

Predator - Pray?

CICCU defends itself from accusations of homophobia



**Gabriella Jozwiak
Laura-Jane Foley**

This week, the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CICCU) held its main event, Promise, aiming to spread the Christian message. They distributed 12,000 copies of St. John's Gospel and held a series of talks attended by hundreds of believers and non-believers. However, the week was marred when some students argued that CICCU were taking evangelism too far using "intrusive" and

"insulting" methods. Some gay students even made allegations of homophobia after they were told they would "go to hell" unless they changed their ways.

At a talk in Girton on Monday a speaker appeared to compare homosexuality to bestiality by saying, "It's not that we see gay sex as worse than any other sin. It's just the same as sleeping with animals." At another speech on Thursday a preacher explicitly claimed there were people in the room who would be going to hell because of their sexual immorality. This caused offence among many students. Yet, Stephen Boon, the

Secretary of CICCU argued the comments had to be seen in context, "The Bible says that sex is designed for marriage... all sex outside marriage is outside God's plan. The Bible doesn't even have homosexual sex in mind." Other Christians would go even further. Christians in Cambridge form a diverse community with many forms of opinion, including one prominent gay Christian group Revelate. One student from APU felt that the talk had been "a bit harsh. At the end of the day the most important commandment is 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself' At times this week I have

felt people have lost sight of this."

Some students argued that Christians should be as able to express their own beliefs publicly to the same extent that homosexuals are able to practice their lifestyle. However, further complaints centre around allegations that college-based CICCU members actually invade students' privacy. JJ Primrose, a gay student at St. Catharine's college claimed that he was specifically targeted by two CICCU representatives to attend last night's talk. He believes he was approached because of his persuasion as...

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Mixed Message

continued from front page

...“both individuals are well aware of [his homosexuality]”. Other students claim to have received comments such as, “you’ll go to Hell,” or, “you’re damned,” because they were gay. CICCUCU deny that this form of homophobic targeting was part of the mission and have distanced themselves from reports of hostility towards homosexuals.

Michelle Taylor, a Downing College CU member told Varsity, “if I was a gay person, I can understand why I might feel threatened by Christianity,” but stressed that the Christian belief was “equality in the sight of God... we’re

“So far, all events have been respectful of each other...there have not been hundreds of complaints”

giving out books not attempting to bash people with it.” However, she described comments about hell as “unconstructive. That’s not the message of God, it needs more explaining.”

But others have also criticised certain members of CICCUCU as aggressive. The biggest response to Promise’s tactics have come from students who objected to CU members knocking on room doors and handing out the specially published St John’s Gospel. At Girton College, the JCR received over fifty complaints that the approach was “intrusive” and “intimidating”. The Girton JCR President, Omar Shibli, commented, “People cannot walk away if they feel uncomfortable.” One student commented that: “no other religious or non-religious group in college would be allowed to conduct itself in the way the Christian Union does”. The complaints led to a meeting of the JCR, which told the CICCUCU members to stop unsolicited door knocking. Instead, the members were only allowed to pigeon hole the

remaining unvisited students and ask their permission to come to their room.

Yet many do not mind the CICCUCU approach. Yoni Garson, the President of JSoc commented, “I don’t care what they do. As long as they’re not coming along to our Friday night dinner trying to convert us then they can continue sticking as many free chocolate bars in my pigeon hole as they like!”

Boon said that the week had largely been a success. Responding to criticism about pestering students and targeting particular groups he told us “irrespective of background – we want everyone to hear. We approach them in the same ways as everybody else. As many people as possible need to know who Jesus Christ is... [these talks] give people a chance to ask questions”.

However, Boon did express concern at the criticisms. As a result, CICCUCU and CUSU are now working together to ensure that the same problems do not recur. It seems to be the College-based mission work rather than CICCUCU which has been put into question. Taylor told Varsity that college reps were told to be “discrete” when handing out the Gospel, accept refusals and only talk to students about Christianity if questioned. CICCUCU was aware the mission could cause complaint, so aimed to avoid “ruffling anyone’s feathers”.

CUSU President Ben Brinded observed, “so far, all events have been respectful of each other and considering the size there have not been hundreds of complaints”. He also praised the CICCUCU run events for “encouraging students to think about their beliefs.” When questioned about ‘pushy’ methods compared to other religious societies, Taylor pointed out that, as the largest religious society in Cambridge, CICCUCU has the financial means to launch such a big campaign and stressed the “urgency of the message. The message of life drives you to tell.”

Boat Race sets sail

Ellie Hargreaves

Last weekend saw The Boat Race pub and live music venue shut its doors for the final time. The last night’s line up had local favourites, Right Turn Clyde and The Broken Family Band headlining. Enterprise Inns are now rumoured to be turning the much-loved venue into a restaurant or wine bar.

Enjoyed by both town and gown for many years, stars such as Oasis and The Darkness have performed on the small and dingy stage. The Boat Race has also launched local bands Miss Black America and The Broken Family Band. Greg McDonald of The Dawn Parade commented, that to headline a Saturday night at the Boat Race was “something for bands in Cambridge to aspire to”. On his band’s first tour they played to eight people each night, but with a sell-out final gig

at the Boat Race, they felt they had really arrived.

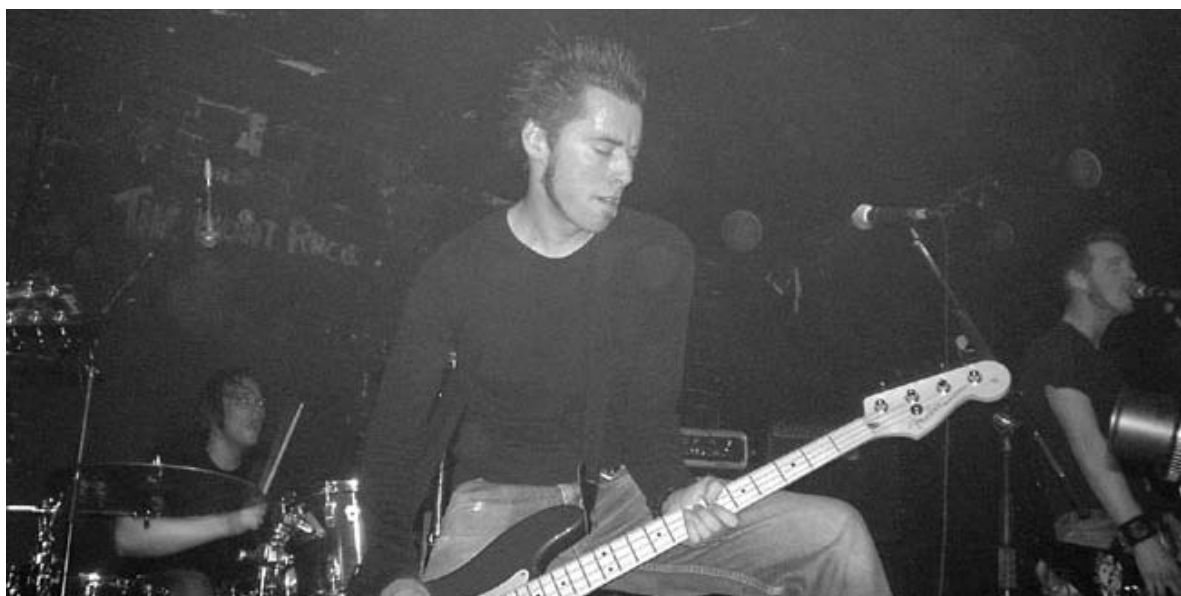
The loss of the venue will have a significant effect on the Cambridge music scene. With a capacity of around three hundred and live music seven nights a week, many students will be left with fewer options to indulge their love of live music. The same is not true of beer and wine drinkers, who hardly need another

“Maybe it won’t open as a restaurant...run by cts!”**

watering hole. Karl Hartland from the local radio station ‘209 Radio’ has attacked Enterprise Inns’ proposals. An on-line petition (thema-chine@209radio.co.uk) has been set up to help save the venue. Backed by musicians and fans, Steven Adams of the Broken Family Band was one of many to voice his opinions at

Saturday’s gig, “Maybe it won’t open as a restaurant... run by c**ts!” The petition was circulated and signed among the crowd.

The night was a huge success, which only made the Boat Race’s closure seem more unnecessary. Jazz from Right Turn Clyde, described the closure as the “biggest travesty” and pointed out that the new locals would be “ponsey twats”. The departing landlord, Stan, received the biggest cheer of the night. His hard work over the past seven years has won him the love and respect of Cambridge music enthusiasts. He was thanked profusely by all the artists and described as a ‘saint’ by Greg McDonald. Cambridge is certainly losing something exceptional, and despite the efforts of ‘209 Radio’ and their supporters, this looks set to be the end of the show. The only hope now is in smaller live music pubs such as The Portland Arms and The Man on the Moon, before the wine bars also take them over.



Right Turn Clyde in action

Ellie Hargreaves

Colleges in big security shake-up



Andrew Gillespie

James Rice
Sam Bostock

Plans are in place to radically improve security in many Cambridge colleges following a number of recent incidents that have raised fears over student safety.

Caius, St. Catherine’s, Selwyn and Trinity are among those intending to implement new security measures in forthcoming weeks. The key issue appears to be the open, public access to many colleges, which has resulted in numerous cases of petty theft and, more worryingly, violent intimidation of students.

Last week, a Trinity student was seriously assaulted on the staircase leading to his room. The attacker then shouted obscenities at the student and later harassed him by forcing large quantities of rubbish through his door. The student suffered numerous cuts and bruises during the attack, which is now being investigated by the police. Proposals have since been made to restrict access to all parts of the college other than the main gate, as is the case in many other colleges.

The problem of violence and intimidation is of particular concern to students living in accommodation outside of college. Last week, a female undergraduate from Homerton was accosted by a

stranger after leaving a nightclub and forced down an alleyway. A small group of second year St. Catharine’s students was attacked at the end of Michaelmas term when walking back to college accommodation next to the University Library. As a result of this incident, St. Catharine’s has launched a taxi scheme for its members. However, one porter told Varsity that the college “frown on calling a taxi just for one person”. This attitude

The Student suffered numerous cuts and bruises during the attack

would appear to conflict with the reasoning behind the scheme as individuals are more frequently attacked than those in large groups.

Selwyn College, have experienced a number of walk-in thefts and made a number of proposed amendments to the college’s security. The security review will aim to improve methods of securing college buildings and increasing student vigilance. A JCR-run awareness programme featuring a presentation by the Crime Prevention Officer. Lockable bolts are to be placed on ground floor windows, wooden fences will be replaced with iron railings, and low-level lighting is to be installed. Shiraz Masood, JCR President of Selwyn, also informed

Varsity that there were plans to install “late key” or combination lock doors at staircase entrances.

Elsewhere, students have organised their own schemes independently of college authorities. Jo Pocock, JCR Women’s Officer at Emmanuel, recently launched a “buddy scheme” whereby students living out of college meet at the porter’s lodge and walk home in a large group, following a number of attacks on second-year students living in off-site accommodation. Jesus College has issued surveys to its female students in order to gauge the extent of crime committed against its members.

Good relations between colleges and the police appear to be of a high priority. In Michaelmas term, CUSU welfare officer Liz Waller escorted Cambridge MP Anne Campbell and Simon Marriott of Parkside Police station around the “problem spots” of Cambridge. These included Sidgwick Avenue, the backs of Trinity and Clare Colleges and Garret Hostel Lane.

Security seems to be more of a priority issue in colleges closer to the city centre. Authorities in colleges on the outskirts of Cambridge stated that incidents were rare. There remains, the issue of poor lighting and dangers of mugging in quieter areas. With this in mind, the Graduate Union is running a two-hour self-defence course.

Students make a break for it

RAG Jailbreak sees Cambridge students jetsetting across the world for charity - on no money

Sarah Marsh

At 8 am last Friday, thirty-four Cambridge students set off from Parkside Police Station. Their aim: to get as far from Cambridge as possible in thirty-six hours. There was, however, one small catch. All participants had to blag their way to their final destination and couldn't spend so much as a penny in the process. The students took it in their stride and reached numerous exotic locations across the world (and Dublin), with the winners making it to Tokyo.

Seventeen teams left Cambridge decked out in fancy dress after RAG encouraged participants to don costumes in order to highlight the charity element of the competition. The couple with the best fancy dress - Sully from 'Monsters Inc.' and a cavewoman - were awarded bottles of champagne for their efforts.

While some teams had already sought sponsorship from travel-firms, others relied upon good luck and good will, blagging their way onto planes, trains, ferries and cars. They hitched to places such as Tokyo, Berlin, Malaga, Rotterdam, Paris, Hamburg and Bordeaux. Each time they crossed a border or took a flight, jail-breakers telephoned RAG president Becky Thompson to inform her. Thompson

told *Varsity*, "it was really exciting receiving calls from phone boxes all over the world".

Teams hitchhiked in traditional fashion, but succeeded in travelling-furthest by obtaining sponsorship from companies including Subway, Ryanair, P&O, and Easyjet. One pair managed to tag onto a "disco train" taking them to the highest peak in France as part of a package deal. Daniel Morgenthau and Joseph Fisher, both first-year geographers at Emmanuel, travelled to Japan with All Nippon Airways. Their oriental endeavours won them the first prize of a weekend in Paris.

"We travelled six thousand miles from Cambridge, beating the previous record."

Fisher was initially met with refusal at Heathrow airport last Friday where he spent six hours covering all four terminals. At 6.40pm, however, just twenty minutes before the flight was due to depart, confirmation came from the Head Office of ANA (All Nippon Airways) that he and his team-mate had obtained a return ticket to Japan. Fisher commented, "We travelled six thousand miles from Cambridge, beating the previous record of the Grand Canyon. We may even have set a

British national record for Jailbreak!"

In Tokyo, the successful team was able to stay with relatives of Fisher. The team's only expense for this extraordinary weekend was the price of a ticket on the Tokyo subway system. Their free flights, on the other hand, were worth £1400 each!

The general consensus among participants was that the public had been extremely generous and sensitive to their cause. Michael Henson, who travelled to Malaga, confirmed that, "everyone was really helpful and enthusiastic." The authorities even gave one team special permission to stay overnight in Southampton airport and whilst the same team ended up having to fund their own return flight from Dublin, the airport staff clubbed together to pay their taxes. Across the Channel, a Frenchman was so impressed by one pair's enthusiasm that he gave them fifty euros to enjoy their time in his hometown.

This is the first time that Cambridge has run a Jailbreak. RAG president Thompson told *Varsity* that although the idea originated from Bristol University, Cambridge not only had more participants, but actually broke the previous record of some 5,000 miles achieved by a team from Bristol who reached Phoenix, Arizona. Thompson stated she hoped to make Jailbreak an

annual event and thinks that "it has the potential to become really popular". She reasons that if they are able to hold the Jailbreak at the end of term, the teams could enjoy their final destinations over the vacation.

Thompson declared that she esti-

mated Jailbreak to make around £5000 through the teams' sponsorship by family and friends; almost 5% of the £95 000 official target for 2003/2004. So far RAG has raised £45,000 and is focusing on RAG week (21st - 29th February) to make up the rest.

Daniel Morgenthau and Joseph Fisher



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Beggars: Nor-wich way to go Battle of the Bands

City council tempts the homeless out of Cambridge with free train tickets

Abigail O'Reilly

The recent spate of cold weather has brought increased attention to the city's problem of homelessness. Cambridge City Council faced harsh criticism this week as it defended its policy of handing out free train tickets to Norwich to homeless individuals.

Many view this as an attempt to off-load the problem onto another city. The policy is evidence of Cambridge's clamp-down on begging and vagrancy but conflicts with recent moves taken by local shelters, student organisations and busi-

nesses to remedy the situation.

According to a recent survey conducted by local shelter Wintercomfort, approximately thirty-five people sleep rough in Cambridge. At least twenty-seven people have died on the streets in the last two years. As the city continues to become more affluent, increasing numbers of homeless people are lured to Cambridge to beg. In a report published last month by the Government's Rough Sleepers Unit, Cambridge was shown to have more people sleeping rough than Birmingham or Manchester. The high number of tourists in Cambridge seems to be the chief factor in explaining such

a high degree of homelessness in what is a relatively small city.

Shelters in Cambridge need more money. Ruth Wyner, Director of Wintercomfort commented, "While

Cambridge has more rough-sleepers than Birmingham or Manchester

82% of donations and funding go to projects in London, 80% of rough sleepers are located outside the capital". Student-run activities in Cambridge have, however, generated a significant

amount of financial support for local projects. Student organisation CUSH (Cambridge University Support for the Homeless) aims to raise money for local shelters Wintercomfort and Jimmy's by increasing student awareness and encouraging volunteers in services provided for the homeless. Recent figures show that around one hundred students volunteer in these shelters. RAG runs a series of events throughout the year to raise money for homeless charities. Sums of up to £ 15,000 have been raised for projects dealing with the homeless in recent years. In 2002 the Peterhouse May Ball also lent their support to CUSH with several other events and balls now showing interest in doing so this year.

A serious disadvantage for homeless people is their lack of permanent address, which means they can neither apply for jobs nor claim Government benefits. However, a number of Cambridge businesses are actively recruiting homeless people on the principle that it will increase their confidence and help them get work in the future.

The Cambridge branch of Marks and Spencer, for example, recently launched its 'Marks and Start' campaign. The programme offers work placements to individuals who may face particular difficulty in getting a job. Andy Westwood, head of policy research at The Work Foundation believes giving the homeless such opportunities can only be a positive thing. However, he added that there was much progress left to be made. "There are still far too many people excluded from the mainstream economic life of

Sarah Marsh

Student Community Action (SCA) is launching Cambridge's first "Battle of the Bands". The publicity campaign has only just begun and finals take place on March 3rd, yet tickets are already selling out and more than twenty bands have applied.

The concept of a "battle of the bands" has earned the sponsorship of major organisations and airtime on local radio. Coordinated by charities, it is a significant awareness and fundraising event as well as a serious window of opportunity for upcoming groups.

Ten finalists will have the chance to perform to a concert hall of 500 people, including May Ball organisers and pub and club management looking to hire bands. The winner will be rewarded with a studio session and CD press from Zoo Audio, a Cambridge-based digital recording studio.

The winner will also have their CD aired on radio Q103; listened to by 125,000 people per week. Rachel Furley, Events-Coordinator, challenged groups to come forward: "In a band? Any good?! Prove it!"

Tickets for the final are on sale at their head office in Pembroke Street for £5. All proceeds fund community projects run throughout the year.



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IQ reaches 100 *Varsity* editor fakes it

Centenary for the Cambridge test

Matthew Bennet

This year heralds the one-hundredth anniversary of the first IQ Test. The ideas that brought about the testing of 'intelligence' and the test itself were developed in Cambridge by a cousin of Darwin. The anniversary raises questions as to why the method is no longer used, and how would a 21st century student fare?

The 11+ exam contains an element of 'intelligence' testing while the American SATs (Scholastic Aptitude Tests) evaluate potential rather than current academic ability. An experiment into the difference between 'intelligence' and academic ability was run by the NFER (National Foundation for Education Research) who gave 1,200 students from deprived areas the American SATs and found that whilst only one of them had the sufficient A-level grades for Oxbridge, thirty showed the necessary level of intelligence to get into the Ivy League. So what about us – are we intelligent or are we just book smart? Are American Universities full of the under-qualified? Or are some of Britain's top Universities turning down some of Britain's brightest?

To try and answer the question of whether Cambridge students are 'intelligent' or just 'smart', an Engineer, a Lawyer, a NatSci and a Historian conducted a highly unscien-

tific experiment: they all took the BBC's 'Test the Nation: The IQ test' (available on the BBC website). They all have good A-level results with the usual plethora of 'A' grades, but what about their IQs? Top of the class was the Engineer with an IQ score of 138 (Mensa territory) followed by the Historian on 135, Lawyer on 128...and the NatSci? 109.

Fear not NatScis, all is not lost. IQ itself is often questioned by scientists and educationists alike as a valid indicator of 'intelligence'. Professor of applied educational psychology at Exeter, Bob Burden, wrote in *The Guardian* this week that 'intelligence' doesn't even exist and that "if it does, it should be used as an adjective or an adverb only and not as a noun".

100 years on since the first IQ tests were taken in France - where they were used to determine which children were "mentally inadequate" - do they have any future? This week a number of UK universities, including Cambridge, announced that they would be introducing an 'Academic potential test' for law applicants. The soon due Schwarz inquiry into higher education could come out in favour of a UK Scholastic Aptitude test being introduced – widening the scope of university selection, whilst it may not be an IQ test they would undoubtedly share many characteristics. The only question is: Will there be any NatScis left?

Aisleigh Sawyer

Varsity co-editor Laura-Jane Foley was plucked from her natural habitat in the Cambridge choral scene and given four weeks to master the skill of rock 'n' roll well enough to fool a panel of expert judges for Channel 4's transformational show *Faking It* to air next Tuesday at 9pm. But the experience was a far cry from her expectations.

Faking It, filmed last June, charts the progress of Laura-Jane in her quest to become a punk-rockstar. Foley believed that the show would be "an amazing opportunity to spend four weeks singing." She was, however, disappointed to find that instead of becoming an opera singer or a musical star, producers wanted her to cut her long silky hair and wear "ripped monstrosities" as part of her hardcore immersion in the world of rock. For the *Faking It* experience, Laura-Jane shared a London flat with a 22-

year old rock singer in what proved to be a somewhat turbulent relationship.

