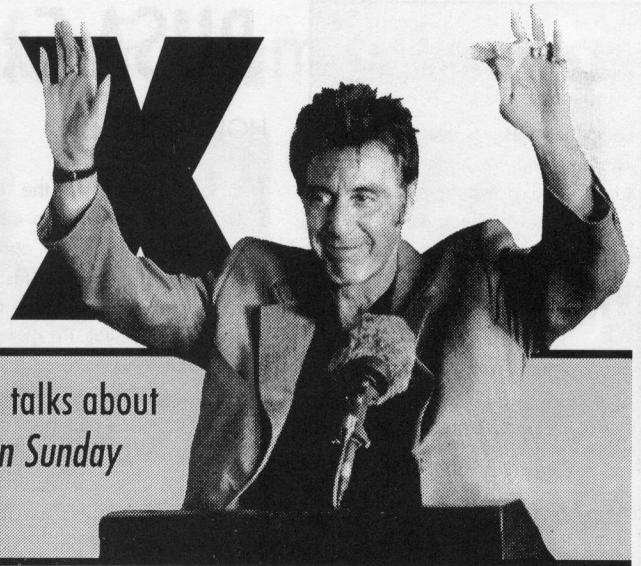


FELIX

This is a subliminal message:
vote for the man on the right
Page 4



Al Pacino talks about
Any Given Sunday
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Southside renovation faces setback

GARETH MORGAN

The planned redevelopment of the Southside halls of residence has been postponed "until mid 2001", after a reassessment of the project by Imperial College Estates.

The delay was announced at a meeting of College Council at the end of last term. The project as a whole has not been delayed, according to John Walsh, the Assistant Director of Projects in the Estates Department, only the construction itself. There will be a greater "lead in" time, which will allow the project to be planned in finer detail. This, in turn, will improve the efficiency of the construction and allow for contracting to be finalised before building work starts.

Estates are currently reviewing the timescale for the construction in light of the improved planning, and hope to minimise the period for which the halls are out of commission. This means that only Willis Jackson House, in Evelyn Gardens, is due to undergo renovation in the next academic year, easing the pressure on spaces in halls and allowing the College to fulfil its promise to offer accommodation to all first year undergraduates.

Part of Estates' rationale in delaying the Southside project was to "safeguard our financial exposure", as there are several so-called "capital projects" underway, including the refurbishment of the



Southside: open for another year

Photo: Dave

Senior Common Room and the construction of the Multi-Disciplinary Research Building (MRDB). Imperial College's recently-published Annual Report includes descriptions of these and other planned projects, but the Southside redevelopment is not listed; neither are the other "rolling refurbishments" of Imperial's halls of residence.

Beryl Castle, College's Director of Finance, denied rumours that financial problems were to blame for the changes, as the projects were never intended to be funded directly from College funds. Indeed, in his introduction to the Annual Report the Rector, Lord Oxburgh, states that progress "will depend on our ability to find

around £200 million outside the College". Ms Castle stated that the capital projects were proceeding according to the College's long-term plans, citing the MRDB as a prime example of a development that is working well.

However, the introduction of a new, £6 million finance system appears to have caused some short-term cash flow difficulties. Due to problems integrating the new system with existing administration systems, there have been delays in processing the tuition fees bills, which were not sent out until December. Since fees and support grants from Local Education Authorities accounted for £34 million last year, some 10% of the College's turnover, the delay in

their receipt caused a temporary deficit when staff expenses were paid each month. The problem was compounded by the decision to pay off around £3 million of debts last July to ease the transfer to the new system. Although there have been no serious losses, and the finances are set to recover as debts are paid, the lack of capital has reduced the profits made by investing surpluses.

Meanwhile, the renovation of Beit Hall looks likely to finish slightly later than scheduled, although Estates are "still looking to maintain the end date", according to Mr Walsh. The delays are associated with the problems of working with old buildings, but are unlikely to prolong the work greatly beyond the target of 1 July. Mr Walsh said that work on the basements, which are to be developed by Imperial College Union, should not be delayed.

Contracts are "currently being signed" for the first stage in the Royal School of Mines makeover, the conversion of Level 4 into new offices. An "in-house strategy for the whole building", rather than the initial plan of renovating everything at once, is now favoured. Although this will still cost tens of millions of pounds and take several years, it is less expensive and disruptive than the alternative. The costs have been inflated by the need to maintain the front of the listed building, which faces Prince Consort Road.

4 GLA Elections

London goes to the polls this Thursday, so we present you with a slimmed down version of the candidates manifestoes.

6 Travel

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C&G launch their buddies scheme, and Tasha talks discounts.

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This week's letters focus on the forthcoming elections, surveys and excess management.

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Screen interviews Al Pacino, Music reports on the best of the Easter clubbing, and Games brings you all the latest Dreamcast releases.

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As ever, we condense one week into a selection of handy boxes.

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A brace of brainteasers from Turnip Henry this week, with both cryptic and quick crosswords.

29 Competitions

Once again, Felix teams up with ISIC to offer you the chance to win a set of Lonely Planet goodies.

30 Sport & Societies

Mountaineering head for Spain, whilst Cross Country get naked.

BUSA Executive accept hybrid entry

HOLLY BARNES

The latest plans for the massive £300 million renovation of the St Mary's site threaten to completely subsume the Chelsea & Westminster Hospital, as well as forcing the closure of the Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospitals.

The National Heart and Lung Institute (currently at the Brompton site) and specialist children's surgery services will be incorporated into the new "Super Hospital" according to plans set to go to public consultation soon. Doctors are worried that the loss of the surgery will reduce the integrity of the hospital, despite reassurances that other services will replace it. Although the intention to close the Brompton and Harefield has been known since the unveiling of the plan, the threat to the Chelsea and Westminster threatens to stir up increased controversy.

The Chelsea and Westminster is London's newest teaching hospital, having opened just seven years ago



The Charing Cross and Westminster Hospital

Photo: Archive

at a cost of £230 million, and as such it is believed that any threat to its future may cause concern amongst government figures and senior NHS administrators who are fearful of a major loss of face should such an expensive construction be made redundant so soon. However, with Imperial regarded as the major driving force behind the project (viewing a major centre for medical research, focused on a sin-

gle campus, as the only way in which the College can compete internationally), powerful lobbies are thought to be at work on both sides.

Any decision on the future of the Chelsea and Westminster will not need to be made for some time, as work on the new structure, to be constructed next to the existing St Mary's building, is not due to begin until 2005.

In Brief

LEAGUE TABLE LATEST

The latest Times Good University Guide league table has once again placed Imperial College in second place overall, behind Cambridge. A more detailed breakdown, published in the Times Higher Education Supplement, shows that Imperial has the best staff-student ratio in the country, as well as a good teaching assessment score and high spending per student. However, Imperial award relatively few first and upper second class degrees compared to other leading institutions, and only 40% of staff work in teaching or research.

ERASMUS IMBALANCE

Fewer UK students are taking up Erasmus places to study in Europe, while more European students are choosing to study here. Only 9994 British students took up placements last year, compared to 11 998 in 1994-95. Poor language skills and an insufficient

grant are blamed. In contrast, 20 769 Erasmus students came to Britain in 1997-98, an increase of around 2500 since 1994-1995.

PRAYER ROOM PROBLEMS

The future of the Islamic Prayer Room is uncertain after a meeting between ICU, the Islamic Society and College Administration. The planned site, part of the Union's developments of the Beit base-ments, was vetoed due to its proximity to the Union bars. It was felt that this would be a particular problem on Fridays.

KINGS BIG BUILDING

Kings College's new Franklin-Wilkins building, which was opened by the Princess Royal on 22 March, will hold 4500 students, making it the largest university building in London. Recently refurbished for £50 million, the building will house the Schools of Health and Life Sciences, Nursing & Midwifery and Education.

BEIT QUAD CLOSURE

Access to Beit Quad is likely to be restricted over the weekend of 13-14 May. This is to allow the crane currently situated in the Quad to be removed by contractors Longley. The date has yet to be confirmed - check next week's Felix or look for notices in the Union.

STUDENTS SHOT AT

Friday night revellers in the Union over the Easter break got more than they bargained for when they were repeatedly shot at as they walked past the Royal School of Mines. An unknown assailant fired a paintball gun at them after they left Beit Quad. Although they avoided the volley, the building was hit several times by green paint. Police are investigating the incident, and think that the shots were fired from the Albert Hall Mansions, across the road. A police spokesman said that they had identified a suspect and that an arrest was imminent.

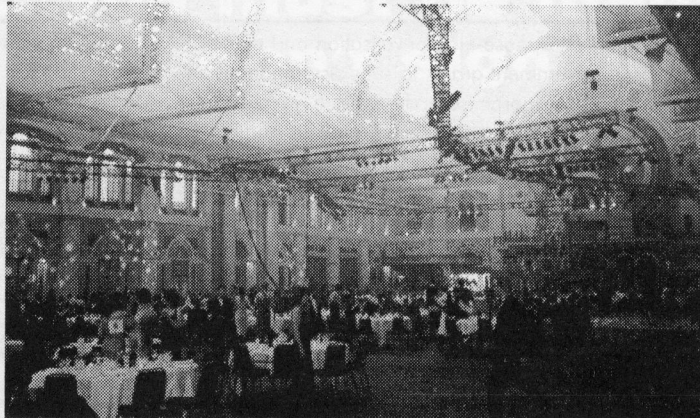
Summer Ball 2000 plumps for Fulham's Paragon

RICK BLAINE

After several false starts and alterations to the initial plan, it's now all systems go for this year's ICU Summer Ball.

Having initially opted to return to Alexandra Palace, home to the last two balls, the Summer Ball Committee has now decided to hold the event at the Paragon Hotel. Although the decision was primarily made on grounds of cost – a total loss in excess of £10 000 was projected for a return to last year's venue – ICU Deputy President (Finance and Services) Ian Clifford suggested that a move to the Fulham venue also brings with it several other advantages, such as proximity and a lower ticket price. Union President Tasha Newton confirmed this buoyant outlook, promising that this year's event will be "really super duper".

Although a date of Saturday 24 June was tentatively agreed before Christmas, several changes of plan – caused by the need for adequate



Last year's Summer Ball at the Alexandra Palace

Photo: Jonas

time to set-up the planned Ents, including a band, disco and casino – have eventually led to Friday 23 June, one week before the end of term, being chosen. Tickets will cost £45 and should go on sale on Monday 15 May. A three course meal, champagne reception, assorted entertainments and "lots and lots of wine" will all be included in the price.

After last year's massive losses, one of the major concerns for Mr

Clifford is ensuring that the event cannot possibly lose money, so the scale of the Ball has been considerably reduced. Around 450 – 500 tickets will need to be sold in order for the event to break even. However, the hotel's owners have set a limit of 850 people on their "Enterprise Suite", which means that, at full capacity, around 500 fewer revellers than last year will be able to attend.

In order to make sure that the

event runs as smoothly as possible in future years, the current sabbatical team has already begun planning for the 2001 Summer Ball, which is likely to take place on Queen's Lawn. As a result, Ms Newton was keen to point out that this year's dinner will be "the last to be held outside of the College for some time... so I guess it's really the year to go". Although there are fears that much of the fun of the event will be lost by a move onto campus, Mr Clifford pointed out several clear advantages to basing the Ball at South Kensington. In particular, the event would be much cheaper to run (as there would be no charge for venue hire), meaning that ticket prices will be decreased and Ents will be drastically improved – indeed, this year's Summer Ball would almost certainly have taken place on site had it not been for the ongoing building work.

Anyone who wants to be involved in next year's Ball should contact Tasha Newton via president@ic.ac.uk.

Make yourself heard

Imperial College Union Council

6.00pm, Tuesday 2nd May

Union Dining Hall

Including the election of a new

Post-Graduate Group Chair

Interested in standing? Then sign up on the notice-boards on the Union first floor, or contact any of the Union sabbaticals



It's make your mind up time...



Ken Livingstone
- Independent -

Transport: Will oppose tube privatisation and demand increased government grants to subsidise modernising programmes. Also promises to freeze fares in real terms for four years, push for two new tube lines and introduce congestion charging.

Crime: Promises to dramatically increase staffing, with 2000 new officers as an initial target, and invest heavily in drugs awareness and rehabilitation schemes.

Jobs: Will lobby the Government to increase London weighting for all public sector employees.

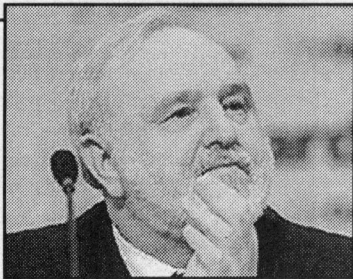
Homes: Says he will pressurise the Government to pro-

vide funding for 15 000 new, affordable homes, whilst working to reclaim London's 100 000 empty homes.

Money: Will oppose the Government's proposed cut-back in regeneration funding and battle against high interest rates and the strong pound, which "creates uncertainty and concern" in manufacturing industries.

Silly thing: "As Mayor, I will back the case for London student maintenance arrangements which fully meet the extra costs of studying in the capital."

Website: www.livingstoneforlondon.org.uk/



Frank Dobson
- Labour -

Transport: Promises to oppose tube privatisation and congestion charges, renew the tube system by 2010, give a free bus passes to every under-eighteen in the capital, and ensure that there are "no increased taxes, fares or charges during my first four years".

Crime: Says he will reverse the rise in street crime within two years, "sweep drugs off our streets" and put more police on the streets.

Jobs: Will work in partnership with business to create an extra 100 000 jobs, and set up a new task force to tackle black and Asian unemployment.

Homes: Offers 10 000 cheap new homes for nurses, teachers and police officers. Promises to "work flat out" to combat homelessness.

Money: Will freeze Council Tax in real terms and introduce a "London Lottery" to raise £50 million for good causes chosen by Londoners.

Silly thing: "I will celebrate the capital with an annual Sunday Out for Londoners, with traffic banned from the centre and free museum entry."

Website: www.frank-dobson.org.uk/



Susan Kramer
- Liberal Democrat -

Transport: "Rescuing public transport is my first priority." Promises to avoid tube privatisation via good management and proper investment, with revenue bonds providing billions for rebuilding.

Crime: Says she will fight Jack Straw to give the Metropolitan Police the resources it needs, reversing recent cuts in police numbers. Will back up Met officers with 1000 "Community Safety Constables".

Jobs: Will focus training on the jobs that are available and promote e-commerce businesses.

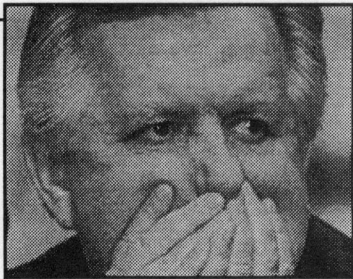
Homes: Promises to "revitalise communities and combat

social exclusion" by improving housing and increasing the availability of training and health centres.

Money: Will set-up a network of new "Community Banks" to revive High Street shopping and help new businesses.

Silly thing: "I will take the local government workers - traffic wardens, street inspectors, park rangers - and give them training and responsibility to watch out for the safety of the community."

Website: www.susankramer.org/



Steven Norris
- Conservative -

Transport: Promises to deliver 24-hour tube and bus services, a massive rail and tube expansion programme, no congestion charges, fewer bus lanes, and 2000 miles of dedicated cycle paths.

Crime: Insists he will reverse recent cuts in police numbers, increase the number of officers drawn from minority groups, publish daily crime figures and establish a new independent complaints commission.

Jobs: Will work with the new Learning & Skills Councils to ensure training opportunities for the unemployed. Will lobby the Government to increase London weight-

ing for all public sector employees.

Homes: Says he will promote right-to-buy schemes and move the homeless off London's streets.

Money: Promises to promote inward investment and cut-down on red-tape that gets in the way of efficiency.

Silly thing: "I will license buskers who pass proper organised auditions by Tube travellers. In the process, they will become part of the eyes and ears of management."

Website: www.norrisforlondon.com/



Darren Johnson
- Green -

Transport: Will reduce road traffic in Central London by 40% by 2008 via congestion charges on private car use, a new tax on company car-parking spaces, rolling out "car free" zones, strict enforcement of bus lanes and a five year fares freeze for all public transport.

Crime: Promises to prioritise racial issues and community policing, with increased recruitment from the ethnic minorities.

Jobs: Says he will create an additional 80 000 jobs in the environmental and public transport sectors, whilst revitalising the poorest communities via credit unions

and cooperative schemes.

Homes: Will introduce a "Warm Homes Strategy" to insulate housing, reduce fuel bills and improve health.

Money: Promises to oppose all schemes which are "environmentally destructive" (eg Heathrow Terminal Five) and end low pay and discrimination at work.

Silly thing: "We will press for a reduction in the amount of violence and advertising on television, especially in programmes watched by children."

