

26
October
1998

FELIX

KEEP THE CAT FREE EST. 1949

Issue
1123

The Students' Newspaper at Imperial College

"Stars in a constellation"

By Ed Lanyon and William Lorenz

So said Her Majesty the Queen of Imperial College and the Royal College of Art during a visit to the area last Wednesday. Her Majesty started proceedings at Imperial, opening the new Sir Alexander Fleming (BMS) building. After an initial panic in the afternoon when a brick-covered outer door collapsed, damaging one of

"After an initial panic when a door collapsed... the site was groomed to perfection"

the building's supporting columns, the site was groomed to perfection by the time of her arrival.

Her Majesty was welcomed by the Rector, Sir Ronald Oxburgh and presented with a bouquet by a descendent of Sir Alexander Fleming. She was then shown a scale model of South Kensington including a lovely pond on the Queens Lawn and Dalby Court with a strangely absent boiler house. Her



Photo: Froggy

Her Majesty admires the BMS architect's handwork

Majesty was introduced to all Imperial's important persons including Dave Hellard and Wade Gayed, leaving her perplexed as to why Imperial has two union presidents. Ignoring several 'commissioned montage panels featuring key figures

and developments in the history of the College' which were obscured by Ed Sexton and other dignitaries, she then started her tour of the building, but was forced to use the stairs because the lifts were broken.

The tour included a live pharmacology practical in which first year medical students tested *on themselves* 'the effect of various chemical compounds upon their sharpness of vision'. Her Majesty then officially opened the building and signed the College's new Royal Charter. This was followed by a speech by the Rector, who made a very funny remark about the building collapsing. Everyone was tremendously amused.

Her Highness left behind some disenchantment, failing to fully acknowledge the 200 strong crowd on her entrance and exit. No doubt this was the result of her full schedule, next involving a move north to the Albert Memorial and a spectacular opening ceremony involving fireworks, apparently costing £25 000.

Suspect Speakers Back Again

By Duncan Hill

In what is becoming an annual occurrence, dodgy white vans have appeared in the area of Imperial College. Not only do they claim that the speakers they sell have an r.r.p of around £1800 and they will sell them to you for a mere £200, but they'll also give you a lift to the nearest cash point to draw your money out for you.

Last year one Imperial student was kidnapped by these people and forced to withdraw £200 from a cash point. They may also offer to take you to your flat etc. to try them out, but the going advice is; under no circumstances must you get into this van. The speakers themselves are not what they claim to be, and if you did spend any of your hard-earned cash on them, most likely they would

cause even more damage to your hi-fi. If anyone sees these vans attempting to sell speakers, they should be reported to *Felix*, along with the vehicle registration plate, descriptions of the occupants and

details of any conversation held. Once again, do not hand any money over, or get into the vehicle; as ICU's president Dave Hellard says, "they rely on idiots. Don't be one".

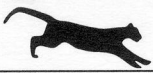


Photo: Brett Donovan

Con-artists try to entice our reporter

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RCSU Who?

by Gareth Morgan

The Royal College of Science Union's problems continue to mount. Douglas Graham's resignation from the post of Vice President (Education and Welfare), reported in last week's letters page, has left the RCSU with nine vacant positions, as well as several empty seats on the Committee.

VP (Finance) William Bentley said that most vacancies resulted from officers needing to devote more time to their academic studies. There seems to be a general lack of interest in the running of the RCSU on the part of most of its members, which has made the officers' jobs harder, increasing the pressure on their time. These difficulties seem to mirror those of the ICU, who are having trouble filling the post of Deputy President (Clubs and Societies). The prospects for the RCSU seem gloomy if

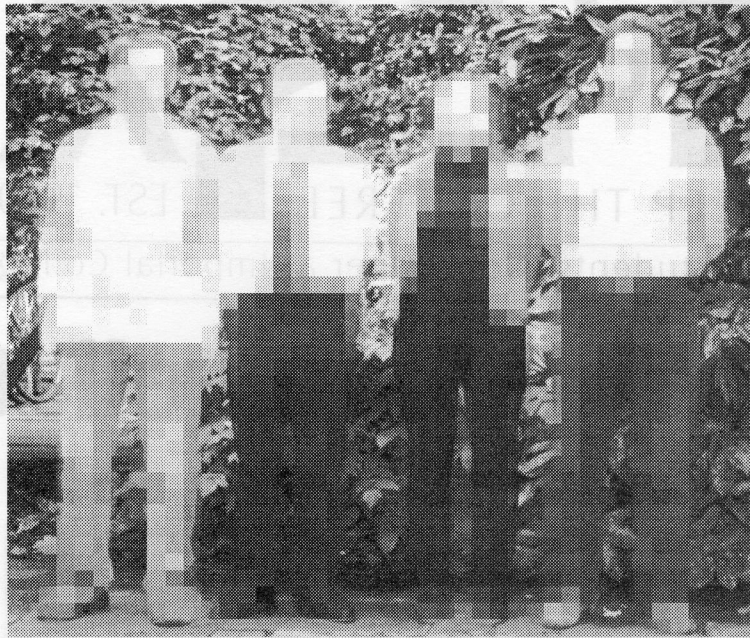


Photo: Jonas

The usual suspects - who on earth will stand?

a paid Sabbatical post cannot be filled because of a lack of interest in student politics.

Nomination papers for the posts of President, VP (E&W), Union General Meeting Chair, Honourary Secretary, Welfare Officer, Web Editor, Archivist and

Publications Officer are up in the RCSU office on Unwin Road. There is also a vacancy for a Biology Departmental Representative. In the meantime, Mr Bentley and VP (Clubs and Entertainments) Bob Walker are filling the role of acting President.

Med School Sport Hangs In Balance

by David Roberts

The fate of Medical School entries into sporting leagues and cups hangs on Monday's meeting of the British Universities Sport Association (BUSA) Council. Although last week's meeting of University of London Union (ULU) Council voted to allow medical students to be able to pick whether to play for their own side or for their "parent institution", this conflicts with current BUSA policy. Consequently, the prospect of continually changing rules promises to produce a situation described as "a complete mess" by one senior figure.

If the BUSA meeting rules against the ULU decision, then the prospect of teams being forced to change between every game looms large. Indeed suspicion is growing amongst senior sports officers that BUSA may decide to simplify the entire issue by forcing all institutions to entire as a single unit. In the words of one senior official "BUSA could legitimately turn round and tell us we must have single entry now".

At present, the discussion revolves

around the exact interpretation of a system known as "hybrid entry". This was introduced for the first time this season, to allow institutions currently undergoing mergers with medical schools (Imperial, UCL, King's and QMW) to enter a mixture of separate medic and non-medic teams and joint institution-wide sides. For Imperial, this means that College wide teams enter all sports except Rugby, Football and Hockey, where separate medic and non-medic sides exist.

At the ULU meeting, the ULU Vice-President (Sports), Nick Dunnet, suggested that the proposal to allow students the right to pick which team to play for was only a "clarification" of the hybrid entry system adopted by BUSA. However, minutes of the BUSA Executive meeting held on the 6th of March this year clearly state that entries will be decided on "a sport specific basis". In other words, ICSM students can only enter as part of a College wide team if no medical team exists. This directly contradicts the motion passed by ULU Council (which applies to UL competitions only).

As a result, Monday evening's meeting of BUSA Council is being asked to adopt the ULU interpretation of the hybrid system. Consequently, three realistic possible outcomes exist: BUSA refuse to set the precedent of changing eligibility rules in mid-season, forcing the sports teams to field different teams for different competitions - and in all likelihood forcing ULU to back down; BUSA accept the new "interpretation" of hybrid entry, and the merger process speeds up; BUSA complain about the inherent problems of checking up on the correct enforcement of the system, and force single entry now (rather than in three years time, as originally forecast).

Although this may all seem hideously complex, it is a real cause for concern amongst senior sources, and has major implications for Imperial's chances in competitive sport this season. Whatever decision is reached, ICU Rugby, Football and Hockey teams will not be merging this year, so if BUSA accept the ULU decision, we stand to loose out, with UCL (whose teams will merge) the largest beneficiaries. However, if BUSA refuse, keeping a check on who is allowed to play for what team will become a nightmare, and all hell could break loose. Either way, troubled times would seem to be ahead.

If you have any views on the situation, then please get in contact with your club captain.

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Editor: Ed Sexton
 Photographic Editor: William Lorenz
 Music Editors: Jason Ramanathan and
 Denis Patrickson
 News Editors: Andy Ofori and Joel
 Lewis
 Film Editor: David Roberts
 Games Editor: Gary Smith
 Arts Editor: Helena Cochemé
 Literary Editor: Kent Yip
 Sports Editor: Gus Paul

Freeze on Fees

by Gareth Morgan

Ever since the Dearing Report and the introduction of tuition fees for most UK students, several universities have been contemplating charging extra 'top up' fees. These would be paid to the university on top of existing fees, and figures of up to £400 per year have been mentioned. Particularly interested have been the 'Russell Group', a club of about twenty prominent institutions including IC. The Oxbridge colleges have a particular interest in this since there have been threats to the £2500 they receive from the Government for each student on top of usual tuition costs.

LSE have been contemplating the introduction of top up fees, a move which may prompt the other Russell Group universities to do likewise. However, ICU President Dave Hellard recently met with the Rector to discuss the new fees. The Rector stated, and confirmed in writing, that IC was not considering implementing top up fees, and this would not be affected by other institutions' actions or the forthcoming Government review of the definition fees.

Dave Hellard said that "Top up fees would have a disastrous effect on the accessibility to the best education for poorer students. It would create a two-tier system based on wealth and not intelligence". He added that the agreement with the Rector was a decisive step in the right direction, especially given IC's influential position within the Russell Group.

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Deputy Deficiency

by Andrew Ofori

The air of enthusiasm that inspires the Union at the outset of any new year is being severely tempered by a Sabbatical shortage. In keeping with previous years, the position of Deputy President for Clubs & Societies has been left vacant, increasing the workload of Union officials. Fate rather than apathy was the culprit in the case of this year's staff shortage, with the former DP(C&S) elect failing last year, forcing him to withdraw from the position.

The elected DP(C&S) will be responsible for the 200 Clubs & Societies, representing them to the College and external organisations such as BUSA (British Universities Sports Association). The new incumbent will be an essential point of contact to club members and can expect to invest their creativity in the expansive field of Student Development until yet another Sabbatical is elected to focus on Welfare and Education.

The missing Sabbatical's duties are currently shared between Union offi-

cial; when relevant issues arise, it is the Union President and the DP(Finance & Services) who are making the decisions, any requisite action is facilitated by the Clubs & Societies Administrator. This current method of operation was described as a 'bit of a nightmare' by the Union President, although he did commend the Administrator's dedication.

He felt the current lack of candidates emanated from student's reluctance to split their courses with a Sabbatical year, but with recurring issues such as health & safety and hybrid entry awaiting a rational mind he pleaded 'As long as you're not a complete donkey please stand!'

The Union's drive to find a Deputy President is an effort to avoid their worst fears, a round of elections where DP(C&S) candidates are required for this year and next. Each candidate requires a proposer and 20 seconders; papers came down on Friday with 2 potential candidates standing, namely Rostam Kilgour from Physics and Material's Stuart Cook. Today marks the beginning of 2 weeks of campaigning around the college and this will be followed by voting from 9.00-5.00pm on the 9th & 10th November where every Union member has the opportunity to vote.

Medics blow cash

by David Roberts

Next weeks planned Medics Graduation has been abandoned at a cost of £7500. Fears of low turnout and heavy losses also surround the Medical Freshers Ball, which was scheduled to take place last Saturday (after Felix went to press).

The Medics Graduation Ball had been organised by the School of Medicine Rugby squad, on the understanding that any profits would be diverted into their coffers. However, their decision to book a hotel for the event was made without any consultation of either the Union President or Deputy President, and without following correct Union financial procedures. As a result, a contract was signed which requires the Union to pay 100% of the bill, even if a decision is made to cancel the event.

Similarly, the Freshers Ball was organised by the Med School Union without consultation with ICU. The contract was finally seen by Deputy President Chris Ince less than a week before the event, and with a verbal agreement already

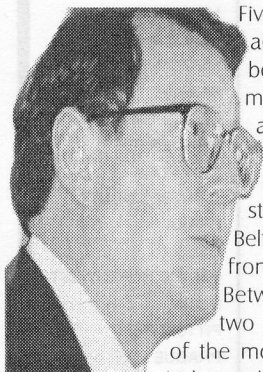
made, he thus he had no choice but to sign. This left the Med School Union needing to sell 504 tickets for the event to break even - leaving the prospect of greater losses looming large.

This financial laxity is widely regarded as being a direct consequence of the huge scale of the combined Med School Union reserves (built up over a period of many years by donations and profits from events) - which stood at £55 885 at the beginning of August, and may not be touched by ICU for the next twelve months. However, at the end of that period they will be pared down to a level comparable with the other Constituent College Union's (approximately £2000). Thus, certain leading figures in ICSM SU have decided that the next twelve months should be treated as a gigantic spending spree, with the words "Take that out of our reserves" frequently echoing around Union offices. In excess of ten thousand pounds has already been spent, and the losses accrued by these events could see the reserves plummet further.

If no action is taken by ICU, then the next year could see an unprecedented roller coaster of spending on behalf of medical students which could easily see their reserves reduced from five figures to four or even three.

Nobel Peace Prize

As the advent of peace in Ireland captures the hearts and minds of the world, including the Nobel committee, Padraig McCloskey takes an analytical look at the two main protagonists of the Peace Process.



Trimble

Five months ago, two bespectacled men of 61 and 54, stepped onto the stage at Belfast's Waterfront Hall. Between the two stood one of the most famous Irish people of the last twenty years, Bono.

Five months ago these two men were on the campaign trail for a YES vote in the Northern Ireland referendum following the Good Friday Agreement.

On Friday 16th October the same pair, John Hume MP and David Trimble MP, were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize "...for their efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Northern Ireland."

As somebody who grew up living a mere fifteen miles from John Hume's native Derry, I am delighted that his endless dedication to peace has been recognised, even if his ultimate aim has not been altogether achieved. For as long as I have been reading newspapers, there has hardly been a day when I opened the

sheets and did not encounter the hard work Hume has done for his home city or for the nationalists of Northern Ireland. John Hume has always been a peaceful man and was instrumental in bringing about the IRA ceasefire in 1994 through secret talks with Gerry Adams. The fact that Adams is no longer regarded with the same offence, he was then made it all the harder for John Hume attain his goals, especially when he was slated for the ceasefire break down. John Hume has tirelessly applied himself to aiding Northern Ireland's Catholics and National-

ists since the Civil Rights movement started 30 years ago. It is hoped this award will not be an end in itself, but rather John Hume will be truly rewarded with peace in our country.

I see David Trimble as another matter entirely. From an early age I can quite

honestly say that a certain Ian Paisely helped me form an opinion that all Unionist politicians are the same, i.e. they were only interested in NO politics. To be fair though for many years my only recollections of some towns having visited them, was the size of their "Ulster says NO" banner draped across their respective town halls.



Bono applauds politicians

When Trimble became the Ulster Unionist Party leader I feared the worst; more of the same. Thankfully to some extent I have been proved wrong.

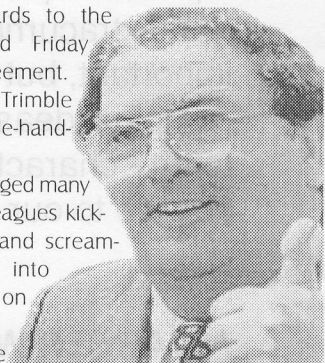
That is, Trimble backed the 1974 loyalist workers strike, was opposed to the Anglo-Irish Agreement and marched triumphantly through Portadown, hand-in-hand with Ian Paisely, after the first Duncree incident in 1995.

I was not only shocked but overjoyed when I saw the stand he made with

regards to the Good Friday Agreement. Mr. Trimble single-handedly dragged many colleagues kicking and screaming into line on this issue

(over half of his party's MPs were opposed to the Good Friday Agreement). Mr. Trimble had so much to lose if he failed to get the overall backing from his party he deserved. I will always remember his courage throughout the referendum campaign, and I'm sure many people with similar views to myself felt the same. Like Gerry Adams said, "...this is a man I could do business with", he too is a deserving winner of this award.

Despite the criticisms from some quarters directed towards the Nobel Committee on their choice, I feel it is not an award to kick-start a failing peace process, but merely endorses what has gone on and hopefully will continue until such time that every member of Northern Ireland's community can walk, drink, eat and shop with no fear of violence.



Hume



Ever felt something could be done better?

What did you do about it?

Nothing? Or did you do something to get it done better? If you actually did something, and you're graduating in 1999, you could be exactly what we're looking for. We need students to apply for our Christmas courses this year. The kind of students who don't just study, but also get involved in things and really make a difference.

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Which brings us back to you. To succeed at P&G you'll need to have certain characteristics. Thinking skills. Creativity. The ability to work with others. And, most importantly, you'll be the kind of person who recognises ways to improve things, then has the drive and leadership to make those improvements real.

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If you are looking for a challenging career which really allows you to break the boundaries then pick up an application form now. We inform all our Christmas course students within a few days if they have a full-time job offer. You could start 1999 in the knowledge that you've secured a place with a company that's one of the most admired in the world.

