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## Film

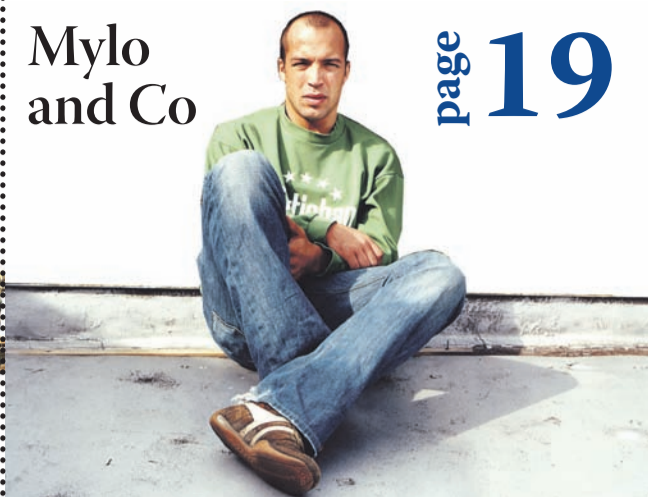
### Oscars nominations



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# felix

Guardian Student Newspaper of the Year

The student newspaper of Imperial College

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# RCSU Science Challenge launched

Competition launched College-wide with a first prize of £2500 and judged by Professor Lord Robert Winston among others

**Andy Sykes**  
Editor-in-chief

Almost 100 people attended the launch of the Royal College of Science Union (RCSU) "Science Challenge" in the Blackett Lab on Tuesday night.

The aim of the competition is to write an 800 word essay on the topic revealed by RCSU President, Jad

Marrouche. Mr Marrouche spoke for half an hour on the topic, revealing the question to be: "What scientific development or breakthrough do you think will be most significant within the next hundred years?"

The theme ties in with Imperial College's Centenary year; the College was founded in 1907.

The RCSU and its President have assembled a prestigious group of

judges for the award. Professor Lord Robert Winston, the much-telvised fertility expert (and Emeritus Professor in Fertility Studies at the College) is to take part, alongside Dr Simon Singh MBE (an Imperial alumnus, writer of *The Code Book* and other popular science books), Dr Raj Persaud (psychiatrist, Radio 4 presenter of *All In The Mind*, and journalist), and Dr Roger Highfield (Science Editor at the *Daily Telegraph*).

This expert panel will judge the final entries after they've been pared down by a panel of academics from the College.

First prize is £2500, a day shadowing Dr Highfield at the *Daily Telegraph*, and a top-of-the-range Apple Macbook. Five runners-up will be given £100 and a bottle of champagne, with submissions being considered for publication in the *Daily Telegraph*.

The prizes have been kindly provided by Apple, Cockburn & Campbell, Schlumberger, and the *Telegraph*.

All entries must be submitted by 23 February, and can be entered online (at <http://rcsu.org.uk/index.php?page/challenge>) or on paper to the RCSU office. The Grand Final, which has been promised coverage by the BBC, *Telegraph*, *Times*, *Independent* and *Guardian*, will take place on 9 March at a yet-to-be-determined location.

## The question

"What scientific development or breakthrough will be the most significant within the next hundred years?"

## The judges

**Professor Lord Robert Winston** (*Emeritus Professor of Fertility Studies at the College*)

**Dr Simon Singh** (*author of *The Code Book*, Imperial alumnus*)

**Dr Raj Persaud** (*broadcaster, psychiatrist, and journalist*)

**Dr Roger Highfield** (*Science Editor at the *Daily Telegraph**)

## The prizes

**First prize:** £2500, a day shadowing Dr Highfield, and an Apple MacBook

**Runners-up:** £100 and a bottle of champagne

PHOTO COURTESY OF LIVE! - LIVE.CGCU.NET



RCSU President, Jad Marrouche, seen here cradling a giant invisible hotdog while announcing the launch of the RCSU's Science Challenge

# Bar restructuring faces problems

Staff find the new EPoS system slow and crash-prone, and with many experienced student bar staff having left in sympathy with members of Union staff who took redundancy during the management reshuffle

Andy Sykes

The Union bars have faced problems resulting from the implementation of a new Electronic Point of Sale system (EPoS) and a change in the management structure of the bar.

The restructuring of the bar falls under remit of the Union's Commercial Services division. *Felix* is prevented from commenting on the performance of staff members specifically by the Staff-Student Protocol (see page 4), but can comment on the changes made by the division as a whole.

The EPoS system was designed to improve stock control in the bar and to increase service speed. Installing the EPoS system was a key factor in deciding to change the way the bars are managed, a new post of Trading Manager was created (which was filled by early November). This new position oversees all of the Union bars and catering.

This led to a review of the bar managers' positions, as much of their work was now rolled into the Trading Manager position and the EPoS system. The staff filling these positions were offered pay cuts, transfer to other positions, or voluntary redundancy. The three bar managers chose to take the redundancy package.

During this consultation period, the student media (*Felix* and *Live!*) were prevented from commenting by employment law, despite cries from the student staff about the redundancies.

The student bar staff are classed as 'casual' staff and were therefore not included in the consultation. Many at the time expressed their dissatisfaction with the departure of the three bar managers, whom they felt loyal to, and raised their concerns with the sabbs and senior members of Commercial Services.

This reporter heard many criticisms of the way the student staff

were treated, with many struggling to find out what would be happening to their managers.

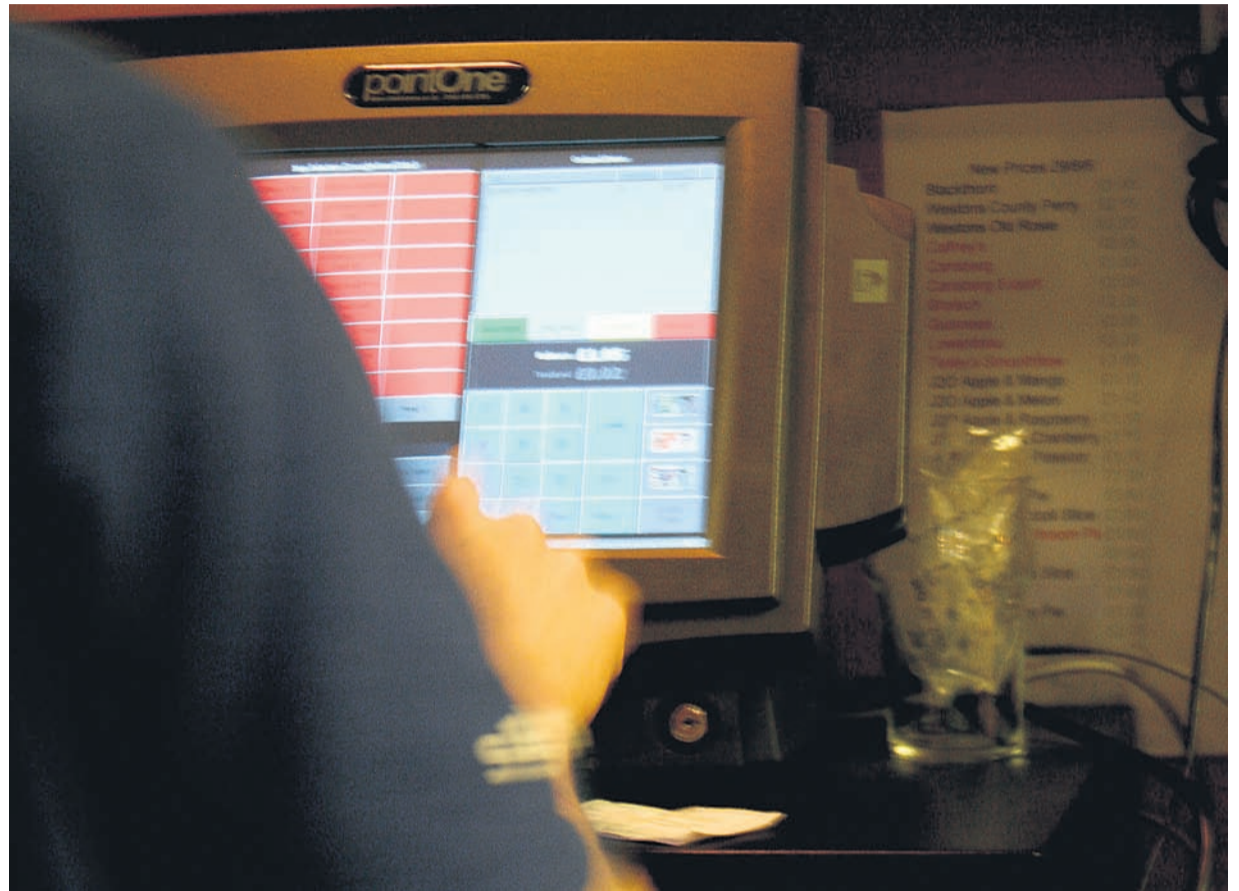
Many of the experienced student staff then chose to leave once the bar managers had taken redundancy, citing their dissatisfaction with the whole process. This left the bars in a poor state, with the communal atmosphere behind the bar degenerating to the point of alleged sabotage of systems to hamper the newly arrived Trading Manager. The new staff lacked experience, and this led to a plummet in the quality of bar service (this reporter has had trouble getting a full pint pulled most days).

The new Trading Manager has been left to deal with this situation. However, things are slowly improving – training is continuing for the new bar staff, and a number of other improvements have been seen in the bars, such as new furniture, an increase in catering quality, the introduction of new house wines, and the long-awaited introduction of chips to the bar (this reporter likes that a lot).

The EPoS system has so far proved less than satisfactory. Both old and new bar staff have commented to *Felix* that the tills are much slower than the old cash tills (requiring scrolling through a long menu for the correct drinks item) and restrict staff to serving a single customer at a time. The tills, which are Windows-based, are also prone to crashing mid-service due to a software bug. Even sabbaticals have been critical of the current state of the system after working behind the bar in recent weeks.

The tills are also not connected across the Union core, meaning the dBs and da Vinci's tills operate independently, though wiring is apparently in place.

The server, which the tills report to, has cost much more than previously reported (as "low hundreds") to the Executive Committee and is



The new EPoS tills in da Vinci's; they crash if staff swipe their access cards while the till drawer is open

currently without a backup system.

Additionally, the Executive Committee believed that the new EPoS system would be compatible with the new "cashless" (pay by 'smart' swipe card) system the College has been investigating; however, it now appears that implementing compatibility between the Union and College systems could be very expensive.

Many of these facts came to light through comments made on an article on *Live!*, the City & Guilds online newspaper (available at [live.cgc.u.net](http://live.cgc.u.net)). The article concerned the motion of no confidence in

the Deputy President (Graduate Students), Shama Rahman. However, the comments on the article quickly developed into a free-for-all on the sabbs and Commercial Services on the way the restructuring was handled. At the time of going to press, the article had more than 100 comments.

Many of the disgruntled commentators questioned the original reasons for the restructuring of the bars, citing the fact that the bars are turning over a healthy profit. The Union shop, however, lost around £7,000 last year, and online regalia sales faring poorly, with £26,000 of

stock written off over the last few years; this has drawn the attention of the Union's auditors.

Any change is of course fraught with difficulty, and things have not turned out as bad as they could have.

There are still a number of issues to be resolved, such as the role of the Union shop and separate online shop, the EPoS bugs and the training of new staff to replace the experienced staff.

For another perspective on the bar restructuring, see page 4.

**felix 1,370**  
Friday 26.1.07

## Iraqi oil debate

"It has been another bad week in Iraq. On Saturday 25 US troops were killed. On Monday, according to the BBC, more than 130 Iraqi people died in Baghdad and Baquba, in one of the car-bomb attacks we are getting so used to hearing about."

PAGE 3

## Biobrick risks

"The concern is that bioterrorists might also desire to construct deadly pathogens along the lines of Spanish 'flu.'"

PAGE 10

## Sex and fashion

"Newton's innovative photography confronted social taboos and explored sexual dynamics, changing the face of fashion photography."

PAGE 11



Rhymes with...  
CENTRE PAGES

## Nightlife returns

"Onto the dance floor, despite it being early, that didn't mean you couldn't be stopped every few minutes by somebody with the manners to kick over the drink you delicately placed on the floor or barge into your get fonky zone."

PAGES 18 & 19

## Big bald bastard

"Seemingly, Hitman is littered with bomb-able places. Chairs, chandeliers, cakes – dead dog carcasses and flagpoles seem to be the only things that you can't shove some *plastique* on and send into orbit."

PAGE 22

## Square eyes

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5		1	2	3
2	1	8	5	

PAGES 26 & 27



WHAT...  
WHAT?  
INVISIBLE BIKE!

# Democracy Vs Petrodollar\$

Andrew Ireson

It has been another bad week in Iraq. On Saturday 25 US troops were killed. On Monday, according to the BBC, more than 130 Iraqi people died in Baghdad and Baquba, in one of the car-bomb attacks we are getting so used to hearing about. As disaster on a scale we in London cannot even imagine continues to unfold, our dear leaders in London and Washington continue deny reality. As a civil war engulfs Iraq, in which our troops are but one of many sides, all the opinion polls show a majority of Iraqis want the US/UK troops to withdraw.

However, in this article, I want to address the main 'conspiracy theory' about oil. In 2003, when Blair was selling the Iraq war to parliament, as well as something about 45 minutes, he also said "the oil revenues, which people falsely claim that we want to seize, should be put in a trust fund for the Iraqi people administered through the UN."

Earlier this month *The Independent* reported on a new Iraqi oil law. "Iraq's massive oil reserves, the third-largest in the world, are about to be thrown open for large-scale exploitation by Western oil companies under a controversial law which is expected to come before the Iraqi parliament within days... It would give big oil companies such as BP, Shell and Exxon 30-year contracts to extract Iraqi crude and allow the first large-scale operation of foreign oil interests in the country since the industry was nationalised in 1972."

Kamil Mahdi, an Iraqi academic and senior lecturer in Middle East economics at the University of Ex-



The sun sets behind ships berthed at the important Al Basra Oil Terminal in the Northern Arabian Gulf

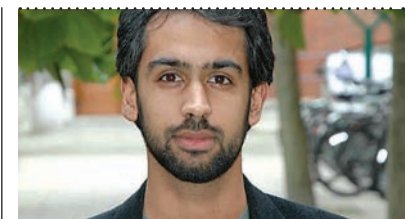
eter, is critical of these developments, writing in the Guardian "A government that is failing to protect the lives of its citizens must not embark on controversial legislation that ties the hands of future Iraqi leaders, and which threatens to squander the Iraqis' precious, exhaustible resource in an orgy of waste, corruption and theft... This state of affairs has negative results for all except those who are corrupt and unscrupulous, and the voracious foreign oil corporations." In other words, the Iraqi people are demanding sovereignty over their most important economic resource, which accounts for 95% of the Iraqi economy. Since no WMD were found, we learned that we are in fact on a democratising mission in Iraq. Therefore, wouldn't it be only

polite to actually take into account the clearly expressed wishes of the Iraqi people? That would mean firstly not allowing our corporations to lobby the fragile and dysfunctional Iraqi government, no doubt with bribes and inducements (see BAE Systems in Saudi Arabia), effectively giving themselves control of "one of the greatest material prizes in world history." Secondly, it would mean withdrawing our troops in the least damaging, yet most immediate manner possible. But this won't happen. The Iraq Study Group endorses selling off the oil to the multinational companies, saying "The United States should encourage investment in Iraq's oil sector by the international community and by international energy companies... and assist Iraqi leaders to

reorganize the national oil industry as a commercial enterprise." And of course, Bush's latest policy is to send in 20,000 more troops to create a surge of violence, and flush out (i.e. kill) the "terrorists".

This current course, disregarding the opinions of the majority of people both in Iraq and in the West, and viewing all problems through the crosshairs of a bombsight, could in the long term bring peace to the Middle East. Graveyards, after all, are very peaceful places.

The author has created a petition on the Prime Minister's website, urging him not to allow Western Corporations to put pressure on the Iraqi government over this issue. To sign it go to <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/iraqi-oil>



Omar Hashmi  
Politics Editor

They say it is the end of the American Century. Not only have people accepted this, but they are preparing for what happens after it. A good country must plan for at least 100 years in the future (take Amsterdam's flooding problem for instance). So when the next bad boy, China, has a little slip-up like testing a ground-to-satellite missile into outer space, which the Foreign Ministry Liu Jianchao has the audacity to call a "peaceful activity", you have to wonder what on earth is going on.

Timothy Garton Ash, a well respected Professor of European Studies at Oxford University, has previously stated that a handful of far-sighted people in Washington are beginning to formulate a long-term American strategy of trying to create an international environment that would protect common interests even when American hyperpower has faded, and to encourage rising powers such as India and China to sign up to such an order.

But the more concerning question is, when China and India do rise, how violent will the earthquake be? And in the race for dominance, will we see yet another pseudo-slave trade-off of rights with advantages for the prosperous nations?

Still hoping, still waiting.

## Policy of multiculturalism officially ditched

Ahmad Moolla

One of the many buzzwords associated with New Labour's 'Blairism' has been multiculturalism. But like with many other policy threads, multiculturalism now appears to have gone out of fashion.

This hands-off approach has come about for many reasons, but has undoubtedly followed the rightwards political shift of the current government. In recent policy speeches, Tony Blair has swept aside the nuances of cultural interaction and has adopted a rather more direct approach to Britishness, in effect rebuking some for holding on to certain cultural values. Most of these values however pose no threat to civilised society and as one may expect, have been passed down the generational ladder. As a result, current governmental policy has not only caused significant discomfort amongst immigrant populations, but has also made second and subsequent generations feel guilty for their beliefs.

Whilst the task of defining Britishness rumbles on in many conversations, whether in the public house or the upper echelons of the Home Office, there are a number of key issues that need clarification.

First on the list is the separation of multiculturalism from integration. Integration happened long ago. It happened for anyone from a non-British lineage born in the



Tony Blair in a speech last year on "British values"

UK well before their conception, when their ancestors moved to the UK, were given the Imperial British stamp of approval in the form of the prized crimson-red book and were free to find a livelihood of their choosing anywhere across Her Majesty's land and with her Royal seal of approval.

Integration simply means that a person is absorbed into a new population and is thus part of that society. It is assimilation however that is the important practical phase when new arrivals begin to interact and find their niche in society. Furthermore, assimilation is an on-

going two-way process, where both previously native and newly native populations interact, communicate and continually assess their ideas and beliefs.

Yet, as a condition of citizenship, those who immigrate are quite rightly obliged to accept the rules and framework of their host society. They however, need not agree with all the occurrences within that society, but fundamentally, they do accept its core values – those along the lines of tolerance, freedom of speech, equality, justice and welfare for all. As long as they accept these basics, integration is a com-

pleted process.

The implementation of these core values is nevertheless quite subjective and is defined by the people that comprise a community. These values allow for huge disagreement in personal opinions, actions and even legislation.

