

VARSITY

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Don't rain on my parade

PATRICK O'GRADY



Charlotte Keith
EDITOR

"No ifs, no buts, no education cuts." Or rather, no more education cuts. Thousands of students from across the UK crowded the streets of London on Wednesday, as part of 'Demo 2012', a protest organised by the National Union of Students (NUS). The aims of the march were diverse: to protest against the rise in tuition fees, the cutting of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA), and the poor employment prospects faced by today's graduates.

This was the first mass student protest in the capital since 2010, when more than 50,000 participants gathered to express their anger at the proposed rise in tuition fees. This earlier march,

notoriously saw a small group of protestors storm 30 Millbank, Conservative Party HQ, resulting in violent clashes with police. 'Demo 2012' was a considerably smaller affair: while the NUS predicted a turnout of up to 10,000, the real figure was less than half that, somewhere between 3000 and 4000. At least 100 students from Cambridge travelled to London on the coaches organised by CUSU.

NUS President Liam Burns was heckled and forced to leave the stage during his speech at the rally in Kennington Park, south London, where the march ended – by which point only a few hundred protestors remained. Chants of "NUS shame on you, where the fuck have you brought us to" were combined

with a stage invasion of around 20 people, and Burns was pelted with fruit and eggs. He appeared unphased by the disruption though, later tweeting: "Amazing day, 10k out, students' unions buzzing... And my egg dodging is pretty fierce."

The overall feeling among the Cambridge contingent was that this was a lacklustre contribution to the student protest movement. There was widespread dissatisfaction with the route of the march – agreed on beforehand by the NUS and the Metropolitan Police – which avoided Parliament Square and, after crossing Westminster Bridge, passed through largely residential areas. Cambridge student James White described the route as "a big

disappointment from the NUS", complaining that protestors were marching past corner shops and houses, "rather than anywhere politically significant". Chris Page, the CUSU Welfare and Rights Officer, agreed that the official route was "bizarre": "it felt like a trivialization of the students to march away from the seat of power, where the decisions are made, to a damp park in Kennington". There were also complaints that the demonstration was scheduled for too late in term, lowering turnout. As the protestors reached Parliament, a number of people tried to break away from the designated route, toward Parliament Square, but were soon moved on by police.

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Online:

The Days, a unique photo blog from Thurstan Redding and Tom Rasmussen will be going up any day now. Look out for some amazing dancing in the trailer, and some of Cambridge's very own looking surprisingly sophisticated in front of the camera.

Abroad:

Hannah Wilkinson, blogging from Cairo, learns when to speak up and when to shut up: "Our year abroad handbook had provided us with a list of things not to mention. If people ask about your religion, do not tell them you're an atheist. Social conservatism makes it hard to explain things like the fact that my parents were never married. And the big no-no is homosexuality; a practice so frowned upon that even defending it in conversation can, socially, leave you up a certain creek, lacking the proverbial paddle." Find the full version on Varsity Live.

It's almost the end of term. It's the last paper issue of *Varsity*. But don't despair: all is not lost. Read this newspaper cover to cover, do the crossword (anyone who does the whole thing correctly and sends it in automatically becomes next term's editor), and then give it to your friends and family, to wrap all your Christmas presents with. Enjoy!

NEWS

Biggest boozers

06

Why do students who do the most boring – ahem, sorry – relevant subjects drink the most? Economists, you'd better have a bottle nearby before reading this.



COMMENT

Oh yeah, dictionary?

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Lewis Wynn invokes Julia Gillard and J.H.Prynne to explain why, when someone tells you to look it up in a dictionary, you can tell them to stick it. More or less.



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The Varsity team emerge briefly from their lairs to offer some thoughts on what they love and loathe about Christmas. Or at least, the preposterously early Cambridge version.



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Letters to the Editor

Standing up for Susy Langsdale

Yes, because OBVIOUSLY Susy has to end up getting married (no such thing as co-habiting - or shock horror, not getting married at all, is there?) and live a hetero-normative life. Being gay, bi, pan or asexual? Of course not!

You know nothing about what rape does to a person's psychology if you think that's anything to go by. People hide their assaults in a manner of ways - even someone as ignorant as you must have heard of battered men and women using make up to cover the marks left on their bodies by their partners. Some people will actively try to assert consent after an assault has happened in order to do away the notion of being a victim. I was so messed up that got into a relationship with my attacker because of my Roman Catholic beliefs about sex before marriage and only having one partner. I lied to everyone I knew about it and ended up convincing myself that it was okay. Not every rape survivor is obviously damaged by their attack. Everyone reacts differently to trauma, but because of people like you, it's no wonder that (if what you said is true) she would have been advised to delete such an email.

Your comments have been so close-minded I could waste my time dissecting the rest of that rubbish but I can't be bothered. As you don't know Susy, I suggest you refrain from making stupid observations that you can't possibly know about. She's not the one who is supposed to be answering for her 'alleged' crimes in a court of law, Assange is.

MARIE KINHURST (VIA VARSITY.CO.UK), IN RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ON ARTICLE 'ASSANGE SNUBS THE UNION.'

Ouch, Mr Maynard

Fred, even though this is clearly a joke, it's deeply upsetting and potentially dangerous if accidentally taken seriously.

CELINE LOWENTHAL (VIA VARSITY.CO.UK), IN RESPONSE TO FRED MAYNARD ON CAMBRIDGE THEATRE

Really, though?

Deeply upsetting and potentially dangerous? Really? Really? Let's say that someone, presumably with almost no grasp of the english language, read this, and thought he was being completely and utterly serious. What would they think? That it helps to know the right people and be quite confident to do well in Cambridge theatre life - which seems to be, while obviously not the whole story, not exactly untrue...

JONNY SINGER, VIA VARSITY.CO.UK

Yes, really

That's why I wrote it. It's insulting to those who earnestly and good humouredly go about making theatre in Cambridge, and off-putting to those who might otherwise have been tempted. There is no such thing as 'the right people'; there are just people who put on shows. The process of 'getting to know the 'right' people', i.e. working with other enthusiastic people, is not formulaic and manipulative, it's organic, and implying that it is formulaic and manipulative is misleading and unhelpful, it'd better to just let people get on with it. I'm not even sure what 'do well' means, get better at your craft? I felt this satire didn't come out of love, it felt aggressive and juvenalian. I would advise anyone interested in getting involved in theatre in Cambridge to ignore the above and go with their instincts.

CELINE LOWENTHAL, AS ABOVE

Come on guys, he's just playing

I've got to agree with Fred. If you compare the comments to the article it all seems very over inflated. The stereotypes described in the article have been known to exist at times or are at least familiar to those involved in theatre: this does NOT mean that they are all-pervasive at the ADC!! Everyone who reads this will know that every week a dozen or so earnest reviews hit this website giving seriously critical appraisal. If either of you disagree that shmoozing or networking, have ever occurred to your knowledge in the theatre world then I'd like you to say so.

In fact I would go further in defending Fred in saying that, with respect to timid freshers, this article does a

world of good for those looking to get involved at the ADC. I, myself, was lucky enough to have many friends interested in theatre, which made it quite comfortable and friendly world in first year, but I know many people who have been put off by the the terrifying audition process, or encountering stereotypes such as these. In highlighting them and ridiculing them Fred has shown that at the core of theatre, these are actually the LEAST important traits, and anyone who feels intimidated by such "thesps" need not be worried. Those who are successful at the ADC, as with in any field, are those who care about their craft, work hard and devote themselves personally - given this is aimed at Cambridge students, I think everyone understands that. Theatre production requires a very personal emotional involvement - it takes a lot from you but is very rewarding. In writing this article Fred has dismissed much of what actually puts off people in satirising it. And it IS clearly satire. The only people who should be offended by this article are those directly guilty of this trivial, vapid behaviour, and noone else - luckily, among those who are successful at the ADC, these people are few.

ERIC HAMMY, VIA VARSITY.CO.UK

Cost-effective Cambridge

As part of the first batch of students facing this almost three fold increase in university fees I am not enthused by the unavoidable prospect of facing a crippling debt upon graduation. Given Cambridge's strong financial position, I think it could be doing more to keep fees down, and I disagree with its reasoning that "to charge less than £9,000 might raise questions about our commitment to excellence". However, I do recognise that as

and unfair reporting. Causing controversy is not laudable in and of itself: debate is vitally important, but not at any price. This week's events have exposed serious flaws in the way the Union goes about its business. As Union President, anyone would feel the pressure of ensuring that the institution lives up to its reputation. But free speech involves more than giving a platform to 'big names': those voices that are being heard precisely because they are already being heard. Provocation and publicity should not and need not come at the expense of other, more important, values.

Charlotte Keith
Editor, Michaelmas 2012

Fill these pages yourself

Varsity is looking for reporters, critics, and section editors for Lent term. Applications are now open. If you'd like to work on *the* independent Cambridge student newspaper, you can find an application form and all the information you need on our website. You are more than welcome to apply as a team.

The deadline for applications to be Editor (yes, with a capital E) is Monday 26 November, by 5pm. For other applications, the deadline has been extended to Monday December 3rd, also 5pm. Bloggers, columnists and one-off contributors also always welcome - email editor@varsity.co.uk. You know you want to.

one of the many universities that have increased their fees, Cambridge is probably one of the most cost-effective where you feel you are getting your money's worth and does provide substantial bursaries to make it more accessible to everyone.

I disagree with the severe cuts in funding for arts and humanities subjects, as this gives the impression that they are less relevant or important degrees to pursue. Furthermore, arts students receive less 'contact time' during their courses and are paying the same as science/math/engineering students despite their courses costing significantly less. However, changing the prices of courses could be problematic as some students may be forced to choose the cheapest course rather than their preferred course. A situation could occur in which those less economically advantaged would be inclined to avoid the more expensive science or maths courses in favour of less expensive courses.

PRIYANKA KULKARNI, PEMBROKE

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No winner as Assange cancels on the Union

Alice Udale-Smith rounds up a tumultuous week at the Cambridge Union after Assange controversy

This week saw considerable controversy for both the Union and the CUSU Women's campaign, after it was announced that Julian Assange was going to be participating in a Q&A session at the Union on November 27th. Mr Assange currently faces questioning on allegations of rape and sexual assault in Sweden, and has been granted asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy after a ruling from the UK Supreme Court declared that he should be extradited to

launching a petition against the event. The petition, which was open to anyone to sign, received over 900 signatures, and criticised the Union for "riding on a tide of publicity created from the traumatic experiences of rape survivors to raise the profile of their own name." One commentator on the petition page said: "the Union think they are being clever & edgy. They are not. They are shameful." The Women's Campaign also planned to protest the event if it went ahead.

Mid-week it became clear that the Union's own members were also deeply unhappy with the situation, with over 150 members petitioning the Union to cancel the event, resulting in plans for a Special Business Meeting to be held. Had such a meeting taken place, a vote would have been taken on whether Assange should have been allowed to speak, with a minimum of a 75% majority needed for the motion to pass.

Even the process of calling this meeting was complicated, however, with a "Presidential Interpretation of the Constitution", necessary to allow electronic signatures for the petition to be accepted. The Standing Committee had initially decided that the petition had to be hand-signed, upsetting some



The Cambridge Union Society argued that Assange should be afforded the same right to free speech as any other speaker

disabled students who felt this would have limited their ability to sign the petition.

Laura Wetherly, a student at King's commented that "as a disabled student, I have limited physical mobility so going to the Union building is difficult and tiring. For students who use wheelchairs the building is not accessible. To expect us to enter the building to physically sign is not reasonable. I am disappointed by the Union's failure to support me as one of their members."

The Union has robustly defended its decision to invite Assange to speak, stating they had "decided to host this interview on condition that no questions will be forbidden", and arguing that "the Union feels that free speech is not just about being heard – it is everyone's right to hear, question, and challenge individuals and their ideas in the public sphere".

But, in a surprise move, the event was cancelled on Tuesday. Union President Austin Mahler confirmed the cancellation to *Varsity*, saying that: "Julian Assange has cancelled the Q&A scheduled for 27th November due to technical issues with the video link equipment in the Ecuadorian Embassy".

Those who had protested against the invitation were relieved. CUSU Women's Officer, Susy Langsdale, said: "The CUSU Women's Campaign is delighted that the Union has cancelled Julian

Assange coming to speak. We are, however, particularly amused by their suggestion that the founder of Wikileaks had to cancel a week in advance for technical reasons."

'We are, however, particularly amused by their suggestion that the founder of Wikileaks had to cancel a week in advance for technical reasons.'

disappointed that the Union has not had the intellectual honesty to admit the real reasons for this disinvitation nor to respond directly to the 178 of their members who expressed concern at the Union's failure to address the wider issues of rape culture."

Despite the CUSU Women's Campaign claiming victory, the Union remained adamant that: "Mr Assange's cancellation comes in light of the broadcaster cancelling, and is unrelated to the petition." Despite this reaffirmation, students posting on Facebook and Twitter were unconvinced by the proposition that the "technical difficulties" couldn't be overcome with over a week still to go before the event.

Their suspicions were proved correct when, in an embarrassing turn of events for the Union, it was revealed the next day that Assange would in fact be speaking via videolink to the ConventionCamp conference in Hanover, Germany, on 27th November, instead of speaking at the Union.

Responding to this snub from Assange, the Union said they were: "disappointed in Mr Assange's apparent dishonesty. We would have hoped that any individual or institution claiming to represent the interests of free speech and openness would be more straightforward in their dealings."

Returning to the initial controversy around Assange's invitation, however, the Union admitted that "It is clear that we need a more representative way of gauging what members want. We hope members will consider joining us next term to discuss No Platform policies and the Union's invitation policy going forward. "Only when we know exactly what members joined to participate in can we be certain how to provide for their wishes." More recently, the Union Women's Officer, Lauren Steele, has told *Varsity* she has felt "isolated and humiliated" in her role. She has also expressed her hopes of getting the Women's and Diversity Officers a vote on the Union Standing Committee, in the hope of making the Union a more inclusive and self-critical organisation.

952

people signed the CUSU Women's Campaign's petition against the event

Sweden. Mr Assange last spoke at the Union 18 months ago, in March 2011, less than a month before the decision regarding his extradition was made.

The Union released a statement on Monday evening about their decision to offer the Wikileaks founder a platform to speak, calling him "one of the most recognisable figures in recent years." The CUSU Women's Campaign was quick to respond, however,

CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY



Assange previously spoke at the Union in March 2011, when he was under house arrest

The week that was: CUSU and the Union get defensive in a never-ending series of statements...

CUSU WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN

Responds to the prospect of Assange Q&A event

"The CUSU Women's Campaign is deeply disappointed that the current committee of Cambridge Union Society have decided to re-invite Assange. Yet again, the Cambridge Union Society is enabling the rebuilding of the public persona of an alleged rapist. By inviting Assange, and Strauss-Kahn previously, the Cambridge Union Society are colluding in the horrific silence and shame around rape."

The statement continued: "we want the Cambridge Union Society to understand that what they are doing is not only a Cambridge based issue but a national one. They are disregarding the voices of survivors of rape across the country through their continued offering of platform to alleged rapists. We expect our university to set a positive model for supporting survivors of rape."

THE UNION AGAIN (A BIT EMBARRASSED)

Assange not coming due to "technical difficulties"

"It is unfortunate that these issues were discovered before the Union Society had the opportunity to fairly gauge members' views through a Special Business Meeting, which was scheduled to be held this weekend, however the Women's Campaign has withdrawn the requisition that was necessary to call this meeting. At the next opportunity, the Committee will be considering the possibility of holding a Special Business Meeting this term or next as chance to discuss No Platform policies. The question of rescheduling the event will wait until after this discussion. We hope recent events will encourage more member involvement and discussion about the principles for which the Union exists. We also hope that they will act as a catalyst for more widespread awareness and education about rape culture."

CUSU WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN ARE HAPPY

Although Union maintains original line

Susy Langsdale: "The CUSU Women's Campaign is delighted that the Union has cancelled Julian Assange coming to speak. We are, however, particularly amused by their suggestion that the founder of Wikileaks had to cancel a week in advance for technical reasons. We are disappointed that the Union has not had the intellectual honesty to admit the real reasons for this disinvitation nor to respond directly to the 178 of their members who expressed concern at the Union's failure to address the wider issues of rape culture."

But the Union insists: "We note the claim that this cancellation is due to a campaign opposing the event, however we would like to re-iterate that Mr Assange's cancellation comes in light of the broadcaster cancelling, and is unrelated to the petition."

THE UNION AGAIN (VERY EMBARRASSED)

Assange, the two-timer

"It has recently been announced that Mr Assange will be delivering the keynote address via video link to the ConventionCamp conference in Hamburg, Germany, on 27th November. This announcement comes only one day after his spokesperson claimed that his Q&A at the Cambridge Union Society must be cancelled because his preferred broadcaster, Russia Today, was unable to arrange the technical aspects of the video link. The Union Society is disappointed in Mr Assange's apparent dishonesty. We would have hoped that any individual or institution claiming to represent the interests of free speech and openness would be more straightforward in their dealings. We apologise to members for the confusion this has caused and the doubts that have arisen following Mr Assange's misleading statement."

CAMBRIDGE UNION WOMEN'S OFFICER

Is not at all happy

"From the very beginning of term when I started my time as Women's Officer of the Union it has been clear that the role is tokenistic. I do not have a vote which means my voice can be easily dismissed and disrespected, as it has been. At the moment, from personal experience, I feel the Union does not provide a safe space for women members and by disregarding even a minority of members' views, in my opinion, contradicts its notion of free speech entirely. The Union must consider the influences and power it has as an institution and how their decisions contradict many of society's movements forward. From an inside perspective, the Union is a backward institution that urgently needs to re-evaluate its no platform policy and the need to listen to all members' points of view, not just the groups that sit comfortably with their own."

NEWS IN BRIEF**CAMFM SETS NEW RECORD FOR LONGEST RADIO BROADCAST**

CAMBRIDGE Students at CamFM beat the world record for the longest ever music radio broadcast by a team as part of their fundraising efforts for this year's Children in Need. The record has previously been held by ex-Radio 1 DJ Chris Moyles and was taken by CamFM from Kiss FM Germany, who broadcast continuously for 73 hours in November 2011. The broadcast lasted 75 hours, with presenters Ben Weisz (Trinity) and Harry Smy (ARU) attempting to remain in the studio for the whole time. Messages of support have been sent to the station via Twitter, with Cambridge MP Julian Huppert tweeting: "Congrats again to @camfm972 - new UK record and great fundraising... keep going!"

LOW TURNOUT AS SIR GRAHAM BRIGHT ELECTED CAMBRIDGE'S FIRST PCC

CAMBRIDGE The Conservative candidate Sir Graham Bright has been elected Cambridgeshire's first Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). Only 14.7 % of the electorate voted in Cambridge, which was lower than the overall turnout figure of 15.3 % for the county. Almost 2,900 ballot papers were spoiled. After the first count, Bright led with 23,731 votes but at that stage no candidate had an overall majority. In Cambridge City, the Labour candidate Ed Murphy and the Liberal Democrat candidate Rupert Moss-Eccardt gained the most first-preference votes. After the counting of second preference votes, Bright won with 31,640, ahead of Murphy's 25,114 votes.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE SEES DRAMATIC RISE IN HOMELESSNESS

CAMBRIDGE A report by the National Housing Federation has revealed that Cambridgeshire has seen one of the largest rises in the UK in the number of homeless people eligible for local authority support. Over the last two years, the increase in cases in the region has been 44%, twice the national average. This comes after seven years of consecutive falls. Claire Astbury, East of England Lead Manager at the National Housing Federation, said: "Today's figures are shocking and indicate that many people in the East of England are truly being pushed to the brink."

UNION ELECTIONS TAKING PLACE THIS WEEK

CAMBRIDGE People would have been forgiven for forgetting about the Union elections this week. They are, however, taking place this Friday and in the only important election, the one for President, Joel Fenster is taking on Harry Prance. Fenster is the current Debating Officer and Prance is running on the typical anti-Union platform, campaigning for Union reform and 3-course meals for £10 at The Mahal.

Home and away: the postgraduate lottery

Emily Handley investigates the new proposals to reform graduate tuition fees

Cambridge University's Bursars' Committee has plans to reform the current structure put in place for tuition fees paid by graduate students.

The committee, which is made up of bursars from all of the University's colleges, has recently released a report outlining proposals for a significant increase in graduate fees paid by international students. The plans in the report would aim to substantially increase the university's intake of graduate students from overseas, allocating fewer places to home students.

While this system would benefit graduates whose main residence is within the UK, as their college fees would be reduced to £1,276 from the current charge of £2,349, the committee's intention to attract many more

'The plans in the report would aim to substantially increase the university's intake of graduate students from overseas, allocating fewer places to home students'

international applicants may result in fewer places being made available for home students.

The new fees would also differ for students depending on whether their postgraduate studies are within arts or science disciplines. These changes come only weeks after the Higher Education Commission issued an inquiry



There are concerns that the reforms will result in significantly higher fees for science students

into the state of postgraduate study in the UK.

Their findings, which *Varsity* reported on earlier this month, showed that rising tuition fees, as well as the reluctance of banks to grant loans to postgraduate students, has dissuaded many students from continuing their education after graduation.

The chairman of the Sutton Trust, Sir Peter Lampl, commented on the information, saying that British citizens "must make the most of all [their] talents. It is no less important in postgraduate studies which are now dominated by overseas students. It is vital that our brightest graduates are not priced out of postgraduate study."

Proposals for the system of increased

charges for graduates would result in those studying a science-based subject paying significantly higher fees than those considering further study in the arts. There are concerns that this may

£1,276

would be the new college fee for home students, down from £2,349

result in the possibility of an unfair 'lottery', where graduate opportunities for fees and funding are largely dependent on their choice of course.

The need for an increase in the fees

paid by graduates comes as a result of the cuts to bursaries made available by Britain's government-owned Research Councils, with grants from the councils having become more difficult to come by in recent years. The councils' practice of paying both the university and college fees of graduates stopped in 2001, leaving fewer options available for students who are unable to fund graduate courses themselves.

Arsalan Ghani said of the proposed

'It is vital that our brightest graduates are not priced out of postgraduate study'

changes to the university's graduate fee system that the problem is having an "education system that depends on students accumulating a mountain of debt in order to gain an education that is increasingly worthless in the face of continued economic crisis. This is the lesson to take home from the current crisis and recession: we live in a system where the wealthy get richer and where the rest of us are forced to live on debt. But this is completely unsustainable."

Matt Phillips, a first-year PhD student in European Literature and Culture, also commented on the plans, saying that he "sympathise[s] with Arsalan Ghani's mixed feelings, as the advantages and disadvantages of this proposal are in proportions not simple to measure. "However, I think that furthering the pernicious influence of market forces on fees and entry is an act not easy to retract, and is one that should be resisted."

The creation of the universe at King's (for free)

Bara Golanova
NEWS REPORTER

The Cambridge Music Festival took place from 9-20 November, with the new director, Justin Lee, planning to make it an annual event from this year onwards.

The festival originally started in 1991 as a celebration of the bicentenary of Mozart's death. It involved four weeks of live music, outdoor as well as indoor events, with schools and other parts of the community coming together to celebrate culture in Cambridge. Since its inauguration, it has been held every three years, and was previously directed by Gillian Perkins.

'The musicians performing included truly world-class artists'

After Perkins' retirement in 2009, Lee decided to continue the tradition of staging both indoor concerts, with locations such as the chapels at King's and Trinity, as well as free outdoor events.

The musicians performing at this year's festival included truly world-class artists, adding to the prestige and hopefully newly re-invigorated tradition of the event. The festival opened with renowned pianist Murray Perahia directing the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and playing Mozart, the composer who inspired the

event in the first place. Perahia, who was awarded three Grammys for Best Chamber Music Performance and Best Instrumental Soloist Performance, only returned to an active career in 2008, after recovering from a serious hand injury.

The opening concert was held in West Road Concert Hall, and kicked off what promised to be a very classy eleven days. Trumpeter Alison Balsom performed in Trinity College Chapel together with pianist Tom Poster, their repertoire ranging from the work of Baroque composer Henry Purcell all the way to that of jazz legend Cole Porter. The closing performance at St John's College Chapel also offered a variety of classical music pieces, with the Tallis Scholars performing Vivaldi's fiery Spanish music as well as the calm and peaceful music from England and the Low Countries.

