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Mr Tom Roberts,
Editor-in-Chief,
'Felix',
Imperial College,
London, SW7

October 26, 2007

Dear Editor,

Tidiness In Scientific World Is Essential

On October 23, 2007, I attended the 'Genomics - from Humans to the environment' evening lecture by Dr J. Craig Venter at Imperial College, London, as a member of the public, but first - to steady my nerves at 78 - I had a cup of tea and a bun in the cafe on the way to the Great Hall.

What I found between 4 and 5 o'clock surprised me, for the tables and the floor were littered with discarded wrappers and paper cups when, clearly, there were receptacles in the area for diners' rubbish.

So, all students using the cafe, why not start at Imperial College and respect what, I am sure, the many disciplines will require of you when you go out into the world?

As the College noticeboards are flush with all kinds of notices, why not a permanent notice, signed by the Rector, seeking tidier behaviour in eating areas?

In approaching the cafe manager, to lodge a strong complaint, I learned from him that abandoned refuse was an on-going problem, which he was striving to correct.

Interestingly, a curious defence point put by one student, whom I challenged, was that leaving a mess to clear up gave someone employment!

Surely this kind of thinking among potential scientists is dangerous. Indeed, after listening to Dr Craig, whose ability to manipulate mankind for good or ill is beyond imagination, I pray his laboratory house-keeping is immaculate! I am sure, without checking with him, that it is.

Yours faithfully,

Christopher R. Elliott
(Christopher R. Elliott),



More unacceptable behaviour on page 3



GSA Chair resigns in dramatic style

Union left to prop up the GSA after Jon Matthews resigned at Council on Monday

Tom Roberts
Editor-in-Chief

On Monday night, the second Council meeting of the year took place in the Union Dining Hall. The evening progressed with the usual mix of policy and report rubber-stamping until the final moments when the meeting finished in unexpectedly dramatic fashion as the Graduate Student's Association (GSA) Chair, Jon Matthews, resigned and subsequently exited the building.

Mr Matthews had to produce a revised report to Council because the paper he submitted earlier in the month was rejected. The general feeling was that Mr Matthews' original report didn't justify the £2000 honorarium payment he was given for being GSA Chair, hence the need for a rewrite.

The first Councillor to voice his opinion on Monday night about Mr Matthews' latest report was ICSMSU President, Tim Wills, who took objection to his work with graduate-medical students. As the discussion continued more and more people began to raise questions, giving an indication that Mr Matthews' wouldn't be getting off quite so lightly this evening.

After an initial round of voting, four people voted for the report with another four voting against, whilst the remaining Councillors abstained. Courageously, Mr Matthews called for a recount of the vote, probably hoping that the votes would fall in his favour, however it was to be his undoing; Council voted 6-5 to reject his report (with over 10 abstentions). The result meant that Council would automatically have to vote on whether to censure Mr Matthews or not; a censure is effectively an official slap on the wrist or a way of saying: "you've been a naughty person."

However, before the Councillors even had a chance to wave their voting cards in the air, Mr Matthews stood tall announcing his resignation, before walking out of the Union Dining Hall leaving the GSA committee with precisely zero members.

Rather ironically, Mr Matthews



The Union Dining Hall was the stage for Monday night's dramatics

was involved in a successfully passed censure motion in February this year, when he instigated disciplinary action against the former Deputy President (Graduate Students), Shama Rahman. By taking on the role of GSA Chair over the summer, Mr Matthews effectively took over from Ms Rahman as the figurehead for postgraduate representation, since the DPGS position was scrapped at the end of the last academic year. At the time, the censure passed against Ms Rahman was the first in twenty years, but the boot was on the other foot at this week's Council and Mr Matthews was firmly on the receiving end.

Critics believe that Mr Matthews could have done much more to help the GSA's cause over the summer. The ex-Deputy President has been condemned for the lack of a GSA stall at Freshers'

Fair, no postgraduate parties or events and a seemingly non-existent push to get people to stand for the empty positions on the GSA committee during the recent elections period. Mr Matthews has reiterated that he has found it difficult being the only member of the GSA, having to be the point of contact for postgraduates all by himself. His reasoning for not having a Freshers' Fair stall is more dubious however. He stated in his report that he felt it would be better for postgraduates "to spend the day looking at the clubs the Union has to offer."

Also brought into question recently was the manner in which Mr Matthews received the £2000 honorarium payment. It's not known how exactly the money was awarded to the GSA Chair and the Union has repeatedly asked for an audit trail to be provided, but Mr

Matthews has claimed to be otherwise occupied and unable to provide the necessary details. Although Mr Matthews was rather publicly mauled on Monday night, his lack of communication with the Union on this matter didn't help his case.

The incident on Monday night has highlighted problems beyond Mr Matthews' resignation though. Firstly, why did so many of the Councillors abstain from voting? Was it for personal reasons, having to work with or attend College with someone they wanted censured? Or did the Councillors not fully understand the situation? Was inexperience the cause?

Secondly, and of more immediate concern: where does the GSA go from here? The current GSA election has been suspended, although only one person was running for any of the positions anyway. At the moment, the Union Presidents are taking on the duties performed by the GSA until it can establish an interim board. Yet more GSA elections will have to be held and it will be at least a month, if not longer before the committee is reformed. This is all assuming postgraduates want to get involved with reviving the GSA anyway. Felix has approached a number of postgraduates asking them for comment in the light of Monday's events and the response has mainly been: "What's the GSA?" Or, "I don't really care."

The Union is going to have to work hard if it wants to bring back the GSA properly, plus it's going to need to put in even more effort if it wants to improve the association's currently dismal profile. The election for the next committee will be the fourth within a year and the Union will need to put together a strong campaign to elect someone for the cursed position of postgraduate student representative. The GSA needs a motivated leader and the Union needs to work closely with that person whilst ensuring that an effective permanent member of staff is employed to work alongside the part-time Chair.

College getting set for Green Roof



Earlier during Monday's Council (before the dramatics discussed in the story to the left), a policy was tabled and successfully passed detailing the plans for a new Green Roof to be built on one of the College's rooftops.

Readers can rest assured that the Green Roof isn't simply an aesthetic accompaniment to the pink Bessemer Building. Instead a Green Roof is in actual fact a trendier name for an environmentally friendly garden rooftop.

The idea was brought to Council by the RAG Chair Karandeep Dhanoa who sought the Union's backing. Various staff members on campus have already taken a keen interest in the Green Roof project and College has said it will foot the bill.

If all goes well and the final proposals get the go ahead, the Green Roof should have a number of functions. Hopefully it will act as a social space for students making up for the other green areas that are being replaced by redevelopment projects; fingers crossed that College's army of marqueees doesn't invade the rooftop too. Furthermore, less heat will be lost from the roof, runoff water will be recycled and it will have a longer life span than conventional flat roofs.

Interestingly, students will be responsible for designing the Green Roof as part of their coursework. Biologists will be required to design the ecosystem, Mechanical Engineers will be tasked with producing a watering system and Civil Engineers will need to ensure the roof doesn't cave in.

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Phew.

LOLcats



OFF THE WEEK

Students: selfish and inconsiderate?

Character of Imperial students debated after multiple complaints over their questionable behaviour

Andrew Somerville
News Editor

Over the past few weeks, complaints have been received from several sources about the behaviour of Imperial students around campus. The criticisms all share one common feature: accusations of students' lack of discipline and respect for their college.

The front page of Felix this week shows a letter received from an offended visitor who was appalled at the lack of consideration that students in the JCR showed for their surroundings as they left the place covered in litter and uneaten food. He went on to question the prevailing attitude amongst the offenders, and to maintain that "tidiness in (the) scientific world is essential."

Whilst the letter is phrased as a gentle reprimand of the student body, it follows similar complaints received by Felix over the past few weeks, seeming to follow a trend of people becoming distressed at the lack of care that students show for their environment and colleagues. One can only speculate what the 78 year old author would have thought had he learned of the events surrounding the Royal School of Mines (RSM) Freshers' Dinner.

Felix has learned, from sources at the event two weeks ago, that the hosts of the "most notorious night of the year" have been temporarily banned from holding a 'sit-down' dinner whilst its future is debated. Sources close to the event have alleged that the dinner involved abuse of the traditional "fining" system (where freshers are commanded to drink large quantities of alcohol for committing offences such as sitting down before the president, and removing a jacket at the wrong time) which apparently continued for over an hour, breakage of a large quantity of glassware, a food fight at dessert, copious amounts of vomit, and an unknown person urinating into a pint glass and leaving it to be found by the staff. The dinner was finished early after staff or-



"Poor Fresher!" (caption and photograph supplied by RSM)

dered them to leave when the dessert was found to be decorated over the walls.

Whilst the RSM has been charged for damages and forced to apologise, its already poor reputation has not been improved and serious questions are being asked about the event, which seems to become more extreme in its abuses each year.

"Our dinner runs in a similar fashion, with traditional fines and freely accessible wine," said one CGCU member following their union dinner, "but the RSM take it far too far. They're just animals." Indeed, comparison to the popular CGCU Freshers' dinner portrays the RSM in an even more negative light, after it passed "pleasantly all

round," and without major incident.

Most worrying is the RSM's reaction to the incidents. Whilst they have officially apologised to College catering, an article that was submitted to Felix following the event (see "Just Another Night in the RSM") shows their point of view on the subject, "pools of regurgitated joy" and all.

For decades now, debate has been rife across society surrounding the "youth of today" and their seeming decline in "values" and "discipline." Perhaps this is just another case of society's changing formats. But when "the youth" begin to shock not just the previous generations, but their own contemporaries, something must be very wrong with the population.

Just another night in the RSM

"It's the most notorious night of the year!" was the first thing Union President Stephen Brown had to say when asked to comment on what he thought of the RSM Freshers Dinner. From what I remember, this year was no exception.

The fun begins when all the newbies learn that the ticket they've just purchased entitles them to a host for the evening. Such hosts take the form of any previous survivors from last year's carnage and it's their job to provide the freshers with drinks for the evening. Sometimes these drinks are of the alcoholic variety and sometimes these drinks are of the very alcoholic variety. Nevertheless, it is not in the interest of the freshers to spend a single penny more than what they paid for the ticket. Now, freshers being freshers then become stuck between the proverbial rock and a hard place when the pre-dinner drinks begin. Let's face it, we've all been there. It's hard to refuse a drink when it's bought for you.

After a quiet pint or 6 at the bar, the mining student body both first years and veterans alike staggered down to the MDH for the dinner. Not even had the first course been completed when our beloved RSM president, Mr Danny Hill, stood up and in very good taste, fined all those filthy little retardards who began to eat before he had. For those reading who ask why? Well, its tradition to follow one particular Royal's set of regulations at our dinners.

Plenty more fines were issued for various acts of misconduct and dress code infringements and as the beer, wine or spirits slipped down our throats the memories began to get hazy. I do however remember one particular young blooded lad to my left who said something along the lines of "it's not that hard to down wine".....16 rather swiftly imbibed glasses latter I was met by the most unholy retch I've ever heard and a wet sleeve. My next little flash of memory was being in a toilet cubicle nursing the poor guy back to a state of pseudo-life.

I returned to the dining hall just in time for dessert, which I might say was a damn sight better than the slice of pensioner's handbag they tried to pass off as pork. A glass of water or two down my own neck made me see and appreciate in true detail just how good a time people had been having. Pools of regurgitated joy lay all around as did several of our new followers. The thing is though; if they could only just learn to keep their mouths shut then they'd never get themselves into these situations. Any person stupid enough to approach a certain individual with a habit of wearing a tie every Friday and say "I love vodka" is going to be rewarded with just that. Ouch.

However, a few more drinks made me stop caring and enjoy the music that had begun to play. That's DJ music, not music in my head. The next thing everyone (and I do mean everyone) seems to remember is suddenly being in the union again. Apparently we had been asked nicely to leave so the stewards could clear up our 'happy puddles' and had brought the party elsewhere. All in all it was a cracking night despite the rotten food. A tactical stop at Subway prevented any manner of beastly hangover which would no doubt have otherwise reared its ugly head the following morning. Special thanks to all those who had a pint glass holding hand in the setting up of the room as well as a big pat on the back to our Honorary Secretary, Mr Alex Middleton, for organising said event. Cheers lads and lasses, can't wait to do it all over again!

by Steve Smith (RSM member)

Student held at gunpoint 20 minutes from IC

Tom Roberts
Editor-in-Chief

At around 2:30pm on Wednesday afternoon, a student from Imperial College was mugged by two men, one of which was armed.