But this continual appraisal and debate is an important cornerstone of any progressive society, and one which multiculturalism in fact facilitates. The concept of multiculturalism is that differences in opinion should be respected, probed and debated. This will in turn allow for society's core values to flourish.

If the debate is undertaken with a constructive mindset, it will allow those partaking to gain in knowledge and understanding. Without knowledge, there can only be scant tolerance. With knowledge, there can be respect. Multiculturalism therefore seeks to build a more prosperous, inclusive and progressive society.

By distancing itself from multiculturalism and adopting an "enough is enough" attitude, the British government seems to be bowing to the pressure of those from the far right who show little interest in understanding those of any different persuasion to themselves.

Yet this approach makes no sense. Individual societies are no longer the truly independent entities of yesteryear, with no outside influence, but are composed of global

elements. Without cooperation and understanding, the future is bleak.

In all societies, there exist renegades who detract and work against the core values. And quite rightly, these people should be dealt with appropriately. But it is simply unacceptable when a person is asked to go against their own personal values, values that do not contradict the core societal values.

So when a person exhibits Nazi tendencies or when they blow themselves up on an underground train killing innocents, it is not multiculturalism that is at fault. It is not the group from which they hail who is at fault, nor is it the immigration system that is at fault. It is rather that they have failed to abide by the core tenets of society and the line between personal opinion and societal values has been blurred.

Obliging people to renounce their personal values to make 'society better' is neither practical nor justifiable. It is in fact a backward suggestion. A society need not be homogeneous to work. Blackmailing the offspring of immigrants by referring or making them feel akin to 'guests' or second-class citizens will not work either.

Culture is simply the flavouring of an underlying product. Multiculturalism allows one to taste the different flavours in which that product may be found. One should be encouraged to taste the difference, for it may encourage a different view.

# Comment & Opinion

## What happened to the Union bars?

Over the summer, a “restructuring” of the bar took place which went largely unnoticed by the majority of the student population. Now, after it’s all over, **Jess Baker** and **Mez Pahlan** reveal exactly what happened



**Jess Baker**



**Mez Pahlan**

**T**he more observant amongst you may have noticed that changes have been brewing around the Union bars. When you came back from your long, lazy summer holidays, there was a big asbestos-filled hole instead of a central foyer, and da Vinci’s had turned a lovely clinical shade of green. But not all of the changes that have been happening have been so visibly noticeable.

The bars and catering at the Union went through a complete restructuring last term. This was planned out during the summer and put into action at the end of August. At this time, the bars and catering staff were invited to a meeting with the Permanent Secretary and the Commercial Services manager to discuss the new EPOS system and explain that there may be some staff restructuring but that there was nothing to worry about. Student staff present at the meeting expressed concern over whether their jobs would be changing as a result of the restructuring and were assured that there would be no changes to the role of student staff (this was later found to be untrue after the abolishment of the bar stewards role). The meeting was held during the summer months so most of the staff were at home or on holiday. I can’t remember a single student staff at that meeting who still works for the Union today out of sheer disgust at being used and lied to.

The word ‘consultation’ sends a chill down the spine of anyone who knows much about employment law. What ‘consultation’ generally means is that people are being made redundant. It of course came out within a matter of hours that the bar managers were facing redundancy. The fact that they hadn’t been informed that their staff were being called in for a meeting was

even more of an insult. The looks on their faces when we came back and said, “are you being made redundant?!” was heartbreaking. The Catering Manager, John Ivory, also made it very clear to us later on that week that he was facing redundancy as well.

It never really became clear to any one of us, though, why the changes were happening. In the executive committee meeting of 21 September 2006, financial figures were submitted for the 2005-2006 year. To make things simple for you so that you don’t have to wade through accounting rubbish, the figures show that:

- “Refractory” (bars and catering) made a “net surplus” of nearly £120,000.
- The shop, on the other hand, LOST nearly £8000
- Ents made a LOSS of over £27,000.

The figures speak for themselves. The Shop and Ents were haemorrhaging money, whilst the bars and catering were making up the difference. So why were the management systems in these areas being changed?

I took it upon myself to try and speak to the management of the Union about what was going on, what were the reasons for it happening and if it was possible that it could be avoided. I sat with John Collins, our president, for over an hour talking about the bar; what needed to be fixed, what worked, what didn’t and finally why the changes were being made. John told me that there was no way back from the proceedings, and that student staff jobs were bound to change as the new structure involved having more permanent members of staff who would be on shift at the weekends. There would be no need for any more senior staff who worked without a manager on the weekends. These shifts earned the bar stewards ex-

tra money (due to the extra responsibility they were undertaking) as well as giving them experience in a more managerial role than normal bar staff. My experience with him was not a pleasant one since he was unwilling to listen to any suggestion I had.

It transpired, through both the conversation with John Collins and later conversations with the bar managers (Mick Dowling, Rob Doolley and Si Bell) themselves, that the bar managers were being offered the chance to apply for the new jobs which were being created. A new position of Trading Manager would be employed to oversee bars and catering and there would be several lesser “operational” managers beneath him. The managers had the option of applying for Trading Manager or taking the new equivalents of their old jobs. The roles would be reduced and so eventually would their pay. All three of the managers ended up taking the voluntary redundancy package. Most of the experienced bar staff, disgusted at the situation, left at this time.

For a while after the bar managers left, the bar was still operating with Mick’s name as Designated Premises Supervisor and none of the new bar operations managers, or the trading manager, were even mentioned on the license! The signs up at the Christmas carnival still contained the old bar management names. This kind of thing can get a bar shut down if the local council find out about it and there was really no excuse for the names not having been changed, as there was more than enough notice to do so.

Some people have commented that the bar is working better now than ever - I hasten to disagree. The few times I have been back the service has been shoddy and I have found myself instructing staff on how to pour drinks professionally. This is not my job any more - and

I only did it because I wanted a decent drink!

These people have stated that the queues at the Christmas Carnival being shorter than those at the summer carnival last year is “proof” that the new management are working better than the old ones. What you might not know is that under Mick, Rob and Si, last year’s summer carnival last year saw the largest bar take - ever. You remember the one hour queues at the bar? That’s because we were about five staff short that night - they were all on your side of the bar, drinking, or had already gone home for the summer.

This Christmas carnival, the queues were a bit shorter (about half an hour), but that’s because the bar was fully staffed. There would have been even shorter queues if there had been any experienced staff on duty, in fact with a full complement of decent staff the queues could have been down to about 10 minutes.

Some of the members of student staff who had weathered the change in management at the bar were threatened with being fired for expressing their opinion on a non-college website (Facebook) that they no longer enjoyed their jobs as much as they used to. A couple of years ago bar staff, catering and stewards were changed from part-time to casual staff. There would have been a real case for unfair dismissal if bar staff were still part-time staff. The Union would almost definitely have lost this case costing the students money (lots of money since there were quite a few people involved).

### The staff-student protocol

You may wonder why the students were not told about what was happening to their bars before in publications such as Felix and Live!. This is due to something called - Staff Student Protocol (SSP) (<http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/resource/governance/mou.shtml#g>). SSP has become part of employment contracts within the Union and it serves two main purposes. To prevent permanent members of staff (bar managers, catering managers, finance staff, et al) from interfering with the way the Union is run. Conversely it also aims to prevent members of ICU (that’s you and me) from discussing permanent members of staff. The idea being that a scenario whereby, “an employee of the Union who was criticised heavily in the student media and chose to leave could sue for constructive dismissal” (Ashley Brown, Live! Editor) is avoided.

Whilst I agree with this aspect of SSP there are two critical points that disgust me so deeply that I wish to make them known to a wider audience.

“The word ‘consultation’ sends a chill down the spine of anyone who knows much about employment law. What ‘consultation’ generally means is that people are being made redundant.”



## Wielding the almighty organ



**Andy Sykes**  
Editor-in-chief

I have finally decided to print something on the restructuring of the Union bars. Originally, the vast majority of what is referenced occurred during the summer period, as we sabbs were just being trained / indoctrinated / getting drunk every evening. I've held off writing something for a while until it became apparent that the changes that have been made have affected students (a number of people have approached me about it - thanks to those that eventually convinced me), and that they didn't understand what had happened and why. Hopefully, the news piece on page 2, and the comment piece on the left hand page should tell you exactly what happened in a (reasonably) fair and balanced way.

And now for something completely different. Elections are approaching. I know that this typically elicits a sigh of despair from your common-or-garden student, as god knows you hate being harrassed in your lunch hour by a bunch of over-keen and under-washed student politicians. BUT WAIT!

If you whinge about the way the Union is run, and you didn't vote, then tough. If you don't like the current gaggle of sabbs, and you didn't vote, then tough. If you think you can do better, then you should damn well stand. The job of a sabb is pretty thankless for the majority of the time; no-one ever notices when you're doing a good job, but they will wreck you up if you're doing a bad job. It is the only way you can make a difference in the way things are run round this corner of town.

My third point is about *Felix*. If you don't like what you've seen here over the last term and two weeks, then you need to tell me. I'm not psychic. We've made a few changes this term, based on the comments we've heard around campus. It seems you like the horoscopes and the extra sudoku, and that the centrefolds are nice to have back but a bit... off. I'm saying no more on that subject.

I've got fill this space now, and I've got surprisingly little to say for a change. I could do what I normally do, and use these last few lines to relate some horribly tragic-lovelife story, thereby purging myself of all residual emoness, or I could moan about how I'm getting old and can't understand the music the kids like, or I could whinge about how my hearing is going and everything is more expensive than it used to be.

I can't do the lovelife story, as a dear, dear friend of mine told me a far better one involving a young lady who happened to be into members of her own sex, yet he fell horrifically in love with her. It's so fantastic you can't make it up, and it made anything I could say look like a big fat load of teenage whining.

That's it. Sorry for wasting your lunch hour.

## felix

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# Big Brother piggy pig

Ammar Waraich rakes Jade Goody and Channel 4 over hot coals

"I know why there's no noise... I know but I can't tell you" said Jade to Shilpa as she left the Big Brother House. Enveloped by an eerie silence due to the unusual absence of any live audience, this rare exit has come about following fears for Jade's safety after the most controversial week in the show's history.

Lets not forget that this is the same person who has in the past frequently come out with gaffes such as "they were trying to use me as an escape goat" or "Rio de Janeiro, ain't that a person?" Now this is not about taking a highbrowed, stiff upper lip swipe at the eloquence of chavs or their lack of class and education. These are things largely out of their control and a fault of the unequal opportunities offered by the system. But the very first quote is either a surprisingly deep foresight from Jade or more likely, the unwanted product of coaching that escaped her lips during the live broadcast. Similarly, coolly declaring that "I don't see people for the colour that they are, or where they come from. I don't want to make a penny from this. I don't want money from something that is wrong" seems to be a suspiciously PC and coherent response from someone who once expressed that she "looked like a state".

Honestly looking at it, I do not think Jade was being overtly racist. I think she was out to intimidate someone who she felt was better than her on all levels; someone who was vulnerable and easy to single out; someone who threatened her ego and her sense of celebrity. This caused her to act as the alpha bully against Shilpa, against the backdrop of two nefarious accomplices. It is something that as kids we have all seen on playgrounds. Besides, Shilpa was there out of choice, as Bollywood filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt said in a Mumbai newspaper: "I believe no-one can insult you without your permission. Shetty has

paid the price for trying to desperately seek the approval of the West. It is pathetic how we can go on bended knees and lick their boots in an effort to be part of their world".

Regardless, the point is not whether Jade was being racist or not. What has been shown on Big Brother has been unacceptable, full stop. Channel 4 and Endemol have been trying to excuse themselves with justifications ranging from 'its just bullying' to 'we are provoking debate', but the truth of the matter has been succinctly put by an anonymous but successful TV produc-

risk of developing mental health problems, and her children fear "rejection", but Channel 4 has finally seen a healthy increase in profits. The image of British society and culture abroad has been significantly damaged with a threat to our inward investment, but Endemol may finally have convinced its parent company Telefonica not to sell its controlling stake. Moreover, the attention this has drawn in India will probably allow Endemol to export Big Brother to a huge emerging market and Channel 4 to make massive profits from the spin-offs, advertising and 24 hour channels.



Jade Goody: "Am I minging?" Yes. Yes you are. God almighty

er in the following quote: "they must be unable to believe their luck. The Prime Minister, the Chancellor and the Leader of the Opposition all in one day. You can't buy that publicity". Knowing fully that they would be able to get away with it, they have been making profiteering entertainment out of the worst mental torment and possibly discrimination that Britain has to offer, conveniently trying to patch things up in the end by blatantly coaching the contestants on what to say to calm things down.

No regard was given to the well being of ether Shilpa or Jade, who has now truly been made the 'escape goat', when instead it should have been Channel 4 and Endemol. Jade is now at the

Ultimately though, the major chunk of the blame lies with us, the audience. We have been the ones who have made this celebration of stupidity and arrogance the success it is. Television like this has been a huge success in insulating the masses and we have been the ones switching on and boosting ratings for this sorry episode. I mean there is a reason why Jade's perfume was a best seller and that she became a millionaire through her 'career' of TV shows, magazine deals, an autobiography, and remarkably, fitness DVDs! I myself am sorry to have given Big Brother even the limited publicity I have done through this piece. Please people, just switch it off. Enough is enough.

## Staff-student protocol explained

*Continued from left-hand page*

"Staff members may not take part in public discussion of ICU policy nor give public expression to views contrary to ICU policy within the Union.

Staff members shall not comment on ICU policy to representatives of the College media except to answer factual questions which come within their area of work."

and  
"The officers of the ICU shall not permit discussions relating to the conditions of employment, performance or conduct of members of its staff in articles, correspondence or other publications produced under the auspices of the Union."

This is effectively censorship of the media and free speech. Since it is an integral part of ICU employment contracts, it is nothing short of legal censorship.

I believe that the continued badgering of the student press towards individual staff members is wrong and shouldn't happen. Staff are not voted for by the student body and should not directly be accountable to them. However, SSP has taken the rather worrying step of banning all discussion relating to ICU

policy (by staff) and ICU staff (by students). If a staff member has acted inappropriately or been made redundant then these facts should be available to the wider student body through media outlets such as Live! and Felix.

Naturally, decisions to hire and fire staff should not be influenced by the student press. SSP can still work to ensure this. However, preventing facts from being published and discussions to be started is an insult to democratic values.

Ultimately the Union is run for the benefits of the student body and no one else. If a part of the Union is losing money then that means less money/services available for students. This should not be hidden away from publication. I believe these facts should be allowed to be printed. Ents and the Union Shop lost an awful lot of money last year. Under SSP discussion of why this should be the case (for example individual acts booked by the Ents manager, losses from writing off stock in the Union Shop) is not allowed.

SSP can still protect the "democratic practise" of the Union by preventing staff actively interfering in Union policy, but it should not censor or ban staff from making comments on the way the

Union is run. Staff comments can be a valuable asset to a body such as the Union.

In most cases staff have a great deal of knowledge that would be invaluable as suggestion. Of course if an elected student wishes not to take that advice then that is his/ her right to do so. However, the right of staff to voice opinion should be exist and so should the right to publish that opinion.

According to the Editor of Live! it is all right to say what you like about members of staff who no longer work for the Union. However, the employment contract of current Union staff protects them from criticism by the student press. This means that if I were to make comment about one of the permanent members of Union staff it would be censored.

I have every faith that the new managers and new bar staff will get better in time and that things will be the same if not better than they were. But until that time I believe that discussions and comment should be allowed to take place.

The Union may not respect the views of students and staff in this context, but they should respect their right to voice their opinions.

# Celebrate Britain and Britishness

Valerio Chang believes the British deserve their own society to match the other overseas societies



Valerio Chang

“Any non-British will inevitably benefit hugely from a bit of exposure to the pub culture”

**W**e are writing to petition for the foundation of a new society in our Imperial College Union – the Royal Society of Great Britain, aka the BritSoc.

It is apparent that the dilution of the British is beginning to cause a lack of unity and therefore, to protect our identity we would suggest the need for an entity to coagulate us. One may say that the idea of having a British society is absurd, but every other country seems to have its own society, in which they are free to revel in the presence of their compatriots. Take the Chinese, they seem to be so tremendously excited at being Chinese, and so scared of forgetting their mother-land they find it necessary to have three societies. Yes, that's three. We wouldn't be surprised if sooner or later, we witness the formation of a Homo-sapien society, H-Sap. Soc. – ‘Lest we forget’.

One may argue that since we are not exactly from overseas, we shouldn't qualify for an ‘overseas’ society. There is, however, great need for an environment in which we can bond with our fellow coun-

trymen, just like the Malaysians and Cypriots do. Being humans, (just like the Greeks,) we feel more at ease and comfortable talking to people from our own culture, who share our values and backgrounds. Imagine a setting in which Bungle and George, Fireman Sam and Super Ted can all be reminisced about freely without having some international go, “who?!”.

Being so thinly spread, we think we should even dare to consider explicitly involving the Welsh, the Irish and the Scots, to create an environment where we can whine about our dwindling numbers in over-zealous regional accents in attempt to fully exclude those from abroad. If it is as popular as we believe it should be, it will become a crucial tool in helping us avoid accidentally learning about other cultures or languages whilst studying at Imperial, providing the proverbial ‘la la la, I'm not listening fingers in the ears’ with a touch of class.

We will strive to represent the true British culture within in this age of multiculturalism and help others to understand British traditions, values and accents. We wish to promote awareness of the various as-

pects of our heritage, Queen's English, ‘Imperialism’ (pun intended), and our capacity to hold our ale.

Events we organize will include ale drinking, extreme queuing, beer drinking, extended periods of not complaining, lager drinking, all cumulating in some good old hooliganism; no event would be complete without it. Any non-British will inevitably benefit hugely from a

bit of exposure to the pub culture, brutish rugby games, fish and chips, Cornish pastries, cricket, tea and scones by the river, Monty Python and good old Yorkshire puddings.

We do hope you will consider our petition with the utmost seriousness, and look forward to the college-wide realization of the great grandness of Great Britain.

Tally ho!



Typical people of Britain, laughing in a typically British way

# We're not antisocial, honest guv

Nicholas English takes a look at what's wrong with us at Imperial, and what we do well (hint: it's not nothing)

**H**ow often do you hear these words: “Only at Imperial would anyone get that joke” or has anyone ever been witness to this phrase echoing around the union bar: “I'm serious, where are the women”? Imperial College is the biggest self-loathing group of people ever assembled in one place.

I like to think of myself as quite socially active in and out of Imperial with, of course, other people at this college and I still can't seem to grasp why we hate ourselves so much. In case you'd forgotten, here's a list of reasons why we ain't no hollaback girls:

1) We're the best college in London.

2) We're the richest college in the U.K (mm, facilities)

3) We have in our possession at least 400 times the debating power of any other university on issues regarding the Muslim integration debate.

