age of Innocence

At the tender age of nineteen, Anya Reiss has been hailed as Britain's Most Promising Playwright. She talks to **Brid Arnstein** about what it means to be an adult in the 'real world' of today

Anya Reiss is a pretty impressive nineteen year old. She is the youngest ever playwright to have a play staged in London. Her first, *Spur of the Moment*, was received with critical acclaim, winning her the Most Promising Playwright gong at both the Evening Standard and Critics Circle awards. Since then she has written her second play, *The Acid Test*, as well as a monologue entitled *The Cure*, staged in a one-off event at the Old Vic Theatre under the direction of Danny Boyle.

Despite her early promise, *The Cure*'s success came as a surprise to the London teenager. She completed the Young Writer's Programme at the Royal Court Theatre in London, and it wasn't until the theatre told her that the play she submitted was going to be put on that it suddenly hit her - 'oh, I'm a writer now.'

Whilst Reiss has credentials that might make anyone else unbearably smug, her modesty is refreshing. Although *Spur of the Moment* was



"I don't think you're ever aware of being young"

described by one critic as a 'blistering indictment of the way we live, parent and grow to maturity now', Reiss is adamant that her writing doesn't follow an agenda. 'I suppose I'm quite good at reading people and guessing someone's reaction to something in real life. That's all I really do in writing - create a little scenario then let them all react. If it adds up to something bigger that's great, but it's not the thing I'm thinking of when I write it.'

Additionally, Reiss denies that her age is an issue, despite the attention she continues to receive because of it. She explains, 'I don't think you're ever aware of being young, you always seem old to yourself. It's like how a ten year old declares that they are an adult just because they've hit double figures'.

While she denies that her young age has affected her work, it is precisely this unaffectedness that marks Reiss out. What she would like to achieve through her writing, she explains, is 'for people to recognise faults in themselves and in others, to inspire forgiveness and change.' It comes down to a desire to understand people better.

When asked what advice she would give to other aspiring playwrights, it is unsurprising that Reiss' response is equally straightforward: 'just write something and, most importantly, finish it. If you want to be a writer it's as simple as - just write. You need stuff down on a page that you can send to theatres, make your friends read,

give to amateur groups. You never know who will have a friend of a friend's cousin who owns Broadway. Assumptions that you need to be taught or need a quick result, aren't understood or can't work something out, are generally unhelpful.'

In her most recent play, *The Acid Test*, Reiss asks her audience to question whether age directly implies maturity. What, she asks, does it really mean to be an adult? When someone is kitted out with all the tools and the qualifications, what tips them over from being adult on paper to bona-fide grown-up?

Reiss explores the question through three twenty-something girls, newly graduated from university, raising the additional question of what it means to be a woman. She describes the situation of these girls as 'that middle-class blank, post-uni stage that some people go through.' But Reiss is keen to deny that social station is the root of all woe. 'I think whatever class you are you get upset over your boyfriend, you have issues with your parents, you have to deal

"If you want to be a writer it's as simple as - just write

with your attitude towards sex. To the girls these are life and death situations because of their age, not because of their class.'

To Reiss, the three girls represent three ways that women identify themselves in relation to men

- abstaining, committing, or sleeping around. 'I wanted to write about female friendship - not in the E4 bitch-fest way, or in the BBC loving and understanding way, but the strangely unhelpful way that women can hate and love each other at the same time. Despite their support for each other, sometimes they can revert to being 'male' and only offer a cigarette and a drink.'

So what does Anya Reiss feel about *The Acid Test* being put on it Cambridge? She's thrilled. 'I love the idea that it will reach a new audience and that people will be finding their own new way of doing it, especially as three of the characters are recent university graduates, who are not sure what to do now that they have finished education and are in the 'real world'.

Anya Reiss' play The Acid Test will be on at the Corpus Playroom 18th - 22nd October



Arts Comment

Cliché has become a modern social disease. We should avoid it like the plague



Rhys Treharne

At the end of the day, when all's said and done, and even after the cows have come home, the cliché seems to stick around like a bad smell. Apparently impervious to assault, the cliché has become a worrying cultural constant; a childhood blanket protecting its wearer from new and unfamiliar thought. It is the pacifier of the masses! But grandiloquence aside, why is it that some of us are so attached to them?

For me, it matters not *what* you think - anyone can have thoughts; some people content themselves with mere feelings - but rather *how* you think. The cliché is the enemy of originality and the chief component of lazy thought. It's the done deed, the heard word, the enacted act. It's the past tense made thoughtlessly immediate.

In fact, through the stupefaction of original or inquiring thought, the cliché has emerged as the literary accomplice to political obfuscation. At its most harmless and whimsical, it occasionally forces women to 'rummage in their handbags' or compels the loser to 'go back to the drawing board'. The least amusing mouthpiece for this type of cliché, is, ironically, the observational comedian (think of Michael Macintyre's achingly hilarious 'man-drawer' routine - if you can).