The student, a member of Photosoc, who wishes to remain anonymous, was making his way to university from his house in the early hours of the afternoon. He reached the large Tesco supermarket on Cromwell Road where he was asked if he had any "weed" by two black men. After declining to give the men anything, one of the muggers revealed a large pistol. He pulled the gun from beneath his trousers and demanded the student to hand over his mobile phone.

The student who is a keen photographer had his expensive SLR in hand at the time as he had just been taking some pictures. "Without thinking," the photographer commented to Felix, "I handed over my mobile phone and pushed my camera in their direction at the same time too. They didn't even threaten me for the camera, I just gave it to them."

The student suffered no physical assault as the muggers then walked away with over £300 worth of electronic equipment.

The incident occurred less than twenty minutes away from campus. The student carried on towards university and happened to see a parked police car, so he informed the officers of the crime.

The photographer described the muggers to Felix as "people you'd expect to get mugged by" but despite this he was still surprised at the "daylight robbery." He continued by commenting on how unexpected the whole event was and how he thought "it might have happened around North End Road at 2:30am (nearer to his house), but not there at 2:30 in the afternoon."

The student stated that he "will be far more cautious in the future, when walking around with expensive stuff" and that he felt a mixture of emotions: anger combined with relief that more wasn't stolen from him, or that he hadn't been hurt.

He offered some advice to anyone else who finds themselves in such horrific circumstances: "If it happens to

you, just hand over your stuff, it's really not worth it. Make sure you report the incident to the police too." The police contacted the victim at his home later in the evening and informed him that a man had been arrested later on Wednesday, possibly in connection with the mugging.

Thankfully the Photosoc member was not attacked or assaulted. Felix spoke to him a few hours after the incident when he appeared at the office door requesting to use the telephone. He appeared remarkably calm to this reporter considering what had happened only moments earlier.

If you have been the victim of crime, there are support services available within both the Union and College. For general advice, ranging from getting help with insurance companies to dealing with the distress of being a victim of crime, you can contact Nigel Cooke in the Information and Advice centre by phoning 020 7594 8067 (ext: 48067). Alternatively you can talk to the Student Counselling Service by phoning 020 7594 9637 (ext: 49637). Both services are free and offer full confidentiality.



The victim's own hand-drawn artistic impression of the muggers



Comment, Opinion & Letters

Let us know your views: comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Letters may be edited for length and grammar purposes
Views on these pages are not representative of Felix

Continuing the education debate

Comment returns to the discussion about what the Union's stance on higher education funding should be



Caroline Clark

In response to the President

I was disappointed that the previous article (Issue 1383) by the Union President about the debate on Higher Education (HE) funding seemed to attempt to label anyone who opposed top-up fees as a "Greek Trotskyite" or "sub-Marxist." I hope instead that we can have a reasoned and intelligent discussion.

The current debate over HE funding at Imperial has been sparked by the NUS Campaigns Convention over the summer. The NUS claimed that we "have lost the argument for state-funded higher education with the public" and we must "focus our efforts on keeping the cap on fees and not let the fight for free education make us ineffective and destroy our chances of winning on the issue of the cap."

For a Union that was so worried last year about Imperial no longer forming policy independent of the NUS, we seem to be reversing our policy on HE funding precisely because the NUS is doing so. Just because our Union has affiliated to the NUS it does not mean we have to adopt precisely the same position as them.

Our Union President, along with the NUS, thinks that the debate has moved on. By their logic we must accept that there has to be a market in

higher education and all we can do is limit it. However, there has not always been a market in Higher Education. Prior to the introduction of tuition fees in 1998 everyone received a grant to go to university.

If our policy was aimed at trying to stop the cap being lifted on the basis that paying £3000 is the best we're going to get, then all we do is weaken our position. The Union seems to believe that maintaining an "unrealistic" - but principled - stance on free education will weaken the ability of ICU and NUS to prevent the £3,000 cap from being lifted. In fact the reverse is correct. If ICU doesn't retain its support for free education, then any future argument against increasing the cap loses its logical basis; if we accept the need for the free market to dictate who attends university then our Rector's position in favour of unlimited top-up fees is one that becomes almost impossible to resist.

Tactically we need to keep our current policy if we are to win the argument in a couple of years when the government reviews top-up fees. If we allow Universities to be subject to the free market then they will constantly be competing to increase fees. Sir Richard Sykes and other members of the

Russell Group make it clear that they would like to charge unlimited fees. We must maintain our support for free education (that is free at the point of use) in order to avoid this situation.

I hope the Union Council will clarify their position with regards to releasing the cap on top-up fees. Will the Union robustly oppose increasing the cap on top-up fees when this issue comes to prominence in 2009?

The President's simplistic argument that the only opposition to top-up fees is because people "prefer something free over something you have to now pay for" ignores the reality in which poorer people are excluded from attending University out of fear of the resulting debt.

Although the overall number of admissions did not change much after the introduction of top-up fees, it is not clear just how much people from the poorest backgrounds have been deterred from going to university. I only managed to come to Imperial because I obtained one of four scholarships, as my parents can not afford to contribute anything to my tuition fees. I only decided to come to university because under the old system of means-tested benefits I was exempt from paying tuition fees, which took away a lot of

worry about debt after graduation. I can testify to the effect that top-up fees would have had on me: I would not have come to University, let alone Imperial.

Under the current system students from poorer backgrounds will end up coming out of university with much larger amounts of debt than before top-up fees were introduced as their parents will not be able to contribute towards their tuition fees. Although new bursaries have been introduced a lot of the time this has been done at the expense of old ones. For example the scholarship I was awarded by Imperial College is now £1000 per annum for new students as opposed to £5000 per annum 2 years ago.

If we change our policy on HE funding we will be agreeing to the exclusion of students from low income backgrounds, which is something that we don't want to do.

The title of the previous article by the President, "The Union's View", was erroneous, as it is clearly only the view of those people on Union Council who voted for the HE Funding Policy to be revoked, not all the members of the Union. I renew my call for a full referendum of the student body to decide this critical issue.

// If we allow universities to be subject to the free market then they will constantly be competing to increase fees //



Steve Brown
President

Free higher education is unrealistic

Has anyone heard the joke about how many sabbaticals it takes to win the "fight" for free education? Don't get me wrong, I am deadly serious. This time last year only eight of you responded to the rallying cry of the then Deputy President (Education and Welfare) to attend a national demonstration in Central London to register your disgust with the current education funding arrangements.

To respond to some of the other contributors to these esteemed pages I would like to clarify that at no point has myself, Union Council or even the Rector has recently put forward the idea that our education should be entirely "self funded".

Union Council voted to scrap our policy on free education as they acknowledged that it is no longer a realistic stance to take given that the government is now aiming for 50% of all school leavers to embark upon a degree course. If you believe that the taxpayer should pick up the tab for this exercise then you better start formulating a proposal that will find favour with the leadership of either of the two main political parties. If I really wanted to I could use this column to sanctimoniously scaremonger on this topic but given that less than 0.1% of the student body attended the last National Demo I will take this opportunity to put a different view across.

To respond to Ms. Clark who was at odds with my view in issue 1,383 I would like to give her a bit of a reality check. She correctly points out that a Students' Union has to "defend the interests of students" but to do so we need to engage with society on what exactly constitutes the "interests" of current and potential students. Ms. Clark seems to be suggesting that the Union should embark on a self-defeating internal monologue on this topic.

There is no point in convincing Union Council, the NUS or even the student body via a general meeting or referendum about the merits of "free education" if you cannot convince anyone else. Whilst the Union held a policy mandating officers to toe the free education line I am confident in saying that we would probably get taken about as seriously as doctors would be if they asked for a 100% pay rise. The abolition of the graduate contribution is a position that both the Conservative Party and the Labour Party do not support and if you want to change their mind it will take considerably more than sending eight people along to wave placards in the air and offering a couple of ill thought out arguments in the pages of Felix.

As I have stated in these pages previously, even the phrase "free education" is a complete misnomer. Education is not free and someone, somewhere has to pay for it and there is little to be gained from me sanctimoniously

scaremongering that if there is no mechanism for a graduate contribution then society would be worse off. I would like to point out that higher education still is free at the point of use. All EU students repay their fees via the student loans company. The amount they pay back is dependent on how much you earn and currently the government subsidises the interest on student loans.

Currently I am over £20,000 in debt but if I was given a lump sum tomorrow I would be better off financially if I put that money in a savings account rather than using it to pay off my student loan early. The introduction of student fees has also seen the reintroduction of bursaries. If I was a bit younger and started university now I would qualify for a grant. Is Ms. Clark going to argue in favour of a system whereby financial support can't be targeted at students who need it the most? Would she be in favour of an alternative system whereby contributions paid by Imperial graduates would be used to support "students" studying Surf Science or Golf Course Management?

Student debt is not like credit card debt. There is no incentive to pay what you owe back any quicker than the government asks. Professor Nicholas Barr at the LSE illustrated this by stating the fact that a graduate earning £15,000 pays nothing but a graduate earning £50,000 would repay their loan at the rate of £262.50 per month. Higher Ed-

ucation is free at the point of use and it is only once you start earning that you can afford to pay for it. The only alternative is to argue that we should all pay more in tax once we graduate to cover the cost but given that neither political parties are in favour of significant tax increases this is unlikely to happen. Imperial College graduates command some of the highest starting salaries so is it really in our members interest to argue for this?

If students are that unhappy with the system or if any evidence emerges that fees have had a negative impact on access to Imperial College then I will be the first to man the barricades. It is crucial that Union policy is based on how things actually are rather than it being formulated around few cheap slogans about "free education". If you want to suggest an alternative to the current graduate contribution where there are significantly increased levels of support for low income students and that all the money paid by Imperial students stays with Imperial College I will be all ears. Until then please remember that if you abolish fees you will also abolish targeted financial support for the students who need it most. If the student body wants their most senior representative to make a case in favour of this then there has to be more evidence of this than the views of the eight students who went marching through the streets of London last autumn.

// Education is not free and someone, somewhere has to pay for it //



David Stewart

Pspelling: The future of spelling

It is a continuing concern to the British citizen that the austerity of British English is being eroded. More precisely, letters are being lost from words. Encyclopædia has become encyclopeda. Diarrhoea has become diarrhea. Through is often misrepresented as thru. Clearly action must be taken until we are left with words with no letters remaining in them at all. By way of demonstration, we include below an artists impression of the word floccinaucinihilipilification in two hundred years time:

fn

It is clear that we must not let such a situation arise, for the benefit of our children, and our children's children, who could find themselves reconstructing polysyllabic words out of single letters. As is well understood in academic circles, it is impossible to hold back progress; however, there is something that can be done. Since

words are generally either shorted from the middle, or the end, we propose the following strategy to conserve word length: we must add new letters on to the beginning of words. This way, we may preserve their length.

We take inspiration from words of already quite prodigious austerity. Psychology, Psalm and Psalter are amongst

Old Word	New Word
stupid	pstupid
sick	psick
scry	pscry
so	pso
school	pschool
spoon	pspoon
sun	psun
shit	pshit

those we are interested in. The 'p' is in each case not at all necessary to the pronunciation of the word in question, and so can reasonably be added to the beginning without disturbing speech.

Below we include a table displaying a selection of words as they stand and the modified versions as we propose:

It is stressed that none of these words will change in sound. This will facilitate the transition; those who are adjusting to the new system will be able to have perfectly normal conversations with those who have already adjusted while those in the know will be aware that they are adjoining ps to an ever increasing quantity of the words they use.

We have investigated many extensions to this. Addition use of the p-prefix can be motivated from pterodactyl to yield such new words as ptick, ptruck and ptoss-pot. Experimenting with other words has also proved fruitful. Gnome gives us gnut, gnever and gnude. Knit additionally provides knincompoop, knag and knude. Wrench would suggest wrandom, wrickety and wrollick. Moreover, what, why and when imply modifications such as

whood, whinkie and whank.

When one drops the necessity for inspiration from pre-existing English words, one can make more creative modifications. Garden could become ngarden, kiddy-fiddler would be fkiddy-kfiddler, and cunt alters to rcunt.

As the degradation of words continues, it would be necessary to repeat this procedure. We could imagine new words such as ppspecial being necessary, or gkpaper. In the example mentioned above, we can therefore predict floccinaucinihilipilification eventually begin represented by ppygjncdrfn.

While personally we may find this depiction of such an apocalyptic state of affairs at best distressing, at worst, sufficient to induce suicide, the desperate position we are put in by the current degradation renders this procedure necessary. It will be a test of our nation in the years to come, whether or not we are able to live up to the challenge posed and relearn our pspelling.



