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Ice Climbing Soc

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# felix

Guardian Student Newspaper of the Year

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# ICU President versus Simon Cowell (really)

RAG raises enough money to force John Collins to audition for the new series of the X-Factor (possibly in a pink leotard)

**Andy Sykes**  
Editor-in-chief

ICU President John Collins has agreed to audition for The X-Factor series.

At the CGCU slave auction on Tuesday, Mr Collins was sold for £450, with money pledged by sabbaticals, other Union officers, and *Felix*. The aim of the bid was to co-

erce Mr Collins to audition for the new series of the X-Factor while dressed in a pink tutu. The song selected for him was *My Humps* by The Black-eyed Peas.

Mr Collins appeared sceptical that the money pledged would ever materialise. However, RAG Chair Stephen Brown presented £450 in pound coins and notes to Mr Collins on Thursday, who insisted on

weighing the money to be sure it was the correct amount. In fact, Mr Brown had raised £485.

Mr Collins has asked to be accompanied by the CGCU Barbershop Quartet, and Mr Brown has agreed to this concession. The auditions are in March.

The money raised by the auctioning of Mr Collins will be given to charity by RAG.



Left: Mr Collins is presented with the money. Right: the application form, complete with Mr Collins' name

## RCSU get their brand new office



College's "Space Executive" have reversed their earlier decision to deny the RCSU use of the old print shop on the Walkway for their office. Jad Marrouche, RCSU President, had this to say to *Felix*: "I'd particularly like to thank John Collins, Alex Guite, and our friends at the Faculty of Natural Sciences for helping us achieve this latest milestone, but most importantly thank you to all those students who signed our petition and joined our protest."

# Union core complete

Main entrance to the Union re-opens after more than six months of work – but vandalism continues in the building

**Emily Lines**  
Editor-in-toilet

The Union finally has use of the central core, after more than six months of building work. The building project has suffered numerous setbacks and delays; during the summer break, asbestos was discovered in the core, and a lack of plans for the building (due to its age) which lead to workmen cutting water pipes, causing flooding.

The lift, the centrepiece of the core redevelopment, is to be delivered by March.

The core is now mostly complete, with contractors applying a few finishing touches to the building. A minor drama erupted last week when the sabbs discovered the new doors ordered for the entrance to Union Reception and the Union Dining Hall were about an inch too large and would not close properly. The doors have since been replaced.

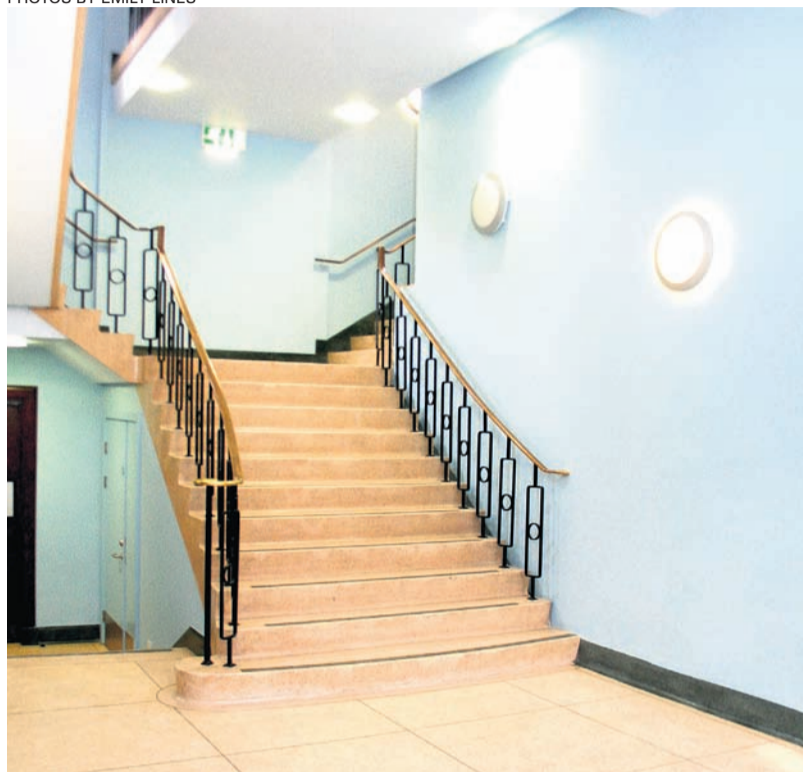
The opening of the core completes the first phase of the Beit redevelopment. The next phase involves the splitting of the Union Gym into two levels; the upper level will become the Student Activities Centre, and the lower level of the gym will be enlarged.

The shiny new entrance and furniture in the bar seem to have had no effect on the penchant of drinkers to vandalise the toilets in the building. After the Superbowl event last week, the men's toilets behind the Union bar suffered damage, and further punishment had caused the cubicles to fall over completely.

The toilets had not been repaired, and on Thursday morning after Sports Night in the Union, the toilets had been almost completely destroyed. Cubicles were ripped up, fittings were damaged, and the floor was covered with urine, beer, food and vomit.

It is not clear whether those responsible for the vandalism are Imperial students, or from elsewhere.

PHOTOS BY EMILY LINES



**Top: the newly-opened Union core, complete with fetching blue colour. Bottom: the mens' toilets behind the Union bar**

# “Naughty vending machines” shock

PHOTO BY EMERSON VIGOUREUX



**The NaughtyVend vending machine – yes, they are flashing nipples**

**Tom Roberts**  
Editor-in-sheep

New vending machines have arrived in the Union, and have caused a bit of a stir with the normally conservative College population.

The machines are made by NaughtyVend, and feature items such as vibrating cockrings (*there's a phrase I never thought I'd see in a news article – Ed.*), flashing nipples, handcuffs and inflatable sheep.

In the interests of research, *Felix* purchased a number of these items, but was unable to claim them on expenses as the machine refused to provide the author with a VAT

receipt.

The sheep seems to be anatomically correct in almost all respects, including an orifice to the rear for purposes unknown.

Surprisingly, no complaints have been received by the Union yet, though the machines have only been in place for a week. Eyebrows were raised in the Beit offices at the “Blowdom” cannabis condom. The machines are in both the ladies and mens facilities; according to the NaughtyVend website, the male products outsell the female ones almost four-to-one.

The disproportionate ratio of the sexes at the College is unlikely to buck this trend.

## felix 1,373

Friday 16.02.07

### Imperial spaceman

“Garneau was then picked to be Canada’s first astronaut in March 1984. Nine months later – the shortest training of any astronaut in NASA’s history at that time, he found himself staring down the Earth from the Challenger Shuttle.”

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### Creaking Doors

“*Narcissus Road* is really a mixed bag of an album, it fluctuates between quite interesting to intensely tedious but throughout the weakness of lyrics and repeating musical themes detract from good potential.”

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### Riiiiise Lord Lecter

“It’s fairly obvious that Hannibal Lecter is now purely a cash cow.”

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### Spreading the love

“For those of you who are unaware of the masterpieces created by Wes Anderson, I will now proceed to give you my very biased, slightly tribute-esque analysis of this talented man’s films.”

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### Twilight zone

“You will never find yourself wishing the game will hurry up so that you can get started on the next and this is a soul saver for those of us who like to finish our games without the pang of post-purchase-not-polished-off-guilt.”

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### Ice climbing

“A slab of ice a metre in size sheared off and hurtled through the air towards those tied into the belay some 40m below. It hit the ice above them and broke up.”

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### IC Footballers Rawk

“Kings, losing heavily, decided to make a tactical change, pushing everyone up front and leaving only one defender.”

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im in ur couch



steelin ur change

# CGCU Slave Auction raises £1000

The Union President loses at arm wrestling (to a girl!) and Union officers are auctioned all in aid of charity

**T. Monkey (thanks to Live!)**

Thursday night saw this year's CGCU Slave Auction raise almost £1000 for RAG from the auctioning of officers alone.

More than half of the money raised was for John Collins to audition for the X-Factor (see front page).

The first to be auctioned was the fetching Matsoc chair, Elly Jay, who went for princely sum of £10, to the dismay of RCS Motor Club, who had been looking for someone to polish their fire engine.

Former CGCU President and long-time Union hack Siddarth Singh only went for £11; a CGCU source says this is because "he's a little strange and quit difficult to shut up when you want some peace and quiet."

Serial midget and misogynist James Fok (current CGCU President) was bought by Ms Jay for the bargain price of £9. She seemed rather pleased with her new toy.

More significant sums were raised by Luke Taylor, ex-ACC Chair and Union bar legend. For £45 and 50 euros (no, we don't know why either) he took on John Collins in a yard-drinking competition. However, Mr Taylor was seen to be of greater stature and build than the ICU President, and hence allowed Mr Collins to drink a pint, rather than the yard (which is three pints).

Mr Taylor then proceeded to make the yard disappear in a matter of seconds, finishing it while Mr Collins was only halfway down his pint.

Other sabbs went for significantly less than Mr Collins; Dave Parry bought Jon Matthews (Deputy President, Finance & Services) for £60; rumours abound that Mr Parry may make his slave go out to dinner with Shama Rahman (see *Felix* *passim*). Ben "Fluffy" Harris (Deputy President, Education & Welfare) raised only £2 after being bought by the RCSU President, Jad Marrouche.

Mr Marrouche himself was sold for a yard competition against James Fok and the RSM Treasurer; surprisingly, Mr Fok beat them both. Plans were afoot for a gladiator-style jousting match on barstools, but both Mr Fok and Mr Marrouche were far too shaky after rapid consumption of three pints for this to be an option.

Mr Collins took on two girls in an arm-wrestling competition, only to lose to them both to his great embarrassment. To this day, he claims the young ladies cheated.

The event was marred when the Guilds managed to abscond with the RAG mascot in revenge for RAG's theft of the Guilds decoy Spanner mascot.

RAG Chair Stephen Brown is said to be "f\*\*king furious".

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LIVE!



Clockwise from top left: Elly Jay (Matsoc chair) with her new slave, James Fok (CGCU President), John Collins (President) gets beaten by a girl, and Fok and Collins suffer at the hands of the Hit Squad

## A round-up of RAG week

**Stephen Brown**  
RAG Chair

RAG week ended on a high at the City and Guilds College Union Slave Auction with Union President John Collins being bought by a consortium of his fellow sabbaticals, Felix staff and people still bitter about him leading us into the NUS for the tidy sum of £450. The current total raised for charity over the whole week is still to be determined but the RAG Chair has been overheard saying "£3000 and counting".

As a slave, Collins is being requested to enter the X-Factor auditions to be held later this year. This announcement was greeted with great amusement by patrons of the Union Bar. However a somewhat cynical Mr. Collin's announced that it would only go ahead "once he sees the money". As you can see from our photos, RAG duly obliged although Mr Collins insisted that the coins be weighed first.

Thursday evening also saw the traditional yard of ale race between the Presidents of CGCU, RCSU and the RSM. James Fok, CGCU President was the clear winner although this was disputed by some spectators due to the large volume of ale which ended up being spilt on the floor.

The author of this article was also on the receiving end of a mischievous bid after 2 Guildsman purchased him to appear on Page 3 wearing nothing but a kilt and a RAG t-shirt. Readers are warned that a large degree of nakedness will still be involved and may wish

to avert their gaze when it is published later in the term.

Despite the excellent take at their Slave Auction, the clear winners of the interfaculty fundraising "competition" was the re-formed RCSU. Their tours of the Queens Tower and RAG Lecturers Quiz proved particularly popular with students and a sum well over £1000 was raised. The lecturers quiz was a 3 way contest between a team of 3 chemistry lecturers, 3 physics lecturers and the RCSU Executive

Committee. Jad Marrouche and his RCSU all-stars duly triumphed, narrowly beating the chemistry staff after a tie-break.

Winners of the London Raid for the second year in a row was the "Cast of Casualty" team who raised £835 in under 6 hours. This was almost 4 times the amount raised by "We Saw the Queen" (they did, really) with commuters and tourists clearly being impressed enough with their outfits to hand over large sums of cash.



RCSU President Jad Marrouche becomes the target of the Hit Squad

## Sabb elections still not a farce (yet)



I've never seen such a crowded candidates meeting

This year's sabbatical elections look to become rather interesting, with no position remaining uncontested.

There are now seven candidates standing for President, including two current sabbatical officers, compared to last week when there were only four fully-seconded candidates.

The position of Felix Editor had been uncontested until just before the close of nominations, when two additional candidates appeared.

There are both experienced and inexperienced candidates running for many of the positions, including President, showing a greater interest in the Union by the student body than in previous years. At the candidates meeting on Wednesday, ICU President John Collins made a point of trying to level the playing field between 'hack' candidates and relative newcomers.

See next week's *Felix* for manifestos of each candidate.



# Imperial's very own astronaut

*Felix* looks back over the life of former IC Electrical Engineer Marc Garneau and poses a few questions

**Michelle Picard-Aitken**  
Token French-Canadian

What does Imperial College look like from space? Undoubtedly very small, but Imperial has one alumnus who's had the chance to see it for himself. Marc Garneau, who received his PhD in Electrical Engineering from Imperial in 1973, became the first Canadian in space in October 1984.

Much of Garneau's life reads like the diary of an over-achiever. Born in 1949 to a French-Canadian family, Garneau grew up in and around

Quebec City, except for three years in the early 60s, when his giddy-ather was posted in London. (Garneau attended the Lycée Français de Londres, just down the street from Imperial College on Cromwell Road.) After obtaining his B.Sc. in Engineering Physics from the Royal Military College of Kingston (Canada), Garneau immediately began his doctoral studies at Imperial.

Upon his return to Canada, Garneau joined the Canadian Navy to fulfill his ambition of sailing the high seas. He quickly worked his way through several postings, from

Combat Systems Engineer (1974) to Project Engineer (1977), Commander (1982), and finally Captain (1986). During this time, his accomplishments dealt mainly with developing, improving and troubleshooting naval weapons systems and communications.

No doubt Garneau's impressive track record, not to mention his superb physical condition, helped him become one of six chosen from 4000 applicants for the new Canadian Astronaut Program (CAP).

Garneau was then picked to be Canada's first astronaut in March

1984. Nine months later – the shortest training of any astronaut in NASA's history at that time, he found himself staring down the Earth from the Challenger Shuttle. Acting as Payload Specialist for the eight-day mission, he thus became the first Canadian in space, and a national hero.

Speaking to the media from space, Garneau looked both giddy and awed: "When you look out at your own planet and see absolutely out-of-this-world incredible views of entire subcontinents, you begin to appreciate what the world is re-

ally like."

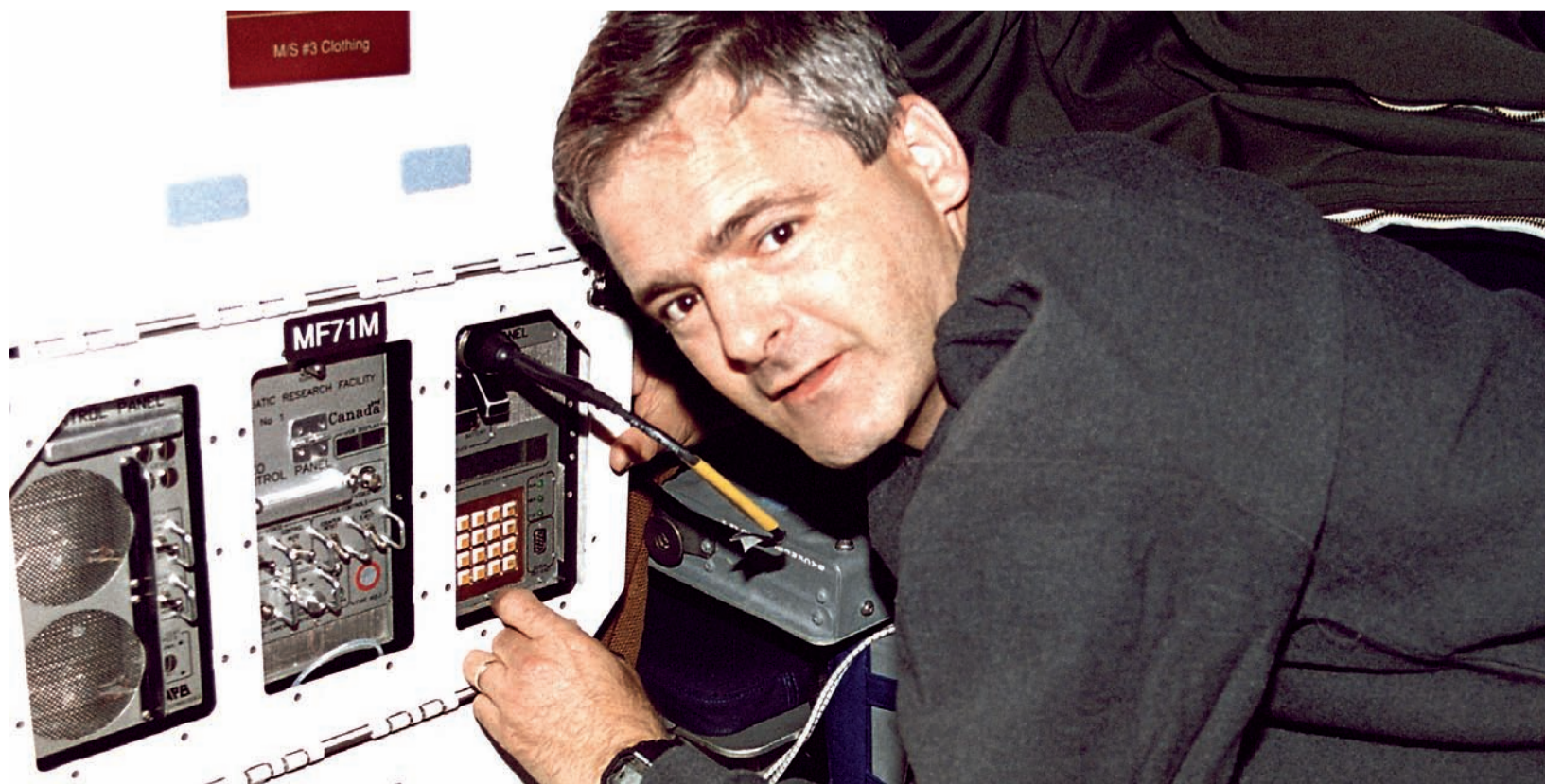
Bitten by the space travel bug, Garneau gave up his naval career in 1989 to devote himself to the Canadian space program, and undertake further pilot and astronaut training.