At it's most dangerous, it allows the politically deviant to avoid genuine debate: perhaps you've noticed how the phrases 'cutting too far and too fast' and 'deficit deniers' have made the complicated dispute about government debt into a simple clash of prefabricated

soundbites?

And yet, to a public nurtured of the trite predictability of TV talent shows, having to actually think about what you're saying or seeing seems like effrontery. Why, for example, is it now requisite to attain 'one-hundred and ten per cent' (or more) of one's energies to reach the knock-out rounds of The X Factor? And why am I always met with an 'ear-full', 'mouthful', or 'tidal wave' of indignation when I point this out?

In the 'war on cliché' (as Martin Amis has phrased it), the supreme exponent of intellectual and prose clarity is usually cited as George Orwell. My preferred combatant in this conflict, however, is Vladimir Nabokov.

Cincinnatus C., the protagonist in Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*, is different. Though he tries to "feign translucence" and to merge with the vulgarity of that which surrounds him, he ultimately remains a source of discomfort for those he meets. Cincinnatus C. represents, at least for me, the skeptical mindset. You might say he was 'at the forefront' of the anti-cliché 'crusade'.

Do these complaints betray the workings of a paranoid mind? True, I sometimes find myself constructing incoherent and baffling sentences just to circumvent a cliché (I refused, for example, to describe the recent bout of warm weather as 'stiflingly hot', as everyone else around me melted).

But inoculation is required against disease, and lazy thought has become contagious. It's our duty to 'avoid it like the plague'.

PHYLLY BLUEMEL



Bucket List

Five college art collections to admire before you graduate

1 Ancient amulets and Anglo-Saxon urns reside in The Lawrence Room at Girton, but the highlight must be 'Hermione' - a Roman Egyptian mummy dating from the first century AD.

2 Murray Edwards College houses the world's second largest collection of art by women. Unusual yet bizarrely unsung, it includes pieces by Paula Rego and Barbara Hepworth.

3 The wisteria of Jesus college is beautiful in its own right, but look at the sculpture collection while you're in the grounds. Dinos Chapman's smiley steel dinosaurs might make you feel like you're in an adventure playground, but don't get

too carried away. Bill Nighy attempted to 'ride' the Bronze Horse back in February and had to deal with a *very* grumpy porter.

4 A stunning new altarpiece by Tom de Freston has recently been unveiled in Christ's College chapel. Next door, the ante-chapel houses work by leading sculptor Anthony Caro, and in the gardens you can sit next to the bronze Darwin on his bench.

5 Notoriously hard to miss, yet equally unappreciated, the Corpus clock had to be on the list. Maybe if you stand in front of it for long enough, you'll finally understand why the tourists find it so fascinating.

DOJO

noodle bar

Sensei always reminded us to keep up with the times.

That's why we now regularly go CLUBBING.

Don't half gives us a bad EAR-ACHE afterwards!

Dojo - Serving noodles that's got kick

Dojo

1-2 Millers Yard, Mill Lane,
Off Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP
T: 01223 363 471 www.dojonoodlebar.co.uk

READING THIS AD?

Obviously. But wouldn't it be great if it involved something you actually cared about?

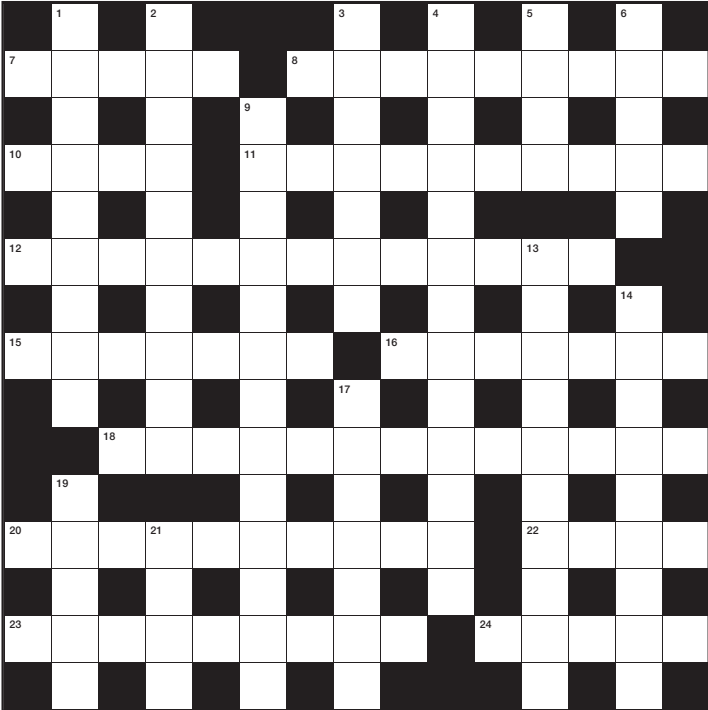
Advertise your play, party or event here in Varsity:
advertising@varsity.co.uk



