

VARSITY

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Cambridge worth the cash: applications soar despite fee rise

Alice Udale-Smith & Emily Handley
NEWS REPORTERS

Sixty four universities are set to charge the full £9,000 fees this year, including leading institutions such as Oxford, Cambridge and University College London. Education experts have claimed that the introduction of higher tuition fees is responsible for a decrease in university applications nationwide, although the number of students applying to Oxford and Cambridge has actually risen considerably.

Figures released in July by UCAS show there was a two percent increase in university applications to Cambridge during the last academic year, despite the nine percent drop in applications nationally, which showed that one in twenty students chose not to apply to university at all.

These statistics suggest that university entrants are more concerned about value for money, ensuring that Oxford and Cambridge entrance has remained as competitive as ever. Government ministers have interpreted this as a vindication of their choice to increase tuition fees, insisting that the application rates for 2012 are "the second-highest on record".

Steph Spreadborough, a Pembroke fresher, feels that the changes to the fees have not affected her particularly: "I knew I wanted to go to Uni anyway, and although obviously I'd have preferred life without the massive debt I didn't really feel I had any choice, because I wasn't organised enough to look into going abroad, and I wanted the reputation of a British degree. I think it might have encouraged me to apply to Cambridge though – if it's costing £9000 a year I may as well try for as good a degree as possible, and if I'm honest the change made me more annoyed at the government than universities."

Perhaps most interestingly the rise in Cambridge applications was

not limited to those from more affluent backgrounds. Vicki Hudson, the CUSU Access officer, was quick to point out that "despite the fear that students from non-traditional Cambridge backgrounds could feel that Cambridge is even further from their reach, there has been a 3% increase in state school applicants this year. Whether or not this is because students are now looking for value for money, what it is most important to remember is that Cambridge is a very diverse environment and has extensive financial support packages available."

In fact, students from state schools saw the second highest increase in applications as a demographic, only behind international students whose application numbers rose 13 percent compared to the 2011 intake. This throws considerable doubt onto claims made by opponents of the fee rises when initially discussed. The negative effect they were predicted to have on state school pupils and access work in particular being one of the key arguments used against them.

A spokesman for Cambridge University said: "We believe that these figures represent the University of Cambridge's long-standing commitment to recruiting the ablest and best qualified students with the greatest academic potential from every background."

The University has also increased its financial support for those from the lowest income backgrounds over the past year. This year for the first time, there were 136 new National Scholarship Programme bursaries awarded to Cambridge students, each worth £6,000. These were given as fee waivers to students from families with a household income of less than £25,000 and were run simultaneously with other previously established University bursary schemes.

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Online:

VarsityLive our new blog site is launching soon, with daily updates on a variety of topics. Look out for amusing YouTube videos, the *Varsity Alternative Freshers' Guide*, where our contributors tell you what you really need to know about Cambridge life, and consideration of all weird and wonderful topics by some of our best writers.

VarsiTV:

If you're interested in getting involved with VarsiTV this term, please email editor@varsity.co.uk

Abroad:

If you're on your year abroad, you are unlikely to be reading this. But if a kind friend sends you a copy or you look us up online - get in touch with Emily Fitzell on international@varsity.co.uk to let us know what's happening where you are.

Some things you didn't know you wanted to know, some viewpoints you may never have considered, some good conversation starters for awkward Freshers' week moments. This newspaper might eventually come in handy for swatting flies, hamster bedding, or maybe one day wrapping chips at a Cambridge establishment near you.

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EDITORIAL

We are, emphatically, not all in this together. Although the overwhelming impulse of student journalism is often to appeal to that mysterious beast – the 'we' of the Cambridge student body – over-stating what 'we' all have in common is misguided. Yes, Cambridge students can be broadly grouped together by the fact of being a student here – but to over-emphasise how this influences how 'we' think or feel about an issue, or cope with the various challenges of life at one of the world's top universities, is to overlook the other, arguably far more important, ways of defining 'us' as individuals.

The 'Cambridge we' is in a geographical as much as a social imposition; 'we' constitute a 'we' because of a shared educational experience which demands physical proximity to this city. And of course the 'Cambridge we' doesn't disappear after graduation, or miraculously dissipate beyond the city boundaries. While having been a part of this supposedly charmed circle of Cambridge 'we' undoubtedly opens many doors, it can also exclude and perpetuate negative stereotypes about what Cambridge students are like.

Cambridge is many things to many different people; it's not for Varsity, or any other student newspaper, to tell you what it means to be here. In a university where it can be all too easy to stick to what you know – college,

department, extra-curricular encounters with like-minded people – the differences, the diversity can be easily overlooked. Varsity is here as a reminder that although 'we' do have a lot in common, it's equally important to celebrate those differences.

Enough with the 'we'. Embracing what makes us different from each other, as well as from other similar communities, need not be negative: individuality is a vital part of what it means to be a community. Don't let this paper – or anyone else, for that matter – include you in a 'we' that wants to compromise what makes you unique.

This year's fresher's will not be able to say they are coming to 'the best university in the world'. But it's still pretty damn good. Cambridge – even, or perhaps especially, when it drives you mad and makes you want to throw chairs out of windows – is an incredible place to spend three, or four, or more, years. Welcome back, everyone.

Charlotte Keith,
Editors Michaelmas 2012

Letters to the Editor

Friends for life

Hi,
I'm a former Varsity editor - January to July 2002. I trust the ship is sailing in safe hands.

A pal of mine, Ed Maxwell, wrote for the paper from 1999-2002. He's getting married next week. The best man and I are having trouble getting hold of some of his work from Varsity, extracts of which we'd like to include in his speech. Any help you could proffer would be greeted with eternal gratitude.

Very best
ROB SHARP

An Attack on GU Democracy

ARSALAN GHANI, PRESIDENT OF THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE UNION

Dear Editor,
Recent articles in the Cambridge student press and international media have reported accusations of racism within the Graduate Union (GU). It is true that I did submit a complaint to the University regarding racial discrimination. I did so as a result of marginalisation and harassment that I had received from other GU board members since taking up my position as President.

However, recent events lead me to believe that the main reasons behind this harassment are politically motivated, as has been suggested in previous Varsity reports, due to my background as a socialist and an active political and student rights

campaigner. Moreover, I believe that this is part of a wider campaign to marginalise me within the GU and to restrict the democracy of the GU.

I was elected as President of the GU in March 2012 on a manifesto to campaign to struggle against fees and education cuts, as part of an international student movement. From the very start of my involvement in GU politics I was the victim of vicious attacks, with other students ripping up my campaign posters from the walls and submitting baseless complaints in an attempt to stop me winning the election.

...There are undoubtedly a number of students within the Cambridge graduate community who were not too pleased about my electoral victory, achieved on a platform to defend students against the government's attacks on higher education. However, it is my belief that the campaign against me goes far beyond opponents within the student body, and in fact extends to officials within the University itself, who are frightened of the prospect of a Graduate Union that fights for student rights and takes a principled stand in defence of education and research.

... It is clear that, far from being a place that respects the democratic right to protest, Cambridge University is a place where student dissent is not tolerated.

SEE PAGE SEVEN. THIS LETTER IS PRINTED IN FULL ON OUR WEBSITE VARSITY.CO.UK; VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE THE WRITER'S OWN.

Want to work for Varsity?

The answer is probably yes. There are lots of different ways to get involved, with opportunities ranging from photography & illustration to sniffing out the best news stories. There's almost certainly something for you.

We're the university's pre-eminent student newspaper, founded independently in 1947. Our alumni include some of the country's most respected journalists and writers. Our team also happens to include some of the most interesting people in Cambridge. Probably.

Please visit our stall at the Freshers' Fair (otherwise the editor will get bored). We're also holding a Freshers' Squash (non-freshers also welcome) in the Varsity offices on the New Museum Site, on Monday October 8th, from 6-8pm. Come along, have a drink, meet the team, and find out if any of the outrageous claims made on this page hold true. We'd love to meet you.

Examination shambles as mistakes are made across IB NatSci courses

THE FIGURES



The Department of Zoology was the worst affected by the marking mix-ups

CLARE COTTERILL

Felix Nugee & Alice Udale-Smith
NEWS REPORTERS

NatSci examiners have come under fire this summer after it has been revealed that there were errors in the allocation of marks in three separate papers for second year students. The instances appear to be unrelated but have led to questions as to whether there are institutional problems in the way examinations are handled by the department as a whole. In Ecology, it was revealed that five students' marks were transposed after they had been allocated. This led to the senior examiner writing a letter of apology to all of those involved. Some of the errors were large enough to cause students

to move classes in this paper, with one moving from a third to a first, but none of the changes were large enough to impact upon overall grades.

There was a similar story in Materials where project marks were awarded wrongly, with people with the same surname initially receiving each other's marks. Again, this impacted upon grades in that paper but there is no indication that it impacted overall classing. *Varsity* spoke to one student involved in the mix-up who commented that "it was just very disappointing, you really expect better from this university."

The mistakes in Animal Biology, however, appear to have been a lot more widespread and caused students' final

classes to change. As a result of this, the Chairman of Natural Sciences Part IB Examiners wrote a very apologetic letter to all Animal Biology Part IB students. The letter signed by the heads of department stated that they "are very sorry indeed that this has occurred. We offer a full apology for the errors made and the consequences this has had for you."

Some students, however, were still upset at the result. *Varsity* spoke to one student whose Ecology and Animal Biology papers were both affected. Despite being "delighted" that this caused her overall grade to move from a 2.1 to a 1st she said she is still "hugely angry with the University."

She added that she believed "if this kind of thing continues to happen, students both current and prospective will simply lose their respect for the University."

Despite a general feeling of resentment amongst the students affected, all the students spoken to by *Varsity* wished to remain anonymous, feeling that criticising their departments when they still had a year to go on their course might risk prejudicing future supervisors and staff against them. There were also reports of further isolated mistakes in previous years, which may have affected final grades for graduating students, but were not publicised at the time as the problem were not as widespread.

Speaking to *Varsity*, Professor

Michael Akam, Head of the Department of Zoology, was apologetic for the mistakes made, saying that the Department "deeply regrets the errors in compiling marks that occurred in the NST IB Animal Biology and Ecology examinations this year. We have already apologised to all students affected and appreciate the stress this will have

The news won't fill incoming freshers with confidence about the courses they are about to embark upon

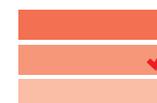
caused. We would like to emphasise that the marks eventually given to all the students were fair and correct."

Professor Akam also attempted to reassure students that this would be an isolated incident saying that "a thorough review of all of our examination procedures is being carried out in the Department with a view to preventing the recurrence of errors of this nature in any future examinations." Although mistakes in Natural Sciences have received particular attention this year, the issue of ensuring grades are correctly assigned is by no means limited to the science subjects, as there have also been problems in the English Tripos.

IA
In first year 25% of students in NatSci are awarded a first and 10% are awarded a third, meaning that exam results are an indication of rank within a cohort rather than of the standard reached.



IB
60% of students sitting a particular IB NatSci paper are expected to achieve a mark of 60% or higher. This means scaling is used to make sure the right percentage of people are given a certain class and can result in small raw mark changes having large effects on grade.



Part II and III
It is only once you reach third and fourth year of NatSci that grades are assigned purely for academic standard rather than ranking, so the proportion of firsts can increase dramatically in some departments.

PEOPLE. PASSION. RESULTS.

WHAT IS MANAGEMENT CONSULTING? WHAT DO CONSULTANTS DO? AND WOULD YOU LIKE IT?

Nicky joined Bain in March 2011 after graduating from Gonville & Caius in 2010 and spending six months working for NGOs. At Cambridge she studied English Literature and did a fourth year in Management Studies. Nicky spent her first six months at Bain working in Retail and Consumer Goods, and has been working in Financial Services in Edinburgh and Dublin for the past year.

BAIN HIGHLIGHT? Working in Ireland, I was part of a project researching the banking needs of small and large companies. This proved a fascinating insight into the Irish economy, as we visited telecommunications companies, furniture retailers, accountants, and even McDonalds franchises across Galway, Cork, and Dublin. I was very impressed by how much my team was committed to understanding Ireland, and truly engaged with the history and culture of the country, thus increasing our understanding of the client context.

Come along and meet us!

WHY BAIN? Strategy consulting appealed to me because of its variety; you get to work in different industries, different geographies, on totally different sets of problems. Bain has provided me with fantastic learning opportunities, underpinned by an extensive training programme, and truly supportive teams. I continue to be hugely impressed by the dynamism of the firm and the innovative ways in which we work – from tying our performance to that of our clients, to developing more efficient methods of charitable giving, to sharing insights across levels, sectors and backgrounds.

A FINAL THOUGHT? While at Cambridge, the whole application process seemed really daunting, so I simply ignored, delayed, and fretted over any decisions about my future. As soon as I started applying to places, I realised how much the applications are a two-way process, and what an opportunity it is to have great companies showcase themselves to you! I would strongly urge you to make the most of the next few weeks, and to come along and meet us!

BAIN & COMPANY

WHERE TO FIND US

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University Centre, Granta Place
Tuesday, October 9 • 12.00–17.00

WOMEN'S EVENT: IS STRATEGY CONSULTING FOR YOU AND HOW TO APPLY SUCCESSFULLY

Bateman Auditorium, Gonville & Caius
Thursday, October 25 • 16.00–18.00

BAIN DNA: FIND OUT WHAT MAKES BAIN A UNIQUE PLACE TO WORK

TBD

CASE STUDY WORKSHOP

Lecture Theatre and Terrace Room, Trinity Hall
Tuesday, October 30 • 12.00–14.00 and 14.30–16.30

BAIN AND COMPANY PRESENTATION

Howard Theatre, Downing College
Tuesday, October 30 • 19.00–21.00

We would be delighted to meet you at any of our events. Please pre-register via the Cambridge University page of our website

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Morris Men dance for survival

CAMBRIDGE Cambridge Morris Men are facing extinction in the new year unless they succeed in their latest push to recruit new members. The side was formed in 1924, and is one of six sides that in 1934 formed the Morris Ring, the national association of men's Morris sides, but has struggled to maintain numbers in recent years.

Cambridge squire, Ollie King said, "As Cambridge has a transient population due to its student presence, we find that we teach the dance to new members but within three years we lose them again as they finish college and move away in search of work. What we really need is more local residents joining the team." In a new recruitment drive they have teamed up with another local side, Fenstanton Morris, to hold a dance demonstration on Friday 28th September from 8 p.m. on King's Parade near Great Saint Mary's church.

Cambridge falls to 2nd in QS Rankings

CAMBRIDGE After two years in the top spot, the University of Cambridge has placed second in the 2012/13 QS World University Rankings. First position has been taken by another Cambridge university from across the Atlantic, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with neighbours Harvard in third. University College London, Oxford, and Imperial College came in at 4th, 5th and 6th respectively while the remainder of the top 10 came from the United States.

As an alternative to the conventional university league table, Which? has created an independent university comparison site. The site uses data from student polls and allows universities to be rated on nightlife, political scene and sports facilities. Comparisons between universities can also be made by entry requirements, percentage of applicants who receive offers, price and graduate starting salaries. Cambridge students described the university as being sporty, political and creative but it scored poorly for nightlife and student union.

EBaccs to replace GCSEs

NATIONAL An summer of unusual results saw an unprecedented fall in national GCSE pass rates, with the grade deflation in GCSE English results causing a political fiasco involving Parliament and the Welsh Assembly. According to the ASCL, sixty seven thousand students who received a D grade would have passed the exam had it not been for an arbitrary increase in the grade boundary. There have been demands from many quarters to regrade the paper at the previous grade boundaries. Michael Gove, the Education Secretary, has called for an overhaul of GCSEs, criticising their muchmaligned modular system, and has now announced plans to replace GCSEs in core subjects with new EBaccs in the next five years.

Darwin's Fungi Found

NATIONAL The relocation of the Herbarium's one million pressed and dried plants to their new home in the University of Cambridge's state-of-the-art Sainsbury Laboratory is turning up hundreds of unique specimens not seen since their collection centuries ago. The specimens found have included various fungi thought to be collected on the Beagle voyage and not seen since.

New admissions regulator ignites row over lower offers

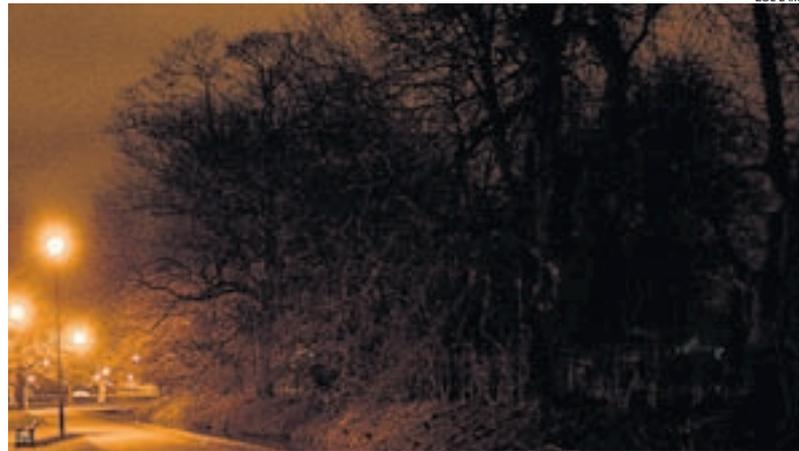
Rosie Robson
NEWS REPORTER

The new head of the Office for Fair Access, Professor Les Ebdon, has called on all selective institutions, including Oxford and Cambridge, to admit more students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have lower grades than the current AAA* requirement, as "context has to be taken in to account if you are going to access potential."

This has been rejected by several Cambridge representatives, including the university's outgoing admissions director, who warned that such a move would be a "cruel experiment that could ruin lives". Likewise Dr. Sewell, the new Director for Admissions at Cambridge, protests that grades are the best criteria by which student admissions can be assessed. He insists, "the research we have done suggests that students who achieve relatively modestly... are more likely to struggle academically at Cambridge than students who have achieved better across their range of three A-level subjects."

Conversely, research from universities such as Bristol, Newcastle, Nottingham and Glasgow suggests that the scheme could yield successful results. Bristol's admissions policy shows that state school sixth formers admitted with one grade lower than their independent school counterparts did just as well in their final exams.

All universities are now required to draw up an "access agreement" setting out targets designed to boost the proportion of pupils admitted from disadvantaged backgrounds, in return



After dark, Jesus Green has been identified as a site of sensational violent crime.

for charging up to £9,000 in tuition fees. In its agreement, Cambridge says it will attempt to award 62 percent of places to state-educated pupils by 2016. The university currently draws 59 percent of its intake from the state sector, compared to nearly 89 percent across all UK higher education institutions.

Students such as Lily Davis-Evitt from Newnham College have spoken out against this approach, saying "Cambridge is an institution of academic excellence, first and foremost, and doesn't have any obligation to remedy the problems ingrained in the school system. To start lowering standards would be to lose the academic prowess that attracts people to selective universities in the first place."

However others, such as Faye Lee, a 3rd year MML student, defended Professor Ebdon's position, as she

herself has benefited from the Cambridge Special Access Scheme, which takes account of a student's individual circumstances when making them an offer. Speaking to *Varsity* she said: "I went to a school that wasn't doing very well whilst I was there. My teachers were often absent or taught poorly and one of my A-levels I did with only one hour of teaching a week at another school due to a timetable mess-up. Another time, one of my modules for a subject was a disaster because the teacher had misread the requirements and taught me the wrong thing. I was committed, motivated and had the desire and ability to do well, but wasn't given the tools to succeed. If I had been rejected from Cambridge it would have simply reinforced the idea that not being privileged enough to go to a good school automatically makes you destined for mediocrity."

"Students who aim to excel aim to excel in everything"

Patrick O'Grady
NEWS EDITOR

Applications to the University from state schools have risen by over 5% for the last year.

The proportion of maintained sector admissions now stands at 63.3%, up from 58% last year. This reflects a 3% rise in applications from state schools, despite the rise in tuition fees which came into effect this year. The University has attributed this to its intensive drive to encourage applications from state schools across the UK, and has



Dr Mike Sewell - the new Admissions Director

also highlighted the investment in access schemes, and in the selection process itself.

The new cohort represents over 700 state schools, with the total for the last three years standing at 1100. The statistics cannot therefore be said to be dominated by a handful of 'high-performing' schools. Director for Admissions Dr Mike Sewell told *Varsity* that Cambridge has 'become more research driven in our decision making'. He added that 'we're not looking for something airy-fairy.'

"We're not looking for something airy-fairy"

Investments in electronic application management now enable tutors to compare candidates from across subject and college boundaries from the start of the admissions process.

The University's target is to admit between 61 and 63% of home students from the maintained sector. This year's statistics therefore exceed the higher bracket of that target. Sewell explained that Cambridge 'adopted a target range, not a figure, because year on year fluctuations may result from external factors outside our control'. The University negotiated the target with the Office for Fair Access, incorporating the alterations made by specific course requirements and subjects not offered at Cambridge. Admissions tutors have favoured

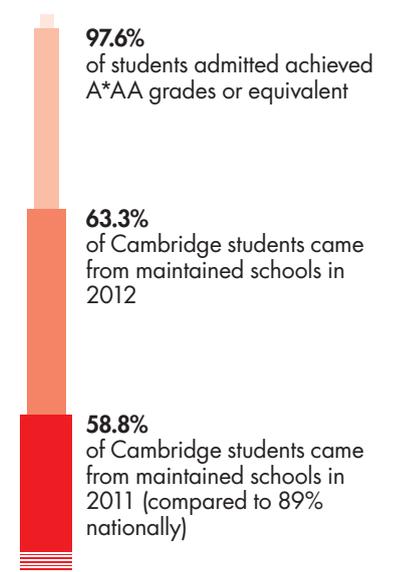
AS module marks rather than grade predictions, and concentrated on students' performance in public exams. Commenting on the recent fiasco regarding GCSE grade changes, and speculation about political manipulation, Sewell stressed that tutors are concentrating on a very narrow margin at the high end of the A-grade, and use an average taken across three subjects. He was 'cautious' about Universities becoming involved in public examinations or forming links with schools, such as the recent UCL partnership with Islington and Camden College.

As the Cambridge Tripos is so exam 'heavy', he believes that public examinations are the key indicator for future success. Rather than taking extra-curricular achievements as evidence of ability, Sewell stated that "students who aim to excel, aim to excel in everything they do" He considers it "damaging to students themselves to let them in for non-academic reasons."

The rise seen in this year's statistics is the result of a decade-long process, including the creation of the Area Link scheme providing all schools with a named University contact, and investment in Sutton Trust summer schools which provided 370 places in 2010. Sewell claimed that the long-term target for university admissions 'has been, is, and will be fair admission.'

The Cambridge Special Access Scheme has now been replaced by the Extenuating Circumstances Form which allows students who have suffered "significantly disrupted or disadvantaged through health or personal problems, disability or difficulties with schooling" to inform so that they can be taken into consideration. Although this is not the same as reducing the standard offer for students from disadvantaged backgrounds it does mean that context can, and is already, taken into account for those who have had the worst disruption to their schooling.

THE FIGURES



Surprising rise in applications

Continued from page 1. These include the Newton Trust Bursaries which can be up to £3,400 a year and are awarded to anybody whose family's income is below £25,000 or is in receipt of a government funded maintenance loan.

Dr Patricia Fara, Senior Tutor of Clare College, and a member of the NSP panel which considered applications for this most recent bursary scheme commented that "While Cambridge is not a particularly expensive place to live or study, by taking part in the NSP we hope to provide additional reassurance to students from low-income families that taking up a place at Cambridge is affordable."

Despite applications to top institutions rising, though, a recent survey by the NUS showed that only one in ten students were convinced by Nick Clegg's recent apology for voting in favour of the increase in tuition fees last year. The survey showed that only 11.1% of students were more likely to vote Liberal Democrats in the next election as a result of the apology and 46.9% were less likely to vote for his party after his video apology was released.

More worryingly for a party that once particularly appealed to students as the only party that was against increasing tuition fees, the same survey suggested that only 7.7% of respondents were currently planning to vote for them at the next general election. So whilst University applications themselves may have remained buoyant in the face of higher fees it seems that many current students still feel angry at the government for introducing higher fees at all.



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Still blindfolded, you must select a marble. If it is white, you live. If it is black, you die.

How do you initially divide the marbles so that you have the greatest probability of living?

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Professor Akbar Ahmed

Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies in the School of International Service at American University is the

Diane Middlebrook and Carl Djerassi Visiting Professor

at the University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies for Michaelmas 2012.

All welcome!
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1700-1830,
Thursday
11 October 2012

William Mong Hall,
Sidney Sussex College,
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CB2 3HU.

This event is part of the University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies Public Event Series.

For further details about forthcoming events, see: www.gender.cam.ac.uk

"An attack on GU democracy"

Patrick O'Grady, Alice Udale-Smith & Charlotte Keith
NEWS REPORTERS

The ongoing animosity between the GU Board and President Arsalan Ghani - as previously reported in *Varsity* - has continued to deteriorate in the last week. A motion of censure has been proposed by members of the GU Board against current President Arsalan Ghani.

The motion was to be discussed at a meeting of the GU Council yesterday evening, as *Varsity* went to press. It states that Ghani's recent behaviour is "not acceptable from a GU President" and mentions "troubling issues" including his refusal to sign a job contract, editing the minutes of meetings, an unwillingness to engage with the GU board, recruiting interns for the GU without seeking legal guidance, and sending rude emails to members of the board. On Thursday evening, Ghani sent a letter to the Editor concerning the recent controversies within the GU. This letter is published in full on our website.

A constant campaign of harassment to push me to the side and tie my hands

The motion of censure states that "Mr Ghani believes that the Executive Committee Officers are attempting to take his power away from him". Ghani himself has claimed, in the letter to *Varsity* (reproduced in full on our website), that since election he has experienced "a constant campaign



ARSALAN GHANI

of harassment to push me to the side and tie my hands". He refers to the GU's recent financial difficulties and says that "The Union has in effect been made totally dysfunctional. I sincerely believe that making the Union dysfunctional this year was the result of a conscious effort by a certain clique within the University to undermine student democracy."