Ms. Foley wasn't a typical faker, resisting being "manipulated by producers" and refusing to cut her hair stating that "it was one rule for her [her mentor] and one for me – she had long blonde hair!" "They were going for a big shock-factor but I had my life to go back to." LJ, as she was

"They were going for a big shock factor"

known during filming, found the experience very superficial, "producers were constantly telling me what to say" and the fact that "it was set up so [she and her mentor] never really got to know each other" meant rifts developed. "I was a trained musician," she asserts, but "was often dismissed and patronised".

Attending award ceremonies and gigs, fronting a band, meeting icons such as The Darkness and Gary Numan and frequenting the Met Bar with Marilyn Manson, all failed to persuade Laura-Jane to leave Cambridge behind and try to make it as a rock star. With plans of becoming either a barrister or writer after she completes her degree in History of Art, LJ believes that the "fake" experience of *Faking It* has "absolutely not changed me at all".

Despite rumours of an appearance on *Richard and Judy* and her face in most of the magazines in Borders, LJ has not allowed the fame to go to her head. She maintains that "the adverts are the most exciting bit – I keep squealing when they come on!" Tune in next week to see whether LJ can fake it.



Channel 4

halfway



Halfway... F***. I swear freshers' week was a few days ago... Going to have to do some work... So far I've done f*** all. Going to have to grow up. Don't want to grow up. I like being a child, I like getting wrecked and pulling gullible freshers in Cindies. I like my bed and hate my bedder for waking me at midday. I like sleeping in though 11am lectures, I like giving 'reasons' like "the animal rights protesters attacked my results" (that wasn't a lie) or "my e-mail's not working" (that was) to my supervisor. F***. Have to grow up. Okay, time for new resolutions. Will think about the future. Will stop telling people that I love them when I want to get laid. Will go to the library after lectures. Will go to bed before midnight. Won't spend half my life in the college bar ogling cute freshers. F***. Going to have to get a JOB. aargh... god that's scary. Me, Work, Job, Money, Responsibility - those words don't go together...

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In 1987, at the Conservative Party Conference, Margaret Thatcher announced what was going to become one of the most hated pieces of legislation in modern history: Section 28.

In her now infamous speech, she stated that children were being brought up to believe that they had "an inalienable right to be gay", when they needed to be taught "traditional moral values".

Section 28 prohibited local authorities from promoting teaching in schools that homosexuality was acceptable and decreed that they must not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material which encouraged it.

Although there has never been a case of prosecution under Section 28, it has caused immense difficulty for a generation of young gays and lesbians and hugely damaged progress towards equality.

The arrival in May 1997 of the Labour government offered a hope to get rid of the legislation. The first attempt from Labour to repeal Section 28, however, was thwarted in the Tory stronghold of the House of Lords by a distinctly unholy alliance

between right-wing hardliners and religious leaders, most notably Dr George Carey, the then Archbishop of Canterbury.

In July 2003, a second attempt at repeal of the law was more successful, despite once again meeting strong resistance in the Second Chamber. Baroness Blatch, who fought against the repeal, described her campaign as "a simple mission to protect

children from the worst form of sex education."

The repeal was successful, however, and came into force in November of that year. Ben Summerskill, the chief executive of Stonewall, called the it "a triumph for 21st Century tolerance over 19th century prejudice."

Massive prejudice against homosexuals remain, even post- Section 28. The national

Having a LBGay ol' time...

Ainsley Mayhew Seers on the quest for equality

Massive prejudice against homosexuals remains, even post-Section 28

blood service refuses to accept blood donations from homosexual men, even those in monogamous relationships or those who have tested negative for HIV. In contrast, a heterosexual male who has had many partners, not practised safe sex or had an HIV test may still donate.

Following the repeal, certain county councils have threatened, and in the case of Kent, actually introduced their own versions of Section 28 into local legislation and in so doing they continue to deny important information and guidance to a significant proportion of their young population.

This week is CUSU LBG Awareness Week, which aims to raise awareness about issues which are relevant to LGBT students. The CUSU Attitudes to Sexuality survey revealed that 20% of LGBT students have experienced a negative reaction in coming out here. Only one in three of the LGBT people who completed the survey said that they felt able to be completely open to everyone about their sexuality. Is this 21st century equality?

www.awarenessweek.com.

"Coming out in Cambridge was the best thing I did..."

Coming out at university took me about a year in all, and I think most people I know still don't know – though the information is 'public' as far as I'm concerned.

It is difficult to do and very scary but was definitely the best thing I could have done. I haven't had a single bad reaction from people that I have told or who found out – in fact it reached a stage where friends would covertly discuss which of them might be subconsciously a bit homophobic!

With some people I feel it's not appropriate to let anything slip and I don't know if that's more to do with them or me. Outside the Cambridge bubble I think there is a much more prejudiced world for homosexuals, but things are changing.

At uni being gay doesn't really feel like an issue. You also tend to get a bit more attention from women...that's not really a problem but if other guys don't know it makes me look like some sort of babe magnet. Maybe gay men are just better looking...

George Harad

Writing this in Varsity is possibly an extreme way of coming out

Before writing this piece, I was only out to a handful of people; as a girl with a fairly long-term boyfriend, it's easy to be an invisible bisexual.

To me, being bi isn't an issue. But coming out is. In the liberal haven that is Cambridge University, I know it's unlikely that many people are going to care that I'm bi. The fact remains, however, that if I want them to know I have to take the trouble to tell them.

Telling people requires hassle way above the actual importance of my sexuality (there are lots of people to tell, and you can never be certain how somebody will react). I'm not interested in coming out and living an exciting, new "bisexual lifestyle" – whatever that may be – I just want to carry on as before, with people knowing a little more about me.

Writing this in Varsity is possibly an extreme way of achieving this goal and it's certainly not a fuss-free method. But maybe it gives some insight into what it's like for one LBG person in Cambridge today.

Katie Birkwood

Varsity drinking: dark blues victorious

Joseph Heaven looks to Cambridge to overturn Oxford's drinking record held by...the former Australian Prime Minister

Two-and-a-half pints. Twelve seconds. Gulp.

Varsity is sorry to report that dark blues have retained the the upper hand when it comes to finishing-up after formal hall. In 1955 25-year-old Robert Hawke knocked back 2.5 pints of ale in a record time at University College, Oxford, entered the record books and has remained there since.

The Australian, a winner of a Rhodes Scholarship, entered politics 25 years later. He quickly climbed the ladder and went on to lead the Australian Labour party to four consecutive general election victories, serving as prime minister from 1983-91. Budding Union hacks take note: time devoted to the chamber might be better spent in the bar.

Hawke recalls the event in an extract from his autobiography, "The Hawke Memoirs":

"A system operated at dinner under which if an offence was committed...[one had] to

drink two and a half pints...in less than twenty-five seconds. Failure to do so involved paying for the first drink, plus another two and a half pints...I was too broke for the fine and necessity became the mother of ingestion. I downed the contents of the pot in eleven seconds...and entered the Guinness Book of Records. This feat was to endear me to some of my fellow Australians more than anything else I ever achieved."

Varsity went in search of a Cambridge man to meet the challenge. On the wall of the Hawk's club bar is a declaration that a Peter Davidson finished a yard of ale in 12 seconds, a mere second off Hawk's stunning record. Varsity traced the 19-year-old mathmo in question to see some evidence.

Peter poses at Sidney bar for the cameras, with the amber yard held in front of him. Moments later he is focused...GO! The top third of the yard disappears with-

in two seconds. Six seconds. Eight seconds. The bulb drains and the last drops rush down towards the open jaws.

Stop. Pause - everyone pauses. Peter sways slightly. 12.06 seconds. Add the fact that he had a pint beforehand. No wonder he is the King's Street Run champion.

It was a second shy of the marker set 49 years ago, but this was Wednesday evening. Bob Hawke's student accomplishment might have helped him become prime minister of Australia in 1983, boding well for Peter should he decide to go for the Aussie premiership.

Peter's feat sets a benchmark for this generation of Oxbridge students, but sadly his only reward was the price of the yard. He is still some way off the pace though - the last world record for beer-drinking was set in 1977 by American Steven Petrosino at 1 litre in 1.3 seconds.



Peter Davidson

Prof. Alison Richard



THE UNIVERSITY'S CHIEF OUTLINES
HER VIEWS ON TOP-UP FEES

From the time it was announced that I was to become Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, in December 2002, the question most frequently put to me by the press was: "What do you think about 'top-up' fees?" It was on everyone's mind because the Government was expected to publish a White Paper on the future of higher education any day.

Frustration and desperation were being voiced more loudly and more often by the UK university community as well as by influential public commentators. The precise size of the funding deficit could

be argued about, but everyone agreed that universities were massively under-funded. The fear for the long term was that a university system chronically squeezed for resources, with little or no real increase in academic salaries for decades, would make an academic career less and less attractive to the brightest and best university graduates. It was becoming more difficult to recruit and retain outstanding scholars and scientists amidst the global competition for talent.

Cambridge had withstood many of these trends better than most UK universities. Still, the 2002 budget deficit, which led to a freeze on staff recruitment, had reverberated around the institution, bringing the community face-to-face with the fact that this was no accounting chimera. It was real, and affecting everyone.

On November 26, 2003, this all came together in a Notice from the University Council to the Regent House, which not only described the proposed expansion of Cambridge's current bursary scheme but gave preliminary support to the idea of higher fees.

The next day, we set out our proposals to the national press. The total 'package' would cost the University about £8 million. But its real value was better explained in terms of what it would do for individual students. A student at Cambridge coming from a family earning less than £15,000 a year would receive a £4,000 bursary from the University, in addition to the then £1,000 maintenance grant promised by the Government. Moreover, students from any family earning up to £35,000 would receive a tapered proportion of this amount. Cambridge was the first university to announce a bursary scheme of this scope, focusing not just on fees but the total cost of education.

Towards the end of November, together with the Heads of University College London, Imperial College, London, the London School of Economics, and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, I wrote to The Times setting out our support in principle for the new proposals. But we tempered our support with concerns that universities must be open to all students capable of benefiting regardless of their financial means, and emphasised that this was only possible if universities were well funded. Further, this should be a matter for the universities to manage, and not for the Government to impose.

On January 8, 2004, the HE Bill was published, and we finally saw the full proposals. The end of up-front fees; the introduction of capped fees of £3,000; student loans without interest; fee remission worth £1,200 a year; maintenance grants of £1,500; and student repayments

delayed until graduates were earning over £15,000 were the main points. I issued a cautious press notice to welcome the Bill but emphasised my continuing concerns over access. The national debate continued to rage.

The Cambridge University Students' Union had long made clear their opposition to the notion of any fees at all. My understanding is that they fear that the new scheme would create an unfair 'market', while failing to tackle the funding deficit. CUSU have argued that the Government would sooner or later have to remove the fee cap and then institutions like Cambridge would be able to charge higher and higher fees; and in so doing firmly close the door to anyone not from a wealthy background.

Others felt that the Bill did not go far enough with respect to the proposed level of fees. How would the University bridge the current under funding of teaching, estimated at around £24 million, let alone muster the resources to invest in new initiatives, with a scheme that would only bring £20 million into the university and put £8 million of that into bursaries?

During January, I spoke and wrote about the Bill on a number of occasions. I expressed my belief that its options gave universities a sound way of introducing a new income stream, and that it was fairer for graduates to pay back a proportion of the cost of their study when earning, than to charge everyone higher taxes. The amnesty after 25 years to wipe away all tuition fees and the increase of the maintenance grant were also welcome.

Alongside Cambridge's own bursary initiative, students from the poorest families could receive more support coming to Cambridge with the proposed Bill in place than they do today. I expressed hope, too, that by tapering bursaries to address some of the needs of students who might otherwise fall into the 'poverty gap', we would be reaching out to a wide range of students and not just the very poorest. But I was emphatic that a good bursary system must be judged by its

results, and that it could and should be adjusted if the results fall short of our goals.

Shortly after the Bill's publication, I went on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme to explain why I felt the Bill was fair, and why it would be a grave matter if

Excellence and access: These were my goals from the start

it failed. There was no plan B, as far as I could tell, and it was an important element in what must be a broader strategy to rescue higher education from the threat of mediocrity. Two weeks later, at a conference hosted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, my fellow panellists and I focused on the contributions of higher education to the economy. Figures from the OECD that week underlined the clear need for far greater public sector investment in higher education in the UK. This reinforced the fact that proposals in the HE Bill are only part of the solution for the present under funding.

On the day of the vote, 74 Vice-Chancellors, myself among them, signed a letter to the Guardian in support of the Bill. Only a very small handful of Vice-Chancellors opposed it. They are not alone course, and opponents of the HE Bill continue to campaign vigorously against it.

I listen to their arguments but I do not find myself convinced. I simply do not believe that the defeat of this bill would result in a fairer world, and it certainly would not improve the critical situation now faced by universities. Universities need more support, and I believe that the Bill is a fair step toward that goal.

The vote squeaked through. The University Council have published a further Notice in the Reporter extending their support for the idea of higher fees, while fully recognising that the level of fees charged at Cambridge – and they already vary widely in different parts of the institution – is set by the Regent House. We now await the committee stage and the third reading of the Bill. Nothing is definite, nothing is sure. All I can say is that the Bill has my support.

Cambridge students came out in force to campaign against government plans for variable fees



Vice-Chancellor: "All I can say is that the Bill has my support"

I simply do not believe that the defeat of this Bill would result in a fairer world

When asked about university funding, I made it very clear that my goal was to keep Cambridge among the world's top-ranked universities, and that this was a costly undertaking for which we lacked adequate resources. I made it equally clear that, whatever the path ahead, we must continue to widen access to Cambridge for talented students from all backgrounds. Excellence and access: these were my goals from the start.

In January 2003, the White Paper was published. Although details were limited, it became clear that the Government was proposing a new system with fees variable

up to £3,000; fees to be paid by a loan, repayable after a student was earning over £15,000; and later the Government announced that maintenance grants of £1,000 were to be reintroduced.



Courtesy of Nicholas Hytner

Hytner makes it matter

James Dacre hears why Nicholas Hytner and his National Theatre are important.

In a week that has seen seriously disability imposed upon the equality of learning and the freedom of the press, Nicholas Hytner is very aware of a need to set an agenda of political activism on the British stage. "If the BBC has its balls cut off, then it puts pressure on all other national institutions to be increasingly sceptical of this authoritarian brand of control freaks who we find ourselves subject to," he tells me passionately.

Nicholas Hytner is the fiery new director of the National Theatre and he wants to make it matter. Virtuous for the visually spectacular, the strikingly relevant and a refreshingly progressive pro-

gramme of 'seats for all,' he quickly achieved notoriety from his revision of every aspect of the theatre's workings. Making his name on the back of a long list of Shakespeares, he has also worked in film, directing *The Madness of King George*, *The Object of My Affection* and *The Crucible*.

Hytner is fond of description, and he describes the ideal qualities of the National through a series of long, perfectly delivered lists. "Loud, disreputable, investigative, inspirational and humane," he finishes. "Our National Theatre has always been on the bank of the Thames, and from the 1580s onwards it has looked towards Parliament and St. Paul's,

sticking two fingers up to both of them."

"We *do* live in exciting times," he reassures me, describing how "when the National Theatre was founded, it was founded for a Nation that was much more certain about what it was at a time when the theatre was much more conscious of what it was." He condemns the 1963 founding of the National for its unpleasant imperial outlook, impersonating his favourite character, "the Telegraph colonel": "a great country wanted a national theatre which was the guardian of the great flame of the great national tradition and would only stage approved versions of the approved repertoire."

Conversely, today, when we talk about the "nation and the theatre, we are talking about concepts fraught with ambiguity and which beg all sorts of questions."

In 1963, the concept of nationalism held far more of a consensus. Today then, "we should be constantly exploring and

"Cambridge actors need to learn to transfer that which is purely intellectual into other more animal impulses."

He smiles, aware that he is in danger of being patronising, but continues anyway. "It's good to come out from Cambridge realising how little you know... ideas are never a problem, and Cambridge students will always be able to pull a text apart, but I do see a kind of dislocation between the way they talk and the way they act." Life is primarily black and white for him, and until we have established this, then subtlety is useless.

Hytner keeps neat. He presents a thoroughly professional, metropolitan look; an air of tidiness. Presentation is all-important to him; he is renowned for his particularity in the way a theatre space looks, from the colour of a safety curtain to his characteristically elaborate sets.

"Have you stopped enjoying it yet?" a journalist asked him recently. "It is really

"If the BBC has its balls cut off, then it puts pressure on all other national institutions to be increasingly sceptical of this authoritarian brand of control freaks who we find ourselves subject to"

reflecting what national means; and holding a mirror up to all sorts of different colonies and interlocking communities; we are forced to be more aware of our international context and alert to forms of theatre other than our literary tradition."

But can the theatre really change society? "No; but it can make people angry, and that's enough." "The theatre on its own can't and doesn't change society, but, plays can define a moment. The Marriage of Figaro did seem to predict a revolution, but I doubt it sent anybody onto the streets. What theatre does is to have a loud and articulate voice in a constant, provocative debate. It would take too long to change society, but I want to be part of the agenda." He cites an area of social change where the arts have actively encouraged liberalisation - an area very personal to him - his sexuality. "It has been really important that men have kissed men and women have kissed women on stage...now black playwrights must find a louder voice."

Hytner talks in simple, absolute opposites. Things are clearly "loud" or "quiet," "right" or "wrong" for him. This is a philosophy that he transfers to his directing method, and a technique that he recognised a lack of in his time at Cambridge. "Cambridge directors talk too much" and

hard," he admits, for "if we had a run of disasters we would go under," and it is "difficult not to let this obstruct your artistic integrity." Most importantly, the box office is an ever-present barrier to achieving his greatest ambition; to make the theatre accessible to all. On a practical level, "our standard audience will all be dead in forty years," he jokes, but on a more serious level, he often recalls how Peter Brook prophesies 20 years ago that "the future of theatre lies in cheap seats." He now religiously keeps to this agenda, and has found it the most satisfying aspect of his time at the National so far.

"I was really delighted with the £10 system, firstly because everyone really rose to spending less, and the shows remained exciting, fresh, fast, punchy, entertaining and provocative," he recalls like a proud father, "and because the shows were better for the context that they were in and the audiences were better, because they were less adjusted to seeing theatre and so more responsive to it." Hytner's shows always achieve recognition; they have a quality to them that mirrors his directing technique in that they are always explosive, or deflated; a saccharine overload or a bitter aftertaste. "Success can always be measured in two words," he laughs.

"Cambridge directors talk too much"

National Theatre



His Dark Materials -Hytner's latest production

I'm Stupid... Get Me Out of Here

Once we ruled the globe but now we just fill up the world's prisons

On Friday, Alan Kiernan, a thirty-five year old from Southampton, attempted to smuggle £70,000 worth of ecstasy into Thailand. Custom-made panels in his trousers allowed Kiernan to safely navigate no less than eight customs checks before walking, unchallenged, out of Bangkok airport.

So far, so good? But Kiernan's doom lay not so far away. While phoning his contact in order to hand over the drugs, an error of schoolboy proportions was made. No doubt hot and relieved after a perilous journey, Kiernan went to a park and took off his shirt. Unfortunately for Kiernan, although shirtless sunworship is a traditional and mostly innocent habit of the British male tourist, such nudity has been outlawed in Thailand. Kiernan was immediately arrested by a local policeman who was wandering in the park. In no time at all the drugs were discovered.

At a press conference, Kiernan surprised journalists with his carefree attitude; even when faced with the possibility of long-term imprisonment or

the death penalty, the drug smuggler's response was blithely philosophical: "Shit happens". Claims that Kiernan is a Camus-esque existentialist have been somewhat undermined by his later confession that he had taken some of the pills before being caught.

Kiernan's strange mix of criminal proficiency

I am only 45% responsible for what happened

and stupidity on a grand scale is not dissimilar to the bizarre story of Glaswegian Jaswinder Kaur, who is presently being held in a Punjabi prison. The twenty-eight year old has been charged with marrying fourteen men over a two year period. Each unlucky husband paid around £8,000, a fee seemingly justified by the guarantee of a life in Britain and a British passport. Her big mistake may have been sentimentally holding on to photo albums and videos of some of the weddings,

which will be used as evidence against her in her trial next month. Kaur confused journalists with the bizarre mathematical deduction that she is only "45% responsible for what happened." That could leave 5% responsibility for her uncle, aunt, and cousin, who all assisted the serial bigamist, and 50% responsibility to be shared among the men whom she married, although this figure could range from fourteen to twenty-two.

In case real life does not provide enough stories of the British pursuing their strange ambitions abroad, ITV has thoughtfully produced another season of its hit TV show, "I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here". The main gossip from the jungle this week has focussed on the budding relationship between Jordan and Peter Andre. The tanned, hip-swinging crooner Andre has fallen for the not so "mysterious girl", Jordan, and left no doubt that he wanted to get close to her when he pleaded, "There has to be one night while we're here when we can just cuddle - sleep



Loser of the week

Alan Kiernan

He made his way through customs with £70,000 worth of ecstasy. And then got arrested for taking off his shirt.

and cuddle. There's no harm in that." Well Peter, you're right, there would be no harm in that were it not for Jordan's boyfriend, Scott Sullivan, who said, "I'll be on the next plane out and I'm going to punch his lights out."

Some like it human

One of the most absorbing trials of recent times reached its conclusion last Friday when Armin Meiwes, the well-mannered German cannibal, was sentenced to eight and a half years in prison for manslaughter.