Gilead Amit

What the ancient Greeks did for us

The Ancient Greeks were a remarkable bunch. I've left that sentence on my screen for the past three days, and the more I look at it, the more pathetic an understatement it seems. A quick scroll through Microsoft Office's usually helpful thesaurus shows how woefully inadequate adjectives are in an attempt to describe real, unparalleled genius.

Our Western society owes its very existence to the Ancient Greeks, and a list of all we have to be grateful for would read like an encyclopaedia. Far simpler to mention all those everyday things that owe nothing to their remarkable discoveries; a list which, over the past few hours, I have been wholly unable to make.

Where would we be, for instance, without Hippocrates, father of modern medicine? Were it not for him, we might never have come to realize that our health is controlled by the balance of our four humours (phlegm, yellow bile, black bile and blood, for all you non-medics out there). It was thanks to this remarkable insight that doctors through the ages knew to use leeches in their practices; just imagine the suffering that would have gone untreated in the millennia since Ancient Greece

had surgeons not known to bleed their patients. It hardly bears considering!

Surely the most remarkable of their contributions, however, were to the field of science. Aristotle, perhaps the greatest of his contemporaries, realized without making a single observation that the Sun, planets and stars all revolve around the Earth in perfect circles. His model was later extended to include Anaximander's vision of the Earth as a cylinder with a height equal to one-third its diameter.

Though many scientists since have attempted to claim his insights as their own, Empedocles must remain the one true father of elemental cosmogenesis (a slightly more technical idea that implies that the Universe is made up of four distinct elements: earth, fire, water and air). He and Ocellus Lucanus, who first proposed that the Universe is eternal, with no beginning or end, set the framework for the next two thousand years of research. I could go on and on, but I think that my point needs no further pressing: the science we know, teach and learn today is almost entirely based on the work of the Ancient Greeks.

Of course, not all their ideas were right. Heraclitus came to the laughable conclusion that random chance



Ancient Greek mythology gave us cool creatures like the minotaur - part man part bull

controls the workings of the Universe, almost as if God played dice with the Universe! His proposal goes hand in hand with one of Anaximander's less brilliant ideas, that multiple universes might exist in parallel, with different futures being lived in each. Hipiasus of Metapontum dared to defy the genius of Pythagoras by claiming that the square root of 2 is irrational. While some may claim that his being drowned by his colleagues was a little excessive, I think we can all agree he was worthy of ridicule.

It is hard to reconcile the two aspects

of Greek society, where every idea, both right and wrong, seems to have seen daylight for the first time. It's all very well to be amazed at the farsightedness of some observations, but one has to look at the other side of the coin, and be equally amazed at their periodic myopia. Instead of praising them for what they got right, or ridiculing them for where they went wrong, we should praise what really deserves praise - that one civilization, in a few generations, could come up with so many wildly original, entirely heterogeneous ideas. What will we be remembered for?

// Anaximander's vision of the Earth as a cylinder with a height equal to one-third its diameter //



Jellybean

Introducing canoe juggling

Some historic manuscripts suggest that canoe juggling started as early as 1737 in a small rural town in south Sweden, though the 1870 World Canoe Juggling Championships, at which 18 countries were represented, is recognized as the first official contest by the Guinness Book of Records.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the Swedes dominated the championships, held every three years, until the infamous 1888 championships in Budapest, at which there was significant outcry regarding cheating in the Lithuanian and Paraguayan teams. The Swedes, pulling rank having invented the sport,

required that the canoes be sea worthy whilst the Lithuanians and Paraguayans, entering the championships for the first time had assumed the canoes were simply aesthetic. Incidentally, the Mexicans were disqualified outright for using 'canoes' a mere two feet in length, despite demonstrating their skills with full size canoes at the previous WCJC. Thus began the standardisation of the juggling canoe and the additional requirement for teams to enter a 100m sprint in a randomly selected canoe.

Since those early days however, significant advances have been made in the sport. At the 2002 WCJC, 5 times world champion Esben Krister as-

tounded judges with a 4 canoe 'Mill's Mess', whilst the runner up Rafael Romero, an unlikely Mexican candidate standing only 5' 3" tall, attempted a 3 canoe 'Rubenstein's Revenge'. Sadly Krister died in late 2005 of internal hemorrhaging shortly after his seventh WCJC victory in which he performed an unimaginable 5 canoe half shower.

The Swedish team now wears sponsor's logos to the value of £3.4 million; a testament to the impact of the sport on the world population despite its dangers. Crazes have hit many schools, particularly for one reason or another, primary schools, though after numerous reports of significant injury, death and the Colchester incident of 1998, it

is now banned in most British educational establishments. If however you are still interested in taking up the sport professionally you might want to think again.

Following the advances in material technology most championship teams now juggle carbon fibre or Kevlar canoes, so a basic set of three canoes will cost you about £4000. Practice and budget canoes are however, available for a reasonable cost and canoe juggling societies often provide rental equipment for their members. The Canoe Club here at Imperial can be seen practicing the sport in front of Beit quad on a regular basis, though they are not very good at it.



A. Geek

// Religion dupes people into worshipping itself. So does television and the Felix Editor //

The world is a reflection of its religion

I have, on the desk next to me, six copies of a book called "GOD – Man's Loving Enemy" by a man named Adam Bolton. The manner in which I came to own these copies is, I promise you, entirely true.

Fourteen months ago, I signed up to a self-publishing website to read about a friend's book. Then I didn't go back to the website ever again. About a year ago now, they sent me a large box, with a letter in that congratulated me for publishing my first book – something that I, also, was happy about, having not actually written one.

It turned out that this was actually some other poor sod's first book, and seeing as my attempts to return the books to the publisher were met with an email promising a second set, I decided to keep them.

Of course, at that point I assumed they were actually readable. My mistake. The subtitle of the book is, "The World Is A Reflection Of Its Religion. Religion, In Turn, Is A Reflection Of The God It Worships". In short, the book is written by a believer in God, and details the myriad ways that the creator of existence is shit at his job. It's Richard Dawkins, crossed with Martin Luther. It's out of its mind.

Not to worry though, as I thought Felix Arts might like to take a look and they've informed me you fine people will soon be able to get your hands on the copy I've given them. Please try to contain your excitement and read on, because the book represents such a bizarre standpoint that I may actually be able to contain my resentment for mankind as a whole in order to lay into Mr. Bolton a little more sharply.

You see, Bolton's underlying argument is this – Organised Religion is brainwashing the people, and we

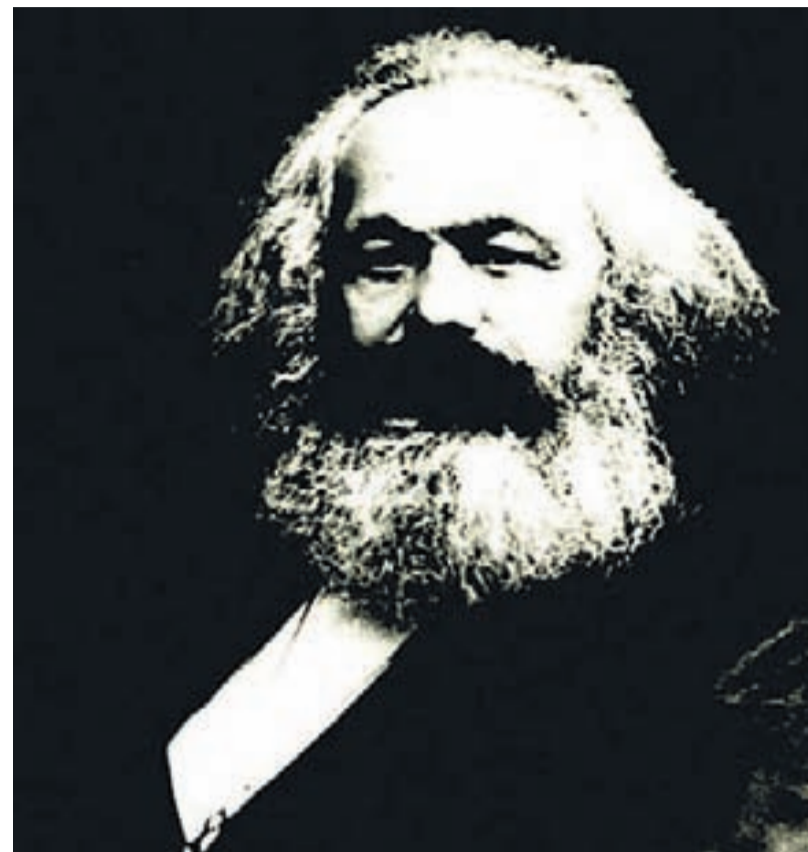
should all wake up to the idea that God is God, fallible but ultimately In Charge, and that people like the Pope just want your money. Your money, and our nation's children. And puppies, probably, to kill and feast upon.

Anyway, in between LARGE SECTIONS IN BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS and general rambling, Bolton doesn't ever grasp the idea that Religion is more useful than simply a means of oppression. Or even faith provision.

Religion dupes people into worshipping itself, it's true. So does television, and the Felix Editor. The thing Religion has that the others don't, is that it dupes people well. Really well. In fact, forget governments and corporations, Religion still remains the biggest social glue on the planet. Yes, this is going where you think it's going.

I don't know how many of you are religious, or who are religious but pretending not to be so you can get in the pants of that existentialist you see at the back of Friday afternoon lectures, and I don't really care. Maybe you considered your faith carefully enough to choose it yourself. More likely, you were coaxed into it by someone else – just like others were coaxed into atheism. And maybe, yes, you give money every year that ends up funding your local bishop's supping on golden retriever babies. But at the end of the day, you feel like you're part of something. And irregardless of The Big Guy's actual existence, you are part of something.

In fact, in an age where we can't even group together for long enough to turn off televisions that we're not watching, Religion is something of a unique institution in the world, where people get together to genuinely act as a group. Sure, you might think they're doing it out of self-interest, or that it's akin



Marxism: On same level as atheism?

to brainwashing, or that, occasionally, what they do as a group involves murdering large numbers of people. Touché. But that sort of thing happens whether you've got a story about an old guy in a toga sitting on a cloud or not.

What happens far less when you don't have the old guy, is philanthropy, selflessness and Genuine Good Stuff.

I'm not religious, and I like to think that between shouting at you and

shouting at Mr. Bolton that I'm a pretty amiable person. But I wouldn't say everyone was like that. And nor would I say that I could organise anything good on a very large scale. My advice would be this – if you're happy as you are, don't change it. Atheism might look crisp, modern and rational, but it's unlikely to organise anything more helpful than Marxism for many decades to come.



The Ringmaster

// England has done what it does best ... finishing second //

This week in England... Issue 002

Does Sanchez Ring A Bell?

If there were any time we required evidence to suggest that our wonderful government either cannot count or was terribly distracted with writing inspirational forget-the-party's-values speeches, it would have to be now. After all, it only takes so long for someone to be sitting at their desk and finally concede... "I'll leave the last stack for tomorrow" before binning the rest of the visa applications and accidentally falling 300,000 heads short. Whoopsies! England has to take a firm stand against this clearly evil invasion that has befallen the country; ignore the fact that you're all more or less Spanish in the first place (although these days, I must say, that Spanish lot seem to have fared somewhat better a-swimming in the gene pool...) and that without your so despised call centres the cost of your BT landline will want to make you swallow your own face, this has to be put at an end!

This is a rallying call to all the Imperial College aspiring plumbers, kebab shop owners, telemarketers, mobile phone salespeople and fruit vendors across all departments – without everyone's support, the government would look rather silly. And let's be honest: we don't want them taking our most valuable jobs now, do we?

Now, if you don't mind, I have my plush office in Fleet Street and my 50 million pound bonus this year to look forward to.

Who's This Bloody Bloke anyway?

I'm unsure as to how many letters of holy enlightenment our esteemed editor has received after my teachings in the second previous issue, but I have yet another revelation to share with you inspired lot – I have chosen to walk amongst you. Because cameras tend to stop working whenever a photo of my face is taken (you should see what I can do to polaroids) I shall, over the coming months, attempt to show you some bits and bobs of the person whose worldly form I have decided to take. To make things even more interesting, the first person who does not directly know my worldly alias who guesses correctly to our esteemed editor, will win an as-of-yet undetermined prize. Details to follow in my next issue.

England Does It Best...

Once again, England has not failed to impress. You would be excused, prior to the 2002 World Cup, if you believed the hype that we weren't just going to sweep the rest of the world under a rug, but that Wayne Rooney himself will be biting the fingers off any goalkeeper that dares keep a football out of the net touched by his supple foot.