Website: www.greenparty.org.uk/gla2000/

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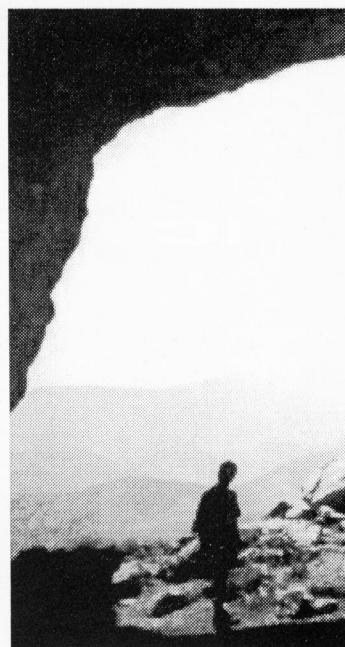
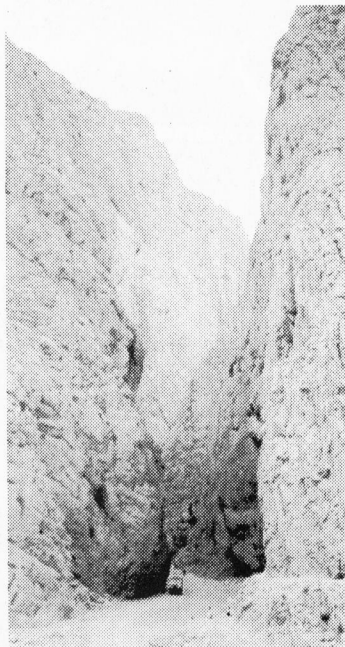
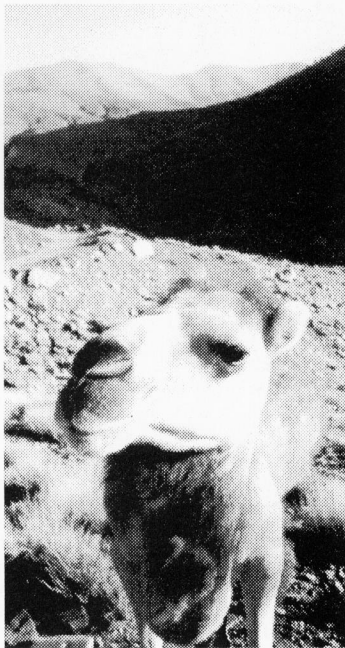


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OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE

CAVERNS MEASURELESS TO MAN



Having succeeded in bagging some grants and found someone who was willing to put up with us for a month and act as our chauffeur for the trip, a group from IC's Caving Club set off for Morocco last September, equipped with the bare essentials: our ex-RAF four-by-four, a minimal amount of caving equipment, and even less clothing. And with that, we set off on our 2000 mile journey...

Arriving in Santander early the next morning, we immediately started the two day slog across Spain, heading for the windsurfing mecca of Tarifa, where we took advantage of the cheap fuel and stocked-up on food and spirits. When I say we, I mean Shed, Goaty, Clewin, Jan and Colm (all members of IC Caving) and Pete the driver (a 50 year-old man whose ability to drive vast distances with little rest and only the occasional dram of whisky was unbelievable). The third and final leg of our journey started at 4am, driving to Algeceiras to catch the ferry to Tangier. The customs at Tangier were extremely suspicious of the obviously military vehicle and started a thorough search, eventually letting us go when they found some French literature on caves (and Pete slipped them some fags).

Arriving in Marrakech late that night, our first mission was to locate some large scale maps of the Atlas Mountains. Unfortunately they are very hard to get and we weren't lucky. Opting to go looking for food instead, we headed for the Djeema Efina, a large square at the heart of Marrakech which is packed in the evenings with food-stalls selling soup, salads, meat, doughnuts and fruit - all you see whilst approaching are crowds of people, and the smell and the smoke are the only evidence of food. The stallholders shout at passers-by and each other, competing for custom, and all you have to sit on are rickety benches around the edges, squashed in with other people. That night we headed out of Marrakech and camped by the road - after all, we were here to get into the mountains and start exploring for caves.

Though a large amount of the Atlas are limestone (and therefore contain extensive cave network), we had three main target areas: Jbel Azourki, Plateau Des Lacs and the Dades and Todra gorges. We acquired some maps and background info whilst Goaty (our expedition geologist) acquired some more info. Goaty was also our expedition linguist (having been learning Arabic for the past few months), but sadly his expertise only stretched as far as useful phrases such as 'I don't know much Arabic', 'where are the caves?' and 'how much for the little girl?'. However, by the end of the trip we had all mastered a little Arabic and the response we got from the locals was always completely different as a result.

There are only two roads crossing the Atlas, so getting into the mountains was done on 'pistes' (the rough tracks used by the Berbers) on donkeys and trucks which acted as a bus service for the locals transporting produce to and from Souks. Our first camp was on a fairly busy route, with two or three trucks passing each day. Frequently, however, the pistes were washed away, and the only route was to follow the river beds - on one occasion it took an entire day's driving to cover just

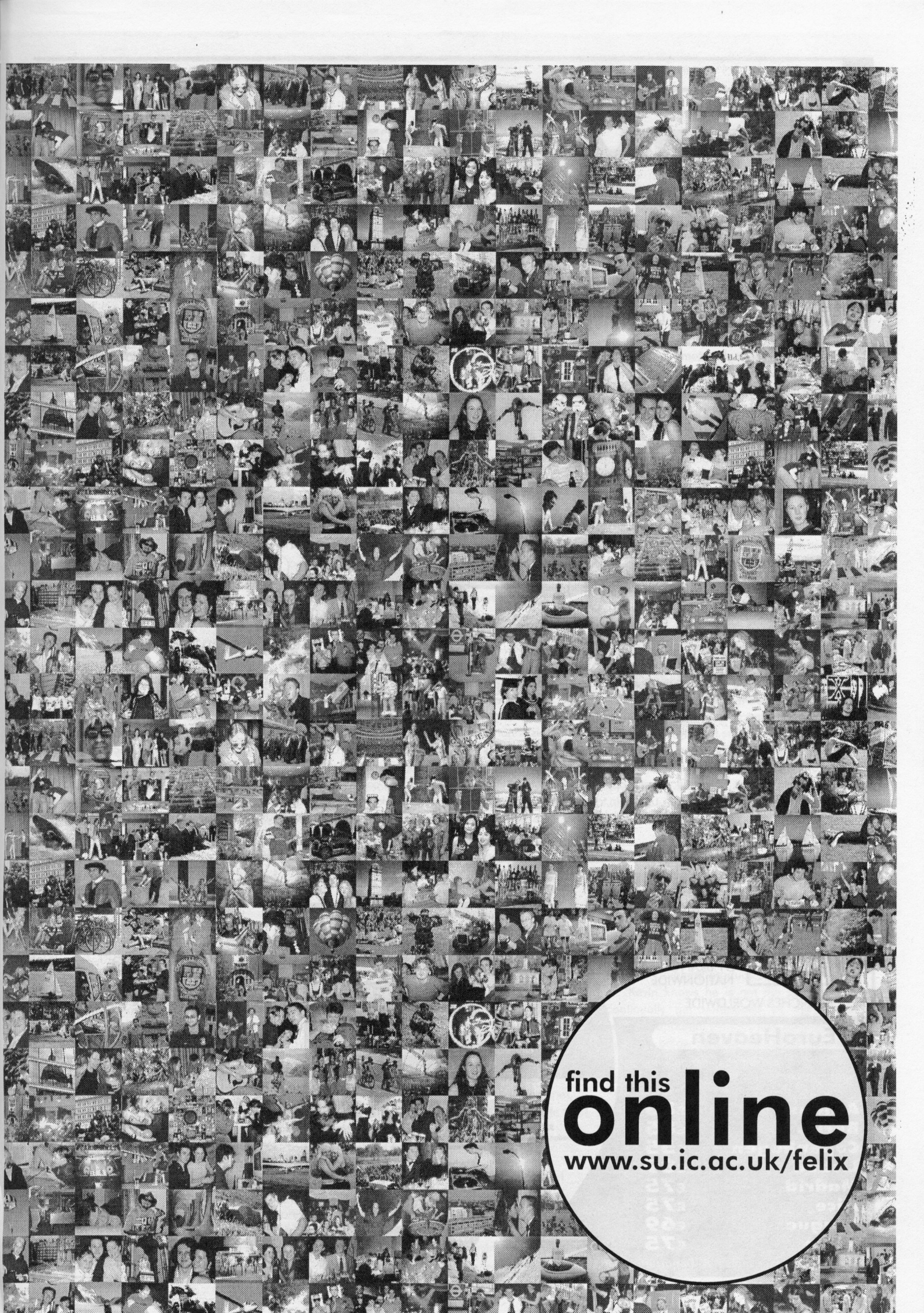
40km, because the piste followed a river bed strewn with large boulders. Having spent the entire journey walking in front of our four-by-four, moving rocks out of the way to avoid writing off our Landrover (or so we thought), we couldn't believe it when we were passed by two Bedford trucks full of people and piled with produce.

The large village we had arrived at was just finishing its market day, which gave us a chance to stock up on vegetables. The enclosed market was lined with hundreds of tiny shacks, selling absolutely everything, including several butchers who generally had various parts of goats and sheep hanging in the sun and engulfed by flies, with the odd severed goats head lying on the ground. We decided to stick to the fruit and veg.

Making enquiries over a Fanta at the local café, we were informed of a cave in the nearby hills. So, following brief directions given in French we drove out the town in search of it. Not only did we find the cave, but the camp spot was idyllic - a stream which came out of the nearby cliffs flowed past our site, and the valley bottom was a lawn of grass dotted with trees. We made ourselves comfortable and spent the next few days exploring the cave and surrounding area, helped enormously by a couple of locals, who had been exploring the cave with torches and lamps. One of them told us of a passage that he had followed for ages without finding the end, which obviously intrigued us. We exchanged addresses and promised to return to carry out a proper exploration of the cave.

Our diet of tomato and pasta stew became a bit tedious after the second or third week, so we decided to stop for a slap-up meal in next big town we came to. This led to an unfortunate event, as it soon became apparent that one of our group had food-poisoning, and he spent the whole night throwing up anything he tried to swallow. However, we soon forgot about it as there were more important matters in hand - mainly beer, as we were approaching a town where Pete assured us he could locate a hotel that sold real beer. We strolled in very casually and took our place on the veranda. Unbeknown to us, however, there was trouble ahead, as one of our party was having a relapse... While we waited to be served he was leaning over the veranda, and with almost comic timing he projectile vomited over the waiter. Fortunately he missed the stonework, but when we asked for our drinks we were told politely but firmly that they did not sell beer. We made our excuses and left.

Our time in Morocco was running out, and with the last couple of days we headed south to the Sahara Desert. Pete was in his element, as he had many friends and contacts in these parts. The next few days were comparative luxury: we slept in Berber tents and were given guided tours of local kasbahs, we took a camel ride to the edge of the dunes, and we spent one night camped under a completely full moon playing cards and drinking mint tea with local guides. The next day, our last full day in Morocco, we watched the sunrise from the top of an enormous sand dune. That evening we were back in Marrakech, the next night Tarifa and finally, after seven days of travel, we arrived back in Plymouth.



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CITY & GUILDS COLLEGE UNION

CGCU take the pain out of coming to College with the launch of their campus-wide buddies system

The idea is this - every single incoming fresher in the next academic year will be paired up with a senior student (the buddy) on the same course. The buddies are to be drawn from the student body of the second, third and fourth year students on each course. The intent is to maintain this scheme and to keep it running in the years to come, perfecting it and ironing out any difficulties that may arise.

What would be the benefits of such a scheme?

Our core aim is to make freshers feel more welcome here. This is our opportunity to reach out personally to every fresher and give her or him an immediate access point into the department. A student in a higher year is more likely to know who to talk to regarding any matters of interest or any problems. Moreover, the forming of friendships between freshers and students from higher years is important to help build a spirit within the departments that transcends year groups.



Why should you become a buddy?

Well, why not? This is not going to take up a lot of your time - it's not a formal job or anything. You have a great opportunity here to be of genuine help to a grateful fresher coming in - after all, you were in the same

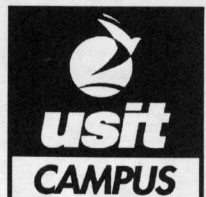
boat a year or two before. Then again, getting a bit cynical, doesn't it look good on your CV to say you've been in a position of responsibility? Taking part could be seen as developing the key skills of organisation and communication.

How can you get involved?

It's simple. The logistics involved in handling this for your course are being handled by your departmental representative - the staff in every department have already agreed to help us run this scheme smoothly. Most departments have already elected their dep reps for next year - you can get in contact directly with your dep rep right away.

Civ Eng: Catherine Luther (Yr 3)
Chem Eng: Max Arendt (Yr 3)
DoC: Rishaar Rawal (Yr 1)
Elec Eng: Shant Oknayan (Yr 2)
ISE: Mustafa Arif (Yr 1)
Mech Eng: Melody Lam (Yr 3)

Aeronautical Engineering students have not elected their dep rep yet, but will be doing so soon. In the meanwhile, get in contact with us at guilds@ic.ac.uk directly if you're an Aero student and want to be involved. We need as many people as possible in order to make the scheme work, so please get in touch.



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The State of the Union

Welcome back. I hear rumours that the front page is set to rock the Sheffield boat. Surely nothing can be wrong with the mother ship..?

Discounts

Can I make a big plea to everyone to come and get their Warner Brothers discount cards? You may remember that I spent six months organising the deal, but unfortunately there has been very little take up, and we will never be able to convince them to go to the hassle of producing cards in future if we don't shift them this year. So please, even if you never intend going to their cinemas, come get a card. Remember, all that you need to bring with you is a photo and your ICU card. Thanks.

Holiday Fun

Easter has been long for us sabbos (and for the postgrads and

By Tasha Newton, Imperial College Union President



clinical medics) - there have been lots of meetings, most of which have been of limited interest. Meanwhile, the engineers and PR agents from Ericsson have been

gently driving me mad, but hopefully they will have successfully installed data and phone lines to all the rooms in Linstead by the time you read this.

Blatant Plugs

Believe it or not, planning has already started for the 2001 Summer Ball. Hopefully in this issue of Felix you will be able to read about the very exciting Summer Ball 2000.

Set in the surroundings of the newly refurbished Paragon Hotel, this year's Ball will take place on the 23rd of June, a week before the end of term. Tickets will be quite a lot cheaper than last year because there are none of those stuffy coaches to look forward to. Watch out for more details of when, where and how to buy your tickets coming very soon.

Union Meetings

Finally, the first ICU Council meeting of the term takes place at 6pm tonight (Tuesday 2nd May) in the Union Dining Hall. See you there.

MASONIC MEDICS?

The question of whether or not the Medical School Union is to have a sabbatical president next year, has not, at the time of writing been finalised. Kevin suspects tonight's ICU Council may shed some light on the matter. The scheduling of the meeting on the first day of term when people will not be properly prepared or even aware of it strikes Kevin as highly suspicious. One of the possibilities for funding of the sabbatical has been sponsorship from the Freemasons. Members of the Med School Union leaving closed meetings discussing the options have vigorously denied that this source of funding is being pursued.

CHANGING TIMES?

Many students would like the central library to adopt opening hours which are more in line with the way that they work. Last year Dave Hellard managed to get the library to agree to experiment with Sunday opening. By using the library on Sundays students demonstrated that there was a demand for the extended hours and they have now become permanent. No attempt to instigate further improvements in the opening hours was made by ICU until the end of last term, when discussions on extending opening hours were started. The library's response was to request proof, in the form of a petition, that extended hours were required. Furthermore, Kevin has been told that the library has stated that scope for improvement is limited due to the library not being able to employ any more staff.

Any extension of opening hours will have to be achieved by re-organising shift patterns and overtime. The options are also limited as the library is refusing to open without the issue desk, despite the fact that this service is not essential out of normal hours.

Kevin wonders if the inability of the Union to negotiate successfully in this situation, and having to resort to petitioning students, is a direct

Mish Mash

A Mostly Harmless Column by Kevin, a random entity who knows nothing about nothing

result of the tiny proportion of students supporting the Union. If this is the case then it will become worse next year as the Union tries to operate with an even more pitiful mandate than it has had this year.

HELLO HELLO HELLARRRRGH...

The Royal Parks Police are responsible for the safety and security of Hyde Park as well as many of London's other parks. Kevin has rarely seen them active, except for an excessive response

mounted following a minor shunt between two cars on a park road and while vigorously enforcing their no-sparklers bylaws on bonfire night. The Parks Police appear to be changing their image. In an effort to become trendier, this summer rollerblading police will be patrolling the parks. This move comes in addition to dropping the 'Royal' from their name when it is displayed on their new four wheel drive vehicles. Kevin wonders how this will turn them into an effective police force.

ANDROIDS WANTED

The company responsible for almost every link in the chain of failures and bad decisions which lead to the computer problems in the city on the last day of the tax year are still desperately trying to recruit Imperial graduates.

Kevin knows he is not the only student to continually get harangued by the company, which is apparently about four hundred people per year below its graduate recruitment targets for the College. Thankfully, he is not alone in ignoring their requests to come in and attempt to brainwash groups of students either. One recent ill-judged scam in their attempt to lure brilliant scientists and engineers into their inimitable brand of jumped up accountancy was an offer of 'summer jobs' starting next week. Who do they think we are with a summer holiday starting in the first week of May - UCL?

To comment or contribute
<http://come.to/mishmash>
 or email kevin@ic.ac.uk

FELIX

ISSUE 1173

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Feedback

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY - YOU DECIDE

Dear Felix,

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind all your readers of the importance of voting in the elections for the Greater London Authority this Thursday.

Although the election of the mayor has captured all of the media attention, the role of the twenty-five Assembly members is just as important as that of the new leader. When Ken Livingstone gets in, as he surely will, it is they who will control his actions and keep him in line. It is they who will sit on all of the new committees that will control essential services and city-wide planning in the capital. And it is they who will ultimately be in charge of the GLA's estimated £3.3bn budget.

As you should all know – but quite possibly don't, as a result of the government's incredibly low key campaign to explain how the election will be run – every registered Londoner (including all EU and Commonwealth citizens) will have the chance to vote for both constituency and party candidates. The fourteen local Assembly Members will be elected on a first-past-the-post system, with votes cast in the second ballot used to elect a further eleven representatives to create an overall position that roughly mirrors the proportion of votes cast for each of the principal parties. The most important aspect of this is that any party that gets more than 5% of the total vote will get a least one member into the GLA – so it's really important that you chose carefully which party to vote for on each of the ballot papers.

You can find out lots more (including which electoral district your home falls into and which candidates are running in that constituency) on the official GLA website, www.london.gov.uk.

Thanks for listening,

Tom Harris

TESCO COMES OUT ON TOP

Dear Felix readers,

I would like to thank everyone who took part in the survey to help identify the most popular shops that could be assigned space on the walkway when the SCR is redeveloped. We received a total of 33 replies with some excellent suggestions.