Education was not left forgotten either. This year, the projects were focused on singing and percussion. Local primary schools participated in a performance of Green Songs with King's Junior Voices at St Andrew's Baptist Church, and the world renowned percussionist Colin Currie joined the Cambridgeshire Youth Percussion Ensemble to play together at Cambridge Corn Exchange.

If you were walking by King's College Chapel on the evenings of November 15 or 16, you might have noticed that it was not looking its old stone-white self. Artist Simeon Nelson, composer Rob Godman and computer scientist and



King's College Chapel was transformed into a blur of colours and music as part of the festival's celebration of music and technology

artist Nick Rothwell joined together to create a massive light projection on the front side of the building, accompanied by spectacular sound effects.

The creators named their project Plenum and described it as "an artistic interpretation of the ways the universe could have been formed", going from "a state of absolute order through to a state of complete chaos". This event was one of the highlights of the festival, giving life even to one of the most ancient buildings in Cambridge.

The Cambridge Music Festival is an event, which encourages and supports

the classical music tradition in Cambridge, as well as trying to introduce new approaches and projects. But the publicity of the festival could perhaps be improved in the future, especially among students. "When I saw photos of King's College Chapel lit up like that, I had no idea what it was", said Yeoh Lai Lin, a student at Homerton College.

In an interview for *The Cambridge News*, Lee said that he was "trying to bring something truly exceptional to the city and to bring people together in a way they may not have experienced before."



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COLLEGE
ROUND-UPSTUDENTS HELPING
WITH INTERVIEWS FOR
NEW PRINCIPAL

HOMERTON Dr Kate Pretty, who has been the Principal of Homerton College since 1991, is to retire in the end of the academic year. The College has already started the interview process for a new Principal, including inviting students to have an informal lunch with the applicants. The number of students invited, however, was relatively small, and the interest in this major change to the running of the College does not seem to be very large either. "I don't really care about having a new Principal, because you never see them, do you?" says Vicky Hill, a student at Homerton. The new Principal, who will be appointed through an election by the Governing Body of the College, is to replace Dr Pretty from Autumn 2013.

SHOULD MEN VOTE FOR
WOMEN'S OFFICER?

SIDNEY SUSSEX Sidney Sussex College Students' Union is currently holding a referendum to change the election process of Representational Officers. The proposed changes to the constitution would mean that all Sidney students would be able to vote for candidates, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation or nationality. At the moment, the only representational role which all student members of college can vote for is the Disabled Students Officer. The other roles – Women's, International and LGBTQ – are elected by students who fall into each of these categories respectively. The motion to hold a referendum on the proposed changes asserted that 'the issues dealt with by the Women's, LGBTQ, International and Disabled Officers should ultimately concern all students' and 'privacy and self-definition is essential when electing these officers'.

NEW SPORTS FACILITY
PLANS APPROVED

EMMANUEL Emma has recently gained permission to build a new sports pavilion on a site north of Long Road and east of Rutherford Road in Cambridge. The pavilion will be 160ft by 45ft, made up of two wings either side of a central hall, and will be located near their other sports pitches.

PETITION LAUNCHED
AGAINST ALUMNUS FOR
SEXUAL HARASSMENT

KING'S A King's student has launched a petition criticizing the college for inviting an alumnus, who was seen sexually harassing a staff member, back for a college dinner. The petition, addressed to the Senior Tutor, says that the "sexual harassment was witnessed by many people, including students, staff members and other alumni" and calls the college's response to the situation a disgrace.

Student loans failing to cover costs

Emily Chan investigates the shortfall between student loans and student expenses

Students are left with an average shortfall of £8,566 a year, according to a report by the National Union of Students (NUS).

The figure is based on estimates of a first-year student's expenditure over a 39-week academic year. The report suggests on average £1,956 is spent on food, just over £2,000 is used for personal items and expenses such as mobile phone bills, while £1,310 is spent on leisure, which includes money spent on alcohol. The average price of rent outside of London is calculated to be £4,834 a year.

The available maintenance loan of £3,575 for all eligible full-time students who began university in September 2012 does not even cover the estimated

£1,956

is spent by students on food

cost for accommodation. 35 % of the maintenance loan provided by the government is income-assessed, and the maximum amount that a student can receive is £5,500. Students with a household income of £25,000 or less are entitled to an additional maintenance grant of £3,250, which does not need to be repaid. This funding gap of more than £8,500, highlighted by the NUS,



In the run up to the vote, the scheme attracted controversy from local

is based on students receiving a maintenance loan of £4,335 and a grant of £934. At this rate, the NUS calculated that a student would have to work 34 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, in order to earn the difference after paying tax.

It was revealed earlier this month that the average cost of student accommodation has doubled over the last ten years from £59.17 a week in 2001/2 to £117.67 in 2011/12. Cambridge students pay between £80 and £110 a week for a standard single room, and between £90 and £130 a week for an en suite room. However, these figures do not include extra costs at some colleges for heating and lighting, and the Kitchen Fixed Charge. The charge, which ranges from around £95 to over £200, pays to subsidise college meals.

The guaranteed maintenance loan of £3,575 would not cover the price of accommodation at Newnham for example, where all students pay a flat rate of £3,938 for a 30-week academic year, along with an extra Kitchen Fixed Charge of around £700.

Pia Salter, a first-year classicist at Newnham, said: "Even though you are paying the same rate every year and the rooms do vary a lot, the way the Newnham room ballot works enables a balance in the standard of accommodation. On the other hand, it is an expensive rate, and you don't have the option to pick a cheaper room. [The kitchen fixed charge] does seem an extravagant amount." Salter, who is an international student, does not receive a tuition fee or maintenance loan: "I have to rely on my parents for financial support and that can be hard. It's hard to balance finances, and it requires a lot of budgeting that a busy student perhaps doesn't have the time to really evaluate and consider."

As students are usually not allowed to seek part-time employment during term, additional financial assistance is often required on top of any maintenance loans from the government, including from parents, overdrafts and bursary schemes. Lyam Todd, a second-year philosophy student at Christ's, said: "My loan definitely would not cover my accommodation and living costs. I think my loan is about £2100 per term and my college bill is about £1700. Luckily I get the full Newton Bursary, as well as a college bursary, and that's why I feel secure enough with money. The funds that the University lays on for students are so extremely helpful



CLARE COTERILL

How does the cost accommodation at Cambridge colleges compare to rents on student houses across the UK?

and vital to many students here, myself included." Todd receives an annual bursary of £3,400 from the University and an additional £700 college bursary for accommodation costs.

He thinks that the increase in tuition fees to £9,000 a year and the rising cost of student living means that financial support is more essential now than ever: "It's ever more important to have the bursaries now that fees are raised precisely in order to ensure that people aren't put off coming."

The Cambridge Bursary Scheme, which is administered by the Isaac Newton Trust, offers annual bursaries of up to £3,500 for eligible students who

£3,500

is available to students on the Newton Bursary Scheme in Cambridge

began their course in 2012. The bursary offers assistance to students who have a household income of less than £42,600.

In March, Cambridge University Students' Union (CUSU) organised a day of protest against the proposed cuts to student bursaries. There had been proposals to offer a £3,000 reduction on fees for students with household incomes of less than £25,000 but to cut the cash bursary to £1,625. The

University responded to pressure by announcing that the bursary scheme would continue to offer grants of up to £3,500. Some students from disadvantaged backgrounds can receive a fee waiver of £6,000 in their first year through the National Scholarship Programme in addition to a Cambridge Bursary.

A spokesman for the University said: "The University of Cambridge is committed to the principle that no UK student should be deterred from applying to the University because of financial concerns. We offer an unlimited number of bursaries to students from lower income households to ensure that students can meet the cost of their Cambridge education, regardless of background."

"Cambridge itself is a relatively inexpensive place in which to study and has consistently been ranked in the top 10 of NatWest's Student Living Index of the UK's most cost-effective university cities. As most students stay in college accommodation for the duration of their studies, they do not need to pay commercial rents, large deposits or additional utility bills, as college rents are all-inclusive. Students also only pay rent during term time, unless they choose to stay in Cambridge over the vacations. Cambridge terms are short, so overall accommodation costs are lower than at many other universities."

Solving the financial crisis with a raging hangover

Phelim Brady
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

Economics and accounting students are some of the biggest drinkers in Britain's universities, according to a new survey from *studentbeans.com*.

The student deals website asked nearly 2,000 students from seventy-four universities how many units of alcohol they generally drink per week and ranked the results by course.

Accounting and Finance students came top of the table, reporting that they consumed 30.6 units of alcohol on average each week, nearly 50% more than the Royal College of Physicians' recommended weekly limit for men, and double that recommended for women. Economics students, perhaps taking to heart Keynes's reminder that

in the long run we are all dead, came in second in the survey, with a reported average consumption of 27.3 units per week.

Commenting on the results, Oliver Brann, editor of *studentbeans.com*, said, "It seems these turbulent financial times are stressing the accountants and economists out before they've even entered the working world."

Close behind were chemistry students, with a reported 26.2 units per week, equivalent to around 13 pints. Geographers claimed to drink an average of 22.5 units per week, just above the weekly recommended limit for males, while most of those taking humanities and social science courses reported consuming between 17 and 20 units. Medics told the website that they drink around 17 units a



Don't they know that Homer called it 'the wine-dark sea' with good reason?

week, while English students reported some of the lowest levels of alcohol consumption, claiming to consume an average of 14.7 units per week.

Bottom of the table, perhaps

reassuringly, were students studying nursing, midwifery and health care, who said they drink just over 12 units per week, about five and a half glasses of wine.

Fez Club escapes closure

Patrick O'Grady
NEWS EDITOR

Plans to convert Fez Club into 12 apartments have fallen through due to a decision taken by Cambridge City Council.

The proposal to convert the club has been in the pipeline since last June, but it was only on November 29th that the Council decided that the location was not appropriate for residential accommodation.

The building is owned by Friend's Life, who claimed that there was a high demand for city centre residential accommodation and also highlighted concerns about the fire safety of the club. Friend's Life claimed that there was already 'generous provision' for nightclubs in the city.

However, Eclectic Bars, owner of the Fez brand which includes a sister Moroccan-themed club in Putney, claimed that the venue is a "unique local facility", and that the employment

of 41 staff was important for the local economy.

The Council decided in favour of the club, and stressed the city's status as a "subregional destination for leisure activities including nightclubs". In a statement released by the Council, they said: "Cambridge has a population of approximately 127,000 people, including approximately 27,000 resident students." "It is therefore important that Cambridge continues to provide a vibrant centre to serve students and

'It is therefore important to provide a vibrant centre to serve students and young people'

young people who may want to use these types of facilities."

Fez Club has marketed itself as an alternative venue for students, claiming that it provides nights "for those who want to escape the standard cheesy high street offerings".

However, the club has suffered financially and struggled to maintain its stake on the Cambridge nightclub market. The addition of Lola Lo, which opened in 2011 and rivals Fez for Sunday night student nights, has added further competition. Fears for the survival of Fez were raised back in Michaelmas 2010 and have resurfaced sporadically in recent months.

The long-term future of the club still remains in doubt, but for the moment alternative club nights in Cambridge have been preserved.

Israeli ambassador visits Union amidst renewed Israel-Gaza conflict

Anna Clays
NEWS REPORTER

Daniel Taub, the Israeli ambassador to the UK, is due to give a talk at the Cambridge Union Society next Monday, 26 November.

Taub, a British-born diplomat with degrees from the Universities of Oxford and London, has over twenty years' of experience in Israeli foreign affairs.

His visit to the Union comes amidst the renewal of conflict between Israel and Gaza, after the assassination of a Hamas military leader last Wednesday. Since then, over 138 Palestinians and five Israelis have been killed.

An expert in international law, Taub previously served as a reserve officer in the Israeli Defence Forces' international law division, and has also held positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Israel's legal advisor to the United Nations in New York and Geneva. He has extensive experience in the Palestine-Israel peace process and has been involved in most negotiations, as well as those between Israel and Syria.

Egyptian diplomats, as well as Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the UN, and Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State, are currently attempting to negotiate a ceasefire. But last Tuesday, a UN Security Council resolution condemning the conflict was blocked by the US on the grounds that it did not address the 'root cause' of Hamas rocket fire. The long-standing conflict has so far failed to result in a permanent solution accepted by both sides. In two weeks' time, the Palestinian Authority, the authoritative body of the West Bank, will approach the UN to request the recognition of a Palestinian state.

Reactions to Taub's planned appearance at the Union have been mixed. Facebook data suggests that over 140 students plan to attend the event; but one student noted the disparity that Israel has an internationally-recognised



It was a mix of exhaustion and elation as the results came in at the Union

government with the funds to attend such events abroad, whereas the Palestinian governing bodies have neither.

But Cambridge's Israel Society welcomes his visit as "extremely positive" and an "opportunity to hear from, and exchange views with an official representative of the Israeli government with extensive knowledge about the current situation". They condemn Hamas' "reign of terror over Israel" as "intolerable".

By contrast, the Cambridge branch of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign is "dismayed" at the Union's decision to invite Taub as a representative of Israel in light of their recent "merciless attacks on a heavily populated and largely defenceless enclave".

Moreover, they point out, Taub "defended Operation Cast Lead 4 years ago" [Israel's ground invasion of Gaza in 2008-9 following rocket attacks, resulting in over 1,100 Palestinian deaths], and they argue that Israel "has ignored innumerable UN resolutions, and contravenes the 4th Geneva Convention on several fronts, as testified by human rights groups".

Taub made his position on the current crisis clear in an article for the *Huffington Post UK*, published last Tuesday. Drawing parallels between the British experience of the Blitz and Israeli citizens' fear of Hamas rocket fire, Taub argued that Israel's "need for action was clear" given Hamas' "sinister and illegitimate" actions against Israeli civilians. He accuses Hamas – which, he notes, the British government sees as a terrorist organisation – of "hiding behind" innocent Palestinians, who Israel is "doing its utmost to avoid injuring".

But in reply, Ben Bradshaw, Labour MP for Exeter and former Cabinet minister, argues that "this is not just about rockets and self-defence.

"It's about 1.3 million Palestinians crowded into a tiny strip of land (or 'prison camp' as David Cameron called it)... Israel's continued blockade has strangled Gaza's economy and only served to encourage the militants".

Daniel Taub's talk will be 7.30pm, 26th November at the Union



Eclectic Bars claims that Fez Club is a "unique local facility"

University receives £4m research funding

Patrick O'Grady & Katharine Biddle
NEWS REPORTERS

Cambridge and Cranfield universities have been collectively awarded a £5 million government supplement for research, with Cambridge receiving almost £4 million of this total. The aim of the grant is to propel scientific and engineering research into the business market, and to ensure that good research proposals are carried out to completion.

The supplement demonstrates the government's interest in bolstering a British 'Silicon Valley', as described by Business Secretary Vince Cable.

'Financial investment was and still is pivotal to research projects such as these'

It is hoped that the funding will contribute to the UK's scientific future and encourage investment in projects that could support the British economy.

The government's choice to invest in Cambridge is motivated by more than simply the University's impressive research history. Earlier last month,

Moody gave Cambridge a stable AAA credit rating, marking its bonds as a sound investment.

The University was praised for having an "outstanding market position", "stable revenue", and was identified as an essential asset to the UK economy. Business Secretary Vince Cable said: "Where we have world class Universities, Cambridge being one of them, we want to get behind them and help them turn their brilliance and their academic ideas into good businesses, which create jobs in Britain."

Dr Richard Jennings of Cambridge University commented on the research grant, praising it as "tremendous", and adding that it will significantly assist the University in becoming more efficient "in transferring knowledge into society".

However, data compiled by *Times Higher Education* revealed that the cumulative income from research grants to the University in the past year was cut significantly. Out of the top ten universities ranked by income received from grants, Cambridge suffered the greatest drop, with Research Council funding falling by 34% from £85.2 million in 2010-2011 to £56.2 million in 2011-2012.

Seven out of the top ten universities saw a fall in income from research, with



The government awarded £5m to Cambridge and Cranfield Universities

Imperial College London, the number one institution in terms of Research Council funding, seeing their funding drop from £94.5 million to £76.7 million.

The fall in research funding offered to UK institutions has caused concern in recent weeks. The Chair of the Russell Group, Professor Michael Arthur, and Director General Wendy Piatt, expressed worries last month in a foreword to a report on the importance on leading universities:

"It's vital that in straitened economic

times, the UK government does not make the grave mistake of making cuts to higher education and research funding or spreading limited funds too thinly."

"UK government policy has, to some extent, recognised the importance of investing in research, concentrating resources on excellence and allowing universities to raise more funds from private sources."

"But to compete globally our leading institutions must be able to secure sufficient funds. Only that way can they

boost our economy and prosper in ways that will benefit everyone."

The foreword claims: "Many countries of a comparable size and world influence would dearly love to possess even a tiny handful of our leading universities". However, it adds that "worryingly for us, right now many of them are doing everything they can to emulate what we already have."

The Guardian reported on 14 November that by next October, a university will be assessed by its ability to justify the impact of its 'impact' research on

34%

fall in research council funding to Cambridge in the last academic year

public life. This impact of a department will then form a fifth of the score during its assessment for the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

Dr Alisdair Pinkerton from Royal Holloway believes that "in an era of decreased funding where fewer grants are available, there's something about being a bit more entrepreneurial that I'm detecting in the sector, on behalf of your own academic career."

VARSITY'S SELECTION OF THE BEST PROTEST CHANTS

"Clegg, I've not met you
And this is crazy
But here's your pledges
Stand down maybe?
And all the other Libs
Regret you greatly
So here's a backbone
Stand down maybe?"

"Dumbledore wouldn't
put up with this shit"

"Clear up the Eton Mess"

"On the twelfth day of
Christmas the ConDems
gave to me, cuts to my
University"

"Go ahead Clegg, step
down" (to the tune of
'Golddigger')

"Cameron is a wanker,
He wears a silk cravat,
He took one look at the
Welfare state and said
I'm not having that!
He can't say no to bankers,
He won't bail out the poor,
So lets show these
Con-Dem bastards the
true meaning of class
war!"

AND THE TWEETS:
"Not very busy in
the Library so far this
morning - is everyone
at #demo2012?" (@
shhsharn)

"We're marching
because even a good
degree isn't good
enough #Demo2012" -
@adi_peltz

And special mention to
the student in the gorilla
outfit from Bath Uni.

"It's cold, it's wet, and we're in loads of debt"

Continued from the front page.

At one point, anti-NUS protestors formed a human chain on Westminster Bridge, trying to prevent people from continuing the march along the planned route. They were saying to students: "What do you want an education for, anyway? There's nothing there for you". A few representatives of Anonymous UK, the hacking group, were also stationed on the bridge, their faces masked – attempting, presumably, to capitalize on student discontent. By the time most of the protestors had reached Kennington, the rain and cold proved too discouraging, with student breaking off into pubs. Only a few hundred people actually attended the rally in Kennington Park.

3,000

lower estimate for the actual turnout

Those Cambridge students who had attended the earlier protest in November 2010 were wistful, describing the greater sense of unity and optimism among demonstrators.

Remembering Millbank, a number of the students I spoke to expressed regret at the decline in student activism since then: acknowledging that violence may attract condemnation, but equally receives more news coverage and therefore more attention from politicians.

The relatively low turnout at 'Demo 2012' in comparison to 2010 also suggests that students were discouraged from attending by the fact that serious cuts to higher education funding have already been made. But Liam Finn, a

student at Emmanuel College, argued "nobody's under any illusions about the kinds of change this could bring about. No one's expecting an emergency bill from Parliament; it's about keeping the issues visible and on the agenda".

10,000

NUS predicted turn out

Wednesday's events have shown that many students do not feel adequately represented by the NUS. One Pembroke fresher complained about the bureaucracy of the NUS, describing the organization as "quite obviously not representative". A King's student added: "The NUS are funded by the government. How can they really be anti-government?" Commenting on the growing tensions between the NUS and other student factions, Chris Page emphasised that "the NUS needs to rethink how it unites a disparate student movement in a time of crisis."

Michael Chessun a co-founder of the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC), and University of London (ULU) President said: "There is no unity in the student movement", adding that the idea that we can feign having the same goals in mind when it comes to marching isn't the case." Chessun also condemned the NUS route as "weak" and their slogan, 'Educate, Empower, Employ' as "weak".

So what next for student protests? ULU has announced plans to hold another demonstration on December 5th, the day the Chancellor George Osborne is set to announce the Autumn Budget.



A novice protestor shares his perspective

Patrick O'Grady
NEWS EDITOR

Within minutes of stepping off the coach, determined to remain an impartial reporter of the demonstration, a placard had been thrust into one hand and a copy of the 'Red Student' pressed into the other.

The infectious tune of Carly Rae Jepsen's ubiquitous hit was stuck in my head, repeatedly chanted by the Cambridge contingent with lyrics tailored to suit the prevailing anti-Lib Dem sentiments. As someone with absolutely no experience of demonstrations, it was intriguing to notice how the moderate anti-austerity chants mingled with the rather more

extreme threats to burn Tories on bonfires, sung to the tune of nursery rhymes. Even Marx was set to poetry with a shout of 'Workers of the world unite, / Now's the time to stand and fight' (see side column for a selection of the best chants heard on the day).

Just as long as my face wasn't on the front pages of the nationals in the morning, next to a sign screaming 'Occupy and Strike', none of this really mattered.

Whilst marching along Embankment and past the Houses of Parliament, the energy of the crowd reached its climax, even if the Palestinian flags, Marxist slogans, and anti-NUS blockade left me a little confused as to

what everyone was actually marching for. The long walk to Lambeth, the cause of much disgruntled feeling within the ranks of rain-battered students, certainly took its toll. It seemed a little odd to have walked past Parliament to take the protest to a residential area of south London.

In fact, as the *Guardian* reported on their live blog that students were rapidly breaking off from the rally to pay a visit to the nearby public houses, this *Varsity* reporter could confirm (from a very full pub) that this was the case.

Although I had been relatively unaware of #demo2012 before being roped into reporting in the drizzle of

the capital, I can say that it certainly highlighted that the problems facing higher education provision in this country have not been simply swept under the carpet.

In fact, each time the protestors passed under a bridge and the screech of whistles and yells was deafening, the anger of this particular group of students (though I would hesitate to say a generation) was undeniable.

The fees may have risen, and the education cuts may seem inevitable, but here were thousands of students willing to make a stand nonetheless.

Or if all else fails, willing to throw a soggy satsuma at the NUS President to make sure their anger is felt.



CUSU PRESIDENT SAYS:

“Of course the student movement is still angry about £9000 fees, but the protest today is about so much more. We are seeing a wholehearted shift in the way in which education is treated in this country. Where other countries are investing in their futures via education, in the UK students are facing prohibitive fees, no EMA, a lack of state postgraduate funding and changes to visas which mean that international students no longer have a right to stay in the UK after graduation. These all add up to an attempt to market education as a private good, despite the obvious and widespread public benefits. Education offers life-changing opportunities; this government is closing those doors on the next generation. Cambridge students are at #Demo2012 today to campaign for a better education system now and into the future, to allow young people the chance to experience the education which we have all benefited from.

The NUS #Demo2012 today is important, but it does not end tomorrow – it has to be part of a longer-term vision, and CUSU already has plans in place for follow-up events and campaigns. Most of all, the art of peaceful protest and campaigning is about empowering people. It is about having our voices heard and fighting for the positive changes that we believe in. We are protesting because we can see the public value of education to our country. We are marching because we care about future generations.”

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SEARCHING FOR INQUIRING MINDS

Alphabet soup

In the letters below there is a message from a loved one.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

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Scientists pick up the scent of surgery success

An operation using cells from a dog's own nose has been successful in treating cases of paralysis

Patrick O'Grady
NEWS EDITOR

A revolutionary operation led by University scientists has enabled paralysed dogs to walk again. Dogs that had lost the use of their back legs through spinal injuries underwent surgery to transplant cells from the nose to the spine, the first time that spinal cord repair has been carried out successfully in "real life" injury cases.

'Our findings show for the first time that transplanting these types of cell can bring about significant improvement'

Scientists believe that the same surgery technique could lead to advances in the treatment of humans with spinal cord injuries.