Come the cricket world cup, and oh dear oh dear oh dear – a rallying call against the Aussies was in order, of course, and it would have been great to watch had we ever gotten that far. It seems like we were beginning to

learn a lesson, but that was before the World Cup Final in the rugby, and the Formula One world championship showdown in Brazil. In one weekend, the worst, most gutting, and horrific battle cries I have heard in my life were echoing throughout the desperate face of England. Despite the fact that Perry Montgomery is effectively a Jonny Wilkinson v3.0. Despite the fact that nobody really expects Hamilton to win

the title in his rookie season (although all credit to him, how close can you get!).

England has done what it does best, and, well, I'm proud of her. Finishing second is the best way to push world standards up further. "Just you watch out," Old Britannia says, "because if I somehow manage to do better next time..."

God Bless the Media.

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Text your comments to the Felix Catfone for free* and we'll publish them!

*if you have a contract phone. Technically, this might not be true. Basically, the Catfone is just a regular mobile on the Orange network

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$$-\frac{\hbar^2}{2m} \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial x^2} + V(x)\psi(x) = E \psi(x)$$

CSI: Cuzco – Incan ritual sacrifices

Scientists use stable isotopes in victims' hair samples to gain a chilling insight into the fattening-up process

Simon Shears

An international team of researchers has found that the ritual sacrifice of Inca children involved “fattening” them up before death. Using data from stable isotopes and DNA they have been able to establish a picture of the final few months of four mummified children found at some of the highest archaeological sites in the world.

To discover information about these final months the scientists measured deposits of various stable isotopes in hair samples from the children. Scalp hair samples were used for analysis as this type of hair grows approximately 1 cm a month, the isotope deposits it contains reflecting the food that an individual has eaten during the months leading up to their death. Once deposited, these stable isotopes (which include carbon, nitrogen, oxygen and hydrogen – see box for details) remain unchanged for thousands of years.

Two of the children were recovered from a shrine 25m from the 6,739m summit of Volcán Lullullaco, the highest archaeological site in the world. They were a 15 year old girl called the “Lullullaco Maiden” and a 7 year old boy called, you’ve guessed it, “Lullullaco Boy”.

What do stable isotopes tell us?

Carbon: Distinguishes between marine and terrestrial protein. Also differentiates between plants that grow at different altitudes.

Nitrogen: Distinguishes plant from animal protein.

Oxygen and Hydrogen: Vary in water supplies, providing information of temperature and altitude

Sulphur: Used to track changes in the diet and origin of food that is sourced from different background geologies.

The shrine is one of over 100 Inca ritual sites all located between 5,200m and 6,700m. The peaks of the Andes were sacred to the Inca, and were often associated or even identified with the major deities such as the weather god Illapa. Sacrifices at these peaks reinforced the reverence for these sacred peaks and legitimized the growing Inca empire.

Dr Andrew Wilson, of the University of Bradford, and the lead author on this research commented: “By examining hair samples from these unfortunate children, a chilling story has started to emerge of how the children were ‘fattened up’ for sacrifice”.

Historical and archaeological accounts suggest that those chosen for sacrifice would first be taken to Cuzco, the capital of the Inca Empire, where celebrations would take place for their impending sacrifice. Following the celebrations the children would begin a pilgrimage to one of the burial sites in the Andes, which could last for several months.

Stable isotope analysis of hair samples from the Maiden show a changing diet during the 12 months before her death, suggesting an elevation in her status as she was prepared for sacrifice. Originally she had been fed a diet of vegetables, such as potato, suggesting that she came from a peasant background.

Her diet then changed to one containing plants such as maize and protein from charqui (dried llama meat), both regarded as “elite” foods in Inca societies, and which would have been deposited for the children at way stations along their pilgrimage route.

While the cause of death of these children is still unclear, it is known that they were given maize beer to “dull their senses” and coca leaves (a chewing quid was found in the mouth of the Maiden) to alleviate altitude sickness and inure them to their situation, hastening their deaths.

Previous research has shown that Lullullaco Boy was particularly distressed when he died. His clothes were covered in vomit and diarrhoea, the vomit stained red by the hallucinogenic drug achiote. However, he appears to have been killed by suffocation, the textile wrapping which enveloped his



The Lullullaco Maiden. No, she's not getting a make-over – they're collecting stable isotope deposits

body having been pulled so tight that it crushed his ribs and dislocated his pelvis.

“It looks to us as though the children were led up to the summit shrine in the culmination of a year-long rite, drugged and then left to succumb to exposure,” says co-author Dr Timothy Taylor, also of the University of Bradford. “Although some may wish to view

these grim deaths within the context of indigenous belief systems, we should not forget that the Inca were imperialists too, and the treatment of such peasant children may have served to instill fear and facilitate social control over remote mountain areas.”

To this end, children chosen for sacrifice were often the sons and daughters of local community leaders or were of-

ferings from within the community.

Sacrifices to social cohesion as much as to religion, these children were mere pawns in Inca society. Yet through the Bradford scientists' work, they may yet prove to be some of its most important emissaries to the present, providing us with an insight into rituals which have previously remained shrouded in mystery.

Gossip. Loose talk which costs lives, or indirect reciprocity's lynchpin?

Imran Khan

Pssst, have you heard? Some clever clogs over at the Max Planck institute have found that far from insidiously undermining the social fabric of community, gossip could actually form an extremely important part of the way we interact with our peers – and even be key to the evolution of our society.

Researchers have been aware for a while that humans help each other out through ‘indirect reciprocity’. This is the idea that it's good for me to help people out, as the likelihood is that you will then give me a hand when I need it. But the chances are that, even if you and I are acquainted, you'll have very little idea whether I habitually help old grannies cross the road or prefer steal-

ing their hairnets. So how does indirect reciprocity actually function?

Obviously, only a small fraction of a given population would have the opportunity to directly observe an interaction between two of its members. Ralf Sommerfeld and his team investigated to what extent gossip might help provide the mechanism for the information-sharing that is needed. Do we actually pay any attention to idle chatter when forming opinions about our peers, or do we give everyone a chance to make their own impressions? And which is the more savvy thing to do?

Sommerfeld's team got their results through the age-old method of giving money to a herd of undergraduates in exchange for them becoming guinea pigs in an experiment involving ‘pris-

oner's dilemma' style computer games. Participants could cooperate – each participant giving up £1.25 of their money to obtain £2.00 for their partner – or be mean, and take everyone else's money but not give away any of their own. Although the best way to maximise everyone's wealth would be for everyone to be generous and give away money, the best way for an individual to do the same is to be mean.

Although not perfect, the game is a useful analogy for human society in general, and in particular the ‘tragedy of the commons’, as it may provide clues as to what stops public resources being completely exploited. It's been speculated that the answer is reputation; people who are consistently mean – I like to call them bastards – get

found out, and the indirect reciprocity system shuns them.

Sommerfeld found that when they gave players in the game the chance to rate their partners and share that information with the community, then mean players suffered and generous players gained. As predicted, players were making decisions on whether to cooperate or not based on gossip. Even more interestingly, the information they gained via gossip was more influential and could even overrule what they saw through direct observation.

This research suggests that, far from being damaging, gossip is actually a reliable and very powerful source of social information, which provides community cohesion by discouraging ‘free riders’. So, the next time you're



A service to the community?

sticking the knife in, maybe you can take comfort in the fact that you could be performing a valuable function for humanity, you backstabbing cow.

Fever'd electroencephalogram on your brow

What a brainwave! Health sensor demonstrates a novel method to generate energy, based on body heat

Brett Cherry

Scientists at the Interuniversity Microelectronics Center (IMEC), an independent research center in Belgium, have developed a new health sensor, which runs off electricity generated by the temperature difference between the skin of the forehead and air.

This thermoelectric powered electroencephalogram (EEG), which monitors brain-waves, straps to the head and wirelessly transmits information on the electrical activity of the brain to a personal computer.

Despite the EEG's thermoelectric generator only having a small theoretical efficiency, the thermal gradient present between the skin of the forehead and air at room temperature provides more than enough power to run the EEG. How the generator obtains this power is central to its use in devices such as this one.

In one sense, thermoelectric generators are nothing new, having been used for many years in various devices from refrigerators to spacecraft. However, IMEC's EEG is a good example of their more recent application to medical devices, where they are used to convert waste heat from the body into electricity, to power sophisticated sensors for gathering sensitive data on human health.

IMEC began research into thermoelectrically powered health sensors in

2003. One of its goals was to eliminate the need for batteries in medical devices worn on the human body. Wearable thermoelectric generators would also provide the autonomy afforded by batteries, but with an unlimited lifetime.

"Why not charge your cell phone from the heat of the human body?"

However, there are physical obstacles to overcome when designing this type of sensor, and to understand these it helps to know how a thermoelectric generator works.

The generator basically consists of thousands of thermocouple junctions made of two dissimilar semiconductor materials, such as bismuth-telluride or silicon-germanium. When thermocouples are exposed to temperature gradients, they produce an electric current, through a process known as the thermoelectric effect. Thermopiles, formed by connecting thermocouples in series, are sandwiched together between 'hot' and 'cold' ceramic plates, the whole sandwich forming a

thermoelectric generator.

One of the biggest obstacles in producing thermoelectricity lies in matching the varying thermal energy resistance of the generator with the air temperature of its environment. To accomplish this, the thermoelectric generator must be designed to correspond with an adequate air temperature, such as the indoor temperature of an office or hospital. The forehead is an ideal location for the thermoelectric generator because it has a low thermal resistance and provides heat at a constant rate resulting in a decent thermoelectric output – up to 25 mW/cm². In order to increase the thermal difference between the generator and the air, and hence the electrical output, the hot and cold thermocouple junctions are isolated.

Currently, researchers at IMEC are looking to lower the power consumption of the EEG sensor even further, and are designing a semiconductor process for manufacturing thermopiles at a lower production cost. Thermoelectric-powered health sensors such as the EEG, could play a vital role in the medical industry. But it doesn't have to end there. After all, if one could power an EEG by generating thermoelectricity utilizing heat from the forehead, why not power your cell phone or iPod from the heat of other parts of the human body or even the sun?



Inspired, the editor tries to charge his mobile using his overheated brain. Rapturous expression last seen in a notorious Warhol film

JPMorgan

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Neophiles' attention span gauged

If you're one, you'll be moving on to a new story soon. But not before you've finished reading this one mind!

Christiana Christodoulou

The internet has made access to news and sharing of information extremely simple. The success of video sharing website YouTube shows how popular and easy it is to share and recommend videos to other people, with many getting more than 1 million views. Even established news websites such as the BBC and CNN encourage more information sharing by allowing readers to bookmark stories on Facebook or to get news direct to their mobile or email. Millions of people can be reading a single news story or viewing the same video simultaneously, in which case these stories are said to have the population's collective attention.

However, as popular as they might be at the time, interest in a news story can rapidly decline and the novelty can soon wear off, be it from a lack of people spreading the story or from too much exposure.

Using the novelty news website **digg.com** to do their research, scientists in America have studied the collective attention of 1 million users to see if they could quantify the loss of novelty.

For those of you unacquainted with **digg.com**, the concept is simple: news articles from the internet, both novel and serious, are posted by the users of the site. Users have full control of what is displayed, by recommending stories

in the "Upcoming Stories" section to other readers. Users who 'digg' the story in this manner increase its digg rating, keeping the story on the front page.

As one would expect, on breaking a story generates a large amount of interest, which increases as news of the story spreads, but this interest soon decreases as the novelty wears off. This is reflected by the rate at which a story receives a digg.

Eventually a story is removed from the main pages and put into the archive sections where it generates little interest.

For their research the scientists

"Digg stories: Fashion tips from a guy; Scientific reasons for a Zombie Apocalypse & Marijuana: drug or leaf? Arnie decides."