T-SHIRTS · HOODIES · POLO SHIRTS · FITTED T'S · RUGBY SHIRTS · SPORTSWEAR · LONG SLEEVED T'S · SWEATSHIRTS · FLEECE · HAT · TIE
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY OFFICIALLY LICENSED
TALKING T'S
www.talkingts.co.uk
PRINTING & EMBROIDERY
All work is carried out in our Cambridge workshop ensuring excellent quality and service
Come and talk to us, try on samples and see colour swatches or phone or email for a quotation
37 BRIDGE ST. CAMBRIDGE (opposite Quayside)
01223 302411 shop@t-shirts.co.uk
T-SHIRTS · HOODIES · POLO SHIRTS · FITTED T'S · RUGBY SHIRTS · SPORTSWEAR · LONG SLEEVED T'S · SWEATSHIRTS · FLEECE · HAT · TIE

Cambridge Union Society
5-7pm Sunday 9th October

Crossword



Set by Anaxander

Quick Clues

ACROSS

- 7 Stuck together (5)
- 9 Examine written work for typographical errors. (9)
- 10 Norse jötunn (4)
- 11 Novel by E.M. Forster (7,3)
- 12 Transvestism (5-8)
- 15 Of a more gladsome disposition (7)
- 16 Homeless person (7)
- 18 Author of 2001: A Space Odyssey (6,1,6)
- 20 A fully automatic mounted or portable firearm (7,3)
- 22 A long-range weapon (4)
- 23 Quadrisected (9)
- 24 Wharf (5)

DOWN

- 1 Leeway (5,4)
- 2 In the form of an area of land almost completely surrounded by water except for an isthmus connecting it with the mainland. (10)
- 3 Search engine (7)
- 4 A part of English folk tradition (6,7)
- 5 Jewish birth ritual (4)
- 6 Pass out (5)
- 9 Classic American war film directed by Michael Cimino. (3,4,6)
- 13 Accounts of event. (10)
- 14 A mixture of equal parts beer and cider. (9)
- 17 Intoxicated (7)
- 19 Northern Italian city (5)
- 21 Employ (4)

Cryptic Clues

ACROSS

- 7 Enthralled by gory beginning of nasty duel. (5)
- 9 Check over ceiling found in the time before the birth of Jesus? (9)
- 10 God: wonderful, ok, idiotic – take your pick! (4)
- 11 Stern's demise makes a great book. (7,3)
- 12 Mix some sauce before going drag? (5-8)
- 15 Man from Dallas grasps skateboarding trick and becomes happier. (7)
- 16 A hobo's verbally enigmatic diatribe? (7)
- 18 Sci-fi legend about Earth containing dangerous crack made with URL-recombination. (6,1,6)
- 20 Offensive weapon going at the speed of sound north-east. Arm! (7,3)
- 22 Communist leader enters American computer company to make far-fetched weapon? (4)
- 23 Third instalment of torturous trilogy makes awfully queer “art” inside Capital Dungeons? (9)
- 24 Joe's tatty odd pieces on the pier. (5)

DOWN

- 1 Blow Romeo badly to get some breathing space. (5,4)
- 2 Author's narrow-minded like the Balkans, perhaps? (10)
- 3 Mario's nemesis consumes his enemy's heart on Safari, perhaps. (7)
- 4 Odd stick-banging display makes racism grind on horrifically. (6,7)
- 5 Johnson loses love for circumcision. (4)
- 6 Loud is not quiet. (5)
- 9 He returned the rubbish war film. (3,4,6)
- 13 Plots an uprising to gain rights over topless aborigines. (10)
- 14 Manly cocktail made of Cobra (possibly), and something not quite as bad as bark, perhaps? (9)
- 17 Was dopehead's unrefined poison administered? (7)
- 19 Gold turns up under cushion in Italian city. (5)
- 21 More upstanding sounding contract? (4)

Sudoku

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

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

The Varsity Scribblepad

Ones to watch

Varsity picks the highlights of the sporting calendar as the Light Blues return with a few scores to settle

Matt Dickinson
CHIEF SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

Varsity sport kicks off with the rugby Blues, who will be hoping to rectify a 21-10 defeat to Oxford last December. Then, the team suffered with late injuries to star men Sandy Reid and Dan Vickerman (currently playing for Australia in the Rugby World Cup) and will be desperate to improve on a performance riddled with handling errors and defensive mistakes. A recent 17-6 loss to Trinity College Dublin, in which indiscipline reduced the Cambridge side to thirteen men, bodes ill, but the squad will draw on a 38-19 victory over Loughborough earlier this month, in which newcomers Kristian Cooke, Tom O'Toole and Ollie Wolfe showed plenty of promise.

The coming months also see the Women's Lacrosse Blues trying to match last season's unbeaten record and February's fiercely contested 9-6 victory over Oxford. The team will be looking to Captain Alice Bush and established second years Ellie Russell and Georgie Pritchard for inspiration, who were crucial to victory over their rivals last year.