4) We don't have any of those “art” students; you know, the ones who get those really wispy haircuts and drone on about how much better Joy Division are than New Order or all those electro bands that copy them but actually listen to Steps and they seem to think that being hygienic is a constriction of their human rights: “I'm too much of a free spirit to clean this fork, now pass the bong; I have a higher plane to reach.”

All that points to the good, right? Wrong. So stupidly, annoyingly, spoon to the eye wrong. For some reason, we see ourselves as big fat

pussy assed, spot infested, computer game obsessed geeks (or g33ks depending on your world of choice: choices include real and WoW). Far too often do I see people in conversation just laughing at how inept Imperial is at events or moaning at how expensive the formal dinners are and how no-one goes to them anyway it's just a bunch of lecturers getting shitted on wine that tastes like it's been secreted by an otter's pancreas. These things may be true, but why dwell on them when there is a wealth of things to do in London. I know this sounds cliché but it's true, it's the fucking biggest city in fucking Europe.

A point many people seem to persist upon is the lack of dynamism offered by the Union in relation to events. In defence of this point of view, John Collins seems to have rather special ideas about what we require from him, by telling us the union is not just about organising events.

I'd be very surprised if more than 10% of students actually cared about politics and the NUS (ok, loads voted but only because you e-harassed us into it, which I will never forgive you for), but let's be honest, a massive percentile of students want to get pissed 2, 3 times a week and spend the rest concentrating on balancing work and the rest of their life. Student politics figures low low low down in the list of priorities; if you asked all the students whether they thought their welfare was in good health at imperial college they'd all chuckle and say “Course mate, cheers for asking” once you're ten paces away



At Imperial, we get them started young. Derive, you little bastard

they'd be guffawing at the very idea they had a rough ride at Imperial. Although the new DaVinci's layout is sexy beyond belief, the union is still guilty of making going out second best, an immediate turn off for any student.

As you can tell this mass self-deprecation is a great concern of mine and after many hours of ruminating I've come to the only sensible conclusion: Imperial College is to blame. Not any figurehead, or rector or DPFS or DPGS or MFI or B&Q but Imperial College as an institution; how many of you remember at some point during your open-day, visit or being in contact with any imperialite prior to arriving at this institution, being told the following facts: “Ah man, like you'll get a wicked degree and stuff but like it's 80-20 percent guys to girls” or the classic: “It's good here yeah

but like there's only 3 English students on my course” or the one I was lucky enough to hear “This is the JCR, never go there”. I know what you're thinking “Tss don't be daft, the fella was having a laugh” well exactly and so are we when we joke about the fact there's no sandwiches left after 5 or something of a similar ilk.

It's not just the reputation gained by Imperial. The layout is something to behold. It has so many uncomfortable social spots that it makes you want to just sprint around college to avoid awkwardness. I'm sure you've strolled down the Sherfield Walkway, spotted a dear chum from afar and he's spotted you, you know what's coming but it's too far away to start a conversation, too near to avoid and just down right annoying. The same came be said of every department, they all have

these absurdly long corridors with walls that watch you as you walk and close in as you get nearer the pal in question so that you're both stuck in some sort of fake conversation that doesn't start or finish within these confines.

But never fear, these are some tried and tested pointers on how to avoid any sort of cringe worthy moment:

1) The army salute: performed, with wink and click of tongue, with the intention of being as cheesy as possible from the offset so that it can't get any worse.

2) The bendy knees and double gun shooting with win and click of tongue, preceded by “eyyyyyy” a la Fonz: hard to imagine but we've all seen it and fake laughed.

3) The denial: both glance up several times and only say “alright mate” at the very last second.

4) Chanting of the name from at least 50m away: crude but extremely effective, let's other people know that you're happy to see this person and that he's obviously cool since he has a chant for his name.

5) Casual conversation: worst possible, people can't have 10 second conversations, it's just unethical.

6) My personal favourite: Run up into their face at full tilt, body checking them, fake punching or just screaming “AAHAHAHAHHH-GGGHHH” right in their mug.

I hope this goes to show that we need not mock ourselves for maybe not being the most party-going college of all time but possess other qualities. It's what's inside that counts, other unis just have beer in them.

# The execution of Saddam

Mustaffa Junaid, an Iraqi Kurd, presents his feelings on the death of Saddam Hussein, and what it means for Iraq as the coalition forces struggle to restore order in Baghdad

It was Saturday December 30th 2006 that will go down in history as a special date for all Iraqis. The former leader of a country, currently in a civil war, was executed. The Iraqi government had wished that Saddam's death would close a very ugly chapter in Iraq's long history. They hoped that ending his life would ease sectarian violence and decelerate the chaos that has consumed Iraq for so many years. Instead it has strengthened the hatred between the Iraqis and further divided the Muslim world. His death has turned a tyrant into somewhat of a martyr in the eyes of some. I, and so many like me, have been left with the burning question- How?

There is little doubt that the tyrant that was Saddam Hussein deserved death. This man had terrorised, tortured and killed thousands of people, including his own. Let us start with a brief history. Born on 28th April 1937 in a village 13km from Tikirit, Saddam Hussein Abd al-Majid al-Tikriti came from a poor background. He was an average person who never knew his father, and apparently was mistreated by his stepfather. He later went on to study law in Baghdad, but never completed his studies. Instead he joined the nationalist Baath party in 1957, which was soon involved in the (US backed) attempted assassination of General Qassim. He then fled to Egypt, where it is believed he got his CIA training, and returned to Iraq in 1964 and was subsequently imprisoned. The Baath party then successfully assumed control of Iraq in 1968 following a coup. To cut a long story short, Saddam Hussein quickly and ruthlessly rose to power before becoming leader of the country in 1979.

Following his rise to presidency Saddam moved to consolidate his power by holding a meeting in which he accused several party members of treason. These members were then immediately arrested and many executed soon after. The meeting itself was videotaped and has been viewed by many Iraqis, and is a chilling reminder of Saddam's bloodthirsty nature. Just over a year after he came into power he invaded Iran after many years of hostility between the two countries. Iraq was plunged into an 8 year war that saw both sides lose at least 1 million lives. The war eventually ended in a stalemate, with both countries in financial difficulties and their infrastructures destroyed. Then on 16th March 1988 Saddam used chemical weapons on his own people to bomb Halabja, a Kurdish town north of Baghdad. The attack killed thousands and left many thousands more severely disabled. The war crimes committed by Saddam were mounting high already. Barely 2 years passed before he went on to invade Kuwait in order to strengthen his grip on the Arab region. The US (backed by the UN council) responded and so began the Gulf War. An uprising against Saddam followed, with the US promising their support to try and overthrow the Iraqi leader. However, the US forces shamefully walked away and the upris-

ing was dealt with by Saddam, who ruthlessly and meticulously killed anyone involved and very quickly crushed any resistance. The UN then imposed sanctions on Iraq that would cripple the country and destroy the lives of millions. For 12 years Iraq suffered under these sanctions with an estimated 500,000 children dying as a direct result of the sanctions. Finally, following the attacks of 9/11 the USA and Britain (without UN backing) invaded Iraq in 2003. Then on 9th December 2003 he was captured by US forces, found in an underground bunker near his home town Tikirit.

The trial of Saddam Hussein began in June 2004. He was initially tried for the murder of 148 Shias of the town of Dujail in 1982. In November 2006 he was found guilty of these crimes and sentenced to death along with 2 other defendants, his half-brother and the head of the Iraqi court in 1982. His execution was ironically carried out at Camp Justice. The day chosen was the 1st day of Eid-al-Adha, one of the holiest days on the Islamic calendar. This inflamed the entire Muslim world and many were united in condemning the Iraqi government in their handling of his execution. However, there appears to be no coincidence in their actions. So many factors went wrong, from the date of his execution to the manner in which it was carried out. It was almost as if someone wanted to maximise the effect his execution had. Why was he tried for only one of the many crimes he had committed? What about Halabja? What about Iran? What about Kuwait? What about all the untold murders committed against civilians? No

doubt conspiracy theorists will be itching to give an explanation.

For so many years Saddam Hussein was the greatest enemy to almost every Iraqi. However, there was widespread fear amongst the people with his spies infiltrated amongst the community. Whole families would be tortured and murdered if they opposed. Thousands of civilians were condemned as he spread his influence. As an Iraqi Kurd his execution was supposed to bring some relief to me. So many years we Iraqis just dreamed of an Iraq without Saddam. We prayed that his tyrannic rule would

## There is little doubt that the tyrant that was Saddam Hussein deserved death

end. It appeared that Saddam was untouchable and that we may never live to see his rule ended and for Iraq to be liberated. However, it was the manner of his demise, at the hands of the very people who had placed him in power. It was the shameful and humiliating invasion and occupation of Iraq by the US and British forces. It was the many lies told by the world leaders and the silence of many others. I was disgusted to see a report from BBC news which described Saddam as the leader of the Sunni world. To call that misinformation would be lying. There is no doubt that a very small minority of Sunnis supported him, as is the

case with these psychotic leaders. As a child I was always asked by my fellow classmates whether I liked or hated Saddam. I always answered the same way; he was an evil man whom no one liked. What frustrated me then and now are the ignorant ones, including some Iraqis who now see him as a martyr; the only true opposition to the US. Even in death he was able to manipulate matters. I am now left with the obscure feeling of injustice. It was too easy. After so many years of suffering and worrying this man was wiped off within a matter of 2 years. His trial and execution have left a bitter taste. The fall of Saddam was bizarre, his trial was a circus act and his death was surreal. Once he was sentenced to death it left us little chance to reflect before he was executed. By ending his life they have in fact increased the woes of the Iraqis. There is no longer a hate figure, so what is left? Civil war is on the cards and it has been the case ever since 2003.

Much of what has gone wrong in Iraq is a direct result of foreign influence, which I have no wish to go into presently. However, there is no doubt what legacy Mr Blair and Mr Bush have left themselves. They invaded Iraq in 2003 with the false pretence that they were liberating a nation and spreading democracy. They removed a tyrant and replaced him with a puppet government. The world is united in their condemnation of the US and Britain. The situation in the Middle East has worsened immeasurably, and has now become the true legacy for Blair and Bush. How can a tyrant become a martyr? That question will haunt us for all time.

## Halls watch



### Paul Green Clayponds Warden

So, hands up if you've heard of Clayponds? No, thought not – you must be an undergrad. Well, it's the main postgraduate halls at Imperial. Not only are we mainly postgrad, we are also "outlying"; meaning we need to use the tube to get to College everyday. At this point you're thinking - right, enough of that, next page. But, if you can manage another 3 minutes, I'll try and explain why some of us actually like it out here and that Zone 1 isn't the be all and end all of London.

We're not all lazy-arse PhD students here, (sorry, correction, your hard working, downtrodden demonstrators). Its about 3/5 MSc students with a smattering of latter year undergrads too, to add to the PhDs. Clayponds was not built as a hall of residence, but for real working people, so is a mix of modern houses and flats. There are 330 residents here, but no more than four share a kitchen, bathroom and front door. We are surrounded on two sides by a graveyard, and on a third side a geriatric/rehabilitation hospital – it's quiet most for time, and the neighbours never complain about the noise. We're in South Ealing, six stops on the Piccadilly line from South Ken, if that helps. Right next door is Gunnersbury Park, not quite as big as Hyde Park, but has a stack of facilities, including a pitch and putt golf course, boating lake, cricket square, museum, not to mention 20+ football and rugby pitches. That means we play our inter-hall football games on proper pitches, with full-sized goals, painted lines and everything. It seems to help, so far this season, P7 W7 GD +28. I can't complain.

Beyond sport, the pub local, the Ealing Park Tavern isn't a bad start. However, since Time Out found it and got into the habit of gushing over it every week, it's been hard to get a seat. Ealing Broadway, Kew and Richmond are all close, all good drinking centres. Watching the river ebb and flow from a water front pub isn't a bad waste of an afternoon. In a few pubs near Kew, your bench can be totally cut off by the high tide; leaving you little more to do than have another drink until the towpath dries out. Clubbing is a little more specialised in the suburbs, but there is something for everyone, the Boulevard and Red Back seem popular with the residents... I say no more. Hall parties are always popular, not sure if it's the free bar or the company, but the results are invariably the same, see the gallery at [www.clayponds.org](http://www.clayponds.org) for details. I guess the term-time events here aren't all that different to any other hall, but Clayponds really comes into it's own in the summer, when most undergrads are off repaying their overdrafts. Volleyball or Croquet on the lawn accompanied by the ubiquitous barbeque and Pimm's almost makes the place seem civilised.



Saddam Hussein in 1998 as President of Iraq (left) and after his capture by US troops (right)

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## Election time again!

We may only be five months into this academic year but already attention is being turned to who will lead the Union next year.

Nominations for Imperial College Union's Sabbatical Officer elections will open on January 30th. But why should you be interested in running for one of these positions?

Students stand for Sabbatical Officer for a variety of reasons; most want to give something back to the Union that has served them so well during their time here as a student, others want to achieve positive change in their Union and help it serve its members better, and some want the experience of managing an organisation. There are, of course, CV points at stake and there is no doubt that taking on so much responsibility at such a young age is a great experience.

Elections for five Sabbatical Roles (President, most of the Deputy Presidents and the Felix Editor) will take place this term. Elections for the Deputy President (Graduate Students) role will take place in the summer term.

What are these roles like? Well, I can really only speak for mine (President) and in good time I am sure the other Sabbatical Officers will provide you with their insights. For the time being, I have produced the following summary:

The Felix Editor is responsible for ensuring that we all get an entertaining and informative edition of Felix on a weekly basis during term time. As anybody who has ever worked for a newspaper will tell you, this is no mean feat! That said the rewards are generous, and many past Felix Editors have found their way into the murky world of media and done extremely well for themselves.

The Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) is the defacto chief of all 300 Imperial College Union's clubs and societies. This is a bit like herding 300 Siamese cats and can be frustrating at times. Aside from day-to-day management, he or she is responsible for designing and implementing club policy and delivering projects, such as recent improvements to the website, that make life a lot easier for club chairs and club members. This is a real "grass roots" role that involves a lot of interaction with club chairs and members.

The Deputy President (Education and Welfare) is responsible for co-ordinating internal and external representation by managing all of Imperial College Union's academic and welfare representatives. He or she is responsible for developing internal and external relations and co-ordinating academic and welfare campaigns. There is also a casework element to this role and it is important that caring and sympathetic people are elected to this post. Next year the holder of this office can expect to play a high profile role in the NUS, which promises to be an exciting and entertaining project.

The Deputy President (Finance and Services) is responsible for overseeing the business aspects of the Union, namely our bars, shops and catering outlets. He or she is also responsible for all finances of the Union and can expect to approve hundreds of events and tour budgets throughout the year. In theory the holder of this position is responsible for a turnout in excess of £5.5 million pounds. If ICU is lucky and wins approval from the College to move forward with the next phase of the building masterplan, then this turnout can expect to rise to nearer £9 million pounds. Anybody interested in a career in finance or business should seriously consider applying for what is clearly one of the best graduate finance jobs in the market.

The President is ultimately responsible for everything listed above, and more. In particular, he or she is responsible for staffing, governance and high level representation. This job is not for the faint hearted and considerable leadership experience and a resilient ego are highly desirable. The holder of this office can expect to go head-to-head against the Rector, the government and, unavoidably, other senior Union officers. The President gets blamed for everything that goes wrong in the Union and occasionally gets blamed for things that happen outside the Union and are completely beyond his or her control. There are, of course, serious perks to this job and I must admit I enjoy the kick of being in charge of an organisation and interacting with interesting and influential people. Aside from running the Students' Union, The President is also a governor of Imperial College, which in itself is an important and very interesting role. Most people who have held this post rarely enter into mainstream graduate jobs and it should be considered one of the best management fast-track graduate schemes in town.

If you are interested in standing for any of these roles then please do not hesitate to contact the sabbatical officers.



**John Collins**  
President

president@imperial.ac.uk

## Centenary Launch Event

**Tuesday 30th January, Beit Quadrangle**

STA TRAVEL

Imperial College  
Finance Society

### Centenary Balloon Race Competition

We will be running a Centenary Balloon Race and each of the 500 balloons we plan to release at 1pm  
Prizes include:  
An all expense paid trip for two to Paris!  
Two iPod Nanos  
£50 Primark vouchers  
Wine and chocolates  
Special edition Centenary Mugs

The Imperial College Big Band.

Juggling and skating teams performing.

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Ride Bo' and Jez, our mascot vehicles.

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Centenary Balloon Race.

Centenary Cake will be cut.

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and much more...

# Chemical warfare – biobricking it

As developments in synthetic biology advance, should we concern ourselves with potential bioterrorism?

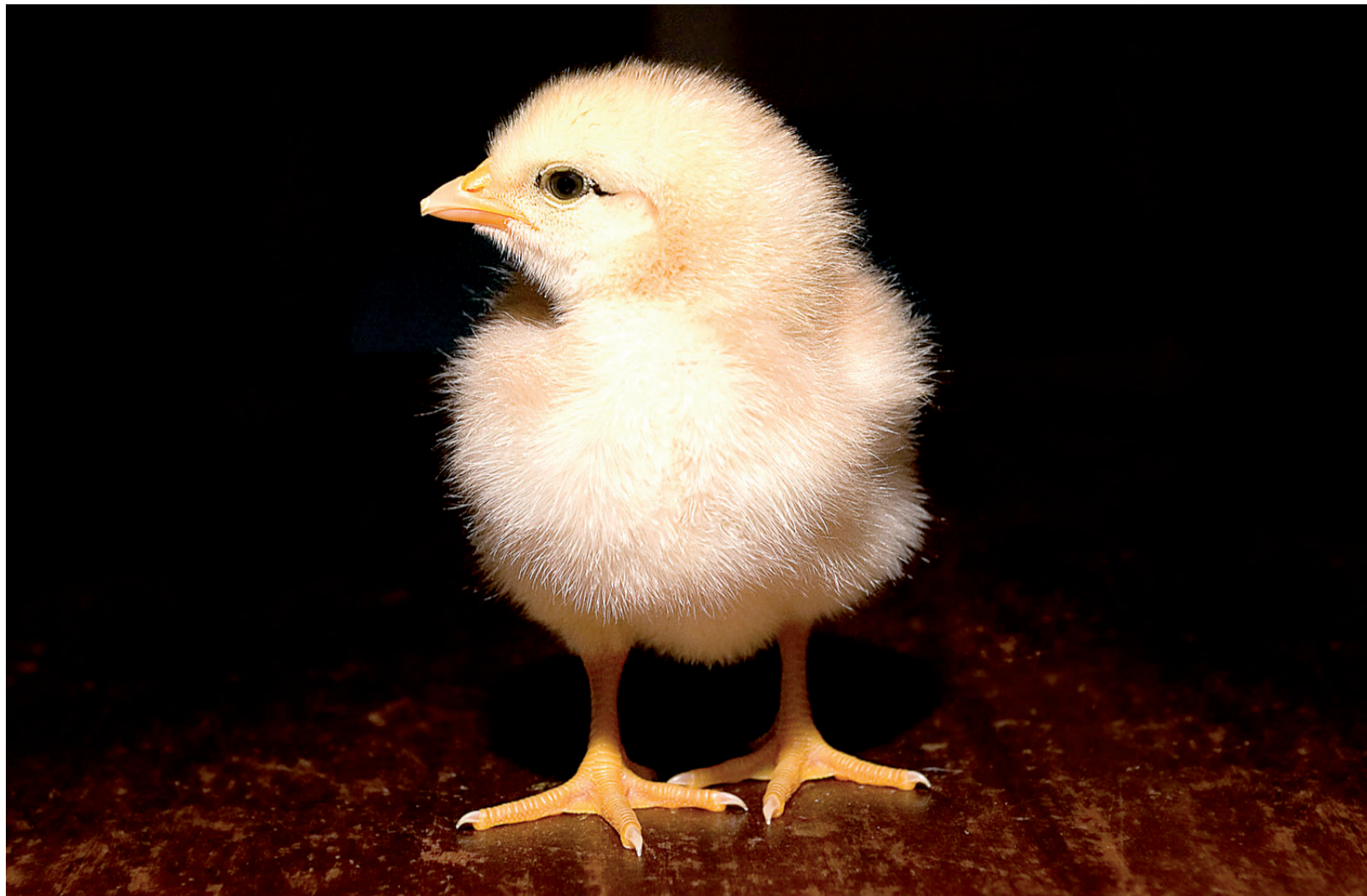
Krystyna Larkham  
Science Editor

“Synthetic biology is like genetic engineering on steroids,” says Dr Doreen Stabinsky of Greenpeace International. Although the first international conference on synthetic biology occurred as recently as 2005, the field has already attracted a lot of outside attention. Synthetic biologists talk of the advantages their discipline promises to bring. Greenpeace and others worry that the science is too dangerous. The future of synthetic biology rests on whether the public decides that the benefits outweigh the costs. And the battle for the public’s hearts and minds has already begun.