As a result, Garneau was chosen by NASA to fly twice more out of the Earth's atmosphere, as Mission Specialist on the Endeavour Shuttle in May 1996 and December 2000. His role in these missions involved conducting experiments, as well as helping assemble the International Space Station. In his free time, he loved to float while listening to Beethoven or Bach on his Walkman.

Back on Earth after his last mission, Garneau became director of the Canadian Space Agency (CSA), but left his post in 2005 to run for office in the federal elections. Although he lost the election, he remains an active member of the Liberal Party of Canada. Garneau is also currently Chancellor of Carleton University, sits on the board of several charities and participates in federal working groups dealing with energy, health and air pollution.

He often speaks publicly of the 19 days he spent in space, of the spiritual awe he experienced, as well as his horror in seeing the impact of human activity on the planet. From the shuttle windows, Garneau saw the fires burning through the Amazonian forest, beige clouds of air pollution hanging over California and the Mediterranean basin, and Lake Chad shrinking while desertification spreads over the African subcontinent.

Marc Garneau now lives in Montreal, Canada, where is often seen walking his dog. From his home, Garneau recently told Felix about his experience at Imperial College.



Marc Garneau flexing his electrical engineering muscles

### Why did you choose to complete your PhD at Imperial?

In my mind, Imperial College was the best Engineering College in England.

So I felt lucky to have the opportunity to do my postgraduate work in the Communications section of the Electrical Engineering Department. I even had the brilliant Colin Cherry as my supervisor. He was an eccentric genius whom I admired greatly, and who was a wonderful mentor.

### What do you remember most about your three years at Imperial?

I had a fantastic time at Imperial. I was a poor student like everyone else and lived in 4 different bedsits, all within walking distance of the College. I became an expert, again like everyone else, at finding events that were giving out free food!

Life was simple: I was poor but healthy, and nothing distracted me from my work. I was able to focus totally on my research.

### With all this research going on, did you find any time to participate in groups or sports?

I played on the College water-polo team, as well as on the University of London team. We actually won the British University championships in 1971! I also swam for the College, and was a major user of the squash courts.

### Do you believe there is something specific from those years that helped you become the first Canadian in space?

I think the fact that Imperial College has such a solid international reputation helped a lot. Also, having lived abroad, I was viewed as having a broader experience in international issues.

### You grew up mainly in Canada. Was there something from home that you missed while you were abroad?

Once in a while, I needed to get out of London into the wide open spaces. I'd escape and go on hikes in the Lake District, Scotland or Wales. Perhaps that's the Canadian in me!

So, while you probably can't see Imperial College from space, there is apparently no limit to how far a degree from Imperial can take you.



Imperial alumnus Marc Garneau, far right, and his fellow astronauts

## Digging up the Royal School of Mines' past

Colin Barras

"One of the biggest things about the Royal School of Mines is the tradition," says Seb Turner, current president of the RSM. It isn't hard to believe this as we sit in the impressive foyer of the Royal School of Mines building on Prince Consort Road. The RSM has existed, in one form or other, for well over 150 years. And that gives its members a different perspective on Imperial's centenary year.

The Royal School of Mines began life in 1851 as the Government School of Mines and Science Applied to the Arts, and it gathered its first teaching staff from the Geological Survey and the Museum of Economic Geology. It underwent a number of name changes in its first decade, but eventually became the RSM in 1863. In these early days, the school was located on Jermyn Street, south of Piccadilly. It was not until 1872 that the school moved west to South Kensington, taking up residence in the Huxley Building on Exhibition Road. That building is now the Henry Cole wing of the Victoria and Albert Museum; the RSM moved to its current location in 1913.

Of course, by that time the RSM was no longer an independent school. "In 1907 we merged into the Imperial College name as one of the founding schools," Seb explains. The merger would benefit both: "The reputation of Imperial and the Royal School of Mines, they're both as impressive as each other," he continues. So, I suggest, just like Norwich Union, 'together we're stronger'? "In some ways, yeah!" he laughs.

In 2001 Imperial moved to a faculty structure, with the RSM joining City & Guilds in the newly formed Faculty of Engineering. In a student referendum, engineering students opted for the name "City & Guilds" for their student union, with the 100-year-old RSM Union ceasing to exist



The familiar logo of the Royal School of Mines which began life way back in 1851

ist in 2001. "I think one of the main reasons for that was it was just too small. Compared to City & Guilds or the Medicine Union. There were the three big Unions and us, the smaller one," explains Seb. But the RSM fought back and, in 2002, it was recognised as a Clubs and Societies Committee within the wider Union. The RSM name was preserved. "We're well over 100 years old as a Union, and the department is over 150 years old. So it would

have been a shame to lose it," says Seb. "But the other thing is, I think the students in this department are slightly different to the students at the rest of Imperial. I think they are slightly more outgoing."

Imperial students had reason to thank those outgoing RSM students in 2005; when the Southside Bar was closed, the RSM was at the heart of the campaign for a replacement. "That campaign was led by the RSM and the Real Ale society,"

Seb tells me. "Tobias Dalton, who founded the Real Ale Society, was the forerunner. It was only because of those moves that Harrington's was ever built. It was never in the plans to be there."

The RSM may be small, but it is very active. Evidence for that can be seen in the wide range of societies and events within the RSM. Chief among the events is the Bottle Match, played every year against Camborne School of Mines, part of

the University of Exeter. The first match took place in 1902, which makes it one of the oldest varsity matches in the world, second only to the Oxford and Cambridge boat race. The teams compete for a 3-foot-tall beer bottle that fell off the back of a lorry and into the possession of RSM students in 1946. This year's match, the 105th Bottle, begins on Friday 23rd February. "We're putting it under the title of 'Centenary Bottle Match'," says Seb, "although the 100 year Bottle Match was actually five years ago." We can but hope that Imperial's 100th anniversary will inspire the RSM to retain the bottle for an eleventh straight year.

So, how else does the 150 year-old RSM plan to mark Imperial's centenary? "We have plans to do a few events," Seb says. He picks up a leaflet that is lying on the table in front of us. It's an advert for a symposium that is being organised by RSM's De La Beche Society later in February. "This is going under the title 'Centenary Symposium', on Frontier Geology. And we're having a talk by one of the retired lecturers, Professor Dick Selley. He's been doing a lot of research into the history of the RSM and the departments over the last 100 years, which will be the main centenary event. That'll happen later this term or in the summer."

The RSM may have had some hard times in recent years, but it seems to be a vibrant organisation today. Seb agrees: "Maybe 300 or 400 of the students go to an RSM event at some point in the year. That's nearly 50% of our members." I'm suitably impressed. "The RSM is a good reason to get together. People love being a part of it. They wear the regalia with pride." With pride? "Yeah! We've got all sorts of things. Hoodies, t-shirts, ties, which sell really well." And I can think of no more appropriate blend of the old and new within the RSM than a Hoodie bearing the RSM logo.

# Nukes: deterrent or legacy?

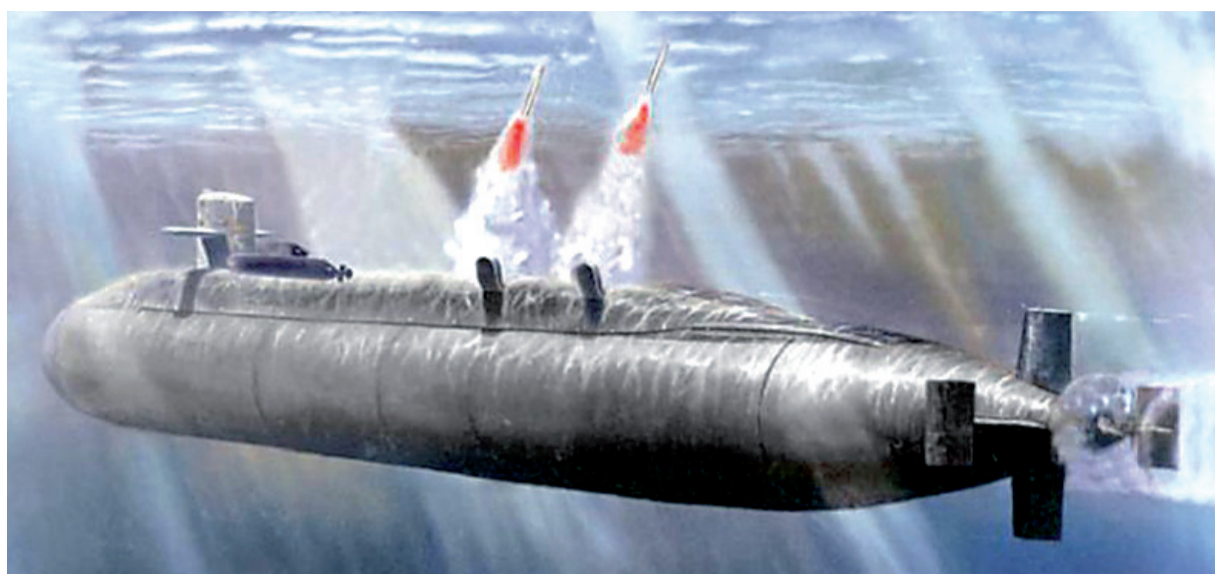
Camilla Royle

Parliament will vote this March on whether or not to renew the UK's submarine based nuclear weapons system – Trident. A paper submitted by Tony Blair proposes that the system, originally commissioned by former prime minister Margaret Thatcher in 1980, should be replaced at a cost of around £50 billion. To remain as one of the world's nuclear powers, Britain would have to replace these weapons before 2019 when they will otherwise start to deteriorate.

Blair's proposal, which initially called for the replacement of all 192 nuclear missiles has now been modified and suggests replacing 160 of them and possibly reducing the number of submarines employed in the system from four to three. Blair has emphasised "uncertainties" for the future of the country, he has admitted that it is unlikely that a country such as Iran or North Korea would attempt to attack Britain but said that this is not impossible.

The government have been criticised for possibly breaching article VI of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty which calls for members to disarm when possible. However Jack Straw has stated that "only a simpleton" would see Trident as violating the treaty. It is also a hugely expensive project, it will protect 500 jobs at Rolls Royce including those of the scientists and engineers involved but could also drain money away from public services such as the NHS.

During the cold war, nuclear weapons were employed by the



China is the third nation to demonstrate its satellite destroying capabilities

world's wealthiest nations on the basis that if two countries possess them neither will attack the other out of fear. They have only ever been used once – in an attack by the US on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Today's nuclear weapons are about eight times more powerful than those used in Japan and each of the Trident missiles could potentially kill a million people.

Wars in the twentieth century are carried out ostensibly to deal with a minority of dangerous people; to stop terrorist organisations or to remove a dictator. Before the war in Iraq we were promised that weapons technology would be used to limit civilian deaths and that it would all be over very quickly. It's impossible to use nuclear weapons

without causing civilian deaths. They are often, therefore dismissed as inappropriate if the ideals of modern warfare are to be upheld.

Clearly a lot has changed since the 1980s. At that time Tony Blair was younger and more idealistic. He was part of a Labour party founded on socialist principles, opposed Thatcher's Conservative government and was a proud member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). In 1982 he described Trident as "nuclear madness", a year later he was elected to parliament for the first time. Lord Hattersley, the former deputy leader of the Labour party (who probably wasn't in the CND) has said that there is no need for a nuclear deterrent now, describing it merely

as a "status symbol".

The Liberal democrats and several others have pointed out that the decision does seem to be going to parliament very quickly. They have argued that there needs to be a more substantial debate before a decision is made. Could it be that a prime minister with a reputation damaged by anti-war protests, privatisation and scandal is making a last ditch effort to be remembered?

The debate on nuclear weapons has brought together members of the two main parties in support of Trident but it has also united mass movements against it. The CND will be demonstrating in central London jointly with the stop the war coalition on Saturday the 24th February.



Omar Hashmi  
Politics Editor

The next American election is looking like a doozy. Democrats have their hotshots lined up in rows – not only Clinton and Obama, but John Edwards (who ran for VP) is now having a shot at the big seat, and even of faithful Mr Environment Al Gore could very soon be in the picture. The Republicans too have their own celebrities. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani – "America's Mayor" and national hero from 9/11 is standing, as well as Senator John McCain, a part of America's political furniture. All we need now is a scandal here, and some closet skeletons there, and we will have a reality show better than big brother can ever give. Who could be apathetic about such an exciting election, right?!

Nuclear power has become far too useful as a diplomatic and military leverage to ever realistically consider that we will find a world without them. Therefore, as a collective race we must ensure that some states do not hold others to ransom with the technologically sophisticated yet age-old simplicity of brute force. Such conditions can only rise if future rulers allow the growth and development of other nations, including nuclear power, and allow much fairer international game-play. If not, then the oppressed might just totally rebel.

## Democrat dream ticket may just come true

Alex Guite

There is no reason for you to have heard of a former community organiser and civil rights lawyer elected two years ago to the United States Senate after an uncontroversial career in the Illinois State Legislature. But last Saturday, in the frosts of Illinois, invoking the legacy of Lincoln and promising to transform American politics, Barack Obama launched his campaign for the White House. Already, some are calling him the first black President of the United States.

It's not hyperbole either: the 45 year old is running second only to Hillary Clinton in opinion polls and his ability to reach across partisan divides gives him a wide support base. He's clearly rattling some cages as well: despite the unwritten rule not to interfere in the domestic politics of another nation, Australian Prime Minister and fierce Bush ally John Howard attacked Obama on Monday over his views on Iraq.

America was introduced to Obama little over two years ago when he delivered a stirring and enthusiastically received speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention. The media coverage which followed his condemnation of artificial divides in American politics and his appeal to the "audacity of hope" turned him into an instant celebrity. With Bush's re-election and a generally poor showing by Democrats



Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer – Senator Barack Obama with former President Clinton

across the country a few weeks later, Obama's convincing victory in the Illinois Senate race stood out and he was established as the new face of the American left.

Since that 20 minute speech in Boston, Obama mania has reached fever pitch. You're just as likely to see him debating foreign relations on the news as to see him talking about his childhood on a chat show. You

can even poke him on Facebook. In October he published *The Audacity of Hope*: 288 pages of lucid prose outlining his political convictions and thoughts on "reclaiming the American dream". It shot to the top of the bestseller lists and remained there in the run up to Christmas with many finding a copy at the bottom of their stockings.

So, what is it that turned an un-

known politician into a cultural icon and a credible contender for Commander in Chief? One clue lies in his ethnic mix: the son of a Kenyan father and a white Kansas mother he can effortlessly bridge the black and white divide which still exists in some parts of America. Within his varied life story most people can find some common narrative; his everyman image has been mirrored and amplified by a willing media. Or as Obama puts it with characteristic elegance and economy of language, "people project their hopes on me".