23

dogs underwent revolutionary transplant surgery

Professor Robin Franklin, Director of Research at the Department of Veterinary Medicine, said: "Our findings are extremely exciting because they show for the first time that transplanting



Each dog's improvement in mobility was assessed using treadmill exercises: a heartwarming watch

these types of cell into a severely damaged spinal cord can bring about significant improvement."

The study involved 34 dogs, all suffering from severe spinal damage including slipped discs (which is a common cause of paralysis in dogs). 23 of the dogs underwent surgery to transplant olfactory ensheathing cells from the nasal cavity to the spinal cord,

and all of these demonstrated significant improvement in mobility.

Olfactory ensheathing cells (OECs), which maintain a communication pathway between the nose and the brain by supporting nerve fibre growth, were taken from the lining of each dog's own nose and injected into the injury site.

The trial, published in the journal *Brain*, which specialises in neurology,

was carried out "double blind", with neither the researchers nor the owners of the dogs knowing which animals were receiving the transplant surgery. Of the 11 dogs that did not receive the surgery, one was only injected with the liquid that contained the cells. However, only those injected with OECs saw any significant improvement.

The mobility of the animals was assessed using a treadmill. A video of this, showing the difference in mobility from the start to the end of the trial, can be found online. The dogs were also tested at one month intervals

for any signs of neurological improvement.

The ones that had received surgery were able to move their previously paralysed limbs and could co-ordinate them with their front legs.

However, Professor Franklin urged a cautious response to the news from spine-injury patients: "We're confident that the technique might be able to restore at least a small amount of

movement in human patients with spinal cord injuries, but that's a long way from saying they might be able to regain all lost function."

"It's more likely that this procedure might one day be used as part of a combination of treatments, alongside drug and physical therapies, for example."

Scientists discovered that the nerve connections, newly strengthened as a result of the cell transplants, were only generated over short distances within the spinal cord.

'Before the trial, Jasper was unable to walk at all. But now we can't stop him whizzing around the house'

However, the study, funded by the Wellcome Trust and the Medical Research Council, is likely to provide a basis for further clinical trials on humans.

The improvement in mobility in May Hay's dog Jasper was so great that he was featured on Channel 4 News and ITV News and can now be seen on Youtube. Mrs Hay said:

"Before the trial, Jasper was unable to walk at all. But now we can't stop him whizzing round the house and he can even keep up with the two other dogs we own. It's utterly magic."

Scientists develop an MRSA "superbug black box"

Bara Golanova
NEWS REPORTER

Using DNA sequencing, scientists have been able to uncover an outbreak of MRSA in a special care unit at Rosie Hospital in Cambridge and identify the carrier.

MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) is an antibiotic-resistant form of bacteria. The spread of MRSA is not common in the UK, but the bacteria may cause potentially deadly wound infections in hospitals.

A case of MRSA was found to be spreading among babies at Rosie Hos-

pital. Normally, the hospital cannot tell easily whether such cases are simply a string of unrelated infections or a case of an MRSA outbreak.

Four days after the subsequent 'deep clean', another baby was diagnosed with MRSA, and using the new technique, doctors found that this was linked to the previous cases. Overall, 14 people at the hospital were found to be part of the MRSA outbreak, which involved a previously unknown strain of the bacteria.

When hospital staff were screened using genome sequencing, one person was revealed to be carrying the same MRSA strain as the already diagnosed cases. This gave the hospital a unique chance to intervene. Without this technology, the superbug would probably have spread much more before doctors could identify its character or the carrier.

The cost of the MRSA outbreak was estimated at £10,000, which is double the cost of the DNA sequencing, according to the research team. More-over, the costs could fall to only "a few pounds" per sample in the future, says Parkhill. He also states that the sequencing technology may become more routinely available "maybe in the next few years".

However, there is still work to be done before this technique can be introduced widely, with researchers now developing the technology so that it can be used by staff who are not experts in genetics.

Additionally, a comprehensive database of bacterial genomes will have to be established before the technique can be introduced into common medical practice.

£10,000

was the estimated cost of the outbreak

pital. Normally, the hospital cannot tell easily whether such cases are simply a string of unrelated infections or a case of an MRSA outbreak.

"The original investigation was inconclusive, we couldn't say whether it was an outbreak or not", says co-author of the study, Julian Parkhill. Because most people have the same strain of MRSA, it is not usually possible to identify whether or not individuals have transmitted the bug to each other simply by using the commonly used test results.

However, with the new technique, scientists were able to break the structure of the bug down and provide a more detailed picture of where the bacteria came from. In the case of the Rosie

Arms industry funds 79 research grants

Patrick O'Grady
NEWS EDITOR

Varsity has received a breakdown of the investment received by the University from the arms industry. The figures, a result of Freedom of Information Requests by the pressure group Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), reveal that almost three million pounds was given to the University in the form of research grants and contracts from arms manufacturers in the year 2010-11.

This follows the *Varsity* report two weeks ago that St John's College no longer possesses the £4 million in shares in UK aerospace company GKN that were previously owned by the college.

'A company that profits out of death and destruction under the guise of supplying defence systems'

Three of the world's largest defence contractors invest heavily in research undertaken at the University. BAE Systems, QinetiQ, and Rolls Royce plc account for 79 separate grants and contracts amounting to almost three million

£461,000

contributed by BAE Systems

pounds. BAE Systems, the third largest defence contractor in the world based on 2011 revenues, contributes £461,000 towards this total. The company caused



Varsity received the figures from the pressure group Campaign Against Arms Trade

controversy in 2006 when it sold 72 Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft to the Saudi Arabian government, and more recently sold 200 Tactical armoured vehicles to the regime. The University of Essex Careers Centre cancelled the attendance of BAE at a careers fair on 29 October following a protest against the contractor. Jack Woodier, 20, who was involved in the protest said:

"The University of Essex takes great pride in the Human Rights Centre which is internationally recognised. Therefore to invite BAE Systems, a company that profits out of death and destruction in international armed conflict under the guise of supplying defence systems, is a morally repugnant decision. Essex students will not tolerate arms dealers on campus."

Rolls Royce, the world's 18th largest defence contractor through its defence-related revenues, contributes £2.3 million through 63 separate grants.

QinetiQ, the sixth largest UK-based defence contractor based on 2011 revenues, contributes a further £201,000. The University also receives annual support of £75 000 from GKN plc to fund the GKN Chair of Manufactur-

63

grants received from Rolls Royce plc

ing Engineering. The Atomic Weapons Establishment contributed £1,000 towards activities related to the University's William Penney Fellowship.

The Establishment designs, manufactures and supports the warheads that comprise the UK's nuclear deterrent. The annual march of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament from Trafalgar Square uses the Establishment's premises as its final destination.

Twitter: I thought I taw a puddy cat

Aliya Ram takes a look at public perceptions of Twitter, explaining the joys of communicating 140 characters at a time

With lawyers positively swarming the alleys of cyberspace in search of their next hit, it has become too easy for us to use “the Internet” as an excuse to make depressing social diagnoses: “In the case of self-harm, the Internet seems to be fuelling an explosion” (Julie Henry, *The Telegraph*) “Twitter is just blogging for people with short attention spans” (second-year Historian)

These kinds of cynicism always come from a position of proud superiority (Julie Henry is of the self-proclaimed pre-Internet generation; the historian doesn’t use Twitter) and inevitably involve putting different technological platforms under generalised umbrella terms like “the Internet,” or clumsily conflating them in words like “micro-blogging.” These glossed descriptions might have been

‘We are the Generation Y who have grown up with digitized fingertips’

sufficient once, when computers were first being commercialized and all progress could be together relegated into the category of “new things” – but they are not helpful now.

We are the Generation Y who have grown up with digitized fingertips. Most of us are well-acquainted enough with the Internet to know that it is not one monolithic object that has intruded upon an analogue world, but an organic medium through which creativity and invention can express itself. Chatroulette and Jstor are only as similar as a wooden table and a wooden chair. It would be absurd to equalise them; it is impossible to properly analyse the shortcomings

of either if they are allowed to hide behind each other.

A similar principle of maintaining distinctions can be applied to less extreme examples. When talking about Twitter and blogging, it is likewise more productive to focus on differences, rather than similarities.

‘Twitter’s communications are not drenched in the sweat of social anxiety’

Whereas blogs allow people to publish unlimitedly, Twitter is defined by its restriction of space. Whilst blogs are (often if not always) largely unread, tweets are of a manageable enough size to actually communicate with a large audience.

And yet Twitter’s communications are not drenched in the sweat of social anxiety. Twitter’s design seems to have purposefully rejected some of Facebook’s choices, especially with regard to the priority it gives sociality: you don’t request friendship on Twitter, but quietly follow people whose tweets interest you. Those whose pages you look at more frequently don’t shoot to the top of an exposing list of friends. By not assuming, like Facebook does, that its users want to control who follows or ‘friends’ them, Twitter gets rid of the pseudo-privacy paradox that weighs heavy on the conscience of Facebook users.

Thanks to its non-sociality, Twitter has become a democratic method of communication. Because of the brevity of its form, you can tweet at anyone (Ashley Tisdale or an obscure conceptual artist) and be confident that they are more likely to read it than an email. And, because of its character restriction, it will never fully replace other forms of communication, so that

while emails heralded the death of physical post, Twitter has by no means nullified the importance of emails.

Despite all these dissimilarities, there are certain ways in which Twitter can be made to behave like other digital platforms. Specifically, its ability to syndicate information allows it to act like an RSS feed – albeit one with an actually aesthetically inoffensive user interface. Because it can adopt this role, Twitter becomes not only a means of communication in itself, but a forum to help with the selection of longer-form essays and articles. It distils the amalgamated mass of the world’s publishings into helpful summaries from which lines of inquiry can be pursued or ignored. We might dismiss this by saying it

‘Twitter has become a democratic method of communication’

facilitates the shortening of human attention spans, but, equally, it is a useful tool for busy people who are practical about how much time they can afford to spend sifting through seemingly infinite amounts of shared material.

People who complain about having to read things like “I just had a bacon sarnie” reveal the wrong kind of engagement with Twitter. Little soundbites about what people are doing or thinking about are nice when they come from somebody in whose life one is implicated. When tweets are not interesting, they need not be read. As with every new addition to our lives, we ought to maintain some critical distance from what we read and say on Twitter. But contrary to popular belief, Twitter is not a platform which makes this distance particularly difficult to find.

Drawing Board



Talking Point:

“Every student will at one point or another experience the panic of a library essay crisis library. Some prefer to hole themselves away, but for most the library is a library oasis of quiet. This illusion of calm is shattered in a matter of hours and the library causes the student to experience a state unlike any other: library hysteria. Library.”

Smiling Ballas, Caius

Twitter Talks

“Drinking bollinger in the pathology department....”

Shenyue Ding, Emmanuel

Our love-affair with the American election

Britain’s perpetual and growing obsession with American politics is assessed by [Alex Marshall](#)

As Ohio was called and President Obama declared the winner of an exhausting election, one of the girls watching the coverage with me was visibly getting a little teary. In her defence, that was probably mostly due to how much she’d been drinking and the fact that 4am is an emotional time for the best of us. Leaving that aside, I’m forced to wonder: why do some Brits get so involved in the politics of the United States?

Facebook was full of status updates encouraging America to “do the right thing” or “not screw up,” as if Americans from Alabama to Alaska were waiting for our blessing. It might even be a little pompous; the idea that we in Britain should presume to tell Americans what to do with their country because we ‘know best’.

Perhaps the main reason we’re so engaged is simply because America is the most powerful nation in the world. For all the talk of relative decline and the rise of China, the United States still enjoys by far the largest economy and commands the strongest military in the world. Power is sexy, after all.

The United States also conducts its political process in a relatively accessible way. Consider the bureaucracy of the European Union and the reshuffle in Beijing in

comparison to the map graphic of the states slowly flicking up red or blue.

Some have argued that British interest in American politics reflects our practical concerns over international relations and the global economy. American policies *do* resonate beyond American borders, and we are even more sensitive to this after the recent years of international recession and our involvement alongside the U.S in foreign conflicts.

The more cynical Brits (and there are just a few) may even suggest we follow American political contests in order to find out what wars we’re to be implicated in over the next few years. The less cynical would argue that America can certainly lead in developing clean energy programs, for example. But these arguments do not explain our interest in their healthcare, social, or tax policies.

It is very likely that our curiosity with such American news stories also reveals the extent to which America’s ‘soft power’ of culture and popular media has steadily dominated British life. Most discussions of American quasi-imperialism will explain this ‘soft power’ as one limb of American power, and it is interesting to consider how the United States, Britain’s old colony, has saturated the old imperial nation with these unavoidable

symbols and products of American lifestyle. It is almost as if those posts on Facebook are demanding that their voices be heard in Washington, as the Boston patriots did to Westminster.

‘The glamour of politics across the Atlantic gets the blood going in a way neither Cameron nor Clegg ever could’

However, if I’m being honest, the sad truth is that American politics are often fascinating because of how different they are to our own. Without claiming either is superior or inferior, I confess I find their politics far more exciting. This is partly because, like many in Britain, I can happily support the Democrats in their progressive battle for universal healthcare and civil rights. But America is also the land of ‘the big’.

Whether it be a big speech, a big debate or a big gaffe, the glamour of politics across the Atlantic gets the blood going in a way neither Cameron, nor Clegg nor Brown or their parties ever could. The whole American spectacle is so over the top in a way that often verges on gaudy, but I can’t

take my eyes off it.

The British attraction to American politics is a combination of all of these factors, not to mention that it helps that they speak the same language, more or less (folks).

But the comparison with our own politics and politicians is most striking. A few weeks ago I wrote about how my enthusiasm and optimism for Obama had waned these last four years. Back then he had mile high expectations and the most serious of challenges.

Luckily for him, most have set the bar far lower for this next term. Even so, my cynicism was for one moment dispelled during Obama’s victory speech, the best speech he has delivered in years. He rounds off with a heart-warming call on all peoples, telling them that they can succeed if they dare to hope and try hard enough.

Inspirational stuff, to be sure, but then his final words are on the unity of America and I am reminded that I am not the person he is addressing the speech to. It is not that I wish our system to mimic the American, for it is riddled with flaws; often such glitz and glamour distracts from the content of their policies. But I’d find it hard to be apathetic about American-style politics.

Dictionaries: chroniclers or arbiters?

Lewis Wynn discusses the relationship between dictionaries and the ways words are actually used

Last month an impassioned speech given in parliament by Julia Gillard, the current Australian Prime Minister, eventually resulted in the *Macquarie Dictionary* changing its definition of 'misogyny' from "hatred of women" to "entrenched prejudice against women". Gillard accused Tony Abbott, the opposition leader, of sexism, hypocrisy and misogyny. Whilst largely commended, the speech was sadly undermined by the developing side-show surrounding her use of the term 'misogyny'. Abbott was 'defended' on the grounds of not being a 'woman hater' *per se*, just harbouring an 'entrenched prejudice' against women; words fail me. Appeals to the *Macquarie Dictionary*, the dictionary of Australian English which sets standard usage in courts and schools, were made to justify this 'defence'.

Whilst I for one fail to see how a campaign against Gillard which made use of posters urging voters to "ditch the witch," in support of a man who referred to abortion as "the easy way out," can constitute anything other than misogyny in its strongest sense, the dictionary changed its definition, seeming to support Gillard's use of the word, essentially conflating the two terms.

Some thought the change excessive, with Opposition MP Fiona Nash offering up this wonderful piece of nonsense in response: "It would seem

more logical for the prime minister to refine her vocabulary than for the *Macquarie Dictionary* to keep changing its definitions every time a politician mangles the English language."

'A dictionary can only ever be an account, rather than a guidebook'

This recent episode illustrates the nebulous and contradictory relationship we have with our dictionaries, the two general and paradoxical approaches we take towards them. On the one hand they are standardisers which should be adhered to in order to 'make sense', on the other, a document of a developing and active language, the chronicler of change rather than the arbiter of truth. The pre-eminent Cambridge scholar William Empson once asserted that we "could not use language as we do, and above all we could not use it as babies, unless we were always floating in a general willingness to make sense of it." This "general willingness" is negated by the mission of publications such as the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, the 'official moderator' of the French language, which seek to set in place definitive allowances on word meanings and language use.

The role of etymology and word definitions in relation to questions

of self-possession and knowledge has long been a marked feature of Cambridge's poetic and literary discourses, particularly in the work and influence of J.H. Prynne, the formidable poet who now lives in Cambridge as a Life Fellow at Caius.

Keston Sutherland wrote in his 2004 PhD thesis *J.H. Prynne and Philology* (supervised by another great Cambridge poet, Professor Simon Jarvis), that the poems which constitute Prynne's first two collections are all engaged in "the philological investigation of concepts; that is, the investigation of the changing appearance of individual concepts throughout the history of language and considered under the primary aspect of their 'names'".

Yet despite a project which in many ways reflects the concerns and activity of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Prynne himself referred to that publication as the "new Oxford dictionary of Etymological Evasion and

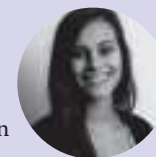
Cowardice," particularly unimpressed with its entry on the word 'winsome,' and its suggestion that it entered the literary language "(god help us)," from the "(one presumes) non-literary north." Prynne's subsequent examination of the English rune 'wynn' may have confused my own self-possession with regard to my surname, but I doubt that's quite the point.

What this does emphasise, however, is the fragility of the pre-suppositions on which a definitive chronicle of words and their usage must necessarily rest, such as the possibility of a 'literary' language which regional variations can 'enter'. It seems obvious, in light of all this, that a dictionary can only ever really be an account, a history, rather than a guidebook or law. To suggest that somebody should refine their vocabulary rather than a dictionary change its definition is completely at odds with the project of etymology indeed, it would render etymology null.



CURRENT AFFAIRS

FREYA BERRY



What do we do when faced with something awful? I don't mean a personal thing, although discovering I'd run out of milk this morning was fairly cataclysmic according to my sleep-addled self.

I'm talking about our reactions when we are confronted with an image or an article that portrays a horror. Do you stare at it in fascination, or do you quickly turn the page?

I ask because I spent this week holed up in the University Library, sifting through pages and pages of photographs for an essay about war and famine. The experience was slightly shameful – looking at images of starving children, while dreaming of lunch and surrounded by plump professors is an uncomfortable activity. But it got me thinking, not just about news, but about our reactions to it.

The 21st of November saw the beginning of the NUS demonstrations. I'm writing this before the actual event, so I'll say it was good / bad / sans fire extinguishers, and you can just delete accordingly (never say that *Varsity* isn't an interactive paper). This protest is not only news, but shows how students react to the news. The people who demonstrate have seen the cuts made to education and are trying to do something productive with their knowledge.

When the action is further away from home, however, it becomes all too easy to turn that page. The turmoil in Gaza, for example, is the latest manifestation of decades of violence. What can we, sitting in our rooms with tea and biscuits and a pile of suitably impressive-looking books, really hope to do about it?

So much of news becomes a guilt trip when we realise it's almost ten a.m. and we haven't gained anything from perusing the news except perhaps having raised our own 'awareness' of issues. And as Gap Yah 2 pointed out, being 'awahr' is hardly the main goal.

The news is the intermediary between the events and the onlooker and it is up to us, as onlookers, to help while we watch. But how? The past few years have seen the rise of campaign organizations such as Change.org, Avaaz and AllOut, but their success at causing concrete change is much debated: many have derided the so-called 'slacktivists' who believe that revolution is only a mouse-click away. Protests do go on despite cries within politics and the media about our apathetic nation, but they generally achieve little and have been accompanied by swift crackdowns on civil liberties in both the UK and the US.

I don't know how strength of feeling can be converted into real change. Charities, of course, do their best (unless they're co-founded by Bono: his One charity handed over just 1.2% of income to good causes) – but no amount of humanitarian aid is going to fix Gaza while the bombs are still falling. Change is difficult, but change is necessary. And some day, so long as we don't keep our heads in the sand, I believe we'll figure out a way to make it happen.

Counterproductive anxiety

Yuming Mei takes a look at the current jobs market awaiting our third year students

A big concern for students at the moment is whether they're going to get a job once they graduate. This worry is reflected in the rising number of us making use of the Careers Service. Our anxiety no doubt stems from the received wisdom that the current graduate jobs market is very competitive. While this is true, the reaction it is provoking is disproportionate and counterproductive.

The problem lies in incentivisation. An individual student has an incentive to make more job applications because an extra application can only increase the chance of success. Graduate recruiters have an incentive to attract as many applications as possible because this is how their managers judge whether they've done a good job recruiting. Consequently, the number of applications being made per graduate position has reached astounding levels, with the most popular companies recording ratios of a hundred applications per place.

The rise in application ratios has forced companies to adopt more stringent screening criteria in order to keep costs down. Online tests and e-tray exercises are popular low-cost ways of ensuring application numbers are manageable. For students, however, they are annoying exercises in jumping through hoops. Clearly the situation benefits no-one – not students who'd rather be spending time on academic study, and not the recruiters either, since such heavy competition incentivises students to work for the test instead of learning true skills.

The competitive market is a

self-perpetuating cycle, whereby students fear that the market is extremely competitive so make more applications, starting further and further in advance. A particular danger is that students from a certain type of background will be disproportionately influenced by these pressures.

The only way for the cycle to be broken is for student behaviour to change. There are signs of this happening already: some students make relatively few applications but do thorough research so that each application has the highest possible chance of success. Such actions deflate the otherwise hyperactive bubble.

'Clearly, the situation benefits no one'

Another solution to the problem is if students avoid the most obvious career choices like banking and management consultancy where the problem is worst, and look elsewhere instead. In the latest figures from Cambridge's Careers Service, five out of six graduates found jobs outside of banks or consultancy agencies.

Most students at Cambridge, according to a 2011 leavers' survey, in fact rate intellectual challenge and the satisfaction of giving something back as the most important factors in deciding on their careers. Both scored more highly than financial reward. This suggests something important about students here: that despite all the noise about a competitive jobs market, most students have faith that they will be rewarded for doing intellectually challenging work.



YUMING MEI



In search of greener pastures: social enterprises and carbon reduction

With the second highest intensity of conservation projects in the world, Cambridge is brimming with sustainable initiatives. But where are they? This week, *Varsity* explores the University's green scene



LILLIE DORE



RAVENSONG75 VIA CREATIVECOMMONS

On November 26th, the United Nations Climate Negotiations will begin in Qatar; an event which also coincides with the 4th anniversary of the UK's Climate Change Act. Before the end of the negotiations on December 7th, our government will have to make key decisions that will either support or undermine their commitment to hitting our country's carbon budget next year.

This all seems very distant from the average debt-ridden Cambridge student: Qatar lies over 3000 miles from our shores, and government policy frequently feels an equally unreachable distance away from our opinions. However, as Matthew Williams – Climate Officer at RSPB and co-director of the UK Youth Climate Coalition – explains, these international negotiations will play a larger role than meets the eye.

The Conference of Youth will take place before the discussions, bringing teenagers and young adults from across the globe to operate alongside the Conference of the Parties and take part in their own negotiations as a cohesive youth stakeholder group.

Whether they are able to achieve policy change or not, Williams argues that their presence creates pressure, a reminder to those at the conference of their responsibility to the youth of the future. Last year, amidst the series of other similar protests around the world, youth delegates formed 'Occupy the COP' outside the various conference rooms as a means of voicing the youth opinion on climate and sustainable development.

Williams argues for the expanding worldwide ambition of the Conference of Youth: "A really exciting thing just happened in the past few weeks: the Arab Youth Climate Movement has set themselves up in time for Qatar, I suppose on the back of the wave of the Arab Spring. It's something that, certainly in the UK and the US, people in the climate movement are very excited by."

In the midst of all of this international innovation surrounding climate and sustainability issues, we turn to consider

the Cambridge green scene. Am I simply ignorant to the green amongst the Cambridge blue, or is there a notable absence of well-advertised movements which work towards a more sustainable university? According to Emily Dunning – the current manager of Cambridge Hub – much more is happening in the Cambridge green scene than is immediately visible. Cambridge contains the second highest intensity of conservation organisations – of both local and university origin – in the

'We can't wait for top-down stuff to happen; we've got to make this happen'

world, second only to Washington D.C. Cambridge Carbon Footprint, Zero Carbon, Responding to Climate Change, 4CMR and Transition Cambridge form just the tip of the iceberg that Dunning explains to me.