We only recruit at graduate level and run courses across Brand Management, Customer Business Development, Product Supply Management, Financial Management, Management Systems, and Research and Development. The Christmas Course programme is an ideal way for you to find out more about the company and it's people.

Your first step?

Our deadline for applications is 30th October 1998. If you think you fit the bill, we need to hear from you now. Call our recruitment hotline on 0800 0565258 or come along to the P&G corporate presentation at the Waldorf Hotel on 13th October 1998 at 7pm.

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A World of Terrorists

Dear Felix,

If Mr Stringer might be persuaded to pause in his breathless moral outrage for just a moment ('An Alternative to Air Strikes?', Felix 1122), he might perhaps realise that Israel is hardly alone in acting the way that it does, unfortunate though this may be. In fact, I can think of a much closer country where "torture of prisoners", "imprisonments without trial" and "forbidding people to travel freely within their own country" have been the norm. Stumped? Try adding "massive military occupation", "massacres of unarmed demonstrators" and "multitudes of miscarriages of justice". I would add "locking civilians into their own homes" except that it doesn't begin with an M. Astute readers will of course have already divined that I speak of none other than the British government in Northern Ireland. Glass houses?

Naturally the actions of Israel, Hamas, the RUC and the IRA are all deplorable. The point is simply that Israel, like Britain, has motivations for its deplorable behaviour, be they justified or not - if Mr Stringer doubts this, he may wish to consider where he was when the Aldwych bus bomb exploded. To believe in a simplistic strategy of going-home-and-sorting-it-all-out, while ignoring the problem of addressing these motivations (such as Israel's very real security concerns), is naivete of the highest order.

Theodore Hong (Computing PG)

CCU - Strike Two

Well, since my letter on the subject of change in the CCUs I have been inundated with comments. Most (80%+) have been along the lines of "great letter" or "about time someone said that..." Others have not been so good. To any of those who I upset, I apologise, however my views on Union politics still stand.

It is no good having the CCUs run by a select few forming a quasi members only club, making it hard for non friends of officers to get involved. The age of people coming into influential roles without any background training must end in this academic year. I am concerned not only with the welfare aspects of my CCU but I want to try and help all future students of all CCUs.

Next year we will have a new sabbatical officer (sabb) in charge of welfare in the Union, he/she should have control over the way in which Departmental and Welfare Officers do their jobs. The dep-reps should have a good team of year reps below him/her and should then report back to the sabb. The same rules need to apply for this as they do to

finance. All new welfare officers and dep-reps should be given training in welfare and basic techniques needed to complete their tasks properly.

If ICU is now in charge of Welfare, what is left for the CCUs? I am not calling for the abolition of these. Tradition does have its place at college. They should be made up of the heads of the departmental societies and be concerned solely with providing events and a certain amount of support for their students. This is because there are different needs from different places - Engineers need advice on industrial placements, Physicists need to learn how to have fun etc.

I am currently working on a paper to put to ICU council later in the academic year, outlining the changes that I feel need to be made. If you have any comments then e-mail me at douglas.graham@ic.ac.uk

Douglas Graham (Physics UGII)

Change the Music!

I am writing to complain about the music played in the Union, particularly on Wednesday nights. Often on Wednesday I go to the Union for a few drinks with my mates. Every week, without fail [the Ents & Marketing Manager] or one of his clan churns out the same old Brit Pop Indy shite. I normally don't mind if the music being played is not to my taste but when I hear the same stuff week in, week out, I wonder if the music is played for our benefit, or to keep the DJ's happy? Not only is it the same style of music, but the same tunes are played every week.

There are plenty of good DJ's at the Union's disposal who can play a massive variety of music. Personally I would like to here more 'good' (particularly non-commercial) electronic music. I know many people that feel the same way who simply avoid the Union because it does not cater for them. I am not asking for Wednesday night to be turned into industrial Acid-Techo night, but simply that more variety is played. There is plenty on electronic music out there that many people enjoy.

I know that letters with the same point have been written before and in the past [the Ents & Marketing Manager] has responded by saying that 'We play the music because people want to here it. The dance floor is always full between 11:30 and 1:00'. Well, firstly the dance floor is always full because most people by that stage are quite pissed and would dance whatever music was played. Secondly, the fact that people like what you play is no reason not to have variation. Please, please, please give some of the other DJ's the 11:30 - 1:00 slot, let's have some variation, you can try to please everyone. Anyone reading this letter who

agrees with me do something, speak to the Ents Manager, or reply to this letter.

Tim Wright (Computing 4)

Ents Replies...

First things first, my personal musical taste has no effect on the ents musical policy at all (except if I'm Djing!). I won't even get into the 'musical tastes' argument, though it is nice to see that in your opinion anyone in the Union dancing has to be pissed.

If you check round what the other Unions in London put on themselves (as opposed to their clubs and societies) I think you'll find we actually put on a diverse range of events.

For instance on Saturday nights we run a range of pre-club nights including 'the electric café' which, with incredible synchronicity, happens to focus entirely on eclectic electronica, 'Tha Bomb', a hip hop, funk and soul night and 'Bubble & Squeak' which will be playing a mix of electronic dance.

That's on top of the chill out room we run every Wednesday and Friday, which anyone can tell you is certainly diverse as we have an 'anything goes' musical policy up there. And I haven't even mentioned the four alternating club nights we run on a Friday. I hope I've answered the points raised; if you don't like a Wednesday night, then why not try one of the others? I'm fairly confident that you'd like at least one of them.

Ents & Marketing Manager

Medical Indoctrination

Dear Sir,

I feel I must complain about the appalling attitudes senior medics have regarding the non-medical students of IC. In conversation with a first year medic recently it emerged that he was actively encouraged by senior medics and ICSM Union officials to avoid socialising with students of other subjects.

Whilst I am not surprised by the us-and-them attitude of the relics left over from the old system, indoctrinating the new students to despise other students is clearly not on. I can only hope that the first year medics learn to live with us during their time at the BMS, away from the hate-mongers.

James Browning (Physics II)

A Word from Estates...

As a proud member of the Estates Division, a former warden, ICU Hon Life member and manager of the car-park, I must comment on the planter. Setting

aside the VFM question, there is a good environmental case to be made.

Next month, 2 Jags will flesh-out the tax implications of those driving to work in London. The College may well be obliged to charge staff and students.

The demand for spaces may well drop below the supply, and if it doesn't, there are plans to build an attractive (if Sir Norman can't do it, no-one can car-park on Dalby Court to satisfy the demand.

Parking is a lucrative business, and I enjoy maximising the profit with minimum disruption to the core activity of IC. However, parking is not a core activity of IC. If we lose research income (and we have) because our campus is unsightly, surely we are obliged to act. How we act is a matter for consideration.

VFM does not stand for Vegetation For Ma'am.

Ken Young

Charing Cross not a Loss

Following your article above I would like to clarify some of the facts that seem to have been distorted over time.

1. There was, and is not any 'suspect book-keeping'. All aspects of the planning of the ball have been and still are available to college.

2. £28,000 was not spent on the largest marquee in the country. This figure relates to the total marquee cost and on the night there were 5 marquees, the largest of which is smaller than the largest marquee in the country.

3. Only £600-00 was spent on Champagne, not £7,000-00 as reported in the article.

I hope this clarifies any points in your article that readers may have been worried about.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Carter (Ex-Deputy President ICSM)

Deadline for letters is 12noon Wednesday.
Letters may be edited for length, but will not be altered in any other way. Letters need not be signed, but a swipe card must be shown when submitting anonymous letters.



The Week Ahead

Monday

- Games Meeting** 12:30pm
PC, Playstation and N64 gamers of the world unite.
- Music Meeting** 1:00pm
From Motorhead to Prodigy, via Placebo or Fat Boy Slim, Jason's got it all
- Film Meeting** 1:30pm
Wanna be the next Barry Norman?

Tuesday

- News Meeting** 1:00pm
The mid-week update

Thursday

- Books Meeting** 1pm
For all the literary types out there.
- Layout Meeting** 1.30pm

Friday

- Arts Meeting** 12pm
Does exactly what it says on the tin.
- News Meeting** 1:10pm
Come one, come all, come all aspiring journalists.
- Photography Meeting** 1:20pm
For all the photographers out there in IC land.

So, the Queen has visited IC. I would like to say that the event will be remembered by those students present for years to come, but it simply isn't true. Hundreds of students (both inside and outside the BMS) were waiting to see her Majesty, and all they got was a fleeting glimpse as she moved between car and lobby. No 'walkabout' - not even a friendly wave and pause for amateur photographers. Maybe I am bitter, as I was not presented to her Majesty and, let's face it, the real reason she was in the area was to open the renovated Albert Memorial - we merely provided a one hour hors d'oeuvre. Many students will remain disappointed, however.

Furthermore, the speeches and

entire ceremony focused on Imperial's 'New School of Medicine'. Now I am not one to criticise medics, and their presence at South Kensington is indeed very welcome, but as a former biologist I would have appreciated more acknowledgement of Biology's role in the new building. It is, after all, the Biomedical Sciences Building, and not just the Alexander Fleming Building.

Not one to let sleeping dogs lie, it was with considerable amusement I studied the model of South Kensington erected in the BMS for the occasion. It was a good model, a very good model - too good, in fact. The pond in the middle of the Queen's Lawn was certainly a surprise, and Dalby Court looked

as though it had been taken straight from a Cambridge college. Okay, so it was how the campus will one day (eons in the future) look. I just can't help feeling that by the time the 'temporary' boiler house has been removed, our "attractive car-park" (see letters page) has been built, and some rare and expensive trees have been found for the Court, Prince William will be drawing his pension.

On a less cynical note, however, the college must be congratulated for organising the event in the first place, and for dealing admirably with a falling door and failing lifts. It was certainly a good day for Imperial College; as for its students... well, you can decide that one.

CAG Events

Monday 6pm

Tools for Self Reliance
Basement of Beit Quad

Tuesday/Thursday 8pm

Soup Run for the homeless
Basement kitchen, Weeks Hall

Rag

is under new management and needs your help! Interested in helping raise money for worthy causes?

Come along to the RAG office on Thursday 28th between 12 and 2 pm to find out more.

For more info, email rag@ic.ac.uk or sarah.coburn@ic.ac.uk

Erasmus

Thursday 29 October

Pub Night
Meet Union Bar 8pm

Saturday 31 October

Round London Quiz
Meet Beit Quad Arch (Union) 11am

ICU Colours

The following have been awarded ICU awards and honours.

Half Colours

Mike Gibbs

Hannah Pearson

Caroline Gibbons

Phil Miller

Nayanee Perera

Rob Park

Phil Pearson

Outstanding Service Award

Natasha Newton

Anne Ovens

Catherine Sheehan

Andy Kershaw

Simon Cooper

Michelle Cope

Mark Sharman

Full Colours

Fellowship

Alex Tylee-Birdsall

David Roberts

Tanya Siraa

Jon Lambert

Claire Penketh

Brian Tucker

Distinguished Fellowship

Darren Hubbard

Hamish Common

Karen Yates

Richard Marshall

Lloyd Kilford

Richard Edgington

Chris Ince

Mark Baker

Shanaka Katuwawala

Ali Campbell

Adam Cherrington

Despina Crassa

Reuben Connolly

Julia Harries

Simon Maycock

N'Diorel Ba

Robin Hill

Mandar Trivedi

William Smith

Ling Li

Tony Hickson

Nick Chapman

Andrew Swift

Wendy Russell

Sanela Hodzic

Paul Hopkinson

James Carter

Members who have been awarded honours are entitled to purchase an ICU tie and pin. Please collect your honours from Pat in the Union Office.

Wine Tasting

Wine tasting Society meets each week for a tutored tasting. Our programme for this term is as follows:

27th Oct Australian

3rd Nov Bordeaux

10th Nov Tuscany

All meetings take place in dB's and start at 6.00pm

Classical CDs for Sale/Exchange

Symphony, Piano, Violin Concertos, Opera, Selections and many more.

Only £0.50 to £2 a CD

If interested, please contact q.mei@ic.ac.uk

Cereal Killer

We have tapes of the Freshers' Concert available for only £1! Contact Paul on Jb297@ic.ac.uk

"...possibly the second best band ever to come out of the college, they've still got plenty of time to catch up with Queen..."

Felix 1122

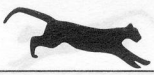
Actors Needed

If anyone is interested in starring in an amateur short film presented by STOIC then please e-mail ho.man@ic.ac.uk

No previous experience necessary.

All ages and nationalities welcome, particularly American, Cantonese and French speakers.

Wide range of acting roles available.



Right Angles to Reality

I don't dance. Not since the "Boney M Affair" at Leonard Glitstein's parents' barbecue party in 1978 when, full of youthful exuberance, six bowlfuls of sherry trifle and half a glass of Double Diamond I threw myself rather too forcefully into "Brown Girl in The Ring" and then threw up on the Glitstein's garden furniture. I really can't see what all the fuss was about. The sun lounger escaped virtually unscathed because I vomited into the lap of Leonard Glitstein's mother's great aunt Lene who was the guest of honour at the event, it being her ninetieth birthday and all. Anyway as I pointed out at the time, it wasn't as if the dress suited her already - I think Chanel is wasted on the over-75s, made to measure or not - but she wasn't having any of it. She just kept coming at me, spittle flying from the corners of her mouth, her face a twisted mask of hate, alternately leaning on one of her sticks and swinging the other wildly at what, to a child of nine, was head height. In fact, recalling the situation, I think she was more to blame than anyone for the garden shed being set on fire. If she'd only given up the fight after she fell for the first time, I might not have backed into the barbecue and sent it flying with inevitable consequences. Still, it could have been worse; great aunt Lene only broke one of her hips and the burns inflicted by flying embers were kept down to second degree. Unfortunately however, the shed itself and the upper two floors of the house next door were beyond saving. The repercussions with Mr and Mrs Golightly the next door neighbours went on for some time, and there were even those who went as far as to try to pin the blame on me. But as

my father told the subsequent local government enquiry, it was hardly my fault that in an effort to economise after Mr Golightly had lost his job due to a global slump in the lava lamp market, they had let their Fire and Contents insurance lapse. You'll be glad to know that we managed to get the stain off the dress after four washes although Leonard's mother was on Valium for rather longer.

I bring all this up to try to impress upon you the fact that I don't like to dance although I admire and envy people who do. Those ballroom fans amongst you will no doubt have heard of the Tarantella, a fiery Latin dance that nobody north of Barcelona can do properly. I was once told that the moniker of this comes from the fact that its apparently random and violent, jerky movements are supposed to represent someone in the death throes that result from being bitten by a tarantula. The Tarantella was, you understand, invented in pre-Ecstasy days when the only way to get your kicks was to cheat death with a giant hairy arachnid. Did the older generation back then shake their heads, I wonder, in sad what-kind-of-world-is-this-when-our-youngsters-have-to-get-splattered-out-of-their-tiny-minds-in-order-to-enjoy-themselves type disbelief? Were there banner headlines in the Tijuana Times decrying the pernicious evil of arachnid abuse or gritty "real life" interviews in the El Dorado Evening Chronicle with Mexican teenagers who, having started on tarantula had graduated onto the hard stuff and now had 300 peso-a-day Black Widow habit? Possibly. The truth of the matter is that I don't really want to think about it because if there's one thing I'm even worse at than danc-

ing it's dealing with spiders, and so to have the two things come lumped together is for me, a scenario of unimaginable horror. A bit like if the Bay City Rollers reformed and went on a world tour with Darts.

Now I don't mean to imply that I'm a total arachnophobic. I don't jump up on a chair, pulling up my petticoats and yelling "Thomas, Thomas", but the fact remains that spiders are definitely persona non grata in my apartment. They don't pay rent or Council Tax and therefore have got no business making themselves at home. I know it sounds mean spirited but there you are. The problem lies in the fact that however hard I try, the spiders just don't take the hint. It's got so bad that it's like the insect house at Windsor Safari Park in my flat (yes, I know spiders aren't insects, take it up with the Head of Creepy-Crawlies at the Zoo).

To begin with I used to kill them outright with the flip-flops that my parents brought me back from Cyprus and whilst this was devastatingly effective, it did not present a long term solution to the infestation. I next tried a policy of inflicting debilitating but non-lethal wounds on the insurgent in the hopes that he (or she, I never stopped to ask) would be partially incapacitated but not to the extent that he wouldn't be able to drag himself back to the nest to warn all the others of the fate that awaited them. But even this enlightened, semi-Jainist approach seems to have failed judging yesterday's encounter.

I had got back rather later than usual - I'd foolishly assumed that because both the destination indicator on the platform and the sign on the front of the train that I had boarded said Wimbledon, that the

train itself was going to Wimbledon. Having fumbled around in my trouser pocket for a not unpleasant five minutes I took my keys out of my briefcase and opened the door. There it was. Only it wasn't a spider. It was a SPIDER. It sat there crossing and uncrossing its Chewbacca-like legs, regarding me with a haughty look in its ten beady eyes, a sarcastic half-smile playing about its mandibles. To say that it was huge would be to say that George Best played football. To add insult to injury, it was smoking one of my cigarettes (no only kidding, it was actually smoking a hand-rolled one). My first instincts were to finish it off with a single blow from my Hush Puppies, but I hesitated - what if they only worked on dogs? Besides, there was no guarantee that it wouldn't grab the sole of my shoe and twist me off balance with a deft flick of one of its wrists - a spider this size might even know judo. Robert the Bruce would probably have drawn some kind of strength and encouragement from the situation, but not this sasenach. Trying to retain as much dignity as possible I darted into the lounge slamming the door behind me, and waited until my breathing had normalised and the intruder had slunk out of the front door chuckling menacingly.