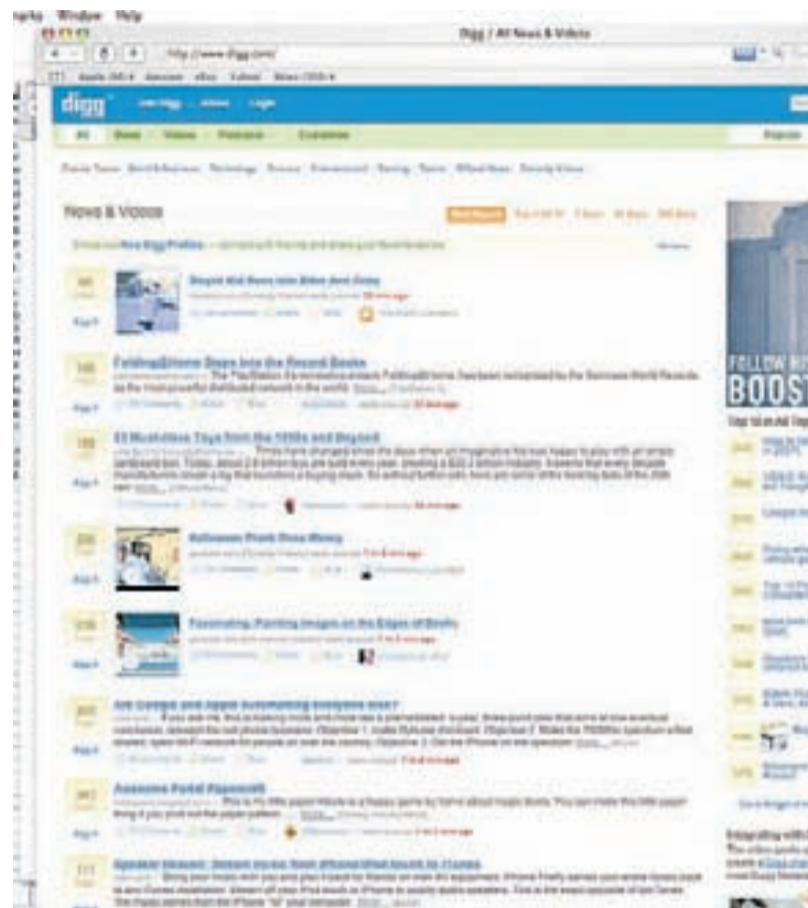
quantified the novelty of a story by a factor known, unsurprisingly, as the novelty factor. They found that this factor decays rapidly approximately two hours after the story is first shown on the front page, declining to less than 0.03 after three hours as promotion of the story decreases.

The researchers propose that the decay time of 2 hours is linked to some natural in-built attention span of a large population. If so, these findings could be useful to advertisers who rely on the spread of information within a large population, and along varying time scales.

Others researchers point out that the types of stories with high ratings tend to be those that have little impact on society but just provide something to relate to and be intrigued. For example, stories on Paris Hilton going to jail for drink driving offences or Amy Winehouse has going to rehab.

At the time of writing the top three digged stories of the American website from the past 24 hours include "Fashion tips for women from a guy who knows dick about fashion," "5 scientific reasons a Zombie Apocalypse could actually happen," and "Marijuana is not a drug, it's a leaf, says Schwarzenegger."

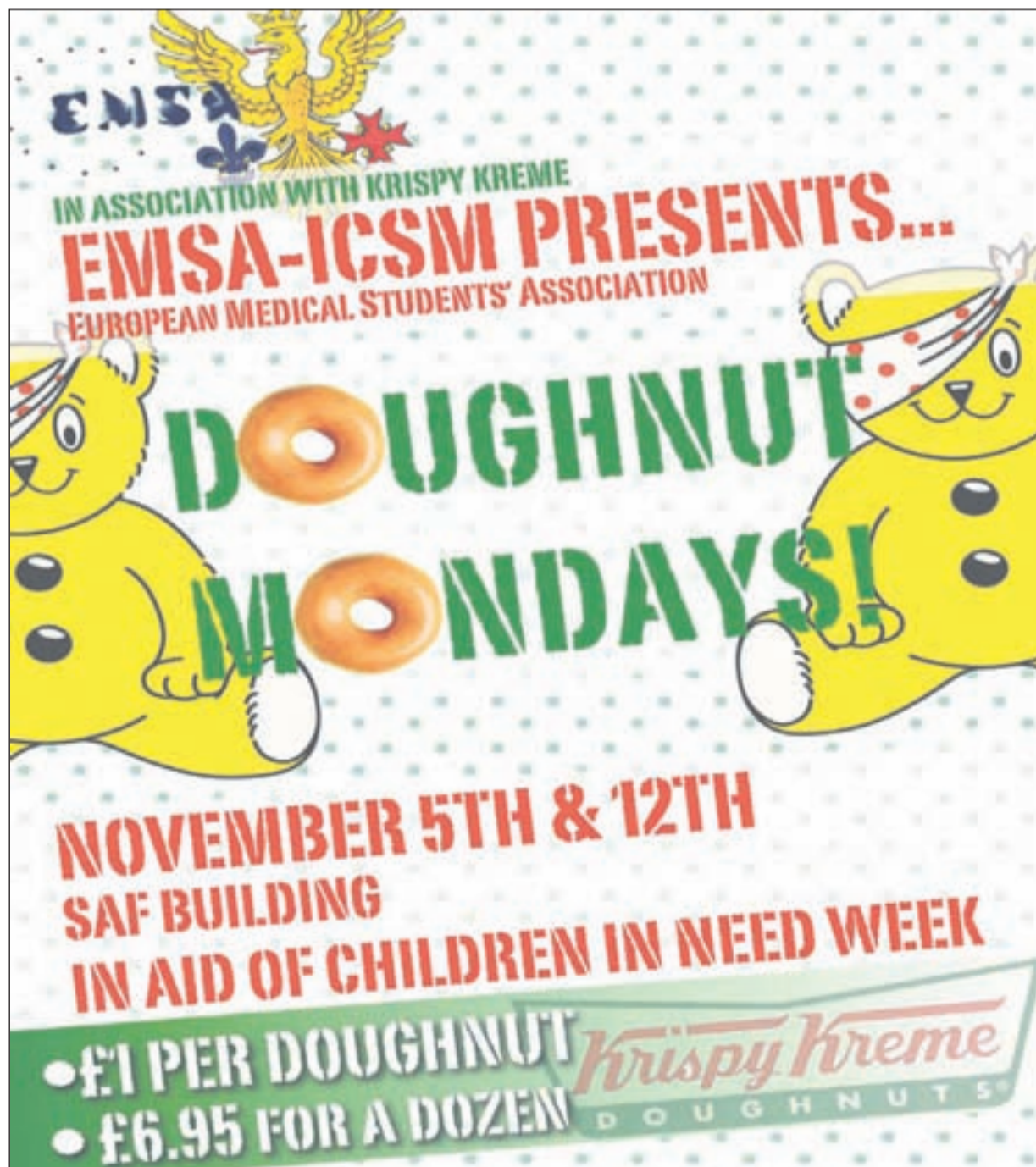
You might as well check them out now; they'll be gone in a few hours. Such is the rise and fall of news stories.



Digg.com, not too long after this article was written. And yet already, nary a sight of Arnie and his dubious dope defenses



Scientific Zombie attack reasons, apparently: brain parasites, neurotoxins, the real rage virus, neurogenesis and nanobots. Avoid all



Realise equality, celebrate diversity

Student RISE Week November 5th – November 9th 2007

RISE Week is a London-wide anti-racism event supported by the Mayor of London's Office and the NUS Black Students' Campaign. The Union is hosting RISE as a celebration of our multi-cultural society at Imperial. With the theme 'Realise Equality, Celebrate Diversity', we will be bringing together food, films and art to showcase the cultural diversity that thrives on our campus and give you the opportunity to experience and learn about new cultures and backgrounds.

Imperial from an International Student's Perspective

Are you an international student? If so, we want to hear about your experience of Imperial as a University and what living away from home is like in London. Imperial is launching a brand new website in December and integral to the website will be real life interviews with students and short films showing your friends and prospective students your opinions, ideas and perceptions.

If you are interested in telling other people about your time at Imperial please get in touch with Kirsty Patterson at dpew@imperial.ac.uk who will be able to put your name forward for selection.

Culinary Delights

Try your taste buds at something new with a different International Dish every day in daVinci's! If you choose the days special dish, with culinary extravaganzas from Spanish Paella to Ghanaian Chicken Jollof Rice, you will also receive a free Fairtrade Fortune Cookie with your meal!

Monday

Country: Italy
Dish: Lasagne
No. of Students: 178
Distance from London: 1,176 miles
Capital City: Rome

Thursday

Country: Mexico
Dish: Fajita
No. of Students: 0
Distance from London: 5,466 miles
Capital City: Mexico

Tuesday

Country: Spain
Dish: Paella
No. of Students: 146
Distance from London: 1,068 miles
Capital City: Madrid

Friday

Country: China
Dish: Sweet and Sour Chicken
No. of Students: 1,172
Distance from London: 5,277 miles
Capital City: Beijing

Wednesday

Country: Ghana
Dish: Chicken Jollof Rice
No. of Students: 9
Distance from London: 3,172 miles
Capital City: Accra

Foreign Film Festival

Imperial College Cinema are hosting a Foreign Film Week with Award winning Film 'Volver' and the acclaimed International Collaboration 'Motor Cycle Diaries' topping this weeks bill. Don't worry if your Spanish isn't up to scratch as there will be English Subtitles! See both films on either Tuesday or Thursday in the Union Concert Hall for only £3 for one film or £5 for both.

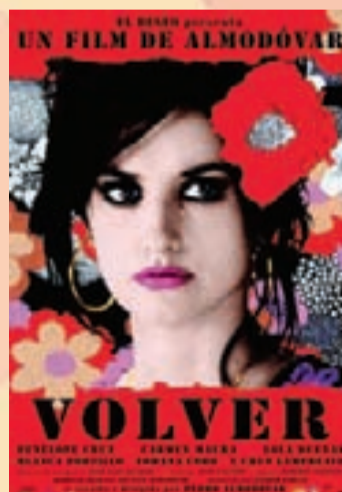


The Motorcycle Diaries

9pm, Tuesday 6th
6pm, Thursday 8th

In 1952, two young Argentines, Ernesto Guevara and Alberto Granado, set out on a road trip to discover the real Latin America. Ernesto is a 23-year-old medical student specializing in leprology, and Alberto, 29, is a biochemist. The film follows the young men as they unveil the rich and complex human and social topography of the Latin American continent.

With a highly romantic sense of adventure, the two friends leave their familiar surroundings in Buenos Aires on a rickety 1939 Norton 500. Although the bike breaks down in the course of their eight-month journey, they press onward, hitching rides along the way. As they begin to see a different Latin America in the people they meet on the road, the diverse geography they encounter begins to reflect their own shifting perspectives. They continue to the heights of Machu Picchu, where the majestic ruins and the extraordinary



Volver

6pm, Tuesday 6th
9pm, Thursday 8th

Volver is a mixture of my previous films: "Mildred Pierce" and "Arsenic and Old Lace," combined with the surrealistic naturalism of my fourth film, "¿Qué he hecho yo para merecer esto!!" ("What have I done to Deserve This?")

The story is set in Madrid with its lively working-class neighbourhoods, where the immigrants from the various Spanish provinces share dreams, lives and fortune with a multitude of ethnic groups and other races. At the heart

of this social framework, three generations of women survive wind, fire and even death, thanks to goodness, audacity and a limitless vitality.

They are Raimunda (Pénelope Cruz), who is married to an unemployed labourer and has a teenage daughter (Yohana Cobo); Sole (Lola Dueñas), her sister, who makes a living as a hairdresser; and the mother



A pre-emptive strike on Iran?

With Iran still defying US pressure to end its nuclear program, the West and its allies may act unilaterally

Kadhim Shubber

As a person who is interested in politics (deduced from you reading this article), you might just know a little bit about the Iran-U.S. nuclear dispute. Well this week that is what my article is about but instead of talking about the right and wrong of this conflict – because inevitably I'll fall into the trap of unrestrained, outpourings of anti-U.S. sentiment which plagues all peoples of Arab origin – I will instead update all you politically minded scientists on how likely it is that we're going to be spending Christmas in underground bunkers or watching "shock and awe" Tehran style on the BBC.

So first question, are the Iranians going to bomb the UK? Unfortunately I can't read the minds of the Iranian government but I can tell you a few reasons why they might and why they won't.

One of the most common misconceptions that pervade the minds of Western people is that Iran is a traditional dictatorship with maniacal President Ahmadinejad at the top; a Saddam Hussein figure in Tehran. In fact, while the Iranian government is not a liberal democracy, there are many different groups and factions vying for influence in government; some of which are opponents of Ahmadinejad. Essentially there is no one person with their hand over a red button labelled WAR, sitting in a suitably menacing room just waiting for their finger to slip; well not in Iran anyway. However this is the current situation and another result of the political situation in Iran is that it is possible that one faction i.e. hardliners will benefit from the pressure being applied by the U.S. and become the dominant group. To make it a little clearer, currently there are enough groups with different interests in Iran to make it unlikely that the Iranians are suddenly going to disturb your Sunday lunch. However in our attempts to ensure this, we may be giving ammunition to hostile elements within Iran who thrive on the idea of the Western threat to the Middle East.