On the other hand, both women's and men's Blues football squads will be keen to forget last year's campaigns. Both sides came unstuck against two extremely well organized Oxford sides and will be determined to regain the upper hand when the sides meet again in Easter. In Paul Hartley, the men's Blues have a captain with a wealth of experience and hunger, and one whom many hope can halt a run of three consecutive Varsity defeats.



Come March, sports fans will be treated to the British sporting institution that is the Boat race. Last year, underdogs Oxford dominated their Cambridge counterparts in an embarrassingly one-sided affair. Oxford crew member Constantine Louloudis commented after the race: 'They didn't get a sniff. This was the perfect execution of the perfect plan'. Over the summer, Louloudis found himself teaming up with Cambridge rival, joining George Nash at the Under 23 World Championships in August where the duo secured a Gold medal in the Coxless Pairs Final. Past

companionships are sure to be forgotten quickly though, as the two men are both contending for a place in the 2012 Olympic GB squad.

Heading the Cambridge boat this year will be ex-international David Nelson, who is hoping to become the first Australian to preside over a Cambridge victory since 1951. Needless to say, the 2011 Varsity Boat Race will be imbued with a heightened competitive fervour.

Easter also sees the university's field hockey teams in Varsity action. Last year, the men's Blues lost 5-2 at Southgate, while the women were held to an unlucky draw.

The summer holds exciting prospects for Cambridge sport. Blues cricketers will attempt to repeat the historic success of 2011, when they comfortably took full honours, winning the Varsity Twenty20 match and the one-day fixture at Lord's, in addition to the first-class match at Fenner's. The MCCU side also thrashed Surrey by ten wickets. The spotlight will naturally fall on key players Paul Best (of Warwickshire) and Zafar Ansari, who is no stranger to the headlines. Ansari's T20 debut for Surrey in June was described as 'dazzling' by the Guardian, and the Telegraph described Kevin Pietersen as 'flunking his latest examination' when Ansari dispatched the England international last May.

Finally, the university's tennis players conclude the season of Varsity matches with an exhausting three-day fixture at the LTA National Tennis Centre. Hoping to extend an impressive six-year winning streak, the Blues will have their work cut out for them following relegation from a very strong Premier division in the BUCS league (British Universities and College Sport). The added goal of promotion back to the top division will mean a difficult season ahead for CULTC captain Cameron Johnston, but with a strong base of returning Blues this year he should have every confidence in his squad.

Clockwise from top left: Blues out-half Greg Cushing in action at Twickenham; Zafar Ansari batting at Lord's; the victorious Boat Club of 2010; Varsity lacrosse.

Varsity Sports Calendar

December
Rugby Union
(Twickenham)

February
Squash (RAC London),
Lacrosse (Oxford),
Netball (Kelsey Kerridge),
Badminton (Perse School)

March
Rowing (Thames),
Golf (Deal),
Boxing (Oxford),
Hockey (Southgate),
Rugby League
(Twickenham Stoop)

May
Football (Craven Cottage),
Athletics (Oxford)

June-July
Tennis (LTA Centre),
Cricket (Lord's and
Oxford)

Jet-set hockey teams gear up for new season

Gus Kennedy and Rupert Allison
HOCKEY CORRESPONDENTS

A pre-season tour to Belgium, a trip to London, and two weeks on the training track have proven ideal preparation for the men's Blues, whose aims for 2011-2 are dual: promotion into the national hockey leagues, and defeat of Oxford in Lent term's Varsity Match. Captained by Scottish U-21 international Nick Parkes (Jesus), the Blues have been bolstered by the arrival of England youth international and centre-back Will Cairns (Trinity), while Rupert Allison (Jesus) continues to direct play from centre-midfield.

In Belgium, injuries to Owen Graham (Caius), Sam Grimshaw (Jesus) and captain Parkes had left only 13 of 16 tour members fit to play, but those still standing gave good account of themselves against Royal Orée, in spite of 5-2 defeat.

Chris Bennett had struck early for the Blues, flicking into the top corner from an acute angle, and Cambridge maintained this early pressure with a press which only

pitch-length aerials could breach. Still, the strength of the Belgians though their midfield and forward line was clear and the Blues' hosts struck twice before half-time with clinical finishes against the run of play.

The second half developed much like the first: Cambridge marauded along the right, impressing with their team ethic and strong communication, but struggled in the final third. At last, Felix Styles finished off a loose ball to equalise, but a talented and technically-proficient Orée outfit again showed their class in front of goal, putting away three more chances to establish a three-goal lead which was maintained to the end.

Perhaps the 5-2 margin did not reflect the competitive nature of the match; certainly, it betrays the strength which Cambridge should demonstrate in the coming season.

Beyond the first team, the Wanderers will hope to repeat 2011's incredibly successful season by reprising their comprehensive 4-1 defeat of Oxford. Led by Joe Bond,



the side will be transformed from 2011, with many of that vintage stepping up to the Blues. Nevertheless, with Ireland U-18 central midfielder Jonny Gibson (Girton) pulling the strings, and with a pre-season jaunt to Oxford Brookes having built confidence within the



ranks, the Wanderers will be confident not only of following the Blues into the East Premier League, but also of success in BUCS, entered for the first time since 2005.