In his notes responding to the motion of censure, circulated in writing to members of the GU council, Ghani says: "I do believe that there is an attempt to sideline me within the GU, and I believe this to be politically motivated, due to my stance on the rights of students and as a left-wing activist and socialist." He continued, "I believe that I am the victim of an attack against my natural justice,

democratic rights and most of all on my mandate that I have from the Graduate students".

He has offered a comprehensive defence of the motion's accusations against him. The reason he gives for not signing the job contract is that as he was elected under the old constitution, which did not require one, signing it would be unconstitutional. Ghani claims that he only edited the minutes to correct an omission made when the minutes were taken by someone filling in in the Secretary's absence. On the question of his unwillingness to engage with the board, Ghani states that clandestine meetings of the GU executive have been held without him. According to the constitution, the President is the only person who can convene Board meetings. Ghani claims that despite this, the GU Board has twice arranged to meet in his absence, and gives dates for these.

He defended his decision to hire interns on the grounds that the Events Office had been consistently absent from board meetings. Ghani denies that his emails were intentionally rude and claims that he was simply acting within his remit as President.

The Council Committee for the Supervision of Student Unions (CCSSU) has recently declared that the GU is undergoing a constitutional crisis. Ghani claims that private solicitors have been hired to consult on resolving these constitutional problems, at what he believes to be unnecessary expense. He also states that the GU accounts have been frozen by CCSSU, and that the Charity Commission and the solicitors have requested that he not make any

financial commitments at the present time.

On 7th September, Pakistan's leading English language newspaper *The News International* launched an attack against the GU board members, alleging that Ghani had been a "victim of racial discrimination after a campaign was orchestrated to marginalise him in the union." Ghani responded to the publication of the article by stating that he never wanted the issue to 'go global', that he had no idea that *The News International* had been informed, and that he was shocked to hear of its publication.

Speaking to *Varsity* last week, Ghani said that he had lodged an official complaint with the University on 29th August. The motion was proposed at a

A politically motivated attack on the democracy and the proper functioning of our student organisations

GU Council meeting earlier this month, but the meeting was adjourned before it could be debated. The consequences of the motion being passed are as yet unclear. In his letter to *Varsity*, Ghani finishes by saying that he believes the difficulties he has experienced with the GU Board are part of a broader campaign to undermine him within the University: "What I have seen and experienced over the past few months as Graduate Union President, is a politically motivated attack on the democracy and the proper functioning of our student organisations."

"Alongside these constitutional issues, I have found myself consistently blocked and hampered at every step and turn since starting my job as GU President. For example, despite it stating in the University's Statutes and Ordinances that "The President of the Graduate Union shall be the principal financial officer of the Union and shall be accountable to the Council (University Council) for the financial management of the Union", I have found that all financial responsibility and resources have been taken out of the hands of the President and placed in the hands of the unelected GU Administrator and GU Executive Committee members. This arrangement has not worked since day one, but when I tried to rectify the problem I was subjected to threats, and ultimately a motion of censure against me was proposed in Council.

Meanwhile, despite it being stated clearly in the new GU constitution that the President is responsible for convening GU Executive Committee meetings, several clandestine Executive Committee meetings have recently been called without me. These have been used as a platform to make unsubstantiated attacks against me, which I have not had a chance to defend myself against.

There are undoubtedly a number of students within the Cambridge graduate community who were not too pleased about my electoral victory, achieved on a platform to defend students against the government's attacks on higher education. However, it is my belief that the campaign against me goes far beyond opponents within the student body, and in fact extends to officials within the University itself, who are frightened of the prospect of a Graduate Union that fights for student rights and takes a principled stand in defence of education and research."

Arsalan Ghani

Trinity Triumphant

Vanessa Gstrein
NEWS REPORTER

Trinity has come top of the college league table based on the examination results of undergraduate students. Since the table was first compiled in 1981 by Trinity alumnus Peter Tompkins, his former college has come top three times - this year with a record performance of 37.9 percent of finalists receiving a First.

Emmanuel, its fiercest rival and, having topped the table five times, the most successful college in its history, came second this year with 33.3 percent of students graduating with a First.

The ranking is compiled by analysing both the percentage of students graduating with a First and the overall results of all undergraduate exams from the 29 colleges entering students for bachelors degrees. The results are ranked by allocating 5 points for a First, 3 for an Upper 2nd, 2 for a Lower 2nd and 1 point for a Third.

To avoid the bias towards colleges with more students in subjects with higher average grades, the scores are then weighted to a common average in each subject. The result is expressed as a percentage of the total number of points available.

In general, the scores of the top half of the table fall within a very small range of one another: this year, the overall score of Trinity (71.44%) is less than 5 percent higher than St. Catharine's score of 66.92, which came 10th. The lower half of the table usually features mature colleges and women's colleges

including Wolfson, Newnham and Murray Edwards. However, as mature colleges have significantly more graduate than undergraduate students, the results are not representative of the majority of the student population of each of these colleges.

37%

of Trinity finalists got a First

Women's colleges tend to do worse because, even though men and women have roughly the same mean results, men have a higher standard deviation (getting more Firsts but more 2.2s and below). Women also tend to favour arts subjects instead of sciences, which generally award more Firsts but also more 2.2s. According to the Tompkins Table, if one college has two students one of whom gets a First, the other of whom gets a 2.2, its score is 70% [(5+2)/10]. If another gets two students who both get 2.1s, the Tompkins score is 60% [(3+3)/10]. This means that the table considers the presence of Firsts as the major factor determining a college's success rather than looking at, for example, the average grade received by a student at a college.

Moreover, the lowest overall score of this year's table is just above 14% lower than the highest, clearly showing that academic performance at all colleges is relatively similar and that the results have to be interpreted with caution.

Biggest Jump:
Corpus Christi
up 9 places
from 12th

Biggest Fall:
Clare down
7 places
from 4th

Peterhouse
remains at
18th after
falling from
7th in 2010

Women's and
Graduate
colleges are
disadvantaged
in this table

TOMPKINS TABLE 2012

Rank (2011)	College	%Point Score	% Firsts
1 (1)	Trinity	71.44	37.9
2 (2)	Emmanuel	70.35	33.3
3 (12)	Corpus Christi	69.54	32.4
4 (5)	Pembroke	68.4	27.7
5 (10)	Churchill	67.73	28.6
6 (7)	Selwyn	67.31	26.1
7 (8)	Jesus	67.27	25.8
8 (3)	Trinity Hall	67.26	25.0
9 (6)	Christ's	66.99	26.9
10 (11)	St Catharine's	66.92	28.3
11 (4)	Clare	66.46	26.8
12 (14)	Queens'	66.25	25.2
13 (20)	King's	66.18	27.5
14 (15)	St John's	65.53	22.6
15 (9)	Magdalene	65.19	22.2
16 (13)	Gonville & Caius	65.15	23.6
17 (16)	Sidney Sussex	64.79	23.2
18 (18)	Peterhouse	64.48	25.0
19 (21)	Fitzwilliam	64.34	22.4
20 (17)	Downing	63.47	19.0
21 (19)	Robinson	61.97	16.2
22 (23)	Girton	61.61	17.3
23 (24)	Newnham	61.21	14.7
24 (22)	Murray Edwards	60.95	15.1
25 (25)	Wolfson	60.1	14.3
26 (27)	Hughes Hall	56.45	14.0
27 (26)	Homerton	58.69	12.9
28 (28)	St Edmund's	57.49	13.5
29 (29)	Lucy Cavendish	57.31	15.2

ANALYSIS

Although received with much fanfare, the importance of the Tompkins Table is unclear. Despite being a collegiate university, a high proportion of contact time at Cambridge comes through departments rather than from the colleges themselves. It is only supervisors that vary from college to college, so there has always been a strong argument against compiling a table at all.

More importantly, there is the issue that the Tompkins Table is creating its own snowball effect, with the brightest students applying to colleges seen as being more prestigious academically than others. This in turn means that these colleges can produce consistently high results without having to worry about their teaching standards. So whether these tables reflect the actual standard of teaching in a particular college is debatable.

People often forget that the Tompkins Table is not the official ranking table of the university. The actual tables used by colleges are the Baxter Tables which include breakdowns by subject and year. These are compiled from the class lists but aren't made available until September and are never formally published, so don't generate as much publicity. However, it is these tables, with the option to look at a "value-added" column that would arguably be the most useful for those trying to rank Cambridge colleges.

Alice Udale-Smith

COLLEGE ROUND-UP

Prize for ponytail physics professor

CHURCHILL Raymond Goldstein, fellow at Churchill and member of the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics, has been awarded the Ig Nobel prize in physics for his work on the science behind the ponytail. The Ig Nobel prizes are intended as a humorous alternative to the Nobel prizes and are meant to highlight the more quirky aspects of scientific research. Professor Goldstein's research resulted in the creation of the 'Ponytail Shape Equation' which takes account of stiffness, gravity, curliness and other factors to predict the shape of the ponytail.

Memorial to discoverer of DNA

GONVILLE AND CAIUS Planning permission for a memorial to the biologist Francis Crick has been submitted for the paving area inside the college's Great Gate. The document also reveals that "a conventional statue within Tree Court was also considered and while it was felt that it could be undergraduate-proofed, it was acknowledged that, along with being a very conventional memorial, it was likely to attract additional adornment such as traffic cones which would devalue its purpose of honouring Francis Crick."

Chancellor opens new Corpus accommodation

CORPUS CHRISTI Lord Sainsbury, Chancellor of the University, visited Corpus Christi College's graduate campus at Leckhampton on Friday 14th September to open the new graduate accommodation building. It is the first building to be built on the graduate-only site since 1961, and was designed by architects Bland, Brown and Cole. It will provide accommodation for 126 graduate students as well as other facilities. Corpus has an unusually high proportion of graduate students which make up 45% of its student body.

Beloved college cat passes away

PEMBROKE Pembroke's college cat died over the holidays. An email sent to undergraduates over the summer said: "a stray taken in by the college staff in 1996, Kit Smart will be sorely missed." Loved by a generation of students from afar (did not appreciate cuddling, stroking or people in general).

Cherished porter retires

ROBINSON Student favourite, porter Alan Hunter, retired over the summer holidays leaving many Robinson students returning to college this week devastated by his absence in the plodge. His brilliant beard, helpfulness, and willingness to talk at all hours of the morning will be sorely missed from Robinson life this year.

'Who Do You Think You Are?' visits Cambridge

ST JOHN'S Hugh Dennis was featured on an episode of the popular BBC programme which filmed extensively in the grounds and building of St John's over the summer.

Flash flooding causes havoc

Clare Cotterill reports on the unseasonably disruptive Cambridge weather this August

Even those without a vested interest in hosepipe bans will have noticed the irony of the weather conditions in Easter term. Following the wettest April on record, drought status was lifted for Cambridge Water in early May. Yet while it may have felt like Exam Term continued to be grey, gloomy and saturated from that point onwards, Cambridge's student population largely missed the worst of the weather.

Heavy rain in mid-July flooded Jesus Green, and had homeowners in Girton rallying round to save their possessions with the help of bricks and sandbags. The toppling of a willow into the Cam created a headache for the organizers of the annual Town Bumps. More unseasonably torrential rainfall was to

follow later in the summer, however, with the worst damage inflicted by the elements during the Bank Holiday weekend.

A combination of rain and hail overwhelmed drains and ceilings in central Cambridge on Saturday 25th August, with the city's main shopping areas being particularly affected. On Sidney Street, Sainsbury's, Lakeland and Superdrug were forced to close, and Sainsbury's reported several inches of water. On Christ's Lane H&M eventually had to close the whole store, after initially only evacuating the first floor when water began to seep through the roof.

Shoppers who attempted to take shelter in the Grand Arcade were rewarded with a poor refuge, as buckets were inadequate to deal with the leaking ceiling, and puddles grew. Members of the public helped to save books, DVDs and CDs in Cambridge Central Library after a deluge of water through the ceiling damaged stock.

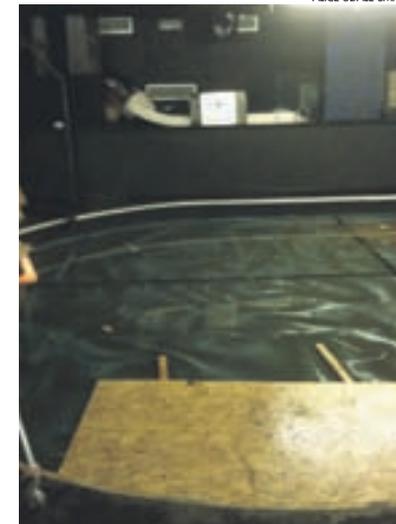
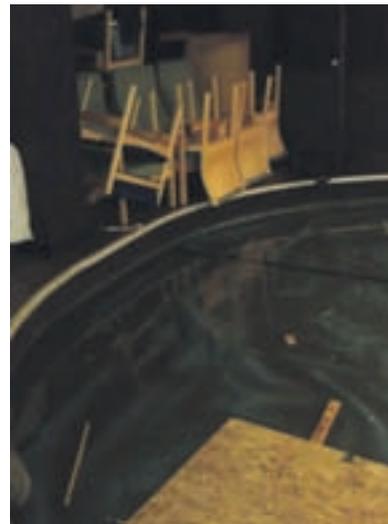
Elsewhere, it was basements that were affected, particularly in popular Cambridge eateries including the Fudge Kitchen and The Copper Kettle Café. The basement of Jamie's Italian was drowned in over three feet of water.

While the impact on Cambridge's shops has been widely reported, the damage done to colleges has been largely unrepresented in the regional and national press. Robinson has particularly suffered, with its café, restaurant and bop room all flooded, as well as the bike sheds and a few student rooms.

The impact has lasted beyond the summer vacation, as two Freshers' weeks have had to be planned simultaneously, one with and one without the bop room.



Serious flooding in the Robinson bop room.



Serious flooding in the Robinson bop room.

Its role as holiday storage space has also resulted in the devastation of the college's JCR furniture, gym equipment and sound system.

The flooding of the bop room in particular has caused major issues in planning Freshers' Week, with a message from the Ents Officers to

Members of the public helped to save books, DVDs and CDs in Cambridge Central Library

students on their website reading: "Due to a major flood in college there is a strong chance that the party room will not be fit for purpose during Freshers' Week. We are currently working on putting alternative

arrangements in place so do not fear!" It is currently hoped that the college will be completely repaired before the start of term, allowing events to go ahead as originally planned.

Selwyn and other colleges west of the city were also affected, with student rooms and offices all being damaged by the floods. The cost in insurance is thought to be tens of thousands of pounds, as many computers and other electrical equipment has had to be thrown away after concerns were raised about their safety.

Just five days after the worst of the flash flooding in Cambridge, Met Office figures were released, which suggested that the UK has experienced the wettest summer in 100 years. Record rainfall notwithstanding, there have been calls to investigate why even Cambridge's most modern buildings struggled to cope with the inclement weather.

Edwards runs second summer school despite protests

Natasha Marchant
NEWS REPORTERS

The Cambridge College Programme (CCP) run by Taryn Edwards, was allowed to return to Cambridge this summer despite causing outrage last year when it failed to pay its 41 student employees up to £2,000 each. As a



Taryn Edwards as seen on the CCP website

mark of solidarity, CUSU unanimously passed a motion in February this year requesting that "no conferencing offices in Cambridge University [are to] accept Taryn Edwards or bookings for CCP until all outstanding payments are resolved." Although CUSU arguably don't have the power to enforce this motion, last year's President Gerard Tully informed all colleges in Cambridge of the resolves, and it was hoped that the measure would act as a sufficient deterrent for future years.

However, when CCP booked under a different name, Churchill agreed to accommodate Taryn Edwards and the American students for the duration of their stay – a decision they were forced to rethink when they realised at the last minute that the required rooms were not available.

As a result, the booking was circulated amongst the other colleges which take conference bookings, and Robinson accepted the summer school, allegedly unaware at first of whom they were admitting. By the time Robinson realised their mistake, the college decided that it was too late to cancel the booking at such late notice, given that payment had already been made and that many of the young students involved had already left the States for this country. The decision does not appear to have been unanimously supported by staff at Robinson, with the porters in particular being forced to deal with regular break-ins from students attempting to gain access to

Taryn Edwards in order to claim their wages from her.

For some students, Edwards' return has resulted in them being successfully paid, as several marched into Robinson and forcibly walked her to the bank, making her empty her UK account in order to pay them back. This was, however, little consolation for most of the students, many of whom had graduated or were away

She marched into Robinson and forcibly walked Edwards to the bank

from Cambridge for the summer, and so were unable to join their peers in reclaiming their money. To make matters worse, an employment tribunal taken out against Edwards last year is proving to be largely useless, as she has limited assets in the UK and the tribunal is not enforceable outside of this country.

However, some money is currently being reclaimed, after Robinson, in an effort to rectify the mistake made in admitting her in the first place, began acting as a negotiator between Edwards and CUSU (the latter acting on behalf of the unpaid students). Although it is difficult to access Edwards' assets in the USA when she is in the UK, it was agreed that some money could be recouped for students out of the deposit she paid to Robinson before

arriving in Cambridge. However, this amount is still well below the estimated total of around £50,000 she is thought to owe.

Nor does Edwards only owe money to students. It is alleged that she is in debt to all but two colleges – Girton and Newnham – in addition to boathouses, university facilities and other agents who provided services during the running of the programme. This is particularly galling considering the luxurious nature of the CCP, which charges a minimum of \$6,200 for its three-week programme and which, according to its web site, boasts "a fleet of airconditioned, luxury coaches for the exclusive use on all excursions [sic]". Additional options offered include PGA Golf, for a fee of \$300, a review of the American SAT exam for \$500, or Polo instruction for \$900. However students on the CCP were expressly forbidden from speaking or interacting with anyone not on the course, in an apparent attempt to prevent the news spreading in the States, which makes it obvious that not everything was going on as smoothly as Edwards was attempting to portray.

When CUSU reconvenes for its first meeting of Michaelmas term, the issue of how to proceed next is expected to be high on its agenda. Students still feel angry and betrayed at the lack of support from the University as a whole. Due to the legal difficulties involved, and Edwards' unhelpfulness, it seems that the matter will not be laid to rest any time soon.

CBbid proposal not a hit as residents complain to Council

Charlotte Keith investigates the discontent surrounding a controversial plan for the city

Local residents and business owners have voiced concerns about a new proposal to create a Business Improvement District in Cambridge's city centre. A Business Improvement District is a defined area in which businesses over a certain rateable value pay a levy in order to raise money for improvements. Similar schemes have been set up in town centres across the UK after legislation approving them was passed in 2003.

At a public meeting organised two weeks ago by the Mill Road Society, residents expressed fears about the possible effects of the proposal. The Society are concerned that if the BID is successful, "the private company operating the centre will not be accountable through freedom of information requests or other norms of public bodies." Chris McCabe, a regular visitor to the city, said "we have no wish to see Cambridge become more

corporate and sanitised. The presence of small, local shops and slightly scruffy areas maintains a real character in a town which is already somewhat denatured by being very tourist-oriented." Another student, Katerina Zaat, protested "this is a city, not a consumer experience".

The BID scheme promises to create a "well managed and vibrant street scene...by encouraging visitors to the city centre to stay longer and spend more". Members of the BID 'task force' include Nicola Buckley, the University's Head of Public Engagement, Nick Allen, Bursar of Sidney Sussex, and various local business owners. The consultation of businesses began almost 18 months ago, but questions have been asked about how systematic this process has been. Funding for the proposed improvements will be raised by an agreed levy "determined by the rateable value of the premises". This is set at 1% for all businesses valued at £20,000 and

above; voting is restricted to businesses, and owners of businesses below this value will not be entitled to vote on the proposal. Some small business owners have complained that they were not properly informed of this. The owner of Angeli Books on Magdalene Road only discovered at the Mill Road meeting that her business would be exempt from the levy, and hence the vote, having already attended two Council-organised meetings about the scheme. "If it's going to be about the shops it should be all the shops", she said, "I still have an interest in this."

There have also been complaints that the Council has acted undemocratically in failing to adequately publicise the proposal to residents. A press release from Cambridge for All, a group formed at last week's Mill Road Society meeting, described the proposal's "total lack of publicity...Anyone might think that CBbid and Love Cambridge don't want the public to know about the BID, to have the opportunity to find out about it, or to question the whole basis of the proposal."

Lulu Agate, a founder of Cambridge For All and planning co-coordinator for Cambridge Friends of the Earth, is worried about the lack of specific details in the BID proposals. "We don't feel we can believe what they're saying, because what they're saying is so vague", she said, "it feels like they're keeping loads and loads of secrets". She criticised the actions of Councillor Tim Bick, whose endorsement of the BID scheme is quoted in the business plan. As an elected councillor, she argued, Mr Bick has "no business making any kind of statement at all about it" - particularly since he is a member of the committee who will make a recommendation to the Council executive on how they should vote on the BID. She was also highly critical of



The aim is to increase consumer footfall

the BID's business plan, circulated in the form of a brochure on their website. "If I walked into a bank with that proposal", she said, "they would say, where are your figures?"

Luke Crane, the scheme's development manager, has dismissed concerns that the BID plans to employ a "private police force to move on street vendors and buskers"; "this simply isn't true", he said. He said that the BID proposal would "help make the town a much more vibrant and animated place, which would be a benefit to consumers, customers, residents and students alike." Crane was also insistent that the BID would have "no power and no influence over the public realm at all". He also rebutted suggestions that the scheme would endanger public use of the city centre for activities like last year's student protests.

On 3rd October at 5pm there will be a meeting at the Guildhall of the Council's strategy and resources committee; this is open to anyone who lives in Cambridge. Voting on the proposal will take place throughout October, and the final result will be announced on 1st November. Read the business plan online at cbbid.co.uk

“ OVERHEARD IN CAMBRIDGE

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY: Person 1: 'Lad, how you doing? I've just bought some oat biscuits, you want some?' Person 2: 'Stale.' Person 1: 'They're not stale.' Person 2: 'No, not the biscuits. Your banter.'

TRINITY: 'I don't think danger Spoons is that dangerous. I mean I've gone in with a full set of pearls and come out completely unharmed. And that's my test of dangerous.'

JOHN'S: John's student talking to King's student: 'We've got what we call a 'buttery'. It's kind of like your cafeteria.'

JESUS: Elderly fellow opposite girl who has just downed her wine: 'I hate undergraduates'.

SILVER STREET: "I don't understand classical music. I just think that every time someone plays the same piece it sounds exactly the same. A note is a note right?"

SIDGWICK SITE: King's student 'I think it would be better if there were more college integration.' John's student: 'God no, that would be awful.'

NEW MUSEUMS SITE: I hate how people keep trying to capitalise summer. It's not a thing, stop trying to make it happen.'

SIDNEY STREET: If you have fabulous hair then it doesn't matter if you have a hideous personality. Everyone forgives you everything'.



Residents fear that the creation of a BID would ruin the city's distinctive atmosphere

iCUSU attack UKBA

Katherine Biddle
NEWS REPORTER

The UK Border Agency decided to allow London Met's international students - who have the proper immigration status - to stay in the UK to complete their course, or to continue to study here until the end of the 2012/13 academic year, whichever is sooner.

UKBA had previously announced that it would serve notices to all international students at London Met on Monday 1 October 2012, giving them 60 days notice to leave the UK.

Following on from CUSU's statement calling the reaction of the UKBA to the situation at London Met "entirely disproportionate", international

the threat of deportation should explore the possibility of suing London Met for (alleged) failures".

The announcement that current international students will be allowed to continue with their studies follows the High Court's decision to grant London Met permission to apply for a full judicial review against the UKBA's original decision to revoke its status as a Highly Trusted Sponsor of international students. The court also decided to allow the National Union of Students to intervene as a third party.

Liam Burns, NUS President said: "We are delighted that as a result of our third party intervention, interim relief has been granted by the High Court to current international students who have been unfairly affected by UKBA's decision."

However, he emphasised that the future for London Met's international students after July 2013 is uncertain. "This whole ugly episode has also thrown up wider questions about the treatment of international students in this country", he said, emphasising that "unless these questions are urgently addressed, the UK's global reputation for higher education remains tarnished."

2000
International students were affected

students in Cambridge have also showed their dismay at the situation with iCUSU releasing a statement sympathising with the "devastating effects that the UKBA's decision has had on the education, finances and dreams of many fully legitimate international students." They also stated that the students affected by

Hackers tweet big, but do small

Alice Udale-Smith recaps a summer of hacking by pro-Assange supporters

There were two consecutive attacks on the data stored in the Cambridge computer system over the summer by a group called NullCrew in an attempt to gain publicity for the pro-Assange movement.

The first attack saw the login details of 17 academics published online and resulted in a few sections of the affected websites being taken offline whilst the problem was fixed. As a result, the second attack which they publicised on their Twitter page for two days beforehand was more high profile, with people expecting a more significant breach of security.

The threats made on their Twitter page started on 14th September with the first reading: "Hacking into #Cambridge again. #NullCrew" which was followed by another saying: "If Cambridge authorities don't want another dump, now is the time to speak up. Tweet me + DM. You have 24 hours."

However, when the group actually released the data it became apparent that all the information released was several years out of date and that any passwords involved hadn't been decoded by the hackers, making them totally useless.

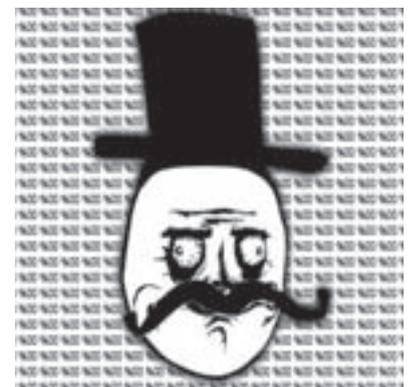
Speaking the day after the second attack, the Chief Information Officer, Mark Maddox said: "Over the last

few weeks the University and other organisations have been targeted by a hacker group calling themselves 'Null Crew'. Yesterday afternoon they exploited a vulnerability in a 10 year old website to download an old list of staff at Cambridge University Press, along with an encrypted version of some staff passwords, which were two years out of date. We can confirm that nothing more sensitive was affected, and no one's personal security has been compromised."