At the heart of synthetic biology are ‘biobricks’. Each biobrick reliably performs a function, be it as a generator, a terminator, or anything in between. By connecting a number of these biobricks together, and inserting them into the genome of living cells, synthetic biologists can produce an organism that carries out a specific function. The potential applications are numerous: living organisms designed to produce medicines cheaply, manufacture biofuels, even dispose of unwanted industrial waste.

That’s the theory, anyway: until recently synthetic biology was confined largely to the page. That has now changed. In November last year, synthetic biologists, including a team from Imperial, met in Boston to mark the culmination of iGEM 2006, an international synthetic biology competition. “The big thing that happened [in Boston] was that the central question, ‘can you build biological systems from standard parts?’ got a resounding ‘yes,’” says James Brown, a synthetic biology PhD student at the University of Cambridge and an ambassador for iGEM. “The fact that stuff works now is a really big deal,” he continues.

Many of the competing teams had advanced beyond the theoretical stage and succeeded in producing practical working models. Most impressively, those working models



An H5N1 influenza carrier – not so cute after all. However, can biobricks help prevent this guy from slaughter and the next global pandemic?

were the results of just a few weeks’ work over the summer holiday. This highlights one of the major advantages of the new science. Little expertise is needed to produce sophisticated systems. Biobricks are glorified Lego blocks. The manner in which each biobrick work is unimportant; the researcher needs only to stick them together. This is plug-and-play science.

But it is precisely this advantage that is the cause of so much concern elsewhere. In 2005, synthetic biologists managed to reconstruct

the 1918 ‘flu virus from its DNA. Research using the reconstructed virus will inform any strategy to fight avian ‘flu. The latest promising results were published in Nature last week. Ultimately, millions could be saved from the effects of a global ‘flu pandemic, but at the cost of resurrecting one of the most lethal viruses on record. And, as Jamie Shreeve commented in the New York Times last year, “The wonder, and for some the fear, is that they could [resurrect the virus] with so little effort or expense.” The con-

cern is that bioterrorists might also desire to construct deadly pathogens along the lines of Spanish ‘flu. Synthetic biology could provide them with the means to do so, without the need for specialist knowledge.

“Synthetic biologists do scare people,” James Brown admits. “We should be willing to talk about that and stand up and be responsible.” And to their credit, this is exactly what the synthetic biologists are doing. An entire day of a recent seventy-two hour conference (“Synthetic

Biology 2.0’) was set aside to debate ethics. The result was the adoption of a code of self-governance to guard against malpractice, similar to that adopted by the pioneering genetic engineers in the 1970s.

“It’s a very open science. We’re trying to steer clear of any images of ‘mad scientists’ creeping around in a cave, to avoid attack by journalists,” says Matthieu Bultelle, a member of Imperial’s iGEM team. But is this self-regulation enough? Some are not so sure: a host of organisations, including Greenpeace, tried to discourage scientists from signing the self-governance document (which, in any case, is a voluntary code) arguing that what is needed is official regulation by national government. They worry that scientists acting alone will be unable to regulate such a potentially sensitive field.

The debate continues. A recent report by the Sloan Foundation is the latest to address synthetic biology. Interestingly, the Sloan Report was commissioned by the scientists themselves rather than by worried campaign groups. Evidently the synthetic biologists are not prepared to surrender the PR initiative just yet. Instead they are steeling themselves for the moment that synthetic biology registers on the public radar.

It is the response that the science receives in the wider community which will determine its future. And, according to James Brown, the scientists are ready for the fight: “We want public debate. We want the world to know about this because it’s so important. I genuinely believe synthetic biology is going to have a big impact.”



Greenpeace activists, possibly campaigning against the dangers of synthetic biology

# Challenging political correctness

Sarah Skeete remembers Helmut Newton, fashion's most controversial and sadly deceased photographer

Helmut Newton's innovative photography confronted social taboos and explored sexual dynamics, changing the face of fashion photography. Newton was born in Berlin in 1920 to a wealthy Jewish family. He was sensitive as a child, prone to fainting spells, and he often felt emasculated by his mother's insistence on dressing him in effeminate velvet suits. He grew up around luxury, often holidaying in exclusive European spas, though his brother often took him on day trips to the seedier parts of Berlin. By 1938 Newton was working on underwear catalogues, "The happiest days of my youth in Berlin".

Helmut saw his mother as a "tower of strength", and it was with her help that he fled from the Nazis in 1938 to Singapore. There he worked as a photojournalist, as well as spending a year as a gigolo for an older woman.

In the early 1940s he moved to Australia, where he met his wife June. Although he enjoyed living in Australia, he found there was a lack of inspiration, and in 1957 moved to London. However he found this "equally sterile and unproductive."

He found the environmental stimuli he needed in Paris, moving there in the late 1950s. Newton commented, "The moment I hit Paris I knew it was for living and taking photographs. The life was in the streets, in cafes, restaurants. Beautiful women seemed to be everywhere."

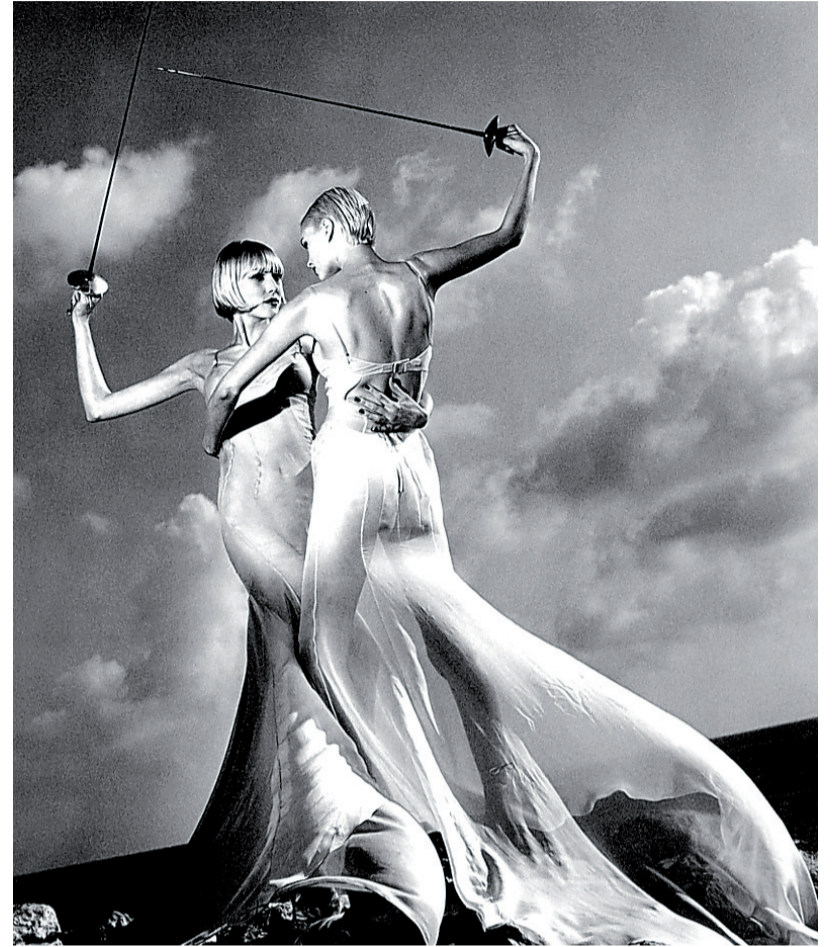
It was after suffering a major heart attack in 1971 that Helmut



started taking the photographs which would create a new genre of fashion photography. His new photographs were raw and unapologetically, aggressively sexual. Many were inspired by his work, not only in photography but also cinema. Many violent film noirs cited Newton as inspiration, although he himself defended his fashion photography as erotic rather than violent. Many feminists dispute this claim, and see Helmut and his work as blatant misogyny.

His photo "Pension Dorian",

shows a model standing with her hips thrust forward, wearing only a leg cast and neck brace, and holding a cane. Feminists found this offensive, arguing that it shows that Newton feels women should be vulnerable, and are the weaker sex. However it could also be interpreted as admiration of how strong women can overcome adversity. The woman is weakened by the cast and brace, but she stands strongly. Indeed in his fashion shoots Helmut favoured athletically built women, telling Vogue's fashion editor "Don't send me any of your scrawny undernourished models". A contrast with many fashion advertisements and editorials today, and also during the heroin chic period, which favoured malnourished passive 13-year-olds staring blankly at the camera. It can also be seen as a critique of fashion, how women hurt themselves in their pursuit of fashion, or



indeed a critique of consumerism in general. Another signature of Newton's photos is that there is never any eye-contact between groups of women. You can see echoes of this in recent advertisements by Dolce & Gabbana; like in Helmut's photos, the men do not make eye contact with each other. They all compete against each other, not daring to acknowledge that anyone is more attractive than themselves.

One of Newton's most controversial images is of the saddled woman

knocking on a bed. Like many of his photos, he seems to be mocking the fashion industry, highlighting the discomfort women endure for fashion. Newton's photos can easily be seen as misogynistic, however if you look closer Newton's photos show a more complex truth. While his images are shocking, perhaps rather than being an illustration of his opinion on where women should be in society, he is exposing the place society encourages women to be.

In Europe his photos were generally uncensored by magazines, whilst American Vogue only published the least risqué of his photographs. Newton commented that "the term 'political correctness' has always appalled me, reminding me of Orwell's 'thought police' and fascist regimes." Helmut's photographs hold a mirror up to society, and though his photographs, with overtones of sadomasochism, are politically incorrect, provocative media is needed for society to examine itself.



## FLIM

## Brittania will rule, OK?

Oscar nominations are out and rumours abound, but the results are anyone's guess



She prods buttock in a furry helmet

It's time for the annual trip to Oscarsville. While politics and popularity competitions sometimes render the awards defunct, this year there are some genuinely good actors up for accolades this year.

Sadly we have no prizes for you this week, but feel free to guess the character/film combination anyway. You may well win my respect.

Film Editor

This last year has been a fairly good one for film, not stellar, but quite good. We've seen some life breathed back into the Bond series, and an abundance of good fantasy and drama such as *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Tideland*, and *Babel*.

The awards ceremonies have so far reflected this, and have already rewarded some genuinely good films. However, we still have the main event still to come.

The Oscars: a time where the entire film industry decides what reflects their best efforts of the past year. The Oscars are always a reminder of everything that is both hated and loved about the great Hollywood dream.

This year is no different. A quick glance at the nominations list to your right, and you will see samey and predictable choices nestling beside some interesting selections.

This year sees the grand institution of British drama given several nominations, with Helen Mirren,

Judi Dench, and Kate Winslet contending for the Best Actress category, along with the venerated Meryl Streep. Helen Mirren is clearly the favourite, especially after her Golden Globes sweep. Peter O'Toole also receives a nomination for Best Actor, possibly as a reaction to the lifetime achievement award that he was given a few years ago to which he responded: "But I'm still a working actor..."

*Babel*, *Dreamgirls*, *Pan's Labyrinth*, and *The Queen* are all up for multiple nominations, some of which are well-earned, and the legend that has become *An Inconvenient Truth* is almost certainly poised for recognition.

The Best Director category is probably the least predictable category this year, with Alejandro González Iñárritu, Stephen Frears and Martin Scorsese neck-and-neck.

Following the trend for biographically realistic portrayals in recent years, after Phillip Seymour Hoffman won Best Actor for *Capote*,

Forest Whitaker appears to be a dead cert for Best Actor this year, although this could be upset by Helen Mirren's similar type of role

in Best Actress. This year appears torn in several directions. As always, this is all just guesswork, and uncertainty reigns supreme.



Hot Tip: Forest Whitaker for Best Actor in *The Last King Of Scotland*

## The Fountain: Unhealthy obsessions with eternal life



### The Fountain

Director: Darren Aronofsky  
 Writer: Darren Aronofsky,  
 Ari Handel  
 Cast: Hugh Jackman,  
 Rachel Weisz

Some films seem destined never to be completed. Famously, a whole film came from Terry Gilliam's inability to complete *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote*, but most are simply never heard of again. A few years back, a project that seemed to be headed that way was *The Last Man*, an epic with a suitably epic budget helmed by Darren Aronofsky, director of *Pi* and *Requiem for a Dream*, both of which were suitably fresh in the studio's minds to impress them into shelling out a great deal on his epoch-spanning work about eternal life.

However, then things started to fall apart - the lead actor left due to creative differences, the studio pulled out and there was talk of Aronofsky adapting *Batman*, *Watchmen* and *Cat's Cradle*. Years later, however, he managed to complete a scaled-back version, titled: '*The Fountain*', for less than half the original cost of the aborted version.

Unfortunately, it really does show; with the exception of one location, every scene is noticeably studio-based. It becomes difficult to suspend disbelief when it's clear that everything has been shot in the same building, be it a laboratory, a Mayan temple, a bubble floating through space, a jungle, or a curiously one-sided street. It feels more like a television drama than a proper film, as such. Only twice do we even see brief fragments of journeys between one place and another, lending the work a fragmented, disjointed feel.

It doesn't help matters that the story consists of three narratives in the past, present and future,

ostensibly about the same characters, flitting from one to another and leaving gaps in each story. The future segment, particularly, omits more than it contains - at no point is it clear how this man got where he is, who he is and how he knows to do what he is doing. Of all the aspects of the film, this is the most irksome, since the other two narratives hold together very well, and the links between all three are sound.

These stories themselves, underneath the stylistic trappings, concern themselves with the quest for eternal life, in some form or another; a conquistador searching for the tree of life in Central America, a doctor searching for a cure for his wife's cancer, and a chap travelling in a bubble toward a dying star which will grant him and his tree eternal life together. Or something. Profound and beautiful as it all undoubtedly is, there is very little in the way of explanation for the future segment; since the lead character in each era is played by Hugh Jackman - played very well, I might add - it is unclear as to whether he is meant to be the same character as in the present, or whether he is just another reincarnation of the conquistador. It's hard to shake the feeling that we aren't being told the

whole story, and since the screenplay was rewritten to accommodate a massive cut in budget it's a fair bet that we really aren't.

Though if you can cope with the confusing storyline (which is hardly any more complex than the average Lynch offering) and lamentable lack of funding, it really is a spectacular work - the special effects were realised by filming chemical reactions on petri dishes rather than through CGI, in a very successful attempt to lend it a timeless and organic air. The result is nothing less than magnificent, and the denouement is visually breathtaking. The music, too, is impeccable - Aronofsky's long-time collaborator, Clint Mansell again provides the score, performed by the Kronos Quartet (who worked on *Requiem for a Dream*, also) and Mogwai (who didn't), without the electronic edge he brought to *Pi* and *Requiem*, similarly striving to be timeless and organic in feel. As such, both the music and the cinematography are ultimately successful in their goals, and very satisfying to boot.

It's just the stuff holding them together that doesn't quite work.

Hugh Mansfield  
 Ever-Present Whinger



Hugh Jackman: Conquistador, doctor, and futuristic bubble-naut

# Oscar nominations announced

It's that time of year again. The 79th Academy Awards nominations: The same old predictable surprises

## Best Motion picture of the year:

*Babel*  
*The Departed*  
*Letters from Iwo Jima*  
*Little Miss Sunshine*  
*The Queen*

## Performance by an Actor in a leading role:

Leonardo DiCaprio - *Blood Diamond*  
 Ryan Gosling - *Half Nelson*  
 Peter O'Toole - *Venus*  
 Will Smith - *The Pursuit of Happyness*  
 Forest Whitaker - *The Last King of Scotland*

## Performance by an Actress in a leading role:

Penélope Cruz - *Volver*  
 Judi Dench - *Notes on a Scandal*  
 Helen Mirren - *The Queen*  
 Meryl Streep - *The Devil Wears Prada*  
 Kate Winslet - *Little Children*

## Performance by an Actor in a supporting role:

Alan Arkin - *Little Miss Sunshine*  
 Jackie Earle Haley - *Little Children*  
 Djimon Hounsou - *Blood Diamond*  
 Eddie Murphy - *Dreamgirls*  
 Mark Wahlberg - *The Departed*

## Performance by an Actress in a supporting role:

Adriana Barraza - *Babel*  
 Cate Blanchett - *Notes on a Scandal*  
 Abigail Breslin - *Little Miss Sunshine*  
 Jennifer Hudson - *Dreamgirls*  
 Rinko Kikuchi - *Babel*

## Achievement in Directing:

Alejandro González Iñárritu - *Babel*  
 Martin Scorsese - *The Departed*  
 Clint Eastwood - *Letters from Iwo Jima*  
 Stephen Frears - *The Queen*  
 Paul Greengrass - *United 93*

## Best Animated feature film of the year:

*Cars*  
*Happy Feet*  
*Monster House*

## Best Documentary feature:

*Deliver Us from Evil*  
*An Inconvenient Truth*  
*Iraq in Fragments*  
*Jesus Camp*  
*My Country, My Country*

## Films with the most nominations:

*Dreamgirls* - 8 nominations  
*Babel* - 7 nominations  
*Pan's Labyrinth* - 6 nominations  
*The Queen* - 6 nominations  
*Blood Diamond* - 5 nominations  
*The Departed* - 5 nominations



Peter O'Toole: The man, the legend. Adored by women, envied and worshipped by men. His chin alone makes me quiver

Top to Bottom: Helen Mirren up for a well-deserved nomination in *The Queen*; *Babel*, starring Brad Pitt, is up for 7 nominations including best picture; Eddie Murphy nominated for his role in *Dreamgirls*

Tina "Oh, I fell" Mulani, third year  
aeronautical physicist

Pose for the *Felix* centrefold

Email us at [page3.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:page3.felix@imperial.ac.uk).