I've not seen him since. Since I hermetically sealed all the windows and doors that is. Some people might say that such behaviour is going a bit far and maybe they're right. And when you think about it it's a bit silly really. After all you're so big and they're so small. I suppose I'm just imagining thi.....wait a minute... did you see something scamper under the sofa?

Matt Salter

A Reminiscing Medic

Over familiarity with the clubbing scene, getting absolutely pissed... slaughtered... licked on cheap beer and wine, partying in obscure, not-even-vaguely familiar decrepit student dwellings, getting acquainted with a bunch of out-of-their-face strangers, getting more and more intimate with the hazy, murky world of drunken stupor night after night. Your head finally hitting your pillow / your mate's floor.... a floor, never before the disrespectful hour of 5a.m., when the birds annoyingly decide to give you a rendition of their version of 'Morning has Broken'. You only notice this for a few seconds though, because before you know it, you're in the deep recesses of the realms of heavenly slumber.

Another missed lecture... practical... study period; nightmarish visions of endless, incessant queues at the photo-

copying machine the week before the exams fail to motivate you to move an inch. Welcome to student life!

No doubt, at this very minute, thousands of freshers are getting over bouts of 'freshers' flu', and experiencing the post-freshers'-week blues, with various strains of paracetamol-resistant hang-overs. The novelty of being at University is probably slowly wearing off. The initial excitement becomes over-shadowed by the increasing pile of essays and projects you have to hand in and the looming end-of-term exams that your tutors won't let you forget about.

And then when you finally get promoted to the upper years, you start seeing everything in a different light. Life seems less rousing and you find that you have lost the ability to cope with the whole morning-after fiasco. You see the new intake of fresh-faced students, ooz-

ing idealism from every pore, full of enthusiasm and getting excited at just about everything and anything. At this point you think to yourself, "God, I wasn't like that... was I?"

You know you're one step closer to drawing your pension when you'd rather stay in on a Saturday night to watch that missed episode of E.R., recorded by your mate's thoughtful mum, than go out, when you actually enjoy cooking a three course meal rather than grabbing a KFC or heating a 99p Tesco microwave meal... and alright the string of twenty-first birthday parties you've recently attended kind of gives it away too!

You feel that the 'once-a-term-regurg' experience is quite enough and even necessary to keep alive the ever flickering, ebbing flames of the youthful, juvenile spirit entrapped within the ever senescing 21 going on 30 body. This

does not in any way imply that you are ready for the responsibilities of adulthood. The thought of a C & G mortgage, nasty Pampers, parents evenings and Virgin pension plans makes the contents of your stomach churn, far more than cider ever could.

Alright... so you're quite content to be floating around in the waiting-room of adulthood, a string of forty-some-things in front of you in the queue, comforted by the fact that you can at any point indulge yourself in juvenile pranks, but act like an adult when you have to.

So what? You're stuck in the comfortable rut between post-teenage adolescence and premature adulthood. Don't worry, you're not alone. Chill out... enjoy... it's only a matter of time before the anti-ageing pill will be available at a store near you!

D. Devadas

Thought for the Day

Halloween

This may be the first Halloween on which you get children coming to your door and asking for Mars bars before stealing your trousers. Well, that's what they do where I come from, anyway. As far as I am concerned, the scariest imaginable event on October 31 is a load of drunk 12-year olds arriving

"...the devilish clinking of Zippo lighters will alert you to the fact that your bins are on fire..."

on your doorstep and clamouring to be fed chocolate (just for that sugar-rush). If they are refused, they will disappear, returning, as if by magic, at the witching hour; the devilish clinking of Zippo lighters will alert you to the fact that your bins are on fire. Oh yes, the real zombies walk amongst us every day.

This scenario, let's face it, is far more disturbing than even the best pumpkin

lanterns. As Steve Punt once put it: "It's a large root vegetable with a candle in it. New underpants for me, Mum."

Halloween is a corruption of All Hallows' Eve, the day before the Christian festival of All Saints' Day. The traditions of Halloween are believed to have been inherited from the Druids. Both the Celts and the Druids considered this day to be of spiritual significance; the Celts placed Halloween at the end of their year. Finally, the Romans introduced the features of one of their harvest festivals into Halloween when they were on their world tour in 55 BC.

This still does not answer the question: why do mothers let their kids jaunt merrily round the darkened neighbourhood, wearing provocative elf costumes, and requesting sweets? Was that the Romans' idea, or

a drug-induced Druidicism?

While we're on the subject of witches and drugs together, I must draw your attention to a memorable series which was shown over the summer on Channel 4. The series was entitled Sacred Weeds, and showed the investigation of a group of scientists, anthropologists and other academic types dosing volunteers with legal drugs and then observing the effects. Henbane was one drug administered in these tests, which some believe was used by the witches found commonly in folklore. If this series is repeated, I strongly suggest you watch at least the first programme; it will be worth it just to see one volunteer climbing a tree to potentially fatal heights, while high as a kite on fly agaric mushrooms, as the scientists calmly take notes.



Experience the unbridled fury imparted by my wicked, demonic powers! Nu- hah hah hah hah haaaaah!

We can thus see how the media

thrives on Halloween, of course; any excuse for a bit of seasonal variation is gladly accepted (and accepted especially by me). It's still a fun idea, but I think children these days are far more interested in the perversely explosive thrills of 5 November than in bobbing apples. The horror film industry loves this day like no

"...climbing a tree to potentially fatal heights, while high as a kite on fly agaric mushrooms..."

other; but that, as we all know, is a well-worn, hackneyed, and generally low-quality route.

Halloween, then. Be it wizard, or be it wash-out? Like so many of the pleasures of childhood, the appeal vanishes as you get older. Plus forgetting to buy Mars bars will probably trip me up.

The Simpsons episode was good, though. **Ali Campbell**

Medicine Matters

Nick Newton

There are some who might say that Sheffield is the last bastion of the empire, and filled with people who want nothing less than complete world domination. I really do not know the personalities in Sheffield well enough to decide whether they are suffering from megalomaniacal delusions of grandeur or whether they just want to make the world a better place. However, I do feel that if the attitude they like to project concerning their approach to undergraduates and general student facilities is accurate then pity the poor fools who allow themselves to be swallowed up by the Sheffield behemoth.

This side of IC has been revealed to me in several ways, culminating in the meeting in Gladys' where the medics were receiving instruction in the financial regulations governing ICU. The exact details of the controversy are not especially relevant but the meeting did highlight certain beliefs held by Sheffield that

are worrying because of their implications for the student body.

Imperial College is prepared to spend £125 000 000 (please note the number of noughts) on a building on which they had agreed to spend £60 000 000. I wish I knew their bank manager. On top of this, Sheffield is going to spend an estimated £110 000 on a few flowers to make the building look pretty. Again, I ask, where do they bank and can I open an account there? Thinking about it a little further, I don't want an account with a bank that allows its customers to overspend to the tune of £65 000 000 but rather I would like a job working for the company that managed to get Sheffield to cough up that sort of cash. Maybe ICU should try to head hunt them for the position of DP C&S?

The previous paragraph was just a prelude to explaining about the problem of the lack of transport that ICU is able to provide to its members because IC

does not give them enough money. IC is happy to bask in the reflected glory of IC medics winning the rugby UH cup and of IC cricket winning the UL championship but are they going to lift a finger or allocate one penny of funds to enable these achievements to happen? IC seem to have no conception of the fact that if you ally yourself (I'll never be merged) with such a widespread campus network then your students are necessarily going to spread out, as are the facilities. Perhaps this is another part of their plot to kill the will and spirit of the students so that they can cut ICU's budget even further.

What these developments mean is that the issue of student politics is no longer about personal ambition, CV points or argumentativeness. It is about whether you as an individual want to play rugby, hockey or football, whether you want to go sailing or SCUBA diving or flying or just sit and watch a new-release

movie with the cinema club. All these activities, indeed just about everything that you as students do are funded to some extent by a body of policy makers who treat you as a loss leader and who could not really care less about you. In the long run, so long as we do nothing to interrupt the flow of research money that floods into the IC coffers, Sheffield will do the bare minimum to keep us happy while relying on their reputation for academic excellence to keep recruiting. Unfortunately this is unlikely to change any time soon because IC seems to have found an unending supply of students who do have and do not appear to want a life outside of their work. I only hope that the medics do not get corrupted by this attitude because medicine is hard enough without losing a social life as well.



The Church of Scientology

After deciding to buy a VCR machine, I thought Tottenham Court Road would be the most suitable place to get the best deal. As I wandered along, I noticed that nestled between the electrical stores was an 'outlet' of the Church of Scientology.

Having been aware of the organisation for many years, and being rather inquisitive, I sheepishly entered. I simply wanted to find out what was on offer, what was different about them and what their agenda was. After all, the organisation boasts such members as John Travolta and Tom Cruise.

The 'outlet' resembled a café in some respects. Practically as soon as I walked in I was invited to take a personality test, which I duly did. I ticked upwards of about sixty boxes designed to delve into my innermost psyche. I was then interviewed about the results, which seemed to indicate a certain lack of personality. This is the complete antithesis to what people, including

myself, would say, although I am an IC student. Admittedly I didn't fill out the form as carefully as I might. However I did notice that many of the questions were repeated in slightly different guises - for what purpose I am not quite sure.

My interviewer tried to wrench as much sensitive information out of me as possible; I retorted with whatever entered my head at the time. She thought that a process called auditing would be to my benefit. Apparently this auditing is rather like psychotherapy, but the subject is connected to an 'E-meter' which is supposed to point out problematic points in the life of those being audited. For all I know they were using it to determine

my financial status.

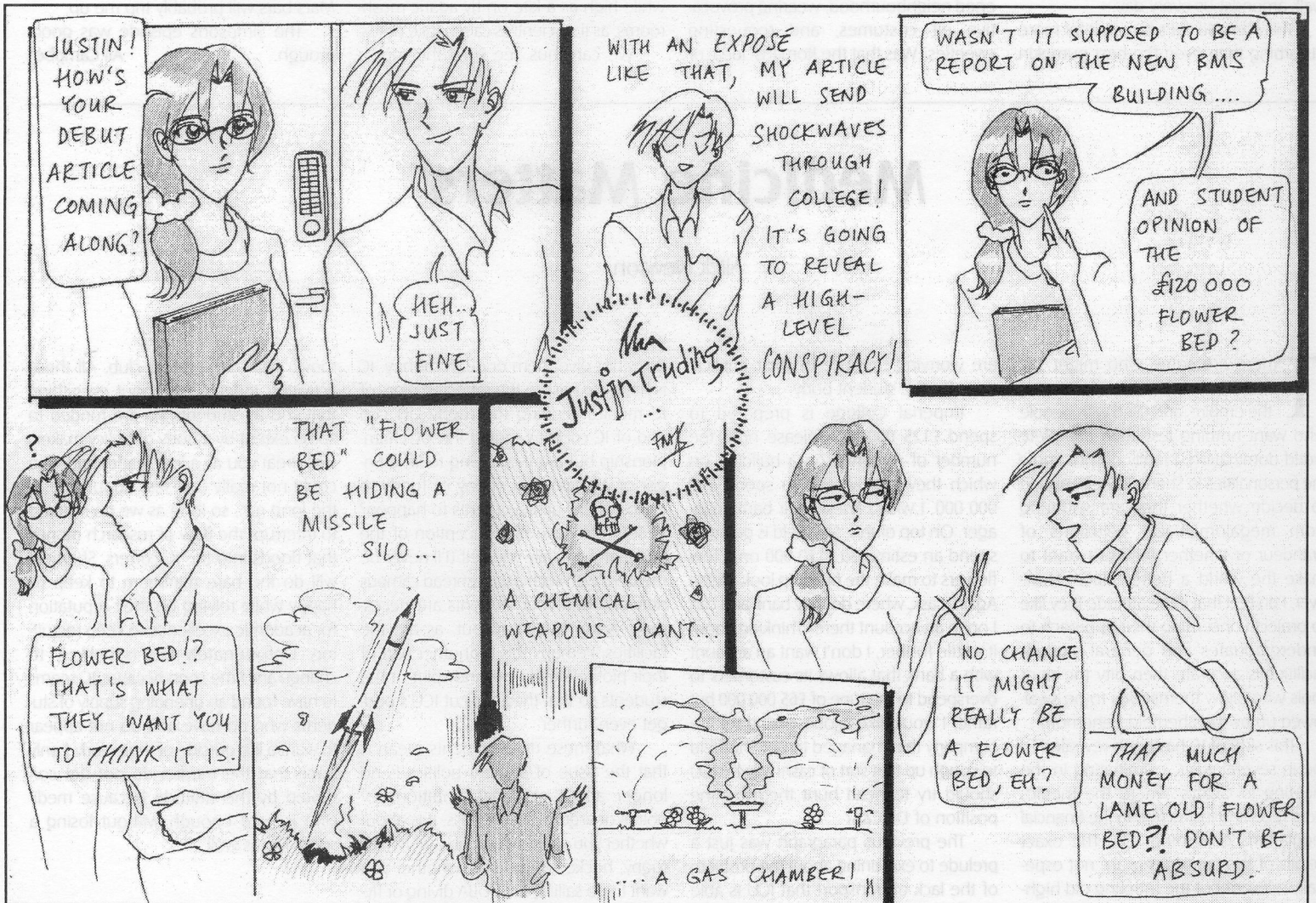
We continued conversing for around thirty minutes while the interviewer attempted to gain more and more information. She was extremely keen to find out my darkest secrets and, when I would not divulge them, became increasingly persuasive. Tired of the probing questions, I asked about the organisation, its beliefs, its founder and its basis. I was given a whirlwind description of the Church - so brief

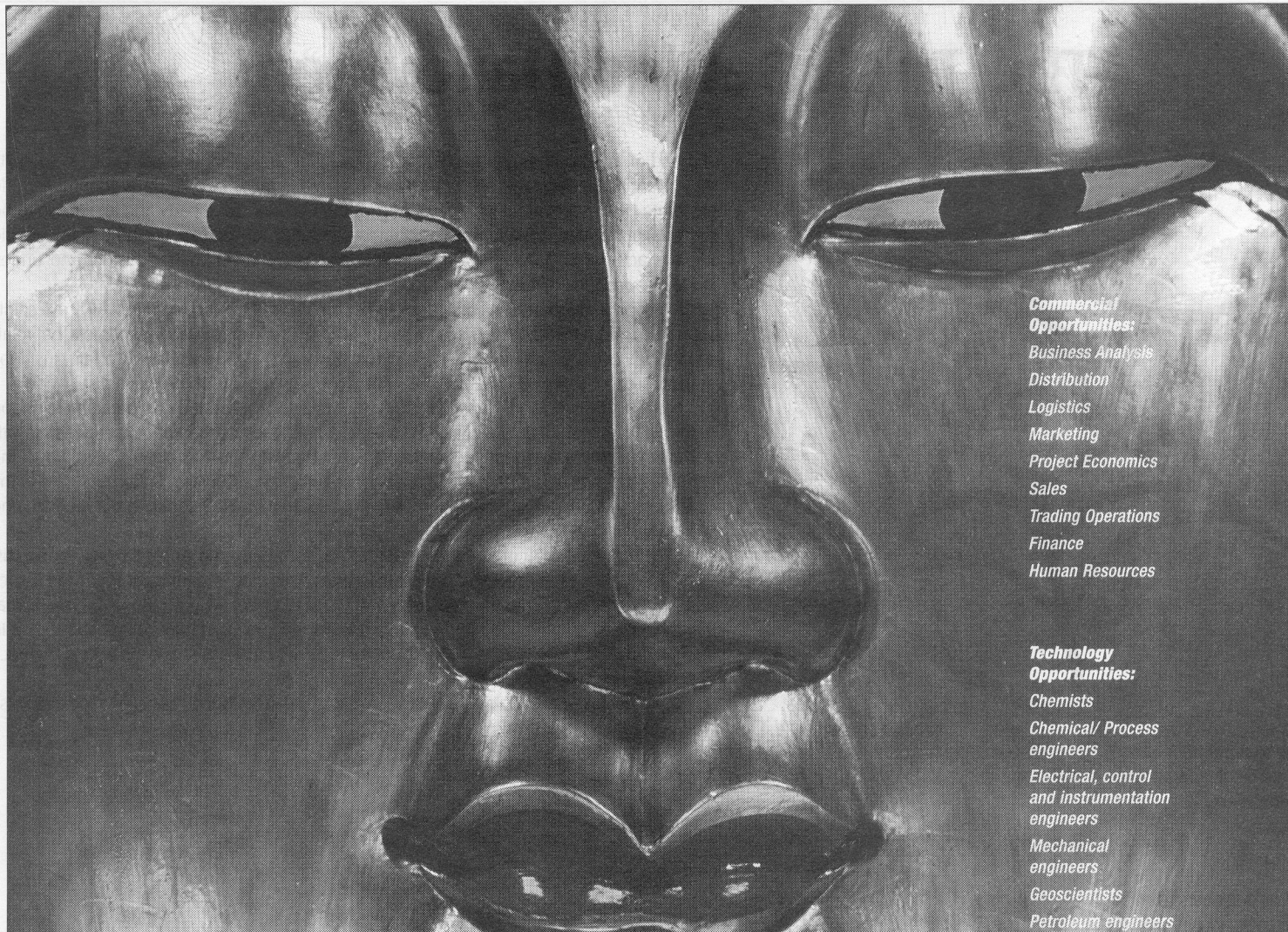
that I knew little more afterwards than when I walked in the door. Apparently Scientologists believe that all human problems stem from "lingering spirits of an extraterrestrial people massacred by their ruler, Xenu, over 75 million years ago."

ago." These spirits attach themselves by "clusters" to individuals in the contemporary world, causing spiritual harm and negatively influencing the lives of their hosts; it makes me look at flu in a completely different way.