Cambridge University Press released a statement, claiming that the release of the files poses "neither a security threat nor an invasion of privacy".

The hackers also appeared to break into Trinity's website and replaced a page about room information in the college with a blank screen with a beetle wandering around on it. Trinity's website went down shortly afterwards whilst the college removed the bug from its system.

The Cambridge Union hosted Assange in March 2011 for his first speech in four months after he was placed under house arrest, leading to speculation that this connection may have been a reason for the group's targeting of the University. However, when questioned by *Varsity* as to why they were targeting Cambridge,



The group NullCrew calimed responsibility

they replied that it was "because we can, and it will get #OpFreeAssange the most publicity. People need to realize what's going on," rather than due to any specific Cambridge connection to Assange. What exactly they hoped to achieve even if they did manage to convince the University that they were a credible threat to their data is still largely unknown. Certainly, beyond the initial publicity the attack received there has been little interest once the data released was proved to be useless.

For full coverage of the two hacking attacks visit www.varsity.co.uk.

Madrid becomes the latest European city to be struck by violent protests against cuts

James Taylor
INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORTER

Madrid was the latest European city to become embroiled in heated public riots, as Tuesday's protests against the recent austerity cuts and tax hikes became violent. The riots originally broke out in response to protesters' attempts to tear down barriers blocking access to Spain's Parliament. Roads were closed, as were underground stations, in a bid to stop rioters from different areas congregating. The protests left 64 injured; 27 of these were police officers. One man remains in a serious condition, although he is known to have suffered from a previous brain condition.

Having been in Madrid for the last week, I can say that the change in atmosphere has been tangible. The usual placidity typical of Spanish culture has been replaced by a sense of anxiety. My hotel room neighbours the Plaza del Sol, where rioters congregated last night. From my room I could hear the hum of an incensed crowd, and the whirring of a helicopter circling the plaza overhead.

Over half of Spain's riot police force were deployed to maintain order during the riots, armed with batons and rubber bullets similar to those used during the 2011 London riots. The Spanish government has congratulated the actions of the police, saying that they acted "magnificently"



The Plaza del Sol in more cheerful times before the riots

and "have fulfilled their duty". There were 35 arrests made in total and the people involved will be charged with crimes against the nation. It is believed that they will face a National Audience on Thursday morning. In response, a group of trade unionists have occupied a branch of Deutsche Bank in the city of Seville, demanding that those arrested on Tuesday be freed.

In the Plaza de Neptuno, where the

riots were at their most serious, 265 kilos of rubbish have been collected, including stones, bottles and screws. According to Cristina Cifuentes, the delegate for the Madrid government, "sticks, hole punches and slingshots" have been also been found. There is further evidence that the rioters used bin lids as shields against the bullets.

The hotels and cafes which litter the streets of central Madrid now reflect the mood of the city; when I

arrived back at my hotel at 6:00pm all the outdoor chairs and tables, normally full of people, had been taken indoors. The cafe was shut, but no one seemed disappointed; there is a real sense that people do not want to be wandering the streets for longer than necessary. As I entered the foyer I was met at reception by two armed police officers. They did not linger as, within moments of my arrival, they were sprinting past me with a frantic look on their faces.

There are concerns that the riots will continue this evening, and Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, the leader of Spain's socialist party, has expressed fears that the issue is "out of the Government's hands". He accused the country's Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, of estranging Spanish society from politics. The riots, like those seen in London last year, were organized through social media websites, with protesters expressing a desire to take back democracy, which they say has been "kidnapped".

Even now that the riots are over the Plaza del Sol, usually a hub of madrileño hustle and bustle, is eerily quiet and tense. Normally a pedestrian square, the plaza is uncomfortably calm, as police cars drive slowly through it, ushering people out of their way with their horns. The exact spot where only a few days ago I had taken photos of the living statues and listened to

traditional live Spanish music is now heavily policed. It certainly seems that Spain already has too much on its plate to be facing another internal crisis. This sense of urgency was demonstrated by the clear aggression with which the police treated rioters as they sought to seeking to quell the uprising before it escalates.

THE FIGURES

64 people

Were injured in Tuesday's protests including 27 police officers.

3.3 million

Madrid's current population of 3.3 million makes it the third largest city in the EU.

4th

Madrid is the 4th most visited city in the EU, a figure that is likely to increase if they win the bid for the 2020 Summer Olympics.

3rd highest GDP

Madrid's urban population has the 3rd highest GDP in the EU.

12th

Madrid is the 12th greenest city in the EU



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“Young, Bright, and on the Right”: interviewed

Charlotte Keith
EDITOR

The official blurb for the BBC's programme 'Young, Bright, and on the Right', broadcast this summer reads: "Do state school children feel they have any real chance of getting on in the Conservative Party? We followed two ex-comprehensive school pupils who got involved at Oxbridge universities". The final product, however, had little to do with politics and everything to do with fuelling the nation's class anxiety, peddling tired stereotypes of Oxbridge students as out-of-touch, Tory poshos. Or aspirant out-of-touch Tory poshos: the great 'twist' of course, being that neither of the students featured was privately educated or came from a privileged background. The message was clear: try as they might, they would never be truly accepted by the braying-voiced public schoolboys who apparently dominate both universities' Conservative Associations. More troubling, perhaps, was just how much they wanted to be.

The media's reaction was generally

It was necessary to omit my explanation of my own political views, which are fairly libertarian

unfavourable. Ian Hollingshead, writing for the Telegraph, said that the programme made Oxbridge seem as if "as if everyone who goes there is a socially inept, snobby virgin with a port habit and a teddy bear called Aloysius". Sam Wollaston for the Guardian described Chris and Joe Cooke – the Oxford participant – as "weird: pompous, middle-aged in youth, with an unhealthy interest in power".

Offered the chance to speak to Chris Monk in person, I was intrigued – if a little apprehensive. The first



CHRIS MONK

question I felt I had to ask was – why on earth would anyone agree to that? Why would you want to be filmed making a total prat of yourself? Was it, as some commentators speculated, a desire for publicity and power – or, as others suggested, sheer naïveté? Chris says he was originally told that the show would be about young people's interest in politics, but admits that what ended up on screen was entirely different: the original cross-party focus was dropped by the BBC in favour of concentrating on young conservatives at Oxbridge. The BBC, he suggests, "has underestimated the British public's tolerance for serious programmes" in rejecting the original brief. "It wasn't really what I had signed up for, but you sign a contract with these things and you don't really get much choice about it".

Has he actually watched the show? Is he...actually like that? Apparently not. At least, not much. It's already clear that Chris is far more switched-on and self-aware than the biscuit-bumbler he is portrayed as onscreen. He does stress that he was annoyed by the programme's avoidance of political discussion: "it was unnecessary to omit my explanation of my own political views, which are fairly libertarian, when they showed so much footage of me cycling

round Cambridge'. Any readers who have watched the programme will know what he means (wind in hair, peddling furiously, organ music in the background to emphasise the ivory-tower atmosphere).

The show portrayed Chris and Joe's conservatism as being largely to do with social aspiration. Chris at one point tells his Lib Dem voting parents that the fun of CUCA is "the opportunity to pretend to be a member of the upper classes for an afternoon". But he insists that this is a misrepresentation of his political views: "my sort of Conservatism has absolutely nothing to do with social class, and the vast majority of conservatives would agree with me". So the programme's equation

There's no greater moral superiority in going to Cindies and getting drunk than there is in going to a black tie event

of politics and social class is not something he agrees with? "Politics and social class should not be linked at all – it's not where you come from that should determine your politics, but it's where you want to go". How's that for a sound-bite? Conservatism, according to Monk, is "basically about aspiration, an aspiration to improve yourself, to improve your community and to improve your country". And this aspiration includes drinking port, eating cheese and striving for toff-dom? Well. "It's important not to confuse what CUCA as an organization does as leisure activities with what conservatism as a political creed is necessarily about". Left-leaning port lovers everywhere can breathe easy. "There's no greater moral superiority in going to Cindies and getting drunk than there is in going to a black tie event". So there.

Why then – aside from the obvious image problems – is conservatism not all that popular with students? He suggests that it's easy "easy to make someone who wants to reduce the size of the state look like the Scrooge-like character who's taking away people's toys". He laughs when I ask if people are surprised when he tells them he's a Tory, saying that 'most people in my year knew about it', almost as if conservatism is a kind of personal affliction or peculiar habit that can just about be tolerated in a friend.

On his infamous 'it's easier to come out as being gay in Cambridge than to come out as being a Tory' comment, Monk is careful to emphasise that 'this is right and proper', trotting out a clearly rehearsed line on the University's hard work in welcoming LGBT students. "There is no stigma in Cambridge, at least not generally, in being gay, while a lot of people are prepared to express their dislike of conservatives to their face in a way that no one would ever dream – because it would be totally inappropriate – of doing to an LGBT person". The comparison with being a Tory doesn't quite wash though because – as he himself acknowledges – "I choose to be, or at least choose to profess to be, a Tory". A particularly striking feature of the programme – one that perhaps prompted the 'snobby virgins' jibe – was the lack of girls. Cambridge student politics, on a party level, came off as an utterly male world. Chris agrees, but suggests that it's not necessarily a bad thing: "the majority of women are far too sensible to want to hitch their colours to a particular political mast and want more from life than political discussion!" This awareness of the melodramatic, self-indulgent side of student politics didn't make it into the programme, and that's a shame – it would have made for far more interesting viewing.

The documentary was widely criticised for peddling Oxbridge stereotypes; misrepresenting

Cambridge – Monk admits that the programme "probably deliberately made in a way that was unhelpful to certain sorts of access". But he's quick to downplay the social barriers to Access: "I think CUSU Access underestimates the commitment of students from all backgrounds to get ahead", arguing that "all the people I spoke to on the shadowing scheme were more concerned with whether they could cope academically than whether they were expected to know which way to pass the port".

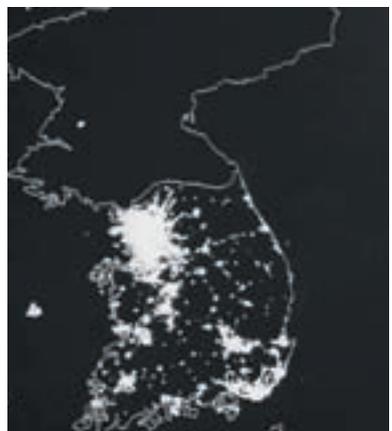
The door's only half-open for people who don't have connections

For all his insistence that "Conservatism is about where you're going", though, Chris admits that in reality, the world of national politics remains frustratingly exclusive. "The door's only half-open for people who don't have the connections", he says when asked about the dominance of the privately-educated in the Cameron's Cabinet, "if you want to do it young, then you've got to know people". He is however adamant that the experience of Joe Cooke – who felt obliged to change his Yorkshire accent in order to fit in at OUCA – would never happen at its Cambridge counterpart. "Your background really doesn't matter within CUCA, it's about what sort of person you are now", he insists. "That's the great point of University, isn't it, that you can leave behind who you were?" I'm not sure what to say. Chris, at least, seems very sure of who he is and what he believes. Tantalising Boris comparisons aside – distinctive hair, bumbling manner disguising sharp intellect, plenty of gusto – Chris Monk has a lot more to say for himself than the cheese-and-biscuits speeches which dominated the show.

Four days in North Korea

Matthew Pullen
EAST ASIA CORRESPONDENT

I can pinpoint the exact moment when I became fascinated by North Korea: it was seeing the famous satellite photograph below of the Korean peninsula at night. Seoul and its suburbs are resplendent, the whole of the South is peppered with pockets of illumination, while only Pyongyang registers in the North.



The Korean Peninsula at night

The photo is a striking visualisation of the isolation the North Korean government imposes on its country. As recently as 1945 these were the same country – the same people, the same culture – and it is only their divergent politics which can account for this asymmetry. Light means houses, offices, street lamps and factories. In other words, it means life. In a country of darkness, nothing is brought to light and nothing comes to light. Muffled under a blanket of darkness, the people are voiceless.

Despite the government's efforts to hermetically seal the country from outside influences – earning the country the name the Hermit Kingdom – it is surprisingly easy to visit. Approximately 1500 Western tourists do so every year, the majority of whom go via European companies based in Beijing which charge astronomical prices for the novelty. It is much cheaper to join a Chinese tour group from the border city of Dandong. Once you arrive in North Korea you are handed over to the government-run Korean Interna-

tional Travel Service (KITS) anyway, so your choice of tour operator is arguably of little consequence.

I e-mailed the company in Dandong saying that I'd like to go and they told me to turn up at their office the day before departure with my passport, the money, a passport photo and – oddly – my student card, apparently to prove that I wasn't a journalist (*little did they know...Ed*). And that was it. Done. "We'll meet you at eight o'clock tomorrow morning to go to North Korea". That's when nerves struck me, the gravity of what I'd done sank in and I began to feel sick.

That night I walked along the Yalu River, the natural boundary between China and North Korea. On the Chinese side, elderly women danced in unison to music blaring out of a portable speaker while men practised calligraphy on the floor with giant brushes. It was busy and frenetic, but it was a comforting chaos compared with the eerie silence and darkness across the river. North Korea was revealing nothing.

In fact, it seemed almost as if every



China/North Korea border

Chinese activity there had been designed to augment the contrast. Children played with sparklers, families watched a fountain light display and bored-looking hawkers tried to sell glow-stick necklaces...all in the shadow of their silent neighbour.

One boy – as he skated past on his LED skateboard, changing the track on his iPod – singlehandedly produced more light than the entire other side of the river. The NASA photograph and the isolation it connoted felt so real.

Couples lit paper lanterns and lifted them into the sky. They drifted upwards across the river and past the Broken Bridge (of which the Koreans never repaired their half) so freely that the idea of a border seemed redundant. The Yalu River is not particularly wide – there's even a stretch called 'One Leap Across' – but which side of the river you are born on determines so much. North Koreans often defect, crossing the river – but, if discovered, China forcibly returns them to their home country, where it is known that they, and perhaps their family, are taken to work camps or killed.

The lanterns danced gracefully into the distance until they were nothing but pinpricks in the sky; North Korea had extinguished their light and maintained its darkness.

Matt will be continuing the story of his journey online at varsity.co.uk; read on to learn what happens when the border police find bras in his bag.

Business as usual for the Oxbridge-bashers

Jon Porter argues that accusing universities over Access issues just perpetuates an unproductive debate. Prospective students are probably still discouraged from applying by stories about Oxbridge's elitism; he wants to shift the debate

Freshers eagerly flicking through your first copy of *Varsity*: feast your eyes on gory stories about Access problems. Read all about the elitism rife in this decrepit institution; see, in high definition, shocking statistics about the lack of working class people and the dearth of ethnic minorities; look at the centuries-old snobbery that pervades this training ground of tomorrow's leaders.

But, joy of joys, some positive news: there is a new higher education Access tsar, Les Ebdon, and a new Director of Admissions at Cambridge, Mike Sewell. Change is coming. The former says top universities need to be set more challenging targets regarding the admission of students from non-traditional backgrounds. The latter says that the university cannot be forced to

You will hear over and over how unjust the admissions system is

'exactly mirror' society. Oh, the more things change, the more things stay the same...

I remember the day of my interview. Wandering into 'King's News' for some mints (because obviously without mints I would fail my interview and thus the rest of my life) I saw a *Guardian* headline about how inaccessible Cambridge was for black students and those on free school dinners.

That headline stuck in my head: there I was, an outsider trying to get in, and on that day the top news story was about how unfair the system was. I've changed very much since then, but the media's obsession with Oxbridge hasn't changed at all.

Freshers, after all your efforts to get



into Cambridge you will hear over and over how unjust the admissions process is. Same old same old. For the white, male, privately-educated scum reading this: you don't deserve to be here. Everyone else: you're just another tick in the box.

The whole hullabaloo is a classic example of putting the cart before the horse. The government and the press blame universities rather than the examination system. Societal disadvantages cannot be reversed by a university lowering its entry requirements.

It doesn't take much of a search to find out about the Access schemes run by the university, individual colleges

and the student union. People often don't realise that Oxford and Cambridge offer the most generous bursaries in the country. Not that our own wonderful institution is a perfect place for education. There is real middle class domination but that's not only Cambridge's fault; those trained at bourgeois dinner tables are more likely to succeed than those brought up on sink estates, sadly.

Think of programmes like *Brideshead Revisited* and *Inspector Morse*: they paint vivid pictures of Oxbridge for their millions of viewers, a picture of a place where there is no room for plebs. If you've come from a state

school (as I did) I bet you were congratulated to within an inch of your life for managing to 'break through' into this strange world.

In the press, simplistic tabloid depictions of the 'privileged' on their way to predestined, undeserved success are complemented by the liberals who damn Oxbridge by spitting statistics at their readers. Neither side puts pressure on the likes of Professor Ebdon to do anything other than once again blame universities like Cambridge.

Poverty of ambition festers in such circumstances. People from non-traditional backgrounds are told Oxbridge is 'not for the likes of us' and such

ideas are fed by TV shows, Fleet Street hacks and civil servants stuck playing up to the same old stereotypes. Every slow-news-day story about Old Boy network conspiracies only strengthens the mindsets of parents, students, and teachers in the 'worst' schools for whom applying to Oxbridge doesn't seem worth the trouble.

The odd Oxbridge obsession: both irritating and damaging

The odd Oxbridge obsession has a knock-on effect, as irritating for the students within as it is damaging to the students without. As a result of all the media attention, people here make a big deal out of where you come from: you will meet students who will play the 'prolier than thou' card, desperately clinging to their working class status in this middle class institution; equally, you will meet those who are wet dreams for programmes like 'Young, Bright and on the Right'.

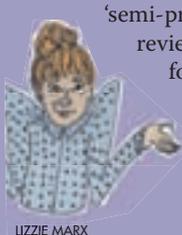
The solution? Perhaps we need another wide-ranging reform of the examination system (we're getting that in 2015, apparently) or perhaps instead we should aim our sights higher and target unfair wealth distribution, which would solve the problem over time. Politicians promise these big ideas, then fail to deliver. Until then, it is up to the likes of Professor Ebdon, Dr Sewell, the government and the media to stop playing the same old games.

Any debate about our education should be, to say the least, stimulating; this one threatens to be sterile at best, boring at worst. Welcome to Cambridge.

In all honesty...

I was Theatre Editor of *Varsity* for a term and I've never read or seen any Chekhov. The closest I've come to it was came via the Tess subplot of the last series of *Lip Service*. I suppose pre-Cambridge my theatre knowledge was pretty poor: I mainly saw plays with friends and their families, or at school and I guess I was always more interested in the visual arts, or found them easier to get into. In a way, then, it seems really ridiculous that I thought it appropriate to weigh in and moderate over a newspaper section critiquing stuff I only had proper exposure to after starting university. Perhaps this is an awful admission of charlatanism, but, in a world of students commenting on the work of other students (where seemingly everyone is aiming for

'semi-professional' and reviewers are noticed for their star ratings rather than their prose stylings), an acceptance of my own ignorance came in rather handy.



LIZZIE MARX

A Paralympic legacy? The future looks promising

Ashwini Ponnampalam wonders whether this summer's Paralympics have really changed attitudes towards sport

The greatest Paralympic Games ever."

These were the words Sir Philip Craven, Head of the International Paralympic Committee, chose for his speech at the Paralympic Closing Ceremony. Sincere and fitting, they reflect the many achievements of London's 2012 games. From sporting success – Paralympics GB took 120 medals, 34 of which were gold – to enthusiastic crowds and a supportive public, everyone involved in organising London 2012 should be immensely proud of a job well done.

But the work is not over yet: the promise of a legacy was a vital aspect of London's bid for the 2012 Games and it is one that has received frenzied media speculation over the last few weeks. The point of the Games was always to "inspire a generation". The organisers of London 2012 clearly intended not only to showcase the best of Britain or encourage tourism, but also to create the foundation for a future more attentive to sport.

Amidst our sadness that we are at the end of an incredible sporting summer, there is anticipation to see how the Paralympic legacy will take shape – whether it will meet the expectations of the public or cave under the pressure of media hype.

London 2012 has generated an

amazing amount of exposure for disabled athletes. Unprecedented levels of media coverage and record ticket sales – 2.7 million compared to Beijing's 1.8 million – have both massively increased public awareness of the sporting opportunities available for disabled people. The success of the British Paralympic team was significant in contributing to this. By placing third in the medals table

and beating the 103 medal target set by UK Sport, Paralympics GB has secured £49.2 million of funding for Rio 2016.

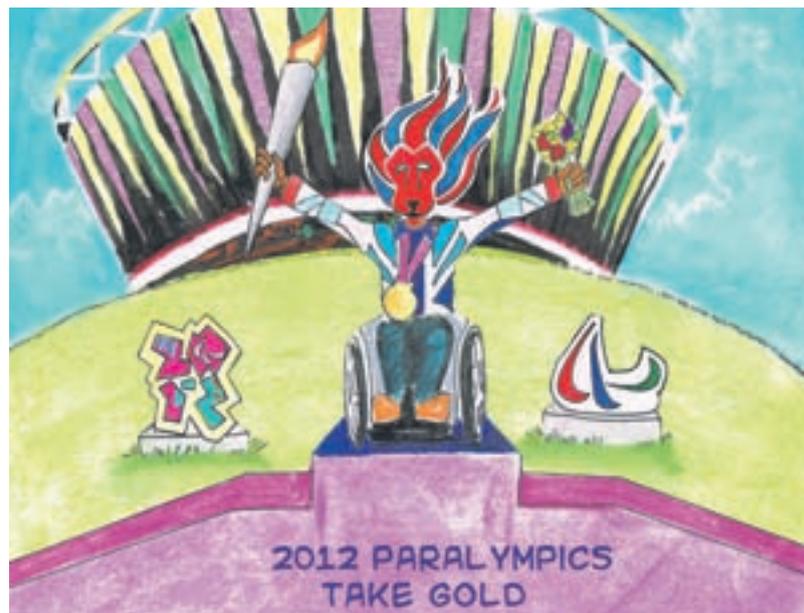
International inspiration has been significant for the UK: Oscar Pistorius – ambassador of an international sporting development programme that has already helped 12 million children – has played an important role in raising the profile of Paralympic sport, particularly

after his outburst at Olivia, which generated a much-reported debate about the blade lengths of Paralympic athletes. Back home, the Disability Legacy Project is already working with sports clubs in the five London host boroughs to improve facilities for disability sport.

The Closing Ceremony was also instrumental in changing our cultural perception of what disabled people can do. It featured numerous disabled performers in the Candoco Dance Company and the British Paraorchestra, showcasing the non-sporting dimension of disabled talent.

With all that has been done so far, the success of the Games and British plans for the future, the solidity of the Paralympic legacy seems a sure bet. Though interest levels did not reach those of the Olympics (the Olympic Opening Ceremony recorded 26.9 million viewers compared to the Paralympic's 11.2 million), London 2012 has put Paralympic sport on the map.

Tom Hollingsworth, Head of the BPA says: "I am convinced we will never go back to a time where there is disinterest in Paralympic sport." Nonetheless, with NBC's failure to show any live action from the Paralympics and government plans to cut disability benefits, only time will tell for sure whether we are right to be hopeful.



CHRIS ROEBUCK

Closer editor gets naked in bathroom

Katerina Pascoulis wants to know whether Laurence Pieau, the infamous editor of French *Closer*, would herself accept the level of exposure her magazine gave Kate Middleton

OK, I admit this sounds far-fetched. But let's say for a minute that it happened: a photographer took a long lens shot of *Closer's* Laurence Pieau topless in her exclusively located London bathroom. What would happen next? A British tabloid (forgetting the Leveson Inquiry) would publish the photos as a stand against those trying to "muzzle" the press's freedom to print pictures of breasts. Rumours are, this type of quality publication can be found in all good newsagents.

Is this Italy's "intellectual freedom"? Only if we use the word very liberally...

We can see how this hypothetical exposé would hit the world media. Using Pieau's logic, a 'Pieau's Bathtime' feature would be perfectly acceptable. After all she is also "a woman who is topless" albeit not a "young" one.

Closer defended the Middleton photos by arguing that they were "not degrading." Surely seeing topless photos of yourself published with neither your permission nor your knowledge is the definition of degrading? Not for Pieau. Her bathtub photos would be a "beautiful series" and the following days' headlines ('Bidet Pieau!') would only be a tribute to them. If her bathroom

was "visible from a public road" it'd be her own fault, even if the photographer had to abseil down a nearby monument with a large mirror to get the shot. Any reaction other than unadulterated appreciation of the artful lighting would be "disproportionate". And let's not forget that French privacy laws allowed President Hollande's girlfriend to claim damages for photos of the couple holding hands!

The editor of the Italian magazine *Chi*, Alfonso Signorini, offered equally logical explanations for his own 26-page Kate feature. He defended his publication of the 18 photographs as "a journalistic scoop," which in non-journalistic speak translates as "moneymoneymoneymoney".

Not a moral defence, but nevertheless the reason behind many controversial editorial decisions. *The Sun*, for instance, suggests one of the "vital" reasons that it printed Harry's Vegas photos were so that the "millions of people who get their news in print, or have no web access" could "take a full part in that national conversation." (Their readers need lots of pictures to help them understand the paper's complex journalism.)

"If you talk about going topless as making a mistake that makes me laugh," Signorini said. At least he finds himself funny, since he spectacularly misses the point. It is not relevant whether or not Kate was right to go topless in the privacy of the house – the whole thing is only a problem because someone with a zoom lens prostituted the images to the international media. Is this Italy's "intellectual freedom"? Yes – if we use

the word 'intellectual' very liberally...

And, in the UK, what about *The Sun*? Quick to condemn *Closer* and *Chi* for printing "grossly intrusive pictures no decent British paper would touch with a bargepole" they seem to forget that just a few weeks ago they labelled newspapers as cowards for "bowing to official pressure" over the Harry photos. The backlash they received for the Vegas issue remarkably coincided with their decision to give Kate her privacy.

The key difference, seemingly, is that "Harry had no realistic expectation of privacy." The "large numbers of strangers" involved in his "stripping naked" weren't subject to any checks. Obviously – how can you guarantee privacy without

Bond-style security checks each time you meet someone? Would Pieau not be entitled to her privacy either if she failed

How can you guarantee privacy without Bond-style security checks each time you meet someone?

to check neighbours and passers-by for long lens cameras? Should she subject them to polygraph tests?