Now let's try that again but the other way around. Is the UK, or more likely the U.S. or more likely still Israel going to launch an attack on Iran? Well... no, well... maybe, well... yes. These three answers aren't because I can't make up my mind. It's because these three nations will behave differently given the same situation. Let's look at the UK. With the Army stretched to breaking point, the public literally throwing up at the idea of war and Parliament being given the final say on going to war; it's just not going to happen. In the U.S. the answer is a little different. While no politician on Capitol Hill is ruling out military action, it would seem that military action in the Middle East has lost credibility.

At the same time though, it would be foolish to underestimate the ability of Americans to see the world in terms of good and bad, friend and foe, us and them. The real problem of the Iraq war in the U.S. isn't that our Atlantic friends are morally averse to conflict but that the plan doesn't appear to be working. It is unclear whether or not the U.S. would again embrace conflict, given the right man (or woman) with the "right" plan. I answered the question of the UK fairly simply and so too



Israeli fighters ready for pre-emptive strikes against Iran

will I answer the question of Israel. While only a fool would suggest that Israeli troops are going to push through Syria and Iraq to take a pot-shot at the man who wanted to wipe their nation off the map, a person of similar intelligence would suppose that Israel will not take direct action. In 1981 Israeli jets – in a unilateral surprise attack – bombed the light-water nuclear facility in Osirak to prevent the development of Iraq's nuclear program. Only in September this year Israeli jets bombed a suspected Syrian nuclear material store.

The point I'm putting to you is not that Israelis are war loving maniacs who only need someone to give them a reason, instead I'm pointing out that pre-emptive strikes are an acceptable part of Israel's foreign policy and certainly in the case of Iran's nuclear program, Israel will not hesitate to attack if it feels sufficiently threatened.

Regardless of whether or not the crazy people who run this world are going to get us killed, let's look at what the Islamic Republic of Iran could do to strike the UK in the event of some irate Iranians getting their way. Primarily it could cause trouble for British troops in Iraq. We've been told that the Iranians give support to insurgents in Iraq and that Iranian weapons have been used to kill our soldiers in southern Iraq. Since this is already happening, I should add here 'apparently' to keep a healthy level of cynicism, then what I mean to say is that the Iranians could cause more trouble for our troops in Iraq. In addition it could be feasibly conceived that Iran could also give support to the Taliban in Afghanistan. So along with capturing unarmed servicemen in the Gulf, Iran could indirectly attack our troops.

Serious stuff but admit it, for the majority of us, it doesn't affect our daily

lives. This leads me back to the nuclear issue. Of course if Iran is developing nuclear weapons and simultaneously ballistic missile technology then the situation is on a different level of risk. Nuclear weapons in the hands of people willing to use them or at least willing to give them to non-state actors who are willing to use them certainly pose a massive immediate risk to the UK and the Western world. But here's the problem, do I or anyone else know that Iran is developing nuclear weapons? The U.S. and Israel say that it is but Iran vigorously denies this. As scientists we are taught not to believe

or disbelieve something until we are shown evidence that strongly or definitely suggests one or the other. Well there is certainly no direct evidence of the Tehran Project but also there is no way to prove that Iran is not going to develop nuclear weapons. While you may have already decided, I reserve judgement pending real evidence. Iran has not been linked to terrorist groups operating in the UK and so the main threat that it poses is to our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Excuse me if I am complacent but the Burger King on Gloucester Road is likely to be safe for some time yet.

I hope I've given you a measured picture of the current situation without out too much diatribe but in my closing paragraph I'm going to give it my all. I'm a very pessimistic person, although I don't believe that this conflict is inevitable it seems to me that both Iran's, Israel's and the U.S.'s capacity for diplomacy is lacking. While I'd hope for either side to work towards meaningful dialogue I worry that the few "strong leaders" at the top will ignore their people's desire for peace and prosperity, their longing for security and stability and their aversion to violence and conflict.



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad reclines into his seat in Parliament



Business

Business Editor – Afonso Campos

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Trading is not just a numbers game

The mindset of a ninja and the audacity of a thai prostitute on a bad night out are prerequisites for trading

Afonso Campos
Business Editor

able to dominate and reduce exposure to his weakest.

Over the past century trading has evolved from being just a profession, to a whole academic subject in its own right. Louis Bachelier, a young mathematician, was the first person to bridge the gap between the two worlds that are seemingly at odds. He achieved this by publishing his "Theory of Speculation" in 1900. Much theory now abounds and many times it borrows ideas from the most unlikely places. From physics and mathematics to what can only be described as cheap mail-order psychology courses.

Many speculators, good and bad alike, have written extensively about trading over the last century. The famous Jesse Livermore and the infamous currency breaker extraordinaire, George Soros, are perfect examples. They have all shared some of their views and doctrines on trading with masses of eager, hungry, foolishly uneducated buffoons.

None of their ideas are truly original or propose the reader undergo radical changes of thought in an absolute plan. It is however, quite interesting to see how they are metamorphosed and adapted to the highly volatile commercial plane – especially the financial microcosm.

While most authors present relatively different topics and ideas from one another, each of their texts contains a few links that connect their supposed wisdom to someone else's philosophy – be it merely of speculation or life in general. It is obviously possible to extrapolate these beyond common sense and identify a plethora of associations that might not really be there in the first place.

If, on the other hand, one is familiar with some of the more widespread ideas about trading, one can quite easily synthesize and identify a few key ideas, placing them under four loose (almost esoteric) headings:

- The relationship between confidence and humility
- Self-perception
- Discipline and authority and most importantly,
- The human condition

There is something to be said about the attributes of a good speculator. No one trader will have all the desirable traits for a successful career in the industry. It is likely however, that a prosperous trader has a few highly dominant ones and is

Confidence and humility

This is a relatively tricky one. Most of the greatest traders of all time agree that one of the main traits moulding a good speculator, is a relatively high level of confidence, sprinkled with a good dose of humility. By this, I mean having the conviction of putting on a trade and opening a position without the arrogance of taking too much risk. This is an idea that is seen in most trading theories – either in an abstract way where it is only implied, or in a more narrative and pedagogical sense where the author might tell a story of how a grave lack of balance between hubris and serenity has led to a devastating loss. In a way, an excess of confidence on the money manager's part can be seen where he/she is no longer curious about every little detail of the trade. As soon as all the questions cease, there is a serious flaw in execution that will in some way, lead to a loss.

Self-perception

Having a good idea of who we are, how we work and what our strong and weak points are, is absolutely vital for speculation. It is postulated by a majority of investors that beginning speculators and trad-

ers fail and suffer massive losses due to a lack of self-knowledge or an incredibly high degree of difficulty in accepting character flaws and overcoming these. Trading history tells us the story of countless traders who firmly believe their gains are a by-product of their intelligence exclusively and that no external conditions have come into play. This completely alters their behaviour and mindset in the financial markets and, thinking themselves invincible, they almost inevitably fall in a tragic manner, worthy of an epic poem. A reluctance of acceptance of our relative inferiority to almost perfectly behaving markets leads to results that fall short of most expectations.

Discipline and Authority

For exterior reasons, most traders, even successful ones have discipline problems and flaws. As long as these issues are very sporadic and some-



Top, floor traders waiting to ride the bull. Bottom, the bull waiting to be ridden by the floor traders

what minor, it is almost acceptable to err; one does after all learn from mistakes. A grave lack of discipline however, will most likely lead to a downfall of character, or most importantly in speculation, positive alpha. When a speculator opens a position he/she must know exactly why this is being done. Many beginning traders however, seem to be completely disconnected from this notion of discipline and seem blinded by their own accidental success. It is suggested by veterans that newbies should take a relatively systemic approach to their trading, where their criterion are validated by more than one metric.

Some traders are also of the camp that one cannot do everything alone and still beat the benchmarks and hence, delegation of authority is a must. This stems from a good manager having the discipline to recognise that human beings, while good at multi-tasking, will over time have diminish-

ing returns if the work they do increases almost exponentially. Success at this stage depends on the choice of people according to competencies.

The Human Condition

The most abstract idea is without a doubt the most widespread and prevailing one in any theory of speculation. It deals with the deepest emotions felt by traders during market hours. Any speculator is almost completely overtaken by the primordial emotions of fear and greed. It makes for an interesting study to observe the shifting focus of these during the day, and what factors other than market activity, make the balance tilt from one end of the spectrum to the other. A concept that is usually perceived to have a negative influence on human beings is that of social and peer pressure. In the financial markets, this becomes a very important part of performing well. It is inevitable to bench-

mark oneself against a peer group. In a strangely Darwinist survival-of-the-fittest scenario when this group is doing well as a whole, it is only normal that one wants to perform at the same level or better to everyone else.

"A good speculator dominates his weak character traits and flaws"

And that is all that markets are about. The perpetual quest to be the best; to know you are on the winning side of a trade; to know your view is superior to that of a million other players; to assert yourself as the leader of the pack.

Veni, vidi, vici... suckers.

The Future of the NUS

Those of you who were here last year may recall that 12 months ago a rather heated debate was being had as to whether or not Imperial College Union should affiliate to the National Union of Students (NUS). After a hectic week of campaigning from both sides the student body narrowly voted for us to join again after 30 years of not being members. Both sides of this debate recognized that the NUS requires significant reform. No one here wants to pay £44,000 a year to a basket case of an organisation which is poorly managed and loses money year after year, so the Union is fully supportive of the attempts being made by the current NUS sabbaticals to remedy some of these problems.

At Council on Monday a motion was passed mandating me to write to the NUS President to add our name to the list of Unions requesting an Extraordinary Conference so that the new NUS governance proposals can be passed by the end of this academic year. The motion passed can be found on the Committees section of our website;

although there was one minor amendment made to it.

I spent 2 days last week at a conference in Coventry discussing this and I would like to pass on the outcomes. The full governance proposals are available in full on the NUS website but in short they are seeking to ensure that the organisation is in future run on a professional basis. If this reform process does not succeed then it is unlikely that the NUS will have a long term future or will have the benefits of Imperial College Union's membership.

I appreciate that governance is not the most exciting topic but it is important so if you have any views on the future direction of the National Union of Students then please pass them on so I can communicate your concerns to their leadership.



Stephen Brown
President
president@imperial.ac.uk



No Need to Queue in daVinci's!

Noticed the long queues in daVinci's at lunch time? Well you don't have to queue to get your food at the Union during lunchtimes! Shuffle yourself next door into dB's where you will find lots of great lunch time snacks and meals. Including jacket potatoes, paninis, breakfast baps and baguettes.

dB's is open weekdays between 12-2pm for our full range of jacket potatoes and fillings plus our really popular new product - the Breakfast Bap! Choose from baps, rolls or sandwiches with fillings of bacon, sausages and our specialty; cooked to order fried eggs. Breakfast baps are available from only £1.25.

Paninis are also available toasted fresh from £2.25 with fillings including;

- Mozzarella & Tomato
- Ham & Cheese
- Brie & Tomato
- Brie & Bacon

Our baguettes are also a great choice if you are in a rush and are available from £1.80 with fillings including;

- Chicken & Bacon
- Cheese & Coleslaw
- Ham & Cheese
- Ham & Salad
- Roast Beef & Horseradish
- Prawn & Lettuce
- Tuna Salad
- Cheese Salad
- Cheese & Tomato
- Coronation Chicken
- Cheese & Bacon
- Chicken Caesar

Finally, did you know that we did pizzas in daVinci's? A great addition to a few pints in the evening after a hard days work!

Pizzas are available from £2.90 and in a range of sizes with choice of toppings. Try them out!

Election Results

The results of the Council and Trustee Board elections can be found in full online. However the following people were elected

Trustee Board

Ali Al-Hussaini
RON (Re-Open Nominations)

Undergraduate Engineers

John James
John O'Neil
RON

Postgraduate Engineers

Ashley Brown
RON

Undergraduate Natural Sciences

Jose Videria
Shray Amar
RON

Due to an outstanding complaint the results of the Undergraduate Medics Councillor have been delayed.

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WEDNESDAY 7TH

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Carlsberg TETLEY'S BLACKTHORN

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From 20:00

FRIDAY 9TH

**DJ SAMI
SANCHEZ**



THURSDAY 15TH

**TOO POSH
TO WASH**



ALSO ON

Tue 6th Super Quiz
Wed 14th Sin City - Surf Simulator

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Fri 16th Bar FTSE!

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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David Paw
Arts Editor

I was thinking about art the other day. I thought about what it constituted, its many definitions and the lack of definition that it ultimately had in its current form. Which is by no means a bad thing. Art is broad, should be broad, and defined by the individual.

We all have our own ideas of what constitutes “art”, falling into aesthetic definitions and ideals, and schools of thought – self-expression and so forth. Though most if not all, would agree on The Establishment, everyone else fights and disagrees about Jake and Dinos Chapman, splatter paintings, interpretative dance and mime.