Meanwhile, in women's hockey, a full side of returning Blues look forward to their first season in the East

Premier League. Skipper Melissa Addy (Jesus) leads a stout defence alongside Becca Naylor (Murray Edwards) and keeper Vicky Evans, while Susannah Stott (Pembroke) and her fellow striker Sarah Lee (Murray Edwards) should provide the goals.

College Football Preview

Reigning champions Trinity have been very successful over the last couple of seasons but with the departure of a number of key players it will be interesting to see how they perform this year. Nonetheless, *Varsity Sport* expects Trinity to be well in contention for the title this season.

Runners-up and the Division's overachievers Downing look unlikely to match the same heights of last season, whilst *Varsity Sport* predicts a strong showing this year from Homerton, a notoriously physical but talented side. Jesus, whose lack of a quality in goal cost them dearly last season, should also look to move up the table and challenge for honours if they address this glaring weakness in their squad.

Varsity Sport also expects Christ's to be this year's whipping boys and newly promoted teams Trinity Hall and Selwyn to struggle. Of course, in Cuppers the balance of power may shift as Blues and Falcons footballers return to their college teams. Trinity, for instance, will be reinforced by as many as four Blues: the stalwart Jamie Rutt, Chris Peacock, Rick Totten, and Matty Smith. Not for nothing, therefore, does CUAFC endearingly describe the college as its 'feeder club'. Fitzwilliam, meanwhile, should welcome the return of Blues skipper Paul Hartley, and centre forward Danny Kerrigan.

PWC Division One
CAIUS
CHRIST'S
DOWNING
EMMANUEL
FITZWILLIAM
HOMERTON
JESUS
SELWYN (P)
TRINITY HALL (P)
TRINITY (C)

PWC Division Two
CHURCHILL
CLARE
DARWIN
GIRTON (R)
KING'S
LONG ROAD
PEMBROKE
QUEENS'
ST CATHARINE'S (R)
ST JOHN'S

Golfers claim Doxbridge Cup

Dramatic scenes on final hole lead to victory for Light Blues

Louis Caron
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

These past four years, golfers from Durham, Oxford and Cambridge have come together each September to compete for the Doxbridge Cup.

For Cambridge and Oxford the tournament presents an opportunity to scout the opposition before the all-important Varsity Match in March; for Durham, Doxbridge is simply a chance to test themselves against rivals from the United Kingdom's two oldest universities.

As in past years, the competition

Ting's heroics on the eighteenth green were the difference between Cambridge and the rest



was held at the venerable Aldeburgh Golf Club (founded 1890), an inland links which hosted the Varsity Match in 2007. The course itself is very demanding, with driving at a premium, gorse in play on every hole, and a precise touch needed to negotiate the contours and nuances of the greens.

The format of the event is also somewhat unusual: three-way

match play, with foursomes on the first day and singles the day after. Members of each group play two matches simultaneously which ensures constant, yet social competition between all players and means the best outcome of each match is a possible two points.

This year the Light Blues were victorious, dethroning last year's champions Oxford by one point and defeating Durham by two. Cambridge captain Charlie Dewhurst chose to field a distinctly international-looking team, consisting of Blues; Nicholas Ramskill (UK, Emmanuel), Geordie Ting (Singapore, Clare), Jamie McFarlane (UK, Peterhouse), Louis Caron (USA, King's) and two up-and-coming golfers, Lawrence Burton (UK, Homerton) and Alister Ingelsbey (RSA, John's).

The tournament kicked off on Saturday with ideal weather conditions. Low wind and warm air allowed for precision iron play and a strong performance from Cambridge translated into a one point lead at the close of play.

A particularly social dinner that evening ensured that the following day would be as much a test of endurance as a test of golfing skill with everything still to play for.

Sunday began with clouds and

the possibility of thundershowers. Teeing off early in the afternoon, the players were confronted by intermittent rain and high winds.

By the time four of the five matches were completed, Cambridge and Oxford were locked in a dead heat with Durham close behind. But Geordie Ting's heroics on the tough par four eighteenth secured a critical point for Cambridge and with it the Cup.

This encouraging win bodes well

for the Varsity match later this March and even though a number of players from last year's squad are leaving Cambridge this year (McFarlane, Caron), the squad will inevitably benefit from the unflappable talents of Ramskill and Ting.

Having suffered the narrowest of defeats at the hands of Oxford in last year's Varsity match, this victory is a promising sign of things to come and shows the resolve of the team to come back stronger.



Lawrence Burton (Homerton) raises a smile on the sixth

Varsity cricketers secure clean sweep

Continued from page 32

Yet, when stumbling to 51 for 5 on the second evening, the hat-trick was far from secure: what it took was a mature half-century from Gus Kennedy, remarkable attrition from Tom Deasy, and another cameo from Hickey to set Oxford 326.