Based on an application of the completely illogical justifications the newspapers gave for printing such invasive photos, the pictures in this fictional spread would undoubtedly go viral not only in France but also in Italy, on the Internet – and one day probably in *The Sun* as well.

Some people may still agree that the photos of Kate (and Harry) were printed for legitimate public interest reasons. I would suggest that in order to protect their privacy these people should get online sharpish and order that home polygraph machine in case they ever become famous. The one that says "60% of the time it works every time" should do the trick.



Talking Point: You wanted us to know...

Twitter talks:
Fifty Shades of Grey: The Classical Album? To the supermarket!

Joe Harper, St Catherine's

Just because Maggie Smith has a damehood, that does not make Downton Abbey a worthwhile way to spend Sunday evenings. The show is not a study of class warfare: it is a soap opera for people who pronounce bath with an R. And wearing 'Free Bates' T-shirts and bumperstickers does not make you an advocate of a legitimate political cause.

Florence Gildea, Pembroke

When I next go into an art gallery, I'm going to do the unthinkable and not do the Gallery Walk. Everyone knows what I mean by gallery walking: the meandering, slow-kicking walk that has long been reserved for art galleries. Next time I go to an exhibition I am going to march purposefully from room to room. I've got a sneaking suspicion the Art Police will appear from nowhere, brandishing palette knives and hand painted 'slow' signs. They'll probably sidle over and cover me in papier-mâché for my disobedience.

Chris Roebuck, Gonville & Caius

Bringing up the bodies, again

This year's Booker Prize may have cunningly rebranded itself but **Joe Harper** isn't fooled

Google has spoken: trawling through what people have been saying about the Booker shortlist has revealed a trend. It seems that there are two things one needs to know about this year's prize. Firstly, Dan Stevens (Downton heart-throb, Booker judge) kept a Kindle in a secret pocket of his tailcoat for sneaky reading during filming. And secondly, this list is not last year's.

The inclusion of two tiny publishers, Myrmidon Press and Salt Publishing, is a refreshing change from the usual domination of publishing powerhouses. Critics have commented that the list not only features two literary debuts (Jeet Thayil's *Narcopolis* and Alison Moore's *The Lighthouse*) but also, noticeably, excludes some big names. Out with the old, in with the new, right?

In considering this shortlist's relation to its predecessors, however, it is perhaps too easy to see it as a reaction to last year's 'readability' scandal. For sure, Jeanette Winterson can in no way accuse this shortlist of being "dumbed down". The authors it contains have upped their highbrow ante: Will Self's novel *Umbrella*, without paragraphs or chapters, revels in the Modernist influences that have been present in much of his earlier fiction. Still, it remains unclear how far Winterson's calls for a seismic change in the prize's attitude have been addressed.

It is the presence of Hilary Mantel that is most telling. A Booker champion from just three years ago seems out of place in a shortlist that is embracing a new prize-giving ethos. *Bring Up the Bodies* is not only written by a Booker veteran, it is no less than a sequel to that former victor, *Wolf Hall*.

If the TLS is right in saying that Hilary Mantel is "a committed revolutionary novelist" then this list, with *Bring Up the Bodies* in it, acknowledges that the Booker Prize has been a place for revolutionary writing in very recent times. How can it be a reaction

It's the presence of former winner Mantel on this year's shortlist that is most telling

to a past that it echoes so strongly?

The shortlist, including four novels set in the past, is interested in history; the ostentatious shunning of big publishers and names harks back to a time before the multi-national publishing brand. But commentators are neglecting to remember that former lists also included new writing and little-known writers.

This list is not really a reaction to the choices of the previous committee, it just seeks to distance itself from the few comments that brought it into disrepute last year.

The chair, Sir Peter Stothard, betrayed the irony inherent in the list's reactionary stance, saying that "the judges placed *Umbrella* on the shortlist with the conviction that those who stick with it will find it much less difficult than it first seems." Less difficult than it first seems. The list contains powerful and thrilling writing, but it is as readable as last year's. It is the old disguised as new. Heaven forbid that anyone should notice.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

FREYA BERRY



One would expect from the word 'news' alone that it's something, well, new. The euphoric blip of the Olympics certainly left the hitherto-unknown taste of vicarious success in the nation's mouth. It was nice to see photos in the papers of teenagers that weren't overweight or rioting.

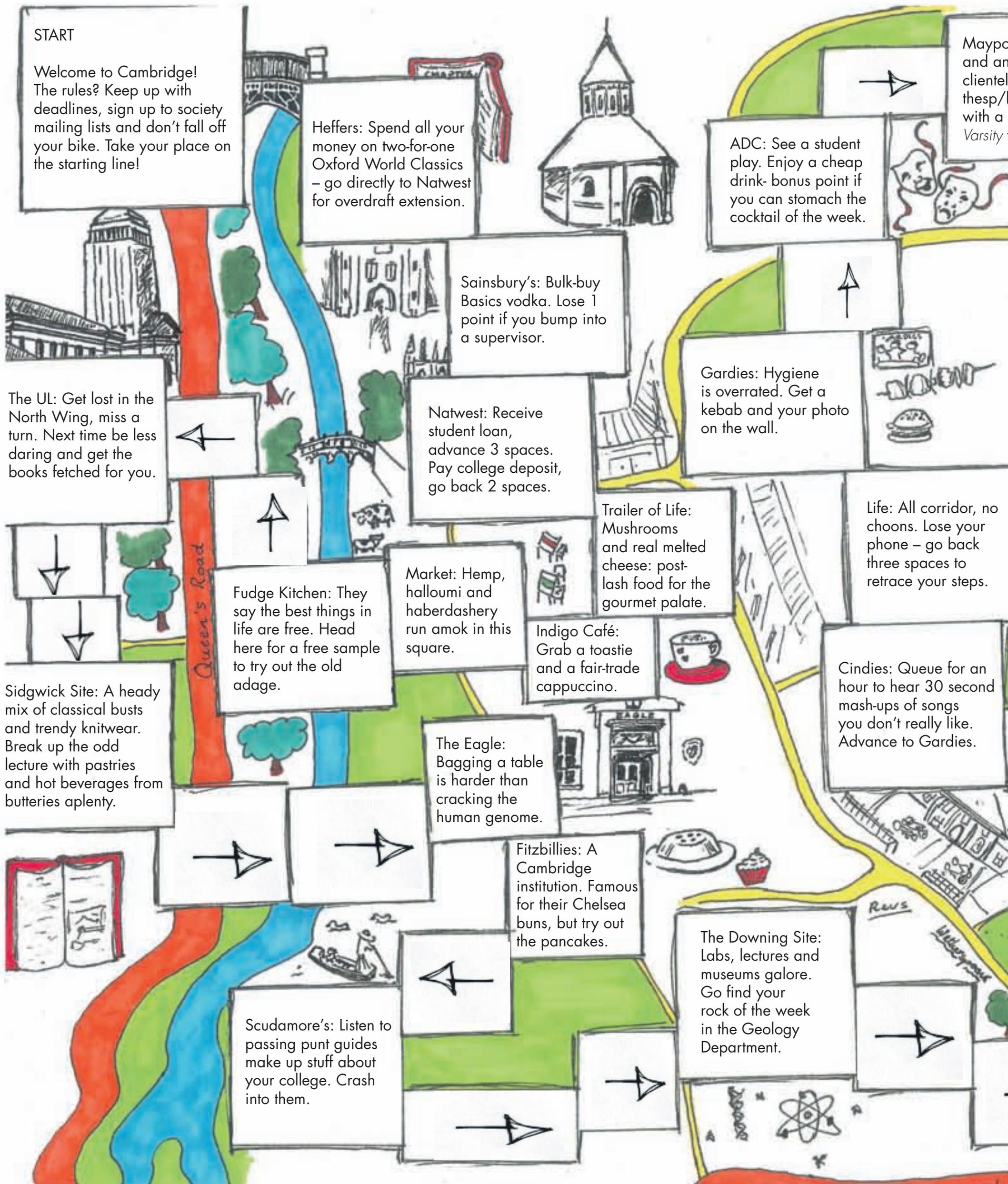
Since then, it's been very much out with the news and in with the olds. In the age of Twitter and twenty-four hour news coverage, information comes to us faster and faster – but just like with Alice and the Red Queen, the landscape still appears to be the same. We still have nasty dictators, poverty and George Osborne. The euro crisis, swept aside during the Olympics, drags on. And no one has offered me a job yet.

However, even if the landscape is similar, there is real change in the details – the thrum of humanity forever trying to alter itself, for better or worse. It is these minor alterations that seizes the press's interest. Togo has suffered under political tyranny for decades, but its plight only made the papers recently when its women went on a sex strike. Pakistan's blasphemy laws have long been utterly insane, but it took the framing of an eleven-year-old girl to get the world's attention. People suddenly start to think differently and it is from the tiny little pixels of new that we get the huge, changing image of the news.

Of course there is always change, if not on a national then on a personal level. Term is beginning: a chance for everyone to redeem themselves to their supervisors and avoid the people they threw up on at the May Ball last year. Freshers: you're genuinely new. Quick, pretend to be someone interesting. Cameron's reshuffled Cabinet is probably doing the same thing and you stand a better chance of reinvention.

It is, ultimately, people who make the news. Journalists always talk about the 'human interest' angles of their stories. It's for this reason that people don't discuss the complexities of the financial crisis: we want to read about the arseholery of the bankers because we need a human face like Fred Goodwin to relate to (or, in this case, revile). At the end of the day, the news becomes about us and what we care about. If the Sun 're-enacts' Harry's indiscretions on its front page, it's because they believe that is what we as a nation most want to see (and perhaps they were right).

The recent cases of news going meta, vying for space on its own pages, do really matter – we need to know whether the binoculars through which we survey the world have become smudged. There is the endless spectre of the Leveson enquiry, the repercussions for the papers who published topless photographs of Kate, and the provocative actions of magazines like Charlie Hebdo. That's a lot for a small column in a student newspaper to deal with (although we are doing a news show over at the student station CamFM – check it out). Yet, dear readers, just because the *Guardian* felt the need to put Kim Kardashian on the cover of their recent Saturday supplement, we do not need to despair. News will happen. And, for the next eight weeks, I'll be there to moan about it when it does.



START

Welcome to Cambridge!
The rules? Keep up with deadlines, sign up to society mailing lists and don't fall off your bike. Take your place on the starting line!

Heffers: Spend all your money on two-for-one Oxford World Classics – go directly to Natwest for overdraft extension.

ADC: See a student play. Enjoy a cheap drink- bonus point if you can stomach the cocktail of the week.

Maypo and an clientel thesp/ with a Varsity

Sainsbury's: Bulk-buy Basics vodka. Lose 1 point if you bump into a supervisor.

Gardies: Hygiene is overrated. Get a kebab and your photo on the wall.

The UL: Get lost in the North Wing, miss a turn. Next time be less daring and get the books fetched for you.

Natwest: Receive student loan, advance 3 spaces. Pay college deposit, go back 2 spaces.

Trailer of Life: Mushrooms and real melted cheese: post-lash food for the gourmet palate.

Life: All corridor, no choons. Lose your phone – go back three spaces to retrace your steps.

Fudge Kitchen: They say the best things in life are free. Head here for a free sample to try out the old adage.

Market: Hemp, halloumi and haberdashery run amok in this square.

Indigo Café: Grab a toastie and a fair-trade cappuccino.

Cindies: Queue for an hour to hear 30 second mash-ups of songs you don't really like. Advance to Gardies.

Sidgwick Site: A heady mix of classical busts and trendy knitwear. Break up the odd lecture with pastries and hot beverages from butteries aplenty.

The Eagle: Bagging a table is harder than cracking the human genome.

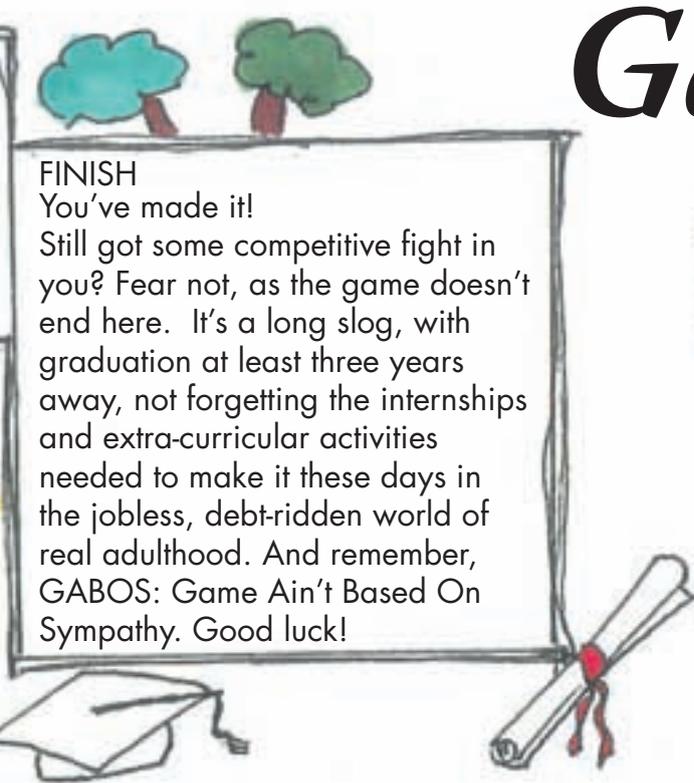
Fitzbillies: A Cambridge institution. Famous for their Chelsea buns, but try out the pancakes.

The Downing Site: Labs, lectures and museums galore. Go find your rock of the week in the Geology Department.

Scudamore's: Listen to passing punt guides make up stuff about your college. Crash into them.

Gamebridge

le: Late hours
n exclusive
e: think a
hipster hybrid
refreshing
twist.



FINISH
You've made it!
Still got some competitive fight in you? Fear not, as the game doesn't end here. It's a long slog, with graduation at least three years away, not forgetting the internships and extra-curricular activities needed to make it these days in the jobless, debt-ridden world of real adulthood. And remember, GABOS: Game Ain't Based On Sympathy. Good luck!



So you've unpacked, bought yourself a kettle and are getting ready to matriculate. What next? This week, Varsity is providing you with what you've always wanted: a visual (if not completely accurate) map-based board game.

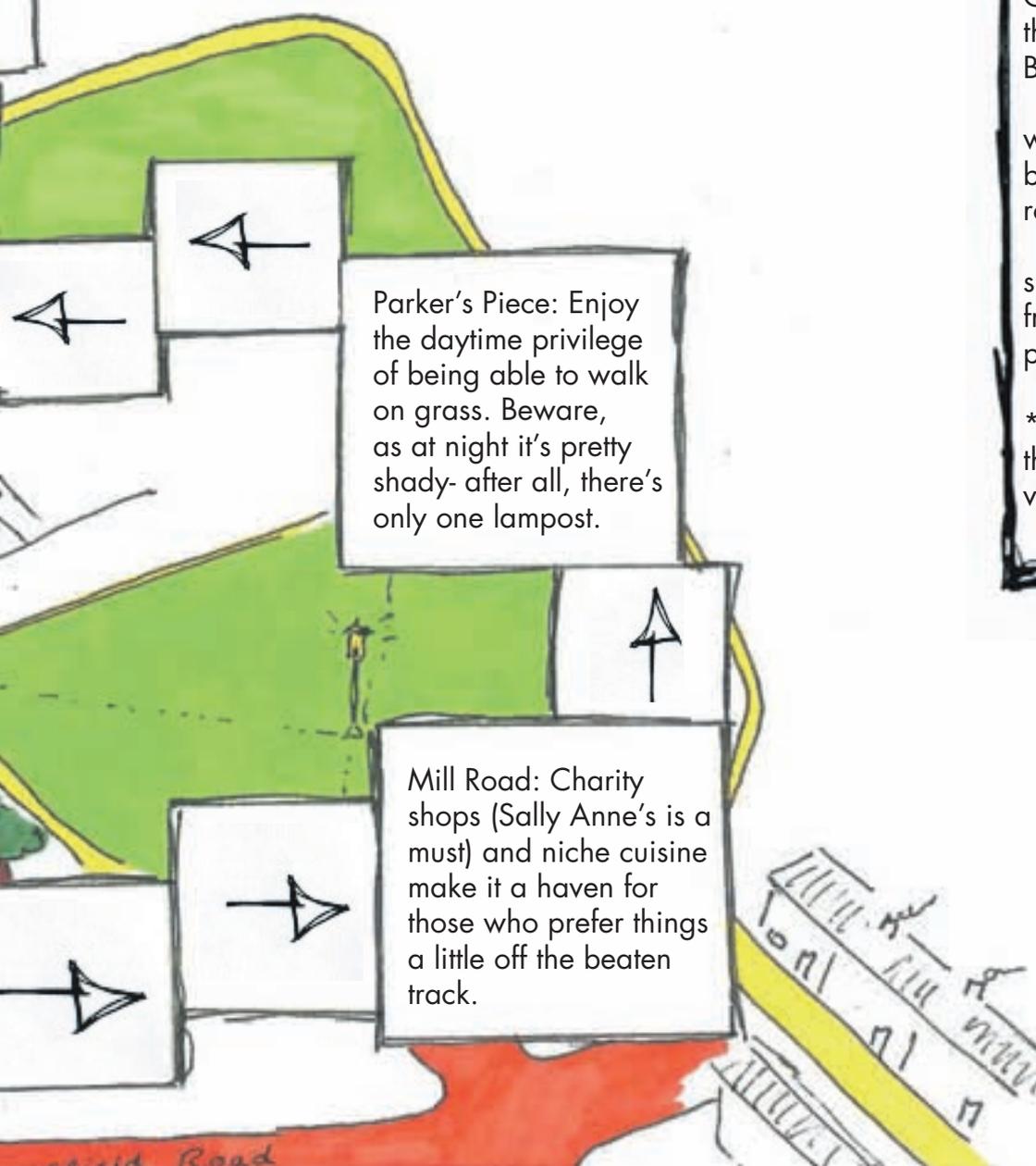
Break out of that college bubble and check out what Cambridge has to offer, whether you're more of a coffee connoisseur or simply on the hunt for the city's cheapest gin*, we have compiled an at-a-glance guide to all the hotspots of Cambridge student-life for your gratification. Ordinance Survey and Articulate eat your heart out.

And that's not to mention the Union Society, the Botanical Gardens, Grantchester Meadows, the Junction, the Corn Exchange, Clare Cellars, the Grafton Centre, G. David Bookseller or Fez.

Although we could keep going, we would rather that you got the ball, or should we say the dice, rolling.

So put those books back on the shelf and get those newly-forged friendships into full swing by playing Gamebridge!

*Hint: It's to be found in one of the locations to be found on this very map!



Parker's Piece: Enjoy the daytime privilege of being able to walk on grass. Beware, as at night it's pretty shady- after all, there's only one lampost.

Mill Road: Charity shops (Sally Anne's is a must) and niche cuisine make it a haven for those who prefer things a little off the beaten track.



PARIS ÇA VA?

EMILY FITZELL



Everyone in Paris has at least two living rooms: the first *chez soi* and then a second in the form of an adopted and cherished local café.

In Paris, a café is far more than just the vendor of a tasty *croque monsieur*: they have come to function as an indispensable extension of the home, and an integral part of daily life.

And nestled within the potent, literary landscape of the illustrious Latin Quarter, surrounded by its plethora of unassuming yet inviting cafés, I find myself vacillating between the equally indulgent acts of rambling *dans la rue* and returning famished *au café*. Just what the Fac had in mind for an industrious year abroad.

It's not my fault: blame history. Out of these seemingly arbitrary acts of rambling and observing, philosophers and poets have established an enduring conception of this part of the city. The French even have a word for it: *flâner*.

From Baudelaire to Sartre, great literary figures have regarded such pastimes as moments of creative opportunity. The café has made its mark.

Yet it was from just such a café in 1976 that the experimental novelist Georges Perec decided to revolt against this well-established culture of observation. *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris* sees the pedantic, almost scientific recording of three days' worth of observation: "It is noon. Gust of Wind. A 63 goes by. A 96 goes by" he writes. And so on and so on and so on... Whilst this soullessly empirical attempt to confine and classify time and space was always doomed to fail, his questioning and re-evaluation of a classical Parisian pastime perhaps goes to show that traditions aside, there's always more than one way of viewing a city.

It is, however, still pretty hard to contest the fact that thanks to Paris' booming café culture, the quotidian has become a sort of theatrical spectacle. Heck, I was at the *laverie* yesterday when a tour guide ushered in his camera-clad clan and began an animated explanation of our laundry chores. Perec makes a valid point, though: laundry, after all, only gets so exciting. There's nothing quite like an afternoon coffee (read: glass of red) in a side-street café hideaway to sooth preliminary year abroad nerves. And following a close encounter with a cockroach infestation and a first night spent in a (surprisingly comfortable) bathtub, trust me, it's been needed. But as the weeks go by, maybe I should try not only to embrace these customary aspects of Parisian life, but to also reconsider some aspects of the traditional *vie parisienne*.

Balzac called Paris "a city where great ideas perish, done to death by a witticism". I hope to find assurance that this need not be the case. Let's call the daft headshot a conciliatory gesture to satire and a reminder of the various prosaicisms to unravel in the upcoming weeks. *À suivre...*



LISTINGS

Pull out and pin up on your board



The Complex: Electra

Tuesday 2nd to Saturday 6th, Corpus Playrooms, 7pm, £6/£5
Fresh from the Edinburgh Fringe, this gritty new play by Celine Lowenthal adapted from Sophocles' Electra explores the post-Freudian sexualisation of revenge. *Ella Griffiths*

Not a fan of icebergs? Got a event you'd like to see in the listing? Doodle in lectures and want to see it published? Get in touch, reviews@varsity.co.uk

THEATRE EDITOR

Cambridge Freshers Fair
Tuesday & Wednesday, 11am-3pm
Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre; Free
An unmissable opportunity to sign up to every obscure club that exists, from tiddlywinks to judo, eat free pizza and sign up to write for Varsity. *Ella Griffiths*

MUSIC EDITOR

FacePlant: This Is Nirvana
Thursday 4th, 11pm-3am
Fez Club; £5/£3
One of the best Nirvana tribute bands around recreate the Seattle grungers' glory days. DJ set from Pete Moore of Let's Kill Disco also. *Dominic Kelly*

SENIOR ARTS

The Casual Vacancy
J.K. Rowling
Released Thursday 27th
Little known author publishes her first book for adults. She describes it as a comic tragedy centred around a parish council election. Could be her breakthrough work. *Dominic Kelly*

BEST OF BLOGS

In the *Varsity* Alternative Freshers' Guide, our contributors give tips on where to eat, where to go on nights out and what they wish they'd known before starting their degrees.

Max Park on Gangnam Style:

"There's something oddly endearing and refreshing about seeing a slightly rotund but surprisingly agile Korean man pretend to ride a horse. My Korean friends have been following Psy's remarkable success with an odd mix of pride and confusion. Consider the litany of K-Pop flops who have desperately tried to succeed abroad: Rain, Wonder Girls, Seven, Girls' Generation. All of them are young, skinny and conventionally attractive. No offence to Psy, but he is none of these things. It's a wakeup call for an image-obsessed nation of 50 million with the highest rates of plastic surgery in the world."

Julia Turner on The Watersprite Film Festival:

"Having planned on keeping my final year clear for studying and making the most of my last 24 weeks with Cindies, I decided it would be a fantastic idea to sign myself up as Festival Director. The result? My beach holiday was largely spent sending emails in the hotel lobby; I know less about my dissertation topic than my cousin who is studying the same topic at school in Year 3, and I am now alarmingly comfortable with the concept of 'to IMDB' as a verb. On the other hand, every time I think about the 1st-3rd March (the festival dates) I want to dance..."

Matilda Greig on why philosophy is still important, starting with Jeremy Bentham:

"Something was only 'good', therefore, if it resulted in pleasure; 'bad' if it resulted in pain. From this, the philosophy of Utilitarianism arose, arguing that the right action is the one which creates the greatest happiness for the greatest number, and spawning a whole range of justifications for majority rule. Bentham's thoughts, however, had revolutionary implications which continue to be relevant in a world where the 'rightness' of gay marriage and abortion is debated on a global stage. If we follow his logic a little further, these implications become very interesting indeed."

Friday
28th

Saturday
29th

Sunday
30th

MUSIC

Dub Colossus Dub Band
THE JUNCTION 2, 8PM; £10
This world music band blends together their Ethiopian roots with dub reggae and jazz, bringing heavy rhythms to the dancefloor for their live performances.

Cambridge Unplugged
THE MICHAELHOUSE, 7.30PM; £8/£6
Music as Therapy International present an intimate folk and jazz concert in aid of Project Rwanda.



Martin Swarbrick
THE JUNCTION 2, 8PM; £10
Part of the Cambridge University Instrumental Ensemble, Martin has played a variety of instruments including the trumpet, saxophone and trombone.

FILM

Anna Karenina
VUE, 1.40PM, 4.45PM, 7.45PM; £6-8
Leo Tolstoy's epic tragedy is transformed in this glamorous cinematic adaptation that is dividing the critics. Join the conversation or simply admire Jude Law in all his lavish Russian splendour.

To Rome With Love
ARTS PICTUREHOUSE, 4.15PM; £6.50-9
Woody Allen's latest is a romantic comedy following the intertwining lives of inhabitants and visitors in the city of Rome. A must-see for any fans of the famous director.



Untouchables
ARTS PICTUREHOUSE, 4.15PM; £6.50-9
After critical acclaim, this bittersweet comedy follows the relationship between a carefree young man and his caretaker, a language teacher.

TALKS



New Poetry
FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, 3PM; FREE
Al-Saddiq Al-Raddi is a leading African poet who has written a series of poems responding to a collection of Sudanese artefacts. Translations of his poems will be read to an intimate audience.



The Science of Mathematics
NEWTON INST, 7.30PM; £5
Continuing the seminar series on mathematical physics, this talk explores the relationship between mathematics and physics.