Though the merits of more vague, less accepted endeavours are less well appreciated, they are by no means less valid as systems of thought or creative outlets. We will always struggle to define our environment through creative and artistic mediums.

As crazy as it may appear at times, the risk-takers and the unafraid are ultimately the ones asking the questions and challenging what we think we know, what we think we want, our perceptions of beauty and indeed, what constitutes “art”.

Why is there so much detritus in modern art at the moment? Who knows. There could have been as much debris in previous eras – but all we’ve been presented with, and all that has been talked about has already been established. The best and the definitive – they already did away with all the crap. Even Banksy is cashing in at major auction houses – who’s to say the intelligentsia won’t be speaking about him with high airs given time?

Similarly, there are still some who believe that art is a bowl of fruit and still life. Clearly not you – you’re reading Felix Arts, after all – but that is the other end of the spectrum. Somewhere along the way, architecture is still discredited as a viable art form, and they are not entirely wrong – essentially designing structures for clients does not seem highly glamorous or definitive of creative endeavour.

But conversely, at the zenith of the craft is the best architecture, that most complicated of art forms. The conception of a striking yet functional structure that has to be able to be appreciated by those perhaps not that way inclined day in, day out, within the constraints of a client’s personal taste, budget, and the intricacies of other real-world guidelines.

Which brings me to this week’s issue – heavy on the architecture, and justifiably so, with fourth-wall-removed mime thrown in for good measure, courtesy of Emily Steele – check out her review of the impressive production of *Behind The Mirror* at the hidden gem that is the Blue Elephant Theatre. Caz Knight gets to grips with an emotionally charged production of *War Horse*, finding there’s more to puppetry than lukewarm seaside shows.

A little less conversation?

Emily Steel is transfixed by one of London theatreland’s concealed gems

A young man prepares to propose to his girlfriend. He shaves, he flosses his teeth, he squeezes a spot. He checks himself out in the full-length mirror, and is pleased with what he sees. He practises getting down on one knee and pulling a ring from his pocket. He lays the table for dinner. He straightens the plates. He lights a candle in the centre of the table. And when his back is turned, his reflection comes through the mirror to steal his woman and ruin all his plans...

Behind the *Mirror* is the first UK production from Theatre Ad Infinitum, a new company formed by recent graduates of the Jacques Lecoq theatre school in Paris. The Lecoq school specialises in physical theatre, storytelling through movement. It has a reputation for rigorous training and for producing impressively skilled and creative performers. Behind the *Mirror* is further evidence that this reputation is thoroughly well deserved.

The performance space at the Blue Elephant Theatre is kept almost bare. There is a blue frame on wheels that stands in for a mirror. Other than this, there is no set, and there are no props. The physical world of the play is imaginary, entirely created by the actors – George Mann, Deborah Pugh, and James Turpin – who remain on stage at all times. Through gesture and sound they conjure up doors, walls, tables, telephones, cigarette lighters, a machine gun, an electric shock. They speed up time and they slow it down. When they speak, it is nonsense language, but through it they convey anxiety, a desire to please, indecision, the pleasure of wickedness, and the awful emptiness of loss.

A word about the Blue Elephant Theatre. It is tucked down an unlikely street in Camberwell. The nearest tube



The production is a tour de force in narrative, finding innovative and imaginative ways of telling a story

is Oval, and it’s a fair walk from the station. The theatre has a map on its website, which is lucky, because it would be tough to find without one. But it’s worth making the effort, because this is a hidden gem. The venue is welcoming, with a good-sized black box theatre and a friendly bar, and the show is nothing short of delightful.

It’s a simple story: boy loves girl, boy loses girl to his own reflection, boy enters alternative dimension on the other side of the mirror and fights his reflection to win back his love. It has mime, clowning, slapstick, pratfalls, a good-hearted hero, a spirited heroine and a delicious villain. It is inventive, irreverent, charming and funny. It is also surprisingly moving and fundamentally human.

From the moment it begins, the audience is captivated. There is no ‘fourth

wall’ in this production – the actors acknowledge and engage with us, and so we too play a part in the illusion. When the young man’s evil reflection steals the candle off the table, he hands it to a man in the front row. Finding the candle missing, the young man retrieves it. In the time in between, the man in the front row keeps a careful hold on his piece of invisible wax. It speaks volumes.

The performances are precise, committed and generous. George Mann, also who directed and conceived the show, is particularly talented. He plays the young man with a vulnerability that lends pathos to the comedy, and his technical ability is remarkable. He does extraordinary things with sound: when he polishes the plates before laying them on the table, he makes them squeak, and in this tiny detail he lets

us know how clean they are, and what kind of quality the china is. After a fall, he stands, gives a lopsided grin and lets out a little whistle, and we see the bluebirds fly round his head.

At we sat down in the theatre, my friend Susannah said, “I hate mime.” By the time it was over, she was converted. This production is wonderful. They say it lasts an hour but it feels as if it flies by in about twenty minutes. I could have watched it all again. I will look forward to Theatre Ad Infinitum’s next show. They’re a young company to watch.

Theatre Ad Infinitum’s *Behind the Mirror* is running at the Blue Elephant Theatre, Camberwell, until 10th November. For more information head to the website: www.blueelephanttheatre.co.uk



The Joey reruns clearly took their toll on Chris’s gran



Zhang Yimou meets Will and Grace. In Camberwell

Reinventing the steel (and glass)

David Paw scopes out a retrospective of Zaha Hadid's greatest hits at the London Design Museum

One of the world's most influential, controversial and recognisable architects, Hadid looks to be finally receiving the recognition her followers believe she deserves. First receiving the coveted Pritzker prize (the architectural equivalent of an Academy Award) and now bestowed with her own gleaming exhibition at the Design Museum, these highs are in contrast to the lows she has sustained throughout her career – most notably the populist snub to her winning design for the Cardiff Opera House. One inevitably asks why opinion polarises when it comes to the charismatic Hadid.

Born in Baghdad in 1950, Hadid received her degree in mathematics from the American University of Beirut before reaching these blessed shores to study at the prestigious Architectural Association, graduating to work with the revered Rem Koolhaas at the Office of Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in Rotterdam, and establishing her own London practice in 1980.

Known for her inspiring and breathtaking visions of urban spaces, most notably the prizewinning Peak in Hong Kong early in her career, she was equally known for being unable to transfer most of these to tangible structures.

Wings clipped by physical, structural or financial limitations, Hadid entered the 21st century with only one notable structure to her name and with countless plans and drawings, hence the de-

rogatory description of her as primarily a "paper architect".

Yet despite this, she has managed to remain one of the most influential and inspiring figures in her field, with a jaggedly angular yet curvaceous style as distinctive as any of her contemporaries.

Somehow the floodgates opened and her office in Clerkenwell is now overwhelmed with activity as she enters a new phase of her career with a plethora of buildings in progress – a new opera house in Guangzhou, the extraterrestrial Performing Arts Centre in Abu Dhabi and The Opus, an incredibly ambitious office tower in Dubai that will appear to hover over the ground.

More close to home is the new Aquatics Centre for the Olympics, controversially running way over its already immodest £75 million budget.

These are represented immaculately in an exhibition that spans two hushed rooms on the Shad Thames. The first represents the early phase of her career, with early sketches of The Peak and her initial brief and thoughts – "the architecture appears like a knife cutting through butter devastating all the traditional principles and establishing new ones. Defying nature but not destroying it."

Though clearly in the mindset of an artiste-cum-visionary at times, Hadid backs it up with typical attention to detail; her sprawling yet concise plans for Italy's National Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome and the Phaeno

Science Centre are there for anyone to peruse at their leisure.

A wall is taken up by her paintings, scale drawings and sketches of The Peak and her visions for urban redevelopments – her representations of city centres and even relatively straightforward structures such as office blocks are turned on their head warp across the canvas in a manner nothing short of mind-blowing.

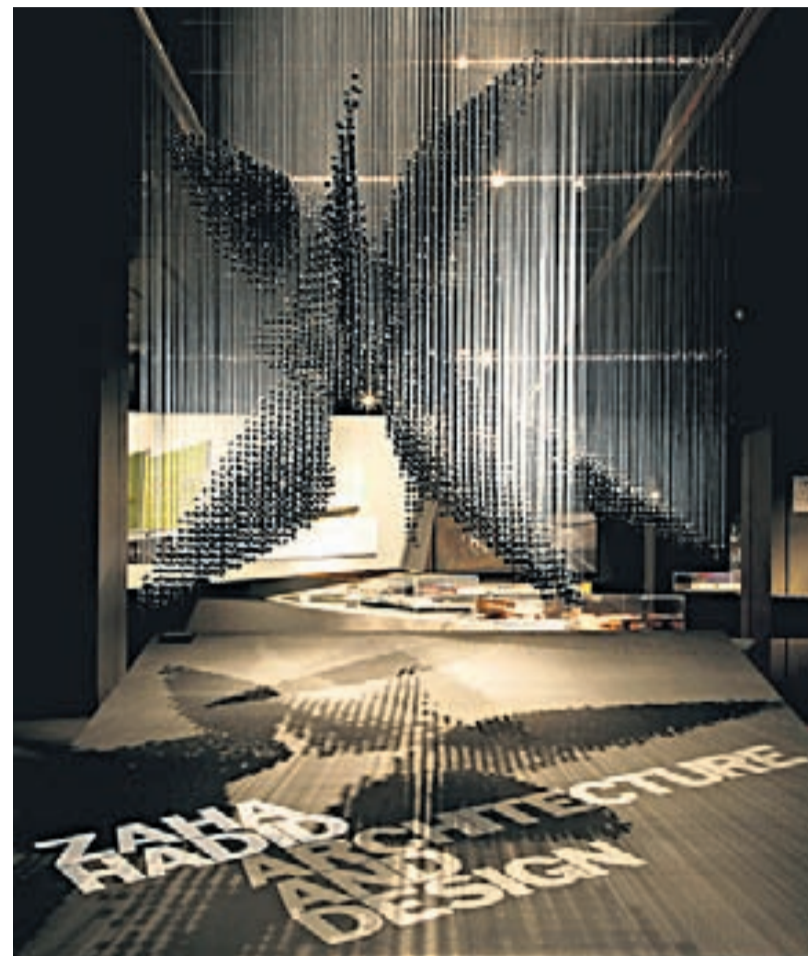
Incorporated too, are hitherto little known plans for developments for London such as the intriguing "Leicester Square" project in 1990, for an exhibition exploring London's public realm. A new space was proposed approximately the size of the current Leicester Square but semi-submerged below its surface, rather like a sunken space. All development would be inverted and sunk into the ground, slicing subterranean "skyscrapers" into the earth.

On a vast wall are projections of digitally-rendered three-dimensional images of concepts and completed works. The Cardiff Opera House scale model is here too, unrepentantly displayed or perhaps a reminder of the architect's chequered past before the turn of the century.

Speaking of which, things picked up between then and now – three major works displayed include the brooding and angular BMW Central Building in Leipzig and the Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art in Cincinnati, an excitingly jarring yet fittingly congruent addition to the city's urban regeneration scheme and a counterpoint to Koolhaas's similarly proportioned Seattle Public Library.

The whitewashed second room displays Hadid's works-in-progress including the aforementioned, but also a re-imagining of the traditional skyscraper, moving away from single, isolated towers to almost contorted, helix-like forms.

Like other architects, Hadid has been lured into dabbling with small scale design by the prospect of a short time-frame and working on a 1:1 scale. Though hardly miniature buildings,



The interior of the first room is perhaps definitive of "sleek"

ordinary household items can offer the opportunity to explore an idea or an architectural form.

Presented are regular items such as shelves that look like something out of Alien, tea and coffee pots that are more military issue than Homebase, and the sleekest, sexiest tables and chairs. Though mundane and humble in function, calling this homewares would be like calling an F1 car a daily commute.

Speaking of commutes, included is a low point in the exhibition – a design for a lightweight car that, though progressive and brave, looks pretty

insipid; more Pikachu than Gordon Murray. Also included is the obligatory handbag which, though taken out of context, also fell somewhat short of the mark.

Capturing the diversity and essence of Hadid's work never seemed a simple prospect, but the curators have succeeded admirably in emphasising Hadid's creative strengths even if her current body of completed work is not comparable to other architects held in the same esteem. With the concurrent Matthew Williamson exhibition running at the same space, a trip down to the Shad Thames seems due.