With Oxford four down within an hour, the result seemed certain. Hickey had struck twice with the new ball, Best twice from first change.

However, a composed and almost heroic century from Oxford captain Rajiv Sharma delayed celebration: first, with Olly Richards, he put on 80; then, following another flurry of wickets – three more to Best – Sharma added 88 with Sam Westaway for the ninth wicket. The former, though, fell for 112, caught smartly by Kennedy behind the stumps. Then, with the requirement reduced to 56, Westaway left a straight ball from Frankie Brown: on the fourth morning, Cambridge achieved the first hat-trick in the history of Varsity cricket.

Blues skipper Timms, re-elected for the 2012 season, was understandably delighted with the results of the season: 'Although we were the better team on paper, it's another matter to get the job done across three separate formats and over six days of cricket'.

More pointedly, Timms rejoiced

in the contributions of those who might not often receive the plaudits. 'The season's success was a real team effort', he told *Varsity Sport*; 'Gus Kennedy made sixty vital runs when we needed them in the four-day, and he then took five catches in the second innings, a couple of which were high class. Seamers Thomas Probert and Paddy Sadler were very reliable all year, while Matt Hickey bowled a beautiful spell at Lord's. Runs came from all

the batsmen at different times, too'. Of his own contributions, the skipper remained modestly silent. While Varsity runs may not have flowed from his bat, his 160 against MCC ensured preparations concluded successfully and his unbeaten 146 against Oxford Brookes guaranteed promotion from the Blues' BUCS league. Moreover, the creation of a tightly-knit and cohesive squad, disciplined and well led, can never be undervalued.

The achievements of Best and Ansari in greener and professional fields may remind us that Varsity sport, not least cricket, remains a peculiar beast: no longer defined by national standards or by international excellence, its sole arbiter of success is performance against Oxford. By that standard, though, few could question this vintage.

Cricket trials for freshers begin in November. Contact Richard Timms (rtt20) to book your place.



Matthew Hickey (Trinity Hall) is congratulated by his team-mates at Lord's

Strong start for rugby club

Varsity Sport

The University's Blues made a positive start to their season, recording victories at both home and away First, in the second week of September, the Old Boys were put to the sword as the Blues racked up 56 points in an eight-try performance.

Matthony Thomas registered the first score, touching down on ten minutes after Donald Blake had slipped through the Old Boys' defence. Blake soon scored a try of his own, intercepting within his own 22 and running the length to establish a convincing lead.

Recent graduate Fred Burdon pulled one back for the Old Boys, but Matt Thomas cancelled this out as the Blues went into half-time leading 21-7. And though the Old Boys scored first after the break, the second half became a procession of tries for this new Blues outfit: Rob Stevens, Sam Hunt, Tom O'Toole, Greg Cushing, and Ben Martin all went over.

Perhaps more impressive, however, was the performance last Wednesday, when Loughborough Students were defeated 38-19, again at Grange Road.

In a six-try demonstration of pace and power, the University side proved too good for the visitors, with man-of-the-match Blake scoring one try and creating another.

Played in ideal conditions, the Blues instantly looked to put width on the ball and, after several half-breaks, some excellent off-loading by Cook and O'Toole translated an overlap into a converted score for flanker Ollie Wolfe.

Loughborough struck back immediately, capitalizing on the Blues' failure to gather cleanly from the restart, but from here Cambridge posted twenty-one unanswered points in the remainder of the half.

First, captain Scott Annett turned Loughborough over on their own 22, allowing fly-half Greg Cushing to scythe through, exchange passes with Ben Martin, and finish his own move. Livewire Blake then seized on a wild pass to score on the left-hand side.

Finally, with Loughborough reeling, Blake intercepted again and kicked ahead, only to be felled illegally by opposition hooker Tom Crozier, who was sin-binned. With this advantage in the pack, Cambridge kicked to the corner and a perfectly-executed rolling maul saw second row Jason Kururangi bundle over. 28-7 at half-time, and the Cambridge lion was roaring.

The second half began much as the first had ended, with Cambridge dominant. Winger Paul Loudon raised a huge cheer by smashing through Loughborough prop Rudland-Thomas and winning a penalty, which Cambridge kicked to the corner. From the resulting line-out, a first phase backs move saw Rob Stevens throw a flat miss pass to Loudon, who appeared certain to score, only to knock on as he drove

A six-try demonstration of pace and power from Cambridge led to an impressive victory



for the line.

Undaunted, Cambridge pressured the scrum and forced Loughborough scrum-half Tom Bliss to send his clearing box kick vertical. As the Blues secured the ball, a wide pass from Blake sent Stevens over in the corner for a 33-7 lead.

A combination of substitutions and the sin-binning of Greg Cushing for not rolling away saw a period of greater parity between the sides, and Loughborough scored from a tap penalty when flanker Joe Atkinson cut back against the grain on 61 minutes.