VIEW

Thrill Me
CORPUS PLAYROOMS, 7.45PM; £6/5
Stephen Dolginoff's award-winning musical portraying the disturbing true story of a pair of 'thrill killers' who murdered a young boy in 1924 offers theatrical chills.



Tomb Treasures of Ancient China
FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, 10AM-5PM, FREE
An expansive collection of exotic artefacts from ancient royal China that reveals the cultural obsession with securing immortality.

'Girl From Victoria'
CORPUS PLAYROOMS, 7.45PM; £6/5
A one-off production exploring the struggles of a young woman in the Victorian era.

STAY IN

TV: The Great British Bake Off
IPLAYER
Genuinely the most tense programme on telly; baking really doesn't get any tougher than this.

Album: Green Day - ¡Uno!
The first part of the pop-punk trio's new trilogy of albums, each released two months apart. This first part throws back to the band's *Dookie*-era sound surprisingly successfully.



Food: Nando's
Downing's proximity to the food in Cambridge is a blessing. Pick up some Nando's peri-peri chicken to go.

GO OUT

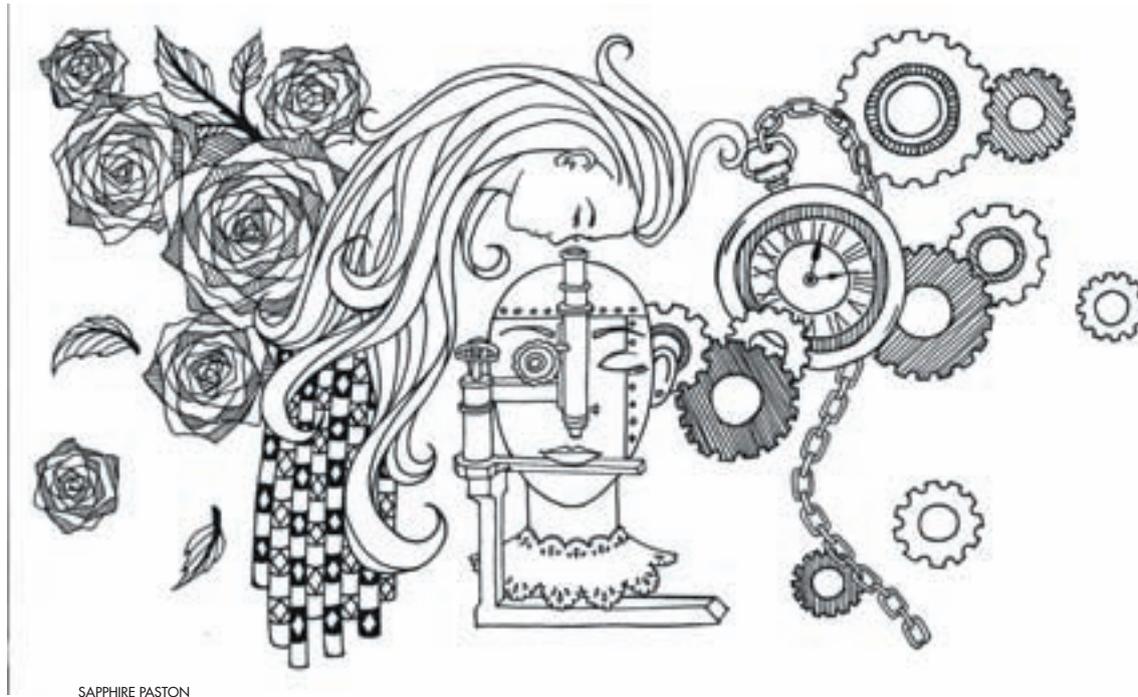
A Soviet Design For Life
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, 9AM-6PM; FREE
This new exhibition of twentieth-century Russian architecture and design includes everything from everyday food packaging to blueprints for Stalinist skyscrapers.



C.R.E.A.M.
FEZ, 10PM-3AM; £4/£3
Everyone get down to Fez on Sunday for the launch of a new university club night that is "moving away from the standard cheesy formula". Featuring student talent and DJs from around the UK.

Good G
BALLARE, 10PM
A brand new extravaganza featuring Baywatch-themed swimwear and bottles of V&A.

DOODLE OF THE WEEK



SAPPHIRE PASTON

The Cambridge week notoriously begins on Thursday; the *Varsity* week begins on Friday - go with ours. Only one day till the weekend plus there's something to keep you occupied on all fronts, every day. Here's the team's selection of the best Cambridge has to offer this week. Although of course the real glories of the Freshers' Week timetable - late-night pizza with new friends, awkward conversations with people you'll never see again - might not feature. If you've made it to the middle page and feel a little disoriented, take a moment to appreciate the gorgeous doodle of the week on your right, and, a little further over, Jethro Thompson's photos from his trip to Sri Lanka.

JETHRO THOMPSON

**Monday
1st**

**Carthy & Dave
Pick**

12, 8PM; £15
 Cambridge Folk Festival, these are an integral part in the history of British folk music.

**Tuesday
2nd**

**In The Locked Room and
Ghost Patrol**

MUMFORD THEATRE (ARU), 7.30PM; £17/£8.50
 Two short operas sung in English composed by Huw Watkins and Stuart MacRae that "explore the capacity of the mind to shape our lives."

**Wednesday
3rd**

The Wednesday Sessions

THE BOATHOUSE, 8PM; FREE
 Free acoustic, folk and blues session held every Wednesday at the Chesterton Road pub.

**Thursday
4th**



Stable

THEATRE, 4PM, 6.30PM, 9PM; £6.50-9
 Acclaim in France, this comedy about the friendship of a disabled millionaire and a girl who looks to be the foreign-embodiment of the year.

The Queen of Versailles

ARTS PICTUREHOUSE, 6.30PM; £6.50-9
 This documentary follows a billionaire couple building a garish mansion, charting the impact of the economic crisis upon their empire. A poignant embodiment of the modern American dream.



Looper

VUE, 14:50, 17:40, 20:30, £6-8
 Add some futuristic glamour to your Thursday evening with this science-fiction action film featuring Bruce Willis and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. Expect time-travelling, assassinations and general thrills.

Science of Ice Sheets

THEATRE, 5PM; FREE
 The Isaac Newton Institute series - a discussion of the science needed to predict sea-level rise.

Rhod Gilbert

CORN EXCHANGE, 8PM; £25
 The multi-award winning Welsh comedian performs his idiosyncratic brand of stand-up on his new live tour, complete with his infamous new tattoo of a flaming Battenberg.

Jeremy Hardy

THE JUNCTION, 8PM; £14/£5
 The witty star of *News Quiz* and *I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue* on Radio 4 brings his new show to Cambridge, following the release of *My Family and Other Strangers* in 2010.

Lunchtime Talks

KETTLE'S YARD, 1.10PM; FREE
 A lively introduction to Winifred Nicholson to mark the launch of an exhibition of her work in the gallery by Lizzie Fisher, Kettle's Yard Curator.

**'From Nowhere' -
A Rigby**

THEATRE, 9.30PM; £6/£5
 A production portraying the life of a young musician, exploring his resilience, fragility and celebrity.

Antony and Cleopatra

ADC THEATRE, 7.45PM; £8/£6
 Shakespeare's vivid depiction of obsessive passion and political turmoil explodes onto the ADC stage to mark the launch of this year's Cambridge University American Stage Tour.

**Cambridge Footlights-
'Perfect Strangers'**

ADC THEATRE 11PM; £6/£5
 Don't miss the final chance to see the Cambridge Footlights dazzle audiences with their bizarre sketches in their 2012 International Tourshow.



Anna Mexico

Best kept secret is their the most authentic Mexican in Cambridge. Go to Regent Street, get the delicious nachos and get the margaritos to go.

**Album: No Doubt- Push
and Shove**

After nearly a decade away, Gwen Stefani's classic 90s ska-pop band return with their first album since *Rock Steady*. Lead single 'Settle Down' is a riotous return to form with a killer chorus.



DVD: Dark Shadows

Tim Burton and Johnny Depp celebrate their 100th film together by remaking the 60's gothic soap opera. It's neither man's best work, but it has enough other glimpses of their ability to make it worthwhile.

Josh

11:30AM, £5/£3.75
 Every Monday night at the Regent Street Cinema. Revs attempts to revolutionize Cambridge nightlife with a new student night featuring three floors of music, cheap drinks deals and a DJ set from T4 presenter Jameela Jamil.

Hoi Polloi

REVOLUTION, 11PM-3AM; £4.50/£3.50
 Revs attempts to revolutionize Cambridge nightlife with a new student night featuring three floors of music, cheap drinks deals and a DJ set from T4 presenter Jameela Jamil.



**Snow Country: Woodcuts
of the Japanese Winter**

FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, 10AM-5PM; FREE
 As an autumnal chill hits Cambridge, this is the perfect time to admire a new selection of snowy prints by Japanese artists.



1. Opinion poll on the Falklands War from an April 1982 issue of *Varsity*

Falklands poll
Students backing Maggie

BY ANDREW CULF

As diplomatic moves gathered apace and the naval task force steamed on into the South Atlantic a majority of Cambridge students were this week broadly backing the government's handling of the Falklands crisis.

That's the main feature of a special **STOP PRESS** opinion poll which sought to gauge the reactions of students to the most serious diplomatic incident involving Britain since Suez.

65 per cent of those polled approved of the government's actions since the invasion. A massive 84 per cent thought that the decision to send the task force was the right one.

Do you approve or disapprove of the government's handling of the Falklands crisis since the invasion? (Excluding don't knows)
Approve: 65% Disapprove: 34%
Are the Falklands worth fighting for?
Yes: 61% No: 37%

Do you support the sending of the task force to back up diplomatic moves to solve the crisis?
Yes: 84% No: 15%

For the government, if such figures reflect public opinion as a whole, they are heartening statistics indeed. For the Prime Minister, herself, there was a sizeable vote of confidence. Only 32 per cent of those questioned thought that she should resign over the crisis, while a sizeable 66 per cent believed she should stay on at number ten.

Although there is strong support for the search for a negotiated settlement, backed up by force, student sympathy is likely to be alienated if the task force is actually put into a military confrontation. While 58 per cent are prepared to see the sinking of Argentinian ships, a majority are opposed to attempts to recapture the Falklands by force if loss of life is likely. An attack on the Argentinian mainland would meet with overwhelming opposition.

Would you support the sinking of Argentinian ships within the 200 mile zone around the Falklands?
Yes: 58% No: 37%

Should the British try to retake the Falklands by force, even if it means the loss of lives of both servicemen and islanders?
Yes: 44% No: 48%

Should Britain attack the Argentinian mainland?
Yes: 22% No: 74%

Should Britain use nuclear weapons to recapture the Falklands if necessary?
Yes: 4% No: 94%

The poll was conducted amongst a random sample of 100 students on April 19 and April 20. Pollsters: Andrew Culf, Andrew Rawnsley, Gill Parker, Gideon Rachman, Simon Rowe, Richard Spencer and Chris Lewis.

Are the Falklands worth fighting for?

The year was 1982. Argentina had just announced it had invaded the Falkland islands. **Yoav J. Tenenbaum** was the only Argentinean student at Cambridge. Looking back, he shares his memories of that time

I remember quite vividly when the phone rang. It was a few days following the Argentinean military invasion of the Falklands – or as we called them, the Malvinas Islands. On the other side of the line was a young voice. He introduced himself as a journalist at the local Cambridge newspaper, and told me that the newspaper had asked the University whether there were any Argentinean students studying there. Yes, he had been told, there was one student, pursuing his master's degree in International Relations. That student was me.

The young journalist went on to stress that I was the only Argentinean student at Cambridge, and said he wanted to interview me. I accepted on one condition – that my name would not be mentioned. I thought it was best to be cautious. After all, the Argentinean military junta then in power might not like what I was going to say. I held an Argentinean passport. Who knew what they might do to me?

Of course, it had escaped my attention that if there was only one Argentinean student registered at Cambridge, and the local newspaper published his opinion,



“It hurt me very much that young Argentinean conscripts might die for the wrong cause

2 **“The islands are known by historical fact to be Argentinian. It is not surprising that a military government should resort to invasion.”**

then anyone else wanting to find out who he was would not find it too difficult to do so.

I still remember that a day after the invasion I went to have a haircut. The person cutting my hair was Italian. I spoke to him in English and Spanish. He spoke to me in English and Italian. The place was full.

“Where are you from?” he asked me. Without hesitation, I replied immediately, “Argentina.” Everyone turned their heads towards me. Some smiled. Maybe they thought I was being funny. Who in his right mind would say he was from Argentina a day after the invasion? The friendly Italian became as red as a tomato. He lowered his voice and urged me, perhaps rather belatedly, that I should never say that I was from Argentina. He suggested that I should mention Mexico as an alternative place of origin.

I was never ill-treated for being an Argentinean. As a matter of fact, I actually became a sort of a celebrity at Cambridge. My academic supervisor, R.T.B. Langhorne, from St. John's College, once called me to his office. I thought he would want to discuss my thesis. I was wrong. He had spoken to the Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Sir Francis Harry Hinsley, and

2. Quote from April 1982 issue of *Varsity*

3. Argentinean posters, also taken from *Varsity* archives

4. Photo of the then Argentinean President, Leopoldo Galtieri, taken from same issue of the paper

5. From the mid '70s onwards, *Varsity* merged with the radical campaigning paper 'Stop Press'. Tab much?

6. One more Argentinean poster taken from aforementioned issue of *Varsity*



that both had agreed that if I should encounter any problem on account of my being Argentinean, the University would be there to help me. I was moved.

Similar expressions of personal support were not rare, and were not confined to Cambridge. I recall, a few months later, in the wake of the war, coming back from a trip abroad. The officer at Heathrow Airport who had to stamp my passport, turned to me and asked me: “May I ask whether you have been treated badly by people in this country due to the war?” I was surprised at his question. If at all, I expected some polite but firm questions, considering that I held an Argentinean passport. I replied that, quite the contrary, people had been very kind to me. There was a visible sigh of relief on his part. “I am so happy to hear that!”

When I had left Britain, a woman working for the airline with which I was due to fly, uttered at the sight of my passport, “An Argentinean Passport! How on earth were you allowed in?” She was joking, or so I thought. Among the students at Cambridge, I was considered the person to talk to about the conflict. Some of them, though, were disappointed. Being an Argentinean, they thought I would be all in favour of the invasion. Well, I wasn't. Indeed, I thought that, in principle, the British had every right to fight back, though I hardly relished the prospect of war, to say the least.

I made it clear that, conceptually, I kept separate the issues of the invasion and the legal question as to whether the Falklands/Malvinas Islands should belong to Britain or to Argentina. I was against the first, very much so.

I remember saying that my case was, in a way, similar to the case of an Italian who believed in parliamentary democracy opposing Mussolini's military invasion of Abyssinia back in 1935. I wasn't trying to draw an exact parallel between the Falklands/Malvinas and Abyssinia, of course. My example was clear to them, but so was their astonishment.

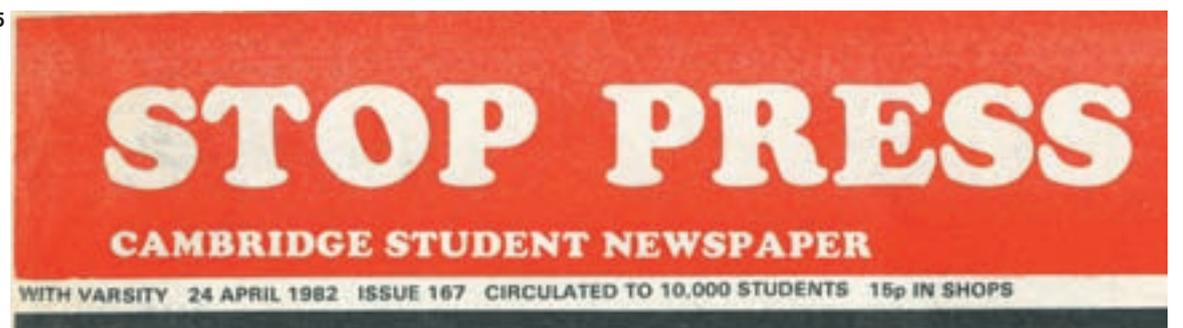
Students coming from former British colonies thought they had an ally in me. Their rhetoric was singularly hostile to Britain. They were surprised that mine was not. It hurt me very much that young Argentinean conscripts might die, in this particular case, for the wrong cause. I blamed the military junta, not the British government. Even British students found

“Even British students found themselves being more critical of their government's actions than I was

themselves being more critical of their government's actions than I was.

Many things in life happen unintentionally. As a result of the war, the military junta collapsed and democracy was re-established in Argentina. Paradoxically, Argentineans have to thank the British government for that. Well, maybe they have to thank the military junta then in power as well. It is sad, though, that it came at the expense of so many Argentinean and British lives. But I for one consider myself lucky to have been at Cambridge during that difficult time.

Dr. Yoav J. Tenenbaum is a member of the Diplomacy Program at the Political Science Department in Tel Aviv University.



FEATURES, FILM, BOOKS, MUSIC, ART & REVIEWS

A photograph of a brick building reflected in a puddle on a dark, textured pavement. The building is a multi-story structure with a prominent arched window. The reflection is clear and detailed, showing the texture of the bricks and the architectural details. The pavement is dark and has a rough, weathered appearance with some lighter patches. The overall mood is somber and artistic.

VARSlTY
Magazine

Getting By...

HARRY MICHELL

I'd always thought of myself as something of a *brave* individual.

My childhood hero was the ever-courageous Indiana Jones. That man grabbed danger by its anthropomorphized balls and refused to let go. He tamed lions without any basic training or rudimentary zoological education. He ran away from rolling boulders, made from polystyrene, sure, but definitely able to knock the wind out of you. I mean, he fought the Nazis, for God's sake!

As a kid I would spend my time a-daydreaming away, imagining myself wearing that stunning Actionman-cum-archaeologist getup, creeping through tombs and having gun-fights with mysteriously Western looking Arabs. As far as I was concerned, if I was placed in Indie's shoes I'd have no problem performing those fearless acts. Indeed, as far as I was concerned, stick me in a situation where I needed to screw my courage to the sticking-place and I would come out trumps. This same, ideological fancy remained with me until university. It never crossed my mind that I wouldn't - should the situation arise - be ready to step up to the plate, fend off some baddies and get myself a picture in the *Islington Gazette* or *Cambridge Evening News*. Or even *Varsity*. But this summer I had an experience which forced me to reevaluate this childhood delusion.

My mate Max and I were wandering home through Edinburgh at around four in the morning when we witnessed a fight break out; two drunken lads were - for want of a better phrase - beating the shit out of a third boy. Now this should have been the moment that my Indiana instincts kicked in, where I selflessly should have rushed over and saved the day. But I didn't. I'd calculated that the risk against my own health was too high and so just stood my ground. What a twat.

Thank heavens then for Max! Quick as a flash, he was pulling these thugs off and trying to get the boy to safety. Finally, I waded in and began ruffling the hair of the victim. It gets worse. In my bag I had a small bongo, being used in my Edinburgh show, and amidst the scuffle it suddenly slipped out and began rolling down the hill. Without thinking, I screeched, in a somewhat warbled and effeminate tone, the most embarrassing four words that have ever emitted from my lips: 'Oh no! My bongo!'

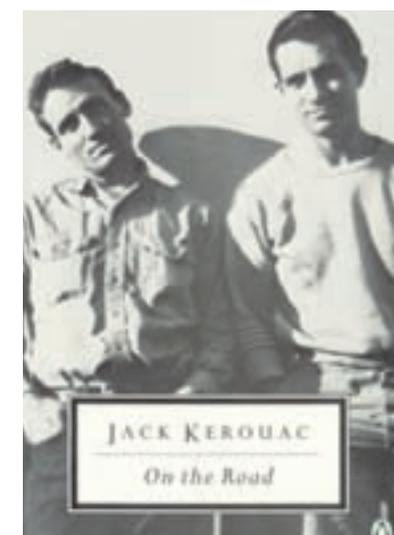
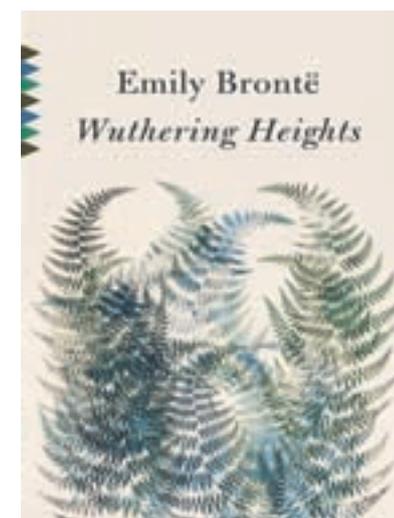
In that moment I realised that I, caring more for a shitty drum than for this poor guy's well-being, was a coward. It's odd, realising that, fundamentally, you're not Indiana but just a run-of-the-mill wimp. I've tried to let it change me, in a nauseous self-help book kind of way: being braver about the little things. I now blow my nose in public, for example, and yesterday actually helped a spider out of the bath (I named him Bernard and imagined him running off to an alcoholic wife-spider and dysfunctional family in the back garden). I'm still pathetic, yes, but just like the pounds and the pennies, maybe working hard at the little things now means one day the Indiana shtick will take care of itself.

Take off the reading glasses

The novel-turned-film is a subject of habitual disdain, but how fair are the criteria of our judgements? **Jim Ross** urges us to reconsider our prejudice towards cinema



Evocative and belligerent: Andrea Arnold's *Wuthering Heights*



Ready for their close-up

There is little in the world of cinema that gets the blood boiling or the nostrils flaring quite like the argument that can develop over literary adaptations. Rarely do adaptations meet the finicky criteria of those who come to the screen via the page. "It wasn't as good as the book," you'll often hear. However, at the core of this complaint is a snobbery that perfectly encapsulates the continuing disability of both the wider public and more narrow-minded bibliophiles to accept cinema as an expressive and technical art form, as well as a generator of filthy entertainment lucre.

The fact of the matter is - taking a step back - that judging a film on the basis of the source material is rife with prejudice and misconception. Cinema is an entirely separate medium that should be judged on its own terms, and this rarely happens in the case of famous literary adaptations. All too often, viewers go in expecting an illustration or scene-for-scene realisation of the book - expectations which are either unrealistic or ignore the requirements of the new medium.

For a hugely layered and complex novel, such as Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, it is totally unreasonable to expect the entire thematic and narrative heft to transfer to screen. To simply dismiss Joe Wright's (*Atonement*) adaptation as a vehicle for a shallow love story, or sniffily declare Keira Knightley's unsuitability for the role, is to ignore some very fine filmmaking. Set in and around a theatre stage, the scene changes happen before your eyes, and the full architecture of this fantasy theatre is used to the full.

Even the most lenient film critics, though, would struggle to describe Wright's adaptation as an unequivocal

success, lacking as it is in narrative engagement. The visuals often distract from the story, but it is a bold and visually inventive piece of work, which deserves credit for not simply providing an expensive illustration.

Something fitting more firmly into the 'controversial' category would be Andrea Arnold's version of *Wuthering Heights*. The film had a number of Brontë purists splurting tea into their bonnets at the liberties Arnold took with the story; at one stage having Heathcliff (cast as black) tell the assembled guests of the Earnshaw household to "Fuck off, you cunts." However, the choices

All too often, viewers go in expecting an illustration or scene-for-scene realisation of the book

Arnold made in her adaptation show her to be a provocative filmmaker, who knows which contemporary buttons to press. Arnold gives a grim kitchen-sink drama feel to the Earnshaw family, lending the film some sort of modern relevance, and breaking free from the stereotypes that often plague adaptations. In addition, her realisation of location in *Wuthering Heights* is simply fantastic, the sound and cinematography bringing the moors and landscape in as character in themselves. Far from taking excessive liberties with the story, she should be applauded for a vision that is both evocative and belligerent, offering something beyond the brand name of a classic novel.

On the reverse of this argument is the upcoming release of *On The Road*;

Walter Salles's (*The Motorcycle Diaries*) adaptation of Jack Kerouac's novel representing the concerns of the postwar Beat Generation. In Salles's case the feel of Kerouac's prose and characters have been captured reasonably well, and have been augmented with some fantastic cinematography. However - what is the point? As good as it looks, and as well acted as it is, Salles's film does not offer anything more than good visuals. It has fallen into the trap of becoming a slideshow to display along with the book, and that is a failing when it is put on film.

The nature of Kerouac's prose makes for a disjointed film that lurches unevenly through its narrative. Whilst the novel retains a strangely elegant spontaneity, it does anything but make for an engaging screenplay. Better than most adaptations, then, it shows that the desire for cinema to be subservient to the written word is the worst kind of artistic elitism. There is something about lines of text that seems to command greater respect. The idea is that the best prose allows for the imagination to fully realise the characters and worlds of which it speaks - beauty is not in the eye of the beholder, but the mind.

A failure to articulate this on screen is not viewed as inherent incompatible with the medium. It is viewed as a failure of the filmmaker's imagination, or as pandering to those who lack the ability to absorb the words into a personal vision. Cinema, however, by its very nature, is a director's medium, and can transcend the imagination of those observing. The language of cinema is not the language of literature. This is the reason novelisations of films are usually nothing more than pulp garbage.

Although cinema exists in many

guises as art, and overall as an art-business duality, lumping the likes of Béla Tarr in with Michael Bay is to ignore this fact. It is about time, especially when certain classic novels have been adapted over and over again, that films were judged on their own terms. Judging them on the basis of how well they represent the book is both an exercise in futility and completely uninteresting. We can expect another version of *Great Expectations* later this year, from Mike Newell, and Baz Luhrmann will be taking the reins on a lavish adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. Both have been adapted a number of times, and, as such, it is neither insightful nor helpful to judge the cinematic interpretation on the terms of the written word. Those who hold a misplaced pomposity, regarding literature as inherently superior, actu-

Cinema, by its very nature, is a director's medium

ally flag up an enormous hypocrisy. It could be argued that judging cinema on the terms of a written source is exactly the sort of brand name reductionism that would make the authors of classics spin in their graves. It is something that plagues cinema, with remakes of old films judged on the basis of their predecessor, rather than on what they deliver that is new. Let us not do the same when adapting literature for film. The next time you watch a cinematic adaptation, forget prior knowledge and narrative expectations. Take off the reading glasses.