I was then invited to buy some leaflets at a cost of £4 each. I declined, explaining that I was a poor student, whilst hiding my mobile phone. I explained that I hadn't bought my VCR yet, but promised to return... I beat a hasty retreat to Dixons to buy that Aiwa Video machine.

...human problems stem from "lingering spirits of an extraterrestrial people massacred by their ruler, Xenu, over 75 million years ago."





Commercial Opportunities:

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Even the longest journey begins with a single step. So come to our presentation and see what BP can do for you, or pick up our Guide at the careers service.

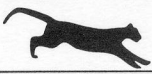
Technology presentation details

Date: **Tuesday 3 November 1998**

Time: **6.30 pm**

Venue: **Civil Eng Lecture Theatre**





The Truth Behind Halloween

The end of the month is approaching and those who are inclined to party can do so legitimately on 31 October. Yes, it's that time of year when many people throughout the world celebrate Halloween. Most just readily accept the occasion for a party and an excuse to be mentally obliterated, to aggravate neighbours and play silly pranks. But how many people know exactly what Halloween is? Halloween has rather a convoluted history and understandably one which people often ignore.

In essence Halloween is about the 'other side', not ITV, but a night in which evil spirits supposedly roam the earth. Perhaps today the original meaning of Halloween is lost, but retailers are not lost and Halloween is increasingly becoming a commercialised affair - just look at the variety of products on offer. But what is the significance of the icons displayed?

For all those who have participated in 'trick-or-treat' this period conjures up childhood memories of threatening relatives and neighbours, with the intention of being rewarded with sweets. However, Halloween is in fact an ancient tradition that has been hijacked over the centuries by many different groups. Originally in ancient pre-Christian Britain and Ireland the Celts observed the festival Samhain (pronounced sow-in) on 31 October. It signified the end of the summer and of the harvest.

October 31 was the eve of the New Year for both Celts and Anglo-Saxons. It was customary to light fires in order to ward off evil spirits. This date is significant for it was associated with herds coming in from pastures and when legalities were renewed. Once a year it was a time to acknowledge the negative powers influencing nature. It was their belief in the dead revisiting their homes that account for the celebrations we have today, and for much of the consumerism associated with Halloween.

It was these pagan rituals that influenced the Christian festival of 'all-hallows' or 'all-saints',

a time to remember all those who have passed away. Christianity effectively adopted the festival from the pagans. Hence the name, derived from hallow (meaning holy) and evening - Hallow-e'en.

Where does 'trick-or-treat' originate?

This originates from the Pagan festivities in Ireland. On the eve of the New Year, people in their houses would put out 'treats', typically fruits, for visiting spirits in order that they would leave the village alone. In addition, people dressed as spirits, ghouls and ghosts would wander round villages to draw the spirits away from the houses and to the outskirts. This tradition continues, particularly in America, with children dressed as ghouls and spirits of the dead.

What is the symbolism of the pumpkin?

This is commonly known as the jack-o'-lantern and is perhaps one of the most familiar icons of Halloween. It may have been used to watch out for evil spirits as the name originates from that of night watchmen.

Did you know?

In Mexico Halloween is known as 'Los Días de los Muertos' (the day of the dead). It is a time of great rejoicing. At this time the Monarch butterfly returns to its native home in Mexico. Traditionally they are believed to be the spirits of the recent dead and are welcomed back.

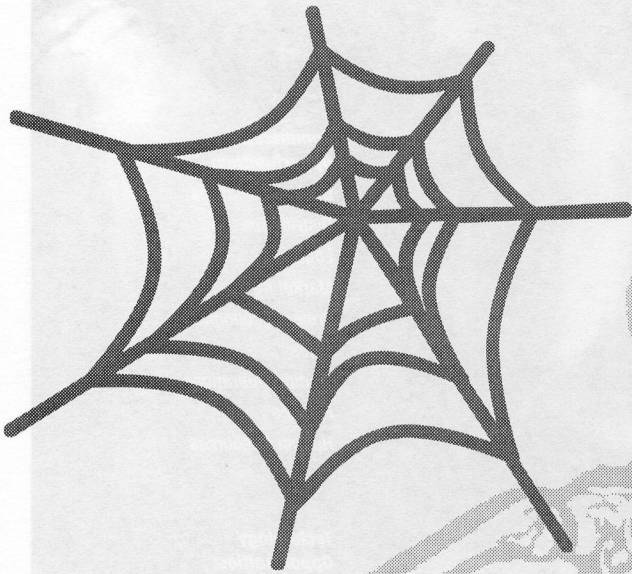
The broomstick is a symbol of the magical powers of females, as it is utilised in cleaning spiritual places. Calling women witches should actually be a complement, as witch is Saxon for wise-one.

Traditionally at Halloween women attempt to peel an apple in its entirety in front of a candle-lit mirror. If this is achieved her future partner is supposed to appear.

Approximately two million people were executed for witchcraft between 15th and 18th century - 80% of these were women.

This year

Mask manufacturers in the US are said to be raking it in, with the latest craze in Halloween fashion. Party stores are stocking props associated with the Clinton affair, with items such as Clinton masks, something not original in itself, but these have Pinocchio shaped noses. Due to legalities there is not yet a Monica Lewinsky mask, and lets hope it remains that way; the casualty departments will never cope with the influx of heart attack victims.



Mon: Standing Room only

Live premiership footie. DaVinci's. From 5pm.

Tues: STA Bar Trivia

Win £50 cash or a crate of lager. DaVinci's 8pm

Weds: ClubXS

Party tunes in room one, eclectic chillout room free with entscard/b4 11/ 50p after

Thurs: DaVinci's Cocktail Night

From sex on the beach to margaritas at bargain prices

Fri: Bust-A-Gut Comedy Club

Noel Fielding & support. DBs. 8pm. £2.50/£2

HEDONIZM

Huge club tunes, chill out room & cocktail bar 9-2. £1/free to entscard.



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COMMEMORATION BALL

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 28TH

THE BREWERY

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This Week

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Winner of the 1998 Perrier Newcomer Award

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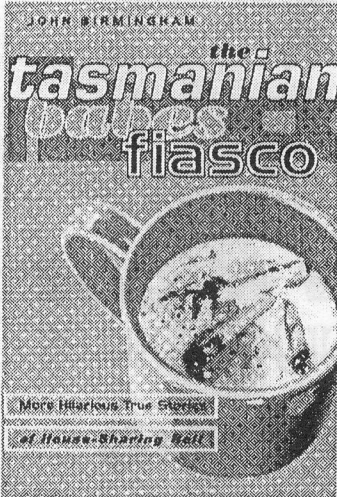
giveaways

£2.50/£2 entscards



The Tasmanian Babes Fiasco

John Birmingham
Harper Collins



Drink, drugs and dire sexual shenanigans... a lot of this sound familiar: Freshers Week perhaps? Ah, but fond as those memories are to recall, this is no time to reminisce about weeks previous, more to provide you with an insight into John Birmingham's "The Tasmanian Babes Fiasco".

Put your hands up anyone who shares or has shared a flat or house, come on we're at university for God's sake, don't most people houseshare? That aside, flatmates and the trials of sharing a house with some people you know and some you don't is what this is all about (you can put your hand down now). This is a collection of short stories all bound together by one big one, much like the author's last book, "He Died With a Felaful In His Hand". It centres around JB (for the book is written in the first person) and the story unfolds around the house's new flatmate, Jordan, who moves in after two goths skewer the fridge with an arrow (read the book). It turns out that Jordan is a bit of an oddball and he proceeds to steal everything that isn't nailed down, including a soda siphon (read the book). What ensues is a hard to categorise party across Eastern Australia: there's your road-trip element in battered vans and vehicles in various states of disrepair up and down the coast; your advertisement for every sub-culture and counter-culture under the sun, from Karate lesbians to men who hang naked in trees (that'll be "Naked Tree Guy" then); and your visit via the author's imagination to every place, name and event in recent pop-culture. Although it's hard to pin the style down to one in particular it is a cracking insight into one persons experiences in life.

Perhaps the style isn't that hard to put your finger on, it's in the vein of

Irvine Welsh and Iain Banks but so many times throughout the book it strays, that is what makes it hard to categorise.

I liked "The Tasmanian Babes Fiasco", I liked it a lot, but I didn't like it so much that I can't spot the reasons why you might not like it. There's a bit of a drugs theme running through it, well when I say a bit I mean a fairly hefty one. It is central to the story and, if it is to be believed, the prologue implies that all the sub-stories are true to a greater or lesser extent so the drug content can't be helped. He also enjoys flitting around in time backwards and forwards to tell these little sub-stories as characters recall them. This way of writing can get tedious when you're trying to read late at night and you start to think, "What just happened? Did I miss something?". Birmingham also lets his characters "do all the talking": they unfurl as the story progresses (which I kinda like) and you don't get to know them until about halfway through the book.

I was kept interested right up until the end when it strangely turned into a wine review on the last three pages. And to me, that's what a book is all about, you shouldn't want to put it down (except to have your tea and do other things like sleep and talk to people) and I didn't. It's not the all time best book I've read but I did enjoy it and perhaps the greatest thing is that I learned something through reading this, I learned that there is another group of people out there like these and that I wouldn't mind meeting them.

Christian Elliott

Saints & Sinners

Marcelle Bernsteine
Bantam Books

Janie Paxton, a feature writer and interviewer, agrees to write the authorised biography of Madga Lachowska, the charismatic spiritual leader of a group called the Chalice. Although Magda Lachowska, otherwise known as Mama, is considered a living saint in whose footsteps lavender plants had been seen to bloom, Janie takes the job for other reasons. Her professional reputation is on the decline due to a fondness for the bottle and her personal life is also a shambles as she has just divorced her husband. She sees the opportunity of writing Mama's biography as a means of making money and restoring her reputation to its former glory. However, as Janie investigates Mama's background discrepancies begin to emerge in the official version of Mama's history, and Janie has to chose whether to listen to her instincts and uncover the real story or not.

Marcelle Bernstein is perhaps most well known for her novel "Body and Soul". It was made into a TV series a few years ago with Kristin Scott Thomas (of "The English patient" fame) as the lead character, a nun with trouble up at the mill. Bernstein often has a religious theme in her books and she has continued the trend in this one. The angle she's taken is that even saints are human and make mistakes, and so are sinners just like the rest of us.

Bernstein's strength is her ability in creating believable characters and then developing those characters throughout the novel. The story takes place over many years, from the Nazi work camps in Poland during WW2 to the present

day. The lives of those in the camp form an important part of the book in understanding what motivated them later on in their lives, and Bernstein quite adeptly uses flashbacks to keep the reader interested.

On the whole this is a very good book, the kind to take on holiday to read on the beach. If that was the case I would happily fork out the money for it but if not, this is the kind of book I would enjoy taking out of the library.

Nicole

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Albums

THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH

Quench ★★★★★



Ladies and Gentlemen, you are frowning with The Beautiful South

This is the 'South's sixth album proper. By now, it's known in kindergarten that Heaton and Rotheray are the most successful song writing partnership since two blokes in the sixties and they deliver some humorous and some serious output here on *Quench*. Yes, there was a bit of production work by former Housemartin Fat Boy Norman but those expecting a radical change of direction and drum loops searing in and out of the dual vocals of Paul Heaton and Jacqueline Abbott are mistaken. *Quench* is unmistakably The Beautiful South. Intelligent lyrics, 'Aren't I clever?' lyrics and sometimes inane soundbites all figure amidst the mixture of catchy snatches and slower slumberings. Those disillusioned with *Blue is the Colour* will see it as a return to form.

The sexy *Perfect 10* has already drummed itself into people's minds with its funky Hammond intro and dubious, or perhaps even obvious, sexual references: 'When he's at my gate with a big fat eight, you wanna see the smile on my face.' Mind you, this is just baby talk considering it came from the same creative source that conjured up 'Don't marry her, fuck me.' The experiment in melancholy, however, is over. *Quench* is fuller and more rounded than *Blue is the Colour*. There are plenty more singles that could be released. Album opener, *I How Long's a Tear Take to Dry?* is upbeat while *The Lure of the Sea* sees a lull in the run-a-long rhythm. *Big Coin* will probably be re-recorded and also performed a capella to great success; basically the one where people go, 'Wow. They can sing. And really well too!'

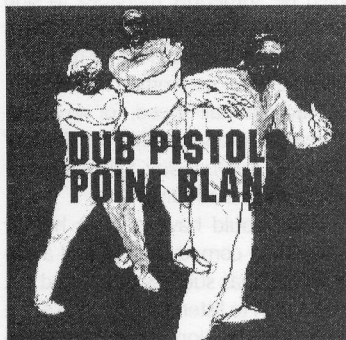
Quench's Essential Choon, though, is *Window Shopping for Blinds*. Powerful in its musical content without going over the top, it has all the necessary ingredients for a popular song: interesting but not outright attention grabbing verses, melodic pre-choruses and finally a chorus that can't seem to escape the sonic compartment of your brain. The opening lyric, 'One day I'm loaded, next day I'm broke. Spent all my money on whisky and coke,' is typical of the now expected pub talk content of the album. *Look What I Found in my Beer* is probably the best example of this style of colloquial lyricism.

So, it's better than *Blue is the Colour* and *Quench* is, as stated previously but worth emphasising again, a return to form. In a musical marketplace where everyone is trying to grab a piece of sound history in generating a new genre or new style, *Quench* is reassuringly old-fashioned in its simplicity. 'South fans but probably not the 'South themselves would argue that this is a new musical direction but it's not. It's excellent pop music with a touch of blues and soul. It's created by experts and it's built to last. The Beautiful South. God bless 'em. **M**

Dennis

DUB PISTOLS

Point Blank ★★★



Err... ...album cover

Point Blank does exactly what it says: shoots you with experimental beats that lie on the boundaries of hip-hop, funk, jazz and ragga. All of these influences appear on almost every track, and they do not disappoint. When you hit play on your CD player you'll think there's an electrical fault with the way the intro uses strung-out keyboards and struggling beats. You quickly calm down, though, with the soft rapping and then they drop some real catchy loops. If *Unique Freak* was released as a single it would definitely get a 'This recording contains material which some may find offensive' stamp, but don't worry, because it won't!

The second track is nothing outstanding but the Pistols continue to keep you attentive with the fresh beats and loops they always use. This is typical of the entire album and the Dub Pistols style. *Cyclone* sounds so familiar (I'm convinced it samples something but can't put my finger on it - maybe it

appeared in a TV ad' or something?). The ragga beats and simplistic rapping are so fresh but it's the bass-line which gives me déjà vu. Putting your CD player on 'Repeat 1' at this point would be acceptable. You would be excused for breaking wind when Ghetto rolls: the phattest bass just force it upon you. Ragga-tipped vocals keep the bass in check. Although it gets repetitive after about two minutes, who cares, this is just so rough!

I didn't even realise we came out of *Towerblock Trash* and went into *Westway*. Once again a phat bass-line on both. The experimental beats are accompanied by some raw sampling. *Towerblock Trash* features cool semi-breaks and trumpets (I guess) bring us back to an electronic voice demanding 'money'. Just as you feel the repetition on *Westway*, the progression begins. Excellent keyboards and harder beats, and then the bass gets so deep that the whole place starts vibrating! The keyboards get progressively frantic and the

general tempo seems to rise.

There's a backing vocalist who drops a few lines on several of the tracks and totally annoys the fuck out of me. He appears on track seven as well. Why? - the main vocalist performs more than adequately on his own.

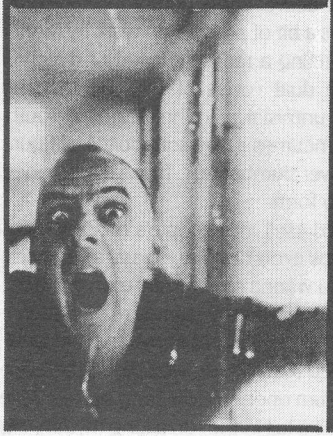
The title track relies more on the electronics. Still, there's always something new on each track. If you get this far you have become an expert in the Dub Pistols sound. The rest of the tracks sound much the same but the sound gets slightly more ambient as we progress, the electro becomes more frequent and we eventually bang our heads to hard-core techno. **M**

Abu

Albums

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Big Beat Elite Complete ★★



Norman Cook tries to guard the bandwagon

With the success of Fat Boy Slim's wicked *Gangster Tripping* and the Run DMC Versus Jason Nevin's number one hit *It's Like That* we're probably going to see an avalanche of these big beat compilation albums. The first one to arrive is this, the double pack (with free mix disc) *Big Beat Elite Complete* from Lacerba Records. Its being marketed as the best and most complete big beat collection and although it is a varied set it comes up well short of being elite. Each track gives you a slightly different look at the range of big beat, some bring a Latin style to the mix, some a hint of drum and bass.