The clear favourite was a supermarket type shop (Tesco was the preferred supermarket) with next favourite option being a Chemist/boot's type of store. The third most popular option was a Computer store (this may just mean that the CCS shop needs to do a big ad's campaign as most of these responses didn't seem to know that it existed!) The fourth favourite option was a hairdressers and this was followed in quick succession by an opticians.

You may also remember that for every 25 people who participated one would get £10! The lucky person who won the £10 prize was Michelle Cope, the money will be winging it's way to her very soon. Thanks again to everyone who took part, your ideas have been immensely useful and will be passed on to the estates division.

Yours truly,

Tim Trailor
 ICU DP(C&S)

WALL TO WALL MANAGEMENT?

Dear Felix,

Having just seen the latest set of Times League Tables, I have to begin to wonder about the way in which this College is run.

It is a credit to Imperial that we have the best student-staff ratio in the land (although as an undergraduate that statistic frequently seems somewhat questionable), but one other figure which was quoted in the table severely worried me.

Firstly, the percentage of staff whose "main function is teaching and research" was a staggeringly low 39.2% - it's frightening to think that we have quite that many staff involved in non-teaching roles.

Of course, many will be technical and ancillary support staff, but nonetheless that must still leave us with a phenomenal number of admin staff – particularly when compared to other universities in the country. For example, Durham manages to achieve a 63.2% score and even LSE is 10% better off than Imperial, with 49.1% of their staff in academic roles – and although I'm sure that the College's shadowy senior figures will rest happy in the knowledge that we still ranked higher than both Oxford and Cambridge in this category, I'd hope that the centuries old administrative traditions of these frequently-incomprehensible institutions aren't being used as a model.

There's been a lot of talk of the appointment of the new Rector recently, with many people suggesting that Imperial needs to be run by a revered academic, not some high-flying CEO. However, in light of these numbers, let's hope that the much-suggested leader of a certain pharmaceutical firm does indeed turn out to be Imperial's new head, because some modernisation and rationalisation of our staffing and management structure definitely seems to be what this College needs if it is truly to compete in the twenty-first century.

In hope,

Julie Potter

AND FINALLY...

Dear Dave,

What the hell was all that Goat Power stuff about last term? It made absolutely no sense at all - surely everyone knows that the real future for Britain's power needs is glow in the dark sheep...

Mrs Trellis

The deadline for letters intended for publication is Wednesday 12 noon - drop into the portacabins or email felix@ic.ac.uk. Letters may be edited for length but not grammar or spelling.

Editorial

INTERNET? SCHMINTERNET

So, whilst you've all been away busily revising, what have I been doing with myself? Well, tempting as it is to say bugger all, that's not quite the case (although I have to admit that I really don't feel like I'm doing enough to earn my salary right now). As you may have noticed from the ad on page seven, Felix has finally made it's way onto the internet. Good the site undoubtedly isn't, and if any of you have any decent suggestions for improvement (or if you spot any bits that don't work) please email them to me at the usual address. Just try to be reasonably kind, because I'm trying to learn HTML as I go at the moment, and my current understanding could undoubtedly be described as a big pair of emperor-size pants. Anyway, if you're feeling kind, tap in www.su.ic.ac.uk/felix and have a look.

On an unrelated note, you've probably read copious amounts about the meltdown in internet stocks over the holidays. Personally, I find the fact that zMicrosoft has lost half it's value since Christmas, 70% has been wiped off last-minute.com since launch and Bill Gates is no longer the world's richest man is hilarious. After all, none of this will effect the financial status of the world (the fact that the FTSE and NYSE indexes didn't go into freefall admirably proved that), but it has given the "New Economy" a much needed kick in the backside that may finally persuade them to play by some normal financial rules (like profitability). Then again, pigs might fly.

TAKING IT EASY...

And so we reach the final term. With just nine weeks to go, it's time for heartbreak, joy, relief, hard work and exasperation to sweep incessantly over us, overlapping and interweaving until

individual emotions become impossible to distinguish... Or at least it would be if this were all one big episode of *Dawson's Creek*. This being Imperial, what we actually get is lots of exams, lots of coursework and precious little time off to realise that the sun is shining, we're young, free and (mostly) single, and we're based smack-bang in the middle of London.

I expect that most of you are panicking like crazy right now (unless you're in Biochem or Biology, and are on a completely different timescale to the rest of us), with a big stack of exams coming up in the next few weeks (or, worse still, days). Just remember that (a) you're at one of the best universities in Europe, which means that you're definitely not as stupid as you think you are; (b) your exams are being set by your lecturers, who aren't going to look too good if you all fail and will want you to pass; and (c) if you've done some work in the last six months, you'll have to try very hard to actually fail the year.

Finally, I think this is where I'm supposed to offer some sage words of advice from the point of view of someone who's "been there, done that, got the certificate", but as I ended up with a 2:2, I don't imagine that you'll take much notice of my suggesting that you don't take any of this too seriously. Nonetheless, it's undoubtedly worth remembering that there is more to life than a degree result, and that life isn't going to come and swallow you up if you don't get 90%. Sure, we were all used to getting bucket loads of 'A's back at school, but we can't all be top of the class at university. So, do your best, have a bit of fun along the way and get a result that you're happy with.

My god, I really am beginning to sound like a parent. Help...

Dave

All complaints should be addressed to the Editor. If no satisfactory reply is received, contact ICU Exec via the Union President

Assistant Warden Vacancies

The College invites applications for Assistant Warden positions at Beit Hall and Wilson House.

Assistant Wardens should have the same organisational and caring qualities as a Warden but not necessarily the same experience.

The post is open to all Academic and Clinical staff and full-time Research Students, and requires the Assistant Warden to live on site in a rent-free furnished flat.

Further information and an application form can be obtained from The Postgraduate Office in Electrical Engineering by phoning Clare or Anne on 020 7594 6195 (internal: 46195) or by sending an email to a.hough@ic.ac.uk.

Closing date for applications:
Wednesday 10th May 2000.

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Tuesday

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2K

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iCU Your Union - Your services

Wednesday

icu ents presents

excess
the ultimate midweek party

every wednesday @ icu 9-12.30
free b4 11.
the cheesiest stress beater

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Thursday

Glamour, sophistication *Da Vinci's* and Cocktails after dark

Cocktail Night

Every Thursday from 5pm
In Da Vinci's Bar

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Friday

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& special circus promo night

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iCU Another fab Union service for you

Friday

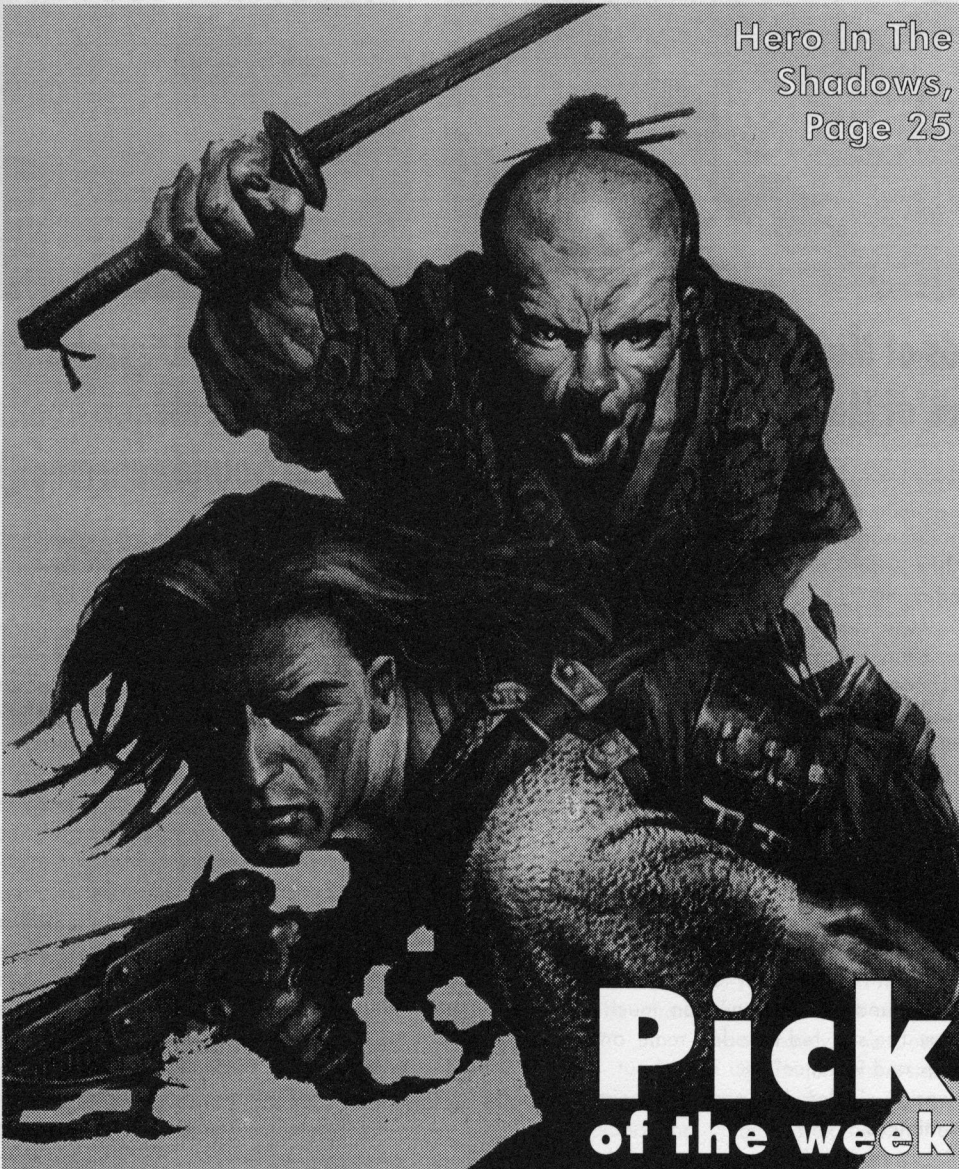
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icu ents

REVIEWS



Hero In The Shadows,
Page 25

Pick
of the week

Ratings



My mum's special Easter quadruple chocolate layer cake with mini-eggs on top.



Battenberg - sponge, marzipan and a nasty two tone effect come together perfectly.



You can't go wrong with a Victoria Sponge.



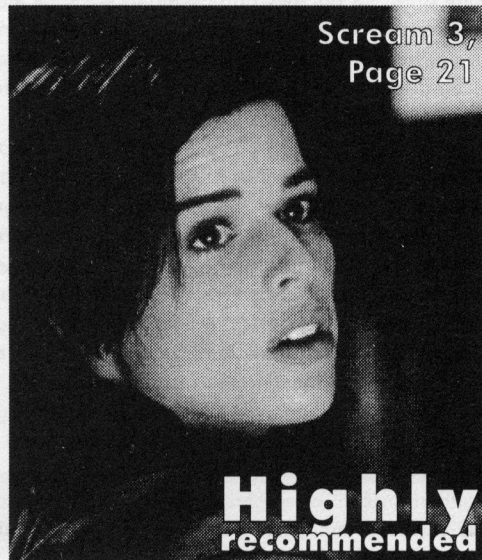
Kendal Mint Cake. Not really a cake. Damn.



It's big. It's heavy. It's indigestible. It's fruit cake.



Buried three feet deep in icing and drowned in alcohol, who really likes Christmas Cake?



Scream 3,
Page 21

Highly
recommended

THE WEEK AT A GLANCE

14 **Frequency** music.felix@ic.ac.uk

- Bedrock @ Heaven
- Calexico - Ballad of Cable Hague
- Cuban Boys - Inertia Kicks
- Death In Vegas @ The Forum
- Fridays @ Notting Hill Arts
- Funkstar De Luxe vs. Terry Max
- Hanson - If Only
- Keith Caputo - Died Laughing
- Les Rythmes Digitales - Live In Belgium
- Merz - Lotus
- Methods of Mayhem - Methods of Mayhem
- MJ Cole - Crazy Love
- Toni Braxton - He Wasn't Man Enough
- Utah Saints - Funky Music

18 **Screen** film.felix@ic.ac.uk

- Any Given Sunday
- Erin Brockovich
- Green Mile (ICU Cinema)
- Sunshine
- Scream 3
- Toy Story 2 (ICU Cinema)

Plus an interview with Al Pacino and your chance to win tickets to Scream 3 or take home *The X Files* or *The 10th Kingdom* on video.

22 **Games** games.felix@ic.ac.uk

- Hydro Thunder (Dreamcast)
- Tokyo Highway Challenge (Dreamcast)

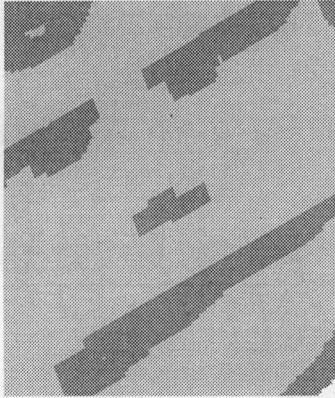
24 **Books** books.felix@ic.ac.uk

- Helen's Literary Events
- Hero In The Shadows
- Idiot's Guide to Creating a Web Page
- Ink
- While I'm Dead...Feed The Dog

Method arts.felix@ic.ac.uk

Felix's arts pages return next week, with all the latest on this term's major plays, exhibitions, shows and gallery openings.

frequency



...And I begin as I should have left off by saying sorry for being a bit rubbish at times last term. For various reasons, I wasn't able to put much time into these pages last term and although music never missed an issue, we sure were a lot less organised than we should have been. So sorry. I also thought about apologising for the drivel that often appears in this column. Then, all of sudden, I changed my mind. I decided that these were worthy of the space that we give them, and although it's not always about music, it's not as totally irrelevant as I once thought.

... frequency ... here comes the sun

So now I feel I must say a few words about music. The summer is usually an excellent time for the release of new music. Indeed it is often music that defines the summer of a given year. We all remember Whigfield's awful *Saturday Night* and the dance moves that went along with it. Jason Nevins' mix of Run DMC's *It's Like That* was also a summer song that seemed to play wherever I went. This leads me to think: Who will be producing the song of this summer? I suppose it's going to have to be a garage tune with the way music has been going recently, which brings me to the new MJ Cole album. Reviewed in Felix this week, his new single is a cracker and if this is anything to go by expect a few more super tracks from him over the summer. My advice to you is to keep listening hard.



Methods of Mayhem Methods of Mayhem (MCA)

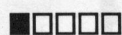
You know, I'm sure Tommy Lee's everyone's hero. Or he would be if he weren't a wife-beating dick. I'm afraid that his attitude and mentality has transferred straight to CD.

"Jumping on the bandwagon" is the phrase that pays for Methods Of Mayhem. Following the recent slew of hip-hop metal fusion bands like Korn, Deftones, Slipknot et al, it was only a matter of time before a member of a flagging band from the cock-rock era decided his bank balance needed a boost. It's all loud guitars, pounding beats and a little too much swearing. Hey, swearing's cool, we all know that, but too much makes it seem Tommy Lee and crew (note the correct spelling, Mr. Lee) have only just learned how to. It doesn't make you hard, it makes you puerile.

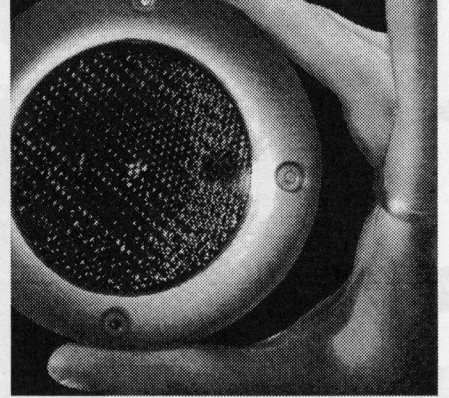
The subject matter is a bit dodgy too: sex and violence - those staples of rock and hip-hop - get too much attention. "But surely Tommy Lee's a red-blooded male and all he thinks about are sex and violence" you may shout. Then he should stick to releasing singles, few and infrequent. It gets boring after a few minutes.

And what's with all these collaborations? Lee and TiLo make the backbone of MOM but they don't seem to have the stamina for a whole album. They've had to get their mates in to shore them up, from Kid Rock to Snoop Dogg. Some make a worthwhile contribution while others muddy up an already less than crystal clear mix.

I guess if you're a regular reader of Metal Hammer then you'd be pretty pleased with Methods Of Mayhem, its chugging riffs and relentless thumping drums would be right up your street. But most of us like a little variation within our music and there's only a couple of tracks here that even hint at a light at the end of that particular tunnel. *New Skin* has a White Zombie / *Zombie* feel to it with a fairly mellow, tuneful chorus and *Crash* is decent industrial metal in the Fear Factory mould. It's not enough though. *Methods Of Mayhem* is a thoroughly crap album. It's offensive, childish, embarrassing and an exercise in how not to be taken seriously.



Christian



Les Rythmes Digitales Live In Belgium (Wall of Sound)

Like Ronseal's quick-drying woodstain, this does exactly what it says on the tin. A Les Rythmes Digitales gig. In Belgium. Basically.

So you get eight songs, which are all (as far as I know) from the recent 'Dark-dancer' album, interspersed with some Walloon-y whooping. Whether you like it all depends on whether you dig songwriter Jacques Lu Cont's singular vision of what music should resemble right now.

On paper, LRD seem to be the shittiest band in the world. This lot are obsessed with the Eighties at a time when most bands are either looking to the Sixties or the future. The influence of that most unfashionable of decades means that the unashamedly manufactured sounding songs are built out of tinny drum-machines, synthesizers, robotic vocals and (if you've ever seen a picture of them) an atrocious dress sense.

In reality though, it's all rather good. Sometimes even ace. Which is surprising, because it veers close to being unbelievably cheesy almost all the time, yet still retains its credibility. The squealing synth riff in 'Jacques Your Body' is worth the asking price alone, and the brilliant bouncy basslines, provided by Jacques himself, provide a good solid base. But if you've got the album already, why would you want to purchase this? Apart from the sound of the enthusiastic crowd and some cheekily thrown in riffs from hits from the Eighties, there's nothing much new. One for the completist only.