The vanishing voice

Is the untreated voice disappearing from music? **Rory Williamson** discusses the omnipresence of vocal alteration

This is the death of auto-tune, moment of silence," prophesied Jay-Z in 2009; three years on and the buzz of mechanised vocals are all the more deafening. From the aural stabwounds inflicted by Britney's 'Piece of Me' to everything released by Ke\$ha, auto-tune certainly has a lot to answer for; however, it is merely the most prominent element of the wider dearth of untreated vocals in contemporary music.

While auto-tune homogenises the top 40 into one pitch-perfect voice, navel-gazing indie bands cloak their work in nostalgic reverb. With our ears now largely desensitized to such effects, we are consistently expectant of vocal perfection. Although albums like The Knife's *Silent Shout* have showcased the full potential of electronically mutating the human voice into unnatural forms, all too often a lack of such inventiveness means that vocals are sapped of their ability to engage the listener.

Take the much-hyped Grimes, for instance:

although the melodies of 'Genesis' and 'Oblivion' may be infectious, her effects-laden voice is an insubstantial wisp of an instrument, failing to connect on any humanly emotional level. Indeed, when she sings, "Soft



Grimes suffers a migraine from her own computerised vocals

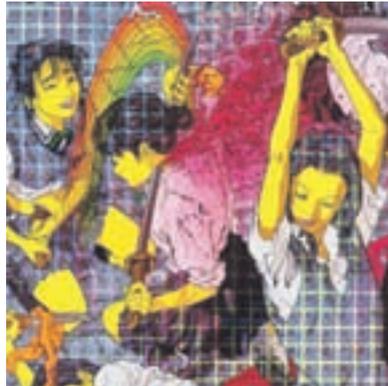
skin/You can touch me again," the lack of visceral impact becomes painfully clear. The effect of the reverb treasured by bands like Deerhunter and Camera Obscura can be similar: the muffled voices float off into the larger soundscape as the artificial echo places a distancing barrier between vocalist and listener.

Part of what such approaches are missing is a sense of the voice as a bodily instrument

Listening to more direct vocals like the sharp intakes of breath audible on Björk's *Vespertine*, it becomes clear that part of what such approaches are losing out on is a sense of the voice as a bodily instrument, as the product of dynamic muscular effort.

Fiona Apple's *The Idler Wheel*, released earlier this year, was a timely reminder of the stark power of hearing a human voice tear its way up the throat without alteration. It's as though Apple slept through both the birth of auto-tune and its proclaimed death. Her spartan arrangements foreground a voice that is at once imperfect and captivating; pitch issues, cracks and all, its spontaneous energy and rawness are at times ugly but always searingly direct. In the album's focus on the primal, emotional power of the untreated voice, it seems almost entirely removed from its contemporary, setting, but this in itself could be taken to be forcible commentary.

A movement away from vocal alteration does not necessarily mean a separation from the cultural moment, though, as



Laurel Halo's *Quarantine*

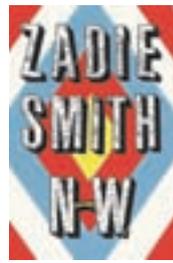
proved by Laurel Halo's *Quarantine*. Here, although Halo's voice appears in many electronically enhanced guises, the most otherworldly effect comes from the unedited, at times atonal delivery that acts as the record's defining feature.

Now that our ears are accustomed to artificial tonal perfection, Halo's decision has proved bold and divisive, as well as ironically avant-garde. The untouched, human roughness of these vocals slices through an entirely synthesised backdrop, creating a disjunction that is both jarring as well as excitingly modern, even futuristic. She makes the human voice sound alien by divorcing it from its surrounding landscape, and the result is as entrancing as it is disorienting.

Apple and Halo, though worlds apart musically, have both exploited the surprise with which the untreated voice is now heard; in so doing, they have pointed to the fact that what was once a stylistic choice has become a damaging prerequisite.

Ironically, then, in 2012 the sound of a pure, untouched human voice is more innovative than the use of most advanced technology. The disappearance of the voice serves only to make its return more vital and effective.

Conrad Landin runs away to NW3 for Zadie Smith's latest literary venture



Zadie Smith
NW

I started reading *NW* in Daunt's Books on the edge of Hampstead Heath, NW3, where Natalie Blake and Nathan Bogle end up near

the novel's close. Natalie is perplexed when Nathan reveals it is his first visit to the huge grassy expanse.

This difference in attitude has reams to say about their class identities. Yet both Natalie and Nathan, along with fellow protagonists Leah Hanwell and Felix Cooper, dwell in the shared shadow of the estate on which they grew up, a shadow that refuses to shrink regardless of how far they run

This is Willesden, or Kilburn, where north-west London's characteristic diversity, transience and anonymous intimacy is most concentrated.

There are plenty of 'London novels' featuring characters living independently and later colliding in the midst of their own personal crises. This is nothing new. Dickens's *Bleak House*, and Patrick Hamilton's trilogy *Twenty-Thousand Streets Under the Sky* both demonstrate the individual's difficulties in coming to terms with the anonymity of the metropolis.

Their technique of cutting between perspectives has seen a resurgence in London literature of late, as in the chart-topping works of Sebastian Faulks and John Lancaster. But such bestsellers can seem false in featuring only a tiresome, romantic liberal commentary on our wonderful and cosmopolitan capital.

Smith's last novel, *On Beauty*, reached moments of wondrous spectacle, yet at times had an air of over-perfection. So I approached *NW* with some caution, expecting meticulously-researched and perfected prose depicting characters too different for the author to identify with each of them.

Thankfully, this was not the case.

Although occasionally clichéd, none of the characters seem over-contrived – nor do any of her protagonists seem distant from what one imagines Smith's own thought processes might be. In some sections, the reader is also struck by the questionable Joycean style of Smith's prose, which is executed with varying degrees of success.

Hamilton, one of the finest chroniclers of the capital, is perhaps most successful in his depiction of characters worrying about how they are considered amongst their peers.

Smith captures her protagonists' questioning of the concepts of aspiration and continuous ascent, that are so crucial to modern existence, with similar success.

Smith captures her protagonists' questioning of the concepts of continuous ascent

Yet it does not come across as an obsession, or a devised attempt to make *NW* a "story of identity", or some other truism that might decorate the blurb.

Leah's questing for the world to stay still is evident from early on, while Natalie's desire for something other than material ascent appears more gradually; the second half of the novel prompted a significant change in my sympathies.

Indeed, the rashness in which characters act towards the book's conclusion is uneasy and unconvincing. There are other inconsistencies too – instead of carefully weaving parallel stories, it's more like Smith breaks off her novel every now and again, and starts afresh.

But imperfection is no bad thing in *NW*, a novel that recognises the natural disharmony of a life that remains uncomfortable, even for its success stories.

● Published 27th August 2012 by Hamish Hamilton

THE COMIC LEWIS WYN



Modernising the Victorians

Following the opening of the Tate's Pre-Raphaelite exhibition, **Anna Souter** considers the continuing significance of the famous Brotherhood

Until recently, the Pre-Raphaelites have been relegated by modern taste to a murky backwater of 'Victoriana', thought to embody a quaint vision of sentimental escapism propagated by the upper classes. With a few notable exceptions, this backwater is where they have rested, since their decline in popularity around the advent of twentieth-century Modernism. In 1935, the Tate was able to purchase Burne-Jones's *Love Leading the Pilgrim* for a mere £94 10s, testifying to the low regard in which the movement has been held. However, emerging reappraisals of the Pre-Raphaelites emphasise the surprisingly revolutionary nature of the movement, its members, and its artistic output.

This is precisely what Tate Britain's autumn blockbuster exhibition takes pains to demonstrate. *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde* attempts, as its title suggests, to rescue these artists from cultural ignominy and to

showcase their radical vision within their artistic and social contexts.

It is perhaps no coincidence that the Tate has chosen to launch such a milestone exhibition in a year which has seen a significant emphasis on all things British. The Pre-Raphaelites' musical peers have seen a similar resurgence, as evinced by the proliferation of British composers such as Elgar and Vaughan Williams at the BBC Proms this summer. This is in many ways a result, both directly and indirectly, of a cultural coup to capitalise on this decade's holy trinity of Britishness (the Royal Wedding, the Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympics).

But the Pre-Raphaelite movement can strike a resounding chord with any twenty-first-century audience, British or otherwise, thank to its combination of realism and idealism, high-minded socialism and business acumen, art and craft. The movement began in 1848 when three young

artists somewhat presumptuously named themselves the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais. Attempting to throw off the

A combination of realism and idealism, high-minded socialism and business acumen

shackles of the Royal Academy, which claimed a monopoly on artistic taste, the Brotherhood espoused the ideas of the famous art critic John Ruskin, drawing particularly on his respect for all things medieval and on the perceived importance of painting from nature. When they secured the man himself as patron and champion, their success was assured.

As the exhibition demonstrates, although the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood only existed for five years, the founders and other associated artists continued to develop the ideas of the Brotherhood for a further quarter of a century. The movement arguably contributed to the nascent Symbolist, Aesthetic, and Arts and Crafts movements.

One of the most central pieces in the exhibition is not a painting by one of these artists, but a piece of furniture designed and made by women. William Morris's bed, taken from his country home at Kelmscott, provides a centrepiece to the room in the exhibition devoted to Pre-Raphaelite design

(another vital, often forgotten, legacy).

The hangings and counterpane were designed and created by Morris's daughter, May, pointing to the central role of craft in the Pre-Raphaelite vision and detracting from the popular image of the Brotherhood as a group of white middle-class males intent on portraying women as sexualised objects.

William Morris, a second-generation Pre-Raphaelite and protégé of Rossetti, has often been somewhat marginalised in Pre-Raphaelite scholarship. However, he is a figure who embodies many of their aims and interests, and who arguably speaks most convincingly to our modern age.

Morris was no painter (as his only known easel work, *La Belle Iseult*, demonstrates), but his other talents made up for this failing.

Known primarily to his contemporaries as a poet, he was also a committed and brilliant designer, translator, printer, socialist, conservationist, craftsman and business man.

His abhorrence of mass-manufactured goods, combined with his need to make a living, led Morris to take up the rather modern occupation of running a business. Under his guidance, the Pre-Raphaelite interior design firm Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. became a commercial and artistic

success, and still flourishes today.

The firm's beautiful and practical hand-made home furnishings embody his mantra of 'art for life'. This aspect of the Pre-Raphaelite ideal resonates particularly strongly today; an age which values comfort and informality in the home, and which is increasingly aware of its subjection to trends of mass-manufacturing and marketing.

As an ardent socialist, Morris was painfully aware that his costly labour-intensive designs could only be afforded by a social elite. Yet in bringing artistic design into the home and into public spaces such as the South Kensington Museum, he brought art to the domestic sphere of the

masses in an unprecedented way.

Morris claimed "I do not want art for a few, any more than I want education for a few or freedom for a few". His version of the Pre-Raphaelite vision suggests that he was a man of our time, committed to expanding the definition of art to include all areas of craft and design, bringing art and beauty into every sphere of life.

Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde, Tate Britain, 12 September 2012 - 13 January 2013, £14.



Edward Burne-Jones, 'Love Leading the Pilgrim' c.1896

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM



Above: William Morris carpet

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

THIS WEEK ONLINE

Tanya Goldhaber discusses the rise and implications of self-publishing...

The saga of the struggling writer is well-known. As a motivational lecture, it is common to hear of the dozens of rejection letters sent to authors such as J.K. Rowling, James Joyce, and Dr Seuss, who each went on to become incredibly successful. Today, however, those authors may well have decided to circumvent the traditional publishing process altogether.

Self-publishing is a rising industry, and although it has given a voice to thousands of aspiring writers whose work would otherwise remain invisible, it has raised many concerns about the future of both traditional publishing and literature in general. While some fear that the onslaught of new texts will lower the bar on overall book quality, others are concerned that the J.K. Rowlings and James Joyces of the world might get lost in the overgrowth of unregulated prose.

"Until recently, what got through the pipeline was a minuscule amount of what readers wanted to read," says I.G. Fredrick, a self-published author of erotic fiction who has gone through the traditional publishing route in the past.

Read the rest at www.varsity.co.uk

Rachel Watters checks in at the latest stop of Woody Allen's European tour – and finds it to be his least inspiring, most rushed journey yet

To Rome With Love

Starring: Jesse Eisenberg, Woody Allen, Penélope Cruz

The apprehension one feels when settling down to watch contemporary Woody Allen films feels something akin to watching a friend in a dodgy play; you know that your friend is gifted but simultaneously worry that the £7 ticket price and your mate's time could have been better spent.

Those hoping that Allen had returned to (near) peak form following the whimsical brilliance of *Midnight In Paris* will be left disappointed by his Roman offering.

Typically, Allen has assembled a capable Italian and American cast against a backdrop of idyllic piazzas and cafés curiously free of conspicuous tourists. However, these assets cannot rescue the film from scoring far more misses than hits.

The weakness of *To Rome With Love* is not a lack of creative talent – rather, a poor structure which spreads the talent of its cast too thinly and stretches certain vignettes long past the point of being engaging or funny.

Of all four stories, the two Italian tales are the most successfully executed. The farcical sex comedy between newlyweds Milly and Antonio, and Anna, the call girl mistaken by Antonio's family as

his bride (played by the bewitching Penelope Cruz), provides most of the film's sporadic laughs.

Allen also weaves in the tale of Leopoldo Pisanelli, a middle-aged office worker and complete nobody – perhaps heeding criticism that his films tend to focus on

The comedic potential of this plot is exhausted by the forty minute mark

wealthy expats at the expense of ordinary citizens – who suddenly finds himself a national celebrity and paparazzi target.

In a post-Kardashian world, the notion that someone could be famous simply for being famous doesn't seem too far-fetched. Yet the comedic potential of this plot is exhausted by the forty minute mark and after that it begins to feel like a tedious Mr Bean outtake.

Leopoldo's story proves a strong contrast with that of a stagefright-struck opera singer, Giancarlo, discovered by opera director Jerry (played by Allen himself, who sends up his nebbish public persona.) Jerry embraces the limelight

while his protégé shrinks from its lustre.

It seems that Allen wants to say Something Important about the world we're living in. A world in which merit, or indeed doing anything remarkable at all, is no longer a pre-requisite for fame. But the point is hard to make out amidst four narratives in different time frames. Perhaps this observation might have been sharper in a less cluttered film.

There are moments where one can see flickers of the old Woody Allen; the continuing visual gag of the opera singer who can only sing in the shower and thus performs in an onstage cubicle. Or Alec Baldwin's turn as John, acting as

the conscience of a young architecture student named Jack, which is eerily reminiscent of Bogart in *Play It Again Sam*.

However, the passionless combination of Jack (Jesse Eisenberg) and out-of-work actress Monica (Ellen Page) drags and is only redeemed by Baldwin's frequent sardonic warnings that Monica is not as intellectual or worldly as she seems.

This year's project feels like an unfinished script filmed too quickly. With another two films in the pipeline for 2013 and 2014, perhaps if the the prolific filmmaker would be wise to take some extra time on these next works, he can delight us once again.



Antonia Stringer



Doorways



L-R, top to bottom: Thea Hawlin, Thea Hawlin, Katherine Morris, Thea Hawlin, Clare Cotterill, Katherine Morris, Clare Cotterill, Clare Cotterill

Busy Doing Nothing

CLAIRE HEALY



When I proposed writing a column on the subject of how easily I get distracted, I didn't account for how this would impede my getting a column written at all. Between writing this first sentence and my next, I have watched a video of a husky puppy learning to climb stairs, read about Karl Lagerfeld's cat – she likes iPads and lace (antique) – and learnt just how much K Mids lookalikes can earn a day (clue: a lot). Before I book in those extensions, however, there is yet a column to be conquered. Word count check and I'm a hundred down, but far from Cramp-ton Columbus standards yet.

Thus, to get over a self-willed aptitude for, well, nothing, I decided it was high time to get down to doing some things. And as a new term dawns at the world's most illustrious university – actually, the second, since MIT topped us (told you, stickler) – where better to begin than at the beginning. Life is short and Cambridge terms even shorter, and if I'm actually going to get anything done this time around it's all in the preparation.

Millions of freshers embarking on their student career equals millions of hyperventilating mothers panic-purchasing rape alarms and tea-towel ten-packs. We brush them aside, ensuring them that 'soon you won't have any idea what I'm up to' whilst rolling our eyes and blowing cigarette smoke in their face (probably). Truth is, three years down the line I can recognise the importance of packing right in order to live college life right. The following are some of the items I believe everyone should bundle in their bindle. Oh, and don't say you'll just buy these items *once you're in Cambridge*, because between swap gear and bop gear, sonny, you just ain't gonna have the time.

1. ALL the shoes. When I suddenly had the urge to get fit and go running in the New Year, I didn't have any trainers with me, so I just didn't go. This year my tasteful pink Reeboks are packed and field-ready. (Gym instalment to come. Gulp.) Boys: you might not deem heels an essential at this point, but as the Denim drag nights have proved for legions of alpha males, cross-dressing is the new shirt and chinos.

2. A potted plant. Not only will it give your room the aura of a dream corner office, but it presents a constant source of inspiration for the idle at heart. By removing CO₂, emitting positive psychological effects and looking pretty, a well-placed potted plant screams 'What have YOU done today?'

3. Tea-towels. I still feel bad for borrowing a neighbour's tea towel in first term, first year. You know who you are.

Oh, and things you could do without so that you are not tempted to remain busy doing nothing: Downton Abbey box sets, slipper socks, all snooze buttons. In fact, maybe just don't bring bedding at all. Have I gone crazy already? Am I soon to be replaced by a cat with an iPad?

Only the next eight weeks of self-transformation will tell...

With each new term comes a vast array of doors of opportunity; for the next group of freshers who are stepping into these hallowed halls, the variety of options will seem limitless.

Every week, *Varsity* will feature a variety of pictures of architecture from around Cambridge. Want to see your work in the paper? Next week's theme is stairways; email your contributions to magazine@varsity.co.uk!

Aaron Watts enjoys an evening of instrumental dinner music with frustrating constraints but still resulting in rewarding exuberance

A Musical Feast

West Road Concert Hall, Wednesday 19th September

Johann Hermann Schein, *Suite from Banchetto Musicale* (1617)

Thomas Simpson, *Taffel Consort* (1621)

Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber, *Suite III from Mensa Sonora* (1680)

Georg Philipp Telemann, *Production II from Musique de table* (1733)

Academy of Ancient Music - Richard Egarr, director & harpsichord

The absurdity of its 'historical' pretensions aside, the Academy of Ancient Music's exploration of a relatively unknown musical nook had much to commend it.

This was an evening of instrumental dinner music ('*Tafelmusik*', literally 'table music') plucked from the Germanic states of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe.

Two 'suites' from Schein's *Banchetto Musicale* (1617) were first in the

offing. Playing was nimble, spirited, and meticulously clear. It was remarkably undemanding to trace Schein's thematic development – drawn from keyboard variation technique – across the dance-style movements.

Rhythmic figurations occupied the foreground in the fifth suite: punchy and unhackneyed, especially in the triple-meter *Gagliarda*.

Inevitably, though, we were deprived sonorities that might have made the seventh suite's Phrygian-mode *Padouana* truly compelling.

Extracts from the collaborative *Taffel Consort* collection (1621) followed. The account of Dowland's elaborate polyphony was a little hard-driven: no doubt another casualty of the ensemble's 'period' ambition. Dowland's fellow English émigré to Germany, Thomas Simpson, was nonetheless

given better treatment.

His playful reworking of the English folksong, 'Bonny Sweet Robin', was genuinely lovely – and looked forward to the subjective possibilities that soon revolutionized the quartet genre that the composer helped to inaugurate.

We might have done without another set of dances-for-listening, this time by Biber, but hitherto relatively plain inner-part writing gave way to a much richer string texture in a well-mannered account of the A-minor suite from his *Mensa Sonora* (1680).

Still, I longed for the cerebral perfectness of Couperin, who had the nous to intersperse dance forms with pieces that were later memorialised in Ravel's *Tombeau*.

The second half of the concert showcased the second 'Production' from Telemann's fashionable *Musique de*

table (1733) – a pick-and-mix work that surely rivals Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos* (c. 1721) and Handel's *Concerti Grossi* (1739) in scale and reach.

The ensemble had an astute command of Telemann's cheery idiom, recasting his trademark symmetrical rhythms and direct melodies into a range of nicely differentiated styles.

Aided by woodwinds and brass, the orchestra's timbre finally began to bloom, initially during the fugal section at the centre of the overture, and then later, spectacularly, as the exuberant conclusion approached.

This musical feast, despite its unhelpful constraints, offered plenty to 'assist and cherish Nature in her first concoction' as Milton envisaged in 1644.

Gabrielle Schwarz takes a trip to the UL and back in time to Soviet Russia

A Soviet Design For Life University Library

The University Library is famed as one of three legal deposit university libraries in England, but don't dismiss it as simply a book-borrowing location. Aside from its excellent tearoom, it also mounts a major biannual exhibition. The current exhibition features a selection of items collected by Dr Catherine Cooke (1942-2004) relating to all aspects of Soviet design. These artistic artefacts, as varied as product packaging and architectural plans, are

curated to tell a fascinating history of Soviet society.

In 1932 the Soviet state officially

I was particularly surprised to discover the extent to which the state-endorsed style permeated...

endorsed the artistic style 'Socialist Realism', cutting off the previously flourishing avant-garde. The exhibition does not display any of the more original or subversive divergences from that earlier aesthetic, except for one of the most valuable items in the exhibition: a letter, written during the Revolution and signed by 32 artists against the uniformity of Socialist Realism.

This seems a shame, but it is this uniformity that is one of the most powerful aspects of the collection. For the viewer with little prior

understanding of terms such as 'Constructivism' and 'Socialist Realism', the exhibition provides a clear and thorough education in the unchanging aesthetic and ideology of Soviet design.

I was particularly surprised to discover the extent to which the state-endorsed style permeated: far more deeply than the expected stock propaganda posters of glorious potato-farmers or rockets flying into space. Cooke's collection ranged from Sputnik cigarette boxes celebrating the Soviet Union's space programme to aquatic sport fabric patterns encouraging its sport programme.

The overt ideology driving every aspect of design sometimes verged on the amusingly absurd such as the bathos of the 'fantasy' section featuring grand architectural plans for a 'Palace of the Soviets' to be crowned by a 100m high statue of Lenin. The scheme eventually fell through and was converted into a swimming pool. However, these objects can also raise provocative questions about the artistic value or even status

of such 'design'. The exhibition displays a page from Alexei Gan's 1922 book *Constructivism*, with the translated words underneath: "Down with eclecticism! Hail CONSTRUCTIVISM," and a few lines later, "Death to art!"

Down with eclecticism! Death to art!

It is repeatedly pointed out how many of the grand Soviet architectural designs fell through, "an impossible dream for a country in civil war and economic crisis." The question is posed: can this imposed Soviet aesthetic be viewed as art, or to the contrary, as the death of art? So next time you can't find what you're looking for in the UL, why not take a break from the bookshelves and visit the Soviet world?

● UL, 4th July 2012 to 6th April 2013, admission free.



UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Hattie Peachey reviews Chris O'Dowd's latest TV venture – is it the new Father Ted? Go on, go on...

I never had an imaginary friend. Martin Moone (David Rawle), on the other hand, has trumped most children – his imaginary friend is Chris O'Dowd; a strapping bloke complete with beard, hat and a treasury of good ideas.

O'Dowd's new show, *Moone Boy*, began this autumn on Sky1 and, although I'm not convinced it's going to make everyone laugh uproariously until drinks pour from their nostrils, O'Dowd is certainly striving for something unique.

The show is an exploration of the innermost workings of an ordinary child's extraordinary mind juxtaposed against the backdrop of real, adult events and social issues unfolding in rural Ireland in the 1980's,

gaining comic momentum as occurrences unfold.

In the third episode of the series, set against the backdrop of the fall of the Berlin Wall, Martin, who "hasn't got the balls" to jump over the wall to school, decides to knock it down in order to "shorten his commute". Eleven-year-old boys who watch *Dynasty* set against a jaunting, *Five Go Mad in Dorset* soundtrack, made for a very enjoyable episode. O'Dowd has clearly taken some inspiration from his *The IT Crowd* colleague Richard Ayodade's debut film, *Submarine*; both share a dash of Wes Anderson's style.

My highlight of the series came in the opening episode, when the fathers of Boyle let us into a little secret – their

meetings weren't really for playing poker – "We don't even know how to play!" a rotund and beaming father announced to Martin's dad Liam (played by the excellent Peter McDonald).

At times I felt that women were being cast into a role a little too obviously carved out for them. Still, by episode three, Debra steals the show, even if her plan appears to fail.

In a tautly constructed script, the episode's plotlines were woven together to illustrate how different spheres of reference could collide with heart-warming results. Although at times a little lost in space, *Moone Boy* certainly abounds with energy, imagination and brazen facial hair.

Sky1, Fridays, 9.30pm



Moone Boy
Sky1

Ella Griffiths manages to unravel the plaudit-pulling band's rewardingly wonky latest LP



Grizzly Bear
Shields

I really wanted to hate Grizzly Bear. I didn't feel as if I could pretend to like another mildly experimental, wacky-jumpered art-house band after Dirty Projectors and Animal Collective hipster-ed their way into my life.

This time, however, the hyperbolic adjectives filling indie blogs were right: Grizzly Bear are gorgeous. Meshing dense soundscapes with swooning pop-folk melodies, *Shields* is a fantastically complex album created by a band with an immaculate mastery of their talents.

After the mainstream success of 2009's *Veckatimest*, the Brooklyn outfit have refined their luxurious chamber-pop into a deeper and increasingly focused collection of tracks.

In the anthemic 'Sun in Your Eyes', the dramatic climaxes seem like the work of a more mature and ambitious group of

musicians. While lush, intertwining vocals are still a vital characteristic of their music, *Shields* lets the occasional vocal imperfection and flawed pitch soften their intricate song structures.