The details of the case were uncontested. Meiwes put an advert on the internet urging anyone who wanted to be eaten to get in touch. Bernd-Jurgen Brandes, aged 43, replied, and the two met. Meiwes cut off his willing victim's penis, which he then flambéed and served up as dinner for two. Unfortunately, as Brandes felt slightly weak by this point, his genitalia proved a little too tough to chew. The final stage of the enterprise involved killing Brandes, cutting him up, and put-

Cannibalism is not illegal in Germany

ting him in the freezer. All of this was videotaped, which made the trial, if not the jurors' stomachs, run more smoothly.

Although the case seemed cut and dried, legal peculiarities made the exact crime difficult to determine. Cannibalism is not illegal in Germany, and the defence argued that the consensual nature of the events meant that Meiwes could only be sentenced for illegal euthanasia. The star defence witness was a Londoner who willingly reached the stage of being chained to a bed and marked up for slaughter before changing his mind; Meiwes happily released him.

The prosecution is appealing for a sterner sentence, realising that the debonair gastronome Meiwes, remarkable in the courtroom for his politeness and charm, could be released early for good behaviour in 2008.



Alexia Pinchbeck

It's a jungle out there...why can't they just stay at home?

Pachyderm F.C.

Giving the elephants some extra time

Last week thousands of fans watched an unusual game of football involving almost a hundred elephants. The game was part of an annual event in the Kaziranga National Park in India, aimed at encouraging locals to protect the animals.

Whether the elephants won the match is not clear, but it would seem that outside the football pitch the elephants are definitely on the losing side. Whilst elephants have killed at least 150 people in the state of

Assam and neighbouring Meghalaya in the past two years, villagers have killed up to 200 elephants in retaliation. State forest minister Pradyut Bordoloi told news agencies he was hopeful that the football match would raise awareness and encourage local inhabitants to accept the needs of the many elephant herds that dwell in the state.

Experts have attributed the increase in elephant attacks on the growth of elephant numbers and the devastation of the

animal's natural habitat. Others have blamed it on drunkenness. Last month, four elephants drunk on rice beer electrocuted themselves after striking down an electric pole in the state of Meghalaya. "The elephants, after getting high on rice beer, went berserk and started dashing against an electric pole," the forest official said.

Elephants playing football, getting drunk... next week, elephants in Britney sex romp scandal. Watch this space kids.

10 Downhill St

The Hutton inquiry may have cleared Blair of responsibility for the death of Dr David Kelly and the alleged "sexing up" of the Iraq weapons dossier, but the issues it left unresolved are just not going away.

Despite statements from America and Whitehall arguing that Iraq is a better place without Saddam, the war was justified on one main argument - that due to his arsenal of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) he was a danger to the international community. In March 2003, Blair responded to sceptics in strident terms: "We are asked now seriously to accept that in the last few years - contrary to all history, contrary to all intelligence - Saddam decided unilaterally to destroy those weapons. I say that such a claim is palpably absurd."

But after a lot of looking, the weapons have not been found. When David Kay, the former US chief weapons inspector, said last week that "it turns out we were all wrong", he confirmed what many observers were coming to believe - that Iraq's supposed deadly arsenal simply did not exist.

On Monday President Bush announced the setting up of an inquiry into the intelligence which indicated that WMD existed in Iraq, saying, "I want to know all the facts". Britain is once again following America's lead, and a five-person inquiry has also been set up here.

The Lib Dems are boycotting the inquiry due to what they see as its far too narrow scope. Despite all the peripheral investigations, what there will not be, at least while Blair remains in charge, is an inquiry into the real reasons for going to war - the decision to follow America's lead, the apparent way in which the decision to invade Iraq was made before the weapons intelligence dossier was complete, and the government's alleged efforts to 'spin' the issues to make Saddam seem more of an immediate threat. For, at the bottom of all of the investigations, past and future, is the nagging question of whether the war, billed as a last resort, was ever really necessary.

Meanwhile, *The Sun* reports that Blair and Bush have been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by a right-wing Norwegian politician. The Prize results will be announced on 10 December, and a Blair-Bush victory against fellow nominees such as the Pope would be a huge, if unexpected, coup for the the prime minister and the president. That is, assuming they're still in power by the end of 2004.

Winner of the week



Cannibal Meiwes

He cut off a man's penis, ate it, killed him and put him in a freezer. He'll probably be out of prison in just 4 years.

Contributors:

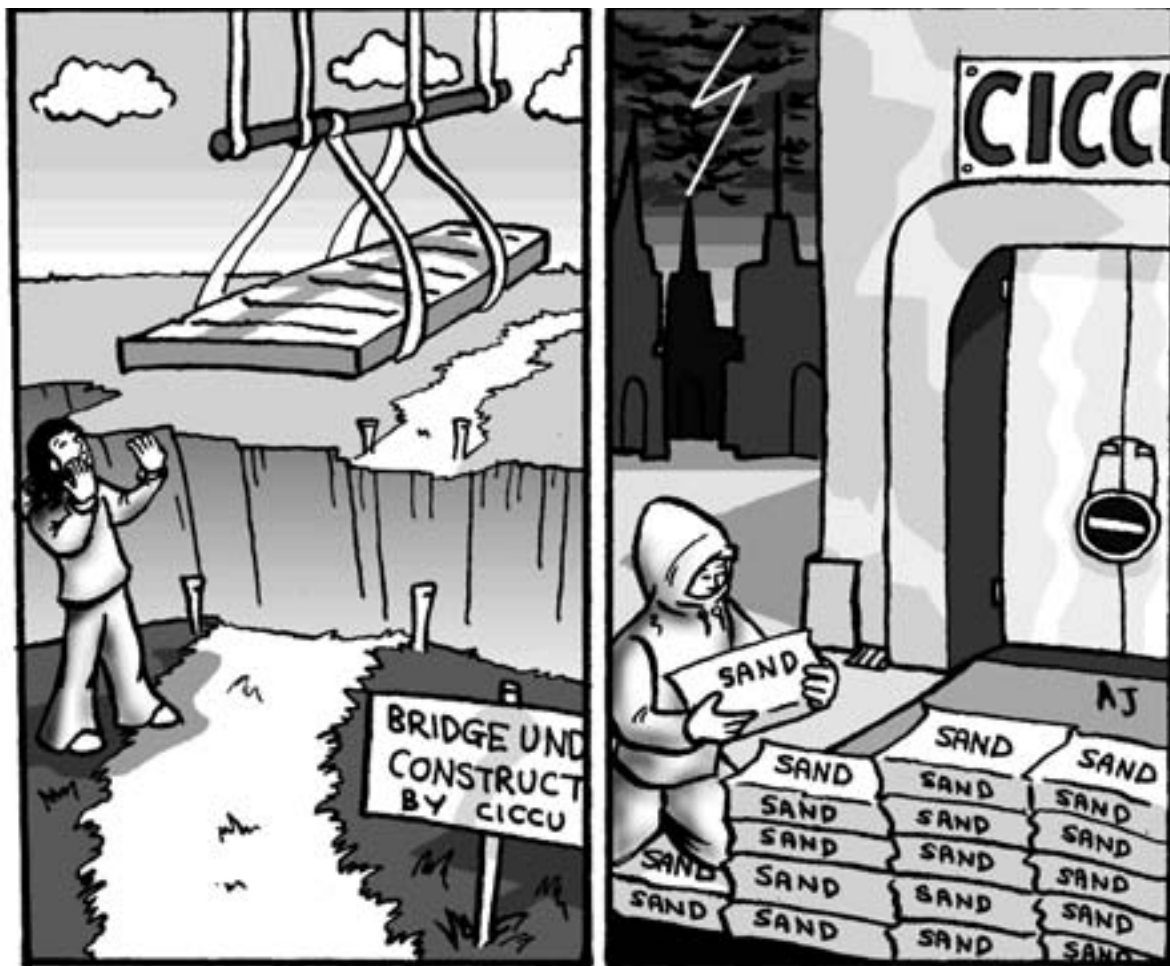
Ollie Rickman
Esther Bintliff
Laura Caplin

A Prayer for CICCUC

This week's coinciding awareness weeks have done more than draw attention to the existence of Christians and Homosexuals in the Cambridge University community. We have always been 'aware' of societies like CICCUC and LBG, but did we always accept the right of equality in free speech, for all groups?

We live in a nominally Protestant country and many of the College's traditions evoke this tradition, grace at formal halls for example, but does this basis give Christian groups greater or less freedom to express their beliefs? It seems the claims some students have made to CUSU this week, of 'pushy' or deliberately homophobic targeting, can be taken in two ways. Either some members of CICCUC believe so strongly in their message that they broke 'acceptable' limits of public persuasion, or the student audience they were trying to reach were not prepared to listen without prejudice. The Bible does state that the sexually immoral are excluded from the Kingdom of God, it is a 'fact' of The Word, but understandably, homosexuals can take offence at being told they are going to Hell. Does it matter though? This is just one opinion, which a non-believer should be able to shrug-off. Is it insulting to be told by a Buddhist you'll be re-incarnated as a snail? If you don't believe in either event, where is the problem?

The Christian message sinks deeper, perhaps because Christianity is part of our national inheritance. It seems we have become intensely aware of not offending some groups, while we retain an ignorant liberality in the condemnation of others. It is unacceptable to be racist, sexist or talk about 'puffs' and 'queers' in general conversation. It's fine, however, to talk about 'Bible Bashers' and 'the God-squad' in front of Christian. We embrace the multi-cultural and sexually liberated according to the 'open-minded' society we live in, yet Christianity is often negatively presupposed to be something different and unacceptable. Although we like to think we are accepting of diversity in the University, maybe we should reconsider. Do we really give every one an equal chance to have their say?



"But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." - Matthew 6:3

Testing times

Sick of being tested? Well we have Darwin's cousin to thank for that. The IQ test is one hundred years old and in those years there has been a major shift in the amount of testing and examining of the nation's youth.

Today we live in a society where young people are continually measured and assessed solely by their scores in tests. Futures are being decided on three hours or less. The news that admissions tutors in Law will expect their applicants to take an "academic potential test" is terrible. An Oxbridge candidate should be judged on more than this. Yes, the best brains should be offered places but admission tutors need to view students holistically. The best brains with the best talents musically, artistically, sporting and otherwise make this University the great place it is to be. And we hope that this doesn't change in the next hundred years.

The Week in Words

"I somehow feel I am not being entirely persuasive in certain quarters."

Blair shouting over the heckles of protestors at a Common's debate this week. It was rumoured that some Cantabs were amongst those who caused the session to be suspended for the first time since 1987.

"The public's choices for Greatest Disabled Briton show that disability is certainly no barrier to greatness"

A spokesman this week following the news that Professor Stephen Hawking was voted Greatest Disabled Briton.

"Three Union Presidents at the LesBiGay launch party. Since when did we become part of the Cambridge establishment?"

An over-heard comment from an impressed LBG

"The growing number of candidates with top scores at GCSE and A level has made it increasingly difficult for the most competitive law schools in the country to rank their applicants satisfactorily,"

A spokesman explaining why university applicants for Law will have to undertake an entry exam. Cambridge will expect prospective students to take this course.

"The most perilous part of the journey was negotiating the icy roads of Cambridge at the start from the police station to the railway station"

Joe Fisher who travelled over 6,000 miles to Japan for the Rag Jailbreak challenge

VARSITY

If you would like to contribute to *Varsity* please e-mail the relevant section editor. To submit a letter to the editor please email editor@varsity.co.uk or drop your letter into the offices at 11-12 Trumpington Street.

Editors (editor@varsity.co.uk)

Laura-Jane Foley
Reggie Vettasseri

Web Editor (webeditor@varsity.co.uk)

Jonathan Wood

Production Manager (production@varsity.co.uk)

Ifti Qurashi

Chief Photos Editor (photos@varsity.co.uk)

Ria Cooke

Deputy Editor (News) (deputynews@varsity.co.uk)

Archie Bland

Deputy Editor (Arts) (deputyarts@varsity.co.uk)

Ellen E Jones

Photo Editor (photos@varsity.co.uk)

Ella McPherson

Arts/News Photos (photos@varsity.co.uk)

Andrew Gillespie
Jack Chiles

Sports Photos (photos@varsity.co.uk)

Andrew Sims

Chief News (news@varsity.co.uk)

Bryan Coll

News (news@varsity.co.uk)

Aisleigh Sawyer, Gabriella Gozwiak

Radio News (radionews@varsity.co.uk)

Benjamin Bland

Comment (comment@varsity.co.uk)

Amol Rajan

National News (nationalnews@varsity.co.uk)

Ollie Rickman, Esther Blintiff

Features (features@varsity.co.uk)

Tom Cahill

Interviews (interviews@varsity.co.uk)

James Dacre, Will Gallagher

Page Fourteen (life@varsity.co.uk)

Alex Rushmer, Dave Fawbert

Lifestyle (lifestyle@varsity.co.uk)

Alex Grundy, Vicki Booth

Fashion (fashion@varsity.co.uk)

Ronojoy Dam

Theatre (theatre@varsity.co.uk)

Chris Adams, Charlotte Holden

Music (music@varsity.co.uk)

Henry Bowen, Edwin Lane

Film (film@varsity.co.uk)

Oliver Tilley

Classical Music (classical@varsity.co.uk)

Ciaran Jenkins

Visual Arts (visual@varsity.co.uk)

Dawn Tunstall

Literature (literature@varsity.co.uk)

Zoe Organ

Sport (sport@varsity.co.uk)

Rajan Lakhani, Sam Richardson

Science (web)

Tom Simonite

Editorial Cartoonist

Andrew James

Business Manager business@varsity.co.uk

Sam Gallagher

Email the Business Manager to enquire about placing adverts.

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Ellen E. Jones



LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR? I'D RATHER LOVE MYSELF

Arrogance can begin innocently enough. At first it's just a long-running joke with yourself, a kind of ironic self-deprecation, but if you go on about how great you are for long enough, sooner or later you'll start believing it. And that's when the fun really starts.

I'm not talking about some wussy, half-arsed Oprah Winfrey-inspired notion of self-esteem. What I'm suggesting is far more radical. Adopt rampant self-love as your every-day, all-purpose, default mode of interaction with the world. Go on, start today.

A simple activity like walking into a crowded room becomes a treat once you've convinced yourself that everyone in that room is desperate to sleep with you. It's like the public-speaking technique of imagining your audience in their underwear, except, well...in reverse. The Laws of Attraction are manifestly unjust, so when it comes to divining whether or not others find you attractive, you might as well work accord-

ing to the South American dictatorship system - that is, guilty until proven innocent. Occasionally, of course, some killjoy playahater will holler "Oi fatty! You can't wear a skirt like that with your arse!" or "Gerr off! I've got a girlfriend!" But, remember, this is only a minor set-back on the path to enlightenment.

The best thing about being a paid-up, card-carrying member of the truly deluded is the wonderful feeling of serenity it brings. I begrudge no-one their success. Go on, write another best-selling novel before you're twenty-one, why don't you. Get a modelling contract and a first class degree from Cambridge - in the immortal words of Cheryl from Girls Aloud - Bovered?! I just happen to be great anyway, without having done anything of any note, ever.

And it works just as well for institutions as it does for individuals. Those trying to work out what's so special about a Cambridge education, need look no further than the amazing

sense of arrogance it instils in its beneficiaries. There's all the money and the world-class academics and so on, but at root, what's so great about a Cambridge education is that we believe it's so great. To that end, massive amounts of time and money are spent on self-congratulatory ceremonies and firework dis-

Modesty is not the best policy

plays where we can pat each other on the back, form mutual self-appreciation societies and insist that no one anywhere else in the world is doing (or ever has done) anything of any intellectual significance at all.

Credit where credit's due. In a thousand years of perfecting an education system, some renegade monk or free-thinking don must surely have noticed that the principle outcome of combining farcically long reading lists with weekly one-on-one supervisions is not to alchemically convert the average public-school dote into a genius, but rather to cultivate the art of authoritative bullshitting in us all. Since the alternative is to doubt the forethought of history's finest minds, we can only conclude that, in their infinite wisdom, this was the intention all along.

At its highest point of evolution, there is absolutely no discernable relationship between self-image and how we appear to others. If we must connect the two, then it should at least be a relationship of inverse proportion. Being attractive and aware of it is one thing, but to be decidedly average and equally assured of your own powers of attraction is a whole leap forward in our collective battle. And in any case, arrogance is so much more charming when it's unwarranted.

Modesty, like its equally irritating sister, self-deprecation, is supposed to suggest a healthy "What? This old thing!" humility. But more often than not, it actually hides the secret belief that your talents are so blindingly glorious and utterly unmitigated by any personal failings that, in consideration of your audience, you couldn't possibly say them aloud without qualification. People might pass out, or something.

Even if, through some tragic combination of poor parenting and unflattering lighting, you have escaped adolescence and yet retained a genuinely low opinion of yourself, modesty is still best avoided, if only on purely pragmatic grounds. Because the best way to avoid the massive time-waste of self-absorption is not through making a thorough inventory of your failings, or belittling the compliments you receive. The best (and only) way to avoid self-absorption is to wake up one morning, decide you're bloody great and then get on with something more interesting.

Adopt rampant self-love as your default mode of interaction

Letters

Letters should be submitted no later than midnight on Wednesday, and be as concise as possible. The editors reserve the right to edit all copy. Write to: editor@varsity.co.uk

Geographers still thick

Dear Editor,

In response to the plea from the first year geographers I have a number of points that I feel ought to be driven home (preferably with a nice big crayola marker). First of all, yes, yes you are a minority subject. That is the very reason that the future of your subject is in doubt. I mean the fact that you are scientists would have led me to believe that you were pretty handy with figures but apparently not. Secondly, I find the logic of something being both interdisciplinary and a separate discipline in its own right somewhat confusing and probably more accurately, quite simply balderdash. Either it is or it isn't, make up your mind.

Finally, GET A GRIP PEOPLE - in all fairness you don't have a hard ride anything like say your average SPS ('stupid push and stoned'), English ('lazy and messy or so far up their own arse they can see the stars') or, God help them, Law ('groinspawn of Satan') students do. I mean if the worst thing you are being accused off is a penchant for colouring in (I am sure in immense detail) maps which you have painstakingly had to research and create in the first place then you are not doing too badly. In short, wise up and stop whinging. I mean, think of the land economists, just think about them.

Yours,
Colm McGrath,

opposition". In light of the Hutton Inquiry and the top-up fees vote, the debate could not have come at a better time.

This government continues to disappoint. The gap between rich and poor grows wider; on Higher Education and foundation hospitals their inadequate proposals are at best conservative, at worst Thatcherite; while our civil liberties continue to be undermined by a Home Secretary who insists on pandering to the *Daily Mail*.

The Conservative opposition, led by the backward-looking and reactionary Michael Howard, is no better. At last week's debate, they offered up Andrew Rosindell, MP for Romford, a man who is pro-hanging, pro-flogging, pro-firearms, anti-asylum & anti-abortion. He is an exemplar of a party that is intellectually bankrupt, out of touch and unfit to govern.

At the next general election, David Howarth, a Fellow of Clare College and ex-leader of the City Council, will be fighting to unseat Anne Campbell and represent the students of this constituency. In Cambridge, the Liberal Democrats are the effective opposition; the Tories lie in a distant third place. I hope you will all join me in voting Liberal at the next election and in ridding this constituency of one more distinctly disappointing Blairite.

Yours,
Ben Ramm,
St. Catherine's College
Chair, Cambridge Student Liberal Democrats.

The Scrabble debate

Dear Editor,

In last week's letters it was claimed that all college names would score zero in Scrabble as proper nouns. Of course this is not the case, as "queens", "downing", "trinity" and "kings" would score 15, 12, 10 and 10 respectively and, slightly more tenuously, "maudlin" would score 10 and "keys" would score 11 or, better still, "quays" would score a whopping 17.

Yours smugly,
Matt Tointon

A political letter

Dear Varsity,

Last Thursday, students at the Cambridge Union voted overwhelmingly in favour of a motion proposing that "the Liberal Democrats are the effective

Sells' unholy tackle

Dear Editor,

I am surprised to learn that Jonny Sells does not think the chapel choirs of Caius or Trinity are worthy of a mention when searching for the best in Cambridge. Some of those considered are, at best, comparable to Trinity or Caius.

Maybe Mr Sells reviewed the male voice choirs first and made a start on the mixed choirs at Clare, where the choir sang so loudly that he has been rendered permanently and profoundly deaf and is thus unable to continue the exercise. I think we should be told.

Yours sincerely,
Tom Jackman,
Trinity College

Archie Bland



EVEN CICCUCU IS SELLING ITSELF THESE DAYS

I am homophobic, it turns out. Who knew? Still, there it is, in black and white, on the flyer I just threw in the bin: **Throw This Away If You Are Homophobic. And I just threw it away, obviously.**

Shock tactics like this are silly. Granted, they make sure that vicious haters like me don't get away with it. Generally, though, they irritate people, combining as they do the standard pain in the arse of your average flyer with - bonus - unwarranted personal abuse. The CUSU Women's Union publicity of last term strike a similar note. They hoped to inform us why a Women's Union is an important thing, which, apparently, is not only because we need to fight institutional, academically manifested, sexism at Cambridge, but also, according to the inside back cover of the Women's Handbook, because 'if we raise our voices we're nagging bitches' and because 'we still can't get adequate safe contraceptives but men can walk on the moon.' And for 'lots and lots of other reasons,' some of which, I hope, would make more sense to me.