Kunal

frequency




Keith Caputo Died Laughing (Roadrunner)

Roadrunner Records, home to scary metal acts such as Slipknot, Coal Chamber and Keith Caputo. Except Keith Caputo is neither scary, nor metal and seems a bit out of place on Roadrunner's artists list. For those of you who do not know, he was the front man for popular metal act *Life of Agony* for ten years. *Died Laughing*, however, is somewhat different and may disappoint LOA fans. This album is more laid back. The anger has gone and been replaced with gentler, more reflective songs.

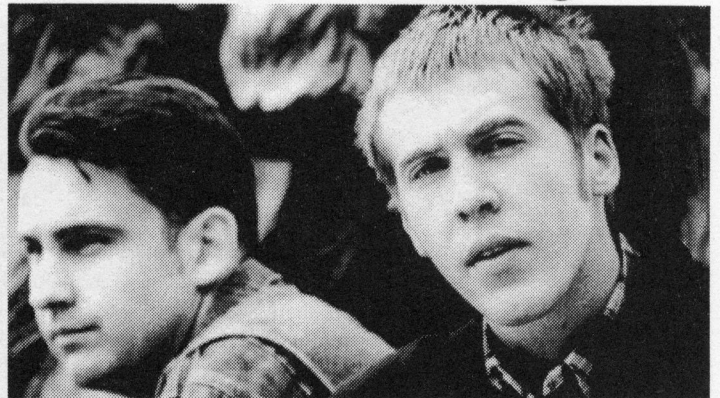
The opening track, *Honeycomb* wouldn't seem out of place on a *Feeder* album, being a distorted-guitar pop-rock song with a chorus that you can sing along to. The next few tracks are somewhat more relaxed, using the traditional combination of clean guitars and strings to create typical soft rock melodies. Although these songs are well written, they don't stand out and could quite easily serve the purpose of background music. Just about anyone can guess whom the song *Cobain* (*Rainbow Dead-head*) is about. One of the more notable songs on the album, it combines jazzy verses with louder, heavier choruses based around the refrain 'Cobain was murdered by you'.

Just Be is another catchy number which could quite easily be the theme tune to a children's television show. A spiky but friendly piano and descending bass-line are accompanied by melodic vocals, but lyrics like "numbskull, you are haemorrhaging" clearly separate the anguish of a tortured rock star from *The Raggy Dolls*. The album ends on the ballad *Brandy Duval*, about his mother who died of a heroin overdose when Keith was only one year old. Again, orchestral instruments are used here to build the song into a fitting tribute.

One thing that I have always noticed about Keith Caputo is that he's got a good voice. It worked well in *Life of Agony*, and it works just as well on his solo work. This album contains songs that you'd probably expect to hear from someone like Paul Young (don't let that put you off), rather than somebody who once fronted a heavy metal band. It's good for chilling out to after an energetic night out, although there are better albums for this purpose. Sadly, although *Died Laughing* is suited for a wide audience, most people who might like it will probably never get a chance to hear it.



Minder



Death In Vegas @ The Forum, Kentish Town

After bringing the house down and earning rave reviews (including on these pages) after their autumn gig at the Shepherd's Bush Empire, Death in Vegas' visit to the Forum was hugely anticipated. In the interim, their latest album, *The Contino Sessions*, has enjoyed considerable success. Testament to their acceptance into the mainstream is the fact that a single - *Aisha* - has been used in that bastion of the middle-of-the-road, the background music for a TV advert. Yet the music hasn't in any way become more ordinary: in fact, very little has changed.

General exposure to the music meant that the crowd was more familiar with the band's material, which noticeably improved the atmosphere at the Forum. However, there were few other improvements since that gig a few months ago. The deep reggae DJ's were the same; the crazy film projections were the same; in fact, DiV played basically the same set. The order was perhaps varied, but the tunes all came from the last album. Of course, this pleased the crowd just as much second time around.

But for those of us who saw the first performance, this latest one was ultimately disappointing, since none of the guest vocalists from the album joined the band on stage. Deprived of the distraction of a singer, the audience often was left wondering exactly what the blokes hidden behind big boxes of electronics were actually doing. The confusion was exacerbated during the vocal tracks when we could hear singing, despite the fact that there was plainly no vocalist anywhere near a microphone. It generated a strange distortion of our concept of reality, and left us asking ourselves what was really being performed and what was coming off DAT.

No Bobbie Gillespe this time, not even Dot Allison and definitely no Iggy Pop. In November, I counted 17 people on stage at one point: DiV's stage presence was certainly diminished (and not just numerically) by this, although the enthusiasm of the crowd reinstated some energy to the proceedings. To be fair, the band did still manage to rock the joint. The music was as twisty as ever, with their trippy jams working the crowd into a frenzy on several occasions. They command your attention like any top act, and the question about what constitutes 'live' electronic music could be asked of many bands. Still, the gig left Felix with speculating as to what could have been....

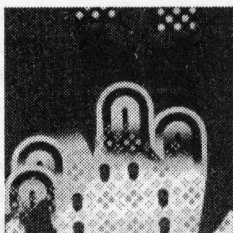


Valmik

frequency

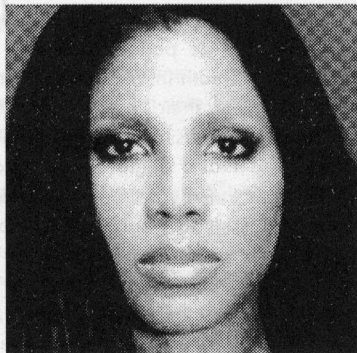
**Merz
Lotus
(Epic)**

The music of Merz is unique, and there are plenty of fans out there who adore their tones. However, the allure has never quite managed to capture me. *Lotus* is nice enough, but it's nothing to get excited about. Maybe I'm missing something, but probably not.



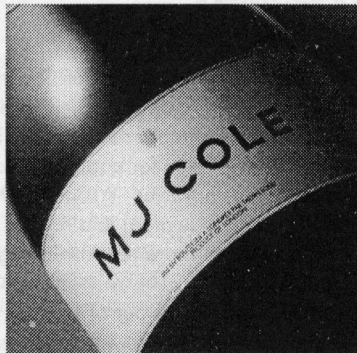
**Toni Braxton
He Wasn't Man Enough
(Arista)**

With the quality of r'n'b tunes rising all the time, it's getting harder and harder to get onto those much desired radio playlists. However, this latest offering from Toni Braxton has had no trouble elbowing the competition out of the way. She may have been away for four years, but there's been no loss of talent and with any luck her forthcoming album should contain a few more gems.



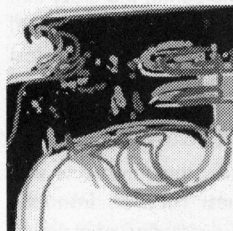
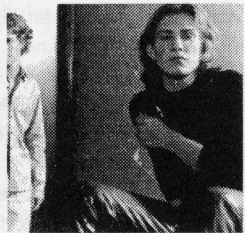
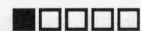
**MJ Cole
Crazy Love
(Talkin' Loud)**

I think if you told me a year ago that I'd be looking forward to the release of a garage album, I would have told you that you were insane. Anyway, for some strange reason garage has really grown on me recently and the music of MJ Cole is no exception. *Crazy Love* is an excellent single from the top end of the garage spectrum and I'll be first in the queue when the album drops in a few weeks time.



**Hanson
If Only
(Mercury)**

How can you not laugh at Hanson? I mean, just look at them. I suppose they do what they do quite well, but it's not really music to fulfil the body or mind. There is, however, a lot of comedy associated with the Hanson boys, and as one of the CDs comes with a free poster this could be worth buying for something new to stick of your dashboard.



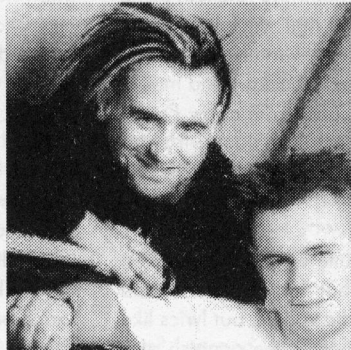
**Calexico
Ballad of Cable Hogue
(City Slang)**

Sometimes, you just can't beat a good ballad. Stan Ridgeway's *Camouflage* was a firm favourite of mine when I was younger. This single is in the country and western style, with all the usual touches, and, as such, makes a nice change from the rest of this weeks singles. I suppose the C&W style could put a lot of people off, but this is definitely worth checking.



**Funkstar De Luxe vs. Terry Max
Walkin' In The Name
(Edel)**

Funkstar De Luxe was the guy who brought us the undeniably excellent remix of Bob Marley's *Sun is Shining*. *Walkin' In The Name* is not quite up to the same standard, but that's not say that this should be avoided. The beat keeps your head bouncing and the lyrics are easy enough to pick up, so don't be surprised if you're singing this out aloud in the forthcoming weeks.



**Utah Saints
Funky Music
(Echo)**

Song titles should in general give an impression of what a song is about or what it sounds like. The Utah Saints classic that we all know and love was called *Something Good* and good it was indeed. *Funky Music*, their latest comeback single is neither funky nor is it particularly musical. So I suggest a trip to a vocabulary school (or better still a retirement home) is about due for these self claimed Saints.



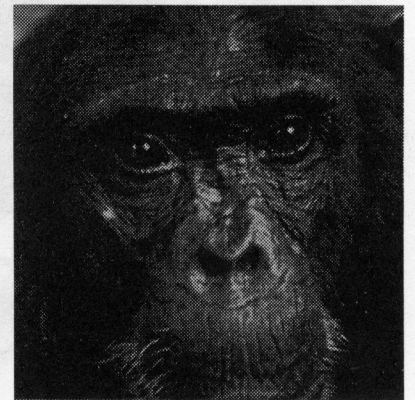
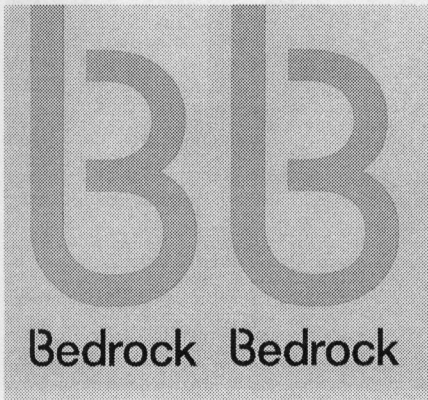
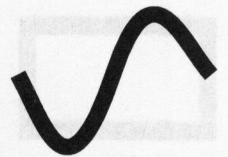
**Cuban Boys
Inertia Kicks
(EMI)**

I don't understand the motivation behind these Cuban Boys singles. The chorus is a self defacing chant of "we're just a bunch of losers" (which makes a change from hamsters), but the construction is so basic and obvious that after just a few listens I'm bored and want more. I think I preferred the hamsters.



...Singles reviews
by Felix...

frequency



Bedrock @ Heaven

Well, well, well. It's all over: lectures, the project, the term, everything. I suppose that there's a few exams, but we can deal with that. So we've a five week Easter holiday - time for some fun methinks. And, as if God has heard my calls, there are two Bedrock nights at heaven over Easter. Wicked and Wild!

Night one is a birthday special, with Danny Tenaglia and Deep Dish joining the residents to provide the kind of music clubs were built for. The night kicks off well with the other rooms in the venue providing a nice warm up to the wonder in the main room. Then we move to the main room to finish off with the above mentioned DJs. The night is good enough, but the evening ends suddenly and we feel as if we've missed something.

Two weeks later and we're back again. Only this time we know we're not going to leave disappointed. This time it's Maundy Thursday, so the next day is a bank holiday and the crowd will be up for a big one. What's more Sasha is appearing as a guest (for the uninitiated or those that ignore the club scene, clubbers feel the same way about Sasha as fanatical football fans feel about their team). As a result, the queue is round the corner when we arrive and it looks like it's going to take well over an hour to negotiate it. So we do what all good student journalists do: we blag our way in at the front and are on the dancefloor in ten minutes flat. The music was better than we could hope and the crowd moves like only a Heaven crowd can. Three o'clock comes and we swear we'll be back for the next one. See you there?

Dan

Fridays @ Notting Hill Arts Club

As the house prices show, South Kensington is a highly desirable place to live. However, although the architecture is nice enough, it's not really what I'd call the perfect place for students to call home. From Prince's Gardens it's quite a long walk to the nearest twenty-four hour shop, and who knows how far to the nearest late night drinking and dancing dens. It was for this reason that I couldn't wait to move away from the embassies and the museums and toward a place with a little more spice. My flat for the last three years now has been located in amongst the kebab shops and tourist shops of Queensway, and although it's not exactly in club central Farringdon or the West-End, it is located within just a couple of minutes of quite a few funky night-spots. Perhaps the most notable of these is the Notting Hill Arts Club, and Felix managed to spend a few hours there during the holidays to find out what's what.

First things first, you don't get student discount on entry on a Friday, so it's six of your finest pounds to gain admission. The drinks inside aren't particularly cheap (three pounds a bottle), but there is quite a good selection if your wallet's up for a pounding. There's even Absinthe on the menu for those who are tempted by these things, and this can seem like an excellent idea after a few beers. For those of drug orientated nature, note that this is probably not the place for madness, rather one for those looking for a quieter night out or trying to be a bit too cool. Which brings me to my main gripe about this place. A lot of the people at the venue don't seem to be having a good time and are just at this venue trying to be out with the in crowd. However, all this can be happily ignored as the music gets you going. Furthermore, you can also have a great time observing those trying to be cool and seeing the fashion victims boogie on the dance floor.

So I suppose what I'm saying is that this is not your average dance club. It is, however, an excellent place to hear some brilliant music and, although there is probably more than your average sprinkling of weirdoes inside, this should definitely not put you off.

John

Recommended Clubbing

This clubbing column has been missing for too long. Now it's back, I suggest you take your pick and a break from revision. After all, dancing is an excellent remedy to many problems.

Tuesday 2nd May Stoned Asia @ Dogstar; FREE!

The Dogstar is an excellent venue for some midweek boogie-ing and as this night is free, you could do a lot worse than this if you have a night off.

Thursday 4th May Bedrock @ Heaven; £8

Pete Tong joins Mr Digweed and Mr Howells for Felix's favourite clubnight this month. Bedrock comes with the highest recommendation possible and I don't think that there's a better club night in the country. It's just a shame Sasha can't play every week.

Friday 5th May Gallery @ Turnmills; £8

Last week was the fifth birthday party of this excellent clubnight. I can imagine this still going strong after another five.

Move @ Ministry; £8

The Ministry has had a lot to put up with this year with the emergence of clubs such as home and Fabric. However, it still has much to offer and should definitely not be avoided.

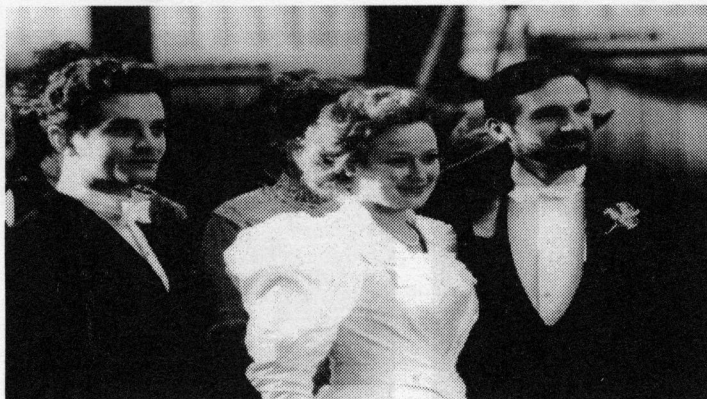
Sunday 7th May Metalheadz @ Dingwalls; £6

Still going strong, this is probably still the best drum'n'bass club in the country. Make sure you try this at least once.

To have your club added to this list just invite us along, we'll check it out and if we like it we'll put it down
e-mail: music.felix@ic.ac.uk
phone: 020 7594 8072 ask for Thom



screen



Sunshine

Any film with Ralph Fiennes can be guaranteed not to be full of belly-lauding humour or infantile silliness. In fact, even a film with the title *Sunshine*, of course, because it stars Ralph Fiennes, will have nothing to do with happiness or nice things but will be about doom, gloom and despair. This film is an epic in terms of both length (three hours) and content, which without doubt is firmly on the serious side of serious.

However, this does not mean it is a bad film and it is not by any stretch of the imagination. It follows the trials and tribulations of the Sonnenschein family over one hundred and fifty years up to the present day. Set in director Istvan Szabo's native Hungary, we follow three generations of a Jewish family, as they struggle to keep themselves as one against a backdrop of political turmoil and two World Wars. The story begins with Emmanuel, who using his inheritance of a recipe book for a liquor called 'Sunshine' transforms his family from local peasant to wealthy businessman. His son, Ignatz builds on his father's respectability by becoming a high court judge. However, much to his families' horror, he is having a secret affair with his 'sister', Valerie. However, she is actually his first cousin, but treated as his sibling after her father, Emmanuel's brother died. They have two sons, one of whom, Adam, becomes an Olympic fencer. He, himself has two children, cheats on his wife, before like most of them, succumbing to the horrors of the Holocaust. His only son to survive, Ivan scared by seeing his father executed, seeks revenge by political motives in the Communist movement. Before long the hypocrisy of the Communists dawns on him and so he campaigns for democracy, a realisation that after years of struggle, finally happens.

The greatest twist in the film is not the intricacy of the plot, but the fact that Ralph Fiennes plays Ignatz, Adam and Ivan during the film, reincarnating himself as the son when his father dies. Each time he also sports a different kind of facial hair, a poor disguise I think you'll agree, that fails to masquerade the fact that it actually still is Ralph Fiennes. Apart from this stunt, however, the film is excellent in most respects. Fiennes is supported by a superb cast, especially Jennifer Ehle and Rosemary Harris as the young and old Valerie. William Hurt makes an appearance, as does Rachel Weisz (last seen screaming incessantly at a computer generated mummy).