Moreover, unlike many of his Senate colleagues, Obama has yet to experience a targeted negative campaign against him. When this undoubtedly happens, it is sure to add some wrinkles to that fresh image. There are signs of it already: in suspicious times having a surname which rhymes with Osama and with Hussein as a middle name has made him an easy target for those on the right. With heavy Islamophobic undercurrents, the six years he spent at a Muslim school in Indonesia are also coming under scrutiny from partisan commentators. CNN have even noted, as if there may somehow be something sinister in this, that his trademark dress sense, a dark suit with a white open collar shirt, is similar to that favoured by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

There is also another hurdle to

overcome before Obama can become President: securing the Democratic nomination. Clinton has a comfortable lead over him in the polls and won't be easy to beat once her campaign gets into full swing. Some of have suggested a Clinton-Obama dream ticket, but whilst it's sure to get Democratic hearts pounding, the electoral maths sadly doesn't add up. America may be ready for a woman or a black man in the White House, but particularly in the Southern states, it doesn't seem to be ready for both at the same time.

There's no doubt that the Clinton-Obama rivalry will make for entertaining primaries, but his principled opposition to the Iraq war does give him a major advantage over his rivals. Unlike his Democratic rivals in the current election, or John Kerry in the last, Obama doesn't need to perform political gymnastics; he has no need to reconcile initial support for the war with belated condemnation of the Bush administration's failings in Iraq.

The election is still almost two years away. In that same amount of time Obama has travelled from obscurity to the national stage. Whether or not the next two years are Obama's journey to the White House remains to be seen. But one thing is for sure, you'll soon have no good reason for not having heard of this former community organiser and civil rights lawyer.

# Letters to the Editor

## Naked people and homosexuality

A Catholic defends against the claim that Christians are homophobic, and a previous centrefold model takes issue with being called "not conventionally beautiful"

### A response to the gay adoption article

Sir,

In Felix #1,372, an article ("Gay Adoption - Where's the Crime?") raised some interesting issues. I would like to address some of the questions raised in the (apparently anonymous) article.

The first misconception is that Christians are homophobic: this could not be further from the truth. Even the Catholic church does not "condemn" gays because of their sexual inclination. The main problem is that, after much research, the Church believes that homosexual relationships tend to be very unstable. The Catholic adoption agencies would not place a child in the care of any couple that is likely to split up, be it same-sex or otherwise. They would probably also look at more important criteria than whether or not the couple "drink Stella Artois" and have "only one Geography GCSE between them", but that's another matter.

The comment that Holy scripture was written "several hundred years after" the lives of Jesus and Mohammed is clearly misguided. I am not qualified to write about Islam, but in the Christian case, Bible scholars have dated the synoptic gospels (Mark, then Matthew and Luke) to only thirty to forty years after Jesus' death, while St. John's gospel is thought to have been committed to paper sixty years later. The epistles were written even earlier, as was the qualla, a text common to St. Luke's and St. Matthew's gospels. Of all writings from antiq-

uity, dating techniques show that the New Testament is the most authentic, and closest to the original (these techniques are quite complicated, and I wouldn't like to go into details here).

Finally, dismissing religion as "fairytales" is rash and somewhat ill thought out. As a Catholic, I see plenty of evidence for the existence of God, or at least the "supernatural", if only from a "Dives and Lazarus" point of view. As a scientist, I see little to either prove or disprove the existence of God. I would suggest that religion is at least as plausible as, say, quantum mechanics or the Higgs mechanism. This world is a very complex place, and so much of what we "know" to be true can come unstitched without much effort (as anyone who has done a physics degree can tell you). The author has clearly made his decision, and that is to be respected, but he should show respect for other people's beliefs in return.

I agree that the church does seem to be discriminating against homosexuals, but there is something deeper in the story that has emerged over recent weeks. It is alarming that the government thinks it can dictate the moral standards of this country. Do we really think that the people who supported the war in Iraq, and who wish to renew Trident, are right to make moral decisions for us in our every day lives? The truth is, I am worried that this may only be the start of government interference in people's spiritual life and moral decisions.

I would add that I have nothing against homosexuals; Jesus calls for us to love everyone to the best of our ability, and I have nothing but respect for gays. I hope that this letter has been informative, and not offensive in anyway.

Andy Sykes replies,

*The only real issue that the article raised was that adoption cases should be considered on an individual basis, whether they come from hetero- or homosexual couples; sadly, you have failed to grasp or address that point in your reply, instead reacting against the manner in which the author expressed his views.*

*Indeed, the likelihood of a couple splitting up ought to be the crucial factor in deciding whether to place a child in that couple's care. However, you deny the eligibility of same-sex couples by alleging that their relationships 'tend to be very unstable' without adducing any relevant evidence. Even if there were such evidence, as a scientist, you should know better that to conclude from it that all same-sex relationships are therefore unstable. So why should adoption cases not be considered on individual merit, especially if the Church has nothing against gays, as you maintain?*

*The closing couple of paragraphs of your letter seem to offer a pointer. Your worry about the government's dictating moral standards would appear to imply that you consider adoption by homosexual couple immoral. This belies your repeated denial of homophobic sentiments within the Christian community (which at any rate is extremely hard to take seriously) and shows how you actually feel about such couples.*

*Having 'nothing against' and 'not condemning' publicly are, alas, not the same as respecting and treating with due justice.*

*Also, I very much doubt that Jesus qualified his teachings with phrases such as 'to the best of one's ability'.*



### What do you mean, not 'conventionally beautiful'?

Andy,

I wonder whether you'd like to explain your meaning behind the phrase "not 'conventionally beautiful'" to me in a little more depth? My appearance has been described as everything from handsome to a bin liner full of custard but never in what appears to be a euphemistic and thinly veiled jibe -- and certainly neither Kat nor I have never as an example of someone who is unattractive, for any purpose.

If you want my take on page 3 in general, I think it is a good piece of fun that shouldn't be taken too seriously either way -- either to mock the porn industry or to replicate it. Women as it happens are no more "sexualised" (if that is an adverb!) than men, viz. Brad Pitt, George Clooney, Jude Law etc. It is my

belief that both men and women should be aware of what each other look like before entering into a relationship with one, let alone get married, and in this role the porn industry has a bearing though clearly a good deal of what is available is unlikely to be justifiable under that criterion alone.

I look forward to your response.

Samuel Furse

Andy Sykes replies,

*All I meant, sir, is that you are not the classic Adonis -- you know the type. You are not 6' 4", tanned, and incredibly muscular. It was not meant to imply your looks were, as you say, akin to a binliner full of custard.*

*I agree with your points about page 3, especially about the 'purpose' of porn. I do remember reading an article in a friend's psychology magazine that proclaimed that modern internet pornography was creating a generation of young people who had a morbid fear of pubic hair.*



The Bible - condemns homosexual relationships

# Imperial College Union Centenary Events

Throughout 2007 the students of Imperial College London will play a leading role in the College's Centenary celebrations. Imperial College Union, along with its Constituent Faculty Unions, Clubs and Societies, plans to run a diverse range of events for students, staff and alumni to enjoy. Some events may be familiar to alumni, others brand new, but the one thing that they all have in common is that alumni are welcome to attend.

Any profits made by our larger events will go towards the Student Opportunities Fund and the Union redevelopment projects, both part of the College's Centenary Campaign. The Union is proud to support these worthy initiatives.

You can visit our website to find out more information about the Union's Centenary events, as well as the Centenary appeals that we are involved in throughout 2007. In the meantime, here are a few events to whet your appetite!

[www.imperialcollegeunion.org/centenary](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/centenary)

## Beit Masterplan Project

One of the College's flagship Centenary projects is the major redevelopment of the Imperial College Union building in Beit Quad, which you may remember well from your time here. The Union building is far more than just a social venue and improvements are necessary to reflect the requirements of an increasingly diverse student body.

Far reaching redevelopment plans are in place and a gift to the Beit Quad Building Fund will help make sure we deliver the improved facilities needed to enrich student life and provide a broader educational experience through music and cinema, sporting and social activities.

If you would like to donate to the Beit Quad Building Fund you can do so now visit [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/centenary](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/centenary).

## Arts

### ArtsFest 2007

Imperial College; Monday 12-Friday 16 February 2007

This week-long celebration involved 25 Union Clubs last year and the line up for 2007 promises to be even bigger. Events will include concerts, workshops and busking across College, as well as a Centenary Exhibition of the Arts at the Union. This will include displays from Arts and Entertainment Clubs, some of which date back to the beginning of the formation of Imperial College. Most events will be free of charge.

For a full schedule visit [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/arts/artsfest](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/arts/artsfest) or contact [eugene.chang@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:eugene.chang@imperial.ac.uk).

### East Meets West

Shaftesbury Theatre, London; Sunday 18 February 2007

East Meets West is one of the biggest shows regularly performed at Imperial College. With its 15-year history, it is also one of the longest running student variety shows in the UK. The show is a fusion of traditional and modern eastern and western cultures, blending the four in the forms of dance, comedy, singing, and fashion. The event raises money for a variety of charitable causes and is simply not to be missed!

To reserve your ticket, contact [prashant.nair@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:prashant.nair@imperial.ac.uk).

### ICSO Centenary Concert

Cadogan Hall, 7.30pm, Saturday 17th March

Bernstein Overture Candide  
Sibelius Violin Concerto (Michal Cwizewicz)  
Wagner Forest Murmurs  
Strauss Tod und Verklarung  
The Jazz Big Band, Windband, Jazz and Rock Society and Sinfonietta orchestra will also be performing centenary concerts throughout the coming months.

For more information please contact Maggie Holme at [arts@ic.ac.uk](mailto:arts@ic.ac.uk).

### Musical Theatre Centenary Show

Union Concert Hall, 7.30pm, Tuesday 6th to Saturday 10th March

MTSoc are beginning rehearsals at the end of this term for their Centenary Show, a production of the show "Batboy" which played at the West End till last year. The show will be advertised to all current IC students and MTSoc members as well as past members of the society and an audience of at least 100 is anticipated for each night.

Goto [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/arts/mtsoc](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/arts/mtsoc) for more information.

### Imperial College School of Medicine Choir Spring Concert

St John's Church, Hyde Park Crescent London; 20.00 Friday 2 March 2007

Performed by the Medic's Choir, Hadyn's The Creation is an ambitious work that lends itself well to both the Centenary and the Faculty of Medicine's 10 year anniversary celebrations. It promises to be a spectacular concert.

For more information and to reserve your ticket, contact Society Chair Greg Froome at [gregory.froome@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:gregory.froome@imperial.ac.uk).

### Sinfonietta, Choir and Big Band Centenary Tour

Dubrovnik, Croatia; 28 June - 5 July 2007

In 2007 Sinfonietta, Choir and Big Band will tour together for the first time, travelling to Dubrovnik in Croatia to celebrate the College's long tradition of promoting the arts. Whilst there the societies will be performing as part of the Dubrovnik International Summer Festival, replicating concerts performed at Imperial throughout the year as well as some joint concerts between Choir and Sinfonietta.

Contact Maggie Holme at [arts@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:arts@imperial.ac.uk) for further information.

### Tom Stoppard's "Arcadia" - DramSoc Spring Play

Union Concert Hall, 7.30pm, 12th to 17th March

Interweaving between a stately home in Derbyshire in the 1800s and the same room 180 years later - this play explores the nature of truth and time, the effect of science and progress and the disruptive influence of sex and love on our lives. Described as a 'masterpiece' when it premiered in 1993, this is a play that has great emotional and scientific resonance - a fitting event for Imperial's Centenary year!

Contact Maggie Holme at [arts@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:arts@imperial.ac.uk) for further information.

### Imperial College Choir Centenary Opera Gala

Great Hall, 8pm, Friday 16th March

Join the Imperial College Choir for a fun-filled evening of popular Opera Choruses in our Centenary Opera Gala! Whatever tickles your fancy, whether it's March of the Toreadors, Polotskian Dances or Dido's Lament to name but a few, there really will be something for everyone!

Contact Maggie Holme at [arts@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:arts@imperial.ac.uk) for further information.



## Royal School of Mines Bottle Match

Harlington Sports Ground, London; Saturday 24 February 2007

This year's annual varsity match between the Royal School of Mines and Camborne School of Mines will take place on home turf. Fiercely fought football, squash, hockey and golf matches will be played throughout the day, and the whole event climaxes with the all important rugby match. Will the RSM bring the famous Bottle back to London for an impressive eleventh year in a row?

**Please come and give us your support! For more information please visit the RSM website at [www.rsmonline.co.uk](http://www.rsmonline.co.uk).**

## Athletics Varsity Competition

St. Mary's College Track, Saturday 17 March 2007

This event will be the very first of many athletics competitions between the School of Medicine and the rest of Imperial's Athletics Clubs. Competition events include:

- 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 5k, 4x100m and 4x400m
- Shot, discus, javelin, long jump, high jump and triple jump

**For more information, contact Jig Patel at [jigneshbhai.patel@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:jigneshbhai.patel@imperial.ac.uk).**

## Varsity Day (inc J.P.R. Williams Rugby Varsity Match)

Imperial College Sports Grounds; Wednesday 7 March 2007

This exciting day of sporting competition between the School of Medicine and the rest of Imperial takes place across many of Imperial's sports grounds, in a wide variety of sports ranging from badminton to water polo. Its culmination sees the annual J.P.R. Williams Rugby Varsity Match, an extremely competitive match between Imperial College Union RFC and Imperial Medicals RFC, which promises an excellent standard of rugby, plenty of rivalry and a highly charged and vocal crowd!

### Day Varsity events

- Tickets: free
- Venues: Ethos, Harlington

### JPR Williams Rugby Varsity match

- Tickets: £6 in advance, £8 on the gate
- Venue: Richmond Athletic Ground, Surrey

**For more information please contact Nicholas Gore at [n.gore@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:n.gore@imperial.ac.uk).**

PHOTO: Robin Pitt



## Centenary Sports Festival

Harlington Sports Ground; Wednesday 2 May 2007

This is a pan-London sporting event where Imperial's Sports Clubs set out to prove to the rest of London that they are the superior! Our football, rugby, lacrosse and hockey teams will be competing. This promises to be a great day, so if you have a free afternoon come and support us.

**For more information, contact Lauren Davies at [lauren.davies@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:lauren.davies@imperial.ac.uk).**

## IDEA League Sports Event

South Kensington Campus; Wednesday 13-Friday 15 June 2007

Over two days, the five university teams from Imperial College London, TU Delft, ETH Zürich, RWTH Aachen and ParisTech will battle for first place in badminton, fencing, taekwon-do and fitness triathlon competitions. On the final day of the event, participants will see their wits and resourcefulness tested as they take part in the Centenary Challenge across the capital.

**No tickets required for willing spectators! For more information, contact Nicholas Gore at [n.gore@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:n.gore@imperial.ac.uk).**

## Hyde Park Relays

London, Saturday 10th February

The Hyde Park Relays draw students from many countries, as well as a large number of Imperial College London teams, to take part in the biggest student cross country event in Europe. This is all followed up with the legendary party at the Union. The deadline for entries is Saturday 3rd February.

**For more information, contact Rakesh Nandha at [hpr@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:hpr@imperial.ac.uk) or go to [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/acc/hpr](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/acc/hpr).**

## Alumni Gliding Day

Saturday 31 March-Sunday 1 April 2007

This is a flying day for alumni of the College, catering for all ranges of ability and experience, even if you have never taken to the skies before. Come along and see how gliding has progressed since your student days.

**For further information, contact Shaun Murdoch at [shaun.murdoch@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:shaun.murdoch@imperial.ac.uk).**

# Dinners & Balls

## Fiftieth Anniversary of the Underwater Club

South Kensington; Saturday 17 March 2007

The 2006-07 academic year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Underwater Club and a celebratory dinner on 17 March will mark this occasion. If you were a member of the club at any time it would be great to hear from you, even if you cannot make the dinner. In particular any photos of club activities would be gratefully received.

**For more information, contact Nick Jones at [scuba@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:scuba@imperial.ac.uk).**

## Faculty of Medicine 10-Year Summer Ball

View Rooms, Leicester Square, London; Tuesday 19 June 2007

The most anticipated and prestigious social event in the School of Medicine's calendar, held on the date of final year results, this annual event provides a chance for all final years to get together with their fellow colleagues and academic staff one final time before embarking upon their new careers. In 2007 we will also celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the formation of the Faculty of Medicine at Imperial. The evening will commence with a champagne reception, followed by a wonderful three-course dinner and live entertainment from professional bands, DJs and some of the medical school's most talented musicians.