This is good copy, obviously, and someone at CUSU Women's Union has a career in advertising in her sights - but it's nonsense. To blame NASA for the risks associated with the pill is a pretty extraordinary leap, even by Neil Armstrong's standards. This is rhetoric, of course, and not meant to be taken seriously, and principally there to attract attention and get people like me to consider the underlying attitudes to which such statements refer; but it's empty, meaningless rhetoric, which simply stigmatises the vast majority of entirely reasonable people with an accusation relevant only to a few.

Of course no-one with any sense should take the side of those apologists who grumble about 'political correctness' stifling discussion: the phrase, as Polly Toynbee remarked, has lost all currency, and tends simply to be an 'empty right-wing smear designed only to elevate its user.' To deny that this university has problems with the advancement of

women, to say nothing of sexual and ethnic minorities, would be wilfully absurd. But the entirely justified concerns of pressure groups like these will be lost in a rhetorical quagmire if such hysterical claptrap is allowed to dominate debate, and the real issues will be much less likely to be taken seriously.

LesBiGay might - whisper it - learn something from the Christian Union. Arguably the only one of these organizations which has learned that alienation (sorry, a Hard Hitting Message) is rarely an effective advertising strategy, CICCUCU instead runs nebulous campaigns which seize an attractive concept - like

Don't read this if you're a loser

The Promise - and load it with religious significance. You could be forgiven for thinking the previous CICCUCU 'main events' were ITV Drama Premieres: Transmission! Freedom! Revelation! Witness! And, best of all - it makes me think of Top Gear, for some reason: Paradigm Shift!

It's working, too. Attendances at this year's talks have been remarkably high, and it isn't just a new religious fervour that's the cause: the free sandwiches - which are, I am reliably informed, excellent - have surely played a part. Next thing you know the thousandth convert will get a free cassock.

Now, personally, I like my religion austere, and the more flying buttresses the better; but you have to admire this canny attempt to ride the zeitgeist. At least no-one's telling me I'm scum. The irony, of course, is that strict CICCUCU members believe I'm destined to an eternity in the fiery pits, whereas the greatest gripe LesBiGay have with me on a personal basis is - well, probably that I think their advertising's hamfisted. Who knew God was such a consummate salesman?

The Pained Intellectual

(Latin name *Poetus Beatnik*).

Oh woe is me" is the lamentful cry often heard by this tortured soul who manages to spend all 8 weeks of term subsisting on coffee so thick it needs to be eaten like yoghurt and strong French cigarettes. Clothing varies from tweed to numerous shades of black, often accompanied by a sample of the vast array of ridiculous headgear that peppers the wardrobe of these pseudo, self-proclaimed intellectuals. When they aren't reading Dostoyevsky, Kafka or Kerouac conversation revolves mainly around Dostoyevsky, Kafka and Kerouac. Knowledge and understanding of existentialism is a prerequisite. **Natural habitat:** upstairs in Café Nero. **Most likely to say:** "I feel like I can really relate to Sartre, but only when I read it in the original French". **Least likely to say:** "Let's get shitted and go to Coco's!"



Grace Ofori-Attah

Pained Intellectual: 20 points

The Socialite

(Latin name *Chelsea Superioris*)

Conversation with this species is a risky tactic and should be attempted only by those with a sound knowledge of horses and Bond Street shops. Should you be successful at negotiating this first hurdle be prepared to apply for a platinum card and drink only in La Raza and Trinity Vaults. Conversations normally revolve around making arduous decisions such as whether to spend Christmas on Daddy's yacht or in the mountain chalet in an unspoilt part of the Alps. It is indeed, as they say, a hard life but someone has to live it. **Natural habitat:** drinking cocktails in small and exclusive bars. An extra 10 points can be gained by spotting this species at the weekend when they normally migrate en masse "up to London". **Most likely to say:** "That dress is fabulous, where is it from?" **Least likely to say:** "That dress is fabulous, where is it from?" with sincerity.

The Rugger Bugger

(Latin name *Ovallis Ballis*)

Loud, lairey and impossible to miss, the Rugger Bugger is easily spotted due to the habit on only wearing items of clothing with the letter RUFC embroidered some place on his person. This particular species hunt in packs at least twice a week with preferred hunting grounds being either Ballare or Coco's. Their mating call ("Get you tits out, get your tits out, get your tits out for the lads") can be heard up to two miles away and should give possible victims ample time to make a swift exit. Their diet consists solely of protein drinks supplemented by late-night visits to Gardie's. **Natural habitat:** in Ballare singing to a Britney Spears song. **Most likely to say:** "Awesome!" **Least likely to say:** "Just a diet coke for me please, I'm watching my figure."

I Spy Cambridge

We all remember the I spy books from our childhood that made long motorway journeys fly by oh so slowly, but they are nothing more than a distant memory. Not any longer, I have a secret source that reliably informs me they are revamping them for the older generation and I have obtained a draft copy: I-Spy in and around Cambridge. See how you get on!

Extra points can be gained for spotting the following:

"Anarchist" with public school accent wearing Nike t-shirt: 20 points

Anyone reading Socialist Worker in Starbucks: 15 points

A Rugger Bugger "moonning" at a passing car on his own: 50 points

More than 5 Rugger Buggers "moonning" at a passing car: 15 points

Any compsci without translucent skin: 40 points

A professor walking around with cycling clips on his trousers: 5 points

A thesp-type talking about the merits of David Lynch: 0 points

A thesp-type talking about the merits of Die Hard: 100 points

A tramp waiting outside Threshers at 10:50am: 20 points

Someone standing in a punt going round in circles: 10 points

Anyone eating Gardies before 11:00pm: 50 points

A fight outside the van of life: 5 points (50 points if it's not Saturday)

A student demonstration: 1 point

Someone punching the fudge man: 1000 points

The Boatie

(Latin name *Rowerus Excessivo*).

During Boatie high season this specimen is often spotted three times a week at college breakfast for between 10 and 20 minutes. Mating rituals are confusing to those who believe a "2K split" is an ailment requiring a visit to Addenbrookes but careful observation can reveal much about this elusive specimen. Beware: do not, under any circumstance, attempt to start a conversation unless you suffer from acute insomnia and need a rapid cure. **Natural habitat:** on the river or "doing an erg." **Most likely to say:** "what's your 5k time?" **Least likely to say:** "I think I'll have a lie in tomorrow"

The Blue

(Latin name *Cantab Bluvium*)

Loud, proud, lairey and impossible to miss. Until the 1950's it was thought that *Cantab Bluvium* was a sub-species of *Ovallis Ballis* but the pioneering work carried out by Witson and Crack destroyed this theory and The Blue was assigned to its own species. Nature has dealt The Blue a cruel hand in terms of camouflage (neon blue blazer and chinos) but their commitment to the cause, namely "getting one over on the Oxford scum", more than makes up for it. **Natural habitat:** any place frequented by the Rugger Bugger. **Most likely to say:** "Oxford boo deck him". **Least likely to say:** "It's such a struggle balancing my sporting commitments with my land economy studies"

Lemon and Lime for new College Names

In an effort to combat accusations of elitism and public school privilege, Page Fourteen has learned that the University is to undergo a rebranding exercise to make it more attractive to the deprived areas of London's East End. The University VC has been on the dog and bone to Red Ken and come up with these new names for Cambridge's colleges - so feast your mince pies on these me lovelies.

Gonville and Caius - Bruce Lees
Clare - Fred Astair
Johns - Simon Le Bons
Kings - Lord of the Rings
Trinity Hall - Cannon and Ball
Queens - Charlie Sheens
Girton - Keep yer shirt on
Catz - Roland Rats
Sidney - Steak and Kidney
Fitz - Thru'penny bits
Trinity - Scum

Page Fourteen - Let us help

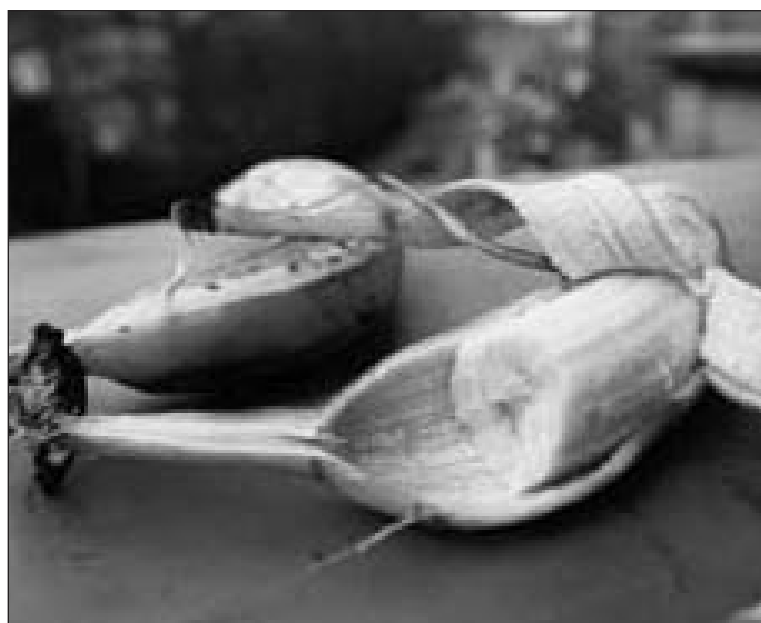
Cambridge is a place full of conventions, norms and social practices that can be something of an enigma to the unsuspecting student, especially if they are from the cultural desert that is north of the Watford Gap. So, here at Page Fourteen we are keen to help (once again that is a complete lie, but it will use up as many words as we care to devote to it, especially during the barren period that we are facing after using

90% of our material in the first two weeks).

If you have any questions at all that you would like the self-proclaimed social guru's Al and Dave to answer for you (and you don't mind Cambridge-wide ridicule) then drop us a line to the usual address. Anything from punting tips to the correct protocol over scarf wearing.

How D'you Like Those Bananas? Art world Stunned by a-peel of Fruit

It has come to our attention that the front page of last week's *Varsity* featured an outstanding piece of conceptual installation art, enigmatically entitled "bananas, half-eaten". Page Fourteen's art critic has reviewed this phenomenal work for your pleasure...



Beth

Bananas, yesterday, tomorrow, the future?

A discovery indeed, this post pre-historic, pre-punk pseudo anachronistic amalgamation of neo-orwellian ideals provides us with the perfect backdrop for the inevitable discussion of racial harmonistic post apocalyptic nuclear attitudes of new romantacism. The fusionistic juxtapositionist nature of the work subsequently reminds the listening audience of the futility of death while the visual stylistic approach shows those watching intently enough to hold on through this voyage through the natural self. This self-effacing work not only provides pornointernational esque titillation but also shows the sardonic aspects of irony that pervade pre-post modern outlooks to urban-ruralist points of view.

We interviewed the creator of this masterpiece, yet all the elusive genius had to say was, "well, I remember having some bananas for lunch but they weren't great like so I didn't finish 'em. What's this about art then?"

His maverick genius requires no further demonstration.

/06/02/04/LISTINGS/

Welcome to *Varsity's* Listings pull-out. With our expert's top recommendations below, Listings is your essential weekly guide to what's on in Cambridge over the next seven days.

F I L M



The Arts Picturehouse will be screening two documentaries from the PBS series *The Blues*, which lovingly relates the evolution of blues music since its inception. On Fri Martin Scorsese's *Feels Like Going Home* will be screened, followed on Sat by Mike Figgis' *Red White and Blues*.

L I T



Cafe-cum-secondhand book shop, CB1 will be playing host to the formidable poetic talents of Scottish poet, Don Paterson. Last year's winner of both the T. S. Eliot Prize and the Whitbread Poetry Award will be giving a reading on the 10th Feb. Call 01223 576 306 for more details.

M U S I C



The Boatrace may be dead, but its spirit lives on in Greenmind promotions. Since Greenmind has recently decamped to APU bar, Cambridge's wussier indie kids may think twice before venturing down, but we think the Dogs Die In Hot Cars + The Zutons line-up is worth a few bruises. 7 Feb £4 (NUS), £5

T H E A T R E



Out of Order, Ray Cooney's traditional British farce revolves around the romantic mishaps of a Conservative MP. While it can hardly be funnier than real-life Tory scandal, if it won the Olivier award it must be pretty good. ADC, 10th - 14th February 7:45pm Tickets: £5 -£7.50 (01223 503333)

C L A S S I C A L



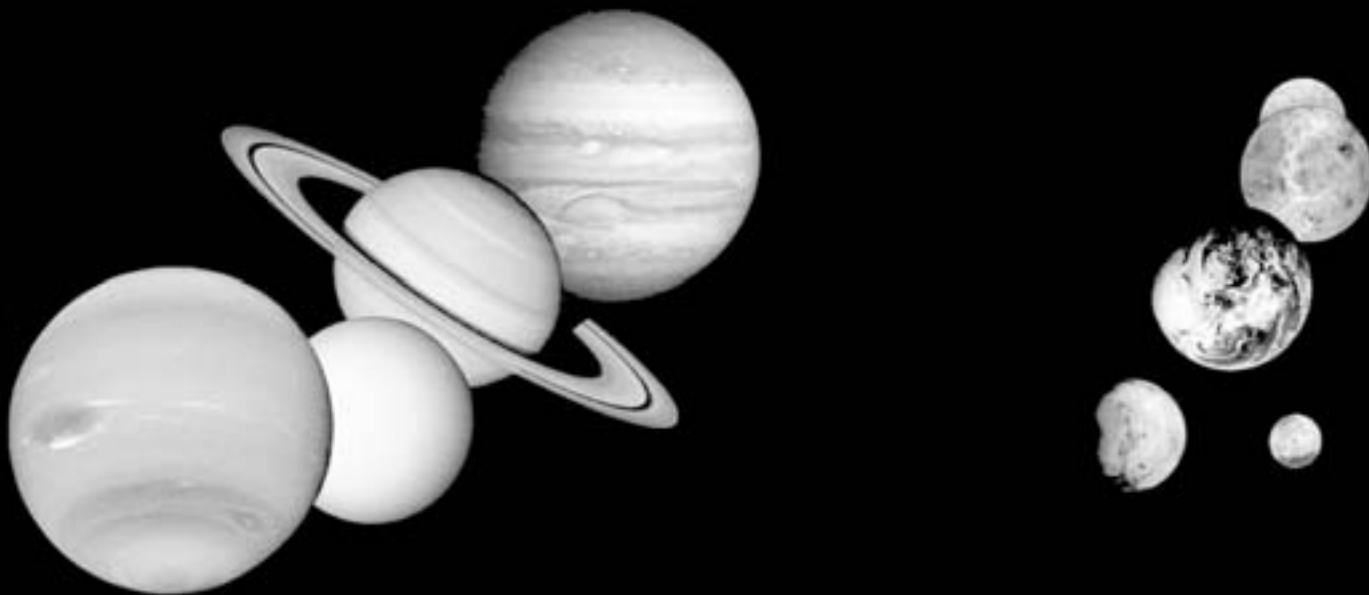
Endellion String Quartet offers a treat at West Road this week, in a programme containing Haydn, Beethoven and Mozart. The froth on this classical cappuccino is Webern's serialist 5 movements for string quartet which either out of curiosity, or genuine enthusiasm must be seen. 11th Feb, 7.30pm

The Works
A World of Alternatives

a Cambridge University Careers Service event

Thursday 12th February 2004

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



BE CREATIVE WITH YOUR CAREER

Varsity is looking for new sub-editors, photographers and columnists. Email editor@varsity.co.uk for details

FILM

Friday
New Hall:
Festival of Law Films “Twelve Angry Men” followed by debate.
New Hall, Buckingham House Lecture Theatre. 8:15pm.

Saturday
New Hall:
Festival of Law Films “Witness for the Prosecution”1957. 3pm. “Porte Aperte” (Open Doors) with subtitles. 7:30pm.
New Hall, Buckingham House Lecture Theatre.

Sunday
Christ’s Films:
Buffalo Soldiers.
Christ’s College, New Court Theatre. 8pm. £2.

Christ’s Films:
Buffalo Soldiers.
Christ’s College, New Court Theatre. 10:30pm. £2.

St John’s Films:
Calendar Girls - They dropped everything for a worthy cause.
St. John’s College, Fisher Building. 7pm. £ 2.

St John’s Films:
Calendar Girls.
St. John’s College, Fisher Building. 10pm. £ 2.

Thursday
Christ’s Films:
Casablanca.
Christ’s College, New Court Theatre. 10pm. £2.

St John’s Films:
The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen - with Sean Connery.
St. John’s College, Fisher Building. 9pm. £ 2.



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MISC

Friday
CU Chabad Society:
Israeli Shabbat, join us for the Shabbat meal. L’chaim, 7:30pm.
Tanya - discover the moral and mystical teachings of Kabbalah, 8pm
Chabad House - 19 Regent Terrace

Culanu:
Jewish Cambridge’s unmissable weekly social... eat, drink and be merry! .
The Culanu Centre, 33a Bridge St, between Oxfam and The Galleria. 10pm.

Saturday
CU Ballet Club:
Intermediate ballet. Free class for grds 6-7ish.
Queens’ College, Bowett Room. 2:30pm. £1.

CU Ballet Club:
Advanced ballet: Free class for grds 7/8+.
Kelsey Kerridge, 4:30pm. £1.

CU Chabad Society:
Tanya - discover the moral and mystical teachings of Kabbalah.
Chabad House - 19 Regent Terrace, 8pm.

CU Karate Club:
Beginners Class-beginners to 7th Kyu.
Fenners Large Gym, 2pm. £2.

The Pembroke College Winnie-the-Pooh Society:
Where minutes are taken and hours are lost.
Selwyn Gardens, No. 3, Room 1. 4pm.

Sunday
CU Chabad Society:
Tanya - discover the moral and mystical teachings of Kabbalah.
Chabad House - 19 Regent Terrace, 8pm.

CU Karate Club:
Beginners Class-beginners to 7th Kyu. 2pm
Advanced Class-6th Kyu and above. 4pm
Fenners Large Gym, £2.

C.U. Ta Chi Chuan Society:
Tai Chi Chuan: Hand-form; Self-defence; Pushing-hands; Weapons; Nei Kung
Fitzwilliam College, Reddaway Room. 2pm. £2/3

Monday
Buddhist Meditation:
Samatha Trust,
Thai breath meditation.
Pembroke College, Seminar Room, N 7. 7:30pm.

Cu Ballet Club:
Performance class
(Intermediate). Contemporary classical dance experience!
1.5hr. 3pm. £2.
Beginners pointe, 0.5hr. Live your dreams! 4:30pm. £0.50.
Queens’ College, Bowett Room.

CU Chabad Society:
Yiddish - learn the language of your grandparents.
Chabad House - 19 Regent Terrace, 8pm.

CU Karate Club:
Squad Session.
Fenners Large Gym, 8pm. £2.

Tuesday
CU Ballet Club:
Improvers ballet. 1hr for grds 4-6ish. Kelsey Kerridge, 8pm. £1.00.

CU Chabad Society:
Beginners Talmud Class - no previous knowledge necessary.
Chabad House 8pm.

CU Karate Club:
Beginners Session-all welcome.
Fenners Large Gym, 8pm. £2.

C.U. Tai Chi Chuan Society:

Tai Chi Chuan: Hand Form; Self-defence; Pushing-hands; Weapons; Nei Kung .
Clare College, Bythe Room. 7pm. £2/3.

C.U. Tai Chi Chuan Society:
Chi Kung: Breathing exercises for relaxation, health and fitness. New Hall, Long Room. 2pm. £2/3.

Kick Bo:
Non-contact aerobics using the dynamic kicking and punching moves of Martial-Arts.
New Hall, Long Room. 5:30pm.

Wednesday
CU Chabad Society:
Tanya - discover the moral and mystical teachings of Kabbalah., 8pm.

CU Karate Club:
Kata Session-Kyu grades.
Fenners Small Gym, 8pm. £1.

VARSITY DATES:
SPEED DATING FOR STUDENTS! THE RIVER BAR AND KITCHEN, on the Riverside, close to Henry’s. 7pm.

Thursday
CU Ballet Club:
Beginners ballet, all welcome!.
Queens’ College, Bowett Room. 6pm and 7pm. £1.50.

CU Karate Club:
Intermediates session-6th Kyu and above. Queens’ College, Bowett Room. 8pm. £2.

C.U. Tai Chi Chuan Society:
Tai Chi Chuan: Hand-form; Self-defence; Pushing-hands; Weapons; Nei Kung.
Fitzwilliam College, Reddaway Room. 7pm.

Kick Bo:
Non-contact aerobics
Christ’s College, New Court Theatre. 6pm. £2.



Calendar Girls, 12A
Sunday 8th February - 7pm & 10pm

The League of
Extraordinary Gentlemen, 15
Thursday 12th February - 9pm

www.stjohnsfilms.org.uk

Think You're Beautiful?

Following the success of Cambridge's first ever fashion show, the search is on for the freshest talent in Cambridge.

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Entries will appear in a colour pull out in Varsity and
all will have a chance to vote

Winners will star in the Cambridge University Fashion Show 2004 at
the end of this term in front of Hillary Alexander, Fashion editor of
the Daily Telegraph and scouts from Storm Modelling Agency.

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THEATRE

Friday

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE: by Tennessee Williams; production funded by REDS. The Playroom, 7pm. £5.50/£4.50.

Brickhouse Theatre Company:

An amateur production of Ben Elton's Popcorn. Robinson College, Auditorium. 7:30pm. £6/£4.

CUADC:

CHRISTIE IN LOVE - intense drama based around serial killer John Christie. ADC Theatre, 11pm. £3 - £4.

Webster Society:

THE MAGIC FLUTE - zany, fast paced, and memorable Mozart. ADC Theatre, 7:45pm. £6 - £8.50.