Still, Cambridge were enjoying the rub of the green, a tendency encapsulated when Kristian Cooke's mishit drop goal turned into a brilliant touch-finder.

A minute later, Cooke was on the score board as substitute Andy Murdoch ran back a clearance and O'Toole, Stevens and Rob Stephen combined to put the outside centre



over on the left. Although there was still time for Loughborough centre Ben Robinson to exploit a tiring Cambridge defence, the Blues were comprehensive winners.

Despite this performance, the Blues camp was keen to focus on areas of potential improvement. As substitutions and fatigue took their toll, the line-out and scrum became less secure, while the otherwise brilliant inside defence began to fade.

Coach Tony Rodgers refused to get carried away: "We are looking for incremental improvements, and we definitely got that from our last game. Some things that we have worked on in training were evident, which is good to see, but there is still a long way to go."

That much was made clear during the Blues' weekend trip to Dublin, where the university side went down 17-6 to Trinity College. In horrendous conditions at College Park, the Blues had taken an early lead through a penalty from full-back O'Toole and a smart drop goal from fly-half Cooke.

From here, however, the Dubliners - who compete in the third tier of Irish club rugby - established a control of affairs that was to last until the end of the match: pressure at the breakdown reduced the Blues to thirteen men, while the Cambridge defence was breached twice in quick succession in the second half.

A setback, perhaps, but it should not detract from an encouraging and productive month of pre-season rugby.

The Blues season proper begins with the visit of Northampton Saints to Grange Road on Wednesday evening. The match starts at 7.15pm.

Commentary Box: Don't listen to us, watch more TV



Michael Taylor

CHIEF SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

In truth, there is little to connect the student to the Rugby World Cup. We may have played Blues with Vickerman; we may have been schooled with Sexton, we may have been prefect to Flood, but we remain in the stalls. Truer still, there is little to recommend a student's opinion on rugby itself: we did not play professionally, we do not report professionally, so if a reader seeks instruction in the game, their interest is better served with Stuart Barnes or Eddie Butler.

Conceding this much, *Varsity Sport* offers its opinion not on the scrum, the ruck, or the maul, but on the experience of watching the tournament. It is on these grounds that we make our case: that the Rugby World Cup, more than any other sporting event, endures as nirvana for armchair punditry.

For one thing, the RWC is arguably the only global tournament, excepting the Olympics, which is the premier competition within its sport. Surely the Champions League has taken that honour from FIFA's World Cup - with Barcelona superior to any national side - while cricket's equivalent is truncated into the poor cousin of the Test match, the ODI.

Moreover, the RWC retains a singular sense of occasion. Major footballing tournaments occur regularly, while golf majors and tennis grand slams are four to the year. Worst, though, is cricket. Time was when the arrival of Tendulkar or Muralitharan was an occasion, but no longer: since 2009, the English have played all but one of the major nations at least eight times. The Cricket World Cup only compounds the quotidian grind of the calendar:

a dearth of competitive teams renders the early stages interminable, but television contracts oblige each tournament to stage at least forty-eight fixtures. Somewhere in the Punjab, the Canadians may yet be completing a group match.

In its timing, too, the RWC does best: at the start of the northern season, but not an exhaustive post-script to the southern; all major markets satisfied by the timing of kick-offs; an occasional match on Wednesday not detracting from the sense that weekend mornings are now sacred ground. Football? 'Too late! Too tired!' they cry, at least when they lose. Grand Prix? Fans need secretaries to keep track of shifting time-zones; not that it matters: Vettel is establishing a primacy comparable even to Schumacher in 2002 and 2004.

Even in its location, the RWC surpasses other major sporting events. Returning to a stricken New Zealand, offering domestic solace to perhaps the greatest under-achievers in sporting history, this year's tournament is redolent of mystical homespun. Contrast this with the globe-trotting promiscuity of other major events. Within the decade, FIFA's circus of iniquity rolls into the sporting wilds of Russia and Qatar; F1's calendar moves inexorably eastward to satiate building contractors of the Second World, while staging the Cricket World Cup in India - with its absent infrastructure and incomplete stadia - has recast the sporting chalice of post-colonial guilt as a monument to post-colonial greed.

Varsity Sport cannot with authority tell you who will win the Rugby World Cup, or why this should be. We do, however, know how to watch, and this month's rugby has more than good cause to be the best event of the year.

Cambridge Pythons back in the game

Just under a year ago Varsity reported on the revival of the Cambridge University American Football team, the Pythons. President Tom Piachaud talks to *Varsity* and charts their progress since

Matt Blythe

SPORT EDITOR

The previous year has been cruel and kind to the Pythons. With the unfortunate delay in funding from Sport England the games promised to recruits were not able to go ahead.

However, despite not playing any fixtures, the BUAFU (British Universities American Football League) has generously agreed to accept the Pythons into the league for the coming year due in part to their dedicated attitude to training and fundraising efforts.

In August Sport England finally

came good and granted the Pythons over eight thousand pounds to pay for thirty-five sets of shoulderpads and helmets for new recruits to add to the three thousand pounds already raised through the Pythons own efforts.