**For more information and to reserve your place at the dinner, contact Olivia Kenyon at [olivia.kenyon@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:olivia.kenyon@imperial.ac.uk).**

## Imperial College London Centenary Ball

South Kensington Campus; Saturday 16 June 2007

Promising to be the largest and most spectacular Union Centenary event in 2007, this will be a great chance to revisit Imperial, meet up with friends and relive those special College moments. A champagne reception will be followed by a three-course meal with after-dinner speeches by famous faces. Magicians, comedians and high profile DJ's will perform throughout the event, fairground rides, street entertainers and chillout venues and an exclusive alumni and VIP lounge.

**For more information and to reserve your place at this year's event, contact Jon Matthews at [dpfs@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:dpfs@imperial.ac.uk) or visit at [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/ball](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/ball).**

PHOTO: Colin Whyman



# ethicalcareersexhibition



corporate responsibility • social justice • environmental sustainability



exhibitors



seminars



displays

**Wednesday 21st February 2007** 11.30 to 16.00

The Great Hall, Imperial College London

Free event. No Registration required. [www.union.ic.ac.uk/ethicalcareersexhibition](http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/ethicalcareersexhibition)

Imperial College  
London  
Careers Advisory Service

imperial  
college  
union

**RSK**  
GROUP PLC



# Why should I come?

Imperial has an excellent reputation for equipping students for top careers in science, engineering and business, and alumni go on to work for some of the world's biggest companies. Now the range of career paths available that combine challenging work and a competitive salary with making a positive difference to the world has never been greater, and more graduates than ever are looking to find ethical work.

At the exhibition, we'll be showcasing careers that protect or promote social justice, environmental sustainability, corporate responsibility and other ethical issues. Our exhibitors come from a huge range of sectors and backgrounds. They offer

everything from graduate recruitment programmes and internships, to advice about work in their sector and volunteering opportunities.

The event is open to all students, so whether you're wondering what to do after your studies or during the holidays, or you just want to support the idea of ethical business, come along and explore what's on offer. We have exhibitors from the public, private, not-for-profit and academic sectors, as well as a packed 'drop in' seminar programme. It will cover everything from sustainable engineering to charity work, careers in policy-making to bridging the energy gap. Be inspired – perhaps over a cup of

coffee from our free Fair Trade Cafe – by browsing the poster display, featuring stories of graduates whose careers have taken an ethical direction.

The event is organised by students, in partnership with the Careers Service and Imperial College Union. It will take place on Wednesday 21st February from 11.30 to 16.00 in Imperial's Great Hall, on the South Kensington campus. For more information, including a list of exhibitors and a seminar programme, see the website at [www.union.imperial.ac.uk/ethicalcareersexhibition](http://www.union.imperial.ac.uk/ethicalcareersexhibition).

**We hope to see you there!**  
- The Ethical Careers Exhibition Team, Imperial College

## Seminar Programme

Each of the seminars listed below will take place in the Great Hall and will run for 30 to 40 minutes, including questions.

**12.00** Volunteering in India: a viable way into the International Development sector?  
*Development In Action*

**12.30** Fuel Cell Technology  
*Prof. John Kilner - Imperial College and Ceres Power*

**13.00** Finding an Ethical Career in Science, Design and Technology  
*Dr Stuart Parkinson - Scientists for Global Responsibility*

**13.30** A Career in Policy Making.  
*Carsten Rohr - Defra*

**14.00** Engineering Ethics and Sustainability.  
*Mark Whitby – Whitby Bird*

**14.40** Working for Aid Agencies, Development Charities and in Disasters.  
*Andrew Lamb - RedR IHE*

**15.20** Going Carbon Neutral - Corporate responsibility to the community.  
*Garry Charnock - RSK*

## Internal Exhibitors

Fairtrade  
Medsin  
Student Pugwash  
esoc

EWB  
Imperial Volunteer Centre  
Imperial Careers Advisory Service

## Exhibitors

### RSK

RSK is a multidisciplinary consulting and technical services company providing specialist support services in the areas of environmental planning and compliance, land assessment, remediation, and health and safety management.

### Whitby Bird

Whitby Bird are an engineering consultancy who work with the issues of sustainability and renewable energy, as well as conducting environmental assessments.

### PowerPerfector

PowerPerfector produce efficient voltage systems and optimize existing systems for large customers from universities to corporate offices.

### RedR IHE

RedR-IHE (Register of Engineers for Disaster Relief – International Health Exchange) provide competent and committed aid workers in engineering and healthcare to humanitarian projects and crisis's worldwide.

### TFL

TFL is responsible for London's public transport, as well as the signalling and congestion charging zones.

### Development in Action

The Development in Action NGO strives to develop understanding of development issues, and offers volunteering opportunities in India.

### Teach First

Teach First trains and places high level students in some of the countries toughest schools.

### Energy for Sustainable Development

ESD is a consultancy that provides experience and expertise on design and planning of sustainable energy solutions for a range of clients ranging from small communities to support for government energy policy.

### Scientists for Global Responsibility

Scientists for Global Responsibility carry out research, education and lobbying centred around the military, environmental and political aspects of science, design and technology.

### Bureau Veritas

Bureau Veritas provides project, product and system inspection/certification for health, safety, quality, environmental and social responsibility.

### Frontier

Frontier run projects to protect endangered tropical wildlife and their habitats.

### Institute of Development Studies

The Institute of Development Studies is a leading global organization for the research, teaching and communication of international development.

### Coral Cay Conservation

Not-for-profit organisation at the cutting edge of ecotourism that sends teams of volunteers to survey some of the world's most endangered coral reefs and tropical forests

### Buro Happold

Buro Happold is an international multi-disciplinary engineering consultancy with a world-class reputation for delivering challenging projects.

### Energy Futures Lab

The Energy Futures Lab conducts research into the future of energy production, providing information on the environmental concerns for companies and government.



**We have a record number of candidates standing for Sabbatical positions this year. Make sure you vote! Voting starts Fri 23rd February and manifestos will be online for viewing on Monday 19th February.**

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



## Rector's Forum

22nd February 17:30  
Union Dining Hall

Come and join us at the Union for your opportunity to quiz the Rector and ask those burning questions. The Rector will be giving a short speech with drinks and nibbles available.





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# ADVERTISEMENT

## Embracing the power of off

The Environmental Society's annual Green Week is back and this year we're tackling our carbon footprints.

### Green Fair

**Monday 11am-3pm, Sherfield Foyer**

Our opening event: come along to sign our petition to write a fully comprehensive new environmental policy for the union and sign an energy-saving pledge or two. It's time to switch off lights that aren't being used, unplug appliances that aren't in use and switch to energy efficient light bulbs. And that's just the start....

### Global Health Forum Debate

**Tuesday 6.30pm, Biology LT in SAF**

"This house believes that with limited resources, prevention and mitigation of the effects of climate change is a higher priority for improving global health than biomedical interventions."

DFID has called climate change the most serious long term threat to development and the MDGs. Is climate change really the greatest threat to human health? With this threat looming, are doctors wasting their time with biomedical interventions? Join the debate!  
In association with Medsin UK

### Ethical Careers Exhibition

**Wednesday 11am-4pm, Great Hall**

A welcome change from the usual bankers and investment companies; a chance to meet representatives from a wide range of sectors with sound ethical and environmental backgrounds. There is also a range of talks. For more details see the Felix supplement this week or visit [www.union.ic.ac.uk/ethicalcareersexhibition](http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/ethicalcareersexhibition)  
In association with Pugwash

### Research Exhibition

**Monday 9.30-5pm, Ante Room (dining room)**

Find out what research is going on within Imperial's own departments and talk to the people heading them.

### Corporate Energy Strategy Lecture

**Monday 6.30pm, LT1 in SAF**

A panel of speakers discussing how institutions in urban areas, such as Imperial, might create a climate friendly energy strategy. The discuss hopes to shed light on the problems of the College's Energy Policy and hopefully raise good ideas of how it may be revised.

### Planet Earth Screening

**Tuesday 12.30pm, Room 119**

**in SAF**

Another chance to see the plight of polar bears and penguins as their natural habitat disappears. Be enchanted by vast ice sheets and watch a battle to the death between a polar bear and a flock of walrus.



**Bike Auction**  
**Thursday 12-2pm,**  
**Queen's Lawn**

Cycling is an ideal way to reduce your carbon foot print; come along for the chance to bag an green bargain. In the last auction bikes were snapped up for under £50. All proceeds will go to cycling-related charities. To see a catalogue of the available bikes visit <http://www.sbg.bio.ic.ac.uk/~brj03/icbug/auction/>  
In association with IC BUG

### Future of Transportation Lecture

**Thursday 6.30pm, LT1 in SAF**

The Future of Transport. Experts from different technology fields (biofuels, hybrids, and fuel cells) will discuss their perspectives on how the transportation sector will change in the coming years.

### Cost of Climate Change Lecture

**Friday 1pm, LT1 in SAF**

The Cost of Climate Change. An enlightening talk on the options of solving the problem of climate change. Prof Dennis Anderson (Stern Review) will introduce the issue of the economics of climate change and a range of academic and industry experts will discuss a variety of solutions to reducing the costs of climate change. Speakers include experts in carbon markets, carbon capture and storage and more.



Events are open to all (students, staff and guests to the College). All talks will be followed by Q&A sessions and a reception with refreshments and nibbles provided.

## Taking responsibility for the environment

When you're living on a meagre student budget, environmental impact is probably not at the forefront of your mind when making a purchase. Every product we buy sends out a message to retailers and companies alike. Three years ago you had to ask why supermarkets weren't stocking Ecover products. These

days they're flying off the shelves with the same regularity as your regular brands. Energy efficient light bulbs may not be the obvious choice when our bulb blows, but over their lifetime they'll save you a small fortune (plus carbon credits too!) This year we're offering everyone a chance to win one of the

following eco-goodies. All you have to do is add your name to our petition or make a pledge which will reduce your energy consumption (and bills!) at home. All the following products will help you on your way to minimising your carbon foot print, making you feel all warm and fuzzy inside.

### Runners-up prizes

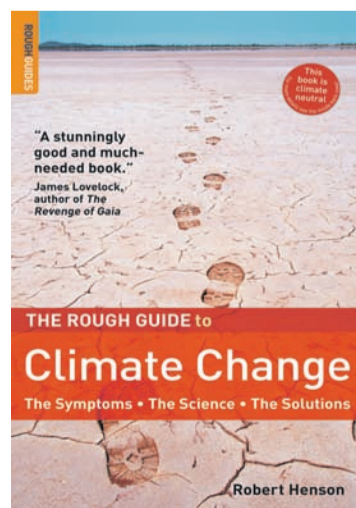
Everyone's a winner when they make a pledge but here's a few more goodies to help you on your way to green nirvana. Switching off light bulbs in rooms you aren't using could save you £55 a year, and a hefty 370kg carbon. And, if every UK household installed three energy saving light bulbs the energy saved would supply all street lighting in the UK. Buying A\*\* rated appliances when your one packs in is important too.

### 1st prize

Solio proves that green living can be fun! The solio unit is ideal for recharging any portable device using the power of sunlight. Place it out in direct sunlight or, failing that, a sunny windowsill and then use it to charge iPods, phones plus a host of other devices while on the go. Designed to last you for years, it's a product of convenience with a eco-benefits to boot.



A solio in closed mode, and open to reveal its solar panels.



Feeling confused? This Rough Guide should sort you out.



The full range of Ecover products- one for every room of the house.

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

**FOUR  
BANDS**

...THE MOST  
COLOSSAL  
ROCK YOU  
WILL EVER  
HEAR!

**DOORS  
8 PM**



PRESENTING

**MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS (UK)**  
OUTSTANDINGLY HARD AND POST-HARDCORE TUNES

**VS. SILENT FRONT (UK)**  
POST-HARDCORE NOISE BRILLIANCE

**VS. RIDDLE OF STEEL (USA)**  
MISSOURI, USA HARD ROCK DESTRUCTION

**VS. AN EMERGENCY (EXETER, UK)**  
FUNKED UP/FUCKED UP POST-HARDCORE

**+ DJs UNTIL LATE**

**COST:**  
**£5/£4 STUDENTS**

**In Colour** SURROUND SOUND ((O))

**AT: IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION**  
BEIT QUAD, PRINCE CONSORT RD, SW7 2BB  
**ON: SATURDAY 24TH FEBRUARY**

# Reviews

MUSIC

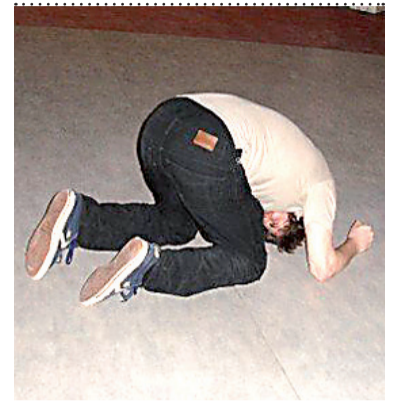
music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Some releases and stuff

Enthusiasm running low at *Felix* music as all music appears to suck nowadays



On the left is what happens when you Google image search The Hoosiers and, well, on the right: I MUST FIND THIS MAN



Matty Hoban needs Dinosaur Jr

Look at you there, reading my words of love, joy and philanthropy. Oh, how I'd love for you to be friends with me and we can listen to Sebadoh, Beat Happening, Drive Like Jehu, Hot Snakes, Sweep The Leg Johnny, Check Engine, Shellac, Big Black, Reynolds, Lords, Part Chimp, The Unit Ama, Polaris, Quasi, Sleater-Kinney, Sonic Youth, Bikini Kill, Le Tigre, Do Make Say Think, Polmo Polpo, Pinback, early Death Cab For Cutie, Built to Spill, The Ladies, Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark, Tiger Piss, Godspeed You! Black Emperor, Piglet, Mogwai, Arcwelder, Monorchid, Black Heart Procession, cap'N Jazz, Owls, Joan of Arc, American Football, Microphones, Mt. Eerie, Thanksgiving, Don Caballero, Battles, That Fucking Tank, 3host-womexicansandatinofspanners, Pavement, Silver Jews, Hey Colossus, Projections, Cat on Form, Why?, 13 & God, Themselves, Subtle, Thelonus Monk, John Coltrane Quartet, Max Roach, Charles Mingus, Four Tet, Steve Reid, Steve Reid & Kieran Hebden, Sunburned Hand of Man, Hush Arbors, [smog], Iron & Wine, Bonnie 'Prince' Billy, Chavez, Pajo, Papa M, Slint, Errors, Appleseed Cast, Broken Social Scene, KC Accidental, Stars, Rachel's, Ganger, The Shipping News, The For Carnation, Nirvana, Lift to Experience, The Evens, Fugazi, Enablers, Isis, Quack Quack, Bilge Pump, I'm Being Good, John Fahey, Jack Rose, Lungfish, Stars of the Lid, PJ Harvey, Aereogramme, Silent Front, Unwound, Toe, Clogs, Tujiko Noriko, Aoki Takamasa, Charlottefield, Blood Red Shoes, Paper Cut-Out, This Heat and Huggy Bear together and we can do each other's hair. By the way, my cock is bigger than yours.

I quite like a lot of obscure music, this does not mean I hate 'chart' music, you will frequently find me singing the lyrics to various Girls Aloud and recent Nelly Furtado singles. That Take That single, *Patience* did not deserve the Brit Award for best single, it is an awful song. That made me angry.

By the way, there is a poster for a gig on the 24th February in the union, it will be outstandingly great. So you should come, or stay at home playing online games, it's your life really.

### album review



**The Hours**  
Narcissus Road  
(Polydor)

★★★★☆

Keeping up with the continual onslaught of new bands is an immense task, not only due to the sheer volume but because so many of them are tripe, generic, bland and/or shit. The Hours is a band on the precipice.

While they do maintain a similar quality throughout their debut, as presented on the album's first single, *Ali in the Jungle*, the move to a long player highlights the limitations of the group.

It is quite easy to think of The Hours as a group, but in fact it is a creative duo consisting of Antony Genn and Martin Slattery. Although The Hours may be new, these two have been around the block a few times. Genn has toured with Pulp and produced UNKLE while Slat-

tery toured with Black Grape (a Shaun Ryder group) and worked alongside Joe Strummer. With this much experience I would expect a little more imagination than that seen on *Love You More*. Starting with a mix of Coldplay piano and Interpol guitar, Genn sings such gems as 'I love you more than my Adidas trainers, I love you more than Tony Soprano, and if you knew me better that's a fuck of a lot' - I just pray they got paid for product placement.

Admittedly that song does develop some interest but like most of the album, tonky piano sees almost Keane like over use. Thankfully it isn't a white wash and tracks such as *Back When You Were Good* fall nicely into the quality, easy listening niche.