Tackling a difficult subject, this film depicts very well how, over one hundred and fifty years, Hungarians have been screwed (for want of a better word) by years of unsuccessful political naivety and experimentation. Will this film attract the avid Imperial student, whose idea of a good time is alone in a dark room with a box of Kleenex and a DVD of *The Matrix*? No, of course not. This film is extremely heavy going, which people will find rewarding only if they put in the effort to make it rewarding.



Erin Brockovich

Based on a true story, *Erin Brockovich* is the latest film to star Julia Roberts of *Notting Hill* fame. Do not make the mistake of dismissing this as another movie where she plays a doey eyed female who eventually falls in love with the first attractive bloke she stumbles across. This is not that type of film.

Instead, Julia Roberts plays Erin Brockovich, a single mother of three who has led a hard life, knows it herself and doesn't mind letting other people know it. One day, she is involved in a car accident in which she is badly injured. Unfortunately, Ed Masry, the lawyer hired to present her case in court does not succeed and she is left in debt due to all the medical expenses she incurred because of the accident. Determined to work, Erin hassles Ed Masry (Albert Finney) who failed her in court, to give her a job. He does his best not to give in but eventually has no choice, as Erin is one determined bitch. Whilst in his employment she stumbles across some files that don't make sense to her and convinces Ed into letting her investigate them. This she does extremely well and unearths a conspiracy. The rest of the story is about how Erin and Ed deal with the conspiracy.

Although not a romantic comedy, this film could be classed as one. It has all the makings of a romance but without all that slushy stuff that makes guys go 'urgh!' and it is also extremely amusing at times. The funniest bits are the references by Erin to her breasts, especially when she is trying to get herself heard by people who wouldn't normally listen to some-one like her. This she does quite a lot and has the desired effect. Apparently the enhanced cleavage is all down to a special gel padded bra not a boob job, but I'm not convinced.

The director, Steven Soderbergh, allows his classic trademarks to shine through in this work. Soderbergh casts an excellent leading pair in Julia Roberts and Ed Finney just as he did with Jennifer Lopez and George Clooney in *Out of Sight*. Admittedly, there is no sexual chemistry between the pair as Finney's character is old enough to easily be Roberts father, but they do share a screen chemistry that works like a dream. Making a cameo is the real Erin Brockovich as a waitress in a restaurant that the character Erin takes her children to for a treat. Try not to blink at that point or you will miss her. Soderbergh's cinematography is similar to that of his previous movies and that too works well without distracting from the storyline.

If you are a fan of Julia Roberts (or just interested in her new blossoming cleavage) this film is a must see. It has so much feel good factor and just goes to show that you can do absolutely anything you want if you want it enough.



Drew

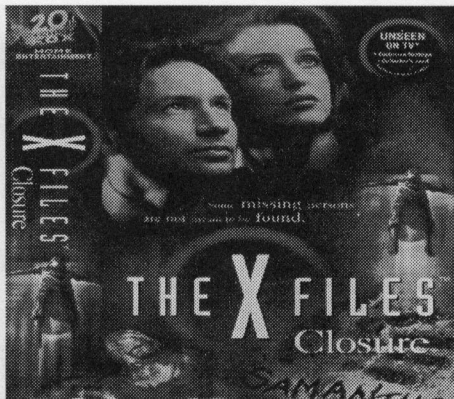


Helen

screen



iCU CINEMA



Scream 3

Scream 3 is the third and final part in the *Scream* trilogy and in my opinion it is better than the second and just as good as the first. The characters who managed to make it to the end of the last one have been re-united for the very last time.

The story takes place on the set of 'Stab 3' in Hollywood - a film about *Scream 2*. Everyone is now a little older but not wiser, as people are still dropping like flies. When there are deaths on the set, Sydney Prescott (Neve Campbell) joins up with the others including Gale Weathers (Courteney Cox) and Dewey Riley (David Arquette). Eventually, after lots of suspense and thrills, the killer and the motives are revealed. It's not a predictable ending. Instead it's quite sad and one classic of the director, Wes Craven.

There was a lot of secrecy on the set of *Scream 3* and not even the cast knew who the killer would be. This wasn't just Wes Craven being his normal self but to stop a repeat performance of when some of the script from *Scream 2* appeared on the internet before the scene was even shot. This movie provides a satisfactory end to the trilogy and it's a good thing that Wes Craven has decided to stop making *Scream* films before it got like *Nightmare On Elm Street*.

You don't need to have seen any of the previous *Scream*'s to enjoy this movie. It does help you to follow the story, but is not essential. There is plenty to laugh and jump at in this movie. If you are a squeamish type, remember to take someone with you to hold your hand and fill you in on the bits of story you will miss due to hiding behind your hand.

Watch this space next week for an interview with director, Wes Craven and leading lady, Neve Campbell.



Helen

Out On Video

The X-Files: Closure

Closure is a previously unseen (on both Sky and BBC), feature length episode of the *X-Files* which marks the end of the mythology surrounding Mulder's sister Samantha. For those of you who are regular followers of the *X-Files*, you will know all about the hype surrounding Samantha's disappearance. This episode apparently solves this issue but not to a very satisfactory conclusion. At least not one suited to a college full of scientists.

Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) join forces with a police psychic to help solve the mysterious disappearance of a young girl. This brings back strong emotions in Mulder which are connected to his sister. As the story goes on, more information is found out about Mulder's sister. As would be expected, all the usual characters are involved including Cancer Man and Assistant Director Skinner.

Closure has the same formula as any regular episode of *The X-Files*. It's nothing special but if you are a huge fan, this episode will intrigue you and answer some of those long standing questions. 3/5

X-Files Competition

Thanks to Twentieth Century Fox, Screen has three *X-Files: Closure* videos. It has been out to buy since 24 April but if you've put off buying it due to lack of funds, answer the following question and you could get your hands on a copy free of charge.

What is the number of Agent Fox Mulder's apartment?

E-mail the answer to film.felix@ic.ac.uk before 12pm on Friday and it could be you who owns an exclusive copy of *X-Files: Closure*.

What's On At ICU Cinema

Toy Story 2

This is the sequel to the amazing *Toy Story*. All the old characters are back, and the same actors as in the original *Toy Story* do all their voices. The new characters are from "Woody's Roundup", a TV show in which Woody (the cowboy) starred during the 1950s. In it, his sidekick was the cow-girl Jessie (voiced by Joan Cusack), while his horse was called Bullseye. Kelsey Grammar voices the final character, The Prospector, a kindly old fellow who is not all that he seems. The story revolves around a malevolent toy collector, who kidnaps Woody so that he can make his collection of toys from "Woody's Roundup" complete, in order to sell them to a museum for lots of money. Of course, this leaves Buzz Lightyear and co to go and rescue Woody, while fighting a new enemy, Zurg. This film is definitely worth watching so get down to the cinema.

The Green Mile

This film is made by the same people that did *The Shawshank Redemption*, and also it is based on a Stephen King short story. The story is very different in nature and, as only Stephen King is able to do, he conjures something incredibly intricate up out of the blue, and you have no idea how, when and where it is going to finish. The story is set around a prison death row in 1930's Louisiana. Tom Hanks plays Paul Edgecomb, the head guard who oversees and ultimately leads the prisoners to their punishment - which is death by the electric chair. Everything seems pretty normal, until a black prisoner named John Coffey, convicted of the gruesome murder of a pair of young girls, arrives. Then, all of a sudden, you are whisked from normality, when the prisoner holds Edgecomb's meat and two veg and performs a small miracle. A strange plot twist, I think you'll agree, and one that leaves him understandably shocked. What ensues, however, is a captivating tale that combines stark reality with fantasy, surrounding a simple giant whose special ability makes him frightened of the world around him. Be warned though, this film is three hours long!



screen



Odeon Kensington Competition

Scream 3 has now opened nationwide and is definitely going to be a massive blockbuster. To celebrate its opening Screen have five pairs of tickets courtesy of the kind people at the Odeon Kensington to give away. Tired of studying for all those exams? Get your brain in gear to answer the following question and you might earn yourself a night away from the books. This week's question is simple so you have no excuse for not entering.

Who connects *Scream 3* to *I Know What You Did Last Summer*?

E-mail the the correct answer to film.felix@ic.ac.uk before 12pm on Friday and keep your fingers crossed.

All winners of previous competitions have been e-mailed so go and check yours to see if you've won.

10th Kingdom Competition

10th Kingdom is the a new drama being shown on Sky as we speak and Screen has been lucky enough to get our hands on some competition copies of *10th Kingdom* courtesy of Warner Vision. All you have to do to get your hands on a box set of *10th Kingdom*, just e-mail the correct answer of the following question to film.felix@ic.ac.uk before 12pm on Friday.

Who connects *10th Kingdom* to *Tales of the Unexpected*?

Warner Vision have released the whole series of the *10th Kingdom* on May 1st as a box set and it costs just £39.99 for the set. If you don't want to buy it but really, really want to own a set, just enter the competition.

Odeon Kensington Student Offers

Still finding cinemas expensive in London? Fear no more! The Odeon Kensington will let you see films Monday to Friday for only £4.50 a showing at their cinema. You can also go to the Saturday late shows for only £4.50. You won't find a better bargain in this part of London so go on get out there and see some of the fantastic new films that are out. The Odeon Kensington is situated at the far end of Kensington High Street, and to get there all you need to do is get on number 9 or 10 bus or take a twenty minute walk due west. Make sure you take student ID (Union, ULU or ISIC card) with you to take advantage of this great offer.



Any Given Sunday

Set in the world of American football, *Any Given Sunday* is the work of the masterful Oliver Stone. He takes a look at the professional sports world from a completely different perspective. It is the first time that Oliver Stone and Al Pacino have actually worked together on the big screen.

Tony D'Amato (Al Pacino) is the coach of Miami Sharks, a once glorious and magnificent team. Now they are battling for survival after three consecutive losses, sliding attendance and aging heroes. One such aging hero is the 39-year-old quarterback, Jack 'Cap' Rooney (Dennis Quaid) who clings to his team as if he is trying to cling to his youth. He is replaced by the young, inventive quarterback Willie Beamen (Jamie Foxx) when Cap is benched due to injury. From there on there is a wrangle between coach and the new young star. The coach struggles to update his methods and the star refuses to conform. Eventually, it all works out but there is much macho-ness first.

Stone is not one to be shy of tackling tricky subjects. He has produced masterpieces such as *Platoon* and *JFK*, both of which take a look at difficult subjects and then presents them in a thought provoking way. *Any Given Sunday* doesn't do this. The story is predictable and is a tale about nothing less than what I would expect from a sport run by wealth. Admittedly, I don't know a lot about American football, being more of a rugby fan myself, but this film didn't shed any new or exciting light on a topic of which I am almost completely ignorant. It does show how aging players cope with up and coming stars and how sportsmen deal with finance over health.

There are some excellent performances from all the cast. The most notable is the fine piece of acting delivered by Cameron Diaz. She plays Christina Pagniacchi who has inherited the Miami Sharks organisation from her late father. This character is a corporate bitch and a complete control freak. It is one role that Diaz seems to fit very easily. After roles such as the pet-loving wife in *Being John Malkovich* or nice girl in *Something About Mary*, it's good to see she can still carry this off. There isn't a point in the film that she opens her mouth without shouting or being aggressive at some-one. There is also a cameo from Charlton Heston as the Commissioner of the 'Associated Football Franchises of America' whose job it is to look after the interests of all the owners of the football teams.

For those of you who are huge fans of American football and understand the rules, *Any Given Sunday* might be of some interest to you. It will give you an insight to how the whole football industry is run as well as the emotions involved in being an excellent sportsman. If you are not a fan then this film is about relationships on and off the sports field and how they are tackled. Just one word of warning when you watch this film: don't leave until the credits are over as the best twist in the story-line comes at the end.



Helen

screen



Helen Clark interviews Al Pacino, star of Oliver Stone's *Any Given Sunday*

Oscar winner Al Pacino was born on 25 April 1940 in New York city and is probably most famously known for his part as Michael Corleone in the *Godfather* movies. Recently he starred in the gripping cigarette conspiracy drama, *The Insider* and his latest work is *Any Given Sunday*. Screen was lucky enough to have an opportunity to talk to the man himself and what follows is what we found out.

Are you a big fan of American football?

I don't know it as well as I know baseball but I have played as a youngster. The game has changed now. I don't know the inner workings of it but I enjoy watching it.

There are about a hundred speaking parts in *Any Given Sunday*. You're the lead so is that anything like being the quarterback on a successful team.

A football player told me once in my research that playing quarterback is like going in the opposite direction on the freeway in LA with the traffic coming at you and reading Hamlet at the same time.

Do you think American football players deserve the huge salaries they get?

When one looks into the life span of an athlete and takes into account the kind of money generated by playing the game, you have to step back and determine what you think. I do believe athletes are paid what they generate. It's a dangerous game. I never thought much about the price they receive. I'm sure it's relative to how much they bring in so I imagine it's fair.

Tony D'Amato's perfect night in would appear to be jambalaya, Billie Holiday on the stereo and Ben-Hur on TV. What would be your perfect night in?

That is a creative question. It seems like I'm always fantasising on certain foods but it's not practical for me to eat them. There's a movie I like to see that plays a lot on the telly. McCabe and Mrs Miller is always playing on the satellite TV I have. I'm a big Julie Christie fan and I always have been. As for music, it would be Frank Sinatra but I also like to listen to arias.

Do you feel that other actors are intimidated by you?

I don't feel that when I'm working with them. I just do my work the same way I have always done. I couldn't possibly act if I felt that they had this feeling towards me because we all get in there and do it together. When I come to do a movie I feel I come with thirty years of past and movies that I've made so people have a tendency to respond to where they know you. There's an image instilled in people of you. I have it when I meet someone that I know just through movies. Through the years, I've learnt to let that go because they are never what you think they are. In answer to the question, it's built in anyway and they soon get over it. We are like different instruments in an orchestra and all the actors play together.

Was Oliver Stone the director you have always wanted to work with?

Oliver directs as if he is in a state of chaos. He was directing four different scenes in the movie at the same time. I was jaw dropped by that. He knows what he's doing and you feel that. You have confidence in some one who has a definitive vision of what they want.

Your character Tony D'Amato is afraid of the changes as he gets older. Do you relate to that as you approach sixty?

Maybe I've been spared as to me the whole idea of age is relative to the business you are in. I don't give it much thought, as it's all relative. Chronological age doesn't interest me.

Maybe I'm kidding myself. There are certain acting parts that come up that you don't feel you want to do as you've done them before. I'm not that interested in playing roles I might have been interested in twenty years ago.

How have you and Oliver Stone changed over the twenty years you've known each other?

I don't think Oliver has changed at all. He's still as wild as ever and that's wonderful. He's the same guy I knew back then. Only he can tell you if I've changed. I hope I did a little. I don't feel as

laboured about things any more. I believe in a healthy preparation for things.

Do you think this film will appeal to people who don't know anything about American football?

I don't know. That's going to be interesting to see. I think they will get into the philosophy of it and the impact it has on people's lives. So maybe that is relatable.

Every few years actors come and go but you've stayed; is there a formula to being an actor that lasts?

Most actors go with the first role that anyone will have you in. There's a point in a career where if you do make it people want to use you just because you've made it. You have to be careful when you chose a part, not to do it just because people want you. If you weren't famous, they probably wouldn't take you for the part. Along the way, my choices for things have changed. I made a little picture called *Chinese Coffee* myself. I've just finished putting it together. It only took four years. It's a small movie. I haven't acted in a year. I'm trying to find something I can connect to now.

What has going behind the camera taught you about acting?

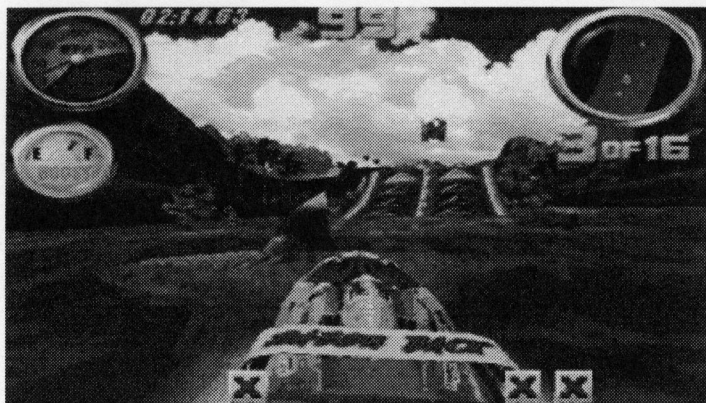
There's a distinction between wanting to make a film and being a director. I flinch when I say director because I know what directors are and what they do and I'm not one of them. I'm not in that league. It's another talent. I look at things as an actor. I look at life and what I choose to do from an actor's point of view. For instance, this picture *Chinese Coffee*, I was acting in it and the director that I wanted wasn't there so I did it. It's almost impossible to direct yourself and act well in a movie you direct. I can see the flaws in the film I made. If I wasn't in it, I think I could have done it better. The poor other actors in it I didn't direct them at all. After each take thirty people rush to this little monitor to see the take and I just sit there and wait for their verdict. They come back and say do it again. The film isn't bad. I'm a little embarrassed about directing as to me it's a different language.



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A WHOLE NEW WORLD



Hydro Thunder (DC)

Well, it's called *Hydro Thunder*: guess what it's about. Yep, racing...on water. A concept. But a good concept? For those of you who played and enjoyed the *Wipeout* series, then this is not going to disappoint. Very similar in many ways (except with no weapons, although strangely you don't miss them).

The concept: You own a boat. You are good at racing your boat. You get invited to a bunch of races organised by other people who like racing their boats (usually in illegal places) at very high speed. If you are good enough to finish the first (easiest) three courses, using the three beginner boats, then you can do the medium ones, and then the hard ones, and then the bonus ones (getting new boats at each level). So there's almost a plot. But no, nothing clever or new. On the other hand the boats do go very fast - so fast that you can make them fly (which is quite surreal) for limited amounts of time. You can also bash other boats out of the water when you have engaged your turbo (explained later), including police boats which are trying to stop you from having your fun, just because you pushed over a kayaker in an American lake. Which is nice.