With a full season of eight games now lined up and an award-winning pitch to play on at Coldhams Common in east Cambridge, the Pythons look forward to hosting the likes of; KCL (Regents), Greenwich (Mariners), Northampton (Nemesis) and UEA (Pirates) who were the Pythons great rivals from the previous era.

The opening home game will be held on the 6th November against

SPORTS BRIEFING

Cambridge linebacker Nicholas Courtenay in full battle gear, 'psyched' for the new season



Northampton, whilst the potential grudge game of the season against cross-town rivals ARU (Phantoms) is away later this year.

Armed with a squad of over ten returning players from last year, six qualified coaches with a wealth of British American football experience and three players who have competed in the British National Premiership, the Pythons are looking to hit the ground running.

Keep an eye out on your college noticeboards and the Societies Fair for more information or alternatively contact thp24

Sport Tube

Search: Joseph Ndo another backheel



You may have seen his first YouTube hit, but this offering from Sligo Rovers' finest is even more outrageous

SPORT

“We offer our opinion not on the scrum, ruck, or maul, but on the universal experience of watching the tournament”

Michael Taylor on amateur pundits and the Rugby World Cup



Cricketers dominate Varsity

Light Blues make history, recording successes in the Twenty20, one-day, and four-day cricket competitions ensuring a clean sweep of the major titles



Paul Best (Homerton) goes on the offensive during his innings of 62 in the one-day Varsity match

Michael Taylor
CHIEF SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

It has not happened before; it may not happen again. In a year when Cambridge failed to record a Varsity victory in any other major sport, its cricketers claimed a remarkable clean-sweep in Twenty20, at Lord's, and in the first-class match at Fenner's.

Such was not, perhaps, surprising: from 2010 there remained eight Blues to whom was added a precociously talented roster of freshers, among them Zafar Ansari (Surrey) and Paul Best (Warwickshire), England under-19 and county 1st XI cricketers both.

Under the leadership of Richard Timms, himself a former professional with Somerset, the Light Blues would have a season of matchless drama, of unprecedented success.

First, the university's cricket week was given the perfect finale as Dan Goodwin (John's) and Phil Ashton (Queens') steered Cambridge to a tense victory in the Charles Russell

Twenty20.

Oxford had set a target of just 108, but Cambridge had collapsed to 90 for 7; nevertheless, smart running and a monstrous six from Ashton returned the Charles Russell Trophy to Fenner's. Earlier, Best had underlined his quality with a stand-out spell of 4 for 12 – his left-arm spin having become a perennial of the Fenner's ground – but at Lord's it was the Warwickshire man's bat that proved the difference.

With Cambridge batting first, Zafar Ansari's half-century – well

supported by Anand Ashok and Phil Hughes – had laid the platform for a par total; that Cambridge would reach as many as 265 was due purely to the thirty balls from which Best struck 63 (eight fours, two sixes).

A brace of victims for Thomas Probert and Matt Hickey soon put Oxford behind the game; a miserly spell from Ansari turned the screw, and three wickets for Frankie Brown concluded affairs as Cambridge retained the CB Fry Trophy.

Finally, in the four-day fixture at Fenner's, which many observers still

regard as the Varsity match, the full strength of the Blues was revealed. Without Ansari – on Twenty20 and frequently televised duty for Surrey – Cambridge had been reduced to 163 for 7 on the first afternoon before 36 from Ashton, 54 from Hickey, and 36 from Paddy Sadler improved affairs to 280 all out. In Oxford's reply, Best again bowled with immaculate control to take 3 for 45, while Probert ran through the tail to claim career-best figures of 4 for 20: Oxford 138 all out, and Cambridge with a lead of 142.

« 30

ANALYSIS
Garri Jones

The MCC is a keen sponsor and advocate of university cricket. With more than 30% of school leavers attending university, we see the university years as very important to the development of many first-class cricketers.

Hence, it was very gratifying to witness CUCC's successful 2011

season. A Varsity Match hat-trick is unprecedented and when put alongside a victory for the Cambridge MCCU side over Surrey (who were winners of County Championship Division 2 and the

"Cambridge University cricket is in rude health"

CB40 Trophy) and in the BUCS competition; as well as this, there was victory for the women in their

Varsity Match. This shows that Cambridge University cricket is in rude health. It is pleasing to note that in addition to the on-field success of the likes of CUCC's (and England U19's) Paul Best and Zafar Ansari, the much-praised England back-room team contains Cambridge graduates Richard Halsall (assistant coach) and Nathan Leamon (team analyst).
Garri Jones is chairman of the MCC Youth Committee



2011 Doxbridge tournament **p30**

Varsity Results Round-up

CU RUGBY BLUES 6
TRINITY, DUBLIN 17

CU RUGBY BLUES 38
LOUGHBOROUGH 19

CU HOCKEY BLUES 2
ROYAL ORÉE 5