Disc one starts off well. The Herbaliser brings us *Wall Crawling Insect Breaks*. Some excellent breaks are stuffed in along with the Spiderman references. This is definitely worth a check. Next up is the funky *Different Strokes* by Psychedelia Smith. The tune uses a

highly infectious 'Nah, Nah, Nah' chorus. Simple but so cool. You've got to check Marlon Sea's *Disco Del Mar!* simply for the comic value; it sounds like something from the Pulp Fiction soundtrack, only faster! The standout track from the first disc is *The Worlds Made up of This and That* by Deeds Plus Thoughts; this is fast and really gets you going.

Disc Two is poor, only one track really stood out, that being *Ruffneck* from The Freestylers featuring Navigator. *Ruffneck* starts off slow till the reggae lyrics kick in and the beats pick up, giving an up-tempo ragga boy tune. There's a track from DJ Kool and the Crooklyn Clan called *Here We Go Now*. It follows the same basic DJ Kool call and respond lines over some very strange beats - please stop.

If you've never heard any big beat you might wanna check this out, otherwise I'm sure you can wait for the next one. **M**

Milen

SENTIENCE

An Eye For An i ★★

The conditions of the universe have led to life on earth, the only sentient beings in creation. Sentience are Nick Fryer, Martin Dawson and Tom Neville. The opening sentence of this review is what they say on the inlay. *An Eye For An i* is a cool blend of techno and electronic music. Turn up the volume, sit back, relax and enjoy a trip to a different world.

The first track is a wild demonstration of cool, sharp techno. Totally funky, heavy beats and phat drums. We hear perfect sampling of Onyx's *Here 'n' Now*, in hand with minimal vocals (quite literally just the song title on *Time Is Now*). It's wicked how the drums roll up and then you're hit hard by a phat bass-line.

Machine Directa gives you loads of hard beats and electronics. Too much artificiality for my liking; loses its artistic appeal and just becomes a computer program! *Eternal* features more beautiful loops, and fresh keyboards await us on the other side of the break. Loud and hard. Track four, *Alive*, begins dark and slow, then a female voice asks questions. The pace just picks up slightly and we gradually hear sampling in the background until it takes over and breaks away hard. Questions are still asked though, giving you plenty an opportunity to ponder over 'what is a brain and what is a mind?'. At over nine minutes of the same thing it's a bit too long, I think.

The next three tracks are a graduation from soft to hard. *A.O.K. (Everything*

Is) starts dark but very sharp. We hear the sound of an annoying siren in the background, and the foreground doesn't move you too much either. *2nd Step* has funkier beats; hard and fast, reminiscent of Cypress Hill's Latin Lingó. It softens and calms you down with fancy loops, but then breaks hard again. *Finer Scale* holds an interesting electro intro. There are no vocals on this, but who needs them when the music speaks for itself!

Full-on beats take you in to *Magnificent Speed*. It really is energetic, and it contains elements from Eric B and Rakim's *Follow The Leader*. The vocals are deep and commanding with lovely breaks all round. *Pressure Them* is such a killer. The 2-3 step drum-beats are just as interesting as the accompanying picture on the inlay of a guy with a gun to his head. Phatter beats are introduced later and then comes an outer-space-like effect. The beats keep rolling till they drop!

Experiment On God is basically another narrative just to finish off. All in all, Sentience have got talent and if they break into the mainstream they are going to do some serious damage, but it will be difficult to achieve the initial recognition. Nevertheless, keep an ear out for sounds from the Nukleuz stable. **M**

Abu

THE KING

The Gravelands ★★

The problem with novelty records lies in the fact that they are a novelty. And, like all novelties, they wear off very quickly. *The Gravelands* is no exception. On paper, the idea seems a winner. Get an Elvis Presley impersonator to sing some '90's songs and classics from the past, that Elvis would be totally unsuited to. And hilarity, mega-stardom and a sell-out appearance at the next Capital FM gala concert is guaranteed. Well, not quite...

The opening track is also the album's best track; a rollicking version of Nirvana's *Come As You Are*. Hearing The King sing the line 'Well, I swear that I don't have a gun' is close to hysterical. Unfortunately, from here on, the album takes a sharp down-turn. Where we would expect to be treated to some Mike Flowers-type pastiche, the ensuing songs are comedy-free, the singer actually trying to create songs that will be critically acclaimed. But, with second-rate production and session musicians, that can never be achieved. And, in any case, his Elvis impression is not far above karaoke standards.

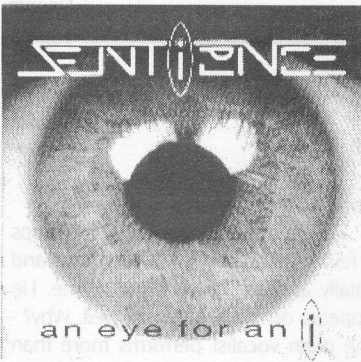
It is surprising how many '60's soul songs he has chosen to cover, given that the main difference between him and the real king is the lack of soul in his voice. Hence, *Dock Of The Bay*, *Piece Of My Heart* and *I Heard It through The Grapevine* are the dreariest songs on the album and the easiest to skip over. Actually, there are a few interesting tunes tucked away on this 18-track compilation. The Small Faces' *All Or Nothing* gets a humorous seeing-to, as does Sweet's *Blockbuster* complete with police siren.

The low point (without mentioning a forgettable *Voodoo Chile*) arrives with The King's version of *No Woman No Cry*, which he somehow manages to sing almost all on one note, adding his own Elvis excerpts as and when he feels e.g. 'Wise men say: no woman no cry.'

Played at half speed, for no apparent reason, is a laughable rendition of *Twentieth Century Boy*. Still, it's better than Placebo's offering.

What could have been a hugely entertaining comedy record and a surprise Christmas success has turned out to be a pain to listen to. It looks like The King's next vocation will be something Elvis had a real interest in. Burgers and fries. **M**

Ed

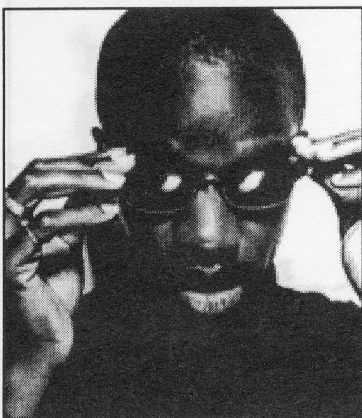


Sentience: sense perception not involving intelligence or mental perception. Hmmm!

Albums

McALMONT

A Little Communication ★★★



McAlmont. Pictured here without Butler

Since his critically acclaimed collaboration with Bernard Butler some years ago David McAlmont has been pretty quiet. *A Little Communication* is his debut solo album. Mostly co-written with pianists Peter Gordeno, Guy Davies and guitarist Graham Kearns. If you are familiar with McAlmont's previous work then you will immediately recognise the voice hewn from the halos of angels. This refreshing album features a brand of blues soul heavily influenced by American artists like Marvin Gaye. Other influences on this work include Gospel music and Frank Sinatra.

Opening with the very soulful and really rather good *Lose My Faith* which clocks in at over 7 minutes this is a touch long but retains your interest throughout.

Other high points in the album are the quite brilliant *A Little Communication*, (from which the album takes its name) and current single *Honey*. If the entire album was of a similar quality then this could have been seminal. The Gospel influenced *Sorry*, possibly the most upbeat of all the tracks, illustrates a tendency to go a bit over the top in production. There's the attitude, 'Let's chuck in a trumpet solo to disguise how mediocre this is sounding.' *The Train*, the only track solely credited to McAlmont, is possibly the worst on the album suggesting that he still needs another musician with him for guidance in finding those better songs. (Although Bernard Butler's album would suggest otherwise.) In an attempt to break away from formulaic blues, some of the tracks are more experimental or minimalist in feel. *It's Enough*, *Love And Madness* and *After Youth* seem to be works in progress rather than finished tracks. Uses of drum machines and samples don't really add anything to the album and could be said to be taking something away. Yet despite this McAlmont should gain some credit for attempting to inject life into what could have been just another Boyz-2-Men album. If you really feel in the mood for blues soul then your best bet would be to search through Marvin Gaye's back catalogue for true classics like *For You My Dear*. **M**

Craig

TIN STAR

The Thrill Kisser ★★★★★

What do you get if you mix U2 with Madonna and a couple of expensive samplers and computers? A bloody awful noise about which your parents would revel in moaning about, saying such things as 'It's such a racket,' and 'In my day music had a tune that you could sing to,' is probably the best bet. However, by some feat of amazing computer knowledge, Tin Star have done just that and created what could be one of the best albums from a new band that I have heard since The Propellerheads' album *Decksanddrumsandrockandroll*.

Mellow, invigorating and sometimes downright groovy, their music style is truly confusing. Some tracks, such as *Wonderful World*, verge almost on very mellow drum and bass. Fast Machine is definitely big beat but the opening track, *Head*, is just plain alternative indie. Not very confusing you may be thinking but what makes them stick out from other bands you hear is the beauty and intricacies of the songs. David Tomlinson's vocals flow somewhat darkly around the room, sounding surprisingly like Bono without the massive singing range, mingling with wonderful electronic sounds and Tim Bricheno's sparse guitar. The effect is not unlike a deeper version of Madonna's *Ray of Light* or perhaps *POP* by U2 without the guitars. The standout track on the whole of *The Thrill Kisser* is *Picture of a Girl*, which is very trip-hop and good to lie back to and be a love puppy.

The only criticism that I could lay upon Tin Star is that the sound can become repetitive and that they do lack a bit of a sense of humour. Also, there's a necessity to stop the tracks just meandering into each other.

Never the less, if you like this kind of music, as I do, this CD will be in your player for long periods of time as you lay back in a darkened room, entranced by the dark melodies and big beat bass sections. This album is brilliant, let down only by a few hashed up, boring tracks. The band is refreshingly new and I hope they become as big as they deserve. Or will you all just go out and buy the next sodding Ibiza collection? A big phat four stars, and tin ones at that. **M**

Eddie

Singles

Beastie Boys - *Body Movin'*

A classic Beastie's track. Full of funky and fun flavas. Definitely one to get you movin'!!

Badly Drawn Boy - *EP3*

The first track, *My Friend Cubilas*, is a brilliant mellow trip hop tune. Unfortunately the rest of the EP is spoilt by Badly Drawn Boy's badly sung voice.

Freekspert - *Gas Mark 5*

Thrash metal/rap cross over group. If you like lots of men screaming down a microphone and guitar screeches this is definitely one to buy.

Towa Tel - *GBI*

Kylie Minogue features on this bizarre single about printing type-faces. After a great Dee-lite sampled into the single plummets down hill. Unfortunately the remixers can't do anything with it either.

Cornelius - *Star Fruits Surf Rider*

Japanese electro-indie is a very strange combination. But suitably good for Damon Albarn (Blur) to remix it. Worth a listen.

Grandaddy - *A.M. 180*

Mellow little ditty, sounding very much Weezer or PUSA. Typical American College indie sound. Pleasant enough.

Garbage - *Special*

You know who they are, probably know what the song sounds like and almost certainly saw Shirley Manson in a short skirt singing it on Top of the Pops.

3 Colours Red - *Paralyse EP*

Quite an aggressive and dark sounding EP with heavy guitars and drums. None of the tracks are outstanding but none are too bad either.

The Supernaturals - *Sheffield Song*

A whiney little pop song about love. But it is pretty catchy and the lyrics are funny. A sure fire chart hit.

THE ESSENTIAL CHOON

Jurassic 5 - *Concrete Schoolyard*

Excellent mellow hip-hop from this San Franciscan group. *Concrete Schoolyard* is one of the best singles taken from the superb J-5 LP. **M**

Ramzi

Dance Music

the electric café

THOMIAN

News

Many people at Imperial College find it easy to complain that things aren't the way they would like them. It takes guts to actually get up and make that change if you think it's right! In terms of electronic music and what we do at The Electric Cafe I would like to make a special mention of Mark Horne (Events and Marketing; IC Union). He has taken a lot of stick for organising very "commercial" nights and not taking risks with his DJ lineup.

You may know that this year, the Union is putting on specialist music dance nights every Saturday. The Electric Cafe is one of these (house, techno, drum'n'bass, breakbeats, etc), and will join Tha Bomb (hip-hop, soul, swing) and Bubble and Squeak (house, garage, techno) giving you the chance to get down to all types of music at no cost at all. That's right, it's all free! How many Saturday night clubs can boast all this in a brand new venue?

I don't think the criticism is fair as we were all approached by Mark Horne himself to stage these events. I don't really want to get into politics and arguments and all that, but there shouldn't really be any need for complaint now! If you enjoy reading Tha Bomb or The Electric Cafe, but you're not sure of these types of music, you should come and check us out at the Union for free. Many thanks to Mark and the Union staff for all their help in getting this off the ground!

The Electric Cafe also appears every fortnight on a Thursday at the back room in Southside bar. This is a chilled-out affair with the emphasis on a more freestyle mix of music. It is designed more for sitting around and enjoying the atmosphere than dancing. Again absolutely free!

The Southside sessions were made possible by IC Radio, who not only run an excellent student radio station, but also manage and run the back room. I would like to thank John C (station manager) and everyone involved in the radio who has helped make this event a success. You can DJ on the radio or in the back room if you join up IC radio.

So as you can see, there are at least five underground music "events" organised every month in this college. If that's your thing then get out and support the scene!

Alick

Artist Profile - Steve Rachmad

Steve Rachmad may not be a familiar name to many fans of house and techno, but he is definitely a force to be reckoned with, and has picked up plaudits from many of the world's best DJs and producers.

You may have heard his deep melodic techno as Sterac on 100% Pure Records, or perhaps a series of EPs out on Spiritual Records called *The Rachmad Projects*, or his newer ventures *Ignacio* on Music Man and *A Scorpion's Dream* on Derrick May's Fragile label.

If you have heard his musical output, then you will know that Steve Rachmad is one of the most prolific and dynamic musicians that modern electronic music has to offer. If you haven't heard him before, then you have plenty of ideas of new music to check out from the last paragraph!

I was lucky enough to meet Steve recently when he paid a visit to London and made a guest appearance on The Electric Cafe radio show. I knew that as well as being a talented music maker he was an excellent DJ, but I had never had the chance to sample his deck skills. He played a great one hour set for the show; minimal techno from the likes of the Advent and Jeff Mills with great emphasis on the way the tracks were mixed. "For me it's based on mixing a lot; to fit tracks together because some of them are quite empty on their own. To create layers of tracks." Indeed, the latest Sterac album (*Thera* on 100% Pure) incorporates this harder sparser sound.

This is quite a departure from the old Rachmad sound of a few years back. His style then was more melodic and delicate. He incorporated strings a lot more, and the overall sound was fuller and richer. Steve acknowledges this as a natural progression.

Starting with the bare minimum of equipment at the age of twelve (a mixer with no cue, one record deck with no pitch control and a tape recorder!) Steve learnt through experimentation how music was constructed and how to have fun playing around with it! "After a while I wanted to do more so I did remixes of existing tracks. I played melodies over the track or let a drum machine play alongside the track. After a while you want to do more and more so I started composing my own music."

As a DJ, Steve is finding himself more and more in demand over Europe. "I played in Cosmos parties in Belgium, in Ghent. I'm their resident but they do parties every four or five months. Also a few clubs in and around Amsterdam. I've been to Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland and Scotland. I still prefer Belgium because people are really into it there!"

Steve is very modest about his mixing skills. "For me I taught myself mixing when I was twelve. But I didn't make myself any mix tapes to give to a club because I didn't want to play at a club every week. I would have heard the same records week. I was afraid that I would get tired of them so I didn't do that. Then I was doing 80s disco stuff. For example Jammin' Lewis, Janet Jackson, Human League, Alexander

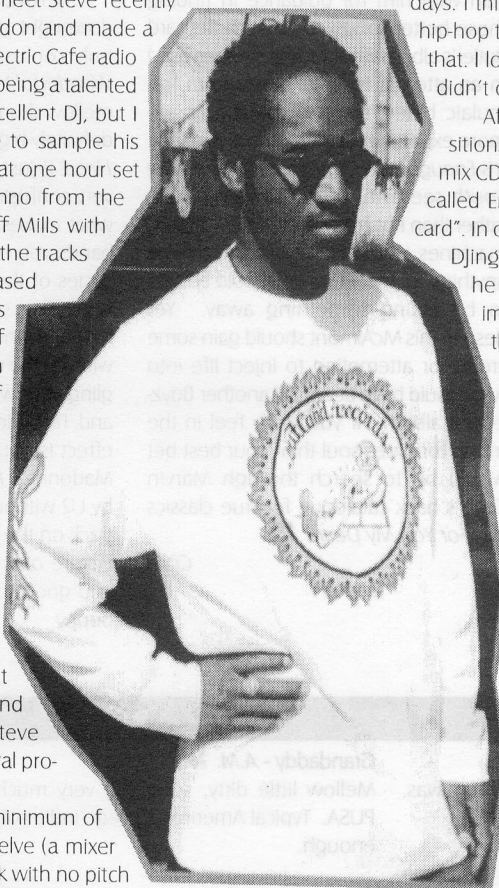
O'Neal and of course Babyface and guys like The System. Those are really my influences."