# Reviews

MUSIC

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Perk of peeing in sink: it's hands free

Nonsensical title leading the way in music journalism, you saw it here first, kids

### album review



**Negura Bunget**  
OM  
(code666 records)  
★★★★☆

In conjunction with the recent additions to the EU, I thought reviewing an album from Romania would make some sense. Few people reading this would have known for instance that Bucharest has a burgeoning hip-hop scene, or heard any music in the language beyond the infamous *Numa Numa* song! This only makes it more difficult explaining that Negura Bunget is an extreme metal band from, wait for it, the dark and mysterious mountains of Transylvania! To be honest though, there isn't much intrinsically Transylvanian in this band at all,

and their main influences are quite evidently from the well established metal community of Scandinavia.

The title *OM* is a pun on the Romanian word for man and the sacred eastern symbol, Aum. A similar disparity of message exists on this record, where much the guitars can be considered pretty stripped-down in that gritty and unabashedly true black metal way; but with higher production values for just about everything else. The vocals tending towards growled chanting, a la Nile, interspersed by epic passages with clean singing and pseudo-classical instrumentals.

The result is a refreshingly cosmopolitan mixture, which is also the hitch to an extent as the resulting mixture can sound a little bit disjointed in places. Fortunately, Negura's aspirations have more or less paid off with this album, which sees the band moving towards the kind of avant-garde metal postulated by bands like Enslaved. Thus I feel that this is a very promising effort overall, though one with an unquestionably been there, done that feel to it.

Alex McKittrick

### live review



**Darkest Hour**  
Carling Academy Islington

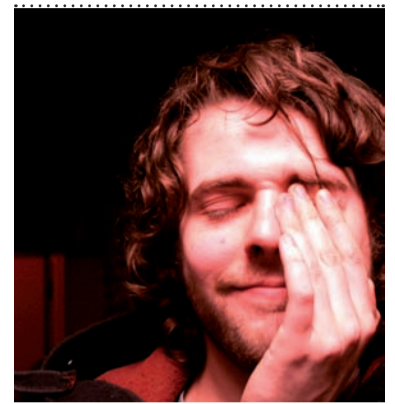
I knew it was going to be difficult reviewing a gig from a Carling venue following the last Deftones album (coincidentally they're playing Brixton Academy in April). I arrived just in time for the ominously titled *Misery Signals* set. In fact, they were better than a lot things I have seen, even if from where I was standing they were playing pretty straight-up, run-of-the-mill 'hXc', complete with idiotic hardcore dancing in the pit.

Minor entertainments aside, I overcame my typically antisocial ways to chat with a few Imperial people. Like most people in the audience, they'd come mainly to see the second act, tech-metallers *Between the Buried and Me* (the name in fact is taken from a song by Counting Crowes), or BTBAM as I shall refer to them for sake of

space. As their set began, the lead singer sprang into life with an unnerving ferocity, eyes glazed like a lunatic, whilst the talented instrumentalists let rip with the kind of robotic precision that made one wonder whether they were actually watching some kind of ornate mechanism. Forgetting the fantastic show that they were putting on, one could easily think that these guys had day jobs in accountancy.

And then their set finished, painfully short for my liking. A short time passed while the awe faded, and *Darkest Hour* spilled out onto the stage, more like a ragtag bunch of random blokes pulled of the street than the campy gothic nonsense of Atreyu and their ilk. They then proceeded to belt out an intense string of powerful songs with virtually no let-up, easily grabbing the audience attention, even if they were a little too reminiscent of *Slaughter of the Soul* era At the Gates for me. Ostensibly a 'metal-core' show, though one at least that showed the true variety of some of the more underground, and dare I say it under-rated bands.

Alex McKittrick



**Matty Hoban**  
Music Editor

Good riddance to 2006! It really, really sucked for music and don't try arguing with me on this. After looking at the inevitable end-of-year-best-of-compilation-column-fodders, I can't believe I didn't give up on music last year. It was a year where noise and free-folk gained more ground in people's record collections – I, for one, enjoyed Raccoo-oo-oon's *Is Night People* amongst a few other gems. However, the sheer amount of noise bands both reinforced a DIY aesthetic and made most of the ideas of noise redundant. The more sparse and ambient experiments in noise caught my attention by way of *My Cat Is An Alien*; recent discovery called *Tiger Piss* delighted and intrigued me in equal measure.

Free-folk and folk-inspired things did interest me with the emergence of James Blackshaw and the plaintive Hush Arbors. I think 2006 was a year for the increase in the role of DIY; various promoters gained more momentum. With the major labels trying to save face through signing anything with guitars in and increasing their presence on the internet (yet not changing their business plan), hopefully more power will be given back to listeners. We need a fucking revolution, we need something akin to 1976!

There were a few gems last year that kept me going: *Styme Vallis* by Reigns (West Country electronica with live instruments with, yes, tunes); *This Ain't A Hate Thing, It's A Love Thing* by Lords (fantastic blues riffs by way of Captain Beefheart with off-kilter time and structure); *I Am Not Afraid Of You And I Will Beat Your Ass* by Yo La Tengo (awful title, brilliant return to form); *Ys* by Joanna Newsom (if you are not put off by her voice – I was at first – then you will appreciate magic happening).

One last thing. I recommend you come along to the Union (dB's more specifically) on Saturday 27th January at 8pm (tomorrow) for a night of sumptuous music in the way of the Kids Will Be Skeletons club-night. Restlesslist will be headlining and they make indie-alt-hip-hop and feature members of The Brakes and Electric Soft Parade. There are two more bands and it costs just £4 for students; this is cheap, believe me.

## Remember to wash your hands after

### single review

**Just Jack**  
Starz In Their Eyes  
(Universal)  
★★★★★

Every now and then, there shines a little glimmer of hope in the world of music and individuality reintroduces itself and pokes us in the ears. Why is this song *this* great? Well, because honestly, you cannot compare it to any other song. The difficultly now-a-days in producing totally new sounds can be seen by how many re-releases, own renditions and no-effort songs are continually released. So on rare occasions when a song such as this is produced, it's only appropriate to get a bit excited, right?

Just Jack comprises of North-Londoner Jack (obviously) Allsopp (you might have not known his surname) and his genre of music is a bit of pop, a bit of house, and a pinch of hip-hop with garage roots. *Starz In Their Eyes* is his second release with a strong up-beat composed of drums and what I'm guessing to be the banjo. The song comprises of a good bassline and is a dance-along tune. Not only does Just Jack unite his diverse music tastes in this song but also provides lyrical genius by describing – poetically – the lives of ordinary people changing into celebrities to find out the 'dream' life is not as pleasant as they always thought.

Watch out for his eagerly anticipated LP, *Overtones*, his music will be a great part of the new sounds of 2007.

Afet Mehmet

### single review

**2pac feat. Ashanti and T.I.**  
Pac's Life  
(Interscope)  
★★★★☆

Another track from 'Pac. Will this 'icon' ever rest in peace? Every time he releases a new single I assume his death is just a publicity stunt. Between Biggie and 'Pac I do not know who is worse. Well do you really want to know about 'Pac's Life'? No, I am more interested in how I am going to survive one more year in IC thank you very much. This track doesn't really tell us more than we already know neither; is it going to make me rush to the cash machine and withdraw my £5 to purchase his overpriced single at HMV? Yes, I am a hater, I am living and I ain't making no paper. I am still that poor, broke student waiting for that fabulous IB job.

*Pac's Life* is a zingy but chilled club track. Certainly a club topper, but with poor lyrics; no one cares anymore about Pac's trials and the tribulations of his hip-hop stardom instead they should have scrapped all the Pac bits and left T.I. on the whole track, now that's what I'm

talking about; 'THE KING' left his signature on *Pac's Life*. Ashanti adds a soulful pitch to the track so we can say a big thank you to her for salvaging the song. It's a nice single but nothing exciting.

Folake Adegbohun

### single review

**Mika**  
Grace Kelly  
(Island)  
★★★★☆

This song I describe as the 'happy, happy, happy song', just due to the high notes singer, Mika Penniman, reaches in it and the rainbows he is lyrically painting. There is a cheerful piano melody with a sort-of marching beat and the song can be described as power-pop.

The first time I was introduced to Mika's music was at a gig recently and he was definitely the liveliest act there easily. He was introduced as being vocally comparable to Freddie Mercury but what I think they missed out is a vocal tint of Justin Hawkins (The Darkness) and the musical style of Jake Shears (Scissor Sisters), because I can really hear the similarities between their music. I had to dock one star because the debut single, *Relax, Take It Easy* was just that little bit better.

Mika was also on Jools Holland's annual New Year show, Jools Hol-

land's Hootenanny and was tipped to be the hottest thing for 2007. The predictions on that show seem always to be right, so start saving for the album, *Life In A Cartoon Motion* which will be released soon. I guess you can say Mika Penni-man, he will be no more as he is set for a successful year.

Afet Mehmet

### single review

**Lady Sovereign**  
Love Me or Hate Me  
(Def Jam)  
★★★★☆

Ah! Would we say refreshing? Maybe! Newly signed Def Jam-newbie Lady Sovereign also known as Lady 'SOV' drops her crazy grimy London accent on some mad beats. This track would definitely get you on the dance floor, it begins with a very techno super Mario theme beat that just gets you crazy and her voice is truly unique and I have not began to explain the remix featuring Missy Elliot. The remix definitely lives up the myth that remixes are way better than the original. Missy drops some fantastic vocals in her usual style most of it doesn't make sense but then we all love a Missy Elliot production. Although this single is definitely jamming, Lady Sov is certainly of an acquired taste especially if you like different.

Folake Adegbohun

A - BADGE-OF-FRIENDSHIP + KIDS WILL BE SKELETONS  
.CO.UK

PRESENT ON SATURDAY JANUARY 27TH

# RESTLESSLIST

SAMPLE-BASED HIP-HOP MEETS INDIE ROCK. FEATURING MEMBERS OF BRAKES  
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AND

## DOBERMANN

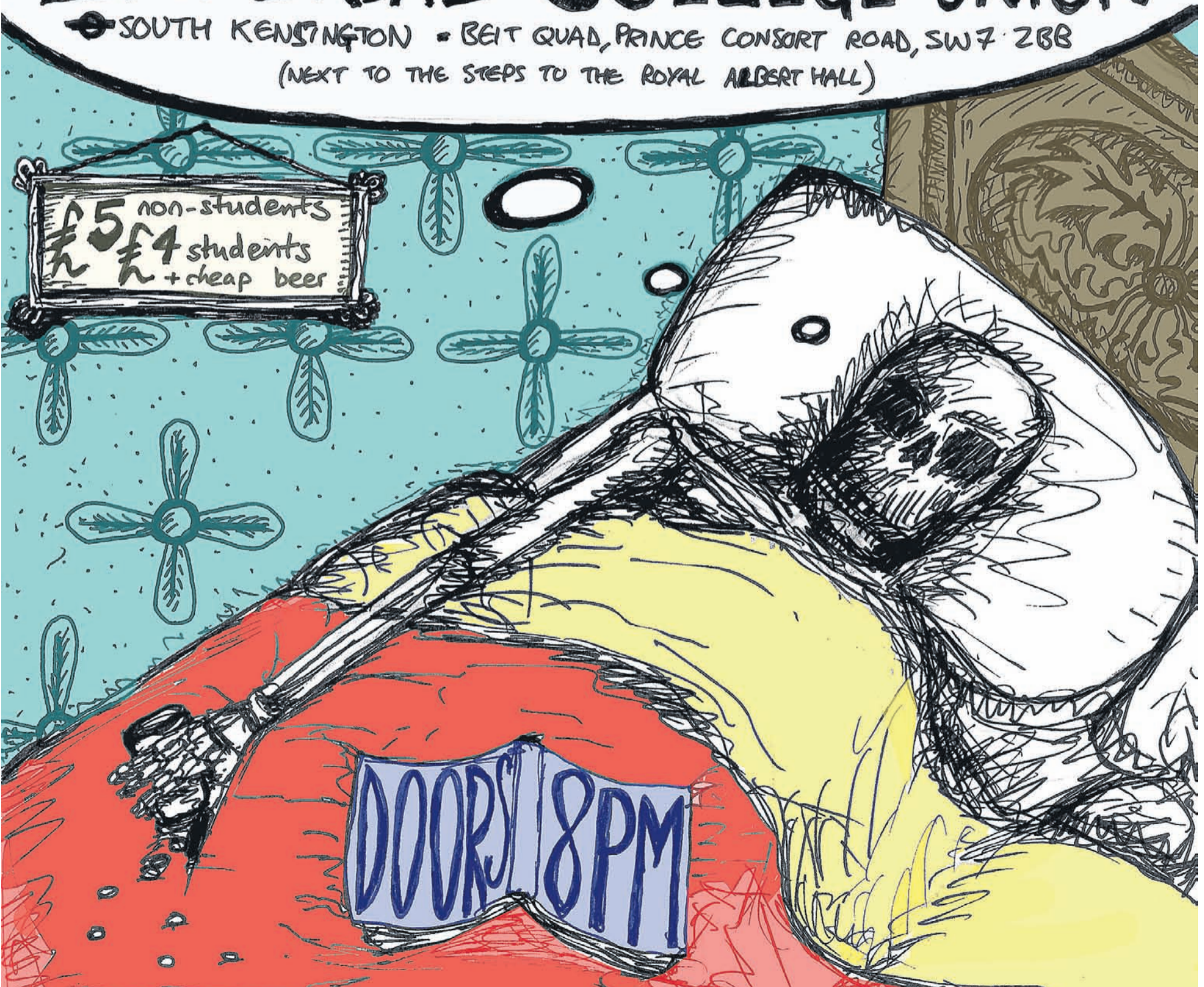
HEAVY RIFFS MIXED WITH EVEN  
HARDER BEATS - MYSPACE.COM/THEDOBERMANNBAND

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## Welcome back 'dudes'



**Gregory Mead**  
Nightlife Editor

Hello! Welcome to a wonderful new term of hard revision, exams and stress. Fear not though, for Nightlife has returned. You may have noticed a lack of things nocturnally related in the last two issues of Felix, this is due to two things.

Firstly, we don't have enough reviewers! We need you lovely people to go forth and party for the name of journalism (and so I can make a page without actually writing anything myself) - first years, I'm looking at you. I know for a fact that you go out to clubs some nights of the week, so why not do it all for free? Some lucky reviewers last year even got unlimited bar tabs at the venues they were visiting - all for a simple 700 word review! You can go anywhere you like, just email us to the address at the top of the page suggesting where you'd like to check out.

The second reason why there was no Nightlife sections in the last two issues is that I have decided to make this page bi-monthly: firstly, I don't have the time to devote to making the page look nice every week and secondly, it makes it more interesting because we have more material to print! Anyway, that's it for now. Officially the most boring editorial ever, so read the articles now.

# Reach for the LaZers. Ferry Corsten hits Turnmills

Felix goes armed with a healthy supply of glowsticks and, of course, plenty of water to check out the Dutch Trance master spinning the decks for a thumping four hour set

Ferry Corsten + Guests  
Turnmills  
Friday 19 January  
★★★★☆

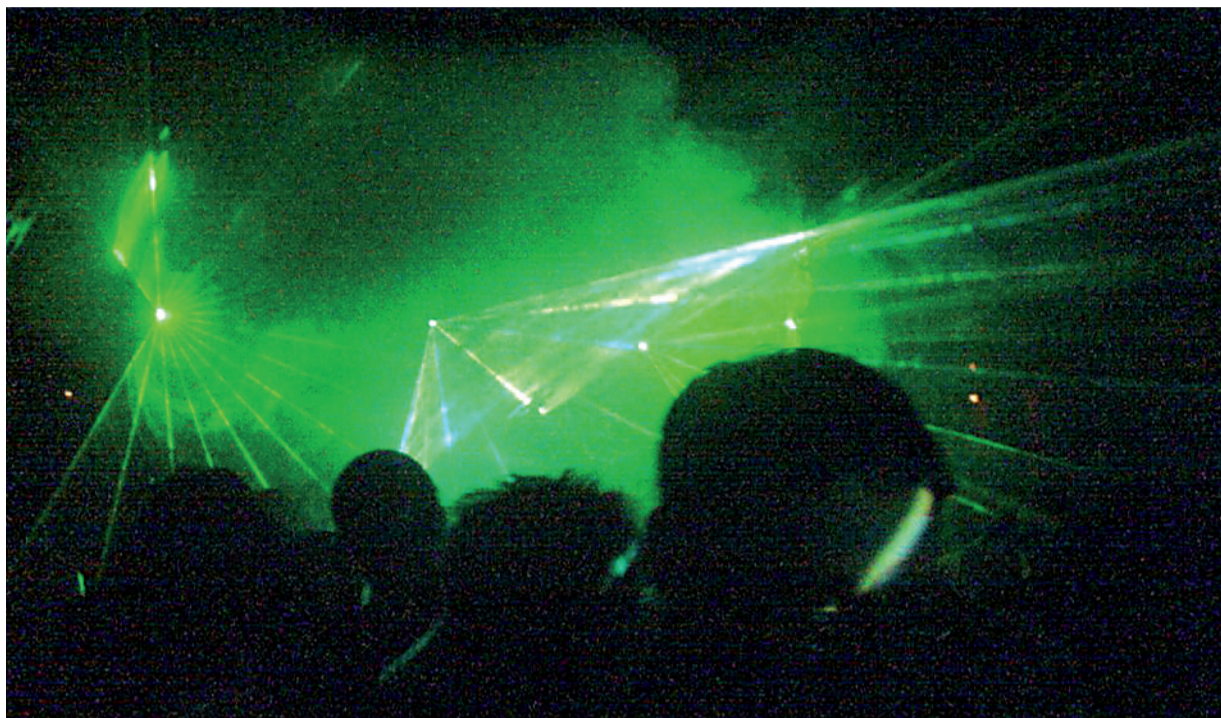
*I'm on a mission,  
Let me take you back and forth,  
I got a jam that's gonna make you  
scream for more.  
From New York London to  
Amsterdam,  
Let's rock, I wanna rock your body  
Rock!*

Singing along to this epic tune, heart pumping, hand-swaying in the air along with other happy people, I experienced true happiness last Friday when the Gallery in Turnmills witnessed one of the demi-gods in Trance, Ferry Corsten, DJ and producer, spinning a four-hour set supported by Spanish superstar Abel Ramos, and the Gallery resident Gavyn Mytchell.