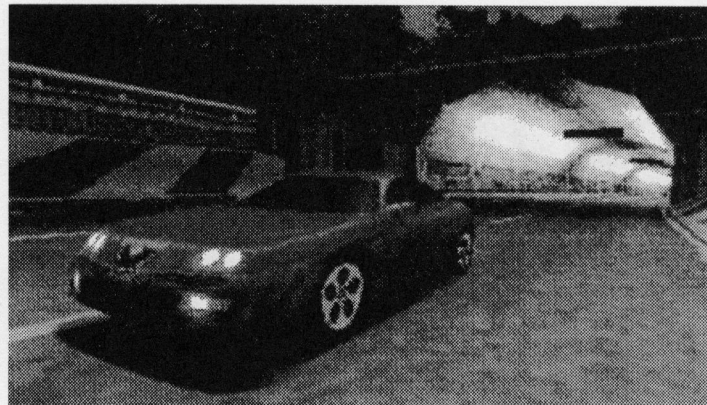
The graphics are very nice indeed: A fast refresh rate and good sounds really make you feel there. You remember the kayakers? Well they squawk as you run them down. Very satisfactory. And when you engage your turbo (explained later), the engines transform. And what's better is that each boat has a different transformation. Now, I'm not a big fan of *Star Trek*, but I do remember the first time I saw the credits for *Voyager*, and the engines did that moving thing just before warping, I thought "cool". And this is much better. And there are thirteen boats. So at least thirteen times cooler.

The levels are fun too. Each one has different obstacles in the middle of the water, depending on the setting: in the Arctic you have to avoid icebergs, and in the Far East you have to avoid big junks. Similarly you have different spectators - penguins and polar bears in one (oh dear, someone didn't do their homework), and paddy field workers in the other. And then there's the turbo... You go pretty fast anyway, but you can pick up these turbo things which will increase your speed to about double, and will also make you invincible to other boats. The only way to complete the levels is to know where these are, and to pick up at least all of them, and then use them all up in exactly the right places, so that you can beat the other boats by about half a second, if you're lucky. This game is quite tough. There are also secret passages that can be found, and although they shorten the route, there might not be as many boosts along the way. This is not good.

So play this game if you like burning water. The learning curve is challenging (but fair) and all in all this is good clean family fun.



Will



Tokyo Highway Challenge (DC)

I know that you all lie in bed, dreaming of being subversive. You know what I mean. You want to get out of your bed, go outside, and steal a car. Then you want to joy ride it. Well now - if you want - you can. Brumm. This is fun.

Actually, to be honest, you don't really steal the cars - but you do drive around the Tokyo equivalent of the M25 abusing nice, normal, law-abiding citizens. And it's all at night, so I felt like I was joy riding. The concept of this game is unusual for the genre: you go round and round in circles, and if you see someone who is considered a rival (ie another racer as opposed to a normal commuter), you challenge them by flashing your headlights at them. Then you race them while avoiding all the other people, in an attempt to win and get money. This game rapidly becomes quite difficult. Then, when you've got enough cash for your next upgrade, or you've beaten everyone on the road that night, you exit on a slip road. It's a nicely satisfying way to end your day (although you can quit from a menu).

There are many different cars you can buy, but I really don't know how you're meant to get enough cash to even buy one in addition to your starting car. You receive money by beating other people in a race, and the more difficult they are considered to be, the more money you get. However, you can also spend your cash on upgrading your vehicle, but this can be more expensive than buying a new car, so it all seems to disappear if you want to have any chance of beating people.

But it's still good fun. The method of racing is more like a beat 'em up: the further ahead of them you are, the faster they lose (for lack of a better description) 'energy', and when it gets to zero, they lose (and you cheer like crazy).

The control mechanism is easy to learn, but the idea is that you can modify your car to get more control over things like drift, suspension height, gear ratio, etc. So, if you upgrade your suspension, you are then given the option to change how high you want it, whenever you want (except while driving), which definitely adds to the realism of the game. The graphics are amazing as well (somewhat unsurprisingly - after all, surely that's why you brought a Dreamcast), which is great when you're sitting inside the cockpit of the car, and there are several different soundtracks included on the disc, which seem to relate to the rival you're racing.

All in all a good game, and if you like the idea of being an urban warrior, fighting it out on the highways of Tokyo and generally causing widespread mayhem, then this is for you.



Will

Friday June 23rd 7.45 - 2

The Paragon Hotel

Earl's Court

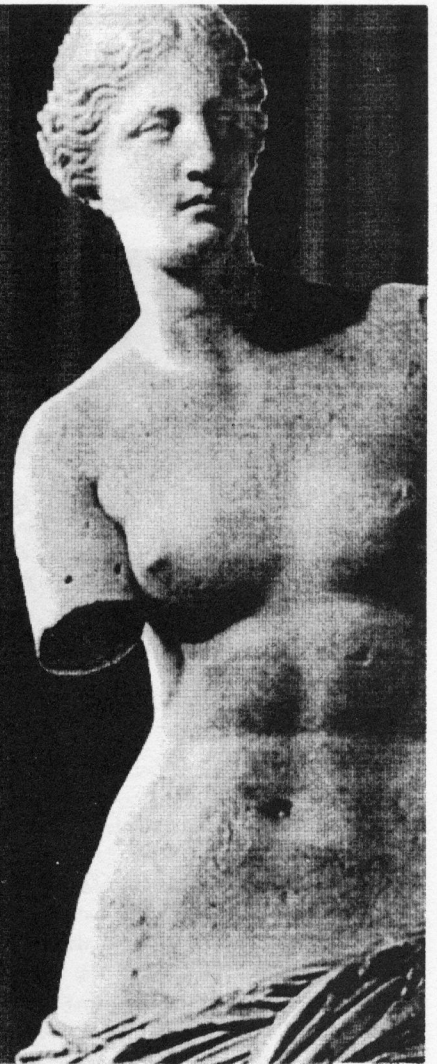
The Imperial College Union
Paragon
Summer Ball

3 course meal, Champagne Reception,

Live band, Casino, disco.

Guest speaker - Trevor Phillips

Tickets £45 available from Union Office



Physics Society Speaker Meeting

A talk by Professor Henry Schaefer, editor of the Journal of Molecular Physics, entitled:

"The Big Bang, Stephen Hawking and God"

will take place at 1pm in Physics Lecture Theatre 3 (Floor 1, Blackett Laboratory) on May 3rd

All students and staff are very welcome to attend this free event

Imperial College Special Lectures

Wednesday 3 May 2000

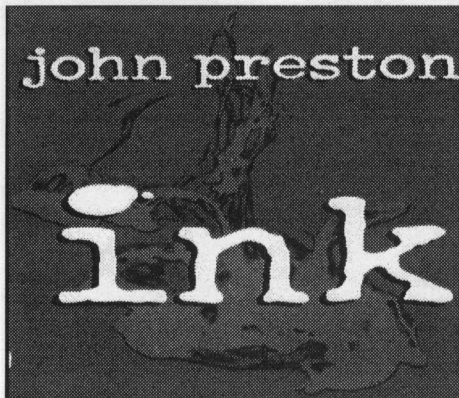
Professor K Barnham, from the Department of Physics, will give a talk entitled "Pure versus Applied Physics - a game of two halves"
5.30pm, Physics Lecture Theatre 1

Tuesday 9 May 2000

Professor Edalat, from the Department of Computing, will give a talk entitled "Doing it without Floating: Real and Solid Computing"
5.30pm, Clore Lecture Theatre

Please contact Ranjini Spencer via r.spencer@ic.ac.uk or 020 7594 8059 in advance if you wish to attend

books

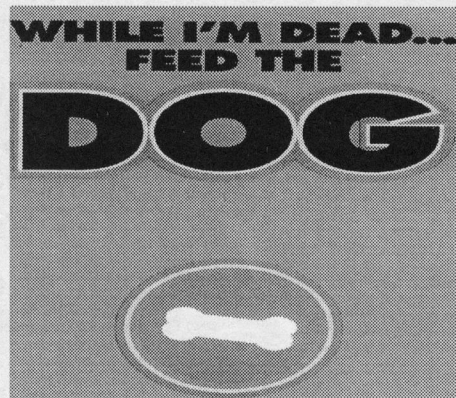


Ink John Preston

1989. Fleet Street is being abandoned by the last of the papers still based there. Hugh Byrne, a reporter at one, is on the verge of cracking up, seeming to have lost the ability to write. A throw-away story about a man found dead in the Thames offers him his last chance before his impatient News Editor makes him bring the Queen Mother's obituary up to date. *Ink* follows Hugh's investigations into the drowned man as the paper winds up its offices and prepares to move to Canary Wharf, weaving a shadowy tale of secrets, lies and newsprint.

Preston paints a dark picture of a traditional newspaper operation, from the rows of hacks at typewriters in the offices, to the nightmarish depths of the printing presses and Byzantine politics of the building. It seems a world away from the modern world of desktop publishing, and it's hard to fathom how much has changed in ten years.

The novel itself works well. Blackly comedic, yet absorbing and intricate, it's stylishly written and thought provoking. There's a strong sense of isolation and dejection in Hugh's thoughts and lifestyle, which adds depth and intensity to the characterisation. The other characters tend to be a little vague, although most are complex and realistic. Hugh's development and awakening is well portrayed, contrasting with the simultaneous decline of the paper. The plot is slick, and the twists are only partly revealed in the conclusion, which is itself a little ambiguous. The emphasis is not so much on finishing the story as on the culmination of Hugh's escape from the problems that haunt him throughout. It's not perfect – it doesn't quite hang together, and there's a suspicion that some elements are there for the sake of a joke, or to sneer at some journalistic stereotypes (Preston is the Daily Telegraph's Arts Editor). Overall, though, this is well worth a read; unusual, accomplished and grimly fascinating.



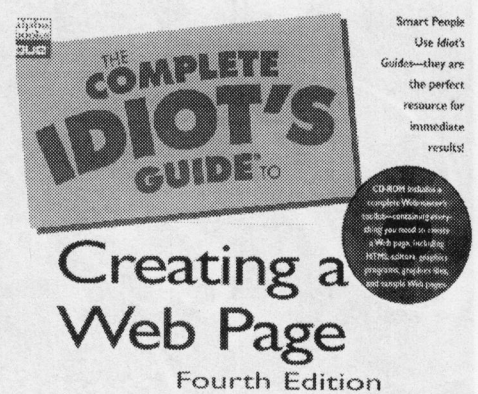
While I'm Dead Feed the Dog Ric Browde

Ric Brodie spent most of his childhood travelling around Europe and America, before settling down to an unsuccessful rock career. To make ends meet he managed brothels, directed porn films, produced records and teaching English to foreigners (the latter not being as wholesome as it perhaps sounds). So what does the singer/guitarist of The Amateur Gynaecologists have to write about?

While I'm Dead Feed The Dog is set in a sleepy suburb of St Louis, Missouri, where nothing ever happens. This is until the sixteen year old Ric Thibault is corrupted by a leopard-skin bikini clad David Bowie promoter and his mother's best friend (who also happens to be his best friend's mother). From here Ric starts on his conquest to seduce the most beautiful girl in the world, Nina Pennington.

Of course, there are a few obstacles in the way; a couple of dead Latin teachers, a father in the Mafia, being forced to tour with David Bowie and his mother leaving him a goodbye note reading "While I'm dead: Feed The Dog" after her first suicide attempt. Ric is caught in a whirlwind of hype which takes him to near stardom during the seventies by simply losing his virginity (albeit in impressive style).

Brodie describes the book as "totally autobiographical except for all the bits where I lied" and I hope he lies a lot! With seven deaths and too many sexual encounters to count, this book moves along quickly and is an incredibly easy read. This novel would definitely appeal to some one with a slightly darker sense of humour; in fact if you are of a more sensitive nature I would advise you to avoid it altogether. All in all, *While I'm Dead Feed The Dog* is a light, shallow and raunchy novel with a story line which gradually progresses further and further from this world.



The Complete Idiot's Guide to Creating a Web Page

You've got to admit that this is not really going to appeal to any of us, I am afraid to say. Most of us who do care probably already know quite a bit of HTML, and don't want to be (what we see as) patronised by an 'idiot's' guide. And those of us who don't care, don't care.

'Ah', I hear you say. 'What happened to journalistic impartiality?' Well, okay. For the person who is an idiot, and does want to write a web page (let's say an Oxford 'computing' student), this book would be very handy. It is a continuation of the famous *Idiot's Guide* series, and as such, it is extremely simple to read, taking you through the steps in a relatively rational fashion. But is this really sufficiently simple for idiots? Take, for example, my mother. She's a lovely woman, but no idea about computers. If I were to show her this book she would probably cry - but I have to say that I think even she would be able to cotton onto this (once she summoned up the courage to open the cover).

The style is informal, which is clearly very important in this kind of book, and everything is explained in detail which, although sometimes excruciating for someone with computer know-how, truly is idiot-proof. However, this is not a short book, and there is certainly a learning curve: later chapters in the book deal with java-script and image mapping. Nonetheless, if you already know a bit of HTML, and aren't scared of it, you would probably benefit from buying a more advanced book.

So, all in all, if you're not too techie parents/friends/you are thinking of going into the web-business, then this is definitely a good book to buy. For someone less scared of computers, however, one could spend money on a book equally as big, but with much more information.



Gareth



Guy



Will



Hero in the Shadows

David Gemmell

This is the first David Gemmell book I have read and it certainly makes me wish I'd picked one up much earlier, as this is easily the best book I have read in ages. In fact, this is the third book to contain Gemmell's Waylander character - but fear not if you, like me, have not read the other two, as this is a complete story within itself (somewhat novel in the fantasy genre that tends to specialise in epics). There are references to previous books, but they are smoothly explained and don't leave you with that irritating feeling that you're missing out on something important.

From the first paragraph you are plunged into the action of a savage village raid and things just never stop from there on. Even if you are someone who only reads occasionally, I defy you to be able to put this book down and not be itching to get back to it. Perhaps not such a good thing before exams, but definitely a good aid to relaxation afterwards.

To fill you in a bit on the plot: Waylander, the retired prince of assassins, must do battle against cruel sorcerers and their demonic minions to prevent his world being over run by an ancient evil. To his aid come friends both old and new - Kysumu, a 'Rajnee' swordsman of a dying order; Yu Yu Liang, a simple ditch-digger with dreams of fame and heroism; Usarte, a powerful half-breed priestess and Keeva Taliana, a peasant girl with uncanny weapon skills. Together they must wake the dead Rjor-nor warriors to restore the waning magic of the portal that holds the terror of Huan Kador out of their realm. But dissent has already been sown amongst the avaricious local nobility, is there a traitor in their midst?

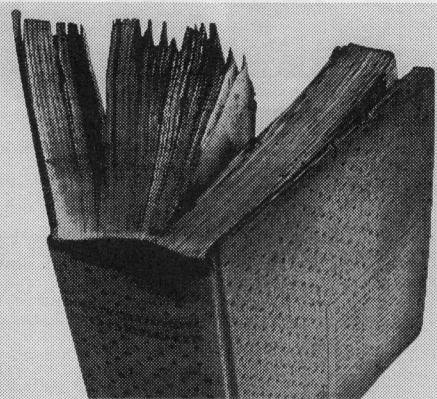
The plot is excellent, neatly drawing all the storylines together at the end. The only fault lies in perhaps relying a little too much on chance. His characters, however, more than make up for this as they are all rounded and believable. Gemmell allows them to deal with real human difficulties in a way that shows genuine understanding. Waylander, feared and hated by many for his fabulous wealth and direct manner, must come to terms with his own hidden character and actions past and present.

Somewhat surprisingly, Gemmell's first attempt at fiction writing was met with unusual scorn from one agent. He was advised to continue working as a lorry driver's mate for Pepsi Cola as it was 'a career not without merit'. However, twenty-one books and over one million sales later David Gemmell has been praised from all quarters as one of fantasy's greatest writers.



Katherine

books



Helen's Literary Events in and around London

MONDAY 1ST

NEW RIVER WRITERS Friendly workshop based group. Short stories, poetry etc. 8:30pm, The King's Arms, 11a Northington St, WC1. Collection for room hire; phone 020 8993 0285; tube Chancery Lane

TUESDAY 2ND

POETRY UNPLUGGED An open mic reading with MC John Citizen. 7:30pm, Poetry Café, 22 Betterton St, WC2. £3 (mem £2:50); phone 020 7420 9888; tube Covent Garden

TERRY JONES Speaking on *Chaucer's Knight*. 6:15pm, British Library, 96 Euston Road, NW1. £5 (concs £3:50); phone 020 7412 7332; tube King's Cross

PAMELA JONES Reading from *Deep Blue Silence*. 6pm, Waterstone's Goldsmith's College, New Cross, SE14. Free; phone 020 8469 0262; tube New Cross

STEPHEN JONES Reading from *The Bad Book*. 6:30 pm, Borders, 203 Oxford Street, W1. Free; phone 020 7292 1600; tube Oxford Circus

NATHANIEL PHILBRICK Discusses *In the Heart of the Sea*. 7:30pm, Stanfords, 12-14 Long Acre, WC2. £2 (redeemable against purchase of the book); phone 020 7836 1321; tube Leicester Square

WEDNESDAY 3RD

KAUO INSHIGURO Reads from *When We Were Orphans*. 7:30pm, Muswell Hill bookshop, 72 fortis Green Rd, N10. Free; phone 020 8444 7588; tube Highgate

JOHN MILLS Talks about his career and signs *Still Memories*, his photographic autobiography. 1pm, Terrace Café, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1. £3:50 (concs £2:50); phone 020 7452 3000; tube Waterloo

THURSDAY 4TH

SHORT FUSE Weekly fusion of performance comedy, stand-up poetry and music. Tonight's show includes Bette O'Callaghan and Jasper Holmes, with host Nathan Penlington and music from David Bush. 8:30pm, The Camden Head, Camden Walk, N1. £4 (concs £2); phone 020 8536 0652; tube Angel

FELIX

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Monday

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Tuesday

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Wednesday

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Thursday

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Friday

EVENTS

Quiz Night

8pm, da Vinci's
Test your knowledge of all things trivial with the Union's weekly bar quiz, sponsored by STA Travel. A £50 first prize and various lager based rewards are on offer.