The Cambridge Hub is itself a national network working in eight different universities, supporting students campaigning for ethical issues, social enterprise and sustainability.

As we discuss the subject of the Qatar negotiations and their prospective achievements, Dunning argues instead that action is all about locality: "we can't wait for top-down stuff to happen; we've got to make this happen".

The national is formed by the accumulation of the local, and with Cambridge standing as an institution of progress and inspiration, movement towards sustainability needs to happen here, on a student level, as efforts combine to work towards reaching the nation's energy budget.

However, only in the last year has the University, as an internationally renowned locality, started taking its own sustainability seriously. Cambridge seems to have caught onto the nation's carbon budgets quite late in the game. The Living Laboratory for Sustainability works to improve the

Above (l-r): produce from Cambridge University's co-operative, SCOOP; some cows, similar to those on the back of King's College and possibly even the source of dairy products for Clare Milk

environmental strategic planning on the University estate by working with and funding anyone who has ideas for progression. It has been in the works since 2010 and yet has only been officially rolled out as a working project over the past few months.

Isobel Braithwaite and Daisy Haywood formed Energise Cambridge last year after becoming aware of the University's stagnation in moving towards alternate fuel sources. Energise Cambridge aims to persuade the University to commit to an ambitious target for more funding for renewable energy and to engage Cambridge students on issues of climate change.

The campaign stated in its Windmill campaign video from last year's Parker's Piece protest: "Of the 237 respondents to Energise Cambridge's survey of Cambridge students so far, 90.3% would be prepared to pay an extra £10 per year in university fees to help fund the purchase of renewable energy." Braithwaite agrees that the windmill protest was visually interesting, but that more is needed to get the University to change its policies. She strongly advocates the need for greater leadership and larger student support if anything further is to be achieved.

What about the idea of a taught concept of sustainability? Braithwaite argues that education should be naturally inclusive of subject-related sustainability, so that no one can turn around and claim "It's not

'The green needs to shine with lurid and inescapable vividness, rather than move beneath the visible surface'

my subject: it's not my issue". Educational institutes such as Australia's Monash University and the University of the UN (UNU) both claim to be at the origins of

a new type of instructive progress. The latter, founded in 1969 and now based in 13 different countries, states its aims:

"The overarching goal of the United Nations University is to contribute to global sustainable development that will enable present generations to live a decent life in peace, in freedom, in safety, and in good health without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same."

'We can only hope that the older generation of policy makers are listening'

Cambridge University may have signed the Cambridge Climate Change Charter in 2007, but it is still debateable whether actual change is being initiated.

Dunning argues for progress: in the past year of her employment with the Hub, the organisation has seen more fight than ever for the cause.

However, like Braithwaite, Dunning still searches for a call to arms – the green way. Even if we aren't flying out to Qatar to argue for the success of international carbon budgets, we need a means of working on that precious local level.

Dunning suggests that it is the societies, rather than the students, who need to put in a little more energy: they need to increase and enforce more advertising and publicity: "the thing that people don't crack, people who are interested in environmental issues, is how to get it out to a wider audience, to get people engaged who aren't necessarily engaged already."

If Cambridge is greener than we initially perceived, then the green needs to shine with lurid and inescapable vividness, rather than move beneath the visible surface. Students are massing together both locally and nationally to consider how sustainability can be achieved for future generations, we can only hope that the older generation of policy makers are listening.

Sam Hunt



Forbes this week started searching for the five trends to watch in social enterprise through the #FutureSocEnt hashtag on Twitter. The question is, what does 'social enterprise' mean, and has Cambridge caught on to it yet?

'Social enterprise' is a business which solves a social problem, or has positive social change as an integral part of its workings. If you're dubious about the existence of any within the bubble of this town, think again.

First of all, think student-run start-ups, such as those providing a stronger link between the student population and local produce, gleaned environmental and social benefits that reach far beyond a dent in the number of Sainsbury's carrier bags floating in the Cam.

For those who are willing to get their green fingers dirty, 'Growing Spaces' supports the creation of allotments, but others have devised ways to give the basic elements of life a 'local' make-over, without students lifting a finger. The student food co-op (SCOOP) is one such venture. Their deliveries of fresh, organic, local vegetables

'If you are dubious about the existence of any social enterprises within the bubble of this town, think again'

reduce transport-related carbon emissions, support growing practices which do not use environmentally damaging agricultural chemicals and make the student population more integrated with the local one.

Before the launch of SCOOP, local produce sellers "found that a lot of people were really willing to buy locally sourced or organic food, but didn't really take any opportunities that are available (Arjuna, the market) – partly because it was inconvenient" and partly due to supermarkets undercutting these prices at an environmental cost.

SCOOP combat this with a popular and successful veg-box scheme, fulfilling their "aim to fight the supermarket culture and promote ethical consumerism with students" by providing lovely grub at wholesale prices.

Clockwise from above: Jesus Green in the summertime; a model of Cambridge's greener side; tracing your carbon footprint; the eco-outlook of Monash University, Australia; the UN University's first purpose-built building in Tokyo. It now has campuses in 13 different countries.



Similarly successful social entrepreneurs within our midst are the 'Clare Milk Maids', who deliver milk to subscribers in their college, bringing business to local dairy farms, saving students on the trip to Sainsbury's (a shocking distance away) and the regrettable carrier bags this might entail. They get up at 5am each morning (even after keeping vigil to welcome Obama's victory), and aren't shy about proving it's possible to run a sustainable, profitable business, making a far greater difference through the joy brought to students who now never fear of running out of milk. Although customers often find the social mission of the project offers a feel-good buzz, the best part about these successful ventures is that the appeal of what they're selling matters more. So the response from Richard, (Gonville and Caius), that SCOOP's social mission "wasn't really my priority when I placed the order" whereas "getting some nicer food was" is a glowing report of how they've been at improving successful Cambridge's access to good veg, at the same time as supporting local organic farmers and cutting down on those pesky carbon emissions.

Many students leaving university now class making a difference through their career as a top priority when looking for a job.

And this is reflected in the unassuming social enterprises around us, showing that social enterprise deserves to be far more than a Corporate Social Responsibility afterthought. *Jessica Holland*

MACHINE MADE VIA CREATIVECOMMONS



AFJT VIA CREATIVECOMMONS



AFJT VIA CREATIVECOMMONS

PARIS ÇA VA?

EMILY FITZELL



It's a French *faux pas* to talk about money, so I'm going to write about it instead. This week I'll put my surrogate mouth where the *monnaie* is, or as the case may be, where it isn't...

Let it be known, however, that this talk of finance is somewhat begrudged, and that the choice of subject came – even to me – as a rather nasty surprise. Armed with a well-trained apathy towards all things economic, it was never my intention to go all Scrooge on you in the lead up to Christmas.

Mais alors, even I could not ignore the major news story of the week. A feature article printed last weekend by *The Economist* has left us in a less-than-festive state of cross-Channel conflict.

The veil of Christmas cheer was temporarily and unseasonably lifted in Paris on Friday by provocative images of dynamite-like baguette sticks heralding a report on the state of the French economy.

Less than a week after the Senate's clearing of the 'Nutella tax' (which will see a rise in the price of the spread thanks to increased taxes on palm oil), *The Economist* was already asking for trouble when it decided to plaster threatening images of the nation's other favourite foodstuff all over the country's newsstands.

Economists really should know better than to try and make jokes.

But gastronomic teasing aside – is there any truth behind these financial evaluations of the so-called "time bomb at the heart of Europe"?

The Economist called France the greatest threat to the Euro and criticised the stagnation of the country's commercial market. It warned of the lack of incentives for new businesses due to the new 75% tax on the rich, and spoke of a Socialist Party "unmodernised and hostile to capitalism".

Such comments have inevitably provoked a violent backlash, with papers such as *Le Monde* accusing *The Economist* of playing up to a long-standing tradition of "French-bashing".

In many ways, the report simply reads like a right-wing attack on a newly socialist state. Yet there appears to be more to the story than a clash of ideology.

There has indeed been much talk in recent months of the emigration shift by Parisian high-earners to places with more favourable tax schemes, such as London.

Boris in fact started his own campaign back in October to lure businessmen away from Paris, crying "Allons enfants de la patrie!" As if it wasn't enough nicking their bikes.

Yet it's not just the rich who are set to suffer. Stéphane Gagnon, the mayor of Paris' impoverished suburb of Sevrans has also made the headlines: his hunger strike outside the Paris National Assembly aims to draw attention to the most vulnerable end of the economic spectrum. Boris reckons such tyranny has not been seen in France since the Revolution, since a Paris in which, as Rousseau stated, "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains".

Now, in 2012, beyond the paper chains of December Christmas decorations, is the average Parisian any better off?



LISTINGS

Pull out and pin up on your board



Mark Thomas

Sunday 25th, 8pm at The Junction; £17.50/£10

Comedian / activist, his new show is a more personal one about his father's relationship with opera and degenerative illness. A unique experience. Read his interview on our website. *Dominic Kelly*

Not a fan of sloths? Well, you have no heart. Also, tough. It's the last paper issue of term. But consider applying to be reviews editor yourself and getting even?

BEST OF BLOGS

Bel Rimmer on the magic of manga:

"Although my spellchecker thinks otherwise, manga has little in common with mange or mangos. Let me assure you that manga is neither flea-bitten nor an exotic fruit. Manga are basically Japanese comics typified by a distinctive style that that I bet you will recognise. Remember Pikachu? That adorable-electric-mouse-thing? Pokémon? Of course you do. Not even spellcheck questions Pokémon. It's that same exaggerated, big eyed, cartoony style that typifies manga. But manga deals with far more than cute anthropomorphised creatures, covering a wide range of genres – there's shōnen ('boy' manga: action, ninjas, pirates and friendships), shōjo ('girl' manga: human and emotional relationships) or seinen/josei (manga for 'grownups': anything from comedy to porn). And that's to name just a few."

Max Park on Ellen DeGeneres:

"To say that Ellen DeGeneres is a pioneer of the modern day gay rights movement would be an understatement. Just how the representation of gay people on TV changed forever with Will and Grace, the topic of sexuality in mainstream media experienced a major turning point in 1997 when Ellen came out. Contrast her coming out experience, one of exile and depression, with that of CNN news anchor Anderson Cooper in 2012. It made headlines but hardly the storm of outrage or frenzy that Ellen's created. Needless to say, there is so much more that can be done and by no means do we live in some social utopia of gay acceptance. But it'll be interesting to see what lies ahead for gay people in Hollywood in this post-Ellen era."

Holly Richards on Being Young:

"Youth is a double-edged sword, a winning combination of crippling angst and feeling able to do exactly what you want. Good lyrics can provide a backdrop to both of these emotions, letting you know that other people feel the same, whilst celebrating how good it is to be free and go wild. Recently, the charts have been full of songs about being young and partying, but unless you frequently wake up in the bath "feeling like P Diddy" (thanks Ke\$ha) or can accept a 43-year old Jennifer Lopez telling you to "get on the floor", you may find that a lot of these lyrics just don't sum up how it feels to be young."

A interesting reaction to this appears in We've Still Got the Taste Dancing On Our Tongues by Wild Beasts, who conjure a world where "Frocks spill like alcopop around girls' knees, trousers and blouses make excellent sheets down dimly lit streets." The places they depict are not the glossy American parties of the charts, but a more realistic portrayal of slightly awkward British youth culture."

See more in the *VarsityLive* section of varsity.co.uk

THEATRE

The Snow Queen

From Wednesday 21st, 7.45pm at the ADC Theatre; £8-12

The legendary ADC/Footlights pantomime returns in full glory, promising eskimos, a flying ice-cream van and eager Christmas excitement. *Ella Griffiths*

MUSIC

The Saw Doctors

Monday 26th, 7pm at The Junction; £22

The pride of the West of Ireland, the long-running band bring their mixture of Irish humour and local sounds to Cambridge. A celebration. *Dominic Kelly*

FILM

Amour

Cambridge Arts Picturehouse; multiple screenings

Winner of the Palme d'Or at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival, Michael Haneke's devastating film about a marriage tested by illness has been hailed as a masterpiece. *Ella Griffiths*

Friday
23rd

Saturday
24th

Sunday
25th

MUSIC



Fascinating Aida

CORN EXCHANGE, 7.30PM; £18.50/£17

The multi-Olivier Award nominated cabaret trio bring their tour to Cambridge, recently launched to viral success thanks to their song 'Cheap Flights' taking off on YouTube.

FILMS

Gambit

CAMBRIDGE VUE, MULTIPLE SHOWINGS

The Coen brothers' latest comedy stars Colin Firth as an art curator avenging his boss (Alan Rickman) with the help of a hot Texan cowgirl. Bizarre but brilliant?



Snow White And The Huntsman

ST JOHN'S PICTUREHOUSE, 7PM; £3

Based on the tale by the Brothers Grimm, expect evil queens and warrior training galore in this dark interpretation starring Kristin Stewart. Sorry, Twihards.

TALKS

Antonio Carluccio

CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY, 7:30PM

The lovable Italian chef and writer discusses his culinary passions, restaurant chain and television career. Bellissimo!



VIEW

Burlesque!

CORPUS PLAYROOMS, 9:30OM, £6/5

If you're nostalgic for Cabaret, don't miss this Weimar-era extravaganza of music, satirical sketch comedy and 'interactive' cabaret.



Salley Vickers

ADC THEATRE; 7:00PM; £8-10

Best-selling author Salley Vickers talks about writing her latest novel, The Cleaner of Chartres, in an event chaired by the literary editor of The Observer.

STAY IN

Sloths

Term is ending, your return to the real world is nigh. Cheer yourself up by visiting www.slothville.com, the home of the world's laziest, slowest, greatest animal- the sloth. Warning: it's like crack for animal lovers.



Food: Bridgemas Dinner

It may be one month early in the real world, but it's the perfect time for it in the Cambridge bubble. Try not to set off the fire alarms – but if you have to, make some extra for the Porters.

GO OUT

Stewart Francis

CORN EXCHANGE, 8PM; £18.50

The second of two Cambridge dates, the star of 'Mock the Week' and 'Live at the Apollo' brings his brand of stand-up to the Corn Exchange.



Chairs by Wegner

CHURCHILL, 9AM-5PM; FREE

The work of one of the most influential designers of recent times is being brought together and celebrated here, including the very chairs used for the 1960 Nixon-Kennedy debate.

David I

CORN EXCHANGE

With 19 To Essex has draw upon ter's Tale,

Barry C

ALISON RICH

The ANC Head of th will speak 'Songs and Liberation

TV: Hi

BBC THREE; 1

Russell To Solemani the undera mundane c

Mother

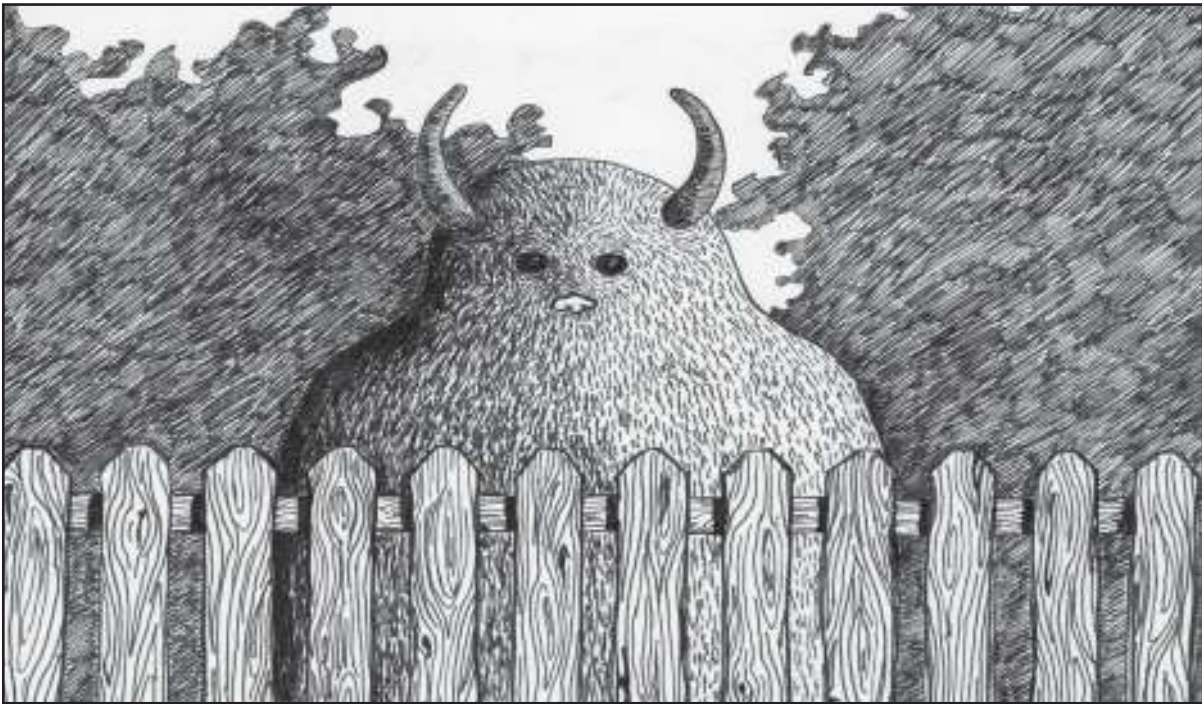
MUMFORD TH

7.30PM; £12

Question ti about our eye-openin Theatre Co

ANTONIA STRINGER

DOODLE OF THE WEEK



Monday
26th

Essex
CORN EXCHANGE, 7.30PM; £29.50
Top 40 singles under his belt, a massive repertoire of hits to name. Make sure he sings 'A Whole New World' this season for it after all.



Wednesday
28th

Adam Ant
CORN EXCHANGE, 8PM; £27.50/25
The pride of the '80s, Adam Ant brings his comeback gig train to Cambridge. A pioneer of British new wave, expect 'Prince Charming,' 'Ant Music' and many, many others.

Thursday
29th

Alabama 3
CORN EXCHANGE, 7PM; £18
One of the greatest acid house bands Britain, has produced (famed for supplying The Sopranos with their opening credits music) bring their tour to the Junction.



The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2
CAMBRIDGE VUE CINEMA, MULTIPLE SCREENINGS
Everyone's favourite sparkling vampire returns in the teenage smash-hit following Bella's struggles with...parenthood? Ew.

Starbuck
CAMBRIDGE ARTS PICTUREHOUSE; 11AM
A film festival hit, Starbuck follows a slacker and his shenanigans managing a job, girlfriend and 142 children fathered through sperm donations.

Hendrix: Live at Woodstock
CAMBRIDGE VUE CINEMA, 7.30PM
Celebrating Hendrix's 70th anniversary, his legendary 1969 Woodstock concert hits the big screen for the first time, complete with behind-the-scenes interviews.

Gilder
HARD BUILDING, 1.00-2.00PM
Insider and former Deputy of the South African Secret Service about his political memoir 'Gilder and Secrets; South Africa from Chaos to Governance'.



Rt. Hon John Bercow MP
CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY; 7.30PM
The Speaker of the House of Commons talks about his political experiences as the Councillor for the London Borough of Lambeth and the Conservative MP for Buckingham.

Freedom of Speech?
CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY, 7.30PM
Join a panel of prestigious figures discussing the existence and possibility of free speech in our society, featuring Brian Paddick, Claire Fox and Kevin Scott.



CU Show Choir: Christmas Special
ADC THEATRE; 11.00PM; £6/£5
Get festive with this evening of traditional and not-so-traditional Christmas hits rejuvenated by the glitz and glamour of the show choir.

Post
ADC THEATRE; £4-6; 11.00PM
Written by the President of the Cambridge Footlights, Post blends reality, humour and sadness in this comedic depiction of the life of a postman.

Coriolanus
CORPUS PLAYROOMS; £6/5, 7.00PM
Shakespeare's Roman tragedy exploring class, family and honour is brought to life in this daring new production in an intimate venue.

My Mum & Her
ADC THEATRE; 7.30PM
My Mum and Footlights' own Sarah-Jane Redmond returns for the third series of the much-appreciated sitcom: it's utterly hilarious and utterly wonderful for it.

Music: Neutral Milk Hotel - On Avery Island
ADC THEATRE; 11.00PM; £6/£5
Obsessive and corrosive yet intricate and bittersweet, this LP may not be as famous as its more refined follow-up but it could not be more urgent, vital and on the brink of destruction.



Apply to be on the Varsity Team
Check the 'Get Involved' section of our website and send in your application to applications@varsity.co.uk. Whatever you want to do, there's plenty of room for it on the Good Ship Varsity.

Brave New World: The Courage
THEATRE- ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY, 7.30PM; £5
The fundamental ideas we hold dear in this unique and thought-provoking production by the Blackeyed company.

Fixed Gear and Single Speed Social Ride
THE MAYPOLE, 7PM; FREE
Grab your fixie / borrow one from your nearest hipster and go on a lovely communal cycle. Leaves from The Maypole, where else?



Anglia Chamber Choir
GREAT ST. MARY'S CHURCH, 7.30PM; £6
Entitled 'From the Renaissance to the Present Day', the university's choir perform their termly concert. Conducted by Paul Rhys.

Postcards: Beirut

This September, there was an added sense of celebration in Beirut: the 'Paris of the Middle East'. The Pope had just arrived in the city. On the same day, anti-American demonstrations had erupted in southern suburbs. By sunset, Beirutis were blaring Lebanese pop from parked cars, undeterred by the events. The blaze of lights poured out from the rows of exclusive bars, restaurants, and high-rise hotels. Yes, this is the Middle East, but not as we know it. The city is the point where all lines cross, where all religions, cultures, languages, and certainly opinions meet. With the whole world in one city, it is no wonder it feels so alive.

Patrick O'Grady

PATRICK O'GRADY



'Tis the season...

With Christmas just around the corner, the **Varsity Team** unwrap their holiday perks and peeves

3.Brussels Sprouts

Amidst all the overwhelming Christmas joy, one innocuous little vegetable seems to have become the scapegoat for all of our seasonally-repressed rage and hatred: the Brussels sprout. These perfectly formed cabbages in miniature are much-maligned without cause; made properly, they are almost delightfully bitter enough to make up for that most sinisterly faecal of vegetarian alternatives to turkey: the nut roast. Forget the stuffing, parsnips, and Christmas pudding: if Christmas dinner could revolve around a magnificent platter of these green balls of glory, I'd be more than satisfied. According to Wikipedia, they even prevent cancer, so why hate these philanthropic sprouts?

Rory Williamson

7.Conversation

We're told every year that Christmas is horrible. Most of the moans we hear every year, whether on sitcoms or from our friends, focus around having to spend all that compulsory time with your family. I can absolutely sympathise with those people who genuinely don't get on so well with their extended families: having to ignore a particularly racist grandmother with a smile on your face cannot be fun. But I would like to take the opportunity to celebrate just how amazing it is to have a Christmas dinner with a family whose conversation you treasure. A meal that lasts about four hours with approximately one bottle of wine per person and fourteen people who know each other incredibly well is as comfortable an experience as putting on an old glove under a duvet whilst drinking cocoa. Even when the meal inevitably descends into a Simpsons quotation contest, it's still the celebration of people who enjoy spending time with each other.

Fred Maynard

4.Christmas No.1

Not only is the Christmas No. 1 a British institution, the yearly completely misguided nostalgia for its standards is an arguably bigger one. For every 'Another Brick In The Wall (Part 2)' there's Cliff bloody Richard. So perhaps the once-inevitable X Factor victory did kill the tension of whether Westlife or Bob the Builder was going to bound out onto the CD:UK stage and claim their rightful place as the people's champion, but rarely did the best Christmas songs get to the top spot. My favourite? Tim Minchin's 'White Wine In The Sun' – the sweetest, secular serenade to Christmastide you'll ever hear, and as far from the top of the pops as possible.