Harry Brown (who?) gave his best prepping the dance floor from 1030pm to an audience who were politely disguising their disinterest but by 1am, around the time Ferry's due on the decks, clubbers who came from all over the country from Wales to Nottingham started chanting for Ferry to take the decks and put this poor soul out of his misery.

Ferry did not disappoint by spinning one infectious track after another mainly from his latest album L.E.P (Loud, Electronic, Ferocious) to the delight of the very ecstatic ravers. It was definitely loud, electronic and ferocious when he spun new tracks as well as updated versions of his earlier works like Junk and Beautiful and he kept the crowd going all night (or morning).

*I wanna make you feel like you're on fire* (the vocal tunes from the track Fire) and the world class DJ did just that to the delight of the frenzied crowd. Few left the jam-packed dance floor until he wrapped up his set at around 5am after a



Oh my god I can't stop staring at those lasers. I want to hug them

very much called for encore.

The atmosphere in Turnmills was very friendly from the shades-wearing, tank top clad gay guys to the glowstick spinning hardcore shufflers: everyone was smiling and seemed to be having the time of their lives which can best be summed up from the track Beautiful: *Everything is beautiful, Let the music carry you, Maybe i will follow you, forever!, Nowhere else I'd rather be, When you're lying next to me, Let the music carry us, together!..*

Everyone seemed to be in love with everyone else while being absolutely amazed in their trance-like state with the laser lights! Needless to say the atmosphere on the dance floor was purely euphoric.

The main room was full to capacity, not really surprising as it is miniscule for a house-club standard. For those of you who have never been to Turnmills, it is a medium-sized club (yes, smaller than Fab-

ric's warehouse-like club) with three small-ish main rooms and a few ante-rooms in between, dotted with lounge chairs. It has a very quaint ambience with a maze like quality to it not for the claustrophobic. And if not for the state-of-the-art sound system blasting thumped up tunes, few high and mighty ravers could make it back to the dance floors.

Another thing worth mentioning is the efficiency of how they work and the friendliness of the staff; bouncers and bartenders alike. They did not give us any trouble when one of my friends forgot to bring the credit card with which she purchased her tickets on-line, or when I asked for a replacement cloakroom ticket after losing mine.

The drink prices however, were much to be desired being at the upper end of the scale (£9 for a double shot!) and they seemed to run out of tequila before 2am.

Undeniably there are other DJs spinning in the other rooms, with Tristan Da Cunha (BackToBasics), Dave Mills (Cool House) and Tania von Pear (the Gallery) spinning in Room 2 and John Rundell, Dave Randall, James Kinetic and Thermobee DJing in Room 3. Good as I'm sure they are, they're no Ferry so to be perfectly honest I did not spend time outside of Room 1 at all, save for the occasional toilet break to fill up my water bottle.

We left the place at 7am, but even the terrible rainy English weather could not dampen our satisfaction after a night of trance by the great Dutch Trance master. With great big names in the Trance genre finally returning, I could not help but feel that the clubbing scene in London is finally looking up. Paul Van Dyk will be playing in two weeks' time in Turnmills and I fully intend to be there.

Syaza Md Taib

## The end of Trash club

For the past ten years Trash has been hosting the coolest night-spot for anybody who thinks they are somebody in the 'indie' music scene.

Being one of the most fashionable clubs in town means the girl on the door can pick and choose who enters, and towards midnight at the last ever Trash she really had her work cut out. It seemed that half the entire population of London wanted to be there, the queue working its way round the block and further even 2 hours before the place opened.

I turned up rather late, and most of the people trying to get in once they'd reached capacity were total arseholes, and the fact the police turned up at one point with three

vans to arrest a large proportion of the queue only confirmed this.

You might think from reading this that everyone was going to be a twat in the club, but it was in fact the complete opposite, the reason all the scenester-coke head tossers were outside was because they were not getting let in. The Trash crew did an excellent job of only letting true music fans in for the final night, and made absolutely sure they didn't overcrowd the place, which resulted in what I believe was the best night I've ever been to at The End Club. Erol was DJing the whole night after about midnight, playing his usual mish mash of electro, indie, new-wave and anything else, only this week he only played the total classics. Basically

awesome.

They opened the entire venue up for the final event, which was the only time I'd seen it that way and gave it a capacity of 850 fans. Everyone was happy and I it seemed everyone I bumped into I recognised, which made for a great friendly atmosphere. *The Arctic Monkeys* even decided to turn up at one point, and I must say, they do not look good on the dance floor; they dance like retards. Apparently I also met one of the guys from *Soulwax* in there too but I don't really remember that part too well. I give this night 5/5 easily. By the way, the last song was *Abba - Dancing Queen*. Some of the more emotional (drunk?) Trashsters actually cried, which shows how highly some peo-



Yep, this was about one sixth of the queue

# Annie Mac and Mylo whip up a frantic frenzy at Fabric nightclub

Laurence Fahrni contributes to the destruction of Rock & Roll with Mylo, Annie-Mac and friends

**Mylo, Annie Mac and Guests**  
Fabric  
Friday 12 January  
★★★☆☆

So it was off to Fabric to write a review on probably London's most well known club. What could I say about the place that had not already been said? Fortunately, having never read anything written about Fabric, I present this review blissfully unaware of the clichés that spew from my fingers, infecting your delicate mind with stagnant ideas.

As ever, the evening began with impeccable timing. It was certainly a convenience catching my friends at the front of the queue, with zero guest list waiting time. However, arriving early enough to avoid them queuing for an era meant I was still a slave to the fundamental Fabric paradox. This is that without the help of magic beans or a small fortune, there will likely be always one inconvenience. Arrive early enough to avoid long queues, and, without preparatory sleeping, you run the risk of running out of energy and intoxication before 4AM (unless you want to continue parting ways with almost £4 for each bottle of beer). Perhaps this is simply a personal problem to feel defeated if I lose the will to battle the night out until being kicked out of the venue.

Anyhow a trip to the stairs of sedation is all too common for those who's blood alcohol level have swung one way or another from the desired balance, those without the

energy to stand, or those who feel like trying a conversation without wondering whether the other person speaks the same language as you.

Getting to the bar, it was time to start a little crowd analysis, try to get a cross section of the 2007 Fabric goer. It was immediately observed an un-chartered 'trendy hollyoaks type' had reared its pretty head onto the scene, along with the types that seemed to me had either just missed Hoxton, or were in for a pleasant surprise upon discovery of the streets of Shoreditch.

More so, it seemed a stream of newbies were amalgamating themselves with the masses, making me feel like a veteran of the place, having only been a humble three times. The toilets echoed tales of how many times people had vomited, and the confusion on how to use the taps confirmed my suspicions whilst giving me a more accurate figure on how many were yet to conclude the highs and lows of their furtive first foray into the frantic furor of Fabric.

Onto the dance floor, despite it being early, that didn't mean you couldn't be stopped every few minutes by somebody with the manners to kick over the drink you delicately placed on the floor or barge into your get fonky zone. Though this did make me wish I had the spines of a hedgehog, I soon realised I easily had the ability to do the same. L double reliably played the first of the enjoyable music, as I the crowd bounced from person to person. Though this situation



Mylo, taking a break from his natural habitat of a banging nightclub

Next was Calvin Harris, which sported some well prepared backing music. Meanwhile the singer dropped lines in the style of David Bowie, without the lyrical prowess, as he taught the recited the verb to be, in the context "I am in the industry, you are in the industry". Not really my cup of tea, but I think I'd spotted what had drawn the Hoxton crowd. Next, Annie Mac supplied some eclectic tunes, with basslines just the right pitch to make you constantly think your phone's going off.

Becoming weary and not wanting to join the stairs social scene for two long, I was fortunate enough to find a sofa on the balcony above the stage whilst waiting for Mylo to come on. This proved one of the most highlights of the evening. A

time for relaxation, without the kind of chatter that guarantees loss of voice in the close future. As the thumping bassline gave me a sonic massage, I reflected upon the review.

Although Fabric has its inconveniences, you are guaranteed an eventful night. The large venue may make it likely you lose your friend's but the likelihood is you'll run into somebody else you know - it's happened every time I've been.

The club's name means it draws people from far and wide, and although this brings about the phenomenon of so many people coming into London for their big night out (making it a bit like going out in Leicester square, with better music). The sound systems are second to none (as far as I know), and the

bouncers are oh so friendly (OK, the rest is true.)

Giving up on Mylo appearing, it was time to go home, feeling the most refreshed I've ever felt leaving a nightclub. Little did I know it had been Mylo providing the backing beat to my philosophical journey, seeing as his appearance was mainly a DJ set, I left in the most dancing mood I'd felt all evening. Hearing tales of the quality of DJ "live up to the" Hype's set, perhaps I felt tempted to return.

I'll leave with the advice that if you want to go along to Fabric, I'd recommend doing so when a performer or a group of friends gives you occasion to do so, making event worthwhile, whichever way you deal with the paradoxical obstacles.

Laurence Fahrni

Grand Opening Night  
Club  
**LOVE IS ALL**  
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7pm  
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My Luminaries  
+ Special live guests  
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£6/£5 concessions

You only live once so what's the difference? £1 from every ticket sold goes to a noble cause. You're here, you're making the difference.

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## 2007: Survival of the hottest

New clubnights springing up everywhere, electro on the up, 'nu-rave' died on its ass, Trash is dead! So what's hot or not?

Chalk might be one of the contenders for being the next amazing club night, as long as they keep to the format of it being a proper Indie night and don't go down the road of Indie 'superclubs' like NME, and speaking of NME they are going down, in fact they are at the top of our list of horrendous clubnights never to attend unless you really really need to go out on a Friday night.

The new replacement for Trash seems pretty good too, DURRR is basically a club night that's being run by all the other Trash DJ's apart from Erol Alkan, so I can only assume it will be basically just like Trash used to be. Only time will tell

if it becomes nearly as popular, or another night comes along to steal all the Trash kids on a Monday night. If you're looking for something on a Tuesday night, and want to make a change from Panic! then you could check out Love Is All at Proud, it's a new weekly charity band and DJ night and should be good fun.

It seems that Metro Club on Oxford Street is going seriously downhill recently, their main target audience being unoriginal Indie or metal kiddies who like hearing the same thing over and over and over again. You're even likely to hear the same Nirvana track 3 times in one night at that place. Oh well, what-

ever makes money I suppose.

If Trance is your thing, then you might want to check out Transcience, again at Proud in Camden offering a wonderful mix of psychedelic trance and ultra chill out it's the best place for any Trance addict to spend their Sunday night. Right near Cyberdog too so you can stock up on your raver outfits and glitsticks beforehand!

Finally, somewhere never to visit is those terrible chain clubs (Bar-Rumba, Walkabout etc.) If you've resorted to that we seriously suggest you go out and buy a Timeout magazine and look what is actually happening in this huge city.

## I, Gamer



**Michael Cook**  
Games Editor

**T**wenty-eight hours. Men have died doing certain things for that long. Hell, people have died *gaming* for that long. Nevertheless – and I'm sure most of you are well aware by now – one plucky World of Warcraft gamer arranged with their guild a 28-hour run through Azeroth that would lead to them being the first Level 70 player in the acclaimed MMORPG.

Which, it has to be said, makes this week's five-hour shoot through Hitman: Blood Money seem less like an epic journey of killing, and more like a half-hour saunter on Sunday afternoon. See what you think of our attempts to fashion ourselves as serial killers over the page.

The twenty-eight hour marathon through the best-loved online world, though, is an impressive feat, especially given Blizzard's hopes that the latest expansion pack, Burning Crusade, would last gamers for another six months or so. It's an immense effort of co-operation and timing that allowed the members of their Guild to protect, support and aid the now-famous player to the new level cap.

I doubt it means that we're breeding some strain of super-human who will be able to solve all of mankind's future ills through scaled planning, time management and an Archivist Cape of the Whale. But it shows that they can actually get something done when they want to.

This week I stumbled across a spoof website that parodies Second Life, a hugely customisable MMO. The site, Get A First Life (<http://www.getafirstlife.com/>) is a wry take on the life simulator that many people give preference to over their real lives. It might seem sad to most, but what goes on in that mini-world is genuinely impressive.

Stroll through Second Life or Garry's Mod, and you'll see a lot of complete arseholes. But in that respect, it's not a lot different from real life. Where it differs is just how much people are willing to work together in order to have fun.

Alright, twenty-eight hours is verging on the obsessive. But as a hobby, there are far less impressive things you could've done. Six months of gaming in a day? Sure beats work.

# This week in videogaming

The gag in last week's subhead was SICK SAXIST. Sixaxis. You make me weep

**I**t's that time of year when Bill Gates reviews his to-do list and realises that he's due for another Time Magazine covershoot. Either that, or the multi-multi-billion dollar owner of Microsoft is getting bored of the poker-face approach to the Console War.

This week, hot on the tail of Steve "You Call That Competition? I've Seen Better Products In My Toilet After A Particularly Colon-Churning Evening Of Curry" Jobs, Gates launched a series of speeches, interviews and OK! photo stories in which he outlined, among other topics, "Why the PS3 will fail", "Why the PS3 won't win", and the ever-popular, "Why everyone will not buy the PS3".

It's not that Gates doesn't have reason to smack talk – the Xbox 360 is enjoying more and more success, with LIVE expanding its repertoire of downloadables and some crucial game deals being struck – and of course there's nothing easier than kicking Sony when they're embarrassed. But it's beginning to get a little boring now.

The media don't like to let things go, though, as KDND 107.9 are discovering this week as they first axed ten of their staff over the death of a woman in their "Hold Your Wee For A Wii" contest, and then later pulled the plug on the unfortunately-named show that spawned the contest, The End. The Wii remains a hugely sought-out product, even well into the January slump, with deliveries still being snapped up in the small hours of the morning. Hopefully, there won't be any more fatalities over it.

Not that we need any more of those, as Germany seems to be providing more than enough "Games = Death" hype, the latest event being two teenage murders who unfortunately gave their names as 'Reno' and 'Sephiroth', two characters from the RPG *Final Fantasy VII*. After making a headline here or there, the events of the two kids were used as further fuel to Germany's ongoing campaign against violent videogames. As the current president of the European Union,



We couldn't get photos of crazy Final Fantasy fans killing things, so here's Pullover Weekly's man of '06

Germany is thought to be forming an EU-wide ban on violent videogames that would potentially cover everything from Counterstrike to Lord of the Rings.

Whilst that might be taking things too far, it is good to see certain steps being taken to curb the amount of very young gamers getting their hands on the bloodier games. New York State is aiming to pass a bill that prohibits the sale of vid-

eogames with excessive violence to anyone under the age of thirty. It's unfortunate, but probably a necessary step, until ELSPA and similar bodies raise awareness and – that old favourite – people start caring what they buy their children.

Fortunately, we can still buy whatever we like over here. Unfortunately, we're still in the New Year dry spell. This week, you can pick up ActionLoop or StarFox Command

for the DS – both good time-wasters, or more questionable license tie-ins, including *Rocky Balboa*. Hmm.

You're better off looking for the cheaper thrills, however – 1UP published a list of the Top 100 free games off the internet. The list compiles all manner of genres, with some genuinely good finds. Find it, and forget about January.

<http://tinyurl.com/2zpyw2>

# 0.9

Litres of water a healthy human can excrete, per hour

# 1.75

Litres of water Jennifer Strange had to hold, per hour, to win a Wii



# The best laid frags o' mice an' men

The CGC's inaugural LAN event hit the Union last weekend. Nimalen Balsingham tells tales of war

He looked to his left, paused, and glanced to his right.

Coast was clear.

A drop of sweat trickled down his brow as he moved his sweaty palm from his mouse to dry them on his already damp jeans.

\*BANG! BANG! BANG!\*

That movement made all the difference. It made him linger at the corner just for a fraction of a second too long; long enough for the person sitting opposite him to empty a magazine worth of bullets through his bullet-proof vest and into his body.

That was it... the Counter-Terrorists had won this round.

Sounds dramatic? Absolutely not. This is a snapshot from the event that took place in the Union Dining Hall last Saturday, when the newly formed Computer Games Club (CGC) held its first event of the year – a LAN (Local Area Network) party.

From 10am, people came streaming into the dining hall armed to the teeth. Most of them had laptops, but the more enthusiastic ones even had desktops brought in with them. After a quick sign-up, bags were ripped open, various kinds of computers came buzzing to life and gaming mice were whipped up onto the tables. It was time to find out whose mouse control was the best, and who could think on their butts as CounterStrike and DotA (Warcraft III: Frozen Throne's Defence of the Ancients) teams were assembled.

For the next 6 hours, only the low humming sounds from the computers, the periodic taps on the keyboards and furious clicking on the mice could be heard. Of course, there were the rather frequent swear words that echoed through the room whenever someone 'died'.

This is what happened at the CGC's first big event last Saturday. For anyone who has missed it, rest assured, there's more future fragging to be had..

The CGC was founded only early this year by a group of gaming enthusiasts, the majority of whom are in their 3rd year of study at Imperial College.

The aim of CGC is to promote the idea of LAN gaming to everyone. LAN gaming is a simple process whereby people connect their computers to this huge 'box' and Lo and Behold!, they are all wired up and ready to play head to head against one another.

CGC also aims to create a platform where all gamers of Imperial College can unite and play together. There will be meetings, or rather, gaming sessions held regularly so that members can meet up and enjoy gaming as a cohort. Instead of playing games with strangers over the internet and having nightmares about how your opponent looks like, with CGC, you can actually see who you are playing with. Also, you will know who the bugger who ended your killing spree was and be able to order a pie to be smashed into his face the next time the Union runs a hit squad.

Believe it or not, gaming actually fosters teamwork and allows people to understand the personality of their gaming peers. In multiplayer games, people are forced to work as a team in order to win, and this kind of co-operation and teamwork can be applied to other areas of life, like in studies or at work.

But it's not just questionable health benefits. Have you ever thought what a loser the nerd sitting behind you could be? Well, nerd or not, he might just hand you your butt on a silver platter when you meet him in the virtual fighting world! Besides, you can also find out who amongst you are the selfish, self-serving trouble makers who only care about their own safety, or find the heroes that will lay their lives down to rescue a team mate in need.

CGC is not just a club for gamers; it is a club by gamers. Thus, if you are new to gaming or if you are afraid to start due to the fear that



You can see more photos of the event at the Felix Games Flickr page – [www.flickr.com/photos/felixgames](http://www.flickr.com/photos/felixgames)

those proud experts will start owning you, CGC is here to your rescue! CGC has provisions for novice gamers, and will teach you from scratch how various game systems work, and what you can do to improve your gaming. You do not have to worry about people calling you a 'newbie' or 'feeder' since all novices will start playing from ground zero. When you yourself feel that you are of the appropriate standard, you are most welcome to join the higher level gamers and test out your mettle.