Excess

9pm - 1am, Union
(free before 11pm)
This year's sporting season may now be over, but that's not going to stop a horde of drunken souls descending on the Union to show off their latest "move".

Cocktail Night

Lectures may be over (unless you're in Biochem), but that certainly doesn't mean that life is any less stressful - so sit back, relax and damn well calm down with the cheapest drinks around.

Bust-A-Gut Comedy

8pm, dBs, £2.50
Martin Bigpig headlines, with support from...erm...someone.

Shaft

9pm - 2am, Union
(£1 with Union card)
It's taste bypass time again...

CLUBS

Archery

6-10pm, Projectile Hall (Sports Centre).

Rag

General meeting - 6pm, Southside Lounge.

IQ

7:30pm, meet in the BCR for Swan Lake.

CAG

Soup run, 8.15pm.

Skate Soc

Roller Hockey, meet 1pm, Southside Lounge or 2pm at Royal Oak sports centre.

CAG Soup Run

8.15pm, Weeks Hall Basement.

Skate Soc

Night skate - meet at 9.30pm outside Mech Eng for a tour through London.

PhotoSoc

Weekly meeting from 1-2pm, Southside Upper Lounge

Music

Eminem & Dr Dre

One-off show which teams the controversial white rapper with his ex-NWA mentor. Brixton Academy, £15

Cousteau

Sharply dressed poetry poetic gloom meets eloquent tales of love. *Borderline*, £7

Paul Weller

Aging mod rocker Weller goes back on the road to promote his new album. *Albert Hall*, £25

Simply Red

Mick Hucknall and co play their first live date in the UK for five years. Shame. *Wembley Arena*, £32

Eagle Eye Cherry

MTV's Five Night Stand kicks off with sets from Eagle Eye, Day One and LSK *Shepherd's Bush*, £15

Film

Scream 3

Neve Campbell, Wes Craven, Courtney Cox et al return to scare the shit out of you... *Odeon Leicester Sq* 3.40, 5.45, 8.30

Galaxy Quest

All-star Star Trek spoof boasting the classic "man in a red shirt doomed to die" gag. *Virgin Fulham Road* 3.10, 6.00, 9.00

Kevin And Perry Go Large

Harry Enfield stretches a five minute gag into ninety minutes. *Odeon Marble Arch* 4.45, 6.50, 9.05

American Psycho

Very, very disturbed book becomes very, very disturbed movie, starring Christian Bale. *UGC Haymarket* 3.30, 6.00, 8.30

Pokemon

Attempts to rip-off parents don't come worse than this blatant merchandising exercise. *UGC Trocadero* 2.10, 4.15, 6.30

TV

Dallas

Channel Four launch an evening devoted to the US soap with the shooting of JR. *Channel 4*, 8pm

Battlestar Galactica

Yet another complete re-run of this classic seventies sci-fi series kicks of this week. *BBC 2*, 6.45pm

The Big Match

Real Madrid take on Bayern Munich after knocking out a certain English team... *ITV*, 7.30pm

Vote 2000

The votes pour in, the Swingometer kicks into action... and Ken wins. *Class. BBC 1*, 11pm

Buffy

Buffy's sex life empowers a bunch of demons. No, honestly, that's the plot. *Sky One*, 8pm

Arts

Copellia

A revival of this joyous mid-century comedy, in a staging by Royal Ballet founder Ninette de Valois. *Royal Opera*, £6+

Ant Noises

Saatchi renews his commitment to British Art with a show of the latest from Hurst, Lucas, Turk etc *Saatchi Gallery*, £4

Passion Play

Peter Nichols' devastating 1981 drama about love and infidelity, revived with grace and wit. *Donmar*, £14+

The Greek Passion

Martini's retelling of Kazantzakis' little known opera, directed by David Pountney, with Jorma Silvasti. *Royal Opera*, £6+

Mona Hatoum

The Tate reopens with Mona Hatoum's sculptures of the domestic made dangerous. *Tate Britain*, free

D

Saturday

A

Sunday

Y

Next Week

All club & society entries
for this term should be
submitted to felix@ic.ac.uk
as soon as possible.

Kung Fu Club

(Wu Shu Kwan)
Southside Gym
4:30pm - 6:30pm.

IQ

More details available by email from [martyn.whitwell](mailto:martyn.whitwell@ic.ac.uk) or [steven.cook](mailto:steven.cook@ic.ac.uk) (both @ic.ac.uk).

Kung Fu Club

(Wu Shu Kwan)
Union Gym
4:30pm - 6:30pm.

Primal Scream

Night two is probably the best of the five, with Death In Vegas supporting. *Shepherd's Bush, £15*

Embrace

Night three sees Embrace's return from the dead continue with top billing. *Shepherd's Bush, £15*

Ricky Martin

MTV's favourite snake-hipped Spaniard hits Earl's Court - we have been honoured...

The Tigger Movie

All together now, "The wonderful thing about Tiggers; is Tiggers are wonderful things..." *Odeon Kensington 1.00*

Mission To Mars

All star Disney-fied effects bonanza, that owes more than a little to *The Abyss*. *Odeon Camden 12.40, 3.15*

Man In The Moon

With the Oscar's now a distant memory, this acclaimed Jim Carrey vehicle now seems long overdue - will it be worth the wait?

Match of the Day

The pick of the Premiership, featuring Man Utd winning and Watford losing. *BBC 1, 10.30pm*

Dawson's Creek

Quality wake-up TV, requiring zilch brain power and offering buckets of schmaltz. *Channel 4, 12.40pm*

The Naked Chef

Another chance to play an entertaining game of "spot the fake South London accent" presents itself.

Hard Fruit

Jim Cartwright looks at the life of a ferocious fighter and closet gay in the North West. *Royal Court, £5+*

Summerfolk

Your last chance to catch Trevor Nunn's revival of Gorky's sprawling nineteenth century drama. *National, £10+*

Dreyfus

Nicholas Kent's working of Jean-Claude Grunberg's eerie play comes to the Tricycle Theatre later this month.

the blaggers guide

Sorry for my absence in the back end of last term, but I was disheartened by the lack of response to the column. Having spoken to people since though, I've realised that the number who write in are only a fraction of those who actually enjoy reading the column and more importantly we have another challenge.

The Challenge

"Living over an hour's journey from Imperial, I find it particularly difficult to get home after a good night on the tiles. I've often thought of just booking into a hotel to collapse in my drunken stupor, but with the prices as high as they are around South Ken, I've never been able to afford even the smallest single. Blag yourself a room in a classy hotel and make sure there's no preparation needed so next time I go to the Union I can get myself a room (it's either that or pull and go home with someone from the Union, you've got to help.)"

Although I haven't tried blagging this in London yet, at the time of the challenge I found myself in Winchester, home of the renowned Hotel Du Vine, one of the top hotel/restaurants in the country. I'd heard of the hotel before, having recently read an article in the Telegraph on the standard of the food, interviewing the head chef Andy something, about his work; this was all the ammo I needed.

To be a good blagger it is essentials that you are a master of the three C's: Coolness, Conviction and Confidence. When lying you also must ensure that the web of deceit that you are spinning can not be traced or checked. Although I have blatantly lied to people before for the sake of a blag, this was the first time I have ever tried to convince someone face to face, knowing that there are huge odds stacked against them believing me and that they could find out the truth, within minutes, if they were sceptical.

After last orders, having empowered myself with a little

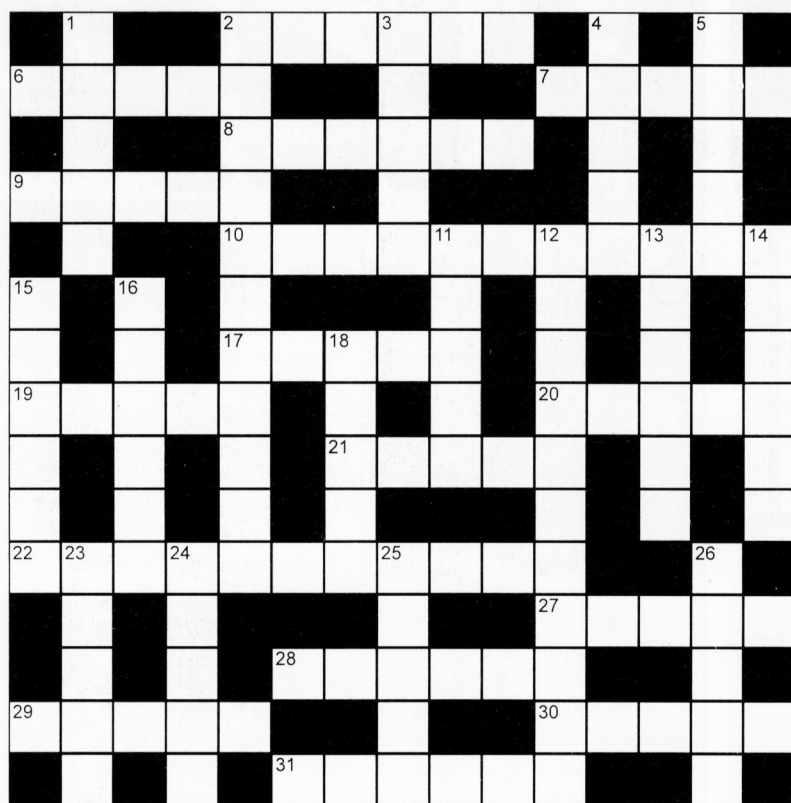
Dutch courage, I walked into the Hotel, slightly dishevelled, with the look of an embarrassed lame dog. Unfortunately my flat mate had disappeared with my keys (most likely to his girlfriend's house miles away) and as a consequence I was locked out of my flat. Given that I worked in the hotel's kitchens as a pot washer, I was hoping that the hotel would put me up for the night in one of their spare rooms, as my only other alternative was to sleep rough, after all the hotel is like a family. They then asked for my name and they said they'd never heard of me, so I explained that I'd only been working for a few weeks as a favour to Andy the head chef; feasible.

This is the point at which I could have been bugged, but because of the time, everyone had finished in the kitchens and the officey-type people had long gone home locking up all of the employer details, or so I assume. I was then asked to wait so they could check on their database to see which rooms were vacant and I had my doubts for a while, in spite of my Oscar-winning performance. They came to nothing though and I was handed my key to one of their rooms, out the door second on the right. Jackpot, it was a double, stuffed full of booze, jelly beans and dried almonds, but I felt far too guilty to help myself and if I was caught, the cost of the minibar could tip the balance between a laugh and a felony in the manager's eyes.

The only downside to this blag is that unlike other blags, the blagger has to leave himself vulnerable for a prolonged period of time, sleeping with the evidence. Paranoid, but content with what I had achieved I woke at 7.30, leaving in the most discreet manner possible, to stay any later would be taking the piss and would run the risk of the manager figuring out what had happened.

If you have any challenges or have any blags that you're proud of, that you want to see appearing in this column, drop me an email at theblaggersguide@hotmail.com.

The Felix Crossword 1173, by Turnip Henry



Cryptic clues

Across:

2. Drier around restricted tool. (6)
6. Pleasing plant. (5)
7. Instrument is back on the road. (5)
8. Rest disturbed after former lover makes an effort. (6)
9. Employment of universal wise man. (5)
10. Embroidery is irritating, but has a purpose. (11)
17. Vital for music. (5)
19. Sorrow to hear German sea feature. (5)
20. In the fog nothing is wet. (5)
21. Start shiatsu around America, for food. (5)
22. Blush from lying helps interpret images. (5,6)
27. Tread down to send it on its way. (5)
28. God has a plate for vegetable. (6)
29. Car carried by people. (5)
30. Sounds like I count a

country. (5)

31. Imitate, and address to the top floor. (4-2)

Down:

1. Stressed in the past, perhaps. (5)
- 2,3. Eton held the f-word to be earth-shattering. (3,3,2,3,5)
4. Nowhere to dance. (5)
5. Airline lie holds water. (5)
11. Punishment for cheesy flirtation. (5)
12. Competition for the number one vessel. (11)
13. On the beat, eventually. (2,4)
14. Beat on skin. (6)
15. Swallow points to bay. (6)
16. Turn metal in the back. (6)
18. Relish in August orgies. (5)
23. Burnt prize. (5)
24. Fight for piece of paper. (5)
25. Note: study is heavy. (5)
26. Broken lamp from the East is enough. (5)

Quick clues

Across:

2. Very cold. (6)
6. Weak. (5)
7. Not horizontal. (5)
8. Body hollow. (6)
9. Throw, brief affair. (5)
10. Giving support. (11)
17. Feudal allegiance. (5)
19. In addition. (5)
20. Skill in handiwork. (5)
21. Sub-continent. (5)

22. Trickery. (11)

27. Dried fruit. (5)
28. Wine. (6)
29. Normal. (5)
30. Ice house. (5)
31. Minister. (6)

Down:

1. Mythical creature. (5)
2. Whipped. (11)
3. Lighter. (5)
4. Vernacular. (5)

5. Cutlery item. (5)

11. Piece of pipe. (1-4)
12. Very important. (11)
13. Mad. (6)
14. Instrument. (6)
15. Aromas. (6)
16. Cake. (6)
18. Looking at. (5)
23. Booth. (5)
24. In the area. (5)
25. Clearing. (5)
26. Irritate. (5)

Cryptic Crossword 1172:

Across: Rainbow, Sausage, Butterfingers, No sir, Hamster, Nearsides, Ratio, Drill, Laserdisc, Chianti, Blimp, Ground-control, Maypole, Nodular.

Down: Rubicon, Breasts, Wafer, Synthesis, Asset Stripper, Embargo, Tantalisingly, Elmer, Dalliance, Decorum, Lingo, Reigned, Cobbler, Bacon.

Quick Crossword 1172:

Across: Abysmal, Iceberg, Counterweight, Cider, Ailment, Protruded, Horny, Hydra, Neckbands, Pink-eye, Corfu, Tranquilised, Radiate, Kernels.

Down: Alcopop, Matador, Lurer, Icelandic, Entrepreneurs, Ghostly, Uncoordinated, Gulch, Dunkerque, Happier, Arena, Burglar, Speedos, Click.

Another term, another issue of Felix, another fiendishly difficult crossword... or something like that. To be honest, I find the Sun's *Tea Break Quickie* a bit taxing on the old grey matter, so I always find Turnip Henry's offerings damnably tricky. And it's for the likes of me that he's once again provided a set of what he likes to describe as "quick" clues (hmmm... that just makes me feel thicker than the large print version of *The Lord of the Rings*). Either that or he's got terminally bored with the prospect of revision - take your pick. As ever, both sets of clues come with prizes attached for the first correct set of solutions out of the hat - just remember that, to ensure that there's no cheating, the two sets of clues are for *different* words (yet both using the same grid - clever, huh), so you're effectively getting two puzzles for the price of one. Which is nice.

So, anyway, back to the normal spiel... put down your notes and the painfully boring text

book (you know you want to) and ignore the hideously attired man at the front of the room talking about partial differential equations (where do they get those ties?). Instead, dig out a dictionary, locate a sharp pencil (and a sharper mind) and set to work one of the puzzles (not both at the same time, mind - that

Crossword Competition

way madness lies).

In order to be in with a chance of winning, you'll need to bring your completed grid to the Felix Office (outside the Physics Department, next to the liquid nitrogen tank) by 8pm on Wednesday evening (preferably accompanied by a full set of correct answers). Oh, and it'd help matters a lot if you indicate clearly which set of clues you've used.

The first correct grid of answers to the cryptic clues will win their owner a copy of the Collins English Dictionary (RRP £20), whilst a full set of solutions to the quick crossword could earn you a £10 book token. The names of the lucky winners will be printed here next week, along with a full set of answers to both crosswords.

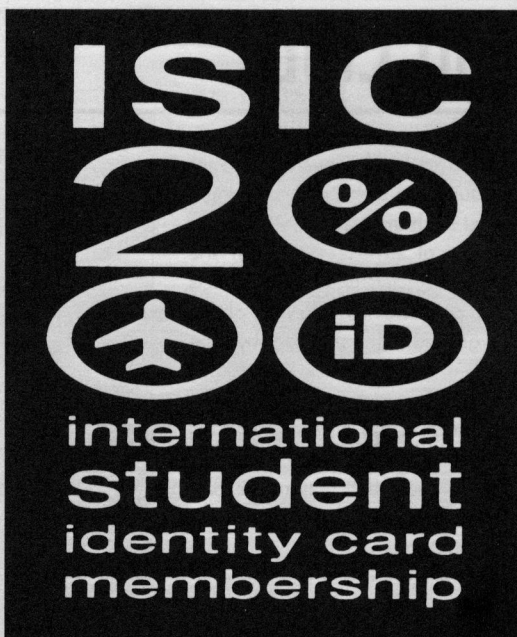
Right, just one thing left to do... The final crossword of last term produced the usual stream of entries, with a particularly high number of solutions for the quick crossword materialising in the Felix Office just minutes before the competition deadline, all looking suspiciously similar... Anyway, after weeding out all the incorrect answers (the correct words are listed above), the first set of cryptic answers out of the hat belonged to **Will Blackman**, whilst the winner of the quick crossword contest was **Amy Hollister**. Congratulations - please come to the Felix Office to collect your prizes as soon as possible.