Towards the end of the album things start to look better, *I Need To Know* injects a subtle dose of punk into the handclap type sounds which seems to be every song. The anthemic *People Say* which moves away from the general sound of the album shows heavy influence from late 90s indie groups before the album wraps up with *Let Me Breathe*, a mush of romantic singing, swelling guitars and strings in the back ground - nothing to write home about.

*Narcissus Road* is really a mixed

bag of an album, it fluctuates between quite interesting to intensely tedious but throughout the weakness of lyrics and repeating musical themes detract from good potential. As much as I would like to fall in love with this album and forget its faults they are just too common and too obvious, hopefully the next album from The Hours will move into new ground.

Nick Simpson

### single review

**The Hoosiers**  
Worst Case Scenario  
(Unknown)  
★★★☆☆

The Hoosiers have a fucking ridiculous name and for that alone they deserve no attention at all - quite why a London band has named themselves after the native American name for Indiana, that or a dodgy American movie about small town basket-ball is beyond me. The band itself sound like the hideous love child of Ima Robot and Lilly Allen. *Worst Case Scenario*, a catchy debut and if you are into happy-go-lucky indie-pop, then you will love this. Unfortunately past the shouty, gleeful lyrics there is no originality

and by the time the 2 minutes 55 draws to a close it is hard to remember anything from the song. Radio 1 fodder this is but better examples lie around every corner.

Nick Simpson

### single review

**Mumm-Ra**  
What Would Steve Do?  
(Sony)  
★★★★☆

Tipped for the top, Mumm-Ra are a bundle of fun all the way from Bexhill. *What Would Steve Do?* is a frantic mix of honest vocals and rhythm guitars. Unlike a lot of new bands, Mumm-Ra knows their bounds and stay away from anything too pretentious, without faux American accents et al. Mumm-Ra clearly have taken props from the likes of the Libertines, replacing all the twatish smack addictions with retro pop-rock love which for some reason remind me of Love (although not the same calibre). All this is a good thing as Mumm-Ra are on the bill for the NME Awards Indie Rock tour, a guarantee that you will here plenty more of this band for a good 6 months to come.

Nick Simpson



# ARTS FEST

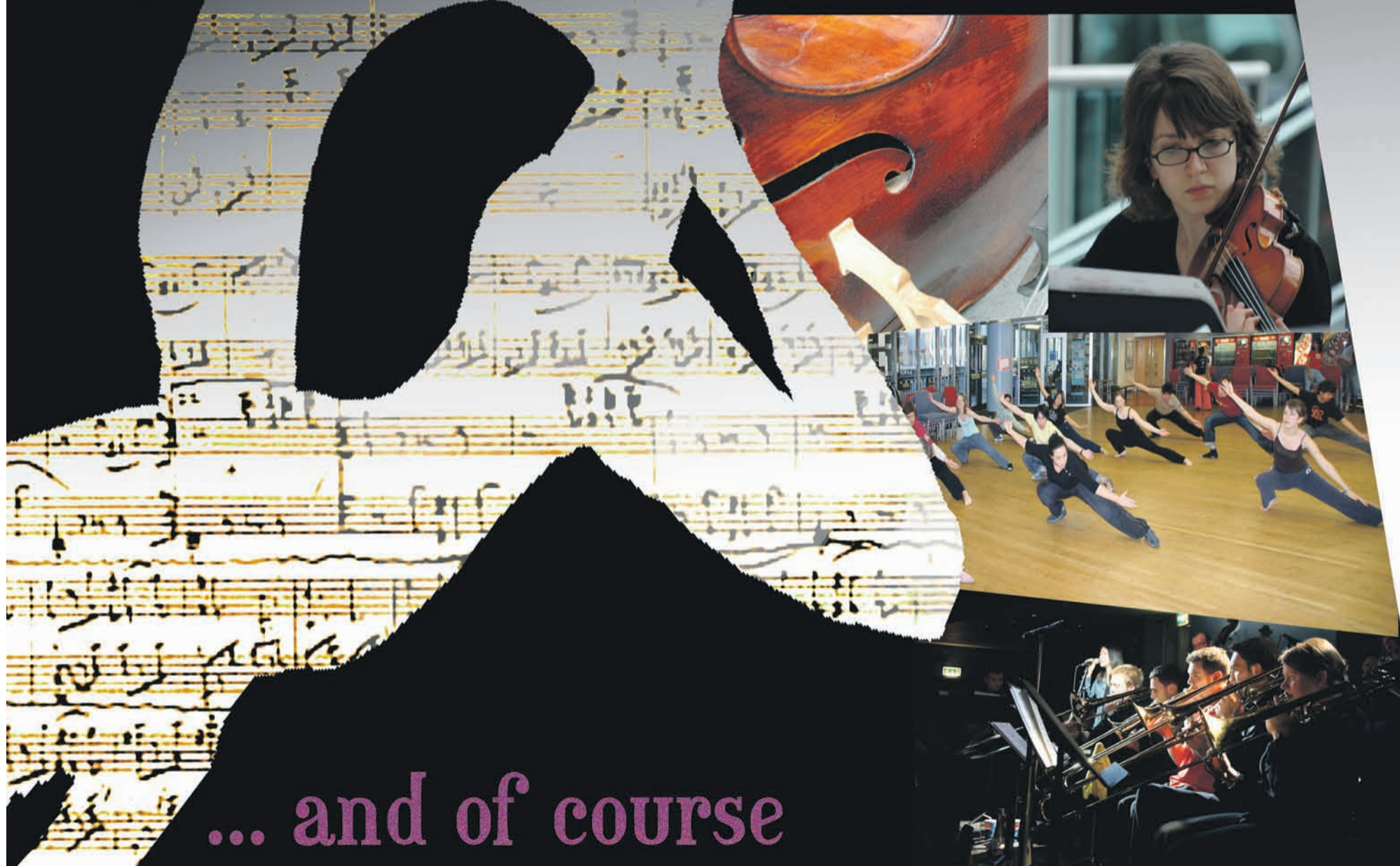
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# Plotting in a modern Rome

The classic tale of a power struggle set to Handel's impressive score opens at the ENO

**Agrippina**  
English National Opera  
Until March 1  
From £15

Handel's *Agrippina* tells a familiar tale of corruption and deceit in the upper echelons of Roman society. When the emperor Claudius apparently drowns at sea, his ambitious and well-connected widow Agrippina schemes and manoeuvres her son Neronene, born from a previous marriage, into position to claim power. But when it is revealed that Claudius has been saved and is returning to Rome, the title character's best laid plans and ambitions are revealed for all to see and her resolve put to the test.

In David McVicar's production, originally debuting in Brussels, the tale is adapted to contemporary Britannia. It works well – the games of power are now played out between corrupt politicians and officials in tailored suits, corporate vampires, and pseudo-WAGs vying for their spot at the trough of indignity and fame.

The snapshot works well and influences from modern Britain are evident in the Enfieldesque brat Nerone and the beautiful Poppea, a crucial cornerstone in Agrippina's plans, who veers between Bridget Jones and a Boujis debutante.

It all makes it readily accessible to the novice, and though the show weighs in at just under four hours, it never becomes tiresome, throwing up laughs, entertaining and ab-

sorbing in equal measure.

The vocal performances are, on the whole, dazzling. Though the show has been criticised as being a vehicle for the feted Sarah Connolly as the show's main character, there is admirable depth across the board. Connolly's Agrippina is charismatic and wilful, and technically faultless.

As her son Nerone, Christine Rice steals the show with a spine-tingling vocal performance matched by her similarly show-stealing cocaine-fuelled antics. But the real find was ENO main stage first-timer Lucy Crowe as the pawn-turned-player Poppea – the audience's concentration was palpable every time she graced the stage with her unrestrained vocal power.

And not least, Daniel Reuss controlled the music admirably from the pit; Handel's electrifying score was both mesmerising and elevating.

The script was sparkling and bright. Though crassly comical, it retained the essence and spirit of the original while receiving a welcome infusion of profanity more in line with the rest of the production. It wasn't subtle – but it was fun and the show flowed easily between its various scenes and arias.

By striking the right balance between retaining traditional operatic integrity and embracing modernity, McVicar opens his arms to both audiences. Opera has never been so accessible.

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ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA AND CLIVE BARDA



Sarah Connolly as the schemeing Agrippina

## Book Review

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Thomas Harris

Hannibal Lecter's 'Memory Palace' is the starting point for Thomas Harris's new novel *Hannibal Rising*. If you've read any of the other books or seen the films, you'll be familiar with this concept, but here it is tired. Harris uses it to introduce you to Hannibal the genius with a museum-like mind. Unfortunately, this hackneyed beginning doesn't fade away; it only gets worse.

We first find little Lecter living in a castle in Lithuania with his sister, noble parents, and tutor to see to his genius. It is the early 1930's and great flapping metaphors about black swans of doom and his innocent sister abound. The Nazis are coming, and the Russians, and in the increasingly short chapters we are constantly reminded that they are, surprisingly, the bad guys.

The events of WWII carry the Lecters away from their castle and into hiding in the woods, there's lots of suffering caused by the baddies (Nazis), and a rather hurried conclusion where all of Lecter's family are killed – his sister in a gruesome case of cannibalism: this is the part where you feel sorry for Lecter.

As fate would have it, the war ends and our little orphan Lecter is looked after in a Russian communist orphanage which, ironically, is situated in the castle that belongs to him. Luckily noble painter Uncle Lecter comes to his rescue and sweeps him away to his chateau in France and to meet his mysterious Japanese aunt.

This introduction to Hannibal's teenage years is where I really began to dread reading more of the book. Auntie Murasaki is the sum of every Japanese cliché; icily beautiful, a whiz at haikus, and owner of terribly sharp swords. Yawn. Some revenge ensues when the uncle falls ill and Hannibal has to avenge his Aunt's honour. Things get a little out of hand with the revenge, and Hannibal becomes known to your standard lone maverick policeman, Inspector Popil. Yawn again. So, him and Aunt move to Paris, where Hannibal (he's a genius again) is training as a doctor.

The quiet life is not suited to Hannibal, however, as he's suddenly obsessed by elaborate revenge on the men who destroyed his childhood. From here, it's all downhill. There's none of the suspense of the earlier books and none of the interplay between Hannibal and his victims. We can't sympathise with the crudely drawn victims because they're evil ex-Nazis and we can't sympathise with Hannibal any more because he's so cartoon-creepy.

If you're coming to *Hannibal Rising* having never seen any of the films or read the other books in the Hannibal Lecter series, then you might possibly enjoy some of the drama, but even for pure trashy novel enjoyment, there's not a lot to recommend. It's fairly obvious that Hannibal Lecter is now purely a cash cow for the author. Perhaps the film version suits the dumbing down of such a magnificent murderer more aptly, but I'd recommend giving both a miss and watching *The Silence of the Lambs* instead for a taste of what Hannibal the cannibal is really about.

Margaret Stewart

## If Imperial made Arts Festivals ...

REBECCA WARREN



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For all the first-years amongst you, this is the week that Imperial's extensive collection of A&E (Arts and Ents) clubs showcase their talents and prove to us all that being a scientist and having artistic/musical talent are not mutually exclusive personality traits.

ArtsFest has been more prominent on campus this year than any other this reporter can recall; you can hardly have failed to hear the busking in SAF, Tanaka, and Sherfield, featuring some of Imperial's choral and instrumental elite.

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Emily Lines

**Richie Allen,  
physicist**

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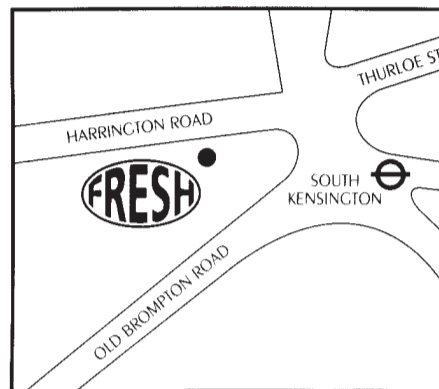
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# The weird world of Wes Anderson

Chelsea Manning talks orgasms and tributes one of Hollywood's most talented and underrated directors

I find it a damn shame that more people are not aware of the fabulous director/producer/film writer Wes Anderson. I first fell in love Wes Anderson's films when I saw the movie *Rushmore* starring Jason Schwartzman. The surreal atmosphere and outlandish plot just blew my mind. I thought, 'No way can a director follow up such a primo production.' Then I saw *The Royal Tenenbaums*... I cried tears of joy, but they might have just been tears of not blinking for two straight hours. Either way, the protein in those tears was held together with bonds of pure amazement. After *The Royal Tenenbaums* I thought, 'No way can Wes pull off such brilliant and colorful characters again.' I practically had an orgasm in my seat when I saw *The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou*.

For those of you who are unaware of the masterpieces created by Wes Anderson, I will now proceed to give you my very biased, slightly tribute-esque analysis of this talented man's films. You should probably read my description with the skepticism of someone listening to a mother speak about the supreme talent of her bratty blob of procreation.

Wes Anderson has a core group of cast that he uses in most of his films, consisting of Bill Murray, Owen and



Wes Anderson's most recent cinematic slice of oddness, *The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou*, starring Bill Murray amongst many legends

Luke Wilson, Anjelica Huston, and Gene Hackman, all wonderful actors whose combined talent can be articulated by the expression ∞∞. The usual Anderson protagonist is very clever, yet plagued by de-

pression and awkward quirks and character flaws. His characters are chock full of dry humor and elitism. I find *The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou* Wes Anderson's most daring and impressive piece to date. It's

filmed in the style of a documentary following the Zissou Society, a sailing crew that, whilst clad in matching baby blue track suits, produces documentaries about their voyages and experiences with aquatic wildlife. Steve Zissou makes it a mission to find the Leopard Shark (an animal fabricated by Anderson that is essentially a big ass shark with leopard patterned skin) that killed his best friend. In a way, the movie is basically a massive homage to Jacques-Yves Cousteau, right down to the ridiculous knitted red beanies.

Wes Anderson films simply have

elements I've never seen in any other film – he captures an absolutely novel style on screen. His movies are filled with vibrant, almost cartoon-like colors that are painted all over the costumes and scenery. The refreshingly quiet dialogue is punctuated by loud, fuck off Devo, Iggy and the Stooges, and David Bowie songs. The films are such a change from the current shit films that capitalize on loud, flashy stunts, and special effects. And I'm sure a lot of Imperial students could relate to the exceedingly intelligent, but socially inept and dorky characters. Just kidding. Kind of.



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*Felix is looking for reviewers, writers, and general hangers-on to contribute to the film section.*

Email [film.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:film.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

## I, Gamer



**Michael Cook**  
Games Editor

Role-playing is a strange word when it comes to classifying games. Since the average gamer spends their hours in the guises of World War 2 sergeants, alien-fighting nuclear scientists, and Tiger Woods, it's fair to say that all gamers do is roleplay. But so-called Roleplaying Games have set themselves apart as a genre over the years, now condensed into one main idea – character improvement.

Over the years, however, it's also been about getting to know your character, and putting a little something in the game. This week we look at the Eastern tradition of fantasy slash-em-ups with a retrospective glance to the Zelda and Final Fantasy series, in preparation for Final Fantasy XII's launch.

Japanese RPGs – Japanese gaming in general – often has the stereotype of being long, involving, and essentially simple. It's certainly a recipe that's done Squaresoft well over the years. But that's not to say that Western RPGs are any shallower, or more challenging. The Elder Scrolls series, as well as the Baldur's Gate franchise on PC as well as console, might represent a culturally different kind of roleplaying, but the core elements remain the same – big story, small idea.

RPG remains – and may always remain – one of the geekier corners of gaming. And given that gaming itself is a little nook of life filled with cobwebs, geeks, and copies of Freespace 2, that's quite an achievement. But as the numbers slowly shift to behind the scenes, and the story becomes something the player's involved in as much as the designer is, there may be a change in that.

If you're looking to pick up a copy of Final Fantasy XII fresh on launch day, HMV at Oxford Circus have organised a special launch event at lunchtime on Friday 23rd to celebrate the launch of the game. Given the look of Final Fantasy XIII (check out our feature on the series), it could be the last time you play it like the good old days.

Felix Games is still looking for extra contributors – please email us if you'd like to write for the section. It doesn't matter whether you play games all night, or haven't ever picked up a controller in your life – all we want is interested writers!

games.felix@imperial.ac.uk

# This week in videogaming

Spore blossoms, EVE falls, and the old days prevail. And teh Console Warz, I guess

Who's winning in the console war currently? Is it the Xbox 360, with their strong marketing presence and good relationship with EA? Is it the Playstation3, who are welcoming better and better news in Blu-Ray sales? Is it the Wii, still selling out the world over and getting more attention from publishers? The answer's not what you might expect – it's none of them.