As mentioned above, Steve's musical sound has developed over time. He attributes this to his roots. "The first records I bought were 80s disco, but I always listened to a lot of different styles of music in the old days. I think the only thing I didn't listen to was the hip-hop thing that was going on. I wasn't really into that. I loved a lot of different styles of music, and I didn't only want to do one thing."

After releasing so much of his own compositions, Steve has decided to put out his own DJ mix CD. Called *Emerging*, you can find it on a label called Emerge. Steve describes it as his "business card". In other words it is a perfect introduction to his DJing style, the types of tracks he plays and how he puts them together. This is very good minimal techno with one or two twists. Check out the very first section; from the pure classical strains of *Incit Hedral* by Philip Glass and the Aphex Twin he manages to find a seamless mix into the techno-dub of Maurizio.

Despite the abundance of minimal techno mixes on the market nowadays, this is one I would recommend to any DJ, clubber or individual who is interested in the music in general. And do look out for that name; **Steve Rachmad**. He's going to be big!

Alick Sethi



Competition

The Electric Cafe has three copies of the new Steve Rachmad mix CD *Emerging* on Emerge Records, to give away. All you have to do is answer this simple question. Name two record labels that Steve

has released music on.

Answers to the Felix office (located in the Beit Quad) or by email to music.felix@ic.ac.uk by Friday 30/10/98. Good luck!

Future Electric Cafe Dates

Thurs 5/11 @ Southside backroom (7 - 11pm) Chill-out bar, guest DJ Darren Nesbeth

Sat 7/11 @ IC Union (8pm - midnight) club night

Thurs 19/11 @ Southside backroom (7 - 11pm) chill-out bar, guest DJ Mark Horne

Milen and Tha Bomb! will return to these pages next week....

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Reviews

A Perfect Murder ★★☆☆½

Starring : Michael Douglas, Gwyneth Paltrow, Viggo Mortensen
 Director : Andrew Davis

For no readily discernable reason, remaking old Hitchcock films is very much in vogue at present. Witness *Good Will Hunting* director Gus Van Sant's current project - a shot by shot copy of *Psycho*. Consequently, *A Perfect Murder* lands on our screens as a reasonably direct reworking of Hitch's *Dial M For Murder*.

Gwyneth Paltrow eases comfortably into the footsteps of Grace Kelly, demonstrating with ease the same kind of ethereal grace that made her predecessor famous. Meanwhile, Michael Douglas revisits his more villainous days as her husband (originally played by Ray Milland). He happily retreads the roles that made him famous in the late eighties, in films like *Wall Street*, *Fatal Attraction* and *Basic Instinct*, utilising his full range of evil grimaces, sneers and stares. All of which probably gives away the fact that Douglas is playing the bad guy and Paltrow his put upon wife.

Douglas is a multi-millionaire (owner of one of the nicest apartments ever created) who is understandably miffed when he discovers that his wife is having an affair. As well as being stunningly



Gwyneth Paltrow. Married to Michael Douglas? I don't think so.

attractive, Paltrow, whose one failing is a tendency to become very obviously uncomfortable whenever the romance moves above a PG rating, is heir to a massive fortune. Consequently, when Douglas fears his business is going down the drain, he decides to bump her off.

So far, so what. However, as those who have seen the original will be well

aware, his next move is far less orthodox. He offers her lover - struggling artist Mortensen - half-a-million dollars to do his dirty work for him. Odd to say the least.

At this point, director Davis (whose previous work includes *The Fugitive*) steps up a gear and does Hitchcock proud. The action scenes, which to Davis'

credit avoid the seemingly mandatory car chases and explosions, still have you fearing for Paltrow, even if they do lack the edge-of-the-seat tension of the original. And at least for those who haven't seen the original, the plot twists will keep you interested - even if much of the action does seem fairly predictable.

Sadly, however, when the pace slows the movie falls back into a flat, translucent, one dimensional story. You realise that the idiotic affluence of these people (even Mortensen) is so far removed from the everyday world that it pushes the film towards fantasy. Moreover, whilst the psychological games provide a break from normal big-bucks thrillers, the denouement is never really in doubt, and Douglas' hamming constantly eschews reality in favour of entertainment.

Indeed, top class entertainment it undoubtedly is, thanks to good lead performances and a treatment which avoids becoming reverential. Hitchcock it certainly isn't - but so what. Judge it on its merits, not on its predecessor, and you'll be pleasantly surprised. **F**

Dave

I Want You ★★☆☆

Starring : Rachel Weisz, Alessandro Nivolo, Labina Mitevska, Luka Petrusic
 Director : Michael Winterbottom

Gritty, depressing, obsessive, bleak, tinged with grey...sound arthouse enough yet? Well, if arthouse means low budget, British, story driven and very good, then arthouse it certainly is. Once in a while, however, you have to forget such trifles, and just watch films on merit. So it's low budget - so what.

Far more bizarre is the fact that *I Want You* counts amongst its stars two young former-Yugoslavians, whose previous work has solely concentrated on the Croatian stage. This may become slightly more obvious when you realise that director Winterbottom met them whilst filming his last movie, *Welcome to Sarajevo*. This also explains the decision to use acclaimed Yugoslav cinematographer Slawomir Idziak. He brings with him his trademark strange camera effects and filtering techniques, in an attempt to capture the action through fourteen year old Petrusic's eyes.

Despite all this, however, the central role still belongs to British born Weisz



Rachel Weisz : a bright spark in a gloomy tale.

(*Stealing Beauty*, *Chain Reaction*, *The Land Girls*). She plays Helen, the centre of a vicious love triangle that also includes fourteen year old mute Petrusic and old flame Nivolo. Naturally, all have hidden secrets and sad tales to tell, and

over the course of ninety minutes, they are slowly and convincingly revealed. Petrusic hasn't spoken for years, and instead spends his time listening in on other people's lives, with an impressive array of recording and surveillance equip-

ment. Consequently, he becomes embroiled in Nivolo's obsession with Weisz, and learns the reason for Martin's eight year imprisonment.

If all this sounds very vague, then that's because giving away any more would destroy the plot. Suffice to say, everyone's clearly setting themselves up for a big fall when the finale arrives - and when it arrives, it certainly won't disappoint.

Obviously, *I Want You* is not going to suit all tastes, and will be either too forceful, too depressing or just too weird for a vast number of people. However, if you're prepared to accept a little bit of arthouse in your diet then this will prove a powerful, thought provoking tale. By turns dark, seductive, hilariously funny, brutally violent and mind numbingly grim, it's brilliantly executed by both the well known and obscure faces amongst the cast. A fine ensemble production, from both cast and crew, that's well worth a look. **F**

Dave

Reviews & Competition

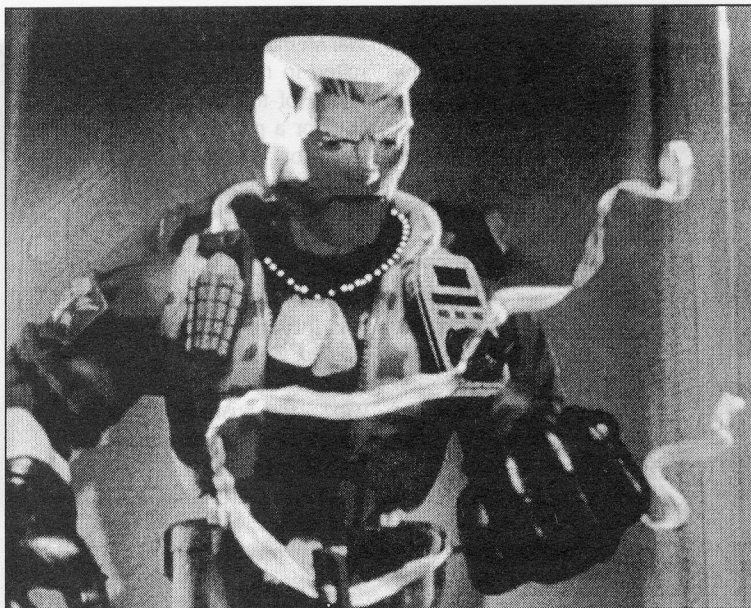
Small Soldiers ★★ ★

Starring : Kirsten Dunst, Gregory Smith, Jay Mohr
Director : Joe Dante

Thanks to the success of *Toy Story* three years ago, film execs have been falling over themselves to re-create the "Wow" factor that surrounded the adventures of Buzz, Woody, Mr Potato Head et al. Consequently, the next few months will see the release of *Antz*, *A Bug's Life*, *Toy Story 2*, *Prince of Egypt* and *Iron Giant*, all benefiting from the magic of CGI, with not a hand-drawn cel in site.

First out of the bag, however, comes *Small Soldiers*, the story of a boy and his sack of plastic figurines. Following a plot not a million miles away from *Toy Story*, a young boy (Smith) takes possession of the latest toy on the market - in this case the military Commandos and their foe, the peaceful Gorgonites. But everything starts to go wrong when the implanted munitions chips activate, leading to a full scale war between the opposing forces. Massive devastation results, with the eponymous toys turning on Smith when he rescues the Gorgonite leader.

Whilst on paper it probably seemed like a great idea for a film, the reality is far from satisfactory. *Toy Story* succeeded because it appealed to adults and chil-



Chip Hazard : Voice of Tommy Lee Jones.; Body of Arnle

dren alike, whereas *Small Soldiers* is too scary for small children, yet too idiotic for adults. That said, the visuals are still spectacular, and some of the cameos (from the likes of Dennis Leary and Phil Hart-

man) provide moments of joy. Even so, like so much of modern Hollywood, take away the CGI and there's very, very little left. **F**

Dave

Win tickets to Exorcist courtesy of

ODEON

KENSINGTON

With Halloween fast approaching, film studio executives on high have decided that it might not be a bad idea to re-release *The Exorcist*, complete with a freshly spruced up stereo soundtrack. And who's going to argue?

More importantly, cinema executives much closer to home have decided that giving away tickets to penniless students would be kinda nice. And I'm definitely not going to argue with that.

So, thanks to those ever-so-nice people at the Odeon Kensington, *Felix* offers you the chance to win a pair of tickets to what is widely recognised as one of the scariest movies ever made (which is still banned from video release).

For your chance to win, simply answer the following question:



In what year was *The Exorcist* first released?

Email your answer to film.felix@ic.ac.uk before 6pm on Tuesday to be in with a chance. Winners will be drawn at random from the virtual hat.

The winners of last week's *Halloween 1120* competition were:

Max Arendt
Jeremy Gosteau
Katherine Ruggeri
Adam Bettinson
Beng K. Ooi

They correctly identified that *1120* is the seventh *Halloween* film to be released. Please drop into the *Felix* office (in the Quad archway) to pick up your tickets.

VIDEO RE-RELEASES UPDATE

The Sting

Reuniting the team that made *Butch Cassidy & The Sundance Kid* a hit obviously seemed like a great idea back in the early seventies. Consequently, the on-screen pairing of Redford and Newman, plus director director George Roy Hill were brought together one again in 1973 for *The Sting*.

What resulted still stands as one of the greatest caper movies of all time. The twists and turns lead inexorably to the final climax, which is simply a joy to behold. A classic.

Grease

You've all seen it, I know you have - no matter how much you might deny it, the simple fact of the matter is that the whole world's seen *Grease* - and 99% of them loved it. So stop living in denial, and instead get some friends round in front of the TV and relive the experience as God intended - with cheering singing and plenty of drink.

Saturday Night Fever

It's a source of constant surprise to discover just how many people there are in the world who haven't seen *Saturday Night Fever*. We all recognise the songs, can flawlessly parody Travolta's dancing, and have the image of the seventies that *SNF* portrays etched on our minds. Yet far too many of those amongst us haven't seen it. And that's just not good enough.

Saturday Night Fever gave the world John Travolta, the Bee Gees and an image of the seventies that simply defines a generation.

Nightmare on Elm Street

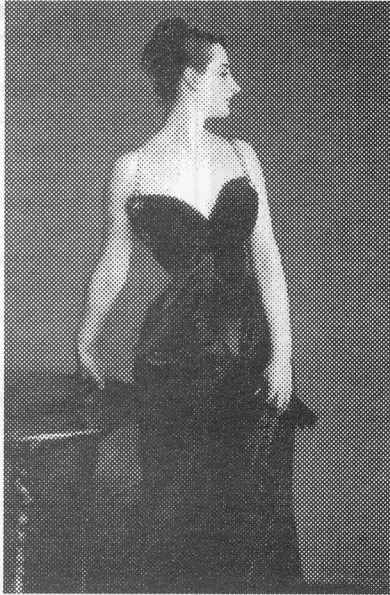
OK, so Wes Craven is hardly one of the greatest directors of all time, but when it comes to scarring the shit out of people, he could still teach Orson Welles a few lessons. Witness *Nightmare on Elm Street*, and ignore the jaded legacy of utterly forgettable sequels, and you'll realise what horror's all about.



JOHN SINGER SARGENT

Tate Gallery

The career of John Singer Sargent (1856 - 1925) was a blend of triumphant success and titillating scandal. As a student of the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts in Paris, his promising debut was marred by the indignation surrounding *Madame X* (pictured left), a daring portrait exhibited at the annual 1884 Salon. The public was outraged at the extent of female flesh revealed by the low-cut black evening gown (by today's standards, the neckline is disappointingly conservative). More shocking still, her slinky golden dress-strap, casually sliding down her shoulder, was denounced as sexually provocative (heaven forbid!). Under pressure from his critics, Sargent actually readjusted the position of the offending strap, thus partly appeasing the fragile sensibilities of a 19th century audience.



Although sometimes dismissed as a cosmopolitan social-climber, the intense public attention he received only served to enhance his appeal amongst clients. Appointed to the Royal Academy in 1897, Sargent soon became remarkably fashionable, painting members of the distinguished nobility and international elite. This collection of 150 paintings forms a major retrospective, later touring the museums of Washington and Boston (Sargent was of American nationality).

In the context of contemporary British art, his work was regarded as experimental and avant-garde. A friend of Claude Monet, he contributed to the introduction of Impressionism in England, adopting similar elements of style and brushwork technique. Yet Sargent's spirit remains firmly ingrained in the traditional and romantic.

Jaded by the demands of socialite commissions, Sargent devoted his attention to landscapes, figure studies and mural design projects. Then in 1918, he was officially requested by the British War Memorials Committee to record an image of the Great War for a proposed Hall of Remembrance. He travelled to the French front and witnessed the horrific casualties of conflict. The result was the impressive *Gassed*, which measures over six metres wide and usually hangs in the Imperial War Museum (nothing to do with IC!). The scene depicts a crowd of blindfolded soldiers, their eyesight damaged during a mustard gas attack. This tragically powerful image of suffering, especially powerful when contrasted with Sargent's typical social portraits featuring vivid colours, lavish costumes and dazzling interiors.

Sargent was accused of "glossing over social realities, sacrificing psychological depth to superficial brilliance", an unfair reproach considering the fact that commissioned portraits, by definition, supposedly flatter the sitter. However Sargent's pictures are not simply decorative; he approaches every subject with subtle perception, capturing each pose or attitude with delicate charm, confirming his unrivalled position as the ultimate Edwardian portraitist.

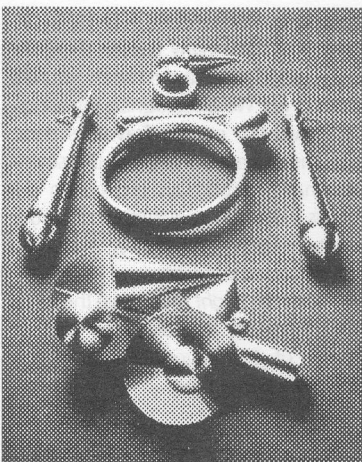


Helena
Until 17th January

Nearest tube: Piccadilly
Admission: £6, concessions £4
Opening hours: daily 10am - 5.40pm

PICASSO'S LADIES: JEWELLERY BY WENDY RAMSHAW

Victoria and Albert Museum



Pablo Picasso had an eye for the ladies. Wives, mistresses and friends have been depicted in his paintings. The identity of his subjects may seem inconsequential to us, but for Picasso, each woman had an allure, which led to the intense emotion expressed in his work. It was this sentiment which drove Wendy Ramshaw to create a collection of jewellery designed

for the women in his life. The exhibition features 66 sets of jewellery, each one inspired by a particular painting, which is displayed alongside her work as a print.

Picasso's style of combining abstraction with pattern has been a useful tool in the design of dynamic and detailed finery. In some of her pieces, Ramshaw has imitated the colour and form of the original paintings. The neckpiece associated with *The Rocking Chair* resembles a rocker with the outline of a seated woman's body. A set of large, clear beads mimics the translucence of *Standing Woman* with thin red and yellow lines that define the painting. Other pieces of Ramshaw's work simply develop Picasso's theme, such as the accompanying jewellery for a scene portraying a woman at the beach drying her feet, which is a necklace of polished pebbles.