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ISIC has teamed together with Lonely Planet to offer a travel guide package, which includes a Lonely Planet guidebook of their choice, a Healthy Travel guide of their choice and Read This First: Asia & India to the first reader out of the hat who can correctly identify the following city:



Spanish sea port; second largest city in Spain;
13th century cathedral; centre of Catalan art
and literature and the separatist movement

Email your answer to felix@ic.ac.uk by noon on Friday, ensuring you include "felix isic competition" in the subject line, to be in with a chance of winning. The winner will be selected at random from all the correct answers received, and his/her name will be printed here in two weeks' time. The competition is only open to Imperial College staff and students.

**ISIC : Where in
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Mountaineering Club

GARETH MORGAN

The Imperial College Mountaineering Club's Easter tour took us to Spain's Gold Coast, the Costa Daurada in Catalonia, for a week and a half of stunning climbing in fabulous scenery.

The trip started in patriotic style, with a late-night viewing of *The Italian Job*, which took the place of sleep before the 7.00 flight from Stanstead to Barcelona. We spent most of the holiday quoting it, especially after picking up the blue, white and (unfortunately) green Clios that would be our transport in Spain ("Remember, over here they drive on the wrong side of the road"). One of these, incidentally, would be thrashed to within an inch of its life over mountain roads and dirt tracks, "because it's a hire car, and they expect it to be thrashed."

One car stayed in Barcelona to pick up two latecomers, while the others drove to the mountain refuge in the ruined village of La Mussara, which was to be our home for the next ten days. The refuge provided impressive views over the mountains to the coastal town of Reus, with the Mediterranean stretching away over the horizon. Run by a Catalan couple, it provided basic accommodation and good food for a few pounds a night. Our two Spanish speakers, Martin and Alban, spent a long time talking to Maria, our young hostess. Her boyfriend, possibly called Mario, seemed nice enough too; he climbs F8a (read, seriously hard) and puts up a lot of new routes. Which was a shame.

The climbing started in earnest on Sunday, with a trip to the nearby TV crags, named after the masts on the hill above them. The rock here is a hard limestone, often covered in sharp pockets or protrusions that make for great technical climbing. On the other hand, anyone who insisted on wearing shorts whatever the weather ended up with knees covered in cuts and grazes. This didn't slow us down though, as everyone set about the rock with a determination caused by a long, cold English winter. Everything here is sports climbing – bolts drilled into the rock provide a more secure and regular form of protection than traditional British routes – so we

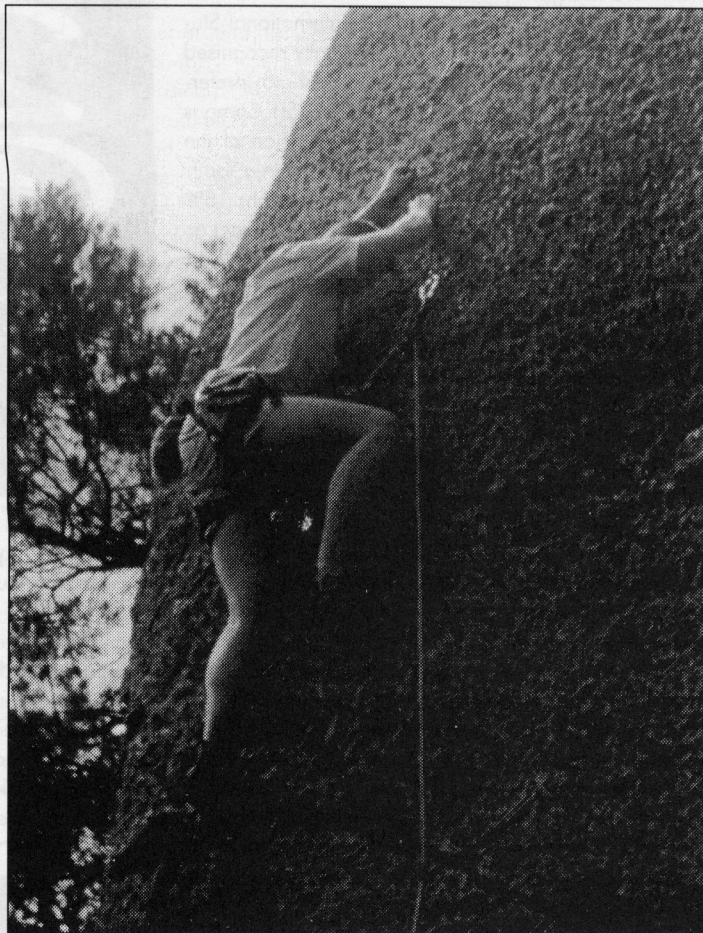
climbed as hard as we could without quite the same risks we would expect at home. There was a fair amount of exposure though, the almost instinctive unease that affects most people when they're above the ground. Hanging on by one hand while you look down two thousand feet of valley, going all the way down to the distant sea, is an interesting experience, generally accompanied by muttered expletives and a strong motivation to keep going.

Thinking of the weather, anyone who had been expecting balmy sun and the chance to really work on their tan was sorely disappointed – we were a thousand metres above sea level and it was extremely cold at times. The wind didn't help – it certainly didn't seem to have come from the Sahara. Still, when we found a bit of shelter, it was a beautiful location.

We had three days of great climbing, the highlight of which was a stunning F7a+ arête led by Simon and Mike on a crag called Lo Soterani, although everyone was pushing their abilities and a lot of great routes were climbed. Unfortunately, we were now collectively tired, and decided that a rest day in Tarragona, the nearest city, was called for. We went medium in Reus (which, on a Tuesday at least, was too dead to go large), and got shouted at for being noisy when we returned at half past two. We returned via Reus, and picked up our esteemed President, Megan, and some random slapper by the name of Nigel, who had come to catch the second half of the trip.

We headed out to the picturesque village of Mont Ral on Thursday, and managed a couple of routes before the heavens opened and we were reduced to huddling in a café, cursing the filthy foreign weather. Friday was much nicer, and we managed a good few routes on the TV crags.

Friday night presented something of a problem. The Catalonia Rally was being held in the area, and the refuge had been booked by around sixty locals for a pre-race party, leaving us with no option but to go clubbing in Tarragona. After a pizza, a few beers, and several jugs of sangria, we were ready to go. But



wait! Look! A playground with those wooden toys on springs to play on! Nice. Unfortunately, someone had to fall off, and Nigel took on this solemn responsibility not once but twice, losing a fair bit of skin from around his eyes, which left him looking like he'd been in a series of brutal fights. Pausing only to pick up an ice pack, we stumbled across a row of a dozen clubs, thronging with people and playing a wide selection of music. Shame that most of them didn't like trainers. Despite this we had a great night, and weren't too bothered about the prospect of sleeping in the cars for a few hours afterwards.

The roads were closed for the Rally on Saturday, so we had a nice afternoon on some nearby crags that made up in route quality what they lacked in height. Sunday was an expedition to Villanova de Prades, which had different rock and lots of nice short routes. Unfortunately our trusty Rockfax let us down and we spent so long trying to find the crag that we only managed a couple of routes before the cloud came down, the wind picked up,

and we retreated to a café. All except Nigel and Gareth, who proved themselves to be the least sane but most hardcore of us all, climbing a reasonably hard route in ludicrously high winds. That night was Megan's 21st birthday, which called for a suitable celebration: cocktails, tequila and general hilarity. The precise details are lost in a haze of alcohol and dire threats, but a fine night was had by all.

Monday was our last day of climbing, and we tried to make the most of it, with some great routes that left everyone tired but reluctant to leave. After a truly fantastic meal and the last of our beer, we left the refuge on Tuesday and made our way back to Barcelona. It had been a fantastic few days, leaving us looking forward to a long summer of climbing back in Britain.

For more information on the mountaineering club, and our summer trips, contact Megan at the address below.

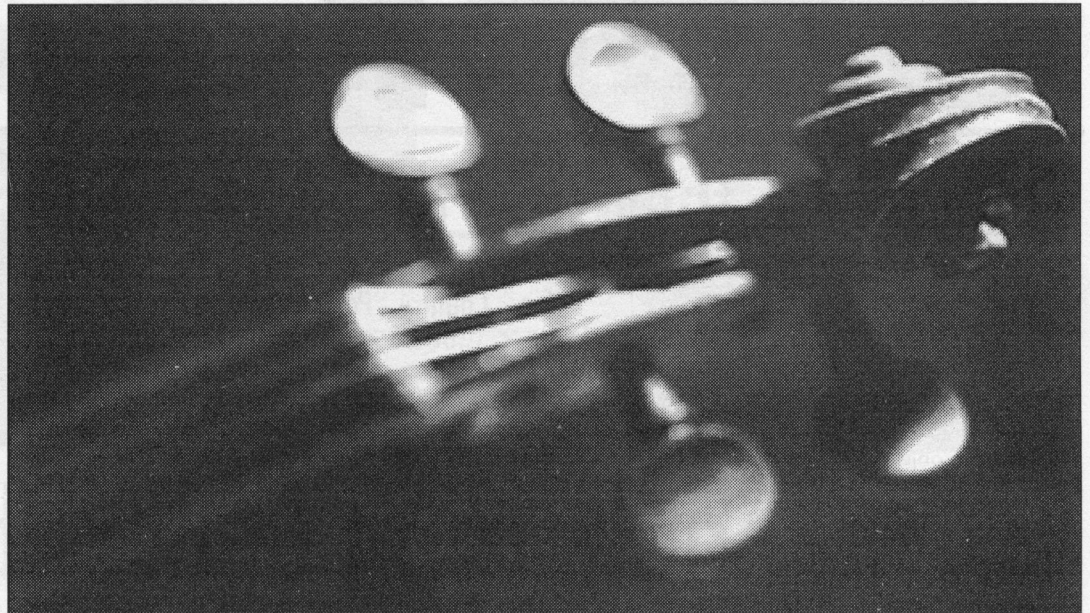
Contact: Megan
Email: mountaineering@ic.ac.uk

Sinfonietta

IC Sinfonietta's second evening concert of the year took place at the end of last term, with all those involved hoping to build on the undoubted success of their first performance, which took place last autumn.

For their first piece, the Sinfonietta selected Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. They were joined by Elizabeth Cooney, a Foundation Scholar at the Royal School of Music. She performed with great aplomb, bringing out the lyrical solo sections of the first movement. During these moments the audience listened in awed rapture, scarcely daring to breathe lest they missed a nuance. The orchestra shone too, performing with clarity and purpose, especially in the later movements. The final movement, *Allegro vivacissimo*, was a rapid sequence of folk-dances, in which the main theme was supported by bagpipe-style droning and an evocation of the gypsy string bands which were popular in Tchaikovsky's Russia. This was as fine a musical performance as this reviewer has ever witnessed from IC Sinfonietta.

After the interval, the orchestra prepared to do battle with (K)ein *Sommernachtstraum*, (Not) *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The piece began simply enough with some toing-and-froing between two sim-



ple tunes, one on piano and violin, the other on flute and harpsichord. Later apparent chaos ensued as the theme is repeated by the strings a beat apart, accompanied by the flutes in a different key. It is fair to say that this sounded odd. In fact many of the audience laughed openly. A lengthy section followed in which the strings introduced a relatively sane waltz like theme, only to have it thrown back in their faces by the brass and winds as a thunderous "oom-pah" march. This piece worked well both as a musical performance and as a comic episode.

Congratulations are due to conductor Daniel Capps who held together the disparate rhythms admirably.

Finally, after some shuffling and rearrangement, we were treated to Malcolm Arnold's *Four Scottish Dances*. This composer has worked on films including *Wildcat's of St. Trinians* and *The Bridge on the River Kwai*. His Scottish Dances include a Strathspey, a reel, a particularly enjoyable Hebridian folk tune and a Highland Fling. The orchestra clearly relished the familiar timbres and musical language of Scottish music, and gave a fun interpretation of the

piece.

IC Sinfonietta has been running for three and a half years, and until this year it was kept under the wing of the Symphony Orchestra. Its many free lunchtime concerts were well attended, but as the orchestra grew bigger and better it needed to perform to a wider audience. For more information on joining the Sinfonietta or forthcoming concerts, contact Chris at the address below.

Contact: Chris
Email: sinfonietta@ic.ac.uk

RockSoc

EL GORDO

Okay, to those of you who didn't attend "The sICk night In", would you be so kind as to form an orderly line by that wall over there, yes, the one pitted with lead, clotted hair and mucus. Lovely.

Saturday 18th March saw London's biggest student rock and metal night in the Union, attracting students from as far out as Surrey and Uxbridge, in addition to all the major London universities. Having almost been cancelled twice and been moved from DBs to the Concert Hall, "The sICk night In" was put together in a mere two and a half weeks of hard work by a crack team from the IC RockSoc, DramSoc and the Union

Bar. The result was best characterised at the end of the night by brain stunned people asking for more (and offering to bear our children, nice).

The night kicked off a little after the advertised 6pm, due to unforeseen technical difficulties concerning custard and rice crispies, with a selection of DJs from ICUs very own RockSoc, in its first year as an official society. RCM-based band Element were first to play at 7pm, regaling us with excellent renditions of a selection of classic songs.

The second band were exciting upcomers in the London hard-core scene, P.D.H.M. (no, we haven't got a clue as to what it stands for either). The rapping brothers, Stuart and Alistair, burst onto the stage in a wild

frenzy of unconstrained energy never before seen in IC and with their performance the first mosh pit of the evening quickly got underway, with a stage froth flailing of limbs and hair. RedHed were next on. With already one Kerrang! feature under the belt, we knew we were in for a treat. With an awesome stage presence, they had the audience eating out of their hands with their guitar Stuck Mojo sound, singing along in no time. Stonking.

The fourth band, on at 11:30pm, were Evil Kneval. This band is already very known for playing support for major bands around the UK. However no amount of preparation can prepare a person for the "my one is bigger than your one,

oh look, I'll whip it out and show you" band debate. The music was pretty cool too...

Headlining the night were Zeta Reticuli. With a fantastic entrance, the devil-winged front man Gary wooed the audience with eerily heartfelt tracks and a refreshing fast moving sound.

Remember kids, you don't have to worship Satan to join RockSoc, but it does help and he is your friend. The date for "The bigger, longer and uncut sICk night In" has already set for Freshers Week 2000 - put a note in your diary and be there OR ELSE...

Contact: James
Email: rocksoc@ic.ac.uk

SPORT

They came, they saw, they streaked through Paris

Cross Country - Paris Relays 2000

Its that time of year again when the cross country team decide to blow the budget in Paris. There were only two objectives of the trip this year. The first was to get drunk for three days and the second was to win the naked 4-by-400 relay.

All the London colleges congregated at ULU on Thursday night for a couple of social drinks before the coach journey out to Paris. As always, the journey was a rowdy one, with Kings Beer Fag Army leading all the chants (including a 55min rendition of Chicago). This led one of the Imperial girls (Sarah, a feminist Yank) who had only been dragged in at the last minute, to complain continuously to the whole of the team. Oh well... The ferry journey was enlivened by Andy G swiping a hostess's hat when she came to

throw us out of the club lounge.

Anyhow, after we arrived on Friday we went on the usual sight seeing tour of Paris, which ended with a club meal at which Sarah complained loudly (you may have spotted a pattern).

Saturday saw the strength of the team increase, as three extra runners turned up at the last minute. The Paris Relay (the reason we are meant to go) was held in the afternoon, with Imperial forced to borrow a group of females from UAE (with them borrowing some of our men in return).

The race itself was uneventful - we hadn't come here to win and we didn't, with the first team finishing eleventh. Shaun should get a mention, however, for running the eight fastest time of the day in

his first outing for Imperial. The post race celebrations started immediately, however, with some serious beer fights. The team then moved onto the more serious reasons for coming to Paris.

At 2.30am the naked 4-by-400 started. Andy G ran a storming leg came in first and handed onto Andy H, who ran a great leg and was only beaten home by the Nottingham runner who started 50m down the track and cut all the corners off (you cheating b*stards). Gav took over but was unable to haul in the Nottingham runner and handed over to McDangerous, who closed the gap but was unable to complete the victory. Nottingham were announced as the winners, but only by the judge who came from - you guessed it - Nottingham. All

the other teams disqualified Nottingham and Imperial were once again crowned Kings of the Naked 4-by-400.

The night continued, and Frank Boucher had a hell of a time at the party. After repeatedly saying he did not like the moaning feminist, he vanished to her room. He claims she asked him for sex and that he said no, but the general consensus is that his new name (Mister Floppy) might have had something to do with it...

A fantastic weekend was had by all, and we arrived back at ULU late on Sunday evening - what a way to finish the season off. On to the athletics season now - and all that remains is to see if Mike can keep his progression going: thirteen year olds to incessantly moaning American feminists to...?

United make it six from eight - but is that enough?

Premiership League Review

Manchester United have taken the Premiership title for the sixth time in the league's eight year history - yet after only reaching the last eight of the Champions League and performing miserably in the World Club Championship, is that enough?

With the title wrapped up so early this season, Alex Ferguson surely only views the Premiership as a way back into Europe next season - after all, it's only through continued success on the European stage that United will be able to conclusively prove themselves to be one of the greatest teams of all time. Until then, no matter what an endless succession of BBC and Sky Sports commentators proclaim them to be, they will still remain an impossi-



bly wealthy yet quickly forgotten team.

Hence, you have to assume, the decision to spend £18.5 million on Ruud Van Nistelrooy. That and the fact that Liverpool have picked up just three points less than United

since Christmas (it was just one point until they ran out of steam against Everton on Good Friday), and the one thing that the Mersiders definitely aren't short of is strike force (unlike Chelsea and Arsenal, who have fallen away from

the leaders largely thanks to an inability to put the ball in the back of the net). So, with the prospect of Liverpool mounting a serious challenge next year (assuming that they can hold onto all of their players and keep them injury free), and, more importantly, with the Champions League kicking off again in five months time, making a few improvements to the starting eleven is clearly essential. However, with Martin Edwards insisting that someone's going to have to leave in order to balance the books, a nice big argument between the Chairman and his short-of-fuse Manager may well be on the horizon - and that certainly won't be good for the share price...