With the Xbox now firmly in its grave, obituary written in the annals of gaming history, the last-gen might seem to be somewhat over. But sales of Playstation2s are still on the up, bolstering Sony's user-base, and the Nintendo DS Lite - released almost a year ago in Japan - is *still* sold out in its home country.

Playstation2 owners are looking forward to God of War 2 and Final Fantasy XII, and huge sales of DS Lites means more conversion and development for the novel handheld console – with prices significantly lower, even than a Wii, it's not just the latest technology that's making the big sales. With the Playstation3 still struggling – a key developer at EA recently advised people to steer away from Sony's latest console – it's possible that the Playstation2 may stay in production for some time.

In the land of the PC, things are far rosier. Vista users are slowly calming down as they discover which games work – though at the time of Felix going to press, *Second Life* – an internet-phenomenon MMO with more than a million active users and a trade of around \$1.2 million per day, completely refuses to work under the new operating system.

But single-player gaming is smiling, and so was Will Wright as he gave an address at the DICE summit on the challenges around developing his latest creation, *Spore*. Wright performed his usual trick of being unimaginably intellectual, and discussed how the structure of intricate games like *Spore* have to be broken down to communicate with the player in as simple a way as possible. The game, which has high hopes set on it by a lot of gam-



Gears Of War nabbed eight awards at DICE's AIAS ceremony, including Best Game and Console Shooter

ers, is due to be released within a few months.

As the Burning Crusade is reduced to the smouldering news headlines that WoW players are used to, the big news in MMOs this week came from EVE Online, the space sim on a huge scale. When EVE hits the gaming news, it's either because the developers are making an announcement, or because someone's

been betrayed. This time? Both.

"I'm here so this whole issue – which jeopardized my company and our community – can be put behind us" were the words used to open a confession by EVE developer "CCP t20", who admitted to illicitly supplying highly powerful blueprints – information that can be used to manufacture powerful weaponry, ships, and equipment – to some of

the largest Corporations in the EVE universe.

Unlike *Second Life*, EVE's players don't make much money from their investment. But EVE saps time unlike any other MMO, and betrayal in such an involved universe – in particular, from the people that nurtured the community in the first place – was hard to swallow for a lot of the dedicated players.

## \$1200

"Bounty" promised by SCEA President for each Playstation3 found on shop shelves.



## 11

Number found by the staff of online comic Penny Arcade, within a half hour of their offices.

# Successful Twilight emergence

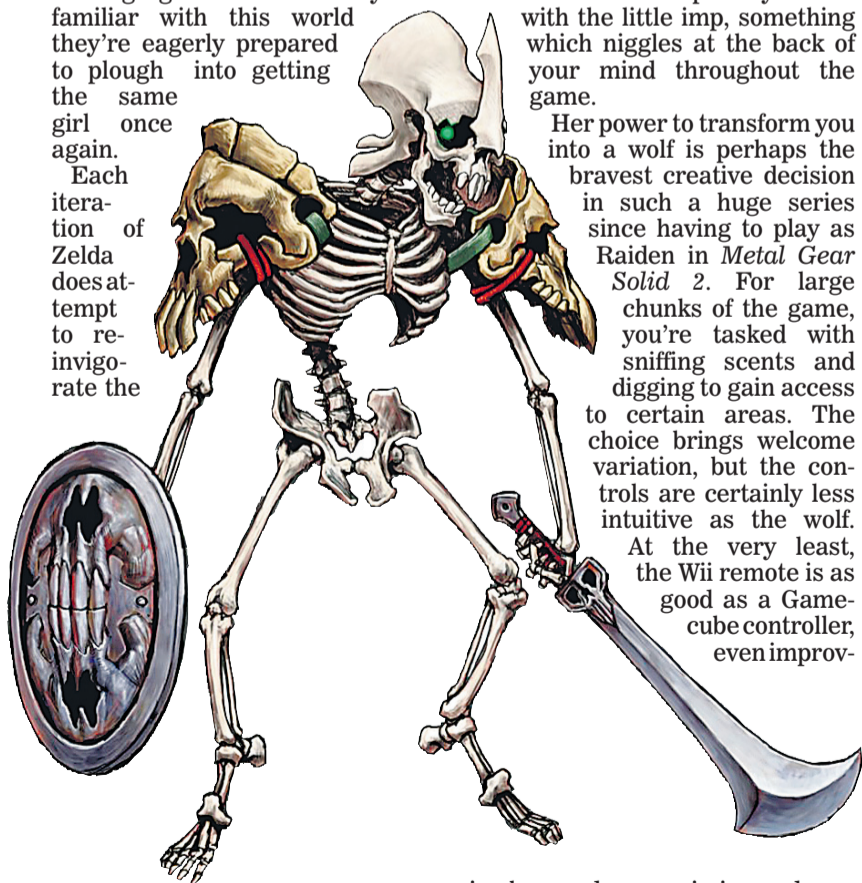
As the sun goes down on Nintendo's latest Link adventure, Tom Roberts asks if it was worth it



There's a sense of crescendo to *Twilight Princess* – years of Nintendo innovation has paid off for them, and they can finally unleash the games they always wanted to make

The world of Hyrule has always been a very strange place indeed. Not just because of the trolls, skeletons, Zora, and larger than life Hulk Hogan look-alike Gorons but because everyone repeatedly manages to get amnesia. How many times has Zelda fluttered her eyes at Link? How many times has Hyrule Castle undergone an architectural makeover? And how many times has Ganondorf been skewered by Link's Master Sword? Matron! Yet, although gamers are entirely familiar with this world they're eagerly prepared to plough into getting the same girl once again.

Each iteration of *Zelda* does attempt to reinvigorate the



series with a subtle twist to the story or the gameplay and *Twilight Princess* is no different, this time fashionably attempting to obtain a 12A rating by being "darker than ever before". Hyrule is being gradually descended into the twilight realm by evil cloak-wearer

Zant and it's up to our young hero to save the kingdom once again. This time he has the help of a creature called Midna, best described as Hey Arnold's long lost cousin. She has the power to transform Link into a wolf as and when necessary. Midna and Zant suit the world comfortably, whilst bringing elements of darkness to the glowing fairy tale land. Zant is a suitably fearful replacement for Ganondorf and Midna's introduction is surprisingly startling whilst she toys with Link. It's indicative of the love-distrust relationship that you hold with the little imp, something which niggles at the back of your mind throughout the game.

Her power to transform you into a wolf is perhaps the bravest creative decision in such a huge series since having to play as Raiden in *Metal Gear Solid 2*. For large chunks of the game, you're tasked with sniffing scents and digging to gain access to certain areas. The choice brings welcome variation, but the controls are certainly less intuitive as the wolf.

At the very least, the Wii remote is as good as a Gamecube controller, even improv-

ing bow and arrow aiming and generally being more relaxing having your hands further apart or resting on your lap. But as the wolf, often you find yourself mashing A to rip at the necks of opponents, rather than waving, which has the effect of making you twitch like you've got fleas. Even then, a jump using the

A button can send you plummeting over the edge of a cliff.

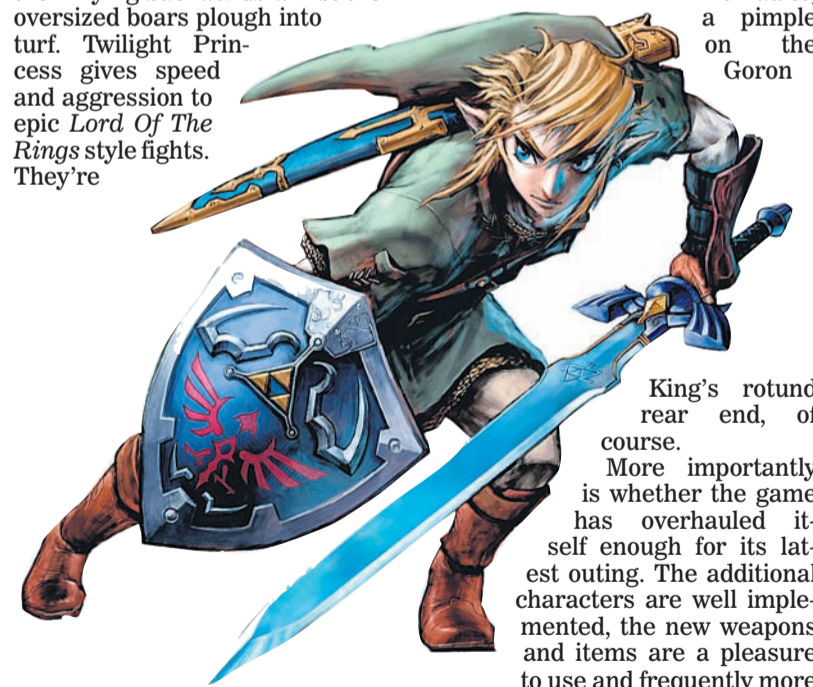
The dungeon format remains faithful, complete with small keys, daddy keys, and exceptionally well designed layouts and puzzles. The temples are intricately designed, lulling you into a sense of awe at the potential complexity awaiting your discovery when they are in fact generally linear experiences. Obtain small key, progress to find the next. The genius arises when you arrive back at the entrance room, better equipped and having pushed the necessary blocks into place so that you can finally reach that mysterious hole in the ceiling. The sense of achievement and everything falling into place is deeply gratifying and you're rewarded with a trademark boss encounter; an experience you enjoy rather than dread. The sand temple's boss is especially fun.

One minor oft cited criticism is the save mechanism in the dungeons whereby you have to return to the entrance after turning off the console. Personally, my compulsive nature meant that I completed dungeons in one sitting and when this didn't happen, Nintendo had the sense to never take the adventure far away from the entrance room.

As with all of the *Zelda* games, *Twilight Princess* is a fine example of OCD sufferer's worst nightmare. There are numerous caves to uncover, almost a hundred bugs and poes to collect, not to mention the fishing side game, or simulator as is perhaps more appropriate with the Wii remote. Having clocked up around 55 epic hours after finishing the game, I am actually considering returning to it, a testament to the game's success and something which *Grand Theft Auto* has never managed to do. There are easily another 10 to 20 hours of exploring and the initial fifty or so are some of the most addictive I've ever played. You will never find yourself wishing the game will hurry up so that you can get started on the next and this is a soul saver for those of us who like to finish our games without

the pang of post-purchase-not-polished-off-guilt.

*Twilight Princess* feels special from the very first moment that you hop onto Epona and gallop around the Ordon ranch. Soon after hopping the gate to Hyrule's fields of freedom, *Twilight Princess* steps up a gear when Link has to pursue a band of thieving orcs and goblins. You're tasked with rescuing a kidnapped girl whilst on horseback. The A button whips Epona into a gallop and quickly you're closing in on the bandits. Swinging the remote sword slashes the goblins, sending them flying backwards whilst their oversized boards plough into turf. *Twilight Princess* gives speed and aggression to epic *Lord Of The Rings* style fights. They're



amongst the most enjoyable sections of the game in between dungeon dwelling and a fine example of the capabilities of the Wii control setup – galloping, turning, and slashing simultaneously.

Graphically, the game is perfectly acceptable although it lacks the quality of the Gamecube's best such as *Resident Evil 4*. The characters are lovingly detailed, however, especially the nightmarish enemies from the Twili realm. Large, bounding black trolls with shields for

faces and lashing tentacle dreadlocks drop out of the sky at regular intervals to halt your progress. There are similarly haunting dark wyverns and it's clear that somebody at Nintendo has been watching *The Matrix*, though thankfully the makers have done the art justice here.

*Twilight Princess* is not entirely without its gripes however. When will a game perfect swimming underwater? Why does Link insist on climbing side ways round that vine ridden wall, rather than hauling himself on the ledge? These are minor faults; a pimple on the Goron

King's rotund rear end, of course.

More importantly is whether the game has overhauled itself enough for its latest outing. The additional characters are well implemented, the new weapons and items are a pleasure to use and frequently more fun than any of the recurring ones,

and the story is pleasingly more bizarre than before. *Twilight Princess* has not undergone a dramatic sea change though; we're not even in the Wind Waker territory of daringness. What's clear is that the compulsion to keep playing, the magnificent gameplay and sheer quality of design is unmatched by previous offerings. This is the best *Zelda* game created.

That is one hell of a statement and can only warrant one outcome.

You buying it.



# Two decades, and still unfinished

From Cactuars to Kupo – Michael Cook tells tales of great adventure as we look back on Final Fantasy



Whilst I want to say that old games journalism standard, “Everyone remembers their first time”, I’m not so sure that’s true of Final Fantasy. So let me open with something a bit different. Everyone – everyone – remembers their first random battle.

“What the hell is going on? The screen just smooched. Yeah, I was just running around, what’s it ... what’s that. Is that me? That’s me? But I was just walking around. Those people weren’t even there. Is this a one-off?”

For many people, it was a one-off, because they put Cloud, Squall, Buttz, or whichever plucky FF hero down and never went near one of the bastards ever again. But for the rest of us, it was the first of many screen smooches. And that game was the first of many fifty-hour journeys. And who cares if you think VI is better than VII? Who cares if you didn’t like the ending of IX? There’s a certain link between each and every game, and each and every FF fan.

It’s always the random battles that divides opinion over Square’s historic line of turn-based, story-led RPG masterpieces. People could bear the plot, even if they found some of it contrived. People could forgive it for not being as hardcore as the Western RPGs, grounded in D&D, D20, and Dungeons. But

the one thing you couldn’t make yourself push through were those darned monster encounters. You either loved them, or you left.

When the game series launched in Japan back in the pre-3D days of 1987, Dragon Quest was the big-hitter of the day, developed by Square’s then-rival studio Enix, and Square themselves were on the brink of bankruptcy. The “Final” Fantasy, developed by Hironobu Sakaguchi, was to be both Square and Sakaguchi-san’s final game, earning itself one of the most ironic game titles in the process.

Ironic because, as we all know,

a clean success from the get-go.

Why strange? Because the more you see of Final Fantasy, the better you understand the threads that Sakaguchi and his development teams wove through



## FINAL FANTASY VII

ファイナルファンタジー VII

Final Fantasy was not to be the end of Sakaguchi or Square. From their first tale of the Warriors of Light and the Elemental Crystals, all the way through to today’s more contemporary fantasy tales, the strange yet unforgettable style of each game has made the franchise

each and every one of the early installments. Certainly, the Big-Bird-esque Chocobo creatures, the Cid character and so forth, are all examples of Final Fantasy’s enduring regulars. But the plots contain a lot of common themes, and nurtures a certain way of play-

ing. After twenty years and twelve main games – ignoring the many spinoffs – it doesn’t take more than a couple of Final Fantasies to make it a very different kind of gaming experience.

One of the most impressive things to come out of the series was the way it penetrated the American market. As the occasional FF got converted – with a confusing numbering system that differed from the Japanese standard – the American audience lapped it up more and more, until eventually Square made the

it. I didn’t need that then – I had Oddworld.

Final Fantasy VII would represent a crucial jump for Square, as they chose to leave Nintendo for the first time to develop for Sony’s debut machine. Not only would it allow them to penetrate the Western market far deeper than previous conversions ever had, but it would also give them a base in a rising star in the console war – a relationship that would soon have tables turned on it, as Final Fantasy became one of the few stable licenses for Sony’s Playstation3.

But I was having none of it, and in fact it wasn’t until Final Fantasy VIII, when I’d mellowed out and discovered Metal Gear Solid and, well, guns, that Final Fantasy began to appeal.

VIII was, I like to tell myself, a different beast. Unlike VII’s cartoonish stylings, VIII was a real game that didn’t talk down to you. It took the gamer into a strange Harry Potter-meets-Gundam world, where teenagers trained to be mercenaries at obscurely cheery high schools called Gardens. And yes, I remember my first random battle. It scared the crap out of me.

Once over the initial shock, and the initial few confusing deaths, the control system began to make sense. Waiting for each turn, choosing a move from an ever-filling list of spells, items and attacks, trying to pre-empt enemy attacks.

leap to a new generation of graphics and scale.

I scorned Final Fantasy VII. I scorned everything on the Playstation that wasn’t a platforming game, so when the flags started waving for some ridiculously-titled swords and magic game, I ignored





# Sudoku 1,373

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** 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.

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

Solution to 1,372

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

Jotting pad



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

# This Week's Slippery Slopes

## Scorpio (23 Oct – 21 Nov)



Yummy, yummy, yummy, I got love in my tummy and I feel like spitting it all over you. Yeah, that kind of love. You know it, the kind of pelvic thrusting, head bobbing, one-eyed trouser snake tonsil tickling loving. Mmm... salty and slimey. Finger licking good.