Dominic Kelly

8.Television

I can't decide whether I love or hate Christmas TV.
Lewis Wynn

1.Dickens

When we think of Christmas, how many of us think of a Dickensian scene of falling snow, unwelcome ghosts, and London gloom? A Christmas Carol is as much a part of our notion of the festive season as presents, baubles or mince pies. We were all told the story as young children because it encapsulates good will triumphing over resentment, the importance of spending time with family and friends, and generosity over miserliness. If you don't agree, well then you must be a bit of a Scrooge. Bah, humbug. However, 1992 added the only thing missing, that all important missing ingredient: Muppets. The *Muppet Christmas Carol* is everything that Christmas should be, and no one should pass the holiday season without watching it. It's either that or watch *Love Actually* again. Your choice.

Patrick O'Grady

5.Crack a Joke

Why was Santa's little helper feeling depressed?

He had low elf-esteem.

6. New Year's Eve

The most stressful night of the year beckons. Thankfully it's the last. For some reason, societal expectations have conditioned us such that spending time with a small group of one's friends on NYE is categorically, emphatically a 'crap' evening and woe betide anyone who stays in with Jools Holland's Hootenanny. This New Year's Eve, I plan on repeating last year's success: eating some good Chinese food with some friends and heading to a pub or two. The only disappointment last year was regarding the DJs' overly harsh musical line: banning Rihanna on a Bank Holiday just isn't in keeping with festive cheer.

Salome Wagaine

9.Carols

I sang in my church choir for ten years, including the awkward teenage years where nothing is less cool than wearing a cassock and squawking high notes, so I've sung more than my fair share of carols.

Even though it's exactly the same every year, it's still the best time to be a singer. When else do you get lyrics that sound suspiciously like 'most highly flavoured gravy' or sing about Jesus Christ the apple tree? Plus, people actually come to hear you sing and you get given mince pies afterwards. That said, if we could get rid of 'Away In A Manger', I'd be a happy man..

Luke Sweeney

10.Decoration

Decking the halls in my house is a process of precision. As I lug the boxes from the attic and tear them open with glee (it's Christmas again! Presents! Wrapping paper, ribbons and German biscuits!), I am told that "what comes up must come down".

My Dad's ex-military take upon the whole process places a slight dampener upon my childish mood as he continually asks why it is taking me so long to arrange baubles. It's art, Dad, seriously. And no, tinsel is not allowed on this tree, as this year I am in control of tree decoration. As you can see, the Christmas holidays allow me to defuse from the stressful Cambridge perfectionism. Almost.

Sam Hunt

11.Jumpers

Why don't more people wear Christmas jumpers? Bin those sexy Santa costumes and bring out a good old knitted jumper this Christmas. Go on, make your granny happy.

Naomi Pallas

12.Crack a Joke

What did the grape do when it was stepped on?

It let out a little whine.

Patrick O'Grady

FEATURES, BOOKS, FILM, MUSIC, ART & REVIEWS

Varsity
Magazine

PUT A SOC IN IT**ROSIE SARGEANT**

It's getting cold in Cambridge. As my nose turns purple on my cycle ride to lectures each morning, I could think of nothing better than some searing sunshine to perk me up. So when I heard that there were classes of hot yoga available in Cambridge, I signed up without hesitation.



An hour and a half of 105 degree heat! Bliss! Removing layer upon layer of woolly jumpers and donning 'minimal, cool clothing' in accordance with the rubric, I couldn't get to class quickly enough. When I arrived, the speedo-clad instructor gently told me that, since this was my first time, my main challenge would be just to stay in the room for the full ninety minutes. Pah! I thought – that was precisely what I'd come for! I unrolled my mat directly underneath a glowing heat lamp and embraced the sensation of warmth suffusing my formerly goose-pimpled body.

Five minutes in, I found myself dripping with sweat and gazing longingly at the frosty conditions outside. The instructor noticed I was struggling. "Bring your focus to the room, to your practice, to your being," he cooed.

Although inside I was dreaming of diving into the frozen-over Cam, I tried to project a vision of zen as we worked our way through the series of 26 postures, and to focus on the benefits that twisting myself into all sorts of bizarre shapes promised to bring: detoxification, increased vitality and mental clarity, weight loss, and reduced stress – all of which assume a greater effect in high temperatures, so I'm told.

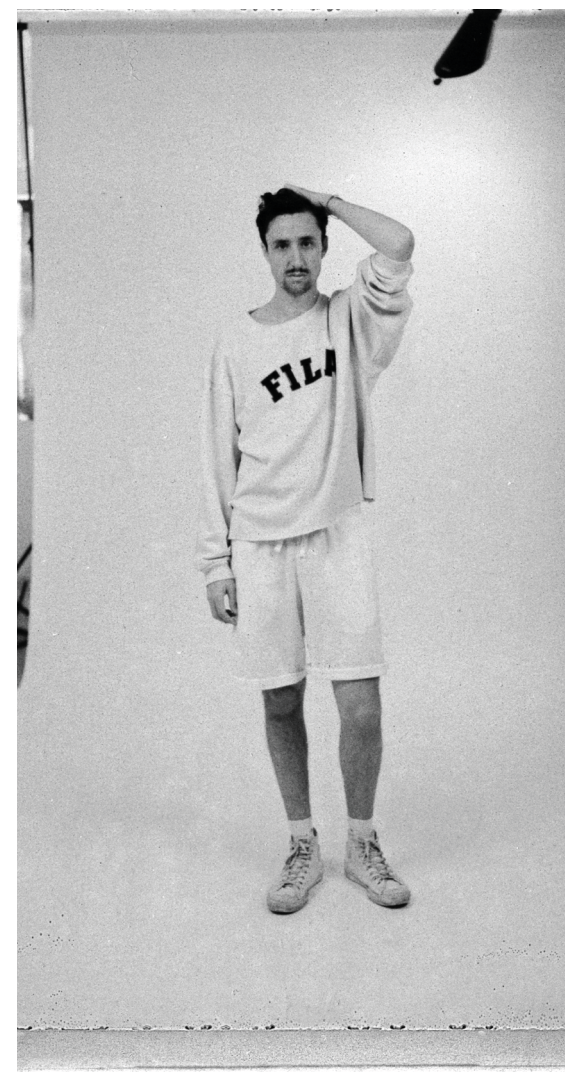
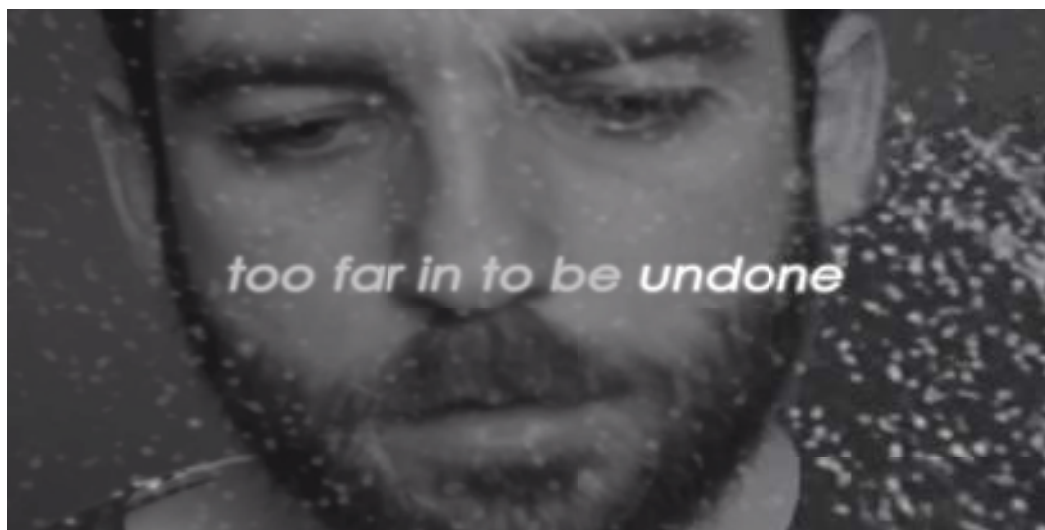
The next sequence involved the delicate balancing act of standing on one foot and holding the other leg high in the air. I looked around the room to see how the others were coping and caught sight of a gorgeously toned man wearing only a pair of shorts, his biceps glistening with sweat, a vision of masculine strength in this posture... I toppled over. "Focus on yourself alone," the instructor said softly. "The body betrays the mind's thoughts. Clear it of clutter, and you will balance better." No chance of me stealing another glance of those beautiful biceps then. Attempting to close off thoughts of my classmate's physical attributes, I began to feel more at ease with the heat, the postures, and myself. At the end of the class, I stayed lying on the ground a while longer, reluctant to let all that "mind clutter" back in that I had cleared.

Then I remembered that gorgeous man on the nearby mat, thinking I would be happy to make an exception and welcome him into my "mind clutter". But when I saw my beetroot-red face, soggy t-shirt and frizzy hair post-class, I abandoned any hope that he would be willing to do the same. I'd learned my lesson: yoga is about focusing on your own practice and becoming more at ease with yourself. Beautiful as he was, I had to respect my classmate's right to do that too. Not that that will stop me going back for another class...

Rosie's column is online weekly

The rapid rise of the R&B sad boy

It's my debut album and I'll cry if I want to... **Claire Healy** considers the rise of the sensitive, mourning male R&B sensibility and its potential future in modern music



Deptford Goth, The Weeknd and How to Dress Well: three lonely boys pioneering a new mourning sensibility in R&B

Researching this article led me to a Yahoo! Answers question that, in a way, cuts to the heart of the aspect of the contemporary music scene I wish to discuss, though 'username:Cinnibuns' never realised it: "Why do people think it's cool to be sad and depressed all the time?" She poses a question that could have been put to any number of the new generation of young male musicians who are fostering a genre of music defined by its sadness.

Being sad, then, is having its musical moment in the sun. Or, rather, a rain-soaked alleyway at night. From Drake's drunken late-night phone calls (I've just stopped picking up) to the Biebs' post-break-up tears on stage this very week, 2012 is shaping up to be the year of the sad face. More than just a new take on the traditional break-up record, however, a noteworthy new batch of young male artists have broken through with albums that are as genuinely heart-rending as they are potentially hit-making. Inflected with R&B but resistant to limitation within that genre, artists such as How to Dress Well, Active Child and Deptford Goth are producing music that truly mourns. Moreover, their crossover into the hearts and ears of music fans evidently betrays a universal desire for a long-overdue revitalizing of a specifically male-gendered R&B. So just why are sad boys doing 'it' so well? And does the very nature of an album of mourning equal an inevitable, eventual death to such a creative approach? Mourning processes are designed to lead to an eventual moving-on, after all – can the sad boy ever be a career-spanning force to be reckoned with?

'Doom-pop' 'Indie R'n'B' and even 'Tumblr-gaze': 2012 has also been a year for coining silly genre names that resist Wikipedia citation. Such lazy tags, reeking

as they do of a critical struggle to assimilate traditional genres into the Internet age, finally do little more than undermine the emotional charge behind these artists and their records. The artists themselves claim an individuality that stands well apart from the pack of influential R&B stars that it might be tempting to lump them with. Tom Krell of How To Dress Well is explicit on this point, telling *The Guardian* earlier this year that he doesn't see Frank Ocean, The Weeknd et al as his sonic peers: "Right now, there's a lot of indie R&B circulating that's like, whatever... I mean it's ready to

'Being sad, then, is having its musical moment in the sun'

be played in Urban Outfitters, [but] it's not ready to be experienced in any meaningful way." Referencing Urban Outfitters before I get the chance to, Krell comes across in interview as well aware of the critical temptation to place his style within a larger, perhaps artificial, musical movement. Instead, he claims his latest long-player, *Total Loss*, to be a truly personal record, and this in more than just the sense of its individual realization.

Total Loss is, explicitly, an album of mourning, with Krell ready to answer with clarity the media's questions on this point: the deaths of a best friend and an uncle, his mother becoming mentally ill and the breakdown of a long-term relationship prefaced the writing of the album. *Total Loss*, as the name would suggest, is deeply sad and affecting. Opening to sounds of waves splashing on a distant shore, Krell's doleful falsetto kicks in with the words, "You were there for me when I

was in trouble/ You could understand for me that life was a struggle." So far, so 80s cheese – and yet, not. Krell has described that he wishes his audience member to react "in like" to the album and its live performances, a statement that prompts the mental image of a room of bawling audience-members after the manner of an eighteenth-century 'cult of sensibility'. Strip back this potential mawkishness, however, and the listener does experience real emotional empathy in listening to the album. We don't just sympathise with Krell, but rather enter into the emotional process of its composition as we are listening.

Why does the record seem so genuine? It's not the emotional openness of Krell in interviews alone – one need only glance at the weekly piano-laden VTs on X Factor to know that a sob story does not necessarily an empathetic recording make. Just as in real life, the process of mourning cannot be restricted to three and a half minutes; rather, the listener is privy to a track-by-track emotional journey over the entire album. Through a clarity of vocals and a heightened sonic sensitivity – the pluck of a harp, sudden string sections – the album works out its own grief in the manner of a totalizing soundscape; comparable to the niche Krell is working in in 2011's *You Are All I See* from Active Child (aka. Pat Grossi). The record harnesses the same tricks: epic electronic landscapes, and R&B so minimal it belongs in a monastery. And yet, *You are all I see*, whilst addressing the same 'you' of the many direct appeals to us the listeners in *Total Loss*, loses the connection somewhere in translation. This music might appear formulaic, then, but it takes a very specially crafted whole to translate genuine emotion into seemingly artificial sound.

More exciting, perhaps, is Deptford

Goth – nope, not another cringey genre label for the Tumblr generation, but rather South London's Daniel Woolhouse, whose video for single 'Life After Defo' portrays an aesthetic which is as minimal and introspective as its musical means. Woolhouse's plaintive lyrics, overlaid karaoke-style over Mac Photo Booth greyscale, plays on the artificiality of modernity, yet cuts to the truth of conducting relationships in 2012. The lyrics – "That's when it takes you apart/ Something soon enough where another thing was" – are all the more affecting in their evident acceptance of the inadequacy of language to express such emotion.

The album of mourning is a thing of beauty, but not of everlasting beauty. As Krell's grief works itself out over the process of recording, so too replaying the record reveals new glimmers of hope. Krell has himself said that his album is "about developing a relationship with loss which is spiritually enriching rather than devastating," and, after a few replays, the listener too will notice the hopefulness that can emerge from grieving, as enacted by these artists' recordings.

The power of a record of mourning, finally, emerges from this very transformation, but it also requires that artists cannot be considered 'sad' in this way forever. The playing of these records prompts a re-visiting of memory which is itself key to moving on from grief, and thus these artists cannot continue to release such sad music without us beginning to disbelieve their authenticity. It will be interesting to see what they do next; perhaps Krell, Grossi, Woolhouse et al will come to discover a musical expression that welds vocals and sound with similar accuracy, but to elicit a 'cult of happiness' in its listeners, instead.

Lost through translation?

Milo Young examines words that resist simple translation into the English language, finding interest in the difficulties they present

How often is it that you look for a word to describe 'the amount of time required to eat a banana'? You might not be *too* surprised to learn that such a noun hasn't actually made it into the English tongue. But it seems significant that the Malay language includes a phrase – *pisan zapra* – which does the job perfectly. What does it mean when a word exists in some languages, but not in others? Does this aspect of the Malaysian vocabulary really reflect a greater cultural import attributed, in that country, to the yellow fruit?

Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote that "the limits of my language are the limits of my mind. All I know is what I have words for." Indeed, just as no two minds are ever totally equivalent, no two languages are ever created equal. Culture and language always exist in a symbiotic relationship, each one defining and constantly changing the other. Every verbal culture creates and discards words in an idiomatic evolution, mutating and adapting according to necessity. In the Western world, the 'Urban Dictionary' is constantly growing – some words are reduced to species known only by specialists, while pop culture spreads others like viruses.

It makes sense that Pascuense – a language only spoken by the six thousand inhabitants of tiny Easter Island – should contain many words describing situations which arise out of living in close quarters. While *anga-anga* roughly translates to "the thought, perhaps groundless, that one is being gossiped about; arising from one's own sense of guilt", *hakamaroo* denotes "the act of keeping borrowed objects until the owner has to ask for them back", says barefootsoul of wordpress.com. The most foreign concept to non-residents will be *tingo*: "to take all the objects one desires from the house of a friend, one at a time, by asking to borrow them", here unexpectedly regarded as "a relationship that is a supreme compliment, endowing social power to the gift giver."

But if some of these lexical gaps are

determined by cultural necessity, other lacunae seem less explicable. A verbal equivalent to the Buli word *pelenti* – "to move hot food around inside one's mouth" – would surely have an application in England as much as Ghana. Upon learning other languages, we recognise voids in the English tongue which would otherwise remain unnoticed.

One might ask, for example, how we have gone so long without an equivalent for the Bantu word *mbuki-mvuki*, meaning "to take one's clothes off in order to dance". The handy German word *fremdscham* denotes shame felt on behalf of someone else, while the Portuguese *cafuné* means "to tenderly run one's fingers through someone's hair". If such words do not exist in the English language, only chance is to blame.

Milan Kundera confronts the quandary caused by such absences in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, where the untranslatability of the Czech word *litost* is lamented with disbelief: "as for the meaning of this word, I have looked in vain in other languages for an equivalent, though I find it difficult to imagine how anyone can understand the human soul without it." Wrestling with the failure of straightforward translation, the writer will be forced to use swerving circumlocutions, gesturing towards assimilated meanings through the restricted vocabulary available

to him.

Still, Kundera's attempt at defining *litost* is anything but unsatisfying – in his description, the word is best translated as "a state of agony and torment created by the sudden sight of one's own misery." Vladimir Nabokov approaches the task of translating the Russian word *toska* with similar tentativeness, but the results are even more beautiful. A passage from his novel *Eugene Onegin* reads: "No single word in English renders all the shades of *toska*. At its deepest and most painful, it is a sensation of great spiritual anguish, often without any specific cause. At less morbid levels, it is a dull ache of the soul, a longing with nothing to long for, a sick pining, a vague restlessness, mental throes, yearning. In particular cases it may be the desire for somebody or something specific, nostalgia, love-sickness. At the lowest level it grades into *ennui*, boredom."

Any translation will bring about a sort of linguistic loss. But those words which prove most difficult to translate also force us to acknowledge the real complexity of linguistic resonances: the deficits within language itself. In order to be translated, a word must be examined from every side, each possible meaning tested. But as the results above suggest, the ensuing circumlocutions sometimes possess a beauty far greater than the original, more simple designation.



Phoebe Power is deeply impressed with this prize-winning poet's first collection



81 Austerities
Sam Riviere

● *81 Austerities* is Riviere's stunning first collection, published by Faber and winner of this year's Forward Prize.

When I heard the

poet read at St Catharine's College a couple of weeks ago I was amazed by the refreshingly modern, accessible and self-aware quality to these poems. The book started as a blog responding to cuts in arts funding, with poems appearing every few days. The digital origins of the poems reflect their form: pithy, glancing, non-punctuated, ephemeral.

The "austerity" of the book's title is less a political statement than an expression of the loss of artistic authenticity. Riviere's poems reject themselves because they are unable to exist in the contemporary age, or as Faber's blurb puts it, the poems "analyse their moment of creation, then weigh their worth, then consign their excess to the recycling bin thereafter". Sometimes this 'anti-poetry' stance is explicit, as in "Loosely Spiritual American Poetry... vs. tensely materialistic british poetry... vs. poetry evocative yes but *of what*..."

Elsewhere Riviere's concern is with representation more generally, expressing art's essential disjunction from reality, which the best poets since Shakespeare and Spenser have always been aware of. *Nobody Famous* describes a life constructed from photographs, where the speaker shouts: "this is me in public putting on a 2nd pair on sunglasses" and reveals that "here I am defining my personal space", in the distinctly Facebookian sense. Riviere is obsessed with the way we perform our lives according to pornographic norms – "guys love latina virgins in swimsuit" (*Clones*) – or film scripts, such as in *Fall in Love All Over Again*. Such a title would be cringeworthy in an un-selfconscious

poem, but here it is deliberately ironic – girlfriends are brands, her face is a "magazine", "the pupil a blot of blackest inkjet ink" (*My Face Saw Her Magazine*). To cap it all, Riviere includes a summary of the poems in the back of the book where he mocks his whole collection with wry annotations such as "poetic bits will be highlighted in yellow".

But here, the worth of the ironic stance itself is analysed. The summary includes the words "scepticism gets stifling", and Riviere retains a voice beyond his poems – an awareness that poems may be "pretentious crap" (*Closer*) but obviously not entirely, otherwise the poet wouldn't keep writing them. There is creative exuberance, after all, something of the postmodern celebration that fakeness

'Expressions of the loss of artistic authenticity and creative exuberance'

is OK, because it is the truth of the world. Some of the poems express a sad loss of authenticity, the wish to "see past the dust / and your own face" (*Coming Soon*). But not all: *The White Door* describes a beloved woman in knowingly computer-quest-game terms, his "svelte princess of future states", but nevertheless, the speaker's love remains real. The cynicism of *81 Austerities* is not conclusive: Riviere says his next project will not be to continue his rejection of the poetic tradition, but to oppose the anti-poetry stance he takes here. I'm deeply excited by *81 Austerities* which is symptomatic of a trend among younger contemporary poets, such as Emily Berry, whose first collection will be published in 2013, and Jon Stone, who writes 'found poems' from manga to express the consumerism, mass digital media and 'hypertext' of our age. *81 Austerities* is for anyone interested in understanding art, poetry, and most importantly, our lives now.

● Published by Faber and Faber now

THE COMIC LEWIS WYNN



Storybook world of bodies: modern ballet

After the appointment of Liam Scarlett as the first artist in residence of the Royal Ballet, **Isabella Cookson** considers contemporary ballet as technology, questioning its social relevance today

We inhabit aspects infused with language. Our sensual encounters with the world are inevitably interpenetrated by the streams of words that flow around our minds and through our mouths. We see someone and they become the evaluative judgements that pop into our heads about them; we walk down the street and flip out into unreal worlds constituted by imaginings and internal dialogues. Languages are a second world superimposed on and intertwined with the physical and emotional worlds. Words are traced in the sky, trapped beneath the stones and smeared across the faces of the people we love. A storybook world in which the word is flesh and dwells among us." David Gamez, *What We Can Never Know*.

At the beginning of this month, the Royal Ballet announced that

BILL COOPER, COURTESY OF ROH



Eric Underwood and Melissa Hamilton, *Infra*

Liam Scarlett would be their first artist in residence. New, innovative choreography is not something that people relate to ballet. For many it remains either a childhood dream to be a fairy or an interest reserved for posh people. Ballet should be neither, and mostly isn't.

The critics of dance rarely help this situation. The common discourse that surrounds this art form can feel pretentious and alienating. Reading ballet reviews can feel at times like

'Technology is not its antithesis, rather ballet is a technology'

wine tasting at a Cambridge college: an outpouring of adjectives like "velvety smooth" interjected by French technical terms. To many, it perpetuates the image of ballet as meaningless and irrelevant, but such language does not describe what ballet really does, what moves it beyond aesthetic appreciation and into something that can really speak. Capturing dance in language is hard and so we reduce it to something formulaic. But ballet speaks for itself.

Ballet imagines a new kind of language; it is both a preconceived form, with rules and strict techniques and yet one that evolves, adapts, shifts. It is no coincidence that modern ballet looks to technology as a thematic and stylistic inspiration. Wayne McGregor's piece *Infra* places a film installation above the dancers below. It shows electronic, faceless stick people casually strolling across

the screen, perhaps with a briefcase in hand or wearing a pair of heels. The effect is a cross between Eadweard Muybridge's Victorian repetitive photographic studies and Lowry's stickmen: it strips human movement to simple symbols. Below the Royal Ballet dance to Max Richter's rich composition: mixing electronica with a string quartet. The music and the two images, the dancers on stage and the electronic images above, are not contrasting but complimentary. The plain black and white costumes aesthetically draw this link between the two. In some ways the electronic images simplify the jutting angles and intertwining movements performed on the stage. There is no narrative in this piece but the language the dancers formulate is interpenetrated by recognisable gestures, such as a kiss. Human movement expresses itself by merging movement of everyday experience and movement that stretches the imagination. It is in this paradox between tradition and innovation that ballet is at its best.