Ramshaw is an established artist whose early work had an aboriginal influence, and this is still apparent in this collection from the shapes and designs which she regularly employs. She chose to work with a range of media for the

project, but included only hard materials as a reflection on the profundity of Picasso's feeling.

Some of her pieces seem a little over-elaborate and I had to fight against my aversion to the jewellery to appreciate the meaning behind it. However, other sets were very beautiful and could be highly valued outside the boundaries set by the exhibition. Ramshaw often uses the materials to add expression to Picasso's two dimensions. Sadness, for instance, is visualised as a cascade of tear-shaped jewels and the two rings, describing *The Kiss*, were cut to form lips with a smouldering stone set in each.

One of the most striking pieces of the exhibition was a set of two virtually identical rings, one set with moonstones and the other left as empty gold surrounds. This was associated with the *Portrait of Olga*, whose head and shoulders were painted in soft pastel shades whereas her crossed arms were left as a pencil sketch.

Even the stands for the rings and combs are carefully handcrafted,

although in some cases I found myself admiring these more than the actual exhibits! Yet this meticulous attention to detail characterises Ramshaw's wish to do Picasso justice. For one of the final pieces of the collection, Ramshaw has chosen *Women Ironing*. Picasso's sympathy for the subject is shown in the neutral tones and the weary female face, revealing the tedium of her labour. In a similarly generous gesture, Ramshaw offers her a string of glittering jewels in gold. The question is, if Picasso were alive today, would he present these gifts to his treasured ladies?

Demelza
Until 15th February
Admission: £5, FREE for students
Opening hours: daily 10am - 5.30pm
(Mondays from 12pm)

CHRIS OFILI

Serpentine Gallery, Hyde Park

As a scientist, the idea of talking to other scientists about art scared me... It scared me a lot! To help overcome my initial lack of confidence, I phoned and enlisted the help of my best friend who rather conveniently happens to be a student at the London Institute (Art College to you and I!). She kindly offered to come with me, boyfriend in tow, to investigate Chris Ofili's solo exhibition.

It's easy to hate art simply because you don't want to try to understand it. It's even easier to hate modern art because it looks so ridiculously basic. But when you actually stop and try to analyse the idea behind a piece of work, you'll soon see it's not as simple as it at first appeared. As a rather cynical biologist, I always cringe when I hear that modern art doesn't need any one particular meaning or that it can be interpreted as the individual sees fit. This to me, in most cases, is a cop-out and allows artists to escape from trying to convey a personal thought or opinion in pictorial or sculptural form. Art should have something to say, and if it doesn't, then there's no point to it.

Now, if I were an honest person, I would say that I went along to the exhibition with an open mind. However, a tad more realistically, I'd say that I was expecting it to be rubbish. Well, "was it?" I hear you cry: the answer is I'm not sure. The first thing that greeted me on walking into a large white room was a

piece entitled *Shithead '93*. This little gem of a sculpture was composed of a lump of elephant dung mixed with resin and decorated with Chris Ofili's own hair.

Picture it yourself, a lovely image I'm sure you'll agree! Despite making me laugh a lot, this made me realise that Ofili, like Damien Hirst, enjoys to shock people with the strange and obscure.

The elephant dung was a feature found in nearly all of the pieces in the exhibition.

Indeed, most of the large collages were propped up on two large mounds of the stuff! This, according to the insane art critic who conducted a tour of the gallery, was done so that the "3-D quality of the work could be fully appreciated". Hmmn... Nearly all the reviews on Chris Ofili have concentrated solely on the elephant dung (which is probably, in my opinion, why he used it in the first place). Not wishing to follow suit, I have

decided not to do this, but I will tell you that anyone who brings tons of dung heaps back from a painting scholarship in Zimbabwe and then endeavours to

display them on a market stall has to be... Well, you judge for yourself.

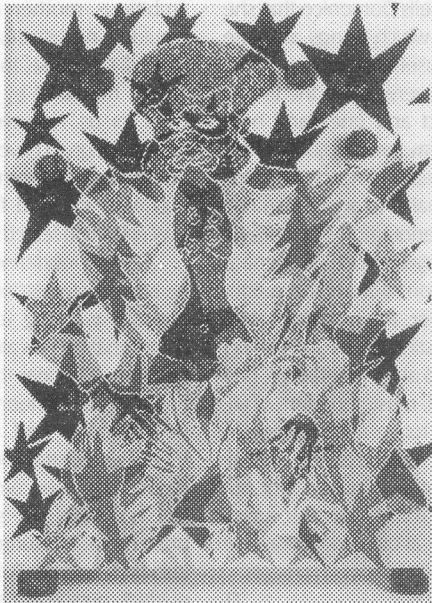
Chris Ofili's other influences include prostitutes, pimps, drug dealers, hip-hop and blaxploitation films from the '70s. He seems very keen to appeal to the young and "trendy" with his use of '70s and porno imagery. Virtually every piece has someone with a massive Afro hidden in

it somewhere and you find yourself constantly looking for the bad, naughty or disgusting ideas and images - at least, I did!

One of the aspects of Ofili's work that did appeal to me was the fact that his work was very detailed. Many of his psychedelic collages revealed more on

closer inspection than they did at first glance. My favourite piece was, rather boringly perhaps, a pencil drawing of hundreds of little faces arranged in circles, entitled *Untitled '96*. I think the main reason for this was because of its intricacy and the fact that it was a welcome break from resin, acrylic, oil, paper and dung collages. Ofili's use of tiny dots was effective in providing dense colour and shape to his subjects. His inspiration for this came from the Matapos cave paintings in Zimbabwe.

Chris Ofili displayed work at the controversial *Sensations* exhibition at the Royal Academy last year. Born in Manchester, he studied at the Chelsea School of Art and the Royal College of Art. He has now been shortlisted for the 1998 Turner Prize. In conclusion, I'd recommend seeing the exhibition; It's free for a start, and it only takes five minutes to walk up Exhibition Road to reach the gallery. You probably won't like it at first but you'll end up talking about it to your friends for ages afterwards - if only because of those stupid elephant dung mounds.



The Adoration of Captain Shithead and the Legend of the Black Stars, 1998

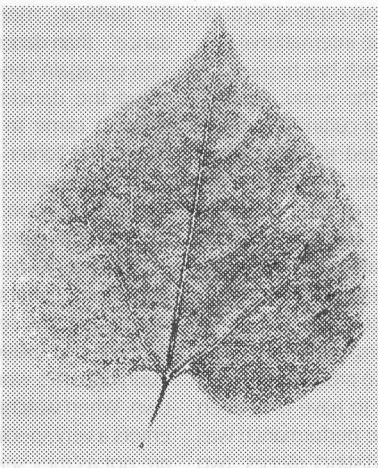
Ingrid
Until 1st November

Nearest tube: you've got to be joking!
Admission: FREE
Opening hours: daily 10am - 6pm

PHOTOGRAPHY: AN INDEPENDENT ART

Victoria and Albert Museum

This exhibition is an introductory overview of the Victoria and Albert Museum's collection of photographs, which overall assembles some 300,000 works. In the current display (part of a national celebratory programme), there are examples of photographic art ranging from the 1850's all the way through to the present day. As would be expected from an exhibition in the



coloured *Photography's Dead Long Live Painting*, is well thought out and skillfully executed. The layout of the exhibition has been carefully designed, with the photographs grouped in sections according to the technique and the age of the print allowing easy navigation for the inexperienced.

The centerpiece of this exhibition is Helen Chadwick's *The Oval Court* (1986), which earned her a nomination for the Turner prize. This installation consists of five gold leaf spheres placed upon blue tinted photocopies, depicting almost abstract images of animals and people

(perhaps a hint of product placement and subtle advertising there, since the company Canon sponsors the recently launched gallery!). On the walls surrounding the spheres and oval photocopied 'pool' are weird, weeping photos of the artist. The artist's creations were referred to as a 'post-lapsarian Paradise where woman is visible alone among humankind'. This



observation is almost as strange as the piece itself, but the overall effect of this piece is very strange and yet somehow moving. Drop in and see if you can describe it!

This exhibition is well worth a visit if you are interested either in the history of photography or just in seeing powerful pictures thoughtfully chosen and well displayed. Entrance is free to Imperial College students (just show your swipe card) and the exhibition shouldn't takelong to view properly.

Until 8th November
Admission: £5, FREE to students
Opening hours: daily 10am - 5.30pm (Mondays from 12pm)



FILUMENA Piccadilly Theatre



You may have never heard of this play before. Neither had I, although Judi Dench was acting the title role. That's about as much as I knew before entering the theatre. Well, it was a very pleasant surprise. It's originally an Italian play by Eduardo de Filippo, translated here by Timberlake Wertenbaker, about a middle-aged woman, Filumena, who fakes an illness to marry the man that she loves. He finally accepts, thinking she is about to die in her bed. She then bounces out of bed claiming that it was all just put on. At this point, the play actually starts. Domenico, Filumena's husband, simply cannot believe his eyes and is also immensely cross with himself for having been fooled in such a way. The first scene between the newly-weds is a jewel of humour and lightness.

They each have an ally in their fight: for Domenico, his old time friend Alfredo

and for Filumena, her "dame de compagnie" Rosalia. Domenico has been having an affair with the nurse, half his age, who took care of his wife. The whole play has a very vaudeville feel to it and is full of hilarious moments. The situation only grows more complicated when Filumena tells Domenico that she has three sons, which brings absolute chaos to the household.

The acting is very good - the timing is always perfect and one can't help laughing all the way through. Judi Dench, as always, is a dream to watch. She flips from one personality to another so naturally. Michael Pennington is a fantastic Domenico and gives poor Filumena a very hard time too. But behind a light and funny exterior, the play does raise some very interesting issues: the conflict between rich and poor, friendships, personal dignity and, most important of all, the way people relate and manage to survive together despite all the difficulties they encounter. A lovely night out full of laughs and a little reflection, amazing actors and great directing. What else could one ask for?

D.

Until the end of December

Nearest tube: Piccadilly Circus

Tickets: standby places available for concessions (check beforehand)

THE FATHERING Courtyard Theatre

The Finnish playwright Jussi Wahlgren apparently started directing plays at the tender age of five. Perhaps, you can't help but wonder, if there is a hint of autobiography in his play *The Fathering*, which tells the tale of how a boy "prodigy" is forced by his ambitious mother down a path he wouldn't necessarily have chosen for himself. Of course, to a certain extent we are all moulded by what our parents want for us. However, most of us are lucky enough to have a say in our future, but the fate of Thomas, the lead of this play, was decided for him before he was even conceived.

Now, considering himself an adult, he is torn between wanting a normal life and still wanting to be the virtuoso pianist that he was always told he would become. It is clear that the mother has had a greater influence on his life than perhaps she had intended, seeing friends as a distraction, denying him girlfriends and even orchestrating his first lay. Yet he is not strong enough to branch out. Her unrelenting pushiness backfires, eventually leading him to misguidedly pursue a talent he doesn't have. It may sound like a well worn topic, and at the outset the play does indeed appear stereotyped and uninventive, but as the story unfolds it becomes clear that there is much more depth to it. The

play explores the motivations behind the characters, revealing incidents in the mother's past and aspects of her life that lead her to use her son as an expression of her own feelings of resentment towards his dead father. We see the son, supposedly aged twenty, acting as a spoilt, bratty child, trying to break free from his mother, yet still craving her security.

There are also several novel twists in the story, all unforeseen and perfectly paced. These plots and subplots come together very well, culminating in an engrossing final scene that leaves you thinking. *The Fathering* highlights well the fine line between trying to help your children fulfil their dreams and trying to make them fulfil your own, stressing the importance of keeping things in perspective. A thought-provoking play brought to life by the endearing piano tuner Max (Peter Hamilton) - and the ridiculous hand puppets.

Judith and Christian

Until 8th November

Nearest tube: King's Cross

Tickets: concessions £5.50 (Sundays, pay what you can)

Performance times: daily 8pm (except Mondays)

CRAVE Royal Court Theatre



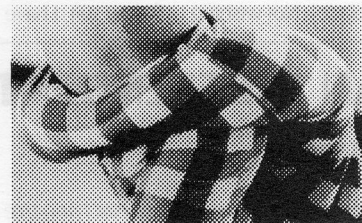
A few months ago, I talked in these pages about a play called *Cleansed*, which I found such a revelation. The author, Sarah Kane, has just presented her latest piece. She takes a new direction in her career by cutting down on the extremely outrageous and sometimes very repulsive style of her previous work. In *Crave*, she settles for something much more accessible to an average theatre-goer. The four actors walk onto the stage and sit next to one another, facing the audience. After a few seconds they start talking furiously and with no particular structure. They repeat words endlessly, as one of them starts a sentence and the others finish it. The whole process is fascinating and very well performed.

None of the characters have names, only a letter. There are no amazing set design or direction tricks and the play takes place in an unnamed city; everything is kept bare, giving the words and action a much stronger presence than in a usual play.

The author still remains faithful to her themes: the search for love in a world that seems so disintegrated, where human beings seem to have forgotten how to communicate and interact. They appear to be making an enormous effort to get to know one another: "M" is trying to have a baby with "B", although it is not obvious whether they have actually met before. "A" is a middle-aged man who has had a lot of experience in life and still hasn't quite found what he needs. "C", on the other hand, is a young woman learning life the hard way. Abuse in Sarah Kane's work is always a very strong point; it often makes for very difficult scenes and situations. Sarah Kane is definitely enforcing her position as one of the most exciting writers around. If you still haven't seen any of her pieces, run for it on the next occasion.

D.

MERCE CUNNINGHAM Barbican



This year, the Barbican has put on one of the most exciting festivals in London: the international theatre event (BITE), which has brought us plays from all over the world, most of them experimental or cutting-edge. The Barbican also decided to incorporate some dance events into the programme, one of them by Merce Cunningham's American company. Cunningham is part of that older generation of choreographers like Maurice Bejart or Pina Bausch, who have been creating the most astounding and daring work for over 50 years. He brought two programmes over and I am very sorry to have only been able to see one. The performance was made up of three distinct pieces, two recent creations and a special composition for the festival.

Merce Cunningham's choreography has always been fascinating; all of his movements are quite simple and repetitive. But what an impact! He gets the

most out of his dancers and they perform perfectly. The first piece, with decor by John Cage, was extremely minimalist; the musical accompaniment was a succession of electronic noises stretched out to their maximum. Of course, this was also reflected in the dancing, invoking an atmosphere of deep thought. The second piece was the creation for the Barbican, more an "experience of dance" than dance itself. It was thrilling, with yet again very bare music, emphasising the dancers' movements. The evening came to a close with something a little lighter: *Scenario*, a piece with the added feature of costumes designed by Rei Kawakubo, the woman behind "Comme des Garçons".

The decor was completely white with very strong lighting: the whole set was compelling. The costumes restricted the dancers' possibilities of expression. Cunningham's work is in a league of its own. When watching his creations, one enters a very special world where things are not as they seem. But one can very easily relate to them. This is dance and more generally art at its best: daring, innovative and provocative. Don't miss out when he next comes back to Europe.

D.



WILD 9 (Playstation)

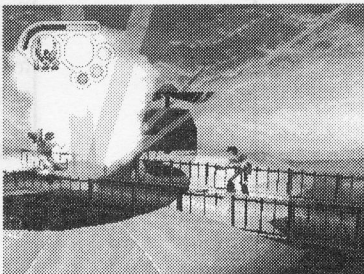
Shiny Entertainment ★★

Wild 9 is the new game from Shiny Entertainment. It is a single player platform game and has many similarities to Shiny's most well known game - Earthworm Jim. The gameplay is basically the same as any other platform game, with the requisite sub-games and puzzles. The plot is the usual kind thing you get - you play as Wex Major ("Earth teenager and reluctant hero"), leading the Wild 9 (a group of 9 wild "misfits") against the villain Karn ("a gargantuan villain with a taste for inter-planetary redecorating").

Although this doesn't sound particularly interesting so

far there are a number of reasons for it being one of the better games of its genre.

Number 1: the game is a very polished and impressive production. The graphics, sound effects and soundtrack are high class. Especially for platform game, the 3D graphics are superb. Number 2 is your weapon, the Rig - "the galaxy's most powerful weapon". Well, that's quite a big exaggeration, but it is interesting playing with it for a while. The game still wouldn't be very good without the main reasons. Which are number 3: its sense of humour, which is seen quite vividly in number 4: your ability to torture



your enemies. You can trap these stupid creatures and blow them up, burn them, decapitate them, drown them, slice them, electrocute them, impale them or puree them. This is fun. You can also use them as bridges to get over pools of acid. This is also fun. The only problem is that creatures look too ridiculous to be realistic and the pleasure from sadistic torture is diminished. It would be much more fun if your enemies were 'cute' fluffy animals or people, except that of course the Daily Mail would start a hate campaign and the game would be banned. I'm not just

detailing all these torture methods because I'm a sadist. It is essential to learn the right way to kill a certain creature before you can proceed.

Overall then - if you like platform games I would definitely recommend it. It is well designed and the 13 different worlds makes for an extensive game area. The puzzles and general gameplay is good. Otherwise, although it is a fun game it gets a bit repetitive after a while, and generally is not very original. It is a platform game after all.