## Sagittarius (22 Nov – 21 Dec)



I don't feel like dancin', dancin', dancin'... Rick-arickaricka rawwoo. Don't feel like dancin', dancin' yabba dabble de do. Oh look: Russell Brand. There's one man of homo sapien descent that I would like to verbally batter with my vocabulary before annihilating.

## Capricorn (22 Dec – 19 Jan)



So, I recently bought a digital camera. It said on the box 10 megapixel zoom and super colour definition. Anyway, I decided to stick it up my Dad's jap's eye. You wouldn't believe what I found! The colours were so vibrant and your mum's pubes are ginger, not black.

## Aquarius (20 Jan – 18 Feb)



Chebs. Gash. Fruity-loop. Three of my favourite words. Mum. Myra Hindley. Harold Shipman. Three of my favourite people. Ducks. Silverfish. Colonic crabs. Three of my favourite animals. Send your favourite diseases in a SAE to the usual address.

## Pisces (19 Feb – 20 Mar)



Matthew Smith: I'm intrigued to know what you think of Phil Collins. After the tragic collapse of Genesis, did you follow his solo career or seek pastures new? Myself? I felt his third album was a bit of a let down, but I'm hardly a knowledgeable expert on said topic.

## Aries (21 Mar – 20 Apr)



Fish is a kind of meat! Fish is a kind of meat! Cheese is a kind of meat, a tasty yellow beef. Cheese is a tasty kind of yellow beef. That's a point. You know those bubbles in fizzy spring water? Cow farts. Cola = pig farts. OH NOES. No drink for you veggies. Die.

## Taurus (21 Apr – 21 May)



Big fish, little fish, cardboard box. Big fish little fish, cardboard box. Just a few of the delicacies available on the menu in the *Felix* dungeon tonight. Deserts include mahjong pieces, ivory walrus tusks, and sweat sodden Andy Sykes graduation shirts.

## Gemini (22 May – 21 Jun)



This week you're playing around with the SCART connector on the back of your TV. Startled by your sister, you smash your head through the back of the TV. 6 days after being declared a missing person, your wife switches to the AV channel and you get electricked.

## Cancer (22 Jun – 22 Jul)



This week you choke on a parma violet sweet whilst reliving those hazy days back in year 4, when you'd scoff an entire packet of the purple pills. Oh, how times have changed. Sweet eating skills aside, you're also much less supple. Life sucks, I know.

## Leo (23 Jul – 22 Aug)



What's your favourite letter of the alphabet? Personally, mine is the letter after 'Z'. This strange and wonderful character is often used to describe the whiff of a freshly felched anus, straight after rectal biresingent has taken place. Just so you know.

## Virgo (23 Aug – 22 Sept)



I was once trapped in a vulcan death grip. The pain was bearable but only because of the sheer magnitude of my pythons. Reversing the hold was a piece of, excuse the cliché, meat loaf, and soon thereafter one was submitted to my own vice like grip. You daiiii.

## Libra (23 Sept – Oct 22)



I just love cock. Coming at me from all angles, one here, one there. Dodging the sperm spears is just one of the many pleasures involved in such dangerous games. Sucking toxic cock is however, deeply against my religion and I urge you to refrain too.

# Felix Crossword 1,373

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				

## ACROSS

- Truncated spectre chases fish at sea for animal. (8)
- Supplanters confuse French over purse. (8)
- w00t! Fear spooony sandals!!!!1 (8)
- United Nations returned to me rank counter. (8)
- Forced polyethylene toy into first part production. (10)
- Porridge, or battered toast, no tea. (4)
- Medium sigh, I hear, with style (7)
- Roman capital after hundredth gold beast (7)
- Spring apple, cored and sliced. (4)
- Flash caused by exploded, pointless munitions during extreme larceny. (10)
- One thousand and one is written with fifty teeth. (8)
- Attempt to cross: setter fails and gets poison (8)
- Without Ra, repentance is for small reward. (8)
- Sheared 500 tangled ginger hairs (8)

## DOWN

- Late lion, going south, brings body suits. (8)
- Miserable? The answer's in a cuppa - the ticket indeed! (8)
- A blokes' response (4)
- Vegetables endlessly turn, revolve, spin (7)
- Cantankerous old git throws Wales into dungeon, releasing New York. (10)
- I hear Venus' sparkling wine is the way to the heart. (4,4)
- Mnemonic for examiner: "A steam ship easily sails seas or rivers". (8)
- Unsaturated carbon bind; petrol split. (6,4)
- Learning many things, parrot fashion times tables for instance? (8)
- My desire lies in salary earning (8)
- The French follows exams at college ball (8)
- Scrambled put ruined, blinded, flipped! (8)
- Currently measuring a bit longer than a yard, they say. (7)
- Unrelated; relaxed, then cut (4)

## Ratco

Greetings, intrepid wordsmiths. In my voyages across hill and dale this week, I came across a young girl. I handed her a tissue afterwards. Bad semen jokes aside, I see very few of you have been entering the crossword. This disappoints me greatly. Do you know how hard it is to draw those miniscule recepticles to the left of your meaty paw? Hours, I tell you; hours. If there's something wrong with the crosswords, then you must inform us post-haste. This week's crossword has no theme; just keep in mind that I hate you. It won't help, but it makes me feel better.

Ratco

Solution to Crossword 1,372

E	X	H	I	B	I	T		U	N	H	I	T	C	H
N	A	E	H	T	O	H	O							
D	I	N	E	D	I	M	M	E	R	S	I	O	N	
O	D	L	R	O	S	M	O							
W	J	A	D	I	S	M	E	M	B	E	R			
N	O	R	M	A	L	T	M	L	A					
H	B	E		A	E	B	B							
I	B	A	D	G	E	R	I	N	G		L			
G	A	S	I		E						M			
H	P	R	P	V	U	L	C	A	N					
P	R	O	C	R	E	A	T	E	A	Y	C			
I	N	I	I	R	P	F	U							
T	O	S	S	F	O	R	I	T	S	P	A	W	N	
C	O	L	O	E	E	I	T							
H	E	R	S	E	L	F		D	E	S	I	R	E	S

Send your answers to **sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk** or bring this page down to the *Felix* office in the West Wing of Beit Quad by **Tuesday 9am**. Each week, we'll choose a winner and give them £10 in real, honest, paper money. That's at least half a pint in South Kensington pub terms. Last week's winner was me, because no-one entered. Fools! It wasn't even that difficult.

# Clubs & Societies

## February butterflies

Alex Kendall

It was strange being the only first-year on this weekend's trip, but as it was explained to me when I mentioned this, everyone else probably needs to get out more. And what a place to get out to! It will no doubt surprise everyone that during the two days and nights of our trip to the North York Moors I didn't see a single cloud except for tiny wisps far away. The sheer beauty of a landscape so barren and yet so diverse with its rolling moors and frosty valleys, emerging out of winter but still baring all to a cold clear sky was breathtaking. This is surely the farthest from London an English landscape is likely to get.

As usual the health-and-safety-defying minibus which I shall call

### Battered Mars bars: that's when you know you're in the north

'the yellow one' (I can see you nodding now), sped away from London to a relatively clear motorway with the characteristic 'Marcus wants cock - Imperial College London - how's my driving?' written on the back. At our dinner stop at a chippie on the way north we soon realised how cold it was going to be, as the temperature plummeted upon stepping outside. And yes the chippie had battered Mars bars - that's when you know you're in the north. After one more stop to pick up Andy from Doncaster station and a journey filled with the either stupidly quiet or unbearably loud radio, we arrived, amidst the moors, at a surprisingly early 11:45pm. The moon was full and the sky completely clear with the stars showing in their hundreds; sometimes in London I forget they exist. As the camping barn was just as cold as outside (they really did mean it when they said 'barn') we did what should be the only government test of 'Britishness': we made

### Deranged cockerels determined to wake us up

tea - and it was warm. We admired the cooker and the working fridge and settled into our sleeping bags at around 1am, after Nathaniel made his special double bed so he wouldn't fall out and Evelyne went to bed sporting the entire Blacks winter catalogue, wearing about 15 layers of brightly coloured clothes. I couldn't help feeling jealous when Tim commented that his sleeping bag was 'toasty warm', whilst mine showed me the other end of the spectrum.

After a bizarre night - deranged cockerels determined to wake us

up every hour and Nathaniel talking in his sleep - we woke at 7am to the sunrise, which was so perfect in the clear frosty morning that Tim exclaimed 'oh my God!' and ran outside. At that moment I seriously thought someone had stolen the mini-bus or run it over with a tractor, but alas no. At 8:30am we left the barn and walked across the valley bottom, still white with frost, and climbed up to the level of the moors, a few hundred metres up. Grass and small trees soon became heather and gorse and the view stretched away on all sides into the distance. We followed a straight track for almost half an hour through the near silence of a landscape more suited to the moon before reaching the Cleveland Way, a long-distance walking route through Yorkshire. Bearing slightly west we followed the Way along the straight path of an old railway line, constantly being startled by grouse bursting out of the undergrowth, yapping like small dogs. It wasn't long before someone found remnants of snow, tucked into the dips on either side of the path where the sun hadn't shone. The snow (which was really more like ice) was a bit too hard to throw but we were content with shoving it down each other's necks. Before long we came to the highest point in that part of the moors, the stomach-turning 454m high Round Hill, so called as it is the site of a neolithic burial and has a characteristic mound. It is probably this feature alone that makes it the highest point but luckily for us the top was graced by a trig point, making it relatively easy to find.

Our route then took us off the moors down to a road and then back up the other side to a section of moorland standing alone, gouged by glaciers on each side. Its elevated position at the northernmost edge of the moors gave us a view over the flat fields below all the way to Middlesbrough and beyond until obscured by the mid-day haze. One of the glacier-gouged edges of this section of moor forms a well used climbing and scrambling destination, the Wain Stones. We stopped for lunch perched on the stones at the top of the drop. It was so warm we could have sunbathed ... in February. Later in the day we saw several butterflies which probably shouldn't be there until May.

After lunch we began our route back which first descended into the valley mostly occupied by small woods, fields of kale and pheasants. Navigating in the valley proved harder than up on the featureless moor (I have no idea why) and it took several attempts to finally find our way to the path back up to the moors again. Walking among the small woods provided welcome shade and I even felt compelled to soak my shirt in water before putting it back on (yes it really was that hot). On the way up again the group split as Richard was poorly; Tim, Andy and Richard headed back on a quicker route to the barn and the rest of us took the route over the moors a different way. I guess Tim just missed the ducks in



Alex collapsed on the doorstep of the Lion Inn. His skeleton will be a reminder for every fellwanderer to take enough beer on the trip

the yard too much... although they did join us later (alas sans ducks).

Severely underestimating the distance left since there was not much more ascent or descent, we set off along the dismantled railway line again. The line snaked through the roof of the moors and we came very close at one point to a heather fire, which the rangers create and control to help out the grouse which like heather at different heights. The smoke from these fires undulated up into the darkening sky (it's all physics) and through them the sun shone red. The setting sun tinted vast swathes of heather purple and soon the heat we had begun to get used to started to dissipate as the sun finally vanished behind the hills. Being passed by cyclists was normal; what wasn't normal was when a pair stopped beside us and said they had a message from Tim! We were to go to the pub instead and meet him there! (Now we see why Tim is the president of the society). Nathaniel repeatedly told us over the next two hours that the pub really wasn't that far and that (although it wasn't on the map) we'd be there soon. Soon enough,

a building far in the distance came into view. "That can't be it, that's way too far" – Nathaniel. (It was).

The Lion Inn, which we reached in the dark, was definitely worth it. It must be one of the most remote pubs in England, high on the moors, and yet it was still packed full. Slanting stone walls and open fires completed the experience as

## The setting sun tinged vast swathes of heather purple

we finally got a drink in a building built by monks in 1553. We later returned to the pub after a brilliant supper eaten in the comfort of our own freezing barn with a heater that decided to belch smoke for an hour and deliver very little heat. The pub though was warm and we stayed until 11:20pm playing gin rummy and taking photos of Evelyne, Nathaniel and Katherin asleep. I slept much better that night, probably

because we walked 18 miles, but also as I was thankful to be alive after Richard bombed it down a 20% slope (after stalling).

Sunday was as warm as Saturday and we had decided the night before to do a coastal walk from Robin Hood's Bay to Scarborough. The drive through the countryside was beautiful as the sun shone through the windows and the surrounding trees were still coated with frost. It was like going back in time. We passed Whitby, Dracula's landing place, and soon arrived at Robin Hood's Bay, a small town on the side of a slope down to the sea. I had heard that it used to be a smuggling haven and there is a story that the houses are so close and jumbled that a ball of string can be threaded through all the houses merely by passing it through the windows.

Richard was still poorly so stayed with the minibus, which became a taxi. The rest of us set off along the cliffs that tumbled down far to the sea below. The sides of the cliffs varied from steep grassy banks to small woods to sheer stone drops and soon we came upon 'Beast cliff' which wasn't really a beast.

The route dipped down and then back up again several times before the flat sand of the beach where we took a stroll, wandering up to the flat sea. After kicking aside strange piles of chalk (which we later found out was being used to mark out a race route) we stopped for lunch in a field on the side of a rise in the cliff height, which meant

## Passing Dracula's landing place, we arrived at Robin Hood Bay

we could see for many miles ahead. We still had no idea how far it was to Scarborough; Richard (there were two!) had some nasty blisters and we wanted to get back to London before Monday. Therefore we decided to divert Richard (driving the minibus) to meet us earlier along the route. Blistered Richard battled bravely on as we descended into the beautiful National Trust nature reserve of Hayburn Wyke,

where a storybook-setting waterfall flowed out to the sea. The way back up to the cliffs proved to be the last major ascent of the day and it wasn't long, still in the heat of the day, before we found the minibus (at around 4pm) to begin the 7-hour drive back to London. The sunset that evening was magnificent as we drove through Yorkshire to the 80's tunes from Yorkshire Coast Radio. We had a hugely extended journey due to many diversions and traffic jams on motorways, and of course the stop for a pub supper – which was completely devoured – gold stars all round. Finally arriving back in London we were all sad to say goodbye to the yellow mystery machine that had become our friend; well done everyone, another great weekend.

The Fellwanderers organise weekend trips such as this every fortnight; day walks in and around London are also fortnightly. See [www.fellwanderers.com](http://www.fellwanderers.com) for details. If you are interested in joining Fellwanderers, please email the president at [tim.scarbrough@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:tim.scarbrough@imperial.ac.uk)

# Caving club take the plunge



Spelunking can get a trifle wet. Spooky too – icy fingers slip around necks before reaching the other side

## Jarvist Frost

So there we were, the corridor of rock ending just ahead. The usual pool of muddy water lay in front of the sheer wall. Strangely a rope led from a bolt on the left, down through the mirrored surface and into the depths. We were on the far-side of Sump I in Swildon's Hole. To go back now the way we had come was impossible – other sumps that we had emptied with buckets and siphons would have refilled by now with the slow percolation of water from the surface. Our only way out was to dive through this short flooded section before climbing the 150 metres (nearly twice the height of the Queen's Tower) back to the surface.

"It's simple!" I explain to the first-

timers, "Lie down in the water to get used to the cold and flood your wetsuit, take a deep breath and then pull yourself hand-over-hand on the guide line. Keep low so you don't float up and get stuck on the ceiling, someone will grab you when you reach the other side. Send three tugs on the line when you're clear."

And so the number of lights slowly dwindled, each one uttering a "See you on the other side" before setting off. A few anxious seconds, then the tugs coming back on the line and the next caver getting ready.

Finally I was alone. The tugs came. I lay down in the water, and felt the icy fingers slip in through the seals around my neck. Alone, and a long way from a place of safety. Please lights don't go out, please

rope don't fray, please helmet don't get stuck. A deep breath and I force myself under.

Bubbles as I sink, the water stings my face. No point looking about – too cloudy to see anything. I pull myself along and graze the pebbly bottom. Too low. Hand over hand on the rope. Hit the rock ceiling. Too high. Am I there yet? There's no way to tell what's going on above – had better continue rather than risk snagging my helmet.

Suddenly I'm grabbed under the armpits and wrenched out of the water. I gasp, pick myself up and stumble out-of-kilter from the pool. Just a few seconds; but the cold is sapping. Everyone OK and accounted for, now there's just a quick climb between us and our dinner.