This is not merely a new 'trend' in ballet- rather it reflects the nature of the dance form itself. Ballet has always relied upon technology: the pointe shoe is, after all, its most signature tool and was first used in the early nineteenth century. Indeed, the process of 'creative destruction' that for many epitomises the process of modernisation is microcosmically formed on the body of the dancer. The nerve endings of a ballet dancer's foot are often damaged; bleeding, blistering feet are the norm for most ballerinas. The previous director of the New York Ballet, George

Balanchine, apparently encouraged the dancers to gain bunions in order to create a smoother line from the ankle to the toes. The body is shaped by technology.

Perhaps a more obvious point is that these bodies are tools themselves. Technology is not its antithesis, rather ballet is a technology: a creative, innovative form of movement that challenges norms and creates. Modern ballets, especially abstract ballets, play with the dynamic between the dancer as an autonomous actor on the stage and dancers as interchangeable machines, cogs in the wheels of a larger body of dance that acts as a collective expression.

Liam Scarlett's latest piece plays with this: the simplicity of the costumes and the concentration upon patterns renders the piece provocatively impersonal. The focus on the complex footwork is the mechanism through which the dancers express collectively.

The new choreography at the Royal Ballet is certainly innovative. It points to the fact that as a technology, it does not exist within the ahistorical vacuum that its use of fairytale narratives would sometimes suggest. Rather, ballet responds.

But ballet could respond more. There have been no female choreographers commissioned to create for over a decade. And while its productions of abstract ballet have been most interesting, it rarely produces narrative ballets that stray away from fairytale stories or nineteenth-century tales of prostitution. Sex trafficking is indeed an issue today, and people may not



BILL COOPER, COURTESY OF ROH

die of consumption as regularly as they used to but they certainly do die of AIDs. It is not that they need to be social commentaries, but ballets will not penetrate the imagination in uncomfortable ways unless they locate human struggles within a contemporary context that implicate its audience rather than placating it. It is not that the story of *Swan Lake* should not be danced; like any technology, though, ballet could at times place itself more closely in the world that surrounds it.

The Royal Ballet's new abstract choreography, on the other hand, shows promising signs. The new pieces by Christopher Wheeldon, Wayne McGregor and Liam Scarlett have shown that ballet as is building upon and stretching beyond its heritage. Kenneth Macmillan need not be the golden age of choreography at the Royal Ballet.

THIS WEEK ONLINE

Hannah Kamer on the perils of giving a bad review

There's a certain prestige involved in not being nice. Some newspaper readers, such as myself, take great delight in reading a terribly scathing review.

If done well, the reaction is generally a mixture of humour, sympathy, and "Thank God that's not me". There is also the sense that such disdain means the reviewer must know what they're talking about. Right? Because of this idea, students aiming to be sharp-tongued, quick witted reviewer-types seem to think that to prove their worth they must be what is generally described as 'mean' by the poorly reviewed. It's easy to fall into the trap of witty 'banter' and associate it with cleverness. Not everyone can be Charlie Brooker.

Beware, aspiring critics, of vindictive navel-gazing. A review is itself subject to criticism. Remember the audience isn't the same as your own sense of self-satisfaction. 'Meanness' can be a harsh but apt assessment, but it can be easy to put the prestige of knowing better and reviewing negatively above the quality of the review itself.

A recent example is perhaps the Tab review of *Kind*.

Read the rest at www.varsity.co.uk

Edward Johnson explores Sufjan's sprawling, brand new Christmas compilation



Sufjan Stevens
Silver & Gold

placating the public with indelible melodies propagating a message of peace, love, and venture capitalism."

After such a polemic, one might expect *Silver and Gold* to consist of nothing more than tired criticisms of consumerist culture. However, Stevens' record is not a savaging of Christmas

It's striking that in the press release for his latest Christmas album, Sufjan Stevens chooses to call into question the validity of both the holiday and its music: "the carol has become its most corrupted currency, intoning rhapsody and romance with mistletoe and Marshmallow Fluff,

music; rather, it is an attempt to reclaim it.

The listener is presented with a collection of songs that have been purged of the dead metaphor and disingenuousness that one associates with the season. *Silver and Gold* is nothing less than an attempt to save Christmas music.

'a collection of songs purged of the dead metaphors associated with Christmas'

As one would expect from an album consisting of five CDs and fifty-eight tracks, there's an incredible amount of variety. *Silver and Gold* is a mixture of original Sufjan material and adaptations of traditional carols. This concoction results in some intriguing combinations – one moment the listener is assaulted with the garage-rock guitar riffs of 'Mr Frosty Man' only to be whisked away to a choral adaptation of 'Auld Lang Syne.'

These jarring transitions allow Stevens to highlight the mixing of the sacred and the profane which characterises Christmas – the listener is made acutely aware that the celebration of Christ's arrival is also most significant economic event of the year. In 'Ding-a-ling-a-ling' a sleazy guitar tone

accompanies the vocal line 'Jesus is the King' – hammering home the incongruity that we no longer notice, or, perhaps, no longer care about.

The final track on *Silver and Gold*, 'Christmas Unicorn', is a psychedelic pop-anthem that epitomises the record's bizarre character. It starts as a soft folk song which is then suddenly transformed by the entrance of a drum machine; this drastic change of atmosphere is followed by the introduction of multiple synth melodies which gradually merge and develop until they finally settle on the melody from Joy Division's 'Love Will Tear Us Apart.'

It's inexplicable and peculiar – but also captivating and enthralling. Such unexpected twists ensure that the listener can never predict what will happen next. It serves as a satisfying antidote to the banality of the holiday season.

There are periods of tenderness on the record which one might interpret as moments of faith. Such tracks allow the record to take a more nuanced position: despite all Stevens' criticisms of commercialism, he is willing to accept that, for some, Christmas music is still a medium in which the divine can be accessed.

There's no doubt that many people simply 'go through the motions' of merriment at Christmas. Once childhood is over, the excitement of the holiday



JOE LENCIONI

drains away and is replaced with the anxiety of what to buy, as well as the painful trepidation that proceeds awkward family encounters.

But that's to make a well-worn point. *Silver and Gold* succeeds as a record because, for the most part, it avoids

'A reinvention of the Christmas record, to show its consumerist shell and its joyful heart'

making such clichéd arguments. Its adaptations of traditional carols could only have been produced by an artist who has affection for them.

This album should be seen as an attempt to reinvent the Christmas record – to show the dualistic nature of the holiday – its consumerist outer shell and its joyful heart.

● Now available



Spires

While Oxford has earned the title of the city of dreaming spires, in the words of Frederic Raphael, we're lucky enough to live in "the city of perspiring dreams." As the time to leave both the spires and the dreams behind is fast approaching, we take one last glance over the Cambridge skyline.

We'd like to give special thanks to our loyal contributors for their beautiful work for each issue: Tom Porteous, Thea Hawlin and Clare Cotterill

L to R, top to bottom: Tom Porteous, Tom Porteous, Thea Hawlin, Thea Hawlin, Thea Hawlin, Clare Cotterill, Tom Porteous

BUSY DOING NOTHING

CLAIRE HEALY



Eight weeks is the length of time George Michael's 'Best Of' stayed at number 1. 8 weeks is also how long it takes for your friends to notice that you are pregnant (or so the forums tell me). It is also the time it takes for women to change their boyfriend's fashion sense for the better, according to a recent survey (note to self: don't give up on that gilet-wearing fresher just yet). Aside from all these scintillating statistics, for those of us in Cambridge who are neither impregnated, chart-toppers or man-eaters, eight weeks will of course only ever mean the length of a single term in this place. And, as freshers will soon come to understand, whilst Michaelmas might have gone by as slowly as the student equivalent of a prison term, as the years progress one's time in Cambridge starts to deplete at an alarming rate. For me, the end of this term marks the beginning of my last full term in Cambridge, which itself marks the beginning of exams which marks the beginning of my actual IRL, er, life.

I think I'm safe in saying, however, that I have spent my time more wisely than ever this term. Indeed, after eight weeks of endeavouring to improve myself physically, mentally and morally (lest we forget raffle-ticket-gate) I think I'd give myself a pretty solid star rating for the term's efforts.

Perhaps not a five-star gush of a review, but at the very least a three out of five from cambridgetheatrereview.com and extra kudos for costume design. I'd like to take the opportunity now, then, to conduct some of my own reviews of real life individuals in Cambridge – individuals whom, I believe, could be doing more to become better people.

(1) Library Snoggers: Whilst you might have found love in a hopeless place, I'm not sure even Rihanna would appreciate your raunchy tonsil tennis as she tries to deconstruct Kant's theory of perception.

(2) Kids: As toddlers get in my goddamn way on the way to lectures, I can only conclude that either the freshers are getting younger or Cambridge has turned me into a child-hating monster.

(3) Baristas: Whilst I fantasise about married life with the peppy Pret barista who now recognizes me and my usual (cheapest) coffee order others around town are disappointingly grumpy. Cheer up!

(4) Librarians: This is a shout-out to my college librarians: yes, a SHOUT out because you are always SHOUTING in your own quiet establishment. That squeaky trolley could do with a clean, too.

So there we have it. Whilst I have spent this term concentrating on my personal self-improvement plan, I choose to end it with a message to my fellow Cantabrigians: you'd better check yourself before you wreck yourself, because beauty is in the eye of the beholder and time waits for no man. And finally, *finally* (to take a Christian self-help book entirely out of its context) *anybody* can be cool...but awesome takes practice.

Marianne Brooker finds the perfect Christmas present in this collection of idiosyncratic female histories and eccentric sketches from Sandi Toksvig



Heroines and Harridans Sandi Toksvig

This is not a 'serious' book of women's history, but that's part of its charm and offers Toksvig the freedom to tell these stories in her own, very wonderful, voice.

In the preface she writes that history is more often than not 'his-story';

● Subtitled 'A Fanfare of Fabulous Females', written by Sandi Toksvig, illustrated by Sandy Nightingale: it was clear from the off that this would be a loveable book. And it is. Out just in time for Christmas, its quirky novelty will doubtless bring joy to many.

In this book the two Sandies reclaim historical narrative in order to shine a light on its glorious idiosyncrasies. Toksvig points out that "we know who attended the last supper but we have no idea who cooked it". The humour that underpins this book, in the writing and

'Embraces the glorious idiosyncrasies of historical narratives'

the drawings, prompts snorts of laughter which still manage to leave a note of thoughtful solemnity in the air.

The stories here are fantastic. From Queen Sammuramat, who asked King Ninus if she might rule for one day (he said yes, she used her new found powers to execute him and rule for a further forty two years) to Bessie Coleman, the first African American pilot ("the very definition of strength,

dignity, courage, integrity and beauty"; from a less than humble Texan background she taught herself French so that she could travel to the Somme to learn to fly, and 10,000 people attended her funeral). Nightingale's illustrations are pitch perfect, with a rotund (they are all rotund) Bessie Colman smiling and flying with wings of cloud. There are many other women here, from a collection of Fannies (Farmer, Burney and Mendelssohn) to "women whose names begin with æ".

The book draws attention to the often thin line between heroine and harridan. What all these women hold in common is that they were feisty and, in differing ways and degrees, empowered women. The vibrant, wry illustrations (Dame Ethel Smith, conducting March of the Women with a toothbrush, from her cell in Holloway prison, is my favourite) compliment the narrative perfectly. Toksvig claims that she is neither a

heroine nor a harridan, but it can't be denied after dipping in and out of this book (more rewarding than a cover to cover sitting) that she is hilarious.

The book ends with a perhaps slightly overwrought analogy between

'The illustrations are pitch perfect ...feisty and empowered women'

the text and a restorative bowl of soup and the line "there is so much left still to be devoured". In an interview, Toksvig picks out human rights lawyer Helena Kennedy, actress Judi Dench, (begrudgingly) Maggie Thatcher and writers P.D James and Maya Angelou as modern women who might come to constitute a similar book in years to come. Provoking this important question is the book's final grace: who will you remember?

Joanne Stewart is blown away by Arcsoc's utterly surreal night of the best local music on offer

ARCSOC The Fountain

Not even the most noxious cocktail served in a pink plastic bucket could deter a weary week-seven student from making their way to Arcsoc's *Ceci n'est pas un ent* at The Fountain on Tuesday night.

With musical acts spanning three floors, there was no excuse not to loosen up and throw some shapes on one of the dance floors. Props to the sonic dream team of Song and Felix, whose hour-long set on the ground floor brought together two underrepresented elements of the Cambridge club scene: rap and slick VJing.

'Who really cares if your face is melting like one of Dali's clocks when you're listening to 00's classics?'

Current offerings from Kanye and Waka Flocka Flame accompanied trippy visuals projected on the ceiling, creating a real buzz in the crowd. The

top floor showcased great dance sets from Tropix and Arcsoc members, with some funk creeping its way into the playlist as the night progressed.

The acoustic takeover of the first floor proved incredibly popular, the promise of a guitar proving irresistible to many a jumper-clad fellow. The giant wooden altar/Santa's grotto (Does anyone know what that thing was? Answers on a post-card please) that took up half the room made the conditions pretty cramped

and sweaty, but who really cares if your face is melting like one of Dali's clocks when you're listening to reworkings of noughties classics?

Holly & The Sorchestra's trumpet-fuelled cover of 'Murder on the Dancefloor' livened the crowd, while Frances Docx and her tasseled loafers resurrected Craig David's 'Seven Days', spurring an enthusiastic sing-along from the crowd (and not a Bo' Selecta heckle to be heard). Trust the indie kids to make even the eternally uncool cool.

The Fountain verged on feeling like a house party at times, with couples getting a bit too cozy on the settees, the stairs constantly heaving, and puddles of spilt drinks stagnating on surfaces.

The Surrealist theme didn't fail to disappoint,

confirming that when it comes to Arcsoc, go big or go home. Cutouts of Magritte's *Le fils de l'homme* (with obligatory bowler hat) hovered over the dance floor while white sheets splodged with dreamy blue clouds swayed from the ceiling.

Schiaparelli-inspired lobster hats had their claws in the air like they just

'Arcsoc continues to push the boundaries of alternative nights in Cambridge'

didn't care and the obligatory Movember turn out of fuzzy lip-caterpillars seemed paltry in comparison to the



Dali-inspired eyeliner-etched tashes that many girls were sporting. I did sit back at one moment and ponder how surreal the décor could have been, but my musings were quickly interrupted as I was walloped by a giant inflatable banana.

Touché Arcsoc, touché. Arcsoc continues to push the boundaries of alternative nights in Cambridge, promising an unbeatable mix of good music, zany décor and, let's not forget, a fair share of Cambridge's cool élite.

● Tuesday 20th November



Harry Jackson is impressed by a compassionate, engaging portrayal of ageing in this Palme-d'Or-winning film



Amour
Dir: Michael Haneke

Michael Haneke's second Palme d'Or winner is a devastating and deeply humane exploration of age, decline and love, but it is also a harrowing account of death probing the emotional interiors of its elderly characters.

Emmanuelle Riva – the confused young lover in Resnais' *Hiroshima mon amour* over half a century ago – gives a truly magnificent performance as Anne, a retired piano teacher in her eighties who suffers a pair of strokes and descends into paralysis.

As the film progresses, we are given the disturbing sense of a woman being robbed of her autonomy and dignity as she puts up a futile fight against the

condition which will overcome her.

It's a perfect and heart-rending performance that would be peerless in any other film, but is here accompanied by a similarly impressive performance from Jean-Louis Trintig-

'A more compassionate film on this subject is difficult to imagine ... a masterpiece'

nant as Anne's husband Georges, who attempts to remain calm while still very much in love, and is driven to the film's inevitable and tragic end by the pain of seeing his wife slowly slip away.

Amour is necessarily bleak, but while it is precise and austere, it avoids coldness. A dispassionate static camera and naturalistic lighting make the film seem detached, while the performances

and the sympathy Haneke clearly has towards his characters keeps it dramatically engaging. Far from being cold, *Amour* is so beautifully executed that, by a certain point, the touching of two hands can genuinely bring a tear to your eye.

Amour succeeds where many of the best films about age fail: in making the elderly, their relationship with each other, and their relationship with death its sole subjects. The film takes place almost entirely in Anne and Georges's apartment and it is the young who invade the space of the old and frustrate their existence. Haneke divorces his narrative from the problem of intergenerational burden and instead treats his subjects in their own right. A more compassionate film on this subject is difficult to imagine, or another film more worthy of the word 'masterpiece'.

● Showing in selected cinemas now

Angus Morrison finds the biggest video game release of the year to be an acceptable but utterly generic installment



Call of Duty: Black Ops II

Reaping over \$500m in its first 24 hours of sale, *Call of Duty: Black Ops II* is officially the biggest game release this year and the fourth-biggest of all time. And it's fine. It really is fine.

If you liked the previous *Call of Duty* games, you'll like this one. If, on the other hand, the same tricks that featured in 2007's *Modern Warfare* have become a bit stale, you'll be forgiven for taking issue with it.

Call of Duty's single player is renowned for its wildly flamboyant scripted action and spectacular set-pieces.

Rather than break with tradition, *Black Ops II* has taken this to the extreme, and gameplay is frequently lost in vast tracts of cinematic, which, on more than one occasion, require their own loading screens.

Mercifully these interludes are both attractive and well-acted. Developer Treyarch's facial animation has made a particularly large bound on from *CoD's* previous iteration, capturing emotion with startling acuity – effort rather upsettingly undone by the agonizingly long periods for which control is wrested from the player.

'Those looking for evolution in the genre ought to look elsewhere'

Gameplay is largely mediocre, relying on gimmicks which began to feel dated several years ago. Clear an area, take out the pursuit using mounted weapons, call in an airstrike to deal with armour, watch out for that gunship.

Credit where it's due: the levels are graphically very rich, but they offer nothing beyond a shooting gallery packed with random militia, unmanned drones or, naturally, Russians. And for a game which treats its myriad weapons

with such reverence, the gunplay isn't half uninspiring. While the level of customization available is laudable, the shooting feels weightless and sounds timid – there's never any feeling of physical presence in the warzone.

Of course the main event in any *Call of Duty* game is that deepest of time sinks, the multiplayer. Yet despite investing considerable hours of play-time since its release, I struggle to report either heinous slip-ups or praise-worthy innovation.

It's *Call of Duty*, as it was last year, and the year before, and for several years before that. This is neither criticism nor praise; the sales figures alone demonstrate the rampant demand for Activision's magic formula, and the series undeniably fills a niche. It is, however, phenomenally generic, and those looking for evolution in the genre ought to look elsewhere.

A redundant work of repetition and iteration, *Call of Duty: Black Ops II* is fine. It really is fine.

● Now available

Eurydice Paris-Falcon

Without wanting to sound like of those curious little placard-waving peasants that never got the memo that doomed Catholic is only stylish when it's done expensively (so Brideshead): the end is nigh.

Not the end of the world, obviously (the Mayans don't scare me. Who's even ever been to Maya?) but the end of Michaelmas term, finishing in a flurry of awkward Christmas formal seating arrangements and the yawning expanse of the holidays stretching ahead like a calorific chasm of over-consumption and familial discord.

Competitive consumerism and alcoholism are the opiate of the upper middle classes (I've been reading a lot of Karl Lagerfeld recently), and as an enthusiastic advocate of legalising stylish vintage narcotics I subscribe wholeheartedly to both of them: Christmas is my favourite time of year.

When else is it socially acceptable to exist entirely on saturated fats, or listen to the seminal Destiny's Child classic '8 Days of Christmas' on a loop for thirty days solid?

I cackle in the face of those Polly Yawnbee-esque socialist nay-sayers who say the Cantabridgian Christmas season is a ridiculously unnecessary display of opulence and excess, taking place as it does in November.

I honestly struggle to think of any group of people more deserving of a month-long party season than we, the dourly oppressed, unrepresentatively privileged

masses of a first-rate educational establishment: bring on the Bacchic festive rituals of institutionalised drinking! Bring on the embarrassing novelty crackers, the novelty jumpers and the time-honoured novelty festive pity-shag.

Type 2 diabetes and cirrhosis are only a few festive seasons away, so Christmas is the time to heed Horace and *drinkus winus whilst youngus est*.

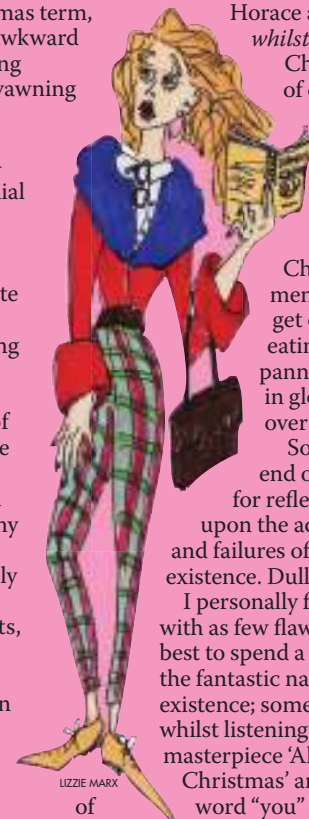
Christmas also marks, of course, the end of one year and the prospect of a new one, hovering on the horizon like the teetotal evangelical Christian family members you try and get out of visiting by eating so much Harrods pannetone you throw up in glorious technicolour over the age.

Some believe that the end of the year is a time for reflection, for rumination upon the achievements and failures of the past year of existence. Dull.

I personally feel that for someone with as few flaws as myself, it's best to spend a while pondering the fantastic nature of my own existence; something I often do whilst listening to Mariah Carey's masterpiece 'All I Want for Christmas' and substituting the word "you" for "me".

I find this is most effectively achieved when coupled with staring at yourself in a full length mirror, flashing your practised 'spontaneous festive smile' and an entire bottle of eggnog.

Merry Cambridge Christmas, my darlings, and remember: nothing is more glamorous at Christmas time than a lack of moral culpability and a full stomach.



Poussin: a cure for tunnel vision

Issy Muir discusses the Fitzwilliam's most recent acquisition, and the significance it might have for the average Cambridge student's end of term experience

In a few short(ish) weeks the majority of undergraduates will return to their homes for the Christmas holidays, but whether you are a fresher full of tales of anxiety-ridden Cindies high jinks, or a weary, knowing third year who hasn't seen daylight since October, you may perhaps struggle to shake off the 'tunnel vision' that is imposed upon us by life at Cambridge. In our rush to make deadlines, attend deadly supervisions and consume inordinate amounts of Caffè Nero lattes, there can

'Typically, Poussin has a reputation for being a "difficult artist"'

be no denying that we put ourselves first and forget that this city will go on without us when we pack our suitcases. Tourists will continue to be ripped off by punters, the Trailer of Life will sell marginally fewer cheesy chips, but ultimately: very little will change. This is the message promoted by Nicolas Poussin's painting, *Extreme Unction*, from 1638-40, which has just been acquired by our very own Fitzwilliam Museum, following a nationwide campaign to raise the requisite £3.68 million. Despite his dramatic use of *chiaroscuro*, Poussin's painting is a remarkably stoic image of a man on the verge of death – grey and bloodless at the centre of the canvas. Typically, Poussin has a reputation for being a 'difficult artist',

because his paintings do not often prove easy to engage with immediately. His compositions often deny his viewer intimacy – either because the human figures are small or because, as in the case of this picture, Poussin deliberately turns their backs to us. The language of his work is also largely classical, designed to appeal to an elite, erudite audience. Yet in *Extreme Unction*, we are faced with a universal theme: the inevitability of our own death and decay, which needs no audio guide to explain... The features of many of the faces are obscured by shadow, but this in fact helps the viewer to insert themselves into the scene; we are made fearful because we could be any one of the figures at some point in our lives. There is a space between the kneeling figure in white and the front of the picture plane, suggesting that we ourselves are meant to fill the composition and share in the demonstration of grief.

One face, however, seeks to distract us from the dark, austere room: that of a servant girl on the far right. She is smirking. Her half-smile tells us that whilst she is aware of the upsetting

'We are faced with a universal theme: the inevitability of our own death and decay'

scene being acted out at the dying man's bedside, ultimately, she has carried out her duty and is free to



Nicolas Poussin's *Extreme Unction* (1638-40) will go on special display in the Octagon Gallery of the Fitzwilliam Museum from early December.

leave. On exiting the room, her young life will go on, whilst the old man's will not. The girl is here to remind the viewer that life is a cyclical process, a truth that would have been easier for Poussin's contemporary viewers to appreciate, due to their lower life expectancy, than perhaps it is for us today. When we leave the ivory towers of Cambridge and go out and get real jobs – which to my mind is so frightening an idea as to be akin to death – many more as yet unknown bodies will fill the benches in hall, and sleep in 'our' rooms, and read 'our' books. Campaigns such as those successfully run by the Art Fund, the Monument Trust and the Heritage

Lottery Fund to secure *Extreme Unction* are all the more important as they have ensured the legacy of one of the nation's most invaluable assets. Not only is this painting useful for the art-historical education of future students, it is also humbling to behold. While attempting not to preach, it seems as if we could all remember to be a little more humble whilst stomping around our gilded medieval playground.