CGC may not have the best gamers, but when many good gamers come together, the ultimate gaming experience can be created.

CGC may still be a young club, but plans for the future have already been made. Come March, there will be tournaments for 2 popular multiplayer games – CounterStrike and DotA. Needless to say, attractive

prizes stand to be won by the best out there. There is not much time left, so all gamers out there: assemble your teams and start practicing... for this will be an intense battle where literally only the strongest and the smartest survive!

Besides that, a forum will be set up just for gaming individuals in Imperial College. Here, you can discuss various strategies and even news of any exciting upcoming games. We'll also try to arrange trips to gaming conventions if any are held in London.

The next LAN party session is going to be held on the 3rd of February 2007. Due to popular demand, we will be playing Counter-Strike 1.6 and WarCraft3 FrozenThrone: DotA. To sign up for this event and our mailing list, please drop a line at [nb604@ic.ac.uk](mailto:nb604@ic.ac.uk). You will be required to bring your own laptop/desktop and copy of the game. The

venue and time is yet to be confirmed, but will be provided to you through email.

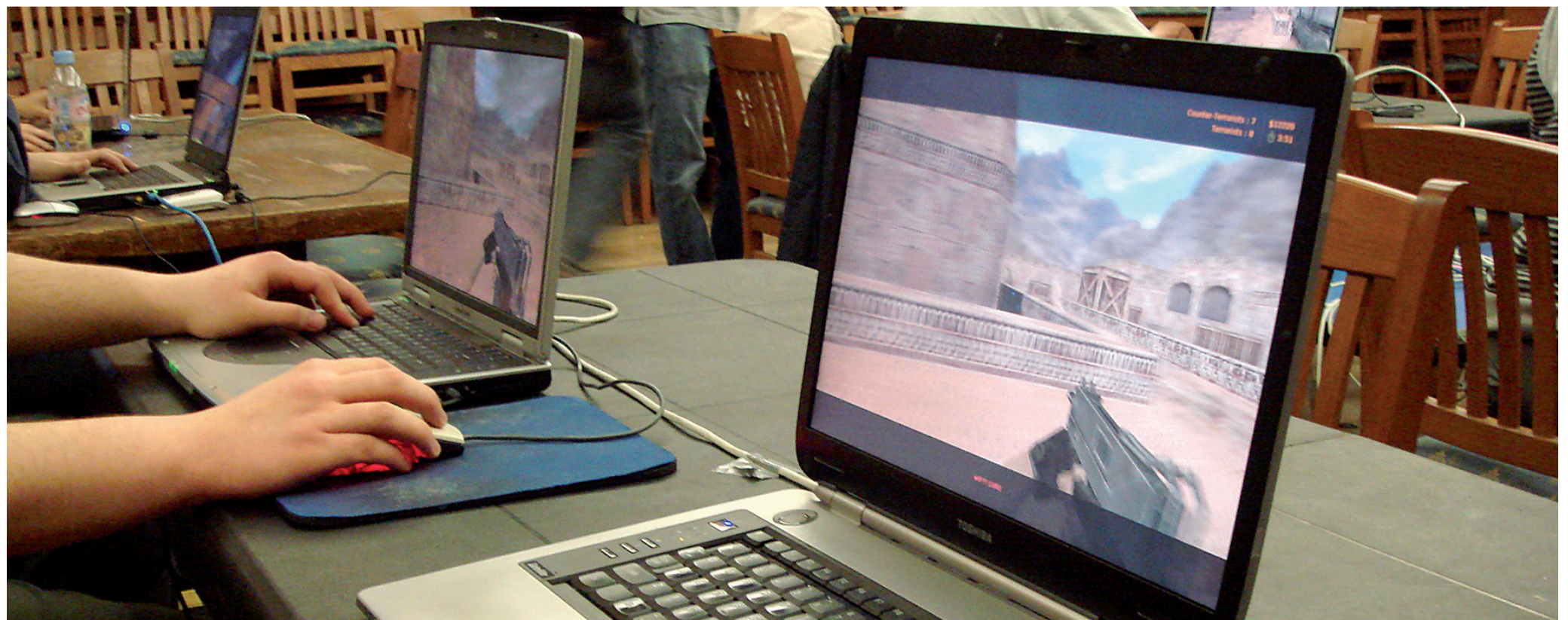
We hope to be pwning you all very soon.

## Contact

After such a long read, what are you waiting for? The membership is a measly £2 and this will open a gateway to a whole new world!

Sign up now at <http://tinyurl.com/2l9gez>

For comments or enquiries email CGC at: [nb604@ic.ac.uk](mailto:nb604@ic.ac.uk)



Counter-Strike remains one of the most popular games for competitive play, and was a firm favourite at the LAN event. Prefer other games? Email the society and suggest them

# Endurance - Hitman: Blood Money

Tony Plana stalks the night with a sharp suit and sharper smile. The pay's not great, but the perks...

When you eat the same kind of food over and over again, the taste becomes burned into your soul. I know this, because after seven packets of Polos, my tongue feels and tastes like the Fox's mint polar bear took a dump on it. But – and I think you'll find this link pretty good – games are a bit like that too, see?

*Deus Ex* sounded like a good idea. It's a straight run through – the same challenges, but different ways to overcome it. Of course, most of them involved people dying, and a lot of them involved cock-ups. For the next Endurance trip, the all-night gamers chose something that required a full concentration bar all the way to the final whistle. Hitman is nothing if not that.

It still sounds like a crazy idea to me, but taking on the thirteen core missions of the assassin simulator *Hitman: Blood Money* was nothing if not unique. After painstakingly planning a stylish route through each level, all that remained was to

set out on my mission. Some gamers left kitchen knives as signs of their passing on every target they killed. Others procured their melee weapons of choice on-site. Some just blew shit up.

'Blew shit up' doesn't quite express just how well some of the plans went, of course (see "A Blow Profile"), but there's something satisfying about taking the explosive approach to *H:BM*. Possibly because, when time's getting on and you're too tired to sedate that guard for his uniform, well – you just toss some explosives his way, or into the nearest crowd of people, or... you get the idea.

You can catch up with some of the better hits on these pages. Of course, some fought for Silent Assassin – the game's best rating – for each mission, others just tried to make the most impressive mess. They're good at that.

Have you played Halo into the wee small hours? Did you complete Half-Life in a single sitting? Get in touch with us and tell us more. [games.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:games.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

## A blow profile

Michael "OddBlowJob" Cook

Seemingly, Hitman is littered with bomb-able places. Chairs, chandeliers, cakes – dead dog carcasses and flagpoles seem to be the only things that you can't shove some *plastique* on and send into orbit. But that's not to say that some levels didn't take some 'invention' in order to get that perfect explosion.

The House of Cards mission is a good example. The setting is Las Vegas, where a meeting is going to take place between a Sheikh, a mad scientist, and a white supremacist. Stereotypes Anonymous are planning to exchange a briefcase full of blood diamonds – the Hitman series' equivalent of a cloth sack with a dollar sign on it – for a briefcase of rather important DNA samples. I need to creatively kill all of them.

The meeting is to take place at a swanky, belly-dancer-ridden casino, so I break into the crazy South African's room and rig the DNA briefcase with a bomb. Then, I simply leave and wait in the ladies' toilets – for some strange reason, only men seem to need to use the facilities in this casino. And so I wait.

The meeting begins, and my walking bomb passes security and begins chatting with his buyer. And I wait some more. He chats about the usual stuff, I guess – whether the slot machines are fixed. Celebrity Big Brother. Genocidal armies of clones.

I'm getting bored now, so I decide to set off the bomb. Nothing happens. Thinking I'm too far away, I stumble into the main area. Hit the button. Nothing happens. Something very wrong is going on.

Then I hear a bad noise. There's an explosion from several floors above, and the scientist is lying in a pool of his own blood in his hotel room. Somehow, the *other* briefcase has exploded.

This, as you might imagine, is something of a setback. It's also

raised the in-game alert level to yellow, and since I massacred a boat full of diners and a wedding full of rednecks recently, well... it's safe to say that just about everyone's looking out for me. It's not looking good right now. I fall back on Agent 47's mischievous days in primary school, and hit the fire alarm.

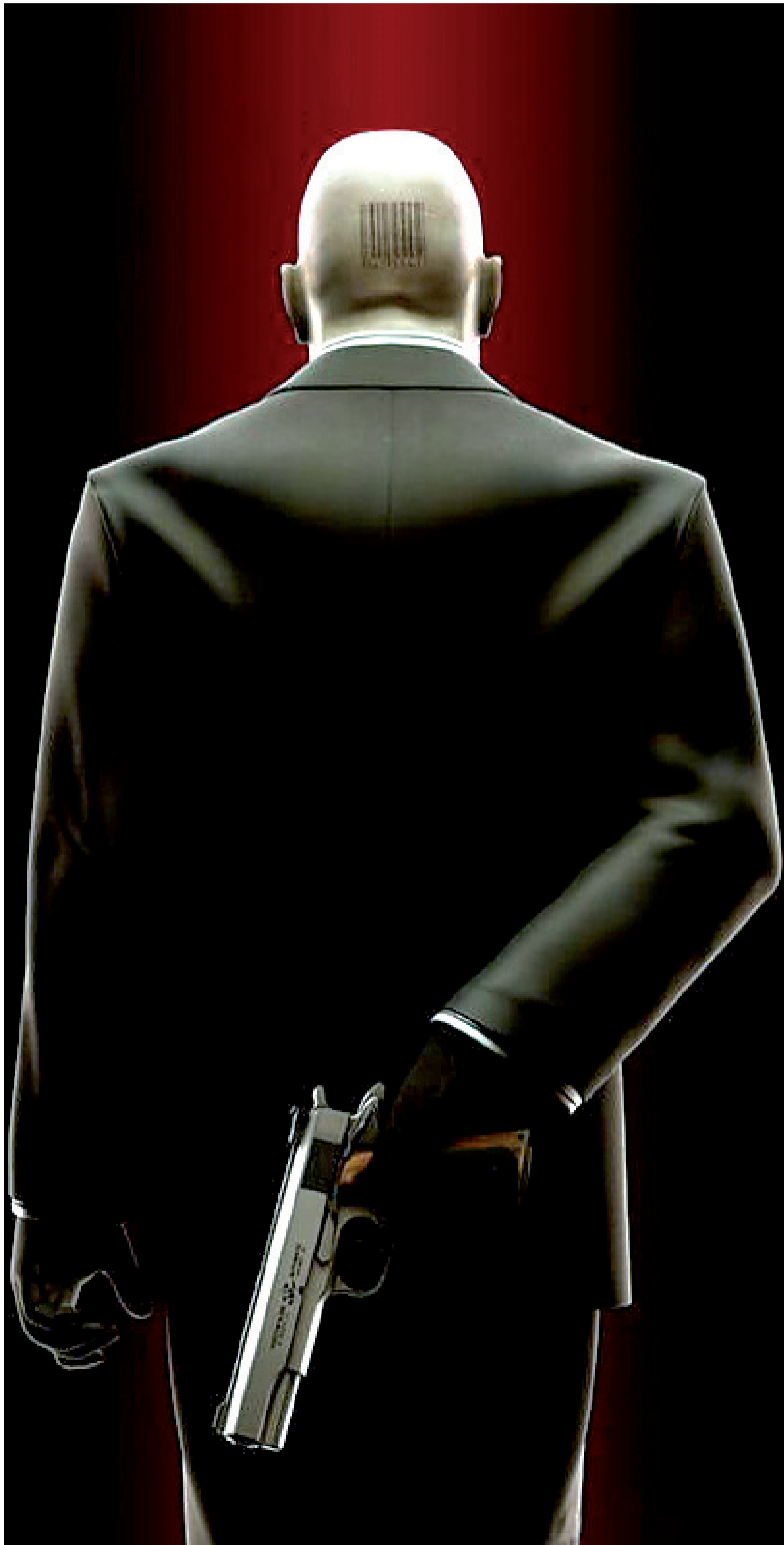
Thankfully, one of the bellhops seems confused by the alarm – quite how you get confused about a very loud noise and people running to the exit is a mystery to all but the AI programmer – and hangs around in a secluded spot for too long. He soon finds himself unconscious and naked in a box. Strutting past the Sheikh's security now, ostensibly to deliver drinks to the money-addled madman, the disguise won't last for very long. As I pull out my second mine, ready to place it in the compartment next to the meeting, the DNA seller decides to get up and stretch his legs in my compartment.

It's a tricky moment, where you weigh up the pros and cons of setting off a large explosive device in the secure area of a very full casino against just pretending to be a waiter for the rest of the day and seeing what you can raise in tips.

I like to think I made the right choice.

I don't remember exactly what happened between that moment and running through the sprinkler systems to my waiting limo, in a hail of gunfire, confusion, and the occasional headbutted civilian. The newspapers claim that someone looking suspiciously like a *Tenacious D* reject 'massacred' a huge group at a Las Vegas casino. They suspect blood money was involved, but unfortunately – no-one ever found the diamonds.

In an unconnected event, I couldn't find the briefcase I'd brought in with me, so I took the Sheikh's instead. It had a lovely collection of marbles in it. Cute.



# Cutting it fine

Andrew "Cutting Wit" Dunn

Hey, why so glum? At least you're not here being Santa at a Christmas party in April. Urk."

It wasn't my fault, officer, it went off in my hand. He threw himself onto my blade. I was in Wisconsin at the time. Somehow, it occurred to me that this wouldn't stand up in court. Oh well. I wasn't planning on staying in this den of depravity long enough to get caught, anyway.

I stood there, the enormity of what I've done failing to impact on my consciousness. In front of me, his lifeblood seeping into the cracks between the kitchen tiles, lay a fat old man in a white-fur-trimmed red suit. He had a knife stuck grotesquely into his forehead, and I just stood and watched the crimson pool spread out from him. Strangely... dispassionate. I'd just killed Santa. But morals weren't really a consideration. So I stripped his whitening, lifeless body, pulled on his cheerful and miraculously clean festive suit stocked up on more kitchen knives, and went on my way.

Also fated to die that snowy night were two slickly-suited security guards, an irritatingly yappy black terrier, a disgraced senator's son, and an aging adult film tycoon. At

that point, though, I didn't know all of this. I knew only that I had a job to do and that a lot of people might die before it was done. But that was alright. It was all for the money, eh?

Massive stainless steel razor-sharp kitchenware hidden safely in my garters, which also contained my emergency survival kit (passport, syringe, three pounds of plastic explosive, silenced pistol, Euros, the usual), I proceeded inconspicuously in my bright red costume to my first target. He was on the upper floor of his mansion, and while none of the drunken party guests with a raging libido seemed to care that a six foot barcoded bald man was going around in a Father Christmas suit with suspiciously bulging pockets, the security guards were less apathetic. Or possibly less distracted, it's hard to say. However, a little creative wardrobe changing (and one unconscious pornographic photographer) ensured my passage to the upper levels. I didn't stay long. Only long enough to slit three throats and brutally execute that annoying canine with a shot to its head.

Downstairs once again, I slipped into my morbidly unseasonal get-up once more, and took to the out-



Father Christmas, caught in the act of the teapot dance. He won't be shouting about his spout any more

doors, where bikini-clad 'actresses' shivered and attempted to entertain my second target, the prodigal son who would never return to taste the fattened calf. In fact, the only thing the poor sod was to taste was the blood in his mouth after my

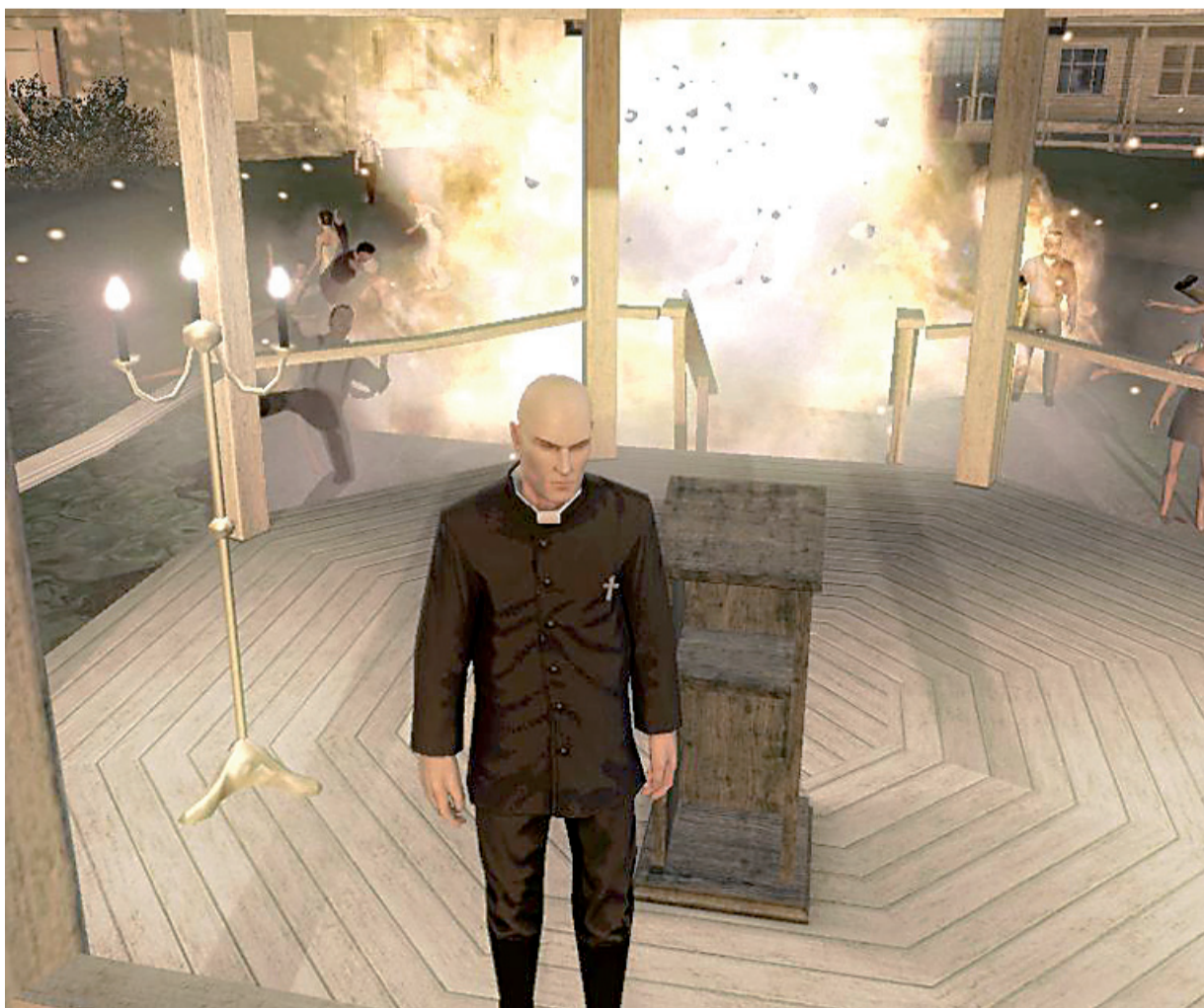
knife embedded itself into his brain from ten feet away. In the confusion that followed, I slipped out, in my crisp suit once more. No-one would ever know who was behind the Christmas Porn Mansion murders. But I put it behind me. That was in

the past now. I had another half a dozen hits to carry out in the next hour and a half, three more cans of cider, a good supply of gingerbread, it was dark and I was wearing sunglasses.