# Boxing, food, dancing and even more at Thai Night

## J. Viniytrongjit

Fancy a 3-course meal Thai cuisine whilst enjoying the light and sound of traditional and modern Thai dances, as if you were in the middle of town in Thailand? Thai society proudly presents to you 'Thai Night'.

Thai Night is one of the biggest and most spectacular event we hold every year here in Imperial College with the supports from various sponsors; Thai Airways, the Thai embassy and famous Thai restaurants around London e.g. Thai Square and Thai Pot.

This year we've arranged our events into an 'A-la-carte' style where you will be sitting down with your friends or loved ones enjoying the show whilst your food is served up directly to your table.

You won't be disappointed by the 3 course-meal comprising starter, main course and dessert which, including well-known dishes such as Satay and Pad-Thai, will seem

as if it is served straight from Kow-Sarn road in Bangkok. Not to worry if you're vegetarian, as we have a special menu prepared for you.

The show itself is composed of various cultural dances to reflect the four different parts of Thailand; North, South, East and West. 'Muay Thai' or Thai boxing is also one of the main attractions of the show.

The purposes of this event are to promote Thailand's unique culture, to help foreigners to understand Thailand's long historical culture and to raise funding for Open World, a charity project in Thailand.

The event will take place on Sunday 25th February 2007 at 6.00pm in the Main Dining Hall (MDH). The tickets, a bargain at £10 each, can be purchased outside the MDH or JCR already.

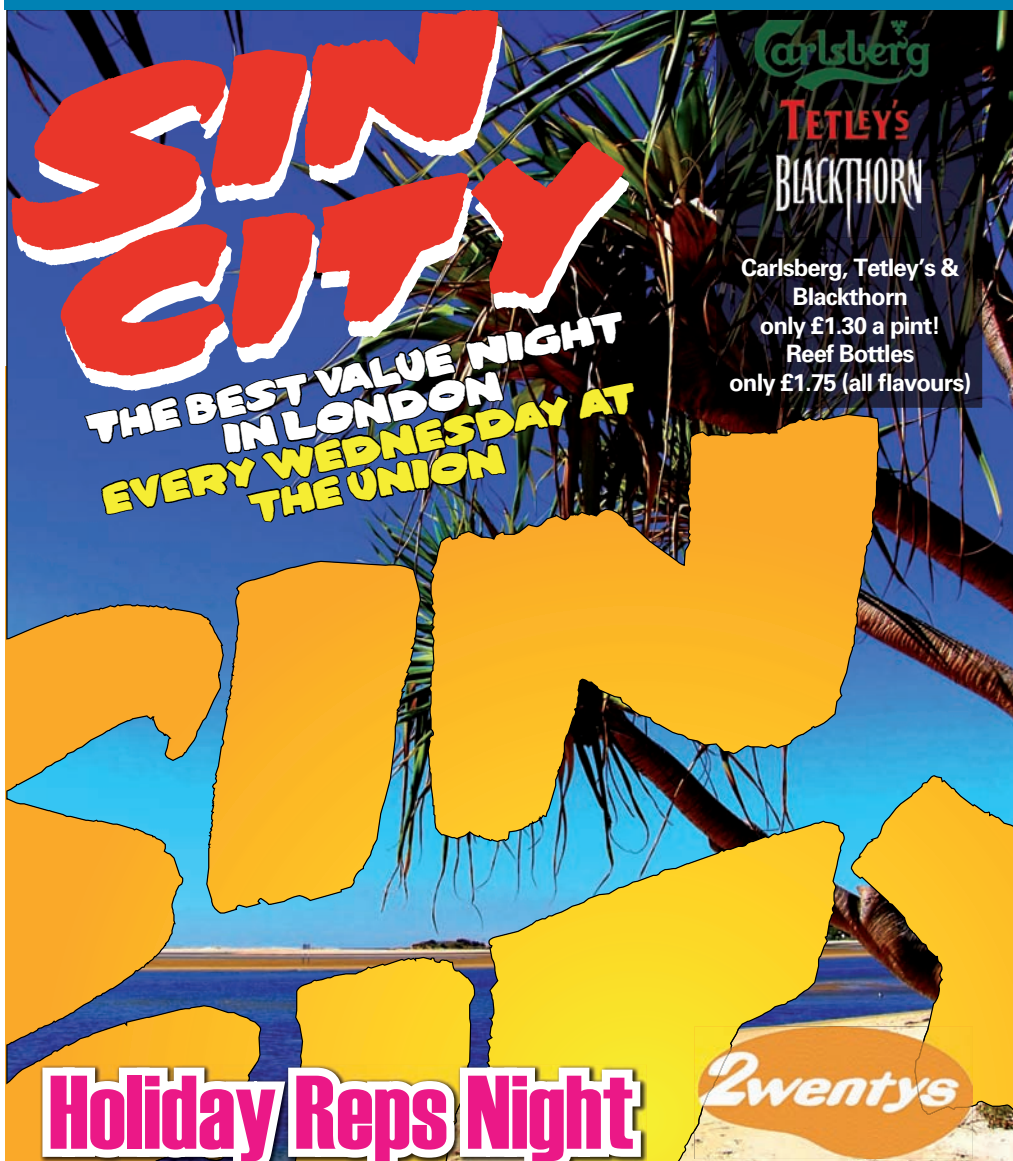
To reserve tickets, please send an email to [phuchong.suriwong@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:phuchong.suriwong@imperial.ac.uk) or [chavamas.viniytrongjit@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:chavamas.viniytrongjit@imperial.ac.uk)



A bevy of delights, gastronomic or otherwise, are all lined up

# at the union february 16th - 23rd

## WEDNESDAY 21ST



**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)

**Holiday Reps Night** *Zwentys*

## FRIDAY 23RD



**subredo**  
Inner City Drum and Bass

Drum and Bass from:  
Nicky Blackmarket (BM Soho)  
Macpherson (Fabric Live)  
Fidel (1001 Cafe)  
Cartel (1001 Cafe)

## THURSDAY 22ND



*Oculo Garden at @B  
featuring.....*

**Silent Alliance  
The Veta Corps  
Dust Trade**

**Thursday 22nd February**

## FRIDAY 16TH



**ArtsFest  
2007**

**After Party**

### ALSO ON

Fri 16th	ArtsFest 2007 After Party
Tue 20th	Telegraph Pub Quiz
Wed 21st	Sin City - Holiday Reps Night
Thu 22nd	Oculo Garden
Fri 23rd	Subred

[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.

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# Treading on thin ice

Dan Carrivick

This year's ice-climbing tour visited the Briançon valley in the last week of January. After a quick flight to Turin, Italy, the group hired cars and hopped across the border into France. Our base for the week was a rather lovely gîte d'étape in Vallouise, just up the valley from L'Argentière-la-Bessée which hosts a big ice-climbing festival every year in the second week of January. The lean winter had taken its toll on this year's festival, with temperatures simply too warm for many of the ice cascades to form. Two weeks later, when we visited, things weren't much better but at least the valleys had some ice, which was more than could be said for the other traditional ice-climbing areas in the Alps.

We decided to have a leisurely first day by visiting the Fournel valley. This valley was close to where we were staying and the climbs weren't far from the road hence we thought it would be a nice easy day. However it was not to be. The road hadn't been (snow-)ploughed and our small cars, complete with snow chains, struggled to make their way through the deep snow. With a lot of perseverance and a bit of pushing we got our vehicles as far up the road as we could (and further along the road than any other vehicle including a four-by-four) before drifts forced us to park and walk the rest of the way. The trek to the climbs took longer than envisaged as we hadn't driven as far along the road as we'd thought. Once at the end of the road we headed for the nearest piece of climbable ice we could see; Les nains des ravines (IV/4), as time was pressing on. The ice was thin and in places covered with snow. Alex and Neil climbed the first pitch while the rest of us practised placing ice screws and setting up belays using abakalovs. We then set up a short top rope so those who hadn't climbed on water ice before could practise the technique. A long walk back to the cars followed which we reached just before dark.

The next day was spent climbing at Ceillac. Ceillac is normally a popular place to climb because the ice falls are close to the road and many of them are classic multi-pitch routes. However it was exceptionally busy as it was the weekend and only a couple of ice falls had formed. Mike and Chris joined the group of people waiting to climb Y Gully right branch 250m (II/3+) while the rest of us decided to hike up the side of the valley to the not-so-busy Easy Rider 70m (II/3). The gully was narrow and the ice thin, which meant there wasn't that much room for different people to climb at once. Fortunately we were the first people on the ice so this wasn't a problem and we enjoyed the two pitches of 70° and 80° ice before abseiling back down. Afterwards the fast climbers went and followed Mike and Chris up Y Gully right branch 250m (II/3+) as the queues had gone. Meanwhile the rest of us traversed along the valley to check the condition of the other cascades.

Our target for Sunday was the Crevoux valley in an attempt to avoid the Sunday crowds. It was a long drive from where we were staying so we set off early, however the place wasn't well signposted and we ended up going round in cir-

cles looking for the turn-off from the main road. Our objective was the Cascade du Razis 70m (II/3+ to 5+) which was an hour and a half's walk from the car park. The wall of ice looked promising on the approach but as we got closer we found part of the right hand side, which was home to the easiest angled climbs, had not fully formed and the rest was taken up by guided groups who had set up top ropes. Thus we were left to climb on the hard ice on the left side of the wall. Mike put in a good lead to get halfway up the wall but didn't fancy the crux. Chris set up a top rope so we could retrieve the ice screws and then complete the climb in relative safety. Meanwhile Alex and Neil climbed a hard full 50m line in between the top ropes on the right hand side. Next, a couple of French climbers let us use their top rope to have a go on a sustained pitch of vertical (grade

## A slab of ice hurtled through the air towards those 40m below

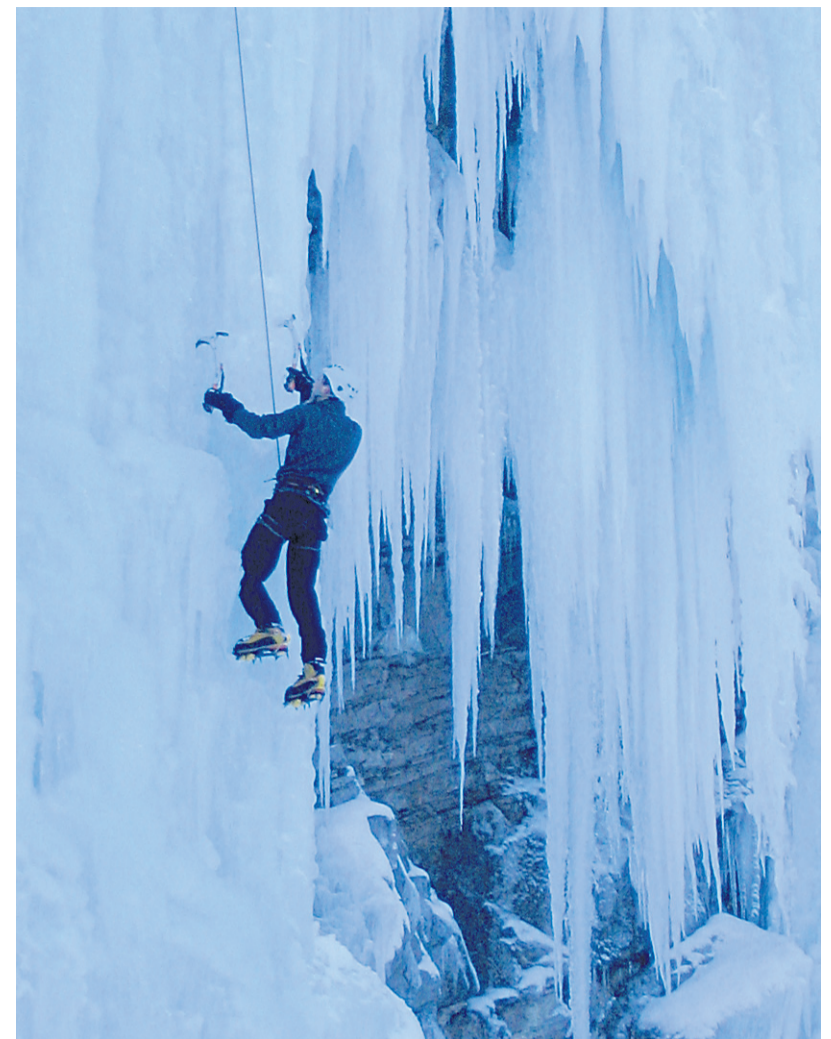
5) ice. On such steep ice, it wasn't long before we were all pretty tired. We retrieved our equipment and walked out, reaching the car just as the sun set below the horizon.

The following day we returned to Ceillac in the hope that it might be quieter. There was no such luck. Over twenty people were waiting at the bottom of the main climbs. Matt and I went over and climbed the first pitch of Sombre Héros 100m (II/5) (the second pitch had not formed). Meanwhile the others queued for the left branch of Y Gul-

ly Holiday on ice 250m (II/3+). By the time we'd finished on Sombre Héros there was no one waiting at the bottom of Y Gully so we climbed all six awesome pitches of the right branch.

The final two days were spent back in the Fournel valley. The road had been cleared so we were able to drive all the way to the car park at the end of the road. The first day we walked for about an hour along the valley from the car park where teams climbed on Capitaine Courageux 200m (III/4+) and Damoclés 230m (III/4+). Both routes were long, sustained and energy sapping. Time passed quickly as slow progress was made and the last group ended up abseiling back down under a full moon. The abseil pitches were a little longer than our 50m ropes so a little improvisation was called for. Once everyone was down safely from the climbs we all trudged wearily back through the snow to the car guided by our head torches.

On the last day we decided to climb Grand Bleu 100m (III/4) which sat high up on the valley side. Unable to find the path we trail-bashed our way over a boulder field covered in knee-deep snow until we found the well trodden path higher up. We arrived at the foot of the climb exhausted from the approach. The first pitch was a full 50m of 75° ice which turned out to be a bit wet and goopy but this was nice to climb on compared with the hard brittle ice we had encountered further up the valley. The second pitch was some 45m in length and inclined at an average 85°. Alex led the pitch while the rest of us were happy to second. At the top, the ice was thin and unstable as it sandwiched a layer of snow. A slab of ice a metre in size sheared off and hur-



Seems quite a lot of effort to fill a whisky tumbler

led through the air towards those tied into the belay some 40m below. It hit the ice above them and broke up. Luckily their helmets took the brunt of the shower and they were left with nothing more than sore heads and a few bruises. Undeterred everyone made it to the top before abseiling back down. The 70° first pitch of the neighbouring cascade called Balade du Piaf (III/3) looked easy compared to what we had just climbed. It was tempting to zoom up it, however our muscles

ached from the cumulative effects of a weeks worth of ice climbing. So we called it a day and thus ended the tour on a high by climbing some of the hardest ice we'd climbed all week. We headed back to the gîte d'étape to celebrate what had been a most enjoyable and memorable week.

This tour would not have been possible without the support from Imperial College Union, the Harrington Trust and the IC Trust. Our sincere thanks goes to them all.



These two unsuspecting pitches didn't know what hit them when Matt arrived, a glint in his eye as he wielded his ice-axe



## Men's 1sts enjoy goal extravaganza



The men's 1st team looking awfully pleased with themselves following a massive victory over King's. Any one would think the opposition didn't have a goalie! (They didn't - Ed.)

### Mens Hockey

IC 1sts	18
King's Medicals 1sts	0

### Jack Cornish

IC timed their arrival to perfection arriving in time to blitz a ten minute warm up and revel in the informa-

tion that the opposition had only ten players and no keeper. After an awesome warm up by Foetus IC set off to dominate the game. It was awesome! An IC triple hattrick set the pace, with champagne hockey abounding. Tricky combinations between Star Wars, Jumanji and Sid showed Kings the mistake they made with being cocky enough to think they didn't need a keeper. IC

struggled to a 9-0 half-time lead but it should have been more, with glaring misses by many including a stinker from Krusty.

After a well-needed 2nd half team talk, IC planned a ridiculous onslaught. However, shooting into a goal with no keeper proved more difficult than it seemed. Batty was so frustrated he threw in his towel and stick, almost killing a number

of innocent pigeons in the process. That aside, there was some great movement from Jumunji and Star Wars, who decided walking the ball across the line, and being very unselfish, was the best approach.

Kings, losing heavily, decided to make a tactical change, pushing everyone up front and leaving only one defender. Five goals followed in quick succession as a result, giv-

ing Star Wars and Jamanji double hattricks.

The rest of the game saw Kings make a few chances for themselves but with only one defender back in their half meant IC scored a series of breakaway goals and with the vocal support from the injured Date Rape from the sideline IC managed to tally up a total of eighteen magnificent goals.

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