Nicolas Poussin's Extreme Unction (1638-40) will go on special display in the Octagon Gallery of the Fitzwilliam Museum from early December

A new exhibition of Japanese woodcuts at the Fitz takes Lavinia Puccetti to a strange and beautiful world of snow

When opening the doors of the Shiba Gallery at the Fitzwilliam Museum, the feeling is that of having entered a self-contained world which is proportioned, in its scale, to the dimensions of the woodcut prints that the exhibition, *Snow Country Woodcuts of the Japanese Winter*, displays. This effect heightens and concentrates the attention of the viewer, who is encouraged to look at each single detail represented in the prints – avoiding the daunting effect of a huge exhibition which could easily have ended as an exercise of label checking rather than an act of looking and engagement with the artwork.

The impression is of having opened a window onto a Japanese winter landscape and culture. The prints are arranged as if to recreate a microcosm: the lights at the top of the displays not only illuminate the artworks but also create a mood within the exhibition: the light is suffused, yet crystalline, evoking the flattened snow ridges seen in the background of Hiroshige's print, *Mount Yuka in Bizen Province*.



FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, CAMBRIDGE

The series *Snow and Music* includes Utagawa Kuniyasu's print dramatising the scene of two Kabuki actors, Kikunojo V and Mitsugero III. The chain unleashed by the warrior on the right continues in the profile of the roof, linking the two figures. The blue and ochre of their garments, along with the night blue of the house in the background, contrasts with the pure white of the snow which covers the scene. The artist seems to have been more interested in freezing a moment in time, than in depicting the final triumph of one of the warriors. In this print the drama is heightened by the way in which the white pigment has been flicked across the paper, almost obliterating the view of the scene. This has a parallel in contemporary Japanese theatre fights, which were stylised and complemented with languorous music whilst 'snow' increased the wintry ambience: the stage covered in strips of white cloth which simulated the weather. This technique, paralleled in the print by the white pigments dots, recalls the 2012 ENO production of *Madame Butterfly*: the fall of cherry blossom petals added drama to the end of the first act, when Cio-Cio San sings a love duet with Pinkerton before their first night together.

This instinctive association of snowflakes with cherry blossoms is exploited by Tagawa Shigenobu II's *Number 5-Silver* colour print. The scene, from the series *An Array of Excellent Horses*, depicts a geisha leaning on the balcony of a teahouse, overlooking the Edo Bay at Shinagawa during a winter afternoon. Shinagawa was famous for its cherry

blossoms – as well as for being an unlicensed pleasure quarter where geisha were free to offer their services. They would signal their availability by holding a wad of tissues, or, by showing their naked ankle, as can be observed in this print. Snow is depicted like blossoms on the trees, embossed into the surface of the paper without ink. The poet Hinanoya Haruko offers a visual comment on this print, associating geisha with snow: "are these other streetwalkers/ floating down along streams/ formed by the melting of snow?" It is interesting to note that the status of prostitution has not been morally condemned in these coloured prints, but rather treated as a natural part of the teahouse culture, to the point of being parallel to natural elements: snowflakes and cherry blossoms.

In the same way in which the candid surface of snow reflects light – differentiating it in a spectrum of colours – the exhibition offers images of a variety of realities, which are "interpreted through the main theme of snow." They relate deeply to contemporary Japanese culture, in terms of history, theatrical staging, poetry, mythology, gender and social realities. The viewer may struggle to arrive at the true meaning of each print – but a familiarity with the images can be acquired by the simple, patient act of looking at prints such as those exhibited in the Shiba Gallery.

Snow Country Woodcuts of the Japanese Winter is open until 13th January 2013 at the Fitzwilliam Museum; admission is free

Shooting Picture 1961

A CLOSER LOOK AT ART

"[creating the painting was] like war. A nice war. No one ever got hurt. But after a shoot-out we always felt emptied, exhausted, like after a bull-fight"
– Saint Phalle, writing in 1987

Saint Phalle epitomises the violent gestures of post-war abstract painting in *Shooting Picture 1961*. Up until 1960, the artist made figurative depictions of landscapes, buildings and animals from oil and collage. However, in 1959, she saw a large exhibition of American works – featuring the likes of Pollock, Rauschenberg and de Kooning – which provided a framework for her early 'shooting pictures'. Indeed, Pierre Restany later commented that these works by Saint Phalle "constituted the most definitive satire, the most irrevocable parody of American style". At the opening of Saint Phalle's 'Feu à Volonté' exhibition (held at the Galerie J, Paris, in July 1961) a .22 rifle was kept at the gallery and on request could be loaded with ammunition and used by visitors to shoot balloons filled with paint. At the opening, spectators were invited to shoot at these constructions, releasing the paint over the canvas. This particular piece was shot at by artists Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns – combining art with performance; the moment of action and the emphasis of chance becomes as important as the finished work themselves.

Naomi Pallas

Shooting Picture 1961 is on display in the A Bigger Splash: Painting After Performance exhibition at the Tate Modern until 1st April



Shooting Picture 1961, Niki de Saint Phalle, 1961

STAGE DOOR

FRED MAYNARD



We've come to the end of another term, and what with the Panto beginning its ever-unseasonably early run, it's time for a festive reminiscence about the term's theatre. As ever, I've managed to see only a fraction of the stuff that's been on despite my keen stewarding, reviewing, participating, and doing whatever else I can to blag free tickets to shows.

My favourite show of the term remains *When The Rain Stops Falling*, a brave choice given its prominent slot and zero name-recognition. Watching it on the first night felt like a genuine privilege – the audience felt like they were being let in on a secret gem, and you got that lovely feeling as everyone exhaled together as the curtain fell. Equally Australian, more leftfield, and far more menacing was *The Apocalypse Bear Trilogy*, a show that baffled most audience members, including myself. It was the good, unsettling kind of bafflement for me at least: like being hit hard in the stomach with a fist of jelly.

New writing was occasionally strong, as in the case of *Kind* (whose one-star review from the *Tab* takes this term's prize for head-desking wrongness) occasionally divisive, as in *Sophie Scholl*, and occasionally over-reaching, as in *The Macedonian Tragedy*.

The prize for hardest working performer this term goes to Ed Eustace, whose five large roles one after the other put him in the mould of a theatrical Terminator. A prize for sheer bloody-minded determination goes to Debbie Farquhar for getting *The Spanish Tragedy* put on in King's College Chapel – even if the acoustics proved insurmountable, I hope her achievement prefaces much more site-specific theatre around here.

In lieu of that, it was excellent to see so much college drama going on: Magdalene, King's, Christ's, Peterhouse, and Caius all staged shows alongside the normal offerings from Queens' and Pembroke. A strange mix it was too – the usual pot-boilers of Wilde and Coward supplemented by *The Pillowman* and a rather unfortunate attempt at Sarah Kane.

Did we learn anything from our efforts? I'm not sure there were any great innovations this term, despite *Bartholomew Fair's* introduction of the "Augmented Reality" flyer. It was probably more a term for strong, relatively unknown but fairly conventional plays like *Dublin Carol*. When I started the term I looked forward to all these weirdly-named plays; now I realise that to carry off a new name you also need a panache to make it feel wholly new all over again. The more regular workshops now available might help us in this – once we all get a bit more skilled up, perhaps we will start being braver with how we interpret our texts. In any case, well done actors, techies, directors, producers, publicity designers and stage managers. You once again have proved yourself an extraordinary bunch, and it's been a privilege to review your efforts.

Fred has been this term's Theatre Editor

Beyond English degree and ADC

Justina Ogunseitan on how disillusionment with the poetry she was studying led to a unique Cambridge production that tapped undiscovered resources

When I considered putting on Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is Enuf*, I didn't intend to make history; I just wanted to perform something I cared about.

An English student bruised by the baptism of fire which is Renaissance, Medieval, Shakespeare and Practical Criticism (with some eighteenth century French poetry and Flaubert thrown in for good measure), I entered Easter term despondent, apathetic and questioning why I hadn't switched to social anthropology.

'I had forgotten the evocative power of poetry which sears through your heart and jars your senses'

I had thought English at Cambridge was going to expose me to the literary voice I had begun to discover towards the end of A-levels. Instead I was confronted by sixteenth century humanism, the convoluted waffling of F.R. Leavis and the prospect of opening a French-English dictionary. Struggling through the first sixteen weeks, I had forgotten the evocative power of poetry which sears through your heart and jars your senses. Comedy had been transformed into tragedy, and I felt dangerously lost in the maelstrom of words without signifiers, patterns without solutions, essays without footnotes.

I remember returning from my

Medieval prelim examination, facing the roar of dissembling punters and foolish tourists, as a streak of defiance overcame me. I was going to do 'exactly what I wanted, and I wasn't gna be sorry for none of it!' I typed furiously,



Justina directed and performed in the show

producing the opening scene of my own play (*I Speak Ken Saro-Wiwa*). But I knew it wasn't going to be finished in time for the coming Michaelmas. It was then that I remembered Shange's daring and provocative choreo-poem, *For Colored Girls*.

I didn't set out to make history, a social or even a feminist point; I simply wanted to have my voice heard. The voice of a woman's struggle to reclaim her identity and place in the world, not

in the mellifluous writings of modernist poets or the verbose postulations of Renaissance artists, but in the crude, raw, authentically brazen colloquialisms of urban life. My life. Shange's work is powerful because it strips back any facades that appealed to the dissembling courts of Elizabeth, and slaps the truth, with a wink and saucy finger-click, in your face. Her collection of

'Could I find six other black thespian women?'

interweaving poems is hauntingly dark, chillingly uncomfortable and coarsely humorous: and therein lies the appeal. Because as you read her work, you hear yourself speaking back.

Unfortunately these experiences can only be captured once you have engaged with the text, either as an audience member or a reader. So when I pitched it to the ADC, explaining the simplicity of the production, solely dependent on lighting and a few stage levels, they felt I was sorely misinformed on how the theatre world, and directing in particular, works. I googled other theatre societies in Cambridge and stumbled upon BATS. I had no idea who they were, but went along, and pitched the same foggy idea to them as I had to the ADC. Thankfully Rosie Morgan was either desperate for something new, or took pity on me, and said yes.

I had no explicit intention of making *For Colored Girls* an all-black cast. Yes, it would be confined by literary critics to the domain of 'Black American literature,' and Shange's characters do identify with black women, and

especially black feminist, or in Alice Walker's terms, womanist ideologies, yet the rainbow in the title is inclusive of all races. Besides, could I really find six other black thespian women in this city? Hearing the rich twang of Naomi Maxwell's audition poem (*Lady in Green*), or the sweetness of Stephanie Goulei's French accent (*Lady in Brown*), I realised that there is far more talent in Cambridge than the city takes credit for.

When directing, co-producing and acting in a play as niche as *For Colored Girls* which stares the grotesque nature of rape, abortion, AIDS, domestic violence and infanticide squarely in the face, declaring outright warfare, and you're performing it in an obscure location, you don't expect people to turn up.

I was told to be hopeful for 20. I demanded 50. Joseph Mambwe's incredible publicity sent us into the hundreds, selling out the last night. *For Colored Girls* was an "evocatively explosive" performance because it had something different to say. From the mouths of the marginalised it roared into the centre of Cambridge waking people to an alternative reality. History was made because a new story was told, and we haven't finished telling it. I only hope, that when another apathetic literature student proposes such an historically misguided idea, people say yes.

I wanted to sing a 'colored' girls song, to "bring her out to know herself...the sound of her own voice/ her infinite beauty." I'm just honoured I managed to do it, and was supported in the process.

A closed stage? A critique of the Cambridge theatre scene

Rivkah Brown suggests what being a 'successful' in the university's drama scene entails and suggests we look further afield than the ADC and Corpus Playroom to find the crop of our theatrical talent

Cambridge is famous for its prolific and vibrant theatre scene, which produces more productions in a single week than most universities do in a term. Most of us will have attended shows, many will be frequent theatre-goers, and others as foolish as myself will even have succumbed to the temptation of reviewing. Yet the puzzling fact remains that the world of Cambridge theatre is something of a mystery to all but a privileged few. Without wishing to denigrate the great pantheon of performers, producers, directors, and technicians we have in Cambridge, whose skill and professionalism occasionally make me proud of my university, I would like to politely point out some of the problems I see with Cambridge theatre.

By 'Cambridge theatre,' I am speaking primarily (although not solely) about the larger theatres including the ADC and Corpus, and better-known theatre groups such as The Footlights and Pembroke Players. In fact, I am speaking about neither of these: I am speaking about people. A small group of people, in fact, which dominates the aforementioned theatres and companies. Never have I seen a larger show which hasn't had one of these names on the cast list; too often have I seen shows where the cast list is a roll call of these names. The problem as I see it is partly social.

It is too often true in Cambridge that



JAMES ROWE

to be in big shows, you have to know people. Being a 'successful' (a term I have heard used by a Cambridge actor, of himself) Cambridge thespian and frequent appearances at the ADC bar often go hand-in-hand. Having attended particular schools or having particular parents are also known to give people

'It is naive to criticise Cambridge theatre for too closely resembling the big bad world'

a steadier footing when they first arrive on the Cambridge theatre scene. That said, it is naive to criticise Cambridge theatre for too closely resembling the big bad world or, for that matter, most other extra-curricular societies in Cambridge. And thankfully, it remains

generally true that the first and foremost determinant of theatrical 'success' in Cambridge is talent.

'There remains an atmosphere of nepotism which widens the gap between the higher echelons of Cambridge theatre and the rest'

Nor is there anything inherently pernicious about the friendships of those involved in the theatre. One of the greatest things about the production process is the bond it creates amongst cast and crew. There is nothing wrong about wanting to put on a play with friends. The difficulty is that the social lines along which Cambridge theatre is run occasionally jeopardise the quality of the drama itself: I once saw a play at the ADC which anyone might have sold on the cast list alone, and yet which turned out to be shockingly bad. How could this play, not only badly performed but badly scripted, have ever made it through the endless hoops one has to jump through to even submit a show to the ADC? It was nepotism gone horribly wrong.

The problem with Cambridge theatre is also, in part, temporal: the key

shows to be in as one of the hundreds of aspiring actors who flood into Cambridge every year are the ADC and Corpus Freshers' Shows. It is at this point that much of the new acting talent is established, and the Cambridge theatre circles begin to contract, making it harder to get into Lent's big shows. This generates a vicious cycle for actors, whose only ways to improve are to act with people who are better than them and to act a lot: actors get parts in important shows such as these, get more parts as a result, get better at acting, get more parts, and so the cycle continues ad infinitum.

I am aware that my critique of Cambridge theatre has been largely cynical, but my focus has also been narrow: pastures just as green lie beyond the cliques of the ADC and Corpus, and many of the best shows I have seen have been by smaller companies, unknown actors and first-time directors. Plenty of opportunities are available for those who wish to try their hand at acting, directing, producing or tech on a smaller scale.

My problem is that there remains an atmosphere of nepotism which widens the gap between the higher echelons of Cambridge theatre and the rest, whose talent is being stymied by a group of individuals, whose talent and whole-hearted dedication to the theatre can only be applauded, yet whose unfair hogging of the limelight simply cannot.

These postmen had better ring twice

Helen Charman talks to Harry Michell and Will Attenborough about their new one-man lateshow

Arriving at the ADC to talk to Harry Michell and Will Attenborough about the play they've written together, next week's lateshow *Post*, I am greeted by the frankly startling vision of Michell sitting outside smoking a cigarette whilst wearing half of a pantomime dame costume. This, whilst not entirely unpleasant, sets a slightly surreal tone for a discussion about a play that I'm assured is actually more tragic than comic, something that might confound expectations, coming as it does from the current Footlights President and seasoned sketch show veteran Attenborough.

'Both have banned their respective families from coming to see the show'

Michell initially wrote *Post* on his own, in eighteen hours straight: intending to enter the play for the annual Harry Porter prize he was scuppered by the unwelcome realisation that the play "isn't actually that funny".

He asked Attenborough to come on board and they proceeded to re-write the play together; Attenborough, who jokingly referring to himself as the "doctor" of the play, spent a significant amount of time on the first draft just "cutting out all of the appalling jokes".

The play centres upon the life of a postman, Terry, and uses the multitudinous letters that fill his Post Office as a gateway to the story of his own life and of the characters confined within the letters. Both Michell and Attenborough



EMMA WILKINSON

have furnished the narrative with anecdotes from their own pasts. Although the stories have been sufficiently twisted into entirely fictional episodes, both admit to being "really quite worried" about the semi-autobiographical nature of some of the content; "there is some pretty personal stuff in there".

Neither of them have shown the script to their loved ones and both have banned their respective families from coming to see the show, aware that however much they have distorted things, people who know them will recognise familiar stories in Terry's reminiscences. They also acknowledge the difficulty of writing about something beyond their own experience: there is, unsurprisingly, ample material for Terry's life up until he reaches his twenties, but once they were no longer writing about what they knew the process became

significantly harder, particularly in the effort to avoid generic clichés. Both writers agree, however, that the process was overwhelmingly an enjoyable one, partly because the actual business of writing was "very organic and constantly mutable": the play grew out of the stories they wanted to tell.

Neither Attenborough nor Michell have had a hand at all in the actual business of the production: they have handed control over completely to Charlie Risius and Ed Eustace, who are respectively directing and taking on the daunting prospect of playing Terry.

The pair haven't even attended a single rehearsal, emphasising their "complete faith" is Risius' direction and Eustace's "phenomenal" acting ability. Although letting go of a script can be difficult, inspiring a severe case of separation anxiety, Michell believes it is an important thing to do: "the only way to make a play three-dimensional is to give it to somebody else".

'A good writer has to be totally invisible'

Whilst Cambridge possesses an undeniably impressive theatre scene boasting as it does a positive smorgasboard of opportunities for the theatrically-inclined, whether it provides quite as fertile ground for new writing is a much-debated subject. Both Michell and Attenborough are positive about the unique environment the university provides – "there isn't any real pressure with anything you put on here, it's a playground, really" – and Michell goes on to say that the fact that



EMMA WILKINSON

there is a real possibility anything you write might get put on is a key factor in motivating writers, along with the all-important provision of deadlines.

Attenborough does, however, acknowledge the fact that more could always be done to encourage new writing, noting that there is a perennial temptation to put on traditional works instead of trying something new: "I spent my first two years here performing in stuff that you could see on the West End, and it was absolutely brilliant, but I'm glad I'm trying my hand at something else in my final year". The business of writing is a difficult one, and as English students they are both also painfully aware of the difficulty posed by the unrealistically high expectations that come from reading a lot: "it's very easy to read a lot of stuff that you think

is brilliant, sit down to write your first play and immediately become outraged that it isn't Pinter". Although 'Post' is by nature technically an amateur production – it is the Amateur Dramatic Club, after all, however easily forgotten that is – one of the chief problems that besets any new play is the task of avoiding the overtly amateurish.

Both Michell and Attenborough talk about how difficult it is to avoid the temptation (again perhaps particularly prevalent for English students) to be overtly "writerly", cramming the play with allusions and ignoring the importance of showing rather than telling.

In a self-mocking (I'm giving him the benefit of the doubt) nod to the overly literary, Michell finishes our discussion by referencing a Yeats essay that talks about the very particular state a play's audience are in – somewhere halfway between waking and sleeping – and ruminating that the mark of amateurism is intruding into that state: "hearing the writer, or seeing the mark of the director, is what breaks that. A good writer has to be totally invisible. We don't want the audience to hear a line and think 'what a great one from Will Attenborough', we want them to believe without thinking about it that it's Terry".

I leave with my interest piqued (there's a twist! A promised secret twist!) and with a few more thoughts to spare for the contents of the Post Office I walk past on my way home. And, of course, with the image of a Pantomime Dame quoting Keats quite possibly burned into my memory forever.

● *'Post' runs at the ADC Theatre 28th November-1st December at 11pm*

That Face ADC ★★★★★ This play left me with a lot of things to think about. The overwhelming thought was how wrong first impressions can be. By that, I mean that this boarding school black comedy is well-written, well-executed, emotive, and full of turmoil, but it really does take a while to warm up.

The first scene is probably the weakest in the production – there was a sense of apprehension and "I'm not quite sure what's going on" in the audience. I would put that down to first-night nerves and the fact that the two fresher actors, Nisha Emich and Lara Ferris, were given the difficult job of bringing us into a hugely emotional play with a scene that does little more

'Strap yourself in because you'll hurtle toward the end'

for the plot than establish a bit of background. I couldn't quite look past the actors onstage inflecting their lines and responding to cues, to see the characters they were trying to portray.

To their credit, both of these actors did warm up as the play accelerated emotionally – and accelerate it did. The plot, the pace and the prowess all picked up as the show moved on, starting with the first scene between Martha (Genevieve Gaunt) and her son Henry (James Bloor). The dialogue is quick, natural and expertly delivered – with some hilarious lines interspersed among the heavy family drama. I would say that this play brings new meaning to the term "dysfunctional family" – but the script avoids clichés and so will I.

Suffice it to say that it creates an enthralling, but totally believable drama. As the plot sped towards its emotional climax, the actors served their purposes very well, and the father character of Hugh, who is not seen until late in the play and yet is demonised by his children throughout, is played remarkably well and sympathetically by Quentin Beroud, creating a father who could be seen both as honestly trying and failing to connect with his children, and as a man who has abandoned his family.

The highlight of the production, I feel, must be the quality of acting from Gaunt and Bloor. Much of the intrigue in the play revolves around, and depends upon, the characterisation of Martha, and Gaunt plays a drunk, added, psychotic woman who is breaking down from the inside with worrying accuracy – delivering the best performance I've seen her give. At the same time, so much of the potential in the script was brought out superbly by Bloor's performance, and he carried much of the emotional weight of the play, to the extent that there were a few teary-eyed audience members by the end. That is not to criticise the rest of the company; it's just that where they created something good, Bloor and Gaunt created something great.

The direction by debutante Maria Pawlikowska was ambitious, with an interesting and detailed use of props. However, there were some minor issues with staging – some movements were unnecessary while others seemed to be lacking, and the agonisingly long scene changes almost tripped up what was an otherwise excellently paced play.

Don't let the slow start fool you; strap yourselves in because you'll hurtle

towards the end. I certainly came out glad that I had watched it, and wondering why I had been so doubtful at the beginning. It is a good play, but it could be better – and hopefully, with a bit more practice to allow for confidence to grow and for rough edges to become smoother, as the week progresses this will turn into a production nobody would dare doubt.

Johann Henrik Kamper

Burlesque! ★★★★★ Sex is funny. Corpus Playroom Anthropologically speaking, it's hilarious.

The art of burlesque, in its most honest form, should attest to this; it should champion the age-old truism that with seduction, inevitably, comes the potential for grotesque humour. In this Corpus revue there's a distinct lack of the bespangled props of tongue-wagging titillation.

Instead, we are greeted with a brazen sexuality which more often appalls than arouses. This is burlesque slinging it old-school, recuperating its Greco-Roman roots with a jamboree of music, dance, and comedy. Of course, it's still delightfully racy, with fetishistic heels, and phallic pistols, but there's a point to it all, an underlying satire which makes it much more than just a pretty face.

The show is set against the twilight years of Weimar hedonism, in a mystical commune-cum-curiosity shop of anarchic filth. We are in a place, as Ryvita Von Teese, the grand dame of proceedings, informs us, where love comes to die. It is an matter of post-coital tristesse, rather than exotic foreplay. The three central showgirls, tottering in Gaga-worthy heels, wearily perform their routines whilst chewing gum and snorting lines. Another three sing a

brilliant dirge on the perils of waxing in a parody of 'Mein Herr'. This is neo-burlesque at its very finest.