Stand-out track 'Yet Again' is a perfect example of how Grizzly Bear manage to preserve this organic warmth despite their mathematically-precise instrumental backdrops. With Edward Droste's crooning vocals soaring over rugged chords, the multi-layered track mixes squalling distortion with Beach Boys-esque harmonies to great effect.

The shuffling and twisting 'Sleeping Ute' is just as interesting, requiring the listener to decipher threads of sound in what seems like musical chaos, but slowly reveals meticulous craftsmanship. Sultry melodies

are seldom overshadowed by elaborate arrangements, as in the waltzing 'A Simple Answer' that anchors an absorbing sketch with echoing synths in rollicking piano tunes.

The band are connoisseurs of textures, seamlessly shifting from husky folk to the orchestral quirks in order to create an eclectic selection of songs.

Older fans may mourn the addictive tunes and sunny atmosphere of their past albums when first listening to these restless, complicated tracks. However, Grizzly Bear always stay on the right side of treating music as an alienating sonic experiment, keeping their songs both controlled and spontaneous.

The indie gift that keeps on giving, *Shields* is an album that grows more interesting, wonky and sublime with every listen. I only wish I'd liked them sooner.

Eurydice Paris-Falcon

Ah, the sweet succulent sublimity of October. As the famous romantic poet Daniel Cleaver once said, the season of mist and yellow fruitfulness has arrived once again like a month that comes round at exactly the same time every year.

But cometh the autumn, cometh the freshers, and soon the hallowed cloisters of our beloved university will be filled with expectant 18-year-old faces, full of the bloom of results success (I got 99 UMS points, on average) and eager for academic exploration.

A positive scenario, you may be musing. Yet, as a person of astonishingly broad mind, I must admit that I was a little alarmed when, whilst reading *Le Monde* on my balcony in Venice, the realisation struck me like a boltus Jupiterus (my Latin in one of my best attributes, if you'll forgive me blowing my own euphonium) that due to the recent fee rises there will surely be a dire dearth of students who have chosen to expunge their minds by taking gap years in this coming intake.

Whilst I firmly believe that holding any political view aside from hipster vegetarianism and a vague commitment to the marijuana legalisation cause is nearly as gauche as carrying money about your person, I can't help but feel that this will have drastically reduced the number of

freshers that I will be able to connect with over life-changingly expensive travelling experiences, conspiratorially nursing a sloe gin and bitter lemon and a wry, knowing smile.

BUT do not give up hope, my fertile-minded freshmen friends: I myself remember well the days

of freshersdom, or as I prefer to call it BCE, and my advice is this: realise that it's easy to come here and not lose your sense of individuality.

I myself have maintained a cultivated hip and happening personal style that few have managed to copy: the sighs of admiration I get as I saunter past the English Faculty, vintage brogues in hand and one hoop earring cocked towards the wind, have given me thechutzpah required to put passive-aggressively labelled yoghurt in the ADC clubroom fridge with the best of them, firmly claiming my place in the post-Kambar Cambridge arts scene with aplomb.

The infamous cartoon zoologist and sultry TV chef Nigel Thornberry once wrote that the key in life is always to be yourself, unless you can be yourself in quirky fair isle, and I agree entirely.

The coming academic year will sort the wheat from the large name on campus chaff, and I can only hope to welcome newcomers into the thinking fold.



Look again at Cambridge

Avalon Lee-Bacon explores the Cambridge art scene and its wealth of opportunities

The University of Cambridge is synonymous with many things, from its ancient heritage and impressive legacy to punishing exams. Something that may not instantly spring to mind, however, is the flourishing art scene. Yet, Cambridge's cultural value is rarely acknowledged. Indeed, both the city itself and the university's colleges are rife with artistic activity, which, more often than not, are free to explore.

The Fitzwilliam Museum stands on Trumpington Street, opposite another Cambridge institution: Fitzbillies Bakery. Modern site-specific sculpture stands in the gardens, but inside, masterpieces by Titian sit alongside Impressionist *études*, contemporary works next to medieval panel paintings. With such variety on display, the Fitzwilliam has something to interest almost everyone: whether that be painting or sculpture, weaponry or coins. On November 7th, *Love Art After Dark* returns: hosted by the Fitzwilliam Museum Society, art, music and wine will collide as the museum opens after hours.

As the former home of Jim Ede – once a curator at the Tate Gallery – Kettle's Yard stands in contrast to the more traditional layout of the Fitzwilliam Museum. Although it is currently undergoing partial renovation, Kettle's Yard is a unique and fascinating space: left exactly as it was at his 1973 departure, the collection is displayed within the structure of a home, albeit one filled with canonical examples of modernism by the likes of Gaudier-Brzeska and Ben Nicholson. Adjacent to the cottage converted by Ede sits a newer building, designed to hold temporary exhibitions – the current Winifred Nicholson show (running from 29th September to 21st December) is a must-see.

Museums aside, the colleges themselves hold notable works. Corpus

Christi is famed for its rare collection of Medieval manuscripts, whilst Jesus' grounds contain pieces by sculptors such as Barry Flanagan, Antony Gormley and the Chapman Brothers. For those feeling something is missing, head up the road to Murray Edwards, whose walls are filled with intriguing works by female artists: addressing feminist issues of identity and equality.

For those interested in contemporary art, October has some exciting events in store. The exhibition *Text&Context* creates 'encounters' with text-based works spread around the city, focused on the interconnection of art, language and location. The displays will be as varied as the 25 artists involved, from a sound piece outside Churchill College to the novelty of a nine meter book next to the Faculty of English.

Thanks to the mass of creativity present within the student body, Cambridge also offers many opportunities for students themselves to get directly involved with the creation, or curation, of art. Last year, an Affordable Art Fair was held in Trinity College. Run by a group of students, the show allowed Cambridge students to receive exposure, as well as payment, for their works. Likewise, student-run exhibitions were put on throughout the year, from solo exhibitions in alternative art space The Shop, to *Art and Faith: New Ways of Seeing* – an inter-faith show organised by two theology students. Allowing five students to show alongside two professional artists, the exhibition fostered dialogue between religions and explored the link between art and scripture. Funded by the university, these exhibitions allow students to create something out of their love of art.

There are a multitude of practical activities available for the keen artist. Most colleges run their own live



LIVIA WANG

drawing sessions: King's maintains its reputation for individuality by hosting a female-only class, utilising student models. Pembroke's art and photographic society holds social events, classes and competitions; it even possesses a dark room. For more direct teaching on varied themes, King's Arts Centre is ideal. Holding classes at various points during the week (featuring topics such as 'learning from the masters') the centre provides free

materials, whilst also allowing supervised time in their studio and its 'messy room'. Established in the 1970s, the centre provides opportunities both to learn and to practise art.

Cambridge's wealth of opportunity for artists and art lovers alike leaves no room for doubt at the city's prowess and ability to compete both with other universities – as well as major cities in the United Kingdom.

“Amputations, Etc.”

A CLOSER LOOK AT ART

Dawn Cole, winner of the V&A Prize at the 2011 International Print Biennale, created this etching in response to her great aunt's war-time experiences. In 1915, Cole's aunt, Clarice, was posted to France to work as a Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse, where she kept a diary of her experiences. Based on lace-work, this piece is darker than it seems: the 'stitches' of it are in fact letters, which spell out phrases taken from the diary. Taking account of the horrific injuries suffered by the soldiers, Clarice writes, in chillingly unemotional prose, phrases such as: “Jan 2nd 1916: Men had eyes removed” and “Dec 21st 1915: Gas boy died”. This print takes its name from the phrase which is repeated throughout the diary – “Amputations, Etc.”; this brisk phrase has horrific connotations, made worse by the seeming lack of emotion. The motif of lace has also been taken from the aunt's patterns for crotchet and lace-work, samples which were found in an earlier diary of hers. Indeed, 'lace' is derived from the Latin word 'laqueus', or 'noose' – the artist adding more implications of death, building on the macabre undercurrent which runs through this seemingly innocent and decorative lace-work. Through her transformation of domestic accessories into wartime memorial, Cole preserves and honours the memories of those involved in the War and reminds us of its horrors.

Naomi Pallas

“Amputations, Etc.” is on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Naomi Pallas decides that the Artist is most certainly Present in Matthew Aker's new film

For nearly four decades, Marina Abramovic has been challenging, confronting and shocking the art world with her fearless and completely unique performance art.

The *Artist is Present* follows the progress of the 2010 MoMA retrospective dedicated to the Serbian artist's work. The documentary begins as Abramovic puts the final touches to her exhibition, following the self-acclaimed 'grandmother of performance art' (she was 63 when the film was made) whilst she creates and performs her newest piece. The MoMA exhibition features pure performance art: with re-performances, photographs and videos of her seminal works – as well as one new addition to her oeuvre: the performance piece, 'The Artist is Present'.

The film traces a move away from her previous, more theatrical style of performance; in 'Rhythm 5' (1974), she lay inside a five pointed star, set it on fire and subsequently passed out due to lack of oxygen, while in other pieces she cut a pentagram into her stomach and whipped herself. This move shows Abramovic create 'The Artist

is Present' as a piece which is quietly intense. Sitting at a wooden table, on a simple wooden chair, the artist invites members of the public to sit opposite her at the table, one by one, repeating this ritual daily for three months. Abramovic then stares into the eyes of her visitors unflinchingly, creating what she calls “an energy dialogue” with the member of the audience.

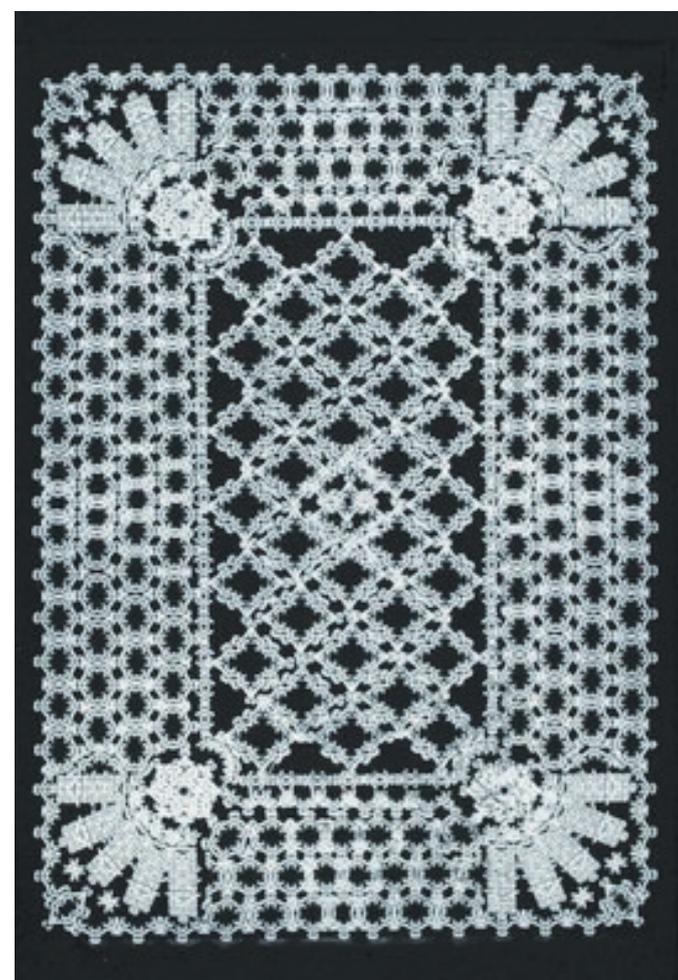
The results are surprising – the film shows people moved to tears, raising their hands to their hearts; often Abramovic herself is seen with glistening eyes. It is the longest duration solo work of her career, and the physical and emotional strain she suffers is clear throughout the film; she says that at first, the mere thought of performing the piece “made [her] nauseous.” Critic Arthur Danto observes that the piece represents an entirely new experience in the history of art – “for most masterpieces people stand in front of it for thirty seconds. Mona Lisa: thirty seconds. But people come and sit here all day” – indeed, a woman sits in the seat for over three hours, to the anger of those waiting in line.

By the end of the documentary, director Matthew Aker has created an almost religious icon out of Abramovic – her long dress is priest-like, and the audience seems to transform

the museum into a place of worship, staring at the artist with extreme reverence. This idealisation is the main flaw in an otherwise inspiring film. The delirium and excitement of the crowds are seen – with some people sleeping on the pavement to get a chance to sit at the table – but only a glimpse of one of the most exciting questions raised by Abramovic's work is seen: is it art?

Akers celebrates the artist, and praises her genius for making people slow down in a busy world. However, he does not pause to question the deeper reasons behind her work. Interestingly, on the extras, footage is seen of people dismissing her piece, saying it was uncomfortable and unnecessary. However, all that makes the final cut are exclamations of life-changing art. No criticism is heard.

Despite this shortcoming, the film is still a hugely enlightening study of a sub-genre of art which is often dismissed, and goes a long way in establishing Abramovic's position as a 'serious artist'. Throughout the film – as ex-lover and MoMA curator Klaus Biesenbach explains – “Marina is never not performing”: it is this charisma which make her dramatic ideas so palatable to the audience.



“Amputations, Etc.”, Dawn Cole, Solar Plate Etching, 2011

Marina Abramovic: The Artist is Present

★★★★★

STAGE DOOR

FRED MAYNARD



Welcome, luvvies, non-luvvies and soon-to-be luvvies alike, to another term of theatre coverage from *Varsity*. And what a term it looks set to be. When I first got my hands on the ADC's Michaelmas slate of shows, my reaction was, I admit, nonplussed. *Disco Pigs? Me As A Penguin? The Apocalypse Bear Trilogy?* What on earth were the Committee thinking? Had they just gone mad and decided to invent as many surreal-sounding plays as they could? Were we all the butt of some elaborate joke?

Of course, the fact that I hadn't heard of eighty percent of the plays just went to prove my ignorance. And a good thing too. I have argued before that Cambridge theatre can be a little too reliant on the tried and tested: too many Shakespeares, Ibsens and Pinters. And here, proving me stone-cold wrong, was what is frankly quite a radical program of work.

We get to see into the future of the Australian desert in *When The Rain Stops Falling*, into a darkly fantastical, free-verse past of Paris in *The Bloody Chamber* and, yes, into a world in which an apocalyptic bear reveals the existential angst of a group of characters. In ADC main-show *Enron*, we have a political play, only 3 years old, that only grows in resonance with each new financial scandal.

It's heartening to see such a bafflingly diverse array of shows on offer. Any freshers reading the termcard will be glad to know that whilst at university they will be able to see shows that will be rarely put on anywhere else, and indeed might only happen once – another impressive batch of new writing includes *Molly*, *Far Away From The Watering Hole* and *The Red Soil*, among others. This is all great. But we shouldn't get too self-congratulatory – these plays are still in some ways fairly conservative.

I don't want to seem unfair to those who chose, say, *Dublin Carol* over *The Crucible*, but these are still plays that draw on our established strengths as a theatre scene: dialogue-heavy, literary plays that address "issues". What's missing, perhaps, is an exploration of traditions outside the standard Cambridge bubble. I was very pleased to see *Burlesque* as an upcoming show, for example, which seeks to introduce the skills of, you guessed it, burlesque into our theatre scene.

I salute the adventurousness of the selection committee in their choice of plays, but whilst I have the attention of newcomers to this university, I will say this: it's never too soon to be adventurous. I've met many departing theatrical types who wish they could have tried something a bit more daring a bit sooner, maybe learned a new skill or tried writing a play very different to anything previously put on at Cambridge.

It would be a great shame to spend your first year auditioning for plays simply because they were the ones on offer. The theatrical culture here is made up of what our students want to do – so look around for what you can do differently. I hope to read the termcard in three years time and think that the students have gone truly, truly insane.

Edinburgh's lynchpin

Fred Maynard talks to *Guardian* theatre critic Lyn Gardner about criticism, innovation and the world of student theatre today

As soon as I meet her in the Pleasance Courtyard, at the heart of the Edinburgh Festival, it becomes clear that Lyn Gardner is a woman in demand. As the *Guardian's* (and some would say the country's) premier reviewer of fringe theatre, her word is close to gospel in Auld Reekie: a favourable quote followed by her name is a highly prized garland on any poster. Soon after we meet, whilst wandering around on the lookout for a quiet place to chat, she is approached by a punter who recognises her, asking her if she might come and see his play. I imagine this must happen to her a lot. Her blog on the *Guardian* website is a vital source of tips for anyone interested in what play to see next, wherever you are in the country (she is impressive in her commitment to get outside of the London scene).

People will say, 'it was great, but was it theatre?' Which is the wrong question. The right question is what can theatre be?

Indeed, it is blogging which she suggests as the essential practice for any aspiring theatre writer today. "It keeps you writing regularly, it keeps you going to see things, and if you're really lucky you might get noticed", she says. Her own route was via listings magazines, having started out as a theatre director at Kent University, but she changed to primarily reviewing after graduating. Despite a rapid rise to her current influential position, she claims that nothing much sets her apart from the many other people reviewing plays in this country. "When I started working at the *Guardian* 17 years ago", she says, "there were many, many people who could have done the

job as well as me. In journalism you can be very good, very talented, but you also need that touch of sunlight, that bit of luck. And I was lucky."

Since taking up her job she has worked in tandem with the *Guardian's* other major theatre critic, Michael Billington, with her role as she sees it to champion devised, physical and explicitly visual work in contrast to his speciality, the "traditional" play. For her, the last decade has seen a great broadening of the church of British theatre, with many of the most interesting and exciting practitioners operating far from the mainstream - or "upstream" in director Chris Goode's phrase, as their ideas eventually flow into the mainstream. Handspring's extraordinary puppetry work in *War Horse* might be an example of this. "It is not a progression", she says, for a practitioner to move on to venues like the National Theatre, "though Jeremy Hunt absolutely perceives it that way, that the West End is the pinnacle." Many of the best people in theatre today simply don't view success in terms of a linear scale of prestige and fame.

For a professional critic, she gets to see a surprising amount of student theatre, especially at the Fringe. What can student drama learn from the wider world of theatre? "Students have to get skilled up", she says, learning the widest possible range of techniques and tools, whether it's putting on *Hedda Gabler*, devising and cooperating on new work or learning puppetry or mime or dance. "Most people's perception of theatre is quite narrow. The best thing about being a professional critic is seeing work in which people say, 'it was great, but was it theatre?' – Which is the wrong question. The right question is what can theatre be?"

And what does Cambridge have to contribute to that question? Gardner mentions that while universities like York and Warwick have produced successful, innovative companies like Belt

Up and Curious Directive in the last few years, she isn't aware of any such innovation coming from Oxbridge. Are we too individualist in our ideas about theatre, perhaps? She, of course, doesn't know Cambridge theatre well enough to answer that question, but she does say that many of the greatest companies have thrived on a group dynamic rather than on individual genius. That includes Complicite, one of the last great Cambridge theatre companies, founded back in 1983 by Simon McBurney and others. The opportunity to meet and collaborate with like-minded people at university makes it potentially one of the most febrile creative atmospheres anywhere, and at Cambridge, we are also, after all, very well funded. "The most interesting things happen when a lot of interesting people get together. What we're talking about is creating a healthy ecology." Seeing student theatre is for her an opportunity to see the future being created - we shouldn't be waiting for our theatrical lives to begin after graduation, but should try to create new things here and now.

She has a tetchy relationship with star ratings, saying that no critic would willingly choose to use them. A review, for her, should not be just a judgment, but a response, something that engages with and adds to the ideas of the show. Indeed, as blogs increasingly become the primary medium of reviewing, criticism has become far more of an informed dialogue than an arbiter telling you whether or not to see a show. A lesson for *Varsity* critics, then? The one piece of advice she will give for certain is to practice. "See as much as you can and write about it as much as you can". The improvement in style will eventually follow. And, indeed, we will never have more to write about than here at Cambridge.

Lyn Gardner blogs at guardian.co.uk/stage/theatreblog

EMMA WILKINSON

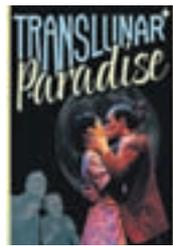


Above: *Bartholomew Fair* rehearsals; see preview on next page

STEVEN FINLAY



Varsity's Edinburgh Round-up



Translunar Paradise
Pleasance Dome

Returning to the Fringe this summer after a successful run (both critically and among audiences it would seem), *Translunar Paradise* promised big things: weepy reactions from those about to see it and a touching, heartfelt story.

Ultimately, it disappointed. Instead, *Translunar Paradise* felt more like a very good replica, an image of what evocative and memorable theatre ought to be. Using masks and music, we were provided with the complete history of a romance, like the first ten minutes of *Up* with masks, an accordionist and an ambirent soundtrack of humming. However, all too often, there simply wasn't enough in the progression of the story to push the production past being simply quaint in some distantly locatable way.

Which isn't to say it was a wholesale failure: in fact, there stuck in my mind an excellent sort-of-sex scene which truly used movement and sound to create a compelling and engaging story. We also had a lovely ritual tea-making sequence, a war scene evoked with nothing more than a pair of sticks tapping on a wooden board. The sound of

breathing created by the accordion was a constant background noise, a maulin and organic pulse of grief. But in its attempts to create something old-worldly and tearjerking, the three-piece cast of theatre company Theatre Ad Infinitum missed out something key: a freshness, a vibrancy.

Without that spark of vitality, neither the wonderful Yeats-quoting title, nor the accordion nor in fact any of the rest of it could make up for the fact that the play was lacking something essential. It was so self-consciously old-fashioned, quaint, or endearing that it forgot to provide anything difficult to grapple with.

It felt like a Victorian landscape painting - perfectly nice in its way, and pretty to look at, but essentially static. It therefore struggled both to dig into any emotion beyond the immediate, and to challenge and ask questions of its audience.

Despite a sell-out run, *Translunar Paradise* is a victim of the Fringe hype, fulfilling the idea of fringe theatre for people who don't get to see too much of it. It has many of the elements of non-mainstream theatre but doesn't find anything new to say with them.

Salome Wagaine



Hearts on Fire
C Nova

As you enter blithely as an audience member into a purpose-built indoor sweat lodge, *Hearts on Fire* instantly registers as an unusual production. Having been cheerily wished "good luck on your journey to becoming a warrior!" by a cast member at the door, it is then your bewildered duty to take a seat around the edge of the tent that will serve as the performance space. An upset to the amiable atmosphere soon comes in the form of the introduction of the character James Arthur Ray (Nigel Barber); a motivational speaker who was given a prison sentence in 2010 for allowing three sweat lodge attendees to die on his watch. Taking a prominent role in contrast to the other characters, Ray is seen to fluctuate between being disturbingly focused and frighteningly unpredictable as he guides his participants through their spiritual experience to, ultimately, tragedy.

Throughout the production, the *Continued from previous page* character of Ray was powerfully executed.

His penetrating gaze put the audience under as much scrutiny as his residents,

All the fun of the fair

Salome Wagaine speaks to director Harry Michell about the upcoming production of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*

Harry Michell clearly has a busy Michaelmas ahead of him: as President of the Footlights Committee, he will be auditioning first-time Cambridge comers for the upcoming Virgin Smoker and thereafter the regular ones; his Edinburgh show with Lowell Belfield *I Am, I Am* will be doing a brief home run and a play he has written, *Post*, will be on at the ADC at the end of term. However, I sit down with him to discuss his upcoming production of Ben Jonson's Jacobean comedy *Bartholomew Fair*, a project about which he is clearly passionate.

A key goal is to ensure the play gets laughs not just from phallic fingers, but because it's an inherently funny play

Inspired to apply to the Marlowe Society with the play after being on last year's committee (despite it being on the shortlist of suggested plays), Michell seems keen to show that non-Shakespearean early modern theatre can elicit real, honest laughter from a modern audience. He is unimpressed with the premise of many current professional productions of Shakespeare - to give the text an unusual twist in order to give it a 'new life'; rather, a key goal for Michell as a director is ensure that the play gets "the same big laughs [as it initially did] not just from elderly people giggling at witticisms and not just from phallic fingers, but because it's an inherently funny play... I wanted to do a play that isn't just seen as an early modern work, rather a piece which can be enjoyed on its own merits."

As well as the creative role that being director obviously entails, some of what Michell has to think about is more managerial in nature. With a cast of 25 (a number which he reckons is part of the reason *Bart Fair* is seldom put on professionally - the expense that hiring so many

actors would entail), Michell stresses the importance of needing to ensure "everyone is kept happy", from previous experience of acting and being made to wait around for long periods of time doing nothing in rehearsals. In addition, finding the right actors for the roles was crucial, particularly given that they would be tackling Jonson's sometimes "dense" language. He felt that he needed "people who are smart and can understand the language and can understand what they're saying... [because] as an audience member, you don't understand what they're talking about if they don't understand what they're talking about."

Bartholomew Fair seems like a perfect choice of play for someone who, while currently very attracted to comedy, sees his real future and interest in directing. The kind of humour Michell is interested in is determinedly, unabashedly feel-good, and he talks about his wish - both when performing and directing - to make people smile and have a good night.

It's clear that, whether creating works of theatre or comedy, he considers audience rather than agenda to be the true measure of success, and his process reflects this. "When something's comic, you've got to find the funny a lot, it's about experimenting and giving everyone the freedom to muck about. I find the idea of 'funny' very interesting and intriguing: it's a science but it's also something ineffable. It's

a difficult thing and also something you can never really tell until you show it to an audience for the first time. You've got to trust what you think is funny is funny." This confidence within his and his cast's own taste is tempered, as ever, by mindfulness of those who will be sitting in the auditorium to watch what they have produced.

Squeezing laughs out of every line is not something Michell seems interested in: "the harder you try to make people laugh, the less laughs you get." Instead, he seems focussed on pulling out the common threads that link us, a modern Cambridge theatregoing population, with Jonson's Jacobean contemporaries who would have been watching a satire of their own society. He notes, with apparent optimism, that "we've changed morally and physically" over the last 400 years but still wish to laugh both "wholesomely and wholeheartedly."

Bartholomew Fair is the ADC's *Week 1 Mainshow*, *Tue 9 - Sat 13 October 2012 at 7.45pm*



WILL CARTWRIGHT-HARWOOD

Cambridge shows showing off their wares on Edinburgh's Royal Mile. Clockwise from top right: *As You Like It*, *The Complex*; *Oedipus*, and *Interruption*.