Saturday

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE: by Tennessee Williams; production funded by REDS. The Playroom, 7pm. £5.50/£4.50.

Brickhouse Theatre

Company:

An amateur production of Ben Elton's Popcorn. Robinson College, Auditorium. 7:30pm. £6/£4.

CUADC:

CHRISTIE IN LOVE - intense drama based around serial killer John Christie. ADC Theatre, 11pm. £3 - £4.

Webster Society:

THE MAGIC FLUTE - zany, fast paced, and memorable Mozart. ADC Theatre, 7:45pm. £6 - £8.50.

Monday

CUADC: ONE NIGHT STAND - Acting Workshop Showcase. ADC Theatre, 11pm. £3.

Fitz Theatre:

A new student-written play by Alex Britton, 'An Ounce of Difference'. Fitzwilliam College, Reddaway room. 8pm. £2 students, £3 non-students.

Tuesday

Chinese Cultural Society: Thunderstorm. Emmanuel College, Queen's Building. 7:15pm. £4

CUADC:

THE CRIPPLE OF INISH-MAAN - black comedy and moving drama in one play. ADC Theatre, 7:45pm. £5 - £7.50.

CUADC:

ONE NIGHT STAND - New Writing. ADC Theatre, 11pm. £3.

Fitz Theatre:

A new student-written play by Alex Britton, 'An Ounce of Difference'. Fitzwilliam College, Reddaway room. 8pm. £2 students, £3 non-students.

Pembroke Players:

The Mystery Plays - Episodes from the York Cycle. Pembroke College, The Wren Chapel. 8pm. £5 with programme.

Pembroke Players:

Five Night Stand - extended standup comedy. Pembroke College, Pembroke New Cellars. 10:30pm. £3-4.

Wednesday

Chinese Cultural Society: Thunderstorm. Emmanuel College, Queen's Building. 7:15pm.

MUSIC

Friday

afrocubism:

very popular monthly latin party. Arrive early to guarantee entry, Cafe Afrika, Sturton Street. 7pm.

Cambridge Indie Society:

Indie/Alternative/Retro/Rock. The Kambar, opposite Corn Exchange box office. 9:30pm. £3.

Cambridge University Nigerian Society:

Nigerian/African & R&B Music on Feb.7th; Free Dance Lessons: 9pm-2am. Clare Hall, .9pm. £2-3.

Kettle's Yard:

Lunch time concert lasting approx 40 mins. Kettle's Yard, 12am.

Queens' Ents :

PUSSY GALORE! No Mr Bond, I expect you to dance... Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall. 9pm. £4.

Saturday

Cambridge University Nigerian Society:

Nigerian/African & R&B Music on Feb.7th; Free Dance Lessons: 9pm-2am. Clare Hall, 9pm. £2-3 pounds.

Cambridge University Nigerian Society:

Nigerian/African Music 9pm-2am. Dance Lessons & Non-stop Dancing!! Clare Hall, Anthony Lowe Building. 9pm. £2 before 11pm; £3 after.

GCMS:

Marat Freytsis, guitar: 20th Century music by Britten, Brouwer, Rak, Dyens. Caius College, Bateman Auditorium. 1:15pm.

Hill Colleges Orchestra:

Lent Term Concert. Programme includes Ives, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky. St Giles' Church, Castle Hill, . 7:30pm. £5 (£3).

Hill Colleges Orchestra:


Lent Term Concert. Programme includes Ives, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky. St Giles' Church, Castle Hill, . 7:30pm. £5 (£3).

Queens' Ents:

RENEGADE! Early 90s anthems. Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall. 9pm. £4.

The Orchestra on the Hill:

IVES, The Unanswered Question; BEETHOVEN, Overture to Coriolanus; TCHAIKOVSKY, Symphony No. 5. St Giles' Church, Castle Hill, 7:30pm. £6/£4.



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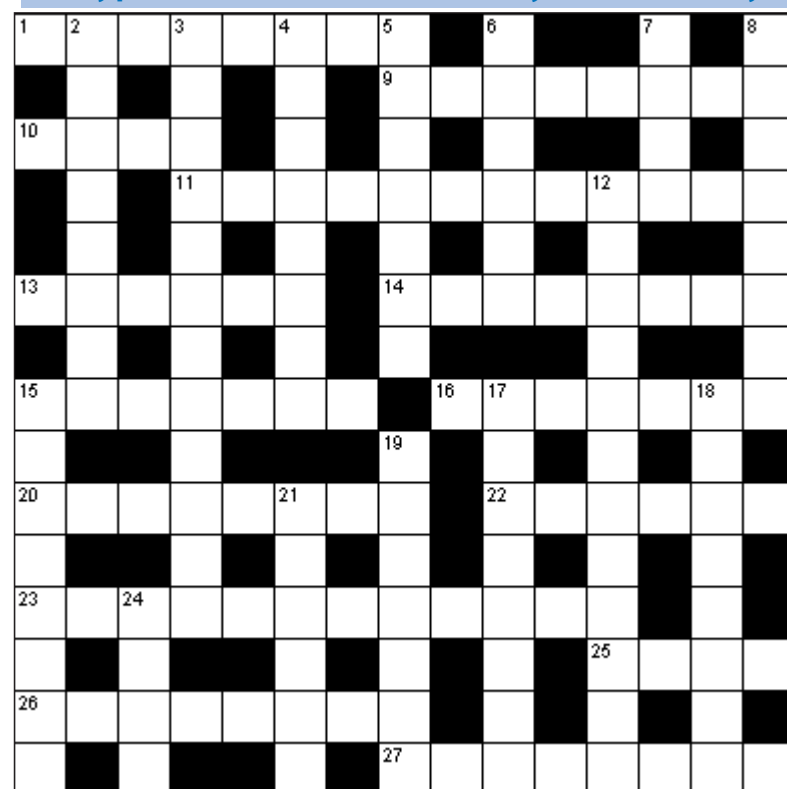
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Cryptic crossword No.5: Set by Luke Pebody



Across

- 1 Put to death sports commentator and laughing doctor (8)
- 9 Current article about commercial for music label. It's difficult to get away from it around here. (8)
- 10 Send a magazine, even though it is sent back (4)
- 11 The current top agreement gave food to Queens (5,7)
- 13 A roman god from outer space (6)
- 14 People who effect a change: AC/DC for example. (8)
- 15 Spot reversed, for example, to keep irregular walks. (7)
- 16 Old-fashioned people like Fred or the Captain. (7)
- 20 Specify a new origin for asset. (8)
- 22 A backrub with half a finger for the King at King's Cross. (6)
- 23 Posh minomer is all wrong for this yellow-bellied idiot.(5,7)
- 25 Mark's replacement goes the wrong way down a foreign street before turning full circle (4)
- 26 Wanted: a fiancée (8)
- 27 Outline is kind of vague (8)

Down

- 2 After a long gap, an inept comic television character gets to an important position in Downing Street (8)
- 3 TV Presenter sounds greater after publicity stunt (7,5)
- 4 Irrelevant topics of conversation in trigonometry (8)
- 5 Roman mason already moved quickly around me (7)
- 6 I am stuck between states with a cover girl (6)
- 7 Chieftain reverses piece of old poetry (4)
- 8 President Ford's first name (8)
- 12 Business owner starts entire report renaming europe (12)
- 15 He wrote swinging music that swang her swing (8)
- 17 It was used to make things safer, but it really gets up people's noses. (8)
- 18 This type of musical instrument is very exciting. (8)
- 19 Island with a mysterious shape (7)
- 21 Live here without a book (6)
- 24 It sounds like the lady has a lisp, but it's not true. (4)

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My name is Sarah and I am a girl. Like most girls I have a problem with food, in that I eat it. It's a problem because I probably eat more food than I should, being a girl, and can sometimes get a bit bigger than a girl probably should be. Although, when I remember to remember I am a girl, I eat a bit less, so I become be a bit more girl-like and feel pleased when people who are not girls seem interested in finding out what it feels like to be a non-girl in a girl.

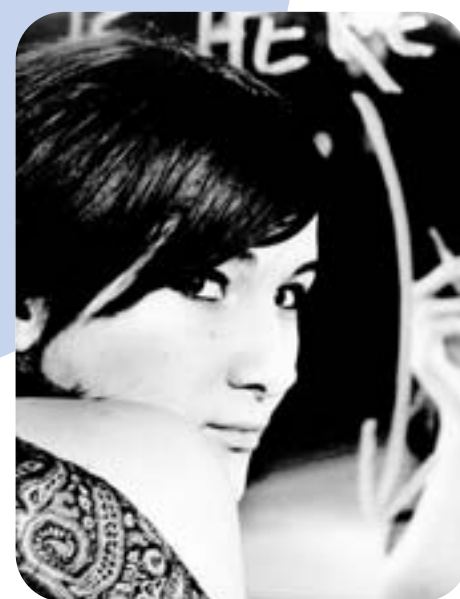
On the whole, girls don't have a very good reputation with food and a lot of people find it very interesting to discuss why this is and write about the possible reasons for this strange phenomenon. My personal favourite is the primal hatred of the female form, but that is by the by. Girls (and non-girls) are aware we need food to live and if we don't eat it we die and cease to be a girl, or anything for that matter, but especially a girl because it's important to be one if that's what you are. Yet some girls go very girl and eat so little they are almost no girl at all, which is ironic seeing as being a girl is the very thing they want to be, if only they could work out what one is.

When I stumble across a difficult social problem I frequently seek the teachings of a famous African-American social commentator by the name of Christopher G.L Wallace¹. Wallaces' body of work includes a famous debate between a girl and a non-girl: 'You weren't saying that when you were sucking my dick'. 'well you weren't saying that when you were eating my pussy.' Here we can see that often girls encounter problems, not just with eating food, but with being food as well. Some girls don't like being food and may be heard protesting at being made to feel like 'a piece of meat'. I don't mind too much, as long as I'm a medium rare, more-rare-than-medium fillet steak with a seared caramelised onion and plenty of Dijon mustard. Some people get scared that girls, like food, will be eaten up in the world and so feel it's their duty to make sure they're not. To prevent them from being munched up and swallowed whole they often keep an eye on them, sometimes lock them up or, occasionally, make them feel like no one in fact wants to eat them anyway.

One day, maybe, we won't want to not think about food. One day it may not matter. Perhaps we'll stop thinking about not thinking about food and think about something else instead. In all the space we'd gain by trying not to think about food we could think about Rwandan genocide victims or why 30% of the population has never made a phone call. We could think about how much money is in our pockets and why some people will never, ever be able to fit their money in their pockets even if they were wearing dungarees. And we'd still have lots of space left over to think about steaming bean hot-pots with dumplings, treacle suet-puddings and minted lamb pies.

Someone once said life is like a box of chocolates and I think, perhaps, they're right. If it is, I'll open the box and, without thinking about not thinking, eat them up one by one. And when I'm done, I'll lick my fingertips for the world to see and smile as my belly gets bigger than how a girls' should be.

Girls just want to have food



By Sarah Solemani

"I'm a more-rare-than-medium fillet steak with a seared caramelised onion and plenty of Dijon mustard."

Date of the Week

Your chance to date Cambridge's most eligible singletons

Sholto

Our man of the week is Sholto Mayne-Hanvey, a 2nd year historian from Johns.

From: West London.

Favourite Song: *Soon come* by Bob Marley.

Favourite Book: *Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess.

Describe yourself in three words: Unashamed, value, feisty.

What I'm best at: Listening.

What I'm worst at: Losing.

To pull me: Impress me.

To date Sholto email date@varsity.co.uk with 'Sholto' in the title by Sunday. Send answers to the same questions, your contact details and a photo if possible.

Last Week's Date

Last weeks date, Sara, chose Phil Spencer, a 3rd year economist from Jesus, to share a bottle of wine and tapas at La Raza. "I had a great time- Sara's a top girl," reflected Phil, before adding "I love Brummy birds!". Of Phil, Sara said "I was loving his Essex charm!" So do we have a Brummy-Essex cross county match made in heaven? Watch this space...

Phil and Sara at La Raza

The Beautiful People



A night where you can glam up, chill out, listen to good music and enjoy a sophisticated setting without busting the budget? Sounds too good to be true in Cambridge, a social scene dominated by 'cheese', sweatboxes and VK1s, but at last this monotony has been interrupted by Monday night's *Come Play* at La Raza, on Rose Crescent.

The music policy ranges from bashment to electro, while 'mixing' duties fall to a crew of variously competent but uniformly enthusiastic student DJs. *Come Play* offers a range of music other nights can't compete with, as organiser Dom Rose says "when you go out you are usually forced to listen to a single type of music all night- here we're mixing it up a bit." *Come Play* also has those other essential ingredients of a good night: The ever-tempting drink deals and the novelty-value, free tapas. There's also discounted entry to the Fez if you're still in the mood for partying after La Raza's closing time at 1.

Come Play has all the perks of a house party - tunes you like, people you know (or feel like you do), and cheap booze - without the bloke vomiting in the corner and the unfortunate snogging. *Come Play* is the night for Cambridge's beautiful people (but mingers are allowed in too.)





varsityarts



Andrew Gillespie

Do
It
Yourself

Ellen E. Jones

In a post-Llewellyn-Bowen age, the term 'D.I.Y.' seems to be associated exclusively with half-arsed M.D.F. sideboards and toilet roll desk-tidiers. It needn't be so. In correct usage the phrase 'do it yourself' should denote unrestrained expression, innovation and piles and piles of gung-ho, glorious, guerrilla cool.

If you want something done properly you have to do it yourself, which is why every key cultural movement since Punk has contained an element of the D.I.Y. ethos. Like many examples of home-grown creativity, Punk was born in reaction to the limitations of what came before. 'The Story of Punk' should properly be subtitled 'How The Kids Overcame The Insufferably Smug Hippies and Their Tyrannous Monopoly on Counterculture.' Everytime Ade Edmondson clonks hippy Nigel Planer over the head with a saucepan in *The Young Ones*, it is a symbolic victory for us all.

Fanzines are D.I.Y too - stapled together, full of rude words, mis-spellings and outrageous libel - *Varsity Arts* would sell its Nan for such freedoms. Independent film of the cheapest, scraggiest kind - think Kevin Smith's *Clerks* or *The Blair Witch Project* - they're D.I.Y. Everytime a low-budget independent film does something new and original, a little bit more of

the big studio monolith crumbles away.

Its not true anymore that creative visions can only be realised at great expense. Sometimes we do it ourselves not because the march of cultural history demands a change, but simply because we can. We can because of cheap(ish) digital cameras and desktop publishing programmes, 5p photocopying in every corner shop and hours and hours of dead cable TV air time gagging to be filled by Geordie teenagers 'rapping' about the ozone layer. Oh, and the glorious, golden internet.

Some D.I.Y. enthusiasts are motivated solely by the Zen-like contentment of creation, without view to publication or exhibition. Others are obsessive in their desire to enforce their under-represented opinions and questionable talents on the world at large. I suppose it's possible that the average print-media consumer had a gaping hole in their lives until zines like *IQ* a "sex zine for girls who like girls who wear glasses" and *Murder Can Be Fun* (which chronicled every death in Disneyland since 1955) came along and filled it. But I doubt it.

The D.I.Y enthusiast is utterly liberated from such tiresome concerns as quality or market demand. I'm not suggesting that we all have un-tapped reserves of genius - most bed-

room art is completely devoid of artistic merit and far more people seek recognition than actually deserve it -but that's exactly the point. You don't need anyone's permission to make a film or write a book or form a band. To reclaim a phrase of the hopelessly corporate for my own purposes, you just do it.

The VarsityArts Guide to DIY

1. *White Town, Your Woman* - The first No.1 to be made in someone's bedroom and also pretty darn funky.
2. *Punk* - In the words of scene instigator Philip Sallon, "We just got this idea to make outfits out of binliners..."
3. *The Guerilla Film-makers Handbook* by Chris Jones and Genevieve Jolliffe - If *Lord of The Rings*, director Peter Jackson had read this book, the world would be a better place.
4. *Graffiti* - "where every evening is an opening and every passer-by is a viewer" - see Ronojoy Dam's pg 16 article
5. *Amateur Dramatics* - from the french '*amateur*', meaning 'lover.' In other words, if professionals work for money, amateurs work for love.
6. *Sniffing Glue, The Wrong'Un, Hardcore Is More Than Music, Oz* - and other fanzines that changed the world, or at least thought they did
7. *Changing Rooms* - If only all builders were as resourceful as Handy Andy.



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 The Dogs Bollocks
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Spray Up the City

Ronojoy Dam on the ethics of Street Art



Ella McPherson

The oldest and most democratic form of art, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the wonderful world of street art. Illegal artisanship of the highest order, open to all and criticized as vandalism. An art world where every evening is an opening and every passer-by is a viewer.

Street art is a predominantly urban genre that covers a host of different mediums, its most infamous son being graffiti. Its current identity is defined by the New York style that emerged in the late 60s and early 70s. Spray paint and pens were its tools, 'bombing' and 'tagging' (putting up your alias around the city anywhere you could in a variety of visual and calligraphic styles) its methods. Graffiti, as we know it today, belongs to the Hip Hop culture that took it under its wing. While legendary crew the Fab 5's 1979 exhibition in Rome witnessed the beginning of the style's appropriation and accept-

ance as an art form by the mainstream. Divergent heroes include Jean Michelle Basquiat and Keith Haring who brought poetry and pictures to the medium.

Street art has always been defined by its illegal nature and no compromise attitude. Though termed 'vandalism,' street art offers an alternative to the assault of commercial visual images we are faced with everyday via the advertising world.

Shepard Fairey, founder of the *Obey Giant* campaign, sees street art as an example of phenomenology, "reawakening a sense of wonder about one's environment". This interaction with the asphalt environment is fundamental. Street art also goes under other guises such as *pochoirs* or stenciled images, painted proclamations that have their history in the French student and working class rebellions of the 60s. These works are inherently confrontational

and provocative, following the basic principle that a street wall is as good a place to exhibit as anywhere else.

Whether graffiti, posters or stickers, whatever the method, the medium and its DIY ethics are aesthetic assertions through direct communication against the grey of urban banality and corporate mediocrity. Its ephemerality is part of its allure and spontaneity. While we are bombarded with flyers, high street advertisements and billboards, street art stands as a pure artistic expression and response to our modern media culture. And yet it remains a 'problem' in nearly every urban area in the world and costs billions of pounds a year worldwide for its removal. It's this subversive outlaw status which is why street art will always survive, thrive and provide some of the freshest rawest art the world has to offer.

The Student Art Exhibition

In its maiden installment more than a decade ago, the Cambridge Student Art Exhibition comprised of, in the words of one ex-student, "a couple of bad watercolours." From that unpromising inception, the exhibition has blossomed, growing consistently each year in both size and ambition.

As the exhibition has matured, its organisers have continually scoured the city for ever larger, more innovative settings. In its early years, the Student Art Exhibition was staged in Little St. Mary's on Trumpington Street. Then in recent years, Natasha Phillips and James Lindon hung student works from scaffolds above the Lion Yard shopping centre and procured the patronage of Sir Anthony Caro. In the winter of 2002, the abandoned edifice of Henry's Cafe on Pembroke Street was revived.

Last year, under the triumvirate of Hannah Barry, Clemmi Kerr and James Fox, the exhibition took up residence in a large warehouse on Jesus Lane. Submissions poured in from both the University and APU, and more than 800 people arrived to celebrate the exhibition's opening, a success which spawned both the Visual Arts Society and the Society for Emerging Art. In its thirst for innovation, unslaked by

previous accomplishments, this year's exhibition headed by Ella Fitzsimmons and Aaron Rosen, will display works in a pavilion specially designed by Cambridge architects.

The exhibition will be staged next Michaelmas in mid-November, and preparations by its diverse executive

committee are already well underway. Submissions are open to all and will be collected during the week of April 25th, at the start of the Easter term. Works in any media are welcomed, but we ask that all submissions be in photographic form, accompanied by a notation of the work's actual size. Proposals for installations should also include a sketch and detailed description of the proposed piece. From these submissions, a panel will select works for display, aiming to represent as many people and media as possible.

The Cambridge Student Art Exhibition 2004 promises artists and patrons alike a potpourri of delights, including among other festivities, an auction and evening of performance art. Most importantly however, the exhibition endeavours to broaden, strengthen, and generally kindle a fire under the congenitally tame art scene in Cambridge.

Aaron Rosen, Ella Fitzsimmons and Hannah Barry



Aaron Rosen

Reality Portrayed

Girton's collection of People's Portraits

Every term I return to Cambridge full of good intentions to spend less time pickling my liver and more stimulating my brain. So, to try and keep at least one New Year's resolution, I headed to Girton College to see its exhibition entitled: *People's Portraits*.

My expectation of portraiture had been heavily influenced by school trips to more traditional galleries, rooms full of epic works where centuries of the great and good stare down, resplendent in their finery. These works often left me, no doubt in many cases intentionally, feeling humbled before a Demi-god rather than emotionally connected in any way with the subject. So, it came as no little surprise on entering the People's Portrait exhibition to be confronted with pictures of builders, gynaecologists, motorcycle couriers and teachers.