Sian Docksey, as the evening's impresario, is flawless. Her characteristic wry, observational humor frames the more frivolous acts with salient social commentary – a self-styled prophet amongst the razzmatazz. Docksey was relevant, playful, and remarkably assured – the very prom-queen of this vertiginous showcase.

Yet the evening quite spoils you for talent. The various 'interactive' cabaret pieces are superbly paced, and choreographed. The dancers belt out their songs with real libidinal angst, the lyrics – a cast-composed effort – iterating a comic irony which runs, like the showgirls' errant glitter, throughout.

Solo moments are equally strong. Evie Prichard, as the swooning Galatea Divine, sings with a quite mesmeric clarity. Another spotlighted moment shows Emma Wright working the pole with an invertebrate litheness.

The allure of burlesque is its promise of release, to ferry the viewer to a snug islet where anything can happen. *Burlesque!*, in its stylistic circus of acts, consummately ensures this. Saul Boyer, the Strong Man, bursts into an utterly surreal ode to Maggie Thatcher with virile, cartoonish mimicry. Jeff



Carpenter, responsible for the brilliant onstage drag band, even contributes a hilarious hoop dance, with surprisingly seductive effects.

But perhaps the most shocking piece was a certain recruitment skit which, at the risk of giving too much away, involves two girls, partial nudity, and fetishistic food-play. It seemed, perhaps, the only gratuitous act of such a carefully considered selection. I found myself overcome with a High Victorian prudery, vaguely scandalized as certain bemused audience members were themselves 'recruited'. But this was a minor misjudgment of tone. The night, in general, was pieced together with real, Fellinian flair a telescoping of fantastic images in which dance was simply the refractive lens.

This show has legs. A whole, high-kicking bevy of them. If you do one thing this week, it should be to see *Burlesque!*. Its fabled, if slightly soiled, fantasy world will leave you tingling with happiness, amongst other things.

Laura Profumo



STYLING | TOM RASMUSSEN
PHOTOGRAPHY | THURSTAN REDDING
MODELS | ALIYA RAM / CHARLIE PARHAM / JACOB MALLINSON BIRD
ALIYA WEARS | NAVY SUIT, BY BALENCIAGA; TURTLE NECK, BY BORIS BIDJAN; PAISLEY SCARF, BY GANT; TRAVEL BAG, BY LOUIS VUITTON.
CHARLIE WEARS | KRALL NECKED SHIRT, BY VIVIENNE WESTWOOD; SWAROWSKI CRYSTAL JUMPER, BY JW ANDERSON; HIGH WAIST TRACK PANT, BY Y3; PIN STRIPED TROUSER, BY MONCLER; LEATHER JACKET, BY BORIS BIDJAN; PLAY TEE, BY COMME DES GARCON; TARTAN INSERT JACKET, BY VIVIENNE WESTWOOD; TROUSERS, BY ALEXANDER MCQUEEN; BAG BY MULBERRY
JACOB WEARS | PLAY TEE, BY COMME DES GARCON; KILT BY JW ANDERSON; SHOES, BY DOC MARTEN; LEATHER AND WOOL DRESS, BY DIANE VON FURSTENBURG; BAG, BY LOUIS VUITTON.
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MW



Varsity Rugby 2012: an exclusive preview

Over 30,000 spectators will hit west London on December 6th, for the 131st rugby Varsity match at Twickenham



A powerful drive from the Light Blues demonstrates the dominance of their pack as they overcame the Steele-Bodger invitational XV

Cambridge's Varsity juggernaut continues

Ruairi Bowen reports on this year's celebratory Steele-Bodger match

Wed. 21st November - Home

Cambridge: 30
Steele-Bodger XV: 10

"The outside world is oblivious: the public prints will carry not even a one-liner fixture note today; certainly no match report tomorrow." The words of distinguished journalist Frank Keating, in an article for the *Guardian* in 2010 lamenting the dwindling interest in the traditional contest between Oxford University and Major Charles Stanley's Invitational XV.

This description couldn't have been

further from reality at Grange Road on Wednesday afternoon, as foul weather did nothing to deter hordes of spectators from descending on a University Rugby ground adorned with press-pass wielding journalists and cameramen alike. The queues for the beer tent obscured the additional seating; there was even a brass band.

In a week when Buckingham Palace celebrated sixty-five years of marriage between the Queen and Prince Phillip, Cambridge University RUFC was commemorating a 'Light' Blue Sapphire anniversary of its own, as rugby royalty Micky Steele-Bodger's Invitational XV challenged the Blues for the 65th time. The annual fixture, which followed

on from Major Stanley's initiative in Oxford, has brought exciting players to Cambridge over the years. This year proved no exception as 7's internationals Hamish Smales, Will Brock and Mark Lee joined a renowned list of past participants, such as Andy Ripley and



KATHERINE MORRIS

Denis Charvet, who have turned out for the Steele-Bodger XV.

Speaking at half-time Mr Steele-Bodger, freshly garlanded with a scarf to honour the occasion, highlighted the importance of such high-class opposition in preparing the Blues squad for the all-important Varsity Match.

"There used to be a dinner where they'd talk to their opposite number and give them the benefit of their great experience – this was probably of much more use to them than anything else – mind you, with the weather as it is, the chance of any of the highest quality of rugby is almost impossible!"

'The in-form Blues are in a good position to overturn two years of heartbreak'

The slippery conditions and high winds did undoubtedly hamper the Blues in their preparations for Twickenham; with territory increasingly important, they had to rely more on the strength of the dominant pack, as opposed to the brand of free-flowing, running rugby that the Grange Road faithful have witnessed this season. However second-half tries from Dugal Bain, Seb Tullie and Will Smith added to captain Rob Malaney's first half score as Cambridge combined improved discipline with superior fitness to run out comfortable 30-10 winners.

With the final dress rehearsal for the Varsity Match against Bristol University on Saturday, the in-form Blues are in a good position to overturn two years of heartbreak when they take to the field on December 6th. The final encouraging words from double-blue Micky for the Twickenham debutants? "The first 10 minutes of the Varsity match is one of the most terrifying experiences you can get – huge crowd, everybody running everywhere, as fast as they can in all directions doing no good at all!"

Light Blue Line Up: The Ones to Watch

Ruairi Bowen looks at who will take to the field at Twickenham in a fortnight

When the curtain finally falls on Cambridge's Varsity campaign at around 3.45pm on December 6th, Rob Malaney's exciting young Blues squad will haul their battered and bruised bodies off the fabled Twickenham turf, making the short trip up the stone steps of the West stand with only one objective in mind: lifting the trophy which has eluded them for the past two years. Following last year's disappointing 28-10 defeat, Cambridge have undergone a major squad upheaval, with only six of last year's Blues expected to feature on the pitch this time around.

So who will feature in the starting XV when the kick-off whistle is sounded? Half-backs Sebastian Tullie and Andrew Abraham have been excellent all season, and (barring injury in the final warm-up game against Bristol) will surely line up at 9 and 10. Dugal Bain, an Australian post-graduate, is joint top try scorer this year, and will be partnered in the centres by Danny Holmes. Will Smith's electric pace on the blind-side wing will make him a shoe in for the Number 11 jersey, with Andrew Murdoch and Ilia Cherezov battling it out to occupy the other wing.

A mid-season shoulder injury to Koujiro Tambara brings Rob Stephen (the 2011 Under-21s full-back) and Kristian Cook (a former BUCS-winner with Loughborough) into direct contention to start at 15.

Captain Rob Malaney leads the pack, assisted by Hugo Kelly and Matthew Steele in the back-row. Nate Brakeley will join Scott Annett in a formidably powerful second-row, and Will Briggs, Paul Mallaband and Stu Brown make up an imposing front-row with a combined weight of over 50 stone. The anticipation is nearly over, and the weight of expectation on Cambridge to lift the coveted MMC trophy is vast. Given their excellent preparation and performances in the past weeks, they have every reason to go into the game brimming with confidence for what should be an unmissable festival of high-quality rugby.

Cambridge Captain ROB MALANEY

Match statistics:
Played: 130
Cambridge wins: 61
Oxford wins: 55
Draws: 14
Our Under 21s have won 4 and lost three this season, including a 17-5 victory against Bath U21's. Oxford have won 3 and lost 4. In a game which can be an early indicator of which shade of Blue the MMC trophy's ribbons will be after the full 80 minutes, the balance of power based on form looks finely poised.
● *The Varsity Match* is broadcast live on SkySports and can be followed on Twitter: @Official_CURUFC

Oxford Captain JOHN-HENRY CARTER

"We're very excited for the 131st Varsity Match. As with every Varsity Rugby campaign, things are very different from the previous year. This year, we've faced some particularly tough opposition, and, due to many new faces in the squad, we've taken some time to come together and find a win. As with the previous year, we aim to enter the Varsity match with strength and intensity in every position on the field, aiming to excel in all areas during the game. We are looking forward to facing Cambridge side in a well-spirited battle."



The Twickenham experience

Ex-England captain **Rob Andrew** gives a view from the top

Capped seventy-one times by England, including the 1991 World Cup final, Rob Andrew has been a notable figure in English rugby since he first took to the field against the Dark Blues thirty years ago. Now Professional Rugby Director at the Rugby Football Union, he speaks about the cultural importance of the Varsity Match, his long-standing rivalry with Stuart Barnes, and how being a Blue is the perfect preparation for later life.

"It's changed, everybody recognises that", he says of the status of the match, particularly since rugby turned professional in 1995. "It's become more difficult for universities to find their niche than it was in the amateur game, where a lot of international players went to Oxford or Cambridge as part of the journey." Andrew, a triple Blue who captained Cambridge to victory in 1984 before making his England debut a month later, epitomises this journey, enjoying an illustrious career playing with Wasps, Newcastle and England, which saw him win 3 grand slam titles and captain the British and Irish Lions, retiring with 396 international points to his name; the 3rd highest in English history.

Going toe-to-toe with him all the way was Stuart Barnes, who opposed him at fly-half in the Varsity matches of 1982 and 1983. Emerging victorious on both occasions, Andrew went on to play sixty-one times more for England than his Varsity rival and won the race to the coveted Number 10 jersey for the Lions Test Series against New Zealand in 1993. In relation to this battle



TOM JENKINS

for supremacy, their Varsity rivalry was no less meaningful: "In its own way it was just as big. When you're 19, experiencing matches in front of reasonable crowds live on TV for the first time it's a big deal."

The Varsity Match undoubtedly holds a great degree of significance in the University's calendar. For the players involved, pre-season training starts early in September with all preparations essentially geared to this "mini Test Match". Such high-level

'A cherished part of the rich history of English rugby'

commitment can lead to drawbacks, be they academic, social, or the sacrifice of other extra-curricular interests. Commenting on this delicate balance, Andrew reflected on his own experience positively. "There are times when you get stressed, you're late with work and you have to give up a social event. But it's a really good grounding in time-management. Having the ability at an early age to be busy in lots of different areas holds people

in really good stead for the future"

Irrespective of what comes of the current crop of Light Blues in later life, it is the more immediate future that will be concerning them. Many great sportspeople thrive on the added pressures of the big stage, though Mr Andrew would warn Cambridge against giving too much thought to their surroundings in order to regain the MMC trophy: "You shouldn't worry about the big picture; it's very easy to allow the environment to impact on you in games such as these, be it the bus journey to the stadium, seeing family and friends in the car park or the vastness of the stadium itself. If they go back to the fact that it is just a rugby match and do what they do to the best of their ability, they have a very good chance of winning."

Whichever way the tide turns at Twickenham, Cambridge's most eminent former Blue will be casting an eagle-eye over a game which he believes to be "a cherished part of the rich history of English rugby", and wishing Rob Malaney's side every good wish in their quest for glory.

A gentleman's game?

BBC Sport Director Barbara Slater talks to **Katie Bartholomew** about women in sport



ELLIE MARSH

Barbara Slater amidst Ospreys at the sportswomen's speakers dinner

While, in sports coverage, men might be on top (that the Varsity rugby match attracts thirty-thousand spectators plus Sky sports cameras, and indeed dominates this page, is testament to its following), it is in fact a woman, Barbara Slater, who is on top of the lot. Director of BBC Sport, she led the greatest

received. "Though they were joking", she laughs, "I hope."

Barbara believes, nonetheless, that there have been vast improvements to the status of women in sport even during her career. On first entering the BBC in the eighties, the idea of a woman being in charge was "impossible". But Barbara

has witnessed an "unbelievable" change. She is certain that "if you've got the commitment, the knowledge and the expertise, you can do anything now."

'We hope you'll keep coverage spic and span'

The Olympics were a new peak of, and stimulus for, this respect and equality for female sport. "You didn't cheer for Jess Ennis any less than you cheered for Mo Farah. I don't think gender came into it in terms of the support, and the way the nation got behind our women athletes as much as our men."

In response to last year's all-male nominations for BBC Sports Personality of the Year, Barbara has introduced an equal gender panel to select from publicly voted nominations: "I simply cannot believe that with the success of women in sport this year, we're not going to see that list transformed."

The track from springboard to boardroom wasn't smooth, however. Barbara remembers the prejudices she has faced as a woman working in sports journalism. Voices were raised when she was first made Director of Sport: "We hope you won't be covering the Hoover Olympics and the Dusting World Championships, and that you'll keep coverage spic and span", were amongst the suggestions Barbara

EYES ON...
JP ESPINOSA is pumped for the Varsity ski trip next week, hoping for another Light Blue victory

Sport:
Skiing

Event:
Slalom

Age:
21

Height:
167cm

Weight:
60kg

Varsity caps for Cambridge:
1

Personal Best?
Team GB



KATHERINE MORRIS

How does the ski team train?

The team trains at the indoor slope at Milton Keynes. We do 2 hours there every Monday, and then 2 fitness sessions each week back in Cambridge.

Any superstitions or rituals?

We ritually put snow down the back of our race suits before a race – it really wakes you up! I also like to have a pasta breakfast on the morning of a race. Some of the Blues team are actually known for having Dubstep breakfasts – one guy on the team enjoys it a bit too much...

Sporting hero?

Jon Olsson: he's reached world cup level at Giant Slalom and freestyle. Nobody has done that in both disciplines.

Injuries along the way?

I broke my left tibia and fibula age 11. A back injury from downhill gives me recurring trouble, which I have to be aware of.

Rivals?

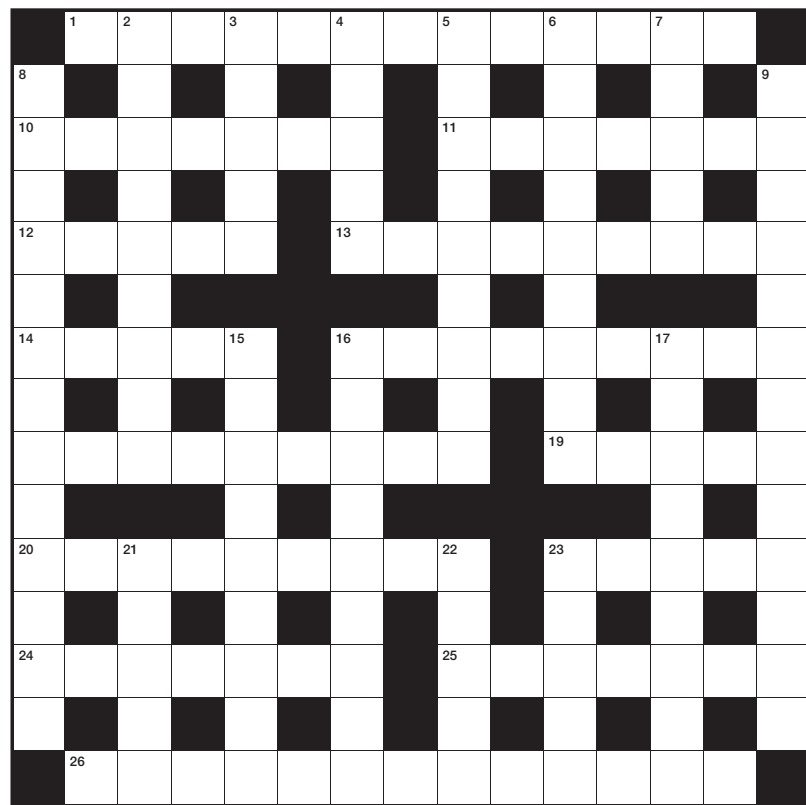
I'll be going head-to-head with one of my great friends at Varsity this year. We're a very similar level, and have trained on the British team together for years. It's good rivalry.

Cambridge's racing chances against the Dark Blues on Varsity trip?

We won both the men's and women's individual races last year, and we've only lost 1 Blues skier coming into this season. So this team has done it once and we can do it again. But it does mean there's a load of pressure: Oxford will be going hell for leather, after their defeat last year. The team dynamics will be interesting, and, as always, there will the tough balance to strike between pushing yourself to the limit, and crashing out.

● *Going on Varsity trip next week? Don't miss the chance to cheer on the Light Blues at the slalom races on Tuesday 4th*

Varsity Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 For instance, Daley Thompson's joint gets fairness and respect (13)
- 10 One drug followed by another for female star (7)
- 11 Author and monarch participating in cricket league? On the contrary (7)
- 12 Singer breaks jawbone with massive resonant sound initially (5,)
- 13 Struggling hero tries to be one who produces ideas (9)
- 14 Initially noiseless, insidious, nimble Japanese assassin (5)
- 16 Russian composer to provoke if annoyed (9)
- 18 Smooth ale, when stirred, is disgusting (9)
- 20 This food, when scrambled, is beige and gold (6, 3)
- 23 See 12, (5)
- 24 Enacts horrid patients oddly (7)
- 25 Hearty squash (7)
- 26 Energetic Open University courses in general relativity used to measure radiation (6, 7)

DOWN

- 2 Paraguay and a European country have obsession with fire (9)
- 3 Destroys old buildings (5)
- 4 Smell small amount of money (5)
- 5 Woman nursing bloke that's broken part of skeleton (5, 4)
- 6 Prove a sun explodes in this way (9)
- 7 I struggle against onset of spiteful

- 8 climbing plants (5)
- 8 Work of 11 is booklet he produced about Swiss psychologist (3, 6, 4)
- 9 Not good, a giggly vagrant messing about irritatingly (13)
- 15 Getting cooked chips with vinegar half spread out (9)
- 17 Rust concealed in Lee Dixon or Ian Wright's comeback (4, 5)
- 18 Had attempted to hug Calvin Klein (7)
- 19 Man or woman with child may learn this (6)
- 21 Though partially blind, I enjoy a film made on a low budget (5)
- 22 Metamorphic rock, for example, not right for lizard (5)
- 23 Poet in Harry Potter's seat? (5)

Set by Rizla

Solution to last issue's crossword:

Across: 1 Imaged, 4 Hostess, 9 Endorsing, 10 Arena, 11 Tupac, 12 Goldfinch, 13 Appoint, 15 Staple, 17 Weight, 19 Leg byes, 22 Chaplains, 24 Logic, 26 Rioja, 27 Know-it-all, 28 Discard, 29 Whiter.

Down: 1 Inertia, 2 Add up, 3 Enriching, 4 Haggles, 5 Scarf, 6 Eternally, 7 Swaths, 8 Fidget, 14 Predators, 16 Angelfish, 18 Tricked, 19 Lesson, 20 Secular, 21 Scared, 23 Llama, 25 Giant.

The solution to this week's crossword will be posted on VarsityLive.

SPORT

30

Rugby:
Cambridge's
Twickenham juggernaut
continues

Rugby: pre-Varsity special

KATHERINE MORRIS

Rugby correspondent **Ruairi Bowen** turns to the Battle of the Blues: previews, reports and interviews inside

Hard hitting: Light Blue kickboxers pummel their foe

A day of bloody noses and oxygen masks ends in glory for Cambridge kickboxers, writes **Ed Abedian**

ED ABEDIAN



Despite the high-calibre opposition, CUKBS came back with wins for Tim Williamson and Daphne Tsalli. Though subjected to early pressure, Williamson eased his way into the bout and punished the openness of his opponent. The Loughborough fighter did well to stay up after a thunderous high kick to the side of the head sent his head guard flying into the arms of his coach in the corner.

Tsalli continued the Cambridge charge in a completely one-sided display. Her cross-disciplinary skills shone through as time and again she scored with punching combinations. With her opponent stricken, Tsalli dominated the fight until the last bell and came home with a deserved victory.

With the teams standing two a piece at the half way stage, CUKBS ran away with the win: Samuel Dahan, Ollie Osunkule, Alex Kaus, and Kontantin Semeniuk secured a clean-sweep in the heavier weight categories.

The fervour of the crowd was not matched by the taciturn officials who were forced to intervene twice in the fifth encounter. Following a warning in the second round, Samuel Dahan finally remembered the ten ounce gloves strapped to his hands and began to punch his way into the lead. Even a one-point deduction in the final stages

failed to deny him his first win.

CUKBS vice-captain Ollie Osunkule found joy in the first round, flooring his opponent within seconds of the starting bell. With no answer for Osunkule's power and accuracy, the other fighter was caught repeatedly in the final round with stinging straight punches to the head.

Normally one to dominate with his polished kicking ability, Alex Kaus was forced into a dogged battle against a plucky opponent. Kaus finally kicked into gear in the final round, leaving Radcliffe sporting a bloody nose and winded after a thunderous strike to the midriff.

ED ABEDIAN



The evening's final ended in slightly unsavoury fashion with a frightening knockout. As both men came in for an exchange, Morgan was caught by a straight punch which sent him crashing into the canvas. Amidst oxygen masks and fretful teammates, Morgan got back up to widespread applause.

Sunday 18th November, Away

6 - Cambridge
2 - Loughborough

After victories against both ARU and Oxford last year, it was surprising to hear of nervousness from the Cambridge University Kickboxing Society (CUKBS) fighters on the eve of their latest encounter. Loughborough's sporting reputation alone had done enough to suggest that CUKBS would not have it all their own way.

Those fears were heightened when Cambridge favourite Cenán Djenan struggled to cope with the dynamism of his opponent. Coming out the worse for wear after some heated exchanges in the first round, Djenan was forced to retire, suffering from an ankle injury that has plagued his early season preparations.

The quality of opposition shone through when debut Charlie Samson was defeated by Zen Lee. The Loughborough man, nicknamed 'Showtime', lived up to his billing: Lee controlled the bout throughout, countering Samson's efforts with poise and accuracy.

SPORT ROUND-UP

BLUES BEGIN THEIR CUP RUN

UNIVERSITY The Football Blues have carried their league form over into the BUCS trophy with a 3-1 victory against Liverpool University last week. Goals from James Day and a brace from livewire striker Danny Kerrigan saw them progress to set up a Last-16 tie against Worcester Uni at Fenner's. It has been a fantastic season so far for the Blues, with three consecutive victories in the league and, based on this performance, the potential to go a long way in the cup competition.

LIGHT BLUES BEAT DARK BLUES: NETBALL 2NDS

UNIVERSITY In a highly anticipated mid-table clash this match was always going to be a close affair. The opening half didn't disappoint with Oxford a single goal ahead at 4-3 by half time. The second half saw a resurgent Cambridge gain the lead and then effectively shut the game down until the final whistle went with a 7-6 victory for the Light Blues. Man of the Match went to Ari Midgen.

FITZ FOOTBALLERS STAY ON TOP

COLLEGE Fitzwilliam sit at the top of the college league table at the halfway stage of the season, having thrashed Emma 5-0. This victory meant that Fitz maintained their 100% record and they now hold a two point lead over all of the other colleges. Homerton are still just behind as they edged to a 2-1 victory against Christ's. With these two teams still to play each other, all is set for an exciting finale to the campaign.

VOLLEYBALL VICTORY

UNIVERSITY The Cambridge Volleyball Women's Blues team sealed its second victory against the University of Birmingham on Wednesday, making another step to secure at least second place (after Loughborough) in the BUCS league. Cambridge's good block line-up, perfect defence and strong hits drove the team to dominate the game, while thirteen serves in a row executed by the outside player, Electra Panagoulia, completely destroyed their opponents.

VAL THORENS SNOW CONDITIONS

FRANCE Snow news is good news, as conditions for the Varsity ski trip look set to be ideal. The Val Thorens resort is opening this Saturday, with light snow forecast to fall over the weekend, and a huge 50cm snowfall forecast for next Tuesday, just in time for the Varsity trip arrivals. Happy skiing!

● Find full match reports and commentary online at varsity.co.uk