LEO CAIRNS



EMMA WILKINSON

Rehearsals of *Bartholomew Fair*

offering a sense of uncomfortable involvement. This sense of immersion was furthered by the assembly of the audience around an open, inclusive set - but it never felt truly explored.

While Ray is given questions to ask the audience, any responses from the audience were largely ignored, and not worked into the production. It felt that the decision of how far the show was meant to engage the audience had not been strictly enough defined and ended up being confusing.

Hearts on Fire flitted between being a quite poignant piece of verbatim theatre, and offering a string of under-utilized gimmicks. While the central ideas were captivating, and the main role was played with true conviction, a lack of dramatic focus resulted in an intriguing show, but one without subtlety. The characters were too thinly drawn, and what is the point of immersive theatre if we don't care about the people with whom we're immersed?

Peculius Stage have certainly tapped into a wealth of achingly relevant and emotionally wrought material in this production, but greater attention to detail would have allowed them to create a still more captivating piece.

Emma Wilkinson



Songs of Lear
Summerhall

I think of the experience of my three frenetic weeks at the Fringe as like a camera shutter going off really quickly, as a rapid exposure to innumerable different theatrical styles and experiences.

One such alternately harrowing and enlightening experience was watching *Songs of Lear*, a strange experimental piece offered up by the Polska Arts Programme, at Summerhall. It came as part of an extraordinary Fringe for Polish theatre; including a *Macbeth* which was the talk of the town with its terrifying, towering Witches striding up and down the Royal Mile on stilts, clothed fully in black and wielding demonic football rattles.

Lear was informally introduced by the director, Grzegorz Bral, who explained that this production would translate the essential themes of Shakespeare's *King Lear* into pure sound, abstracting away from the language into a realm of voice, expression and gesture. The ten performers were all simply dressed in black and sat in a semi-circle, looking slightly awkward. I had no idea what to expect.

Then the blonde woman in the middle just leant forward and howled. The show turned out to be amazing. They did things with their voices I didn't think people could do - mad and brutal harmonics, with the occasional movement or improvised instrument thrown in. One woman's cellulite was used to startling visual effect. The roles of Lear and Cordelia, instead of being assigned to individual performers, were reconstituted as soundscapes; a chorus of highly trained voices harmonising to create moments of piercing vocal intensity. It treated Shakespearean tragedy as a religious ceremony, the play itself becoming a hymn. I was totally riveted and sat there with a little frozen expression of awe. People around me cried.

Before I came to Cambridge I'd seen approximately two plays in my life, and was easily impressed by the novelty of anything and everything. Now, after an Edinburgh visit, rather than spending my money on something well-made and superficially entertaining, I'd like to be surprised (and hopefully moved) by something as strange and different as *Songs of Lear*.

Heather Williams

STAR RATINGS

In a perfect world, we wouldn't do star ratings, and you'd all have to work out whether or not you wanted to see a show by actually reading the review and forming an opinion. However, we understand that life is short, and sometimes you just want a quick idea of whether something's worth seeing or not. And stars look pretty, after all. Nevertheless, we would like to point out right now that there is no way to put critics' ratings on an even footing. One man's two stars is another man's four, depending on their standards.

With that in mind, here's what the critics mean when they say:

One: Either purely incompetent or staggeringly offensive. Or both.

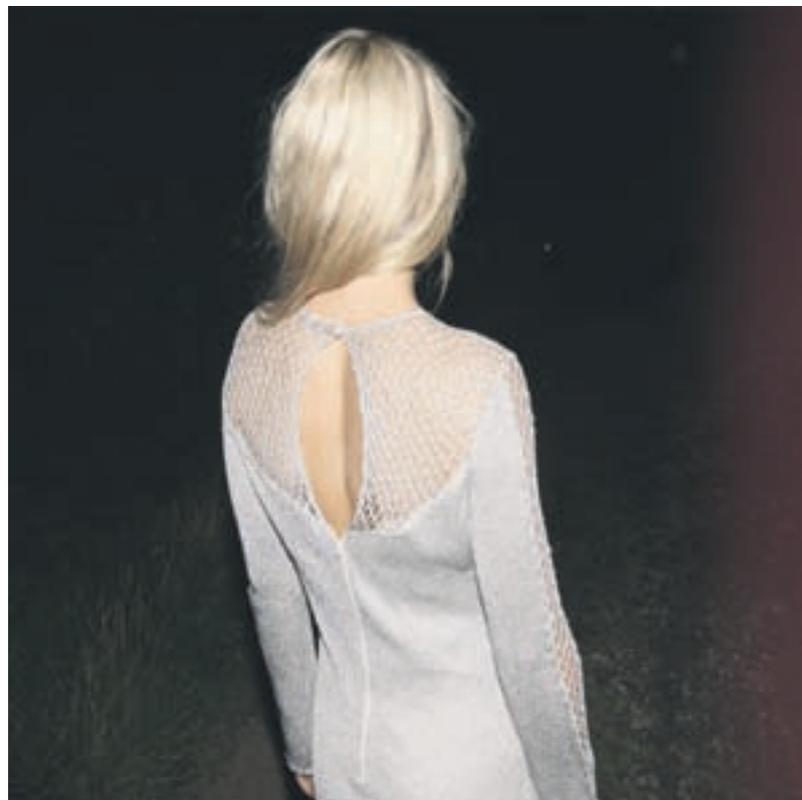
Two: Dull - nothing to hold your interest.

Three: Understands its job and does it well enough, justifying the ticket price and giving you a nice, if unmemorable, night.

Four: Excellent stuff, really worth a look. Shows imagination and polish.

Five: This is Cambridge theatre firing on all cylinders. You'll come out weeping or humming or maybe in shocked silence.





The days

TOM RASMUSSEN



The new academic year seems to promise so much. Here we are being given the opportunity to start afresh, to reinvent ourselves, and with all of our Cambridge lives on pause over the summer, Michaelmas term brings with it a real mixed tote of feelings. I definitely tend to over-analyse the events which have led me to the place I find myself now; as I'm sure most of you know, this can lead to the 'how the fuck has everyone else got a graduate job but me?' jitters deep in the pit of your Nero-filled stomach.

However, with so many opportunities afoot, I have decided to change my approach to life this year. Take this week's shoot for example: my first shoot as *Varsity* fashion editor took a completely different route to normal; I usually spend weeks planning each shoot, each outfit, each stroke of a make-up brush, but this time I decided to run with a concept and see how it turned out. I wanted to capture the feeling of being lost, and then finding yourself – I hope these photos communicate that. Online you can check out the shoot in more depth and catch some interesting articles written by fashion's conscience.

What a bundle of sartorial delight to aid your fresh winter wardrobe. I want to encourage our readers to experiment, go wild and find your style through reinvention. With so many ways to share your look with us this term I think it's time you had a go.

Tweet us your outfit of the day @VarsityFashion, or tag us on Instagram @Varstagram – the top five outfits will be posted on the site, and the extra special ones may even make the paper copy. It's your chance to take over the town – so get up, dress up and show up!

Take back the city

RACHEL WEARS (L-R Clockwise)

1. Neon dress by Topshop Hong Kong
2. Camo shirt by The Vintage Store; Mini-skirt by Topshop; Necklace at Temple Street Night Market, Hong Kong
3. Silver dress by Philip Selvern for the Vintage Store
4. Black and white full-sleeved dress by Topshop.
5. Studded shirt by The Ragged Priest; Belt by FTRP; Maxi skirt by Topshop

STYLING & CONCEPT DESIGN

Tom Rasmussen

PHOTOGRAPHS & EDITING

Adam Lupton

MODEL

Rachel Hurst

HAIR & MAKEUP

Tom Rasmussen

Tom Rasmussen



Olympic Games: the winners and losers

Did Cambridge students catch Olympics fever? Sport Editor **Katie Bartholomew** investigates five perspectives on the London Games

THE OLYMPIAN

George Nash

I would sum up my Olympic experience in two words: phenomenal people. From the guy I raced with to the last man and woman watching on the banks at Dorney Lake, I was positively shocked by the crazy things that people can do.

I came into the Olympics with a totally selfish mindset: for me it was about seeing what I could do against the two best rowers in the world on the ultimate sporting stage. I didn't think or care about what it meant having that stage in my home country, hosted by my home city. I thought all the hype was political bollocks. All I cared about was using the Games to push myself and the guy in front of me to the limits of what we were physically and mentally capable of. That was what sport meant for me.

We won a bronze medal in a race that took more out of me emotionally and physically than any other I've ever done. In the aftermath I was totally

“All I cared about was using the Games to push myself and the guy in front of me to the limits of what we were physically and mentally capable of

overwhelmed by what the Olympics did to my body; what it got out of my pairs partner; how the crowds responded; how people who I had never met before told me that they were genuinely proud of me, with tears in their eyes. Their warmth made me incredibly proud to be British and happy to have represented them in my small sport. It blew my opinion on what it means to be an Olympian out of the water.

THE OBSERVER

Anya Muir Wood

London 2012 saw a medal haul to be proud of, but was it worth its weight in gold when it comes to the social impacts and infamous lasting legacy of the games? As Britain struggles with recession, an estimated £11-24 billion bill to the taxpayers for hosting the Olympics seems almost mocking.

Beyond the hype of record-breaking achievements and impressive feats of human endeavour, there are positive lasting effects that are unique to hosting the Olympics. Despite 'legacy' having become something of a joke, the word being so over-used that it has been emptied of value, a lot of work has gone in to ensuring that hosting the Olympics is

not just a four week wonder.

The dramatic regeneration of a previously forgotten area of east London is an obvious improvement with great longevity. Stratford has been rebuilt and promoted as an up and coming area of the capital, although this has come at the cost of traveller communities and co-operative housing that were demolished to make way for the giant Olympic footprint. What the general public will be left with, though, is the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – 257 acres of open space, 8000 new homes and 5 world class sporting venues. An area buzzing with the cultural high of Olympic fever that will force legacy to be taken seriously.

As well as these concrete achievements, there are the less tangible social effects that have taken hold of Britain in

a whirlwind summer romance. Alongside the imposing athletes stood the inspiring Games Makers: rallying and organising the crowds, assisting the competitors and providing an energy to keep London 2012 running smoothly with a spirit of volunteering that many thought long forgotten.

The Paralympics has nurtured a new perception of disability, drawing a wider audience to witness what humankind can achieve despite the hardest of circumstances. There is plenty of talk about a changing attitude towards disability, with hope that this can inspire improved rights for disabled people.

There is also the undeniable pride that has wooed even the most cynical of critics. The grit and determination of the athletes was evident in triumphs and



RICHARD PARKIN-MASON



GEORGE NASH

Stalemate at Oxford, triumph at Lord's: this summer's cricket Varsity

New captain **Paddy Sadler** reviews a strong season for the Light Blues

With as many as ten of the thirteen cricketers who won Blues in 2012 available for the Varsity matches in 2013, new captain Paddy Sadler will have high hopes that the undoubted talent that remains, along with some new faces, can continue the recent success.

2012 can be looked back on as another summer of success for Cambridge University Cricket Club. The Light Blues won the showpiece one-day Lord's Varsity for the third year in succession, and secured a draw in the 4-day match away at the Parks.

Sadler captained Scotland to an 11th-place finish at the Under-19 World Cup, among further individual success from Zafar Ansari – who continued to build his reputation on the county circuit – and newly appointed Vice-Captain Paul Best – who featured heavily in limited-overs cricket for Warwickshire.

Cambridge MCCU (the Marylebone Cricket Club-funded side in partnership with ARU, featuring regular Blues Best, the Ansari brothers, Sadler and Tom Elliott) had another successful year, beating Durham in the final to retain the BUCS Premier League crown. Cambridge also remained unbeaten MCCU 2-day champions, becoming the first side to beat Cardiff or Durham in the competition since 2009.

1-DAY VARSITY

Saturday 16th June, Lord's

Cambridge win by 17 overs
Cambridge 269 all out

(Timms 84, A Ansari 63, Senaratne

57, Z Ansari 37)

Oxford 252 all out

(Lodwick 4-39)

Cambridge captain Richard Timms, ably supported by Nipuna Senaratne, batted superbly to put his side in a very strong position. The Ansari brothers, Akbar and Zafar, added impetus to the innings and took full advantage of the powerplay. Cambridge set Oxford a very challenging 270 for victory – a similar score to that which they defended at Lord's in 2011.

Oxford started well before Jon Lodwick, a former Dark Blue, made the all important breakthrough. When captain Ben Williams was trapped LBW by Best in the 25th over, the Light Blues were well on top. Dan Pascoe launched a counter-attack with a hard-hitting 67 and for a while the momentum was with Oxford. However, Z. Ansari, Lodwick,

and Sadler were able to hold their nerve and help bowl Cambridge to victory.

Three run outs were typical of a fantastic Cambridge performance in the field, and the enthusiastic student contingent in the Grandstand travelled home happy.

4-DAY VARSITY

24th-27th June, The Parks, Oxford

draw

Oxford 280 all out

(Jones 83, Lodwick 4-55, Probert 3-68)

and 215-5

(Williams 70, Jones 54*, Lodwick 3-44)

Cambridge 267

(Timms 52, Elliott 44, Agarwal 3-46,

Pascoe 3-53)

The start of a first-class Varsity match was delayed by half a day because of rain, and the time lost – combined with a very slow wicket at the Parks – made achieving a positive result difficult for either side. Cambridge, having chosen to bowl, were disciplined with the ball and the run rate was never able to get above two and a half runs per over.



MATT BRIGHT

After two early wickets on day two, the bowling with the second new ball was good. But riding their luck, and aided by a couple of Light Blue fielding errors, Oxford battled to 280 before Lodwick took the final wicket. Timms was once again in superb form, along with Elliott, he batted Cambridge into a strong position, before both were dismissed approaching the close.

Wickets fell at regular intervals on the third morning: every time a partnership threatened to develop, Oxford seemed to strike. Nobody was able to

convert a start into a more substantial score and Cambridge were eventually bowled out for 267. A hostile spell from Lodwick, and the standard Varsity pressure applied by Best, left Oxford three down at the close, and Cambridge entering the fourth day believing victory was possible.

Williams and Sharma batted through the entire morning session on day four, and by lunchtime a draw was the most likely result. Although Cambridge stuck to their task through the afternoon, the match ended in stalemate.



THE WORKER

Lily Hastings

In an effort to avoid a summer internship ("It's what all the second years do," according to my mum), I managed to get myself a job selling programmes at London 2012. After adjusting to the sweaty, claustrophobic commutes, I settled into the job and really began to enjoy it. This was a miracle: I have never enjoyed a job in my life.

The atmosphere was electric. After spending weeks surrounded by cynical friends (the more extreme of whom took "transport's going to be a nightmare" to mean "we're all going to be blown up"), it was great to be around people as enthusiastic as me. Gone was the usual frosty atmosphere of the capital; in its place, a friendliness and openness that far surpassed my expectations. Spectators came from all over the world and most were keen to share their stories with me: a French gymnastics judge, a man from Kansas who had been to the last five games and a couple of very sexy policemen. What's more, programmes were selling like hot cakes, despite being £10 each.

The odd disgruntled person would see my employee pass and assume I was responsible for the whole running of the games, and lay into me – tickets too hard to get hold of, security queues too slow. But these modern day scrooges were heavily outnumbered.

Oh and the volunteers, you know, the unpaid ones in the ugly purple and red uniform? I must admit, I was very impressed with their motivation: their hours were similar to ours and I would expect the thought of an 11-hour unpaid shift to get anyone down. Not these guys. Their enthusiasm never let up and, come midnight, they were still shouting and dancing and high-fiving and oh gosh just being too cheerful for a cold, rainy night.

Verdict on the whole experience? Bloody tiring but a right laugh. My no longer pitiful bank balance and I are very proud to have been a part of London 2012.

THE LONDONER

Jerome Lyte

As someone who lived and worked in London throughout this summer's Olympic Games, the public awareness campaign 'Get Ahead of the Games' struck me as particularly cruel. It both fed an atmosphere of impending travel doom and simultaneously reminded commuters that while other superhuman high achievers would be competing on the field of international sport, garnering fame and everlasting glory, their only competition of the summer involved desperately trying to get to work: a competition everyone assumed they'd lose.

I worked for a company that bought into the notion of Olympic chaos root and branch. To stave off disaster, employees were advised to plan different routes to work, camp outside the office, dig alternative underground routes or leave for work six or seven weeks early to avoid delays.

their only competition... involved desperately trying to get to work: a competition everyone assumed they'd lose

Amusingly, travel anarchy did not materialise and despite squatting on an Olympic artery, my commute remained much as it was before: slow, smelly and uneventful.

I've read 'heart-warming stories' of the Olympic spirit penetrating London's Underground: of travellers exchanging tales, offering advice and generally making love to the notion of value-driven competitive sport.

I was witness to literally no such thing! Olympic events and coverage decadently consumed my office hours but failed to make an impact on London's real competition: the rat race.

THE SPECTATOR

Emily Craven

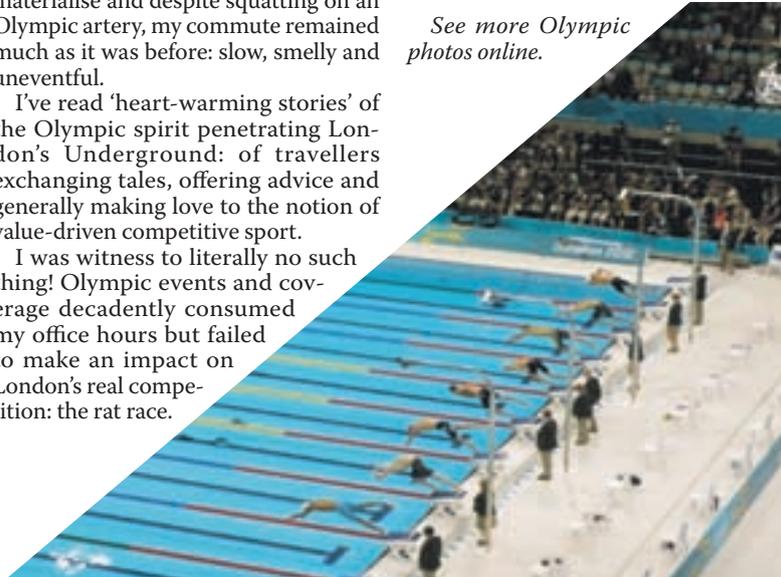
I have watched the Olympics obsessively every year for as long as I can remember. I was in the capital on a school trip on the day it was announced that London's bid had been successful. Although I was very excited, I never expected I'd actually be there.

My doubts weren't assuaged as I failed to secure tickets in the first few ballots. A trip to the Olympic Park in 2010 with the Cambridge University Athletics Club (CUAC) had really whetted my appetite. Then, last year, I was one of the privileged few qualifying to run in the stadium at the BUCS Athletics Championships: the official test event for the Olympics.

Fortunately for me, my trips to the stadium did not end there, as I eventually got tickets for both the opening morning of Olympic athletics and the final evening of Paralympics athletics. I can proudly say I saw Jess Ennis start out on the road to heptathlon gold: a personal highlight for me as a hurdler (albeit much slower than Jess) was seeing her break the British 100m hurdles record.

Amidst 80,000 people screaming, the atmosphere was absolutely electric. The Mexican wave of sound that followed the athletes around the track had to be heard to be believed.

See more Olympic photos online.



EYES ON...

LUCY CROSSMAN

jumps almost her own height, avoids gyms and is wary of orange juice

Sport:
Athletics

Event:
High jump

Age:
20

Height:
170cm

Weight:
57kg

Varsity caps for Cambridge:
3

Personal Best:
1.62m

What's your training programme each week?

Tuesdays and Saturdays at the track – but hopefully more this term. The Medic timetable makes it difficult to get to all the sessions.

Any superstitions or rituals?

No orange juice on competition days.

How did you get into athletics?

My dad was an athlete and encouraged me to go to sessions when I was young. I loved it so kept it up.

Injuries along the way?

Shin splints, but nothing that stopped me from competing.

Sporting hero?

It's predictable but Jess Ennis - so much pressure on her and she still won gold.

Rivals?

Anyone who can jump higher... and always Oxford.

Would a 2.2 be worth it for a Blue?

It's a balance, depends what you're here for...

Best gym in Cambridge?

I don't use gyms (confession!), I'd rather do a track session.

Tips for Freshers?

Get involved, it's a great way to de-stress from work and team social events are great.

● If you want to get involved with Cambridge University Athletic Club, contact c.u.athletics@sport.cam.ac.uk. College cuppers are open to all, on Sunday 14th October at Wilberforce Road. And watch this space for results of the Freshers' Varsity match: Sunday 4th November, at Iffley Road, Oxford.



SUDOKU

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	2	7	3		4	5	1	

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SPORT

30 **Cricket:** This year's new captain reviews a summer of success for the Light Blues

Nash: Blue to Bronze



Boat race winner in 2010, George Nash (third year, St Catharine's; pictured right) rowed his way onto the London 2012 Olympic podium - read his thoughts on the Games overleaf

SPORT ROUNDUP

Women's tennis trounce Oxford

UNIVERSITY The Light Blue tennis women dominated Oxford at outdoor Varsity this July. Despite the rain's best attempts to stop play, the Cambridge Blues once again showed their indomitable spirit, winning their fourth consecutive Varsity match by a convincing 16 matches to 5. Laura Morrill, Kadi Saar and Marilena Papadopolou opened the singles, barely dropping a game between them. Amy Zhang cruised to victory against the third player. Unfortunately, a rain break was not enough for Sophie Walker to claw back a win from her opponent. With Cambridge 4-1 up and torrential downpour outside, skipper Emma Kudzin was last to step out on court (under the roof) but was unlucky to lose to the Oxford number one.

The next day proved just as successful: Morrill, Saar and Zhang again won their singles matches with impressive ease; captain Kudzin blasted Oxford number two off the court. Despite tough losses for both Walker and Papadopolou, the two teamed up to win a fantastic doubles match against the Oxford first pair, thereby securing Cambridge's Varsity victory. The last day was purely doubles, and the Blues consolidated their victory 16-5.

Bath beat rugby Blues

UNIVERSITY The Blues started promisingly as both sides produced try-scoring opportunities early on. At half time it was 12-12, the pick of the tries coming from Cambridge wing Kouj Tambara after a searing break through midfield from the opposite winger Will Smith. But Cambridge's intensity dropped after the break, allowing Bath to score two tries. Final score: 29 - 12. They will be looking to improve on this performance next Wednesday when they take on Cambridge RFC in the Town vs Gown grudge match.

CUWLC national stars

UNIVERSITY After a 2011-2012 season in which the Women's Lacrosse Blues went undefeated to win the South Premiership League, Varsity, and the BUCS National Championship, Cambridge was the most represented university at the European Lacrosse Championships in Amsterdam in June. Midfielder Laura Plant played for the gold medal-winning England squad; 2011-2012 co-captain Alana Livesey was also an alternate for England. Ellie Walshe and Erin Walters won silver medals with Wales. The lacrosse girls open their 2012-13 campaigns on 17 October, with the Blues against Bristol at home and the Kingfishers away against Nottingham.

Cambridge MCCU retain BUCS crown

TOWN See results overleaf.

UNIVERSITY SPORTS TEAM TRIALS

Inspired by the heroes of London 2012? Get involved with University Sport this year - head to trials (all in October)

SPORT	WHEN	WHERE	CONTACT
MEN			
Basketball	20:00 - 5th	Kelsey Kerridge	lc471
Boxing	18:00 - 8th	Fenners	blt28
Cricket*	14th	Fenners	ps540
Field Hockey	16:30 - 7th	Wilberforce Rd.	fds21
Football	7th	Queen's Pitches	rb557
Powerlifting	11:00 - 6th	Fenners	ws298
Lacrosse	20:00 - 1st	Cass Centre astroturf	msc60
Lightweight Rowing*	ongoing - please contact		sm802
Rugby League	10:00 - 6th	St John's pitches	aw490
Squash*	13:00 - 13th	Fitz. courts	jaqs2
Volleyball	18:00 - 6th	Kelsey Kerridge	hhg24
Water polo	13:00 - 7th	Leys School Pool	hc367
WOMEN			
Basketball	12:00 - 6th	Kelsey Kerridge	sm851
Cricket	16:00 - 12th	Fenners	nr336
Field Hockey	15:00 - 7th	Wilberforce Rd.	cb660
Football	11:30 - 6th	Fitz. pitches	abs40
Netball*	13:00 - 6th	Leys School	cam215
Squash	15:20 - 13th	Fitz. squash courts	rp405
Tennis	12:00 - 6th	Fenners	sw556
Volleyball	16:00 - 6th	Kelsey Kerridge	cs650
Water Polo	11:30 - 7th	Leys School Pool	as2201

SPORT	WHEN	WHERE	CONTACT
MIXED			
Archery	14:00 - 7th	Churchill pitches	th332
Athletics	10:30 - 14th	Wilberforce Rd.	aa499
Badminton*	6th	Perse School	sjcp2
Clay Shooting*	9:15 - 6th	meet at English faculty	gs429
Cross Country	14:00 - 8th	Wilberforce Rd.	jc490
Cycling	13:30 - 6th	Benets	hrs36
Dancesport	10:00 - 7th	Parkside Sports Hall	dm446
Fencing	18:00 - 9th	Fenners	nmz20
Gliding*	please contact for trial flights		mem48
Golf*	17th	Royal Worlington GC	as2000
Horse Riding*	21st	Hill Top Centre	oal24
Ice Hockey	18:30 - 7th	meet at Queens Backs	trr23
Judo	20:00 - 9th	Fenners	mess2
Karate*	11th	Fenners	js979
Modern Pentathlon	14:00 - 7th	Fenners	hd293
Revolver & Pistol Club	15:00 - 6th	QE Range	jpw54
Sailing*	10:00 - 7th	Grafham Water	jf446
Small Bore Club	14:00 - 5th	QE Range	daf41
Swimming	17:30 - 7th	Parkside Pool	cs640
Table Tennis	13:00 - 14th	Fenners	nkc12
Trampoline	17:00 - 6th	Leys School	ndb32
*Trial attendance by confirmation only - must contact in advance			