However, it is this rendering of the people one would not normally expect to see depicted in an art gallery that is the exhibition's aim. Conceived by the Royal Society of Portrait Painters as a celebration of the millenium, its idea is to reflect ordinary people and so provide a picture of the UK as it entered the new era. Over

a selection of forty pictures, a broad sweep of society confronts the viewer, from the great Ed Coode, Olympic Oarsman, to the bad, *Simon*, a thief who replied to an advert in a newspaper posted by the artist. There are paintings from more than twenty different artists, all members of the Royal Society. Some conform to classical ideals, with a structured sitter, while others such as Daphne Todd's portrayal of butchers Ron and Ray Pett, which appears to catch them off-guard at work, surrounded by plucked turkeys. My personal favourite is a picture by Howard Morgan of Arthur Gathercole, a vagrant. Morgan's use of thick brush strokes gives him a rough, untidy appearance, leaving his face ill-defined. His mournful stare is piercing, and yet you cannot truly see him, invocative of the semi-invisibility of those who live on the streets.

Displayed on a staircase and corridor leading to student rooms, it is fair to say that the setting reflects the exhibition as a whole: surprising, unconventional, but full of real life.

Richard Wielechowski

Cam Culture

Who designed the UL?



Even the most generous of observers could not honestly describe the University Library as a particularly picturesque piece of architecture on the Cambridge horizon. Resembling a Victorian workhouse, crematorium, or most sinister of all, a concentration camp, from the outside, the building invites neither visitors nor landscape artists. Its gloomy exterior is less than appealing for an afternoon's reading session, and the dusty atmosphere and WW2 era design inside adds to the impression of going back in time. The building has changed very little in terms of structure since its opening in 1939, devised to be functional and durable. Its architect, Sir Giles Gilbert Scott lays claim to a wealth of other

designs, most famously the iconic red telephone box. Although now replaced by British Telecom kiosks, the classical booth was once a familiar sight on our streets, a quintessential part of the country's heritage. There are undoubtedly resemblances between the UL's tower and the elongated phone box. Scott also designed Oxford's New Bodleian Library, Battersea Power Station, Tate Modern (formerly Bankside Power Station) and Clare College's own Memorial Court. As the well-known saying goes, do not judge a book by its cover: these are buildings intended to last, and like the UL, are foremost designed for their practicality because what is most precious is contained inside.

The Dog's Bollocks

Katie Sutton yaps about Kidman and Von Trier's adventurous new work

Dogville
On general release Feb. 13th
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Do It Yourself, *Dogville* suggests. Build your own house, build your own town, build your own society isolated from the world. But what you can't make, and what is truly man made, in this Hobbesian universe, is human nature.

Dogville lasts for a lengthy 3 hours. It is disturbing and intense. It's a film that will haunt you for a while, that you will mull over. It's a film definitely to be seen (but not necessarily liked), maybe not for the bleak presentation of human nature and society that von Trier bluntly and forcefully rams down your throat, but for the world that is created in one bare room: it's a real world of your imagination, of your creation.

Set in a remote American town, isolated by mountains, Grace (Kidman), the epitome of, well, grace, is a fugitive on the run from some mean mobsters. Coaxed by Tom (Paul Bettany), the town's self-proclaimed philosopher-writer, the town's people agree to allow her to stay, and in exchange she agrees to work for them. Grace's work quickly escalates as the good people of Dogville's

suspicion, envy, lust and greed intensify. As the title suggests, Lars von Trier's version of humanity is one where people are reduced to behaving like animals, like dogs – at times like a simpering whipped dog, or in the film's more fleeting generous moments like a dog that's just been given a brand spanking new bone.

The landscape is like something from an absurdist drama – minimal and sparse. The entire film is set on one stage and the houses, roads and gardens are outlined on the stage floor in white.

Dogville is a combination of all towns everywhere

While this doesn't sound too aesthetically enticing, you can feel this town, you can hear it. The gravel that crunches beneath worn leathery boots, weeds dropped in a bucket, the knock on a heavy wooden door. In parts, the camera is used effectively from above, looking down on Dogville, the town's people buzzing like separate but interconnected insects going about their daily routines.

Dogville is divided into chapters, like a peculiarly intense and psychologically disturbing version of your favourite



story-book. The soft, lulling storytelling voice-over provides a backdrop to scenes, entices you with hints of what is to come and offers commentary on the inner thoughts of characters. A constant eeriness is maintained by the contrast between the placid and serene voice-

over, the neat chapters, and the not so cosy reality. Rather like the American Dream, in sweet optimistic sugary form: a *façade*. A nice cover to attach to a rather bleak tale. Yet it would be too comforting, too easy, to confine the societal sickness endemic in Dogville to America.

Tom muses about the name of the town in the book he is writing, 'it needs to be universal', he says. Dogville is a combination of all towns everywhere, of people united, and separate, with their own fears, wants, prejudices, and grey dusty happiness.

Grace, like the central female role in *Breaking the Waves*, is a martyr figure – raped, abused and betrayed. But Grace sympathises with the town's people's weaknesses, their wrongs. As she sees it, their behaviour is dictated by circumstance and who is she to judge? She cannot judge them, she will suffer for, and stoically endure them. But in a surprising turnaround, it is Grace that in the end is forced to confront her own nature.

Despite its bleak earnestness and von Trier's seemingly chronic misanthropy, there is something tongue-in-cheek about the film: you get the feeling that Lars von Trier is playing games. Serious intensity is coupled with absurdity: the dramatic arrival of the gangsters, and the unexpected twist in the end brought about by Miss Grace. Someone famous once said that all art should dare to be taken seriously. When *Dogville* (finally) draws to a close, you are left with the lingering feeling (and hope) that Lars von Trier's seriousness is not intended to be taken quite so seriously.

Casablanca

College Film of the week

Both the viewers' and the critics' choice, *Casablanca* is one of the all-time classics, and what a better way to spend Valentine's Day than sobbing over the immortal line 'here's looking at you kid'.

The story centres on the passion between callous Rick (Bogart) and stunning Ilsa (Bergman): long lost lovers from a romantic Paris before the war.

***Casablanca* is one of the all-time classics**

After being left at a train station as the Nazi's invade Paris, Ilsa walks back into Rick's life: 'Of all the gin-joints in all the towns, in all the world, she had to walk into mine'. She walks into the gin-joint in question arm-in-arm with husband, and leader of the Czech resistance, Victor Laslo (Paul Henreid), both wanting Letters of Transit to the US that Rick has. Yes, the basic question is will Humphrey let Ingrid run off with her new bloke?

Soppy, romantic pap you may think; but, add Peter Lorre playing his criminal

role as Ugarte, and a hideously pompous French Captain (Claude Rains), both doing their utmost to dodge bullets and stop the lovers escaping, and a superb film-noir classic is created.

If the heartbreak of the storyline is not enough to get you weeping, then you are very hard-hearted, but you'll find solace in the film's brilliant portrayal of the tension and paranoia of a world in the midst war. When it was released, the Nazi's were invading Europe and North Africa. The sinister presence of the German army and Major Heinrich Strasser (Claude Rains) become far more terrifying, and this tension is more than enough to carry the film.

The black and white cinematography is superb, adding a shadow filled gloom to the café when the thieving Ugarte is dealing with Rick, or Rick is wallowing in whisky-laced self-pity. As Rick famously says 'you played it for her, you'll play it for me, if she can stand it so can I, play it.' – a lot less impressive than 'play it again, Sam'.

By Peter Matthews

Casablanca is showing at Christ's, Thursday 12th Feb.

No poetry in motion picture

Rachael Graham prefers *The Bell Jar*

Sylvia
At the Arts until Feb. 12th
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Perhaps the courtship of literary lights Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes was a real bore to watch. Maybe the two poets, notorious for their artistic temperaments and mental instabilities, had a relatively passionless marriage. If this is the case, *Sylvia* has succeeded in one sense, at least, by making a reliable historical artefact, which also satisfies the morbid curiosity of 'Oh-I-Do-Like-to-Be-Beside-the-Suicide' obsessives.

We may never know: we were not 'there'. But even if we cast aside and strike off the record the dreadful mis-castings, hideous mis-characterisations, gratuitous historical inaccuracies, and the bastardization of many quotations from Plath's work (which they were justly forbidden to use in the production), *Sylvia* is a dreadful film.

Beginning in 1950's Cambridge (spot your friends! It's the most fun you'll have for two hours), where Plath studied English as a Fulbright Scholar, and ending – sorry to spoil – with the most unspectacular suicide scene this reviewer has ever seen, one can only assume that *Sylvia* tries to give us the REAL Sylvia, or at least dumb her down, mist her eyes up and give us Sylvia-lite (not as interesting, but better for you).

A poet whose talent was not fully realized until her husband's infidelity drove her to near-madness, Plath has iconic cult status with most teenage girls who have ever felt a little piqued with the world, and a biographical movie of her life requires greater scriptwriting than is provided by the unimaginative documentary-writer drafted in by BBC Films.

It is nearly impossible, in a culture which has brought us *One Flew Over the*

Cuckoo's Nest to make a comparable drama about depression and suicide. With one exception – mid-way, a frustrated and professionally jealous Plath loses her temper at Hughes and finally there is evidence of life and blood – every scene is loaded with hackneyed and predictable cliché. Dialogue-wise, if you can picture the angst-ridden bleatings from the diary of a seventeen-year-old girl and then remove substance and originality, you won't be far off.

from a punt.

Apparently, Paltrow is more proud of this performance than any she has done before. I have to say, *Sliding Doors* was more of a high point, or maybe *Shallow Hal*. She will draw audiences – it's a pretty nifty trailer – but she simply lacks the capability and range to portray, responsibly, such an emotionally nuanced and paradoxical character. Daniel Craig of *Our Friends in the North* fame portrays Ted Hughes competently



Visually, to labour the point that this is a serious and arty film, it tries desperately to look European: every few minutes we are shown Paltrow gazing blankly into middle-distance or looking depressed.

On the positive side, Cambridge appears to be quite a pretty place. The Grantchester cows even make an impressive cameo appearance as Paltrow's most captivated audience, as she recites Chaucer to them

enough, but is ultimately unbelievable as the cad and bounder he was known to be during his lifetime.

Sylvia is a film full of stock characters saying stock things and adding nothing to new British cinema. It is a film which should only have been attempted by those dextrous enough to handle such a tempestuous love story. If you're curious about Plath, buy a biography or read the journals. Gwyneth should put the fat-suit back on and work her way up to proper roles.



Music to Make Girls Dance

Was Yaqoob on Franz Ferdinand

Every few years a band comes along that lays out new boundaries, renders the once-shiny status quo irrelevant, and makes fashionistas wear rawk t-shirts again. Oasis brought us the pungent odour of cheap fags, spilt pints and grimy pubs, Radiohead offered heartbreak and alienation in the heartless modern world, The Stereophonics brought the delicate whiff of sweltering dog-shit and it appears that Franz Ferdinand are about to be granted a similar epoch-defining role.

On the surface, Franz appear to bear fashionable coffee and the smell of bohemian wine bars. Hyped to the point of saturation by NME, molested by the broadsheets, they've sauntered into the top three with second single *Take Me Out*, and everything seems set for one-hit wonderdom and popularity amongst people wearing stylish neckerchiefs. But perhaps we're judging prematurely; A chat with singer/guitarist Nick and a listen to their self-titled debut album suggests liking freschatos and Café Nero need not be a prerequisite of liking Franz Ferdinand. Behind the apparently self-consciously arty name lies a depth that promises great things. As Nick says, Franz's influences are "far too many to name". That's a lie, because in a single

breath he cites Dostoevsky, Graham Greene, Leonard Cohen and Prince. More evidently, the influence of post-punks Gang of Four, fellow Scots Josef K and even Joy Division lurk in the album's razor sharp hooks and aloof vocals. The angular guitars, dramatic tempo shifts and sardonic lyrics of single *Take Me Out* are enough to confirm suspicions that behind the definite sense of style, there lies an intelligence and irony that is sadly lacking from virtually all their contemporaries.

Nick may say Franz just "want to play music for people to move to", but as he admits, it "has to have depth to it." That's not to say that all Franz's inventive energies are channelled into mordant commentary like 'So I'm on BBC2 now/Telling Terry Wogan how I made it' on *The Dark of the Matinee*. Songs like *This Fire* (Nick's favourite) reveal a raw, harder edge. Coming from Essex, the desire to raze a city to the ground is something I can relate to. But even this catharsis is underpinned by a dance sensibility. They're no one-trick pony. Eclectic, lyrically and musically clever, full of surprises and catchy riffs, the first single *Darts of Pleasure* is a good example of its worthiness. The album is full of surprises and defies easy pigeon-holing. Moreover it has a definite sense of des-



tiny. They might not have a political agenda but as Nick says, "the music scene is boring". They see "men standing still with their pints while a band go crazy onstage" and they want this to change.

The point is that, with their sharp dress sense and seemingly co-ordinat-

ed haircuts, Franz may seem part and parcel of the intrusion of fashion's fickleness into 'our' scene. But they're not. Despite NME's dubious categorisation of them as leaders of the art-wave movement, they are a unique band. Nick says Franz Ferdinand want to "reclaim pop music" and given the

Hammer Time

The Music of DIY

Garages are the refuge of young rock bands, providing space, storage, soundproofing and sometimes even inspiration from the very tools that lined the walls during their early sessions. Hardware is a persistent motif in rock: if we built this city on rock and roll, then it would seem that we built it in the humble tool shed...

DIY artists - Ever wondered why they call it a 'bandsaw'?

There are more hard-wearing artists than you might expect. At the top of the toolbox are...well...Tool, found to be useful in the mid-90s for beating out metal. Nottingham DJs, DiY, set up their trade in vacant warehouses and farms in 1989, and from the late 80s the Nine Inch Nails had the industrial sound all sewn up. But for serious idolaters of ironmongery, you'd have to look no further than Kraftwerk, The Carpenters, MC Hammer, and the Saw Doctors. Although the sharpest tool in the hardware homage stakes would have to be the reggae duo, Chaka Demus and...yep...Pliers.



DIY albums - Guitar = Axe

Other artists have had a little help from hardware when it came to album inspiration. Iron Maiden went with your functional *Metal Hammer* in 2000. Jimmy Page chose to *Bury the Axe* and Rod Stewart put a Spanner in the Works. Jethro Tull gave us *Songs from the Wood*, but David Gray topped it by bringing his *White Ladder*.

DIY songs - Smells Like Teen Spirit-level...

Hardware is also the ideal lyrical option - what better way to communicate than with reference to objects both familiar and universal? The Beatles achieved what a certain college has yet to get around to (despite several requests) when they were *Fixing a Hole* in 1967. Hardware harpies, The Breeders, had a brilliant *Divine Hammer*; the Foo Fighters opted for a *Monkey Wrench*, but Peter, Paul and Mary lamented their distinct lack of tools in *If I Had a Hammer*. Huey Lewis and the News were playing a dangerous game in 1991, when they encouraged us to do what we were thinking and *Hit Me Like A Hammer*. Peter Gabriel was a devotee of DIY ditties, penning two odes to hardware, *DIY* and *Sledgehammer*. Then, there's always the chance that Eminem was *Cleaning Out My Closet* to do a spot of decoupage. Of course, the Rolling Stones would just *Paint It Black*.

From Michael Bolt-on to Justin Timberlake, from *Garage Flower* (Stone Roses) to *Loose Screw* (The Pretenders), it would seem that the (allen) key to a riveting rock classic is a trip to the tool shed.

Amy Stockwell

Engerica

The Boatrace

Sunday 25th January

Being a lazy Sunday, Engerica were struggling to see The Boatrace even half full. Unsurprisingly, you might say, if I went on to describe them as a three-piece heralding from deepest darkest Essex. But this band is definitely more than it seems, a breath-taking marriage of punk and metal that left the crowd exhilarated and gasping for more.

Engerica formed three years ago with the intent of sounding 'like the destruction of something beautiful' and with a contagious hyperactive energy, they do more than pull this off. With each track a civil war between vocals and backing that somehow works, the crowd is left feeling that they really shouldn't be allowed to be enjoying this, but they do. This is music to push the boundaries, with elements of Nirvana, System of a Down and Nine Inch Nails stirred up into a vibrant mass, pulsing to Engerica's seismic riffs and Dave Gardner's darkly twisted chaotic vocals. The unveiled honesty and transparency so inherent in the jerky beats and angular guitars is entrancing and sets the band aside from the others as something very special - a real band for real people.

With ecstatic reviews from the likes of the major music magazines like *Kerrang*, and incredibly strong tracks such as *Trick or Treat* and *The Smell*, the yet unsigned Engerica are set to go far.

Diana Liyanage



Jumping Off the Deep End

George FitzGerald witnesses some refreshing styles at Queens'

I had not approached 'The Jump Off' with any form of anticipation. The event once more promised the opportunity to witness defiant 'hip-hop heads' drown in a sea of indiffer-



Faith SFX breaks out some raucous styles

ence - something lamentably unique to Cambridge. Last Friday, however, Queens' rose above both this tiresome paradigm and a venue more suited to PE classes than parties, to provide a night of rare variety and exhilaration.

The algoRHYTHMIX - (quite a cool name as far as mathmo wordplay goes) performed back-to-back throughout the night. The duo instantly took the night by the scruff of the neck, forcing revellers and apathetic haters alike to appreciate their seamless cuts and blends of solid floor-fillers.

It was soon time to introduce a very shy looking 17 year-old beat-boxer named Faith SFX. Non-believers who had viewed the title 'UK's no.1 under-18 beatboxer' with severe scepticism (myself included) were shown the light. He proceeded to induce raptur-

ous appreciation in 500 or so inebriated students, somehow extricating from his adolescent voice-box awe-inspiring, lyrics-n-all renditions of anthems ranging from *Simon Says* to *Stand by Me* - as SFX would later put it, "something" for the gal-dem.

The undesirable task of following this spectacle was nobly undertaken by rapper Inja, from The Delegates of Culture, in an admirable performance that was unfortunately destined for anti-climax. This emcee didn't receive the love he deserved as edgy beats and insightful rhymes, delivered with a tight flow, were lost on a largely unresponsive crowd.

All that remained now was for the algoRHYTHMIX to close out a memorable night, as Queens' basked in the radiant glow of yet another resounding entz success. Long may it continue.

Reviews

Beans - Now Soon Someday

Warp, February 9th

Beans takes his rock-solid declamatory existentialist style of rap from his former group the Anti-Pop Consortium, and drops it straight into his own brand new mini-album. The beats get dirty, the synth bleeps reverberate into your cerebral cortex and the bass drones: you know you could only be listening to a Warp release. If you're getting sick of the bitches and bling of mainstream rap, Beans can show you a mind-expanding alternative. And unlike the unoriginal repetitiveness of West Coast 'underground' MCs like Dilated Peoples, this really is something new. Just don't expect a G-Unit collaboration any time soon.

Henry B

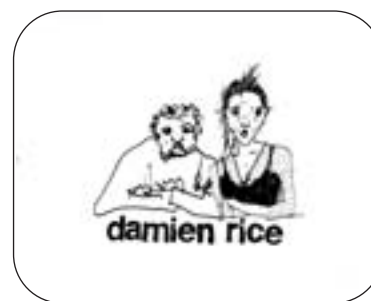


Damien Rice - Volcano

WEA, February 9th

Remember when Coldplay were touted as the new Travis until it became clear Coldplay were the better band? It's the same with Damien Rice, 'the new David Gray', whose debut album, *O*, contains far more than the British songwriter has come up with. *Volcano*, his third single, has the sticky fingerprints of the record company all over it: the release comes with no original b-sides, just acoustic and instrumental versions of songs from *O*, and crappy concert footage. Worse, on a magnificent album, *Volcano* is probably the weakest song. There are better adverts for his music than this single: don't buy this, buy *O*.

Sam Bostock



Floating Screws

Niccolo Milanese has a problem writing in straight lines

I have a problem with writing straight lines. I expect it is because I am unable to think in sequence – my thoughts are frequently interrupted, I start a sentence and then go on some unexpected detour, quite unconnected in relevance, and then scramble around to attach my beginning of a sentence to something to ground it, and to allow me to let it go. Of course, we think things simultaneously. Observe:

cat
mat

So when I write anything, I start with plastering a blank page with words, phrases and expressions, at all angles, under no particular sequence. And then I look for the connections. That page covered with incomplete sentences is my page, it is where I begin to communicate by ordering all those half-thoughts I have into some kind of order someone else might understand. The worst thing someone can do when they want to start writing is to stare at a blank page: it is blank! You must put some of yourself and others there first.

Perhaps I connect my half-thoughts on the page so that some are under others, split by a line break, and I come

inup with a kind of poetry. Or perhaps I give different half-thoughts, different personas, make them stand up and interact with each other. Then I come about with a kind of prose, or perhaps a play.

Here are some connections:

Monkey tails work like arms, dog tails work like smiles.

Midnights last longer than middays.

Mrs Johnson walked into the baker shop and saw that there was a giant cockroach before her, and inferred that the reason it was so huge was that it had eaten all the bread. She was annoyed at this.

Now, this is not all there is to it, there is considerably more construction and artifice required than that. Moreover, it is hardly a method guaranteed to give good results. It is just the beginning. But I think it is where everybody must begin – for we are all aware of more things than we would ever be able to say, and we must choose some things to say and the order to say them in.

Now, I suppose there is no great reason why you should need to connect these half-thoughts at all. You could

just not say anything. There has been a great deal of fuss recently over whether each of us creates ourselves by internally narrating a story of our lives. Some say that we don't all do this, and that to do so is rather unhealthy, indeed tantamount to a kind of self-deception. I see no reason why you should have to lie, constructing a narrative. I don't even see why what we construct has to be a narrative. What I do think is that paying some attention to the way you make connections between half-thoughts is a way of considering your relationship with your circumstances, and that playing around with those connections is a method for changing the way you relate to the world and other people. Reading the way some other people have chosen to make connections is another way of considering your relationship. Those of us who choose to write these experiments down are called 'creative writers'. I guess other people do it in other ways, and they have different talents.