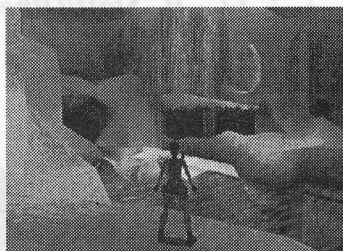
Chiron Mukherjee

News

Tomb Raider III

Lara is back. With the latest dose of Running, jumping and provocative bum wiggling being promised for November 15th the hype machine is into gear with 5 minute cinema adverts and press launch parties at the Natural History Museum winning over the press in one evening.

Once again Tomb Raider will make the number one chart by Christmas with the new lighting effects and the emphasis on more puzzle elements. This should make the game a mix of the pure action Tomb Raider II game, and the very puzzle orientated Tomb Raider. From what I managed to see there are some very nice touches with



the AI being tweaked allowing Lara to hide from the baddies, and guns smoking after being fired. The London scenes looked very impressive with rain in the outdoor parts and nice church stained glass effects in the indoor parts. The Playstation version is also tweaked and now runs in high-res mode (it makes her breasts slightly less pointy). The trophy of the night were 30 cm high golden statuettes of Lara herself. Journalism being a honourable profession they all disappeared before the end of the night.

We will be reviewing this as soon as we get a copy and we fight it out on who gets the copy to review. Now where is my favourite broken newcastle brown bottle.

GS

Lemmings (Playstation)

Psygnosis ★★

Following on from the release of the old arcade classics on the Playstation it appears that the release of PC classics on the PS is in full flow. Psygnosis has decided to release Lemmings and the sequel 'oh no not more Lemmings' on the Playstation masses. Since 1991 Lemmings have plagued over 3 million people with their appalling stupidity and their ability to step into furnaces, off high platforms and generally to endanger their lives in entertaining ways. Only determined and frantic activity meant the difference between a load of live lemmings and a horrible pile of mush on the ground.

So basically it's a 1991 game being released in 1998. The game is still as good as it always was, even if the PS controller is a pain - hopefully the PS mouse

will be supported in the full version (it should make it much more like a game and less like an instrument of torture). You have your usual limited motley crew of special lemmings. Digging, mining, floating, climbing, bashing, bridge building and best of all the bomb lemmings (turn your lemmings into small bundles of semtex and blow your way through the wall). The graphics are nice but nothing special and as puzzle games go it is a good and worthy classic game but when compared against newer puzzle games like kula world it does reek of a early 1990's game. A game worthy of game of the year, it's a shame that the year happens to be

1992.

GS



Red Alert - Retaliation (Playstation)

Virgin Interactive ★★

You've done the world domination bit in Red Alert, taken the soviets to London or the Allies to Moscow and generally spent several sleepless nights going through your mind whether you should have built another ore refinery rather than that spanking new tank. What has Retaliation got to tempt you to go on another mass killing spree?

Well there are new and powerful weapons, which go towards balancing the power of the two sides on land and sea. The soviets get missile launching subs to match the allied cruisers, and tesla tanks and infantry to provide a bit of punch to the soviet attack. The allies seem to get the raw end of the deal with the only new important weapon being the chronotank which has the habit of being able to pop up behind the lines of battle chewing enemy base for lunch.

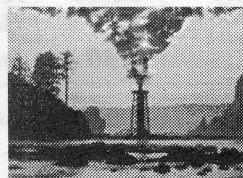
With this new armoury there are 32 new missions (16 for each side) to tackle which go from the fairly straightforward to the incredibly annoying and difficult. This is compounded with the problem that games can only be saved after completing a battle and not during the bat-

tle. There are also new cut and intro sequences - yes eye candy perhaps but anything for a bit of atmosphere.

Also with a nearby friend with a spare Playstation and TV, the Playstations can be linked up and old scores can be settled using the blood of your troops rather than using a broken newcastle brown bottle. (frankly grinding their noses into the floor in this game can be very satisfying and less likely to have you at one of Her Majesty's Hotels.)

The game is not perfect though. Without a mouse it is a pain to move across the map quickly enough and during the link up game it occasionally decides to slow down to a complete crawl. Also comparing it against the PC version it does come second with lower resolution on the screen and an inability to play it across a link more than a few metres and more than two people. But if you have not got a PC and have missed out on the original Red Alert go and buy it. Though don't blame me if your skin starts to pale and eyes become sunken because of lack of sleep.

GS





Your Guide to What's On in the Next 7 Days

Around IC

| Mon 26 | Tues 27 | Wed 28 | Thurs 29 | Fri 30 | Sat 31 | Sun 1 |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CAG meeting - basement of Beit Quad 6pm | Wine Tasting - dB's 6pm | XS - free before 11pm, 50p after 9pm - 1am | Kyra Vayne (illustrated talk) - Read Theatre, Sheffield 1pm | Bust-a-gut dB's £2.50 | Comedy - London around Erasmus around London quiz - Beit Quad 11am | Annual veteran car London to Brighton run - see the mascots in action! |
| Standing Room Only - DaVinci's Bar 5pm | Tzigane Piano Trio - Read Theatre, Sheffield 6.15pm | | Cocktails - DaVinci's Bar 5pm | Shaft - £1 9pm - 2am | | Contact p.h.mitchell@ic.ac.uk for Bo peter.burge@ic.ac.uk for Clem jez@ic.ac.uk for Jez |
| | STA Bar Trivia - Davinci's Bar 8pm | | CAG soup run - basement, Weeks Hall 8pm | | | |
| | CAG soup run - basement, Weeks Hall 8pm | | Erasmus meeting - Union Bar 8pm | | | |
| | Caving Club meeting - Southside 9pm | | | | | |
| | CLAYPONDS MOVIE VISIT AT PARK ROYAL | | | | | |

We would love to tell you all what great clubs are on this week, but we've lost our Club Guide (aka *Time Out*)

Instead, Felix would like to wish all its readers a very

Happy Halloween

FITNESS & AEROBICS SCHEDULE

| Day | Time | Level | Description |
|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Monday | 12:30 5:30 6:30 | Advanced Beg/Int Intermediate | Circuit Training Body Sculpt Aerobics |
| Tuesday | 5:30 | Advanced | Aerobics |
| Wednesday | 1:00 5:30 | Beg/Int Intermediate | Body Sculpt STEP |
| Thursday | 5:30 | Intermediate | Aerobics |
| Friday | 5:30 | Int/Adv | Aerobics |
| Sunday | 2:00 | Intermediate | STEP |

Everyone Welcome!

Class Prices

£ 1.25 Members

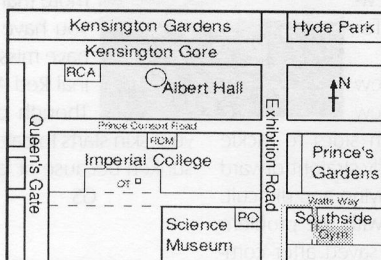
£ 2.00 Nonmembers

Membership

(Valid for 1 year)

£ 8 IC Students

£ 12 IC Staff/Other Students



CLASSES HELD HERE

Professional Instructors
at Student Prices!!

For more information email
fitness@ic.ac.uk

All Classes are held
at SOUTHSIDE GYM
To join in, just turn up
for any class!

iOU Fitness Club





Football

2nd XI

IC 3 - 0 QMW

This was IC's second BUSA game, following our 5-3 win the previous week. IC got off to a good start with early pressure on the opposition. It paid off when a shot from just outside the 18-yard box from Loz, managed to get past the keeper. IC continued to have most of the play during the first half, without too many attempts on goal. About 10 minutes before half time IC won a corner, which was played into the penalty area and in clearing the ball, one of QMW's handled the ball. Jules, our captain, stepped up and put the penalty away.

The rest of the first half passed without incident. After the break, IC continued where they had left off, taking most of the possession, but not having many shots on goal. It wasn't until about the 70th minute that IC scored their third goal. From the corner Tony got to the ball first and put in a great goal. IC dominated the rest of the match and had a few long-range efforts but, again, did not really test the keeper. QMW did not really have a chance on goal in the second half. The closest they came was a good free kick halfway through the first half. It was a good performance, giving IC something to build on for the coming weeks.

Badminton

Delusions of Grandeur

This summer has seen much change in the college buildings as part of the continual renaissance of the campus, none more so than the refurbished Great Hall. Unfortunately it was discovered that the contractors had laid the wrong kind of surface for badminton. This means a special carpet/synthetic surface has to be laid each time it is required for play and even this has not proved satisfactory to the purists of the game. All this despite the fact that the Union had been established as one of the key members of the User Group in meetings prior to the building work approaching the end of last term.

The other more contentious issue arising from the redevelopment is the accessibility the Union now has to the Great Hall. Owing to the work done on it, the Great Hall now boasts retractable seats. This is not the instantaneous high technology as suggested by its description. For instance, if the badminton club wanted to use the hall, a "specially trained" crew of four staff would need

Playing the same team twice at the start of the season is never ideal. Even if you win the first game the usual apathy associated with all IC can set in, resulting in a below par performance in the second game, and losing the first game just tends to demoralise you. However it was quite different in these two games. Losing the BUSA game merely strengthened our resolve to overpower the same LSE team three days later in the ULU League.

In BUSA we were actually leading 2-0 at half time, thus to lose from such a position was extremely galling (perhaps something to do with the apathy?). The three goals we conceded in the second half came about from sharp incisive forward power play from the Economists, lacklustre defending from the Imperialists and, to be honest, shite goal-keeping from the Custodian.

Credit has to be given to the whole

team who apart from the obvious lapses in concentration played some neat football more recognisable than the silky skills of Bury FC than the previous tirade of long balls served up by previous Fourth teams. For the record the quality goals were scored by Adam and John.

Then, strengthened by a couple of new players for the Saturday game IC simply dominated from start to finish. Against the wind in the first half it was always going to be tough, but LSE only managed one shot on target, saved superbly by S-T-U, the prospective candidate for DP (C&S). Some remarked that it was possibly his best save in his five years at IC; though the previous two saves weren't really up to that much anyway. Some inspired (???) substitutions at half time enabled the Famous Footballing Fourths to cruise to a famous victory, reaffirming themselves to be the best Fourths in London. Peyrouz scored, Adam scored a couple, Bertie a hat trick and Chris a wonder goal. It all bodes well for the future...altogether now "A,B,C,D,E,F, G.."

4th XI

IC 7 - 0 LSE

SCOREBOARD

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------|-------------|
| Sat 17 Oct 1998 | Div 5 IC V | 1-7 | LSE VI |
| Div 2 KCL II | 2-3 | IC II | Div 6 IC VI |
| Div 2 IC III | 0-1 | ICSM II | 1-7 |
| Div 3 IC IV | 7-0 | LSE IV | RSM II |
| | Wed 14th Oct 1998 | | |
| | BUSA LSE IV | 3-2 | IC IV |

D'Oh!

No women's X-Country team

Even by Imperial's standards the turnout for the women's team at the ULU X-country meet at Parliament Hill was, to say the least, abysmal. Bethan battled bravely for 2nd place but refused to run 3 more laps to make up a team.

The men fared slightly better with 3 full teams demonstrating strength and depth, if not speed. Brunel used their usual dirty tactics to break up the field, leaving Benny-boy to finish gallantly in 8th position.

There were excellent performances from Mike Baicher and Gavin Daisley, who qualified for the first team on their debuts. Nick "Kinky" Bowmen decided to run anyway, despite asthma and 'flu. The rest of the boys did well, especially the first timers on the X-country scene. Thanks to everyone who ran and PLEASE could we have some more female runners!

Contact d.robinson@ic.ac.uk

RSM 2nd XI

IC VI 1 - 7 RSM

Oh RSM [Oh RSM]
Are wonderful [Are wonderful]
Oh RSM are wonderful!!

RSM didn't play badly as a team (as the scoreline suggests), but the encouraging thing was that they created enough chances to be well into double figures if certain members of the team (myself included!) kept their composure. I'm sure that'll come with time. Goals came from "Captian" Dave, "Vice" Moony, "Twinkle-toes" Tim, "Devious" Derek, a double strike from "Pieman" Phil and none other than Barry McGuigan himself, who struck a knockout blow by sweetly sweeping a right hook into the mouth of the goal.

We can't get too big-headed, but we're at the top of the table after just one game and we agreed in the changing room afterwards that it would be too much effort to move from the top spot. So, Mines, let's dig deep and, save any pitfalls, show 'em what we're capable of. Oh RSM are wonderful! **Mark**

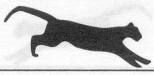
Hockey

IC I 6 - 0 QMW

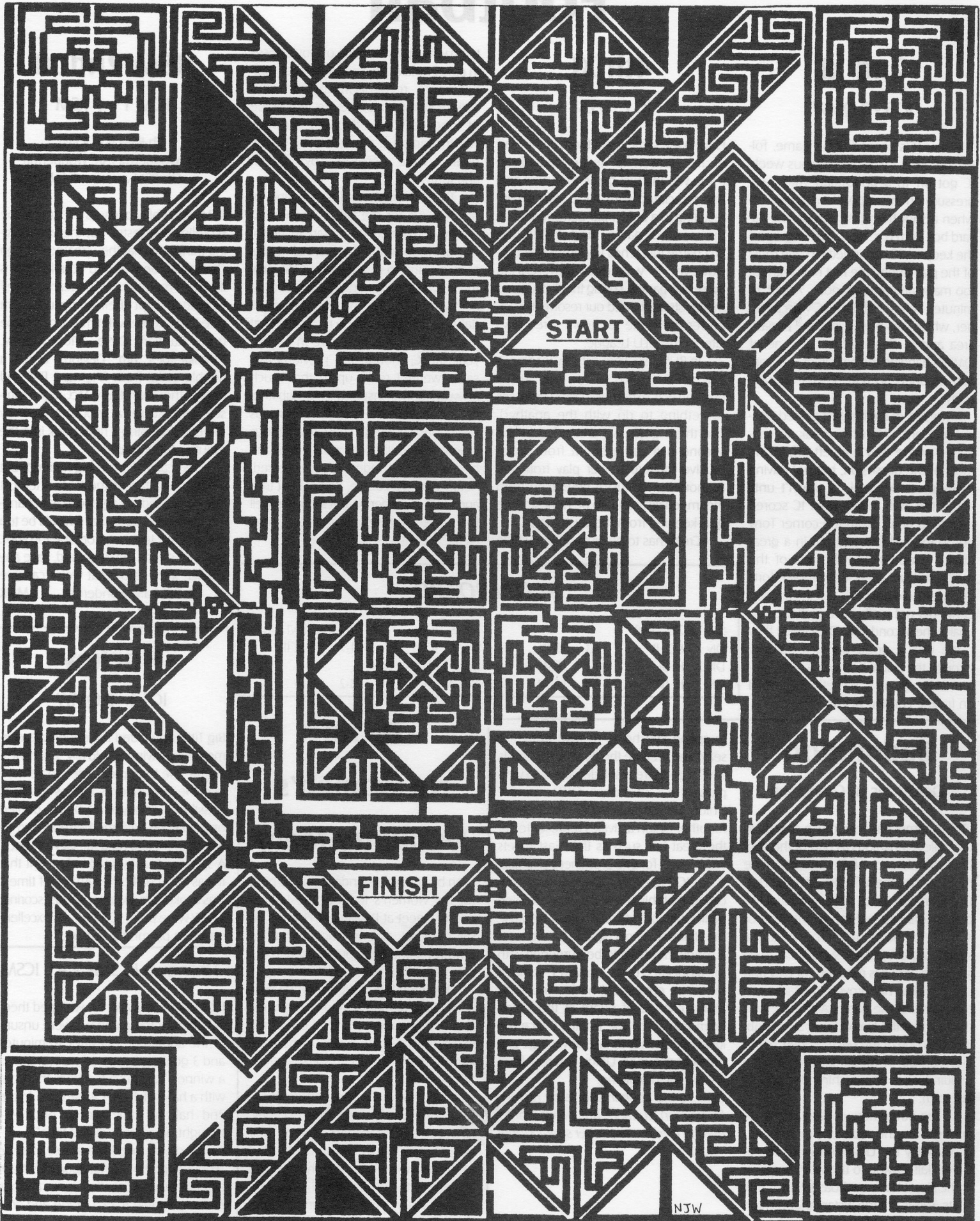
Big Titties provided the opening excitement by denying an old ally, 2.4 inches, a goal. He then proceeded to venture into the opposition's half as much as possible. Annoyed at being denied one goal, he had another poached by Noddy. Not bad for a fat, lazy left back. A spawny goal by spagbol meant that it was 2-0 at half time. After half time it was a joke, IC's sweeper almost scoring. QMW were poor, IC ruled. An excellent start to a promising season.

Unknown IC 3rds 7 - 0 ICSM

ICSM were crap and we whipped them 7-0. Before the game we were unsure of the aptitude but after 10 minutes and 3 goals, we realised we were onto a winner. Casanova led from the front with a hat-trick from Casanova. In the 2nd half he only scored once - I thought he scored "all the time". (Some of you (me, for example) may be wondering about what sport this team actually plays. Scrawling a mostly illegible/unprintable match report and ending it with the words "Felix is shit" is NOT the best way to get your team's efforts into these pages. But I've got space to fill - Gus)



Natalie Wood



NJW

Faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.