Hit it.



# Is that a small explosive device in your pocket?



Nick "Bible Basher" Virago

A redneck wedding – it's every little boy's dream. Fittingly, then, Agent 47 spruces himself up in the clothes of a drunken southerner (America, not England, obviously. They don't drink down there.) and slips his way inside.

It's the bride that's hired us for today's job – to take out the groom and his father and let her get on with the job of partly-organised crime. The guards are patrolling, the 'gators are in the water, and the yokels are doing their dancing. I join in for a little bit, but then get disturbed at the sight of a bald killer doing the jive, and move on.

The mansion's looking pretty spiffy. Clean, white panelling, pianos, alluring guests. The priest is also looking quite spiffy too, so it's off to knock him upside the head and take his clothes. And his large, hollowed-out Bible.

His very large Bible, with an interesting compartment in the center.

No-one notices that the priest has now become considerably more angry-looking, and has a barcode tattooed onto the back of his skull. No-one notices during the ceremony that I'm cradling a detonator. In fact, everyone seems pretty unconcerned when the bible is launched into the congregation, towards the groom, and explodes violently.

Except the members of the crowd

on fire, who are understandably irritated.

Most of the hillbillies are running scared now, the guards don't know what's going on, and the father – lovingly known as 'Pappy' – is staggering around the mansion in shock. They're eyeing me up very closely, but I'm not clear to leave yet, so I swagger in through the front doors again and hop upstairs to the attic.

The attic, for some reason, is full of guards. Not to worry though, they see priests in lofts all the time, I'm just exorcising spirits and the like. I leave a holy remote mine on a consecrated chandelier bolt, and then amble my way downstairs.

They noticed. They take their time informing me of this, of course, so by the time I'm standing in the hallway, watching Pappy stagger the last steps down the stairs to the crushing point, *everyone in the room* pulls a piece out.

Time freezes momentarily, as the expression on Pappy's face changes from sorrow into a mixed anger/confusion/did-I-get-him-insured and he steps onto the lower half of the staircase.

In a beautiful split-second movement, I pull the trigger on the detonator, burst out of the door, and draw my dual Silverballers. Behind me, the sound of crashing glass and screaming. In front of me, my speedboat, and a drunk, naked redneck. Action!

at the union jan 26th - feb 4th

WEDNESDAY 31ST

**SIN CITY**  
 THE BEST VALUE NIGHT  
 IN LONDON  
 EVERY WEDNESDAY AT  
 THE UNION

Carlsberg  
**TETLEY'S  
 BLACKTHORN**

Carlsberg, Tetley's &  
 Blackthorn  
 only £1.30 a pint!  
 Reef Bottles  
 only £1.75 (all flavours)

**Fight Club Bouncy Boxing**

FRIDAY 26TH

**STICK IT ON!**

bring your music along

Smirnoff vodka & Draught mixer £1.25  
 Gordons Gin & Draught mixer £1.30

Bells & Draught mixer £1.35  
 Bacardi & Draught mixer £1.45

SUNDAY 4TH

**Coors**  
 FINE LIGHT BEER

**SUPER BOWL XLII**

**NFL**

**SUPERBOWL 2007**  
 Sunday 4th February 23:00 - late!

- LATE BAR UNTIL 3AM
- GIVEAWAYS ALL NIGHT
- BEST BAR IN KENSINGTON FOR THE SUPERBOWL

FRIDAY 2ND

**the mingle**

uk hip-hop & trip-hop

ALSO ON

- Fri 26th Stick it On!
- Sat 27th Alternative Music Night
- Tue 30rd Da Vinci's - Quiz Night
- Wed 31st Fight Club - Bouncy Boxing
- Thu 1st IC Radio
- Fri 2nd The Mingle
- Sun 3rd Superbowl - late bar!

[imperialcollegeunion.org/ents](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/ents)

Imperial College Union, Beit Quadrangle, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB  
 The Union encourages responsible drinking. R.O.A.R. Student I.D. Required.



# Phoenix

## The arts magazine of Imperial College

Phoenix is the arts magazine companion to Felix. It has existed for more than ninety years, and was originally edited by H. G. Wells.

This year, we're looking to re-establish Phoenix as a regular (termly) magazine, along with an editorial team independent from Felix. If you're interested in contributing work, designing the magazine, or helping out in any way, contact the editor of Phoenix ([hugh.stickley-mansfield@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:hugh.stickley-mansfield@imperial.ac.uk)), or the Felix editor ([felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:felix@imperial.ac.uk)).





# Ultima fira scorchioso puzzle time

Here's some puzzles originally supposed to be in last week's issue that were cut due to nasty adverts!

## Sudoku mania!

			9		2			1
	5			1		2		3
2		1		8			5	
						5	9	
	4		1		7		2	
	2	8						
	9			3		4		5
5		3		7			6	
6			8		5			

Solid

			7	8			1	
			3		5	8	6	
	8			2	1	3		
	1	7				5		
8								6
		4				1	2	
		1	2	6			8	
	4	3	8		9			
	2			3	4			

Bitchin'

		2	8	6			9	
	4						5	6
				1	5		7	
9				5	2		3	
	2						6	
	1		3	7				4
	7		5	2				
4	9						1	
	3			4	1	6		

ROCK

## Kakuro – round 3

	16	32					15	4
17					3	16		
13				14				
		20						15
	10				4			
	17			6				
				11				
	7	16						17
30							14	
10							12	

The numbers indicate the sum of the digits in the row or column indicated. For example, the square with 7 and 11 in it means "the numbers you write in the row below must add up to 7, and the numbers in the row across must add up to 11". You may use each number only once within a row of cells (called a 'run'), like sudoku.

Any spare cells are available for tiny photographs of dwarves in future weeks.

## Hexadoku – the destroyer mk. 2

E					A		5	6		F	8				
	6	5			E	1	8		F	0	3	A			
3		7	B		6	5		D		2					
8					B		3	4			5				
			0	7		1	9				2				
9	B			2		0	F	7		8	D		6		
5		E	7			F	B	D	1	6		C			
	D	6		3			2	0			A		7		
				D				C		2	8	7			
7	3	B	E			9	C	0	A	8	2		6		
		A			1				7	E		B	9		
2	9					0		6	4	D			A		
4	7	6			F					A	0		2		
B		C	3	A		5	4	8	0			E	F		
D	E	9		0	C	2		4		F	5		1	8	
F			5		B					1	9		4	D	3

# Sudoku 1,370

Complete the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 square contains the digits 1 to 9. E-mail your solution to [sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk) by **Tuesday 9am**. We will randomly select a winner to receive either a 128MB USB stick or a crate of beer. You must claim your prize within a week.

	8		6		2	7		
		4		5		6		
	6			3				
						1	6	
7								2
	1	6						
			1	8				
		8			5	3		
			7		3	4	8	

**Solution to 1,369**

8	2	5	1	3	9	7	6	4
9	3	7	6	8	4	2	5	1
1	6	4	7	5	2	3	8	9
7	5	3	4	2	6	1	9	8
2	4	9	8	1	3	5	7	6
6	1	8	9	7	5	4	3	2
4	7	1	5	6	8	9	2	3
3	9	6	2	4	7	8	1	5
5	8	2	3	9	1	6	4	7

**Jotting pad**

Get a fucking life you beige-featured bunch of queered-up shit-brained piss fumlbers. Your sort of cunt-eyed boggle-arsed cockweasel makes me physically sick. Still, good luck.

Thanks to everyone who entered. The winner this week is **Ben Earner**. Keep those entries coming in!

# This Week's Wii Remotes

**Scorpio (23 Oct – 21 Nov)**



Oh Smithers we do! Oh Smithers we do! OH SMITHERS WE LOVE YOU! You are a true legend of the physics department.

Your enthusiasm knows no bounds as you answer every question put forth by every lecturer ever. Keep it up. Your country needs you!

**Sagittarius (22 Nov – 21 Dec)**



Fuck off phone. Really. Just fuck off. Your incessant ringing is going to make me break you. I'm going to break every bit of

plastic in your casing. I'm going to rip you wire from wire. I'm going to tear of your earpiece and shit down your handset.

**Capricorn (22 Dec – 19 Jan)**



So, this week's TV page has been demoted to the horoscopes page. Waking The Dead. Watch it. Five Days. Also watch it.

Er... Mona the Vampire is cackling to herself all of a sudden. I think she's going to plunge her fangs into my bratwurst... neck!

**Aquarius (20 Jan – 18 Feb)**



This week you notice a portal to another dimension located just behind the second drawer on your bedroom dressing table.

Barnyard, as it's known, is a world without war, grief or strife – where everyone lives in peace and tranquility. Yeah, we can do satire too.

**Pisces (19 Feb – 20 Mar)**



So... the Felix "dungeon" as it is affectionately known... No, really. Considering I live in a FUCKING HELL HOLE, the

dungeon is pretty much a tramp's nirvana. ANYWAY, we've had a tidy up. I can now eat my dinner off the floor as well as out of your mum.

**Aries (21 Mar – 20 Apr)**



This week you buy a gun of the highest calibre available. It comes with the most powerful .12 gauge bullets you've ever

had the pleasure to shoot out of the barrel of your most powerful gun ever. The metal is made from the best diamond ever and it rocks.

**Taurus (21 Apr – 21 May)**



Well done crossword fans. You didn't pander to The Bearded Intruder's juvenile attempt for attention by complaining about his

H.I.L.A.R.I.O.U.S. faux-crossword. Do not support this vagabond! He rapes babies whilst whispering convoluted sentences of grim death.

**Gemini (22 May – 21 Jun)**



Well done crossword fans. You didn't pander to The Bearded Intruder's juvenile attempt for attention by complaining about his

H.I.L.A.R.I.O.U.S. faux-crossword. Do not support this vagabond! He rapes babies whilst whispering convoluted sentences of grim death.

**Cancer (22 Jun – 22 Jul)**



Darling, I love you. You know, the way you smile when I call you beautiful. The way you walk with a slight spring in your step. I

love when you rub your eyes in the morning, surprised to find my seed slathered unevenly. Ha! Spider-man! You didn't see that coming!

**Leo (23 Jul – 22 Aug)**



I've got a glove full of vaseline to lube up your axe gash with. Of Men And Mice references are dominating the newspaper this

week eh folks? Cultured bunch of scatological shitbags us lot aren't we? Tip: make sure you twist and stab, it ensures maximum seepage.

**Virgo (23 Aug – 22 Sept)**



This week your man mammaries swell to epic proportions. After dishing out obligatory squeezes to all your friends, you decide to

get implants in yaw buttocks. You sit down on a vicious cockroach that burrows up your anus and proceeds to devour your insides.

**Libra (23 Sept – Oct 22)**



You drop off your kids at the swimming pool as you do every Tuesday. Unfortunately, some bastard has taken your parking

space. This is not on. Reverse bay parking quickly ensues causing catastrophic carnage. The clean up operation is going to be a mess.

# Felix Crossword 1,370

1		2		3		4		5		6	7		8
									9				
10						11							
	12									13			
14													
15				16				17				18	
19					20		21						
22		23			24					25			
													26
27										28			
29					30								

**ACROSS**

- 1 Setter is is with fifty others in city of foolishness (10)
- 6 Strip and follow a follower (4)
- 10 Fear of god (5)
- 11 Screwdrivers from Idaho? (9)
- 12 Adjusting king after work, during tea (8)
- 13 Lump of mixed French spice (5)
- 15 Add to feds between gold and time (8)
- 17 Garbled news as a city (7)
- 19 Family of reverse mention motion (7)
- 21 Water gods look after Docklands (4,3)
- 22 Confused, Adrian lost his head at lowest point (5)
- 24 see 30
- 27 Mixture I purport to mix without heat (9)
- 28 Provide one hundred at Eritrea (5)
- 29 In this, how to display (4)
- 30 & 24 Score an eighth? (3,7,3,5)

**DOWN**

- 1 Mischievous children behead procurers (4)
- 2 Dry 6 leads and follows the crowd (9)
- 3 Two companies and a bean (5)
- 4 Socialist breaks down iron stilt (7)
- 5 Dispersed as great dispersal agent (7)
- 7 Open, for the love of God! (5)
- 8 Neglects criticism concerning (10)
- 9 Broken hip sways in canals (8)
- 14 Mischievous child in attempt to hijack anapests (10)
- 16 The id of Irmgard (8)
- 18 Viewer of Boris's organ (9)
- 20 Disorganised charging with no end of humiliation (7)
- 21 Horrifying disfigured children ending abruptly (7)
- 23 Horrifying disfigured children ending abruptly (5)
- 25 Tinned Peruvian? (5)
- 26 Dry king in assistance (4)

# Scarecrow

As you might have spotted, I didn't have time to do a crossword last week, so I was rather pleased when someone stepped in to do one at short notice. However, it seems Mr Barbatus has something of a reputation for mischief, and came up with a rather unfortunately impossible puzzle.

This week's crossword may be familiar to those of you with long memories, though since no-one solved it then, it's clearly new to some of you. Last time, there was no prize, of course, so hopefully someone'll have a pop at it for the tenner.

**Scarecrow**

**Solution to Crossword 1,359**

	8	2	5	1	3	9	7	6	4
	9	3	7	6	8	4	2	5	1
	1	6	4	7	5	2	3	8	9
	7	5	3	4	2	6	1	9	8
	2	4	9	8	1	3	5	7	6
	H	I	S	R	E	A	L	L	
	I	S	N	'	T	A	S	E	
	Y	A	S	Y	O	U	M		
	G	H	T	T	H	I	N	K	

Send your answers to [sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk) or bring this page down to the Felix office in the West Wing of Beit Quad by **Wednesday 9am**. There was no winner last week, due to circumstances beyond our control, so the prize money goes towards keeping Felix running for another week. Dear god, we need it. We can't even afford water.

# IC 1sts demolish everyone

Jack Cornish

After one too many mince pies over the festive period, returning to the Fortress to play 70 minutes of gruelling hockey was a daunting task, however the spirit of ICHC shone through with what can only be described as a demolition project!

Ladies Hockey	
IC 1sts	7
RUMS 1sts	3

It was a sunny January Wednesday at Harlington when the IC ladies 1s took on RUMS ladies 1s. Having worked off the mince pies and Christmas cake during a frenzied Monday training session, the girls were well up for some top-class hockey action!

Spirits were high in the changing rooms despite a guest appearance by Howard in goal, and there was much discussion about five o'clock shadows and wandering bikini lines.

Out on the pitch, the IC ladies hit RUMS hard from the first whistle and after some nifty passing from Span and Cate in midfield and total domination of the D, Argentina's finest deflected a cross into the goal. 1-0 to IC. A flurry of goals followed including one each for Pru and Lucy - losing their goal virginity in style - and one for Moonie.

With IC 4-0 up it looked like there was no comeback for RUMs with the defence looking solid and a little bored. It was rumoured that there was even time for some flirtation between a certain defender and a mystery man from the Mens 1s who wears a lot of green. A lucky RUMS break put the score to 4-1 but, by half time, Argentina had struck again and the score was 5-1.

After an inspirational half-time chat, IC came out and looked distinctly lethargic. The second half was slow-paced until IC were awarded a penalty flick when a



They look like golf sticks but thankfully we haven't had to print two issues with golf on the back page!

short corner was stopped by a foot on the line. Womble drove it home nutmegging the goalie. Cate struck again for IC with an exemplary strike from the top of the D, however the umpire controversially disallowed it despite a torrent of abuse from the sideline. RUMS fought back in the second half and despite scoring in the wrong end scored another two. The final score was 7-3 and player of the match went to Howard.

Mens Hockey	
IC 1sts	12
IC Medicals 1sts	1

Having not lost to the Medic scum for over 2 years and having already beaten them twice this season one might have thought this match was pointless, even so credit was due to the medics for turning up

to a match that promised so much humiliation!

Harvester, back from war wounds to his forehead, regained his captaincy from Date Rape and was determined to see his squadron perform as well as the Ladies! Sure enough there were no lasting hangovers from Christmas and within minutes the goals started flowing.

Slick interplay between Star Wars and Toady caused havoc in the Medics defence (as they have done over the last four years) resulting in a couple of flying goals. The short corner routines seemed unstoppable and Jumanji was magical with a final tally of five to his name. Not forgetting the defensive players who saw very little of the ball but managed to perfect their celebration techniques, building on previous demonstrations by a certain ladies captain! But on a serious note Date Rape, Foetus and Shipman were solid and learnt a lot

about pills, child birth and professionalism while consoling the Medics. The second half saw the departure of Mountie and the arrival of Batty, who with limited chances left to bash some Medic arse took the opportunity to make those in red go red! He managed to feed the forwards well, in particular the rat who started scoring goals like the plague.

With only minutes left and double figures reached Date Rape decided it was time provide the female supporters with some long awaited attention. While the rest of the IC 1sts watched him work his magic the Medics slipped a sly one past Plug who having seen almost none of the ball was getting some beauty sleep. A couple more were scored soon after and the final whistle followed with which came the formalities - hand shakes, pats on the back and a request not to publish a match report (Oops!).

## Sports results

### Wednesday 17th January

Football:	
Men's 4s	1
Royal Vets 1s	2

Men's 5s	1
KCL Medical School 2s	1

Men's 7s	2
University of the Arts 1s	4

Hockey:	
Men's 1st	12
Imperial Medicals 1s	1

Men's 3s	1
St Barts 2s	2

Women's 1s	7
Royal Free 1s	3

Women's 2s	0
KCL Medical School 4s	0

Netball:	
Women's 1s	22
Royal Free 1s	30

Women's 2s	39
St Barts 3s	8

Rugby:	
Men's 1s	10
Royal Free 1s	17

Men's 2s	30
Roehampton 1s	5

Women's 1s	14
Royal Vets 1s	42

### Saturday 20th January

Football:	
Men's 1s	1
UCL 1s	1

Men's 2s	2
Royal Holloway 2s	1

Men's 6s	1
KCL 6s	1

Tennis:	
Men's 1s	8
Queen Mary 1s	2

## AdLib

by Tevong You