Niccolo Milanese is the founder and chief-quill of Cambridge Writers' Guild, a society committed to promoting creative writing. Membership is free. E-mail cambridgewritersguild@yahoo.co.uk



Cam Stories

Sylvia Plath on Varsity

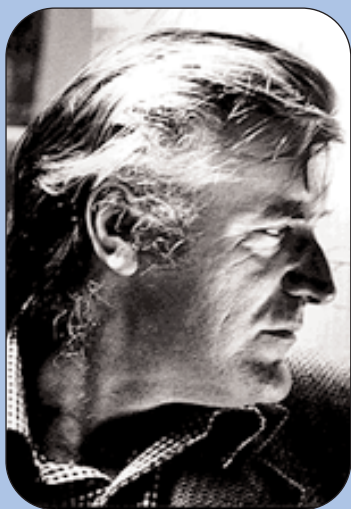
Sylvia Plath won a Fulbright scholarship to Cambridge in 1955. Here she describes her experiences with exams, Hughes and Varsity.

'Last night's whiskey is still strutting latent havoc in my veins...The caffeine from the coffee this morning tenses fibre too and I am appalled...bitterness about clique: they publish friends, always friends; must write some short sketches for them and Varsity after this next week: potent, witty, punchy: something they can't reject without being immoral.

What I want to say is: HE is here; in Cambridge. Smiling blub faced Bert, all scrubbed and polished, met me in the street on the way to the College library: "Lucas and Ted threw stones at your window last

night." A huge joy galloped through me; they remembered my name...

Now tense, rebellious, with spring sprouting outside my window and playing merry hell with my blood, I have to cram for a paper on Webster and Tournier: why oh why didn't I do it yesterday... if I do not plot and manage and manipulate my path, joining: academic, creative & writing, and emotional & living & loving: writing makes me a small god: I recreate the flux and smash of the world through the small ordered word patterns I make. I have powerful physical, intellectual and emotional forces which must have outlets, creative, or they turn to destruction and waste (e.g drinking with Hamish, and making indiscriminate lov)



The Ghosts in the Woodwork

Alex Runchman on the undergraduate

The extent of Cambridge's literary alumni is staggering, but until the 20th century poets dominated over novelists. This is not to underestimate the achievement of such giants as Sterne or Thackeray; it's simply that only the inclusion of William Shakespeare could make a list of poets boasting Milton, Dryden, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, and Tennyson, Rupert Brooke, William Empson, Sylvia Plath, should you admire her, and John Berryman - who studied at Clare and celebrated his seduction of 'the most passionate & versatile actress in Cambridge' with the ecstatic line 'She skipped dinner at Newnham' - more prestigious.

In the 20th century Cambridge showed its potential to inspire young

novelists as well as lyricists. A. A. Milne and Douglas Adams, who created a St Cedd's College, loosely based on his own St John's in *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*, both made it into the Top 10 of the BBC's *Big Read*. Not a reliable assurance of their greatness, but popularity should never be underestimated. C. S. Lewis, who taught at Magdalene, made it to no. 9 with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. King's old boy E. M. Forster, were he still alive, might be put out not to be more widely enjoyed, but he's still canonical. And today, of course, there is Zadie Smith and the prospect of Helen Oyeyemi – standing out for making their mark whilst still here. Reading her stories in *The May Anthologies* (95-97) shows Smith had a major talent.

So where does this leave the student writer? Intimidated? But also in diverse company. It's notoriously difficult to get published, but anyone with enough ability is likely to be discovered sooner or later. If all else fails, you could always follow in the footsteps of Horace Walpole, son of PM Robert Walpole and one of the first novelists to come out of Cambridge. When *The Castle of Otranto* was published in 1764 he passed it off as a translation of a genuine 12th century Italian document. Critics were outraged and many reassessed their initially favourable judgements. But the fashion for Gothic literature was born. Whether Walpole learned his ability for outright deception from his politician father or from bluffing his way through supervisions is a question for conjecture.

How many poets does it take to change a lightbulb?

Is it a strange thing to list 'Poet' amongst your hobbies and pursuits? Not the type of thing that you would come across very often if you were interviewing candidates for a job? Doing so may convey an overweening arrogance or a fuzzy touchy-feely personality that, I imagine, would be discounted as 'bad' in such staple Cambridge career paths as say, management consultancy, publishing or even worse, the black arts of law and medicine.

But then again, that is understandable given there is no real option for poets in the university to be able to interact with one another's work or

have a sense of community in what they are doing. Despite the frankly gargantuan efforts of the Cambridge Writer's Guild, trying to establish a framework for creative writers of all levels and media over the last two years, there are still gaps that need to be filled.

We hope that *Filament* helps do just that. When we have enough work to constitute a 'pile' (the mathematical measurement of poetry) Jon Opie, Nick Purves and I sit down and argue about what gets in, and photocopy the whole thing 300 times. 'Silvey' the *Filament* folding monkey then lovingly folds each edition.

Filament is a labour of love by a small group of students, who believe creative writing in all its forms has taken a back seat in this University for far too long, and we are sick of being out in the cold. 'Poet' is not something to be ashamed of or embarrassed about. It is simply someone who chooses to make a point in a certain way. It can be challenging, funny, tragic, gooey, frivolous or serious, but you'll never find out unless you have the confidence to take the first step.

Email jo240 or cpm34 to submit. *Filament* 4 out now (5 coming soon!)

Colm McGrath and Jon Opie

Brave New World of Song

Saraid Dodd tingles to a world of jingles

Songs for a New World
ADC Theatre, 4-7 Feb, 11pm

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

If you go to see *Songs for a New World* this week you may not need to see another musical this year.

This show more than satisfies that desire for a pure musical injection that comes to every drama lover now and then. Yet there is no train of small children with candles, nor any brazen scenery, just four extraordinary singers who slip into different episodes of hope and suffering in America. The ease, focus and skill with which Chris Berry, Sarah Bird, Alex Spencer-Jones and Lloyd Wood perform is of the highest possible quality. Particularly noteworthy is

Alex Spencer-Jones' portrayal of the frustrated Mrs Santa Claus and Chris Berry's painless falsetto.

With cheesy love songs; meaningful laments; outpourings of pure soul; seductive jazz; bright eyes and

"a pure musical injection"

gusto, *Songs for a New World* is not pretending to be any more than a bloody good show.

So, Cambridge students, if the words 'paradise calls me' don't repel you, then stop trying to be clever for a night and get down to the ADC. By the end of the evening you'll probably have to admit that you feel all tingly.

CUMTS



Backstage Theatre News

CHEESY MUSICAL *Anything Goes* swept the boards at this week's Whatsonstage Theatregoers Award ceremony winning awards for direction, choreography, set design, revival, best actress (Sally Ann Triplett) and best actor (John Barrowman). Is it just me, or wasn't he a presenter on *Live and Kicking*?

EX-CAMBRIDGE director Sam Mendes' Broadway production of *Gypsy* has announced early closing notices for the end of February. The producers, intriguingly, blamed the weather.

SEASONS GREETINGS from Cambridge Arts Theatre, who informed us this week that bookings are now open for their annual Christmas Panto. So if you want to well and truly ensure you're not missing out on the Beanstalk action, give them a call. Hang on. Isn't it February? CA

Pembroke Magical Mystery Tour

The Mystery Plays, York Cycles
Pembroke Chapel, 3 Feb, 8pm

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

Staging the *Mystery Plays* is, undoubtedly, an ambitious project. However the Pembroke players seem to have, on the whole, overcome the constraints of time (in both senses of the phrase) to produce a successful, and unusual, version.

Dating from about the fourteenth century, the plays consist of short Biblical scenes first performed by priests, and later funded and directed by various city guilds. As Richard

Beadle (quoted in the programme) puts it: 'The *York Cycle of Mystery Plays* is one of the great literary and theological monuments of the later Middle Ages in England.'

This, however, was my initial fear – would something so date and theme specific still be relevant to a secular twenty-first century audience? I was particularly dubious upon learning it was staged in the Pembroke Chapel, but luckily my doubts were unsubstantiated. Director Simon Temple made good use of the space, and having God appear high up in the organ loft seemed particularly inspired. The selection of episodes used was logical

and cohesive, and humour was injected into what could have been a very sombre production by some good performances, particularly in the Noah scene and by Lucifer throughout (Jennifer Scott, who deserves a special mention.) There were a few weaknesses – the cast seemed to flag somewhat towards the end, and occasionally it was difficult to make out speech, but otherwise highly recommended – a rare chance to see this performed outside of York. And perhaps your only chance to see Christ being graphically crucified in the middle of Pembroke Chapel.

Sally Jennings

An Uninspiring Affair

One Night Stand
ADC Theatre, 3 Feb, 11pm

★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆

There is little to say about the ADC's most recent example of new writing – a play entitled *I Am* written and directed by Yevheniia Mikheenko.

The plot is incredulous and tells of a young Aborigine boy who has been adopted by a white Australian family; tortured by his severed past, he eventually runs away. Whilst crossing Australia he boards a bus, which is empty except for his birth mother

who happens to be sitting at the front. Next scene: he chances upon a girl sitting on the pavement, drawing and she just happens to be his birth sister!

The script itself is resplendent with clichés and this is faithfully mirrored by the distasteful and melodramatic acting.

The set – two plastic chairs, a table and a phone – is uninspired; the costume is uniformly black and the lighting is practical rather than dramatic.

In short, a disappointing one night stand.

Giulia Miller



Varsity Archive

A Moo-ving Performance...

The Cripple of Inishmaan
ADC Theatre, 3-7 Feb, 7.45pm

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

The Cripple of Inishmaan is an eclectic mix of cow watching, suicide, and egg throwing. Hints of Craggy Island emerge in the eccentricities of the characters, but the humour is mixed with violence.

Conrad Mason made a good Cripple Billy, pulling off both accent and limp. Although somewhat Tiny-Timish at times, Mason's performance emphasised the fact that although Billy's physical deformity marks him out, it is his intelligence and compassion which truly separates him.

His sense of confinement was reflected using stones at the edge of the stage to mark the limits of the land and Billy's world. The set was excellent, with a 'driftwood' atmosphere bringing out both the location and poverty of the community. Using projected images helped to emphasise how the film being shot on a neighbouring island could have helped the people to escape.

Billy's fellow villagers share the feeling of being trapped, but unlike him they do not attempt to leave. Although references to the 'Irish problem' do not contribute anything new to the debate on the subject, they do provide a further sense of confinement, and help contextualise the violence.

From the childish delight in gore of Helen (a cocky and engaging Jennie McGuire), to the outright brutality of BabbyBobby (Chris Till), the threat of attack is constant. The shift in the violence of BabbyBobby from protecting Billy to attacking him was shocking, as was the reversal in the 'good' and 'bad' in the play it precipitated.

It wasn't all gore and doom though; much of the play was comic, although stilted on the night I saw it, creating a drag in places. However, a larger, more responsive audience would have helped. A good debut for director Stacey Gregg – and not a duff accent in sight.

Amy Blakeway

Pop-tastic!

Popcorn
Robinson, 30 Jan, 8pm

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

Popcorn is based on Ben Elton's novel about an obnoxious Hollywood auteur who gets stuck in a scenario which stinks of his own ultra-violent films.

Grinning babes sell popcorn (too salty to eat, but good to throw at theatre-goers), and you ask yourself: if this is a play about American violence, why is

there nothing about nation and race? Though well-stocked with witticisms, stereotype-exploiting set-pieces, and deluxe turns of phrase, the play spent too long juxtaposing different versions of these arguments. But there was nothing fresh or new in the play's artless groping after the transfer of culpability among individuals, institutions and impersonal social forces. Still, *Popcorn* is a fun and funny play. I for one, am going on a killing spree.

Jow C Lindsay

Erase and Rewind

Tape
The Playroom, 3-7 Feb, 9.30pm

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

"Nobody is right or wrong, nobody wins or loses, but some things can never be erased". Hmmm.....?! *Tape*, playing this week at the Playroom is not as compelling or dark as it claims to be, nor as it would like to be.

The general gist is that things change but we are all inextricably

linked by our past. The trio of actors were well cast in this smart, slick production where the only factor letting it down was the script itself. This did not however, take away from the many moments of dark humour, the convincing interaction between the cast and thought-provoking ending.

There is little doubt that Akaash Mehta carried the play with an endearingly convincing performance as 'wannabe bad boy' Vince. Being set

in the US, perhaps his genuine accent was the deciding factor (the programme informs us he is a bonafide Yank who found his way to Trinity College).

The tiny theatre space, sparse staging and dim lighting made for an intimate production which moves at a rapid pace and drags the audience along with it. Funny, thought provoking, if a little trite, *Tape* is undoubtedly worth a look.

Clare Geraghty

Dramatic Escape

Scapegoat
Drama Centre, 29 Jan, 8pm
★★★★☆

Scapegoat - a fantastic piece of experimental theatre, performed and devised by the Wishbone Theatre Company - tells the story of a young couple on holiday in the secluded European country of Montagnu.

Almost all of the action takes place behind a sliding screen, which moves ingeniously up and down to only ever reveal part of the story.

Whether we are watching their feet, heads or midribs, the perform-

ances from Paul Murray and Karen Glossop - each taking on several roles - are superb, with sets being constructed of nothing but sound and light and the superb use of physical theatre.

"a fantastic piece of experimental theatre"

We focus mainly upon Stella, a relationship psychologist who writes self-help books yet fails to succeed in her own relationships.

The screen is used as a visual metaphor for the blame she puts on other people, a scapegoat that blinds her from the truth. A projection on the screen informs us that 'without self-awareness, self-development is impossible'. In one scene, one of only two played in full view, she meets mechanic Pierre, with whom she can start again and be herself.

The Drama Centre consistently provides entertaining and experimental theatre of a high quality, and *Scapegoat* is certainly no exception - I'm thrilled to help get this thriving little venue on the map.

Lucy Barwell

Wishbone



Theatre: DIY Style!

Cambridge is full of opportunities to get involved with student drama, but what happens when someone decides to do drama the DIY way?

The Fall of the House of Usher played to sell-out audiences at the Playroom earlier this term, staged by brand new theatre company 'Back to Back Productions', founded by English students Sam Hodges and Tom Cantrell in 2002. Cantrell and Hodges met on the Cambridge stage and were involved in various projects together, culminating in

a European tour on which they decided to officially merge their 'creative' ambitions. So how does one go about 'doing it yourself' in the tight-knit world of CamDram?

Last January, the pair sat down and deliberated on the direction in which the company should head, debating the 'mission statement', pros, cons and differences, and a year on, the company is still in working progress. The underlying premise of the company was simply to veer away from the commercial, 'bums on seats' theatre that graces most

Cambridge spaces on a weekly basis and stage lesser known contemporary pieces. "On this mandate," explain the pair, "Berkoff's adaptation of Poe's short story *The Fall of the House of Usher* immediately appealed to us". Having settled, to some degree, their artistic direction, the next stage involved a myriad of administrative and practical details. For this reason, they decided to split their efforts, with Cantrell overseeing the production aspect, and Hodges integrating himself into cast and direction.

The first hurdle was finding a venue appropriate to the intimacy of the play, but also a space which appeals to the 'alternative' theatre-goer. The Corpus Playroom fulfilled the criteria and

worked on a shared profit basis, perfect for a first-off production. Funding was obviously the main concern, with Cantrell clinching backhand deals with certain downtown bars, as well as private sources and sponsorship, to cover overheads. Keen to utilize the Playroom space, in spite of its technical primitiveness, Back to Back expanded to recruit the professional lighting company, BlueParrot Productions, who proceeded to transform the space into tech-heaven.

True to the experimental nature of the company, Hodges recruited two actors with whom he has worked before, aiming to form a tightly knit ensemble, vital to the physical and emotional intensity

of the play. The shared understanding of the ensemble was especially significant and 'put to the test' by the fact that the three shared direction of the production, incorporating a specific vision of lighting, sound and choreography into their work.

The play's success has inspired Cantrell and Hodges to continue collaboration on a wider level. Back to Back are currently looking to embark on a small national tour, culminating in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival later this year. It seems now for this new company that there's no looking back.

For more information on *Back to Back*, contact Tom (tec26) or Sam (sh361).

ESTablishment?

Esbjorn Svensson Trio
Corn Exchange, 2 February
★★★★☆

The way the Esbjorn Svensson trio defy definition is illustrated perfectly in where this review sits. At the top of this page lies the word 'classical'. E.S.T. are not in any way classical.

Before this tour, if you wanted to hear them play in Britain you'd head off to some jazz festival and, surrounded by gently ageing middle managers and ex-hippies, sit bemoaning what everyone else was missing. Their pigeon-holing as a 'jazz' act has for over ten years hidden their electrifying performances from the majority.

No longer; Esbjorn and co have made a break for it and they're heading mainstream, acronymised (presumably in Sweden ELO were never that big) and hoping to pull some of the popular music scene, which is currently castrating itself with David Gray towards something more challenging.

At least that's the theory. Now before I say more I should pre-empt myself by saying two things. One: I am a long term E.S.T. fan and perhaps some of their previous gigs have become rose tinted in the years since I last saw them. Two: don't misunderstand what I'm about to say, they are still damn good - their music remains unsurprisingly a joy to experience, with the talent they show unquestionable. They easily achieve complete harmony with their instruments while performing some of the most perfectly crafted music you will ever hear.

However, something has been lost in the shift they have tried to perform



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and, without wishing to be overly critical of what are probably still the finest trio of their kind around in Europe, they seem to be lacking the sheer undeniable electricity which used to be their trademark.

The long, meandering diversions which Svensson used to take are gone, replaced with a far tighter but less musically adventurous set. Berglund's bass solos also make no appearance, presumably deemed too 'out-there' for the market that E.S.T. are now pitched at and although Öström's genius is undoubtable, you miss the breathtaking ten minute digressions which used to remind you, in an age where most drummers would be best off put down, why

percussion was invented. The verve, which once gripped every member of the audience is surely still hidden inside, but something seems to have been lost in translation.

There remains hope that E.S.T. simply had an off night, but you can't help feel that they've been needlessly told to rein in their more creative instincts in order to pursue a wider ear. For those who see them for the first time there is always something to grab - *Gagarin's Way* will always be something of immense beauty - but you just feel they long to be back where they came from. Let's hope they find their new shoes fit before it is too late.

Tom Ebbutt

CUCO's shining night

CUCO/Del Mar/Cooke
West Road, 31 January
★★★★☆

Jonathan Del Mar bounded on to the platform, his highly polished black shoes sparkling under the lights and his tousled hair bobbing about as he gave us a little homily on Rimsky-Korsakov's *Overture on Russian Themes*; CUCO had a very lively conductor in front of them, and a very attractive programme lined up for us.

The Overture was the only piece I wasn't overjoyed about; it's not desperately worth hearing - neatly played though it was - unless you enjoy nerdy spot-the-tune games. In any case, everyone was waiting for Florence Cooke to appear; more about her in a minute.

CUCO were clearly on good form under their guest conductor and indeed were very fortunate to have a Beethoven scholar as renowned as Del Mar to direct them. His interpretation of Beethoven 4 was sparkling and dramatic from the outset, with teasing string tremolandi and magical timpani rolls from the excellent Catherine Hockings and her wooden mallets. I beamed all the way through the sunny last movement although I would have liked to see the players pushing the tempo a touch faster.

The meat of the evening, however, was Bartók's Violin Concerto No. 2 - the Bartók violin concerto, as Del Mar informed us. It's a fiendish piece just for the orchestra, but the soloist needs a Houdini-like perseverance to make its way through the consistent cascades of trills and triple-stopped chords. Florence Cooke has the necessary

technique in spades - her quarter-tones were perfectly measured and her roulades spun effortlessly from her 1713 Stradivarius - and a sensitivity to match. The opening theme, played with overwhelming poise, held me totally in a thrall, but then, so did the whole performance; I felt privileged to be hearing this violinist at the beginning of what will be a dazzling career.

A few orchestral weaknesses - edgy moments in the Bartók and some

Cooke has the necessary technique in spades

minor tuning problems - prevent me from adding a fifth star, but as far as Florence is concerned, the evening was an unalloyed triumph; her playing shone even brighter than Maestro Del Mar's gleaming shoes.

James Halliday

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Mark Adair

INVESTIGATING FOOTBALL'S
TRANSFER WINDOWWindow of opportunity
or a pane in the glass?

If Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich wants to go out and buy a football he can purchase one every single day of the year. However, if he wants to buy a footballer, he is restricted to purchasing during the January Transfer Window and the end of the season. UEFA, the European governing body, justify the window by saying it means that a team starting a competition will stay together for at least part of it.

Those lower division clubs, who have been made bankrupt in the wake of ITV Digital's collapse, are now told that they can only sell players during the January Transfer Window. Many teams such as Crewe have a reputation as a 'selling club' and make money by having an excellent youth system that cultivates players who they can then

sell on at a massive profit. Even Premiership clubs like Leeds United, (who are £80 million in debt) survive by selling their best players and bringing in replacements on loan. The transfer window artificially limits the periods they can sell players. In a worst case scenario this means that if Leeds are about to go into administration in March and need to raise a quick £5 million they will not be able to do it by selling Alan Smith or Mark Viduka.

What if a club's star striker gets injured when the window is closed? The manager will surely want to bring in a replacement. Advocates of the window say that this is a perfect opportunity to blood some youth team players and stop foreign imports ruining the game. On the other hand I'm sure Alex Ferguson would be fuming if Ruud Van

Nistelrooy broke his leg in the Champions League and United were not allowed to buy a replacement.

From the perspective of the players at the lower end, it means that if they have had a magnificent first few months, they feel that they have missed out on the 'big move' forever if it is not completed in January. Louis Saha recently moved to Manchester United for £13 million and Scott Parker recently moved to Chelsea for £10 million. Although the current 'flavour of the month', Chelsea may not be in the reckoning at all come July.

Some fans argue in favour of the Transfer Window because instead of a few transfers in September and a few in October and so on, it concentrates all the transfers to one point during the season which makes it more exciting. Fans can avidly watch the television

and read the rumours in newspapers to see if their club has succeeded in buying the next big thing.

In fact, what the Transfer Window has shown is that the gap between the Premiership's elite and the rest is becoming larger and larger. If one looks at the top three deals this January it will reveal that they involved the top three clubs, Arsenal, Chelsea and Manchester United, spending a total of £40 million.

But is there any point in having a transfer window? Critics feared that with the Bosman ruling, transfers involving cash might be obsolete and all players would move at the end of their contracts (normally in July) for free. This has been the case to some extent. High profile free transfers include Sol Campbell's move across

North London from Tottenham to Arsenal. Spurs could have expected to recoup anywhere up to £20million for the England international's services but were forced to let him leave on a free transfer to their arch rivals.

One thing which has kept cash transfers and the transfer window alive in Britain is Roman Abramovich, who has spent a cool £121 million on players since July 2003. By asking all the clubs across Europe to name their price for their top stars he has assembled a world class team based purely on his financial muscle. The demands on smaller clubs to sell in the face of these mega-money offers from Chelsea and Manchester United has always been intense, but narrowing the dates when these deals can be done only turns up the pressure.

Hurst it all before?



Nick Seeber

Sam Richardson interviews 1966's hat-trick hero

If any Englishman personifies the phrase 'living legend' it is Sir Geoff Hurst.

The man whose unique hat-trick in the 1966 World Cup Final changed his life forever, sits opposite me in front of the fireplace in the imposing surroundings of the Union President's office. Sir Geoff, however, looks perfectly at home. His still-impressive physique ("I have a treadmill, though my wife's relegated me to the garage") dominates the lounge chair as it once dominated opposition penalty areas. He greets me with a firm, reassuring handshake, telling me that "I hear you've got five minutes of my time". That this five minutes rapidly grows towards half an hour is clear evidence of Sir Geoff's passion, not only for football but for people in general.

Sir Geoff certainly has a lot to say for himself. Indeed, it crosses my mind that, while Geoff Hurst spent his time getting crosses, Sir Geoff Hurst merely spends his time getting cross. He uses the word 'disgraceful' fourteen times in relation to the modern game. But to characterise

Sir Geoff as an angry old man would be grossly unfair. He surely has a right to compare modern footballing culture unfavourably with the time when he played. The behaviour of the England and Turkey teams in the tunnel was, he says, "disgusting, pathetic, immature and disgraceful. If Alf Ramsey was manager, we'd have stayed on the pitch and waited for the Turks to go in."

Sir Geoff's views on the Rio Ferdinand saga are even more forthright. He believes the England centre-back "purposefully did not show up, he's out of order". Pushed further, he suggests that "something's going on... there's more to this than meets the eye". The FA were in the right, and the team's threat to boycott the match was "disgraceful, madness". "In Alf Ramsey's day, wearing the England shirt meant something". As for players like Chris Sutton, who refuse to wear the England shirt, "They can sod off. Who needs them."

There is one thing, however, that even Sir Geoff cannot fathom: Emile

Heskey's inability to play football, combined with his ability to get picked for England. "I was watching Liverpool recently, when my wife walked past and jogged the TV. Heskey fell over." "His record's something like four goals in twenty games. If I'd done that for West Ham, I'd have been a bricklayer in no time".

I therefore ask why, after leaving football, did Sir Geoff make it in business and not as a bricklayer? The England hero stares searchingly into my eyes, wondering if I am implying that his business success (he rose to be a managing director of London General Holdings) was only due to his fame. "I think the experience and skills I picked up in football management stood me in very good stead for the business world."

Sir Geoff's success, at least on the football field, stems partly from his genes. His father was a professional footballer for Bristol Rovers, Oldham and Rochdale; his mother (who ironically had German roots) was a strongly-built and determined woman. Yet, Sir

Geoff's emphasis throughout his best-selling book, *1966 And All That*, is on hard graft and endeavour being the key to success. He tells me "Life's about natural talent, and expanding that by hard work."

Sir Geoff, however, is been anxious to point out that "success can be a dangerous thing". He a story of how a taxi driver taking him to Heathrow airport had been staring at him through the mirror all the way. Every time Sir Geoff had looked up he had seen the taxi driver, trying to work out what his name

was. Finally the cabbie relented, saying "Go on then, guv, you'll have to tell us what it is". Sir Geoff had replied "I'm Sir Geoff Hurst MBE, scorer of a hat-trick in a world cup final, 24 goals from 49 international matches, and 248 goals in 499 appearances for West Ham". The taxi driver replied, "No, you silly prat, what terminal is it?"

Sir Geoff's polished anecdotes also included a story about how, the day after the final, Alf Ramsey had found 'volunteers' from the England team to take the trophy to an old people's home in Wembley. Sir Geoff, finding an elderly lady, asked her, "Do you know who I am?" Her reply: "No, but if you go over there and ask matron, she'll tell you."

That fourth goal in 1966, which Sir Geoff says might not have gone in if the ball hadn't hit a bobble just as he struck it, is one of those moments, like the JFK assassination, that everyone can remember exactly where they were when it happened. "One man", Sir Geoff says, "was telling me how he had been sitting in front of a TV on holiday somewhere, when he looked me straight in the eye, and asked 'So where were you when the fourth goal went in'".

The fact that these three anecdotes all revolve around not being recognised could, some might say, hint at an underlying desire for recognition somewhere in Sir Geoff's character. That could also explain his anxiety to emphasise his success in the world of business. But I think that would be a misreading of a much more complex character. Sir Geoff is anxious to "live in the present" and not just feed off the past. Hence his current involvement with grassroots football through McDonald's, and his prior work as an ambassador for England's 2006 World Cup bid. So how did he keep motivated after winning the top prize? The answer is simple. "In my day, we had to carry on. We couldn't afford to retire".

But Sir Geoff doesn't resent the money in today's game. He admits to being from the "very old school", and wouldn't have had it any other way. However, an element of sadness is clearly present in Sir Geoff's life as the conversation moves on to his former teammates who have passed away. When I tell him that I was present for the minute's silence in honour of Johnny Byrne, a flash of sadness passes across his

face. "I met up with Johnny just before he died, he was a marvellous man". Sir Geoff's 1966 team

continues to meet up annually though and, even as the likes of Bobby Moore tragically pass away, Sir Geoff is sure that "their memory will remain."

That day in 1966 was a massive turning point in Sir Geoff's life. His first goal had been a trademark West Ham creation, a towering header from a long Bobby Moore free kick. But it is his second that abides in the memory. The question everyone asks is, did the ball cross the line? "Well, if you look at the picture, you'll see that I was sitting on my arse having hit the ball on the turn, and probably had the worst view in the stadium. But the person who had the best view was Roger Hunt, who put his arm in the air straight away, and for the last thirty-seven years that's been good enough for me."

But would Sir Geoff have preferred if Roger Hunt had put the ball in, saving his team-mate from years of abuse from the Germans and Scots? "No, I'd never want to have that hat-trick taken away from me." Sir Geoff often dedicates those three goals on the "absolutely vital" pillar of support his wife Judith has been for him. So, would he have rather never won the world cup, or never met Judith? His answer, for once, is a diplomatic one: "If I hadn't met my wife, I could never have won the world cup." And that is a feat Sir Geoff hopes England can repeat as soon as possible. "I love England, I hope we win it 4-0, with two goals from Owen and two from Rooney. But no hat-tricks".

College Sport

Our superior college sport coverage returns next week when the weather is better, and *Varsity* can go out without getting cold.

Vrooom for manoeuvre?



Ben Evans Archive

Sam Richardson interviews Karting captain and BRDC driver Ben Evans

How are things going with CUAC [CU Auto Club] at the moment?

The BUKC, that's the British Universities Karting Championship, kicks off on February 18th. The testing's gone really well, and we've got a really talented line-up with the likes of Nicos Darzentas, Phil Down, Keith Collantine and Alex Darlington. But the standard of racing is really high, so it should be a real challenge. Having said that, we got several top ten finishes last season, and we're confident we can do really well.

What else is coming up?

There's the College Karting Cuppers this weekend. Then there's a race on the indoor circuit at Claxton in a few week's time, which would be ideal for any beginners looking to get involved.

What are the Karts like?

They get up to 80 miles per hour,

and do 0-60 in less than four seconds. They're all equal spec, so that way it's a level playing field for everyone involved.

And what about beating the scum?

We're confident we'll beat Oxford again. Last year we only just won, but that was because our karts kept breaking down. One of our teams was leading overall when their kart seized up. We're hoping they'll be more reliable this year, and the Rye House outdoor circuit is great, with loads of fun corners.

Were there any good crashes last season?

Well, we destroyed two karts in one race at Buckmore Park. Although neither of them was our fault. Actually, one might have been partly. I probably could have backed off, but that was never really going to happen.

And how about in your personal

racing career?

When I was testing on the Grand Prix route at Brands Hatch last year, my rear wheel clipped the grass going into Westfield's, and I hit the barrier at 90 miles per hour. That was expensive and hurt a lot. It's amazing, it really feels like the world is in slow motion in that second before you crash. And I had another good crash in my debut in the BRDC series. I was running third coming into Druids, and lost my grip driving over some rubber. I hit the wall at 50 miles per hour, and fainted as soon as I got out of the car.

What's this BRDC championship?

That's what I'm going to be racing in this year. I'll be driving a Van Diemen Formula Ford car, which does 150mph, and 0-100 in under four seconds. There are no spoilers or slicks, so there's a lot of sliding on the corners. The racing is unbelievable. And we get regular tuition at the Silverstone Race School. This year I'll be doing all fourteen races.

What are you doing to secure sponsorship?

I've got a deal with The Junction in Cambridge, and I'm also looking for more sponsors, so please do get in touch if you're up for it. The championship's on lots of high-profile bills, and we get covered in the major magazines. We might even have some TV coverage.

What drivers do you most admire?

Nigel Mansell was a great driver, very brave. Michael Schumacher was simply sublime, although now he's past his best. A guy called Adam Carroll, who races in Formula 3, really impresses me. His commitment is unbelievable and he breaks incredibly late. Nine out of ten times he's okay, but that still means he crashes quite a lot.

Thanks very much Ben. Good luck for the rest of the karting season, and for the BRDC championship.

To get involved with Karting, or to sponsor Ben, email him on bte21.

Sport in Brief

Blues Basketball

The Cambridge Blues Basketball team started this term just as they finished last, with two crucial back-to-back victories. The first win came at home against a Warwick University team that threatened the Blues' chances of finishing above fourth place in BUSA, and hence earning the opportunity to compete for the Shield. This was a hard-fought match which saw Cambridge eventually prevail by 15 points despite missing two of their starting players. The most recent match was against Staffordshire University at home. Although bottom of the table, the opposition proved tougher than expected and the Blues' poor play made it even more difficult for them to achieve the desired result. The eventual scoreline was 85-67 in the hosts' favour.

Fencing

The Women 1sts are now back on top of the BUSA Premier League. Last weekend they recorded victories of 124-102 vs. UCL, 135-49 vs. Reading, 135-62 vs. Bristol and most importantly 120-108 vs. Oxford. The Varsity Match is on Sunday 22nd February in Oxford, and Cambridge are aiming to retain the shield. Captain Lisa Hoole says she is confident of beating the Dark Blues by a bigger margin this time around as the two best members of the Oxford team aren't eligible for Varsity.

Rowing

Ben Smith, one of four men who made Boat Race history in 2003 when two pairs of brothers competed in opposing crews for the first time, has given up his fight to be fit for this year's Boat Race. The 20 year-old Cambridge architecture student, whose elder brother Matt stroked the winning Oxford crew last year, has been suffering from a recurring virus.

Women's Hockey

It has been another extremely successful week for the university womens hockey teams. After the defeat of Oxford 2-0 last weekend the Blues continued their incredible run of form with yet another league victory, 3-1, over title contenders Canterbury 2's. Two lethal short corners from captain Jenny Parkinson set up goals to ensure that the Uni side remains the "team to beat." The Nomad's push for promotion was emphasised in their 7-1 demolition of Ely. Goals from all areas of the pitch provided a brilliant team performance and excellent preparation for the Varsity match in Oxford on the 16th. Despite the gale force wind, the Bedouins were able to hold local rivals Cambridge City 3's to a 1-1 draw.

Football's divers sink to new depths

Rajan Lakhani calls for TV replays

As much as I have enjoyed watching the African Nations Cup, taking delight from the skills on show provided by the likes of Jay-Jay Okocha, Niang, Dos Santos and Eto'o in addition to the profligate, almost comical keeping that would embarrass Sunday-league goalkeepers, the one aspect of the tournament that has taken my attention is the referee's discipline of diving.

Every time the referee has construed that a player has dived in the area, a yellow card has automatically been shown to the offender. My immediate reaction was, at last, FIFA were finally taking some action against this most vicious disease within the game.

The problem in the tournament has been that approximately eight out of the ten decisions made, where the player has been cautioned for allegedly diving have been mistakes. Defenders have been allowed to get away with some terrible challenges in the penalty area, with attacking players being forced to think twice about

going down in the area.

One might believe that the lower standard of refereeing is the reason for so many errors, but the matches refereed by the European officials have resulted in similar errors. To stamp out diving, the innocent players should not have to suffer because of the diving cheats, and the defenders should not receive the benefit of

The only way to deal with what FIFA ridiculously calls 'simulation' is to introduce TV replays

the doubt in all circumstances. The big worry is that the stars of the tournament may be robbed of playing in the latter stages of the competition due to such mistakes.

This leaves us with the question of how to deal with diving? In the Premiership, it was easy to take the attitude that diving had been brought by the foreign players, and remains something that is a foreign problem,

with players such as Robert Pires, Cristiano Ronaldo, Paulo di Canio and Ruud van Nistelrooy major culprits.

This is simply a short-sighted and fundamentally wrong assessment because English players have been found to be no less guilty of taking a dive, especially the leading English players, for example David Beckham, Michael Owen and Ashley Cole.

There is nothing more frustrating when a player is through on goal and instead of taking on the keeper and rounding him to score the goal, the player deliberately runs towards the keeper's hands to suggest that he has been brought down. The divers are getting cleverer and more subtle, making it increasingly difficult for the referee to make the right decision, especially given the increased speed of the game.

The only way to deal with diving is to introduce television replays. For a long time I have opposed bringing them into soccer except on matters of fact, for example, whether the ball has crossed the line or not, but diving has reached such a level something dras-



Andy Sims

tic has to be done. If the referee is able to consult on when a player has been brought down in the penalty area, he can not only be one hundred percent sure about his decision, but also issue a red card for the diving offender. There is a stoppage while a player prepares to take the penalty.

Without doubt, you would cut down what FIFA ridiculously like to call 'simulation' which for me seems to give some credibility to the action of diving. More importantly, football can finally rid itself of the cheats who do nothing but tarnish the sport.

OFF-COLOUR BLUES LOSE THEIR WAY

Blues Football

BLUES 0
A.F.A. 1

Sam Richardson

After two weeks of snow-enforced hibernation, the Blues stuttered in the face of an Amateur Football Alliance side who are likely to prove the toughest opposition of the season.

The Amateur Football Alliance, made up according to their coach of "old boys, brokers and bankers", have only lost to the Blues once in the last twenty-five years. However, this regular fixture hadn't been played for four years due to postponements. Judging by the early minutes of the game, the Blues weren't too keen on playing this time round either.

While the Amateurs belied their name, the Blues came out of the blocks with a performance considerably flatter than the Grange Road playing surface (not that that took much). The only glimmer of light in the first fifteen minutes was a strong run by Luke McNally who scythed incisively forward from full back, only to see his cross sail over the bar.

The Blues looked to play football, moving the ball out wide to try and use the skill of Mugan, McNally, Hall and Hughes. The AFA, however, used a more direct style, sending into the swirling wind a bombardment of corners, crosses, and long throws which came down with snow on.

A header crashed wide of Blues keeper Joe Garood's near post. The keeper got down to either side to cling onto low grubber shots. A looping header clipped the Cambridge cross-bar. AFA striker Anthony Mann produced a distinctly unmanly finish three yards out as the Blues somehow scrambled the ball clear.

The only glimmer of light came from the AFA keeper. Perhaps desperate to get into the action, he produced a kamikaze diving header outside his box, and then sliced a clearance straight to Blues skipper Chris Fairbairn, although the defence closed in on him as if they were Blue-tack in Cindies.

Harry Hughes moved from up front



Andy Sims

Garood boy: Cambridge's keeper attempts to clear the ball under pressure from the Amateur Football Alliance

to the wing in a switch with his namesake, Jonny, in order to give the Blues some more skill up front. This did little to trouble a solid opposition back four, although Harry's agricultural language did at least wind up the old boys watching from the comfort of the Grange Road stand.

At the other end, Garood was keeping his side in the game with a string of fine saves. He denied Colin Jones when he was clean through, then spectacularly tipped over a dipping long range effort. The best save of the lot came on the stroke of half time, turning round the post a volley which he

saw as late as a Virgin train.

The Blues team-talk must have turned the air blue at half time, although it didn't have the same effect on the match. Certainly the re-jigged line up was tighter at the back, and Harding stamped his authority on a midfield area which was generally bypassed anyway as the Blues gave the ball wide and the AFA sent it over the top.

Both the game's only goal, and the corner from which it resulted, were cheaply conceded. Poor communication led to the ball being unnecessarily hacked behind. The hanging cross

dropped into the six-yard box and was met by a strong header. Garood, for once, could not cling on, and striker Chris Shaw made sure from two feet out.

This was a shame, as the Blues had been looking more solid. With just under half an hour left, the AFA shut up shop, gradually dropping deeper. The Blues rung the changes, but to no avail against a solid defence. The only sniff at goal fell to Fairbairn, who chested the ball down ten yards out, and turned brilliantly on a sixpence to fire wide from a tight angle.

As the clock ticked down, the AFA

introduced winger Kris Sonne, which at least allowed some bright spark in the crowd to shout 'Go on my Sonne'. The Blues, however, had little to shout about after this game, although with six games until Varsity they will ultimately look to do their talking on the pitch.

Fairbairn told Varsity 'It was a tough game, against a big, physical side. We hoped we'd have one good spell after half time, but it never really happened for us'. But as his talented side pushes for BUSA promotion and Varsity victory, one suspects that it will start happening soon.

Burgeoning Blues bash Bishop Stortford

Blues Hockey

Mikey Williamson

After the crucial win last weekend, the team seem to be unfocused and unprepared for a game that could have been a potential trip up.

Bishop Stortford are bottom of the league and the top of the league students were always looking to win this fixture comprehensively. It was important for the Men's Blues to retain their

concentration and discipline against the struggling opposition, since there are no guarantees in sport as we saw with bottom of the league Wolverhampton Wanderers' win in the Premiership against then leaders Manchester United.

In spite of this, the Blues' lack of focus soon became evident in the first ten minutes of the game when there was no structure or discipline to their hockey. Stortford managed a few early counter-attacks which led to scoring chances. Fortunately, they were all off target.

Eventually, the students settled down and with the captain coming back on the field for the first time since his injury, the team managed to construct a couple of short corners. The pressure paid off with Jamie Parker once again scoring a superb reverse hit after a set piece from a free hit at the top of the circle. Minutes later, the score line was doubled when

Rob Fulford slotted a powerful low flick under the keeper from another well won short corner.

The half time talk was simple. Kill the game off in the first 5 minutes of the half. The students did just that with Fulford adding to his tally. There was no chance of Stortford coming back from this score line and the game started to peter out.

There was still enough time for Cambridge to add to their score for 5 minutes from the end, Parker and Fulford combined to play a neat one two and Parker expertly finished the goal of with a full length diving deflection. This 4-0 victory brought the Blues another 3 points and the promotion campaign carries on.

The Blues carried on their fixtures against the top flight teams with a fixture against Old Loughtonians on the Sunday. Old Loughts are in the National Premier league and are also one of the top teams in the country.

Three 35 minutes were played to allow for maximum practice for both teams.

The first third saw the students suffer at the pace of the premiership team. The score was 4-1 to Old Loughts after some great flicking by their South African international. Despite the score-line, there were signs that the students were adapting to the pace at the end of the third.

The second third started and was a different game. The students started to match Old Loughts for skill and ability and were only let down by our fitness and unforced possession turnover. The score remained a respectable 1-1.

It was clear that the students were starting to compete with Old Loughts and were keen to put everything in to the final third to get the win that we wanted. It was a superb 35 minutes of hockey by the students, with numerous short corners won and continual pressure applied to Old

Loughts. Their international forwards squandered numerous chances, but the students won the third 2-1. This was a superb result and shows the standard of hockey the Blues are now achieving.

The weekend saw notable performances by Jamie Parker in both matches, great skills by Dickie Little and a solid performance by Neil Wilson in the Sunday friendly. Vlad Katunin came up from the Wanderers to put in a great performance in goal on the Sunday too. Cambridge hockey just keeps getting better.

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