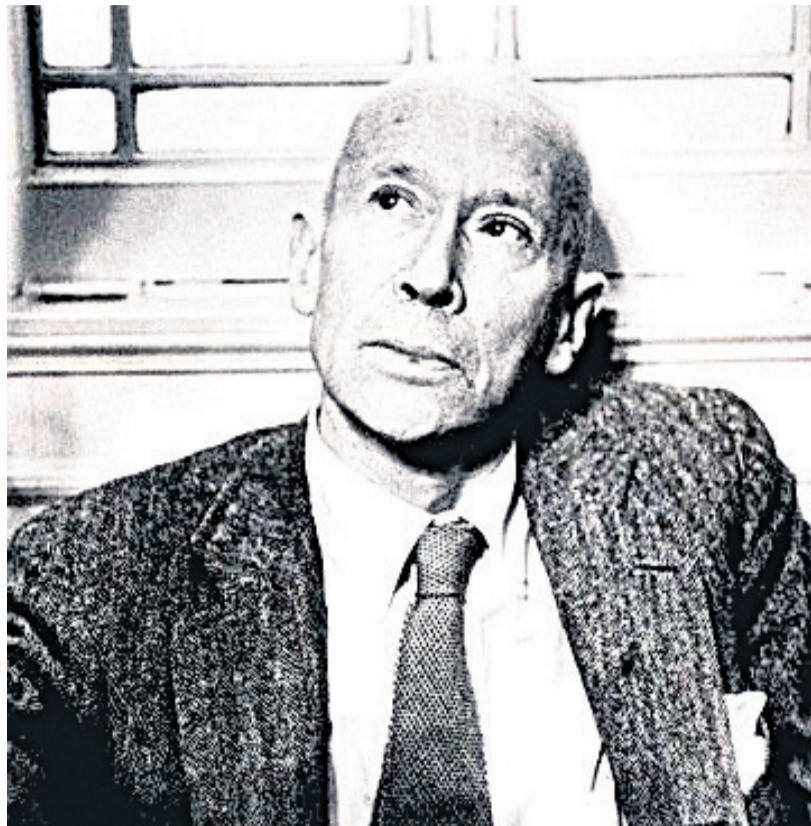
Zahid's Dancing Towers



The BMW building in Leipzig is one of many to possess Hadid's striking angular style

Poem of the Week – e e cummings edition

Maturity is the sarcastic word of choice for this week's poem, "The Boys I Mean Are Not Refined"



The return of the Mystical Potato Head. Nice shirt

This month's highly mature poem comes courtesy of crazed literary giant e e cummings. For the folks who aren't so familiar with the man, cummings (always writ-

ten lower case, no full stops) was one of the 20th century's most unconventional yet popular poets.

Born Edward Estlin Cummings in Cambridge, MA, Cummings started writing poetry at the age of 10 before

treading the hallowed halls at Harvard and rooming with John Dos Passos (American, writer, terrific) and labouring over the college paper with S. Foster Damon (critic, academic, all-round smart person).

Influenced by national predecessors Gertrude Stein and Ezra Pound (writers, poets, also awesome), cummings delivered a controversial commencement address entitled "The New Art" – he was subsequently chastised by the press.

Also interesting is the fact he was arrested and detained on suspicion of espionage, and subsequently flitted between Paris and New York, meeting amongst others, Pablo Picasso.

He then travelled throughout the Soviet Union and the rest of the world (as one does). Hence, in addition to relative frolics such as the imaginatively titled "The Boys I Mean Are Not Refined" (right), he also published a lot of anti-American poetry.

But he didn't just stop there – he has also written heartfelt and ethereal sonnets and romantic poetry, much of which was in his spaced, oddly abbreviated and broken avant-garde style. Odd, but accessible and often with wry humour, they are the perfect antidote to the overwrought and tiresome, yet more directly relatable than some of the Beat Generation's more kooky writings. What's not to like?

cummings spent the last years of his days travelling, getting paid to speak and spending time at his ranch in New Hampshire.

the boys i mean are not refined
they go with girls who buck and bite
they do not give a fuck for luck
they hump them thirteen times a night

one hangs a hat upon her tit
one carves a cross on her behind
they do not give a shit for wit
the boys i mean are not refined

they come with girls who bite and buck
who cannot read and cannot write
who laugh like they would fall apart
and masturbate with dynamite

the boys i mean are not refined
they cannot chat of that and this
they do not give a fart for art
they kill like you would take a piss

they speak whatever's on their mind
they do whatever's in their pants
the boys i mean are not refined
they shake the mountains when they dance

Emotion and pathos for a Horse called War

Ghostly equines, hallowed ground and a tender narrative – Caz Knight gets in at the deep end

Everything that's wrong with War Horse happens in the first fifteen minutes. After that it's nothing but a delight; yet again the National Theatre has delivered. Of course, the National can't take all the credit! Your attention is first drawn to a large white crack hanging above the stage- highly reminiscent of the Tate Modern's current exhibition. The only difference is no shit comes out of this crack!

War Horse is the story of the First World War from the viewpoint of a horse. I didn't have any inkling of how such a concept would be conveyed and whether it would successfully captivate an audience – would it be experimental theatre? Of the rubbish kind?

Kicking off in 1912 in Devon, we see Joey, the starring stallion (then a mere foal) being bought in a rural market square. He falls into the hands of Albert- a young boy who quickly forms a strong bond with Joey. Once Joey is grown, the thought of losing him coerces Albert into training him into a plough horse in 7 days. Albert and Joey succeed but their efforts have been in vain as, come 1914, Joey is sent off to war. The uncertainty of Joey's whereabouts drives Albert mad with worry until he runs away to join the army to find him.

Expecting a play about war from the word go, the initial scenes exploring the blossoming relationship between horse and man lack substance and direction with the occasional sappy emotional moment thrown in for good measure

to appeal to half term audiences.

Fast forward past these scenes and we're thrown into a production which amazes on both sentimental and technical levels.

The first thing that is striking and novel about the play is the way in which Joey is brought to life. Three people manipulate a wooden puppet horse to an uncannily real effect- the mannerisms identical to a live horse. The puppet itself bore a resemblance to a Trojan horse (rather apt given the theme of war) and also the steed of a Black Rider from the *Lord of The Rings* films.

Given the play's title, I was a little worried the play would centre too much on the horse's actions. If anything, Joey's role took a back seat while other issues prevailed. The futility of war was highlighted with British and German troops flipping a coin in no man's land for Joey. The horrors suffered during the First World War were poignantly actualized, with some grizzly effects and scenes at times. War and peace were juxtaposed, with a scene set back in war-devoid Devon going on while the dead bodies from the previous scene were still strewn over the stage. One thing I admired was how the play successfully portrayed the National Pride that would have been present at the time; something which is utterly absent in today's highly indifferent Britain and something which I hope changes.

There were definitely moments where I felt the tears prickling my



Mikey noticed that the lineup for this year's annual Ascot was looking well... a bit crap

eyes, which was often brought about by the music. Accordion sounds were paired with beautiful old English folk songs and evoked a lot of emotion and pathos.

However, War Horse is not always heavy going; just the right amount of humour is added without detracting from the gravity of other issues, but keeps the audience from getting too upset from some of the other serious elements of the play. Animal rights ac-

tivists be warned that there are several scenes with enactments of animal brutality. I am in no way condoning animal cruelty but in the current climate of political correctness and not wanting to offend anyone in the slightest, it was refreshing to see something controversial- also bold of the producers knowing that the play would attract a young audience.

From a technical side, I thought it could get no better than those as-

tounding puppets. I was proven wrong as, towards the end and the climax of both the war and the play, the Olivier's rotating stage was impressively lifted to create the illusion of trenches. The colossal tank that makes an entrance is terrifying indeed.

—Any of you who have either read or seen productions of *Journey's End* by R.C. Sherriff will adore this, and even if you haven't you are guaranteed a delightful evening.

More sex & drugs, less rock & roll

Rent purist **Lucy Harrold** treads into uncharted territory with the shiny new *Rent Remixed*

First I have to admit – yes, I am a *Rent* fan. I bought the soundtrack, I watched the movie. Hell – I even knitted the scarf. Oh, she'll write an "I loved every single minute of this show" review you're thinking. Well sorry, but I meant the original version. *Rent* was one of the first Broadway musicals I discovered back when I was doing my GCSEs (it was only 3 or 4 years ago) and so it was a little precious to me; I didn't really want to see anyone screw it up. So I was a bit apprehensive in going to see *Rent Remixed*, the "new" version by William Baker, creative director to Kylie Minogue.

But first, a quick history lesson. *Rent* first opened in 1996, based on the life of its author Jonathan Larson, whose friends around him were living hard lives and dying of AIDS. Ironically, he died the night before the opening of a heart aneurysm (and not AIDS) and did not live to see his show win the Tony Award (like an Oscar for theatre) and the Pulitzer for theatre.

Rent came to London for a while, but didn't do too well, perhaps because they cast Adam Ricketts (the guy with the 6 pack off *Coronation Street*) and Caprice. The film came out in 2005 starring the original Broadway cast and was panned for them being too old.

Which brings us to "*Rent Remixed*". Without giving too much of the story away, *Rent* looks at a group of 8 friends in New York and a year in their lives seen through the eyes of Mark, a filmmaker. Okay, it's not that simple.

There's a drug addict exotic dancer, an ex-junkie recluse, two gay guys, two lesbians and half of them are HIV positive. It is originally based on Puccini's *La Bohème*, and is updated for the MTV generation. For example, Rodolfo the poet becomes Roger the songwriter, and Schunard the musician became Angel Dumott Schunard, the drag queen drumming busker.

The show is billed as the first to offer a general admission price, which is great for us students, especially as they knock off another £10, making it a bargain £20!

The first thing that hits you as you enter the theatre is the vastness of white. The set is basic but effective. Most of the action takes place on a white square with simple props (a chair, a table, a funky chaise lounge). Above is a walkway lined with a digital display, used most effectively to display the names of famous people who have died of AIDS.

The show starts with a new prologue which introduces the main musical themes of the score and the main themes of the show; the idea of questioning how your life will change when hit with a terminal illness, how you should spend the time you have left to the full and to measure your life in love. The themes are carried through the show by Larson's powerful lyrics and the actions of his characters.

Whilst the film was set firmly in 1989/1990, the play could be set anytime, which adds to the idea that AIDS is still as big an issue today as it was in the 80s. The location on the other hand, is set firmly in New York City, which brings us to the first negative point of this version of "*Rent*". Baker wanted to make the piece timeless and placeless – a universal show, but to make this happen he would have had to remove many of the lyrics and dialogue. Unfortunately, half the cast seem to have forgotten this, and so



Denise Van Outen returns to the stage in this supremely hip, not camp-at-all uber remix of the classic musical *Rent*. Doesn't she look pretty?

Mark is well spoken and slightly Welsh (this kind of fits with the character, except I don't know many Welsh Jews) and Angel is a slightly gruff Cockney (which really didn't fit as Angel has always been the happiest and most effeminate character).

Of course, when they start singing, most reverted back to American. So with every other problem in the show, instead of fixing it, Baker just adds extra dialogue to gloss over it, so Angel and Mimi now came over from London.

The songs themselves are what make the show. They push the storyline, they play with your feelings and take you on a roller coaster ride of emotions over the 2-ish hours.

The best word to describe *Rent Remixed* would be inconsistent. There are some amazing scenes that are much better than in the original – look out for the Tango Maureen and What You Own – but some songs, in an attempt to "funk up" the score, have been reduced to Kylie Minogue backing tracks. *Rent* was originally billed in the nineties as a Rock Opera for the MTV generation. Now in the Myspace generation, it has been transformed into a Pop Opera – yet surely pop had its heyday in the nineties?

The cast have also been sexed up along with (supposedly) the music. There's lots of pouting and leather, and the cast definitely aren't ugly! There were some great standout performances too.

Yes, Denise Van Outen is in it. Yes, she is good and can definitely sing and yes, that is the main reason why most people will go see *Rent Remixed*. I found that her main song, a performance art protest, actually took the audience away from the story leading you into the "Denise Van Outen Show".

We saw the understudy for Joanne,

CJ Johnson, and I thought she had an excellent voice, especially singing material originally written for a gospel-style belter. Unfortunately both Joanne and Maureen are both blonde, which made them look more like twins than lovers.

At first I was put off by Mark (Oliver Thornton)'s very British accent, but it grew on me and I did begin to feel for Mark and the loneliness he experiences through the show. Leon Lopez and Jay Webb made the relationship of Angel and Collins realistic and sweet, both

with different but brilliant voices.

But most of my praise is for Luke Evans. The man has an amazing voice – just the right combination of booming musical theatre and rock timbre. He also grasped the concept of his character and understood his situation so well, making me feel for Roger, a character I never really liked before.

So will *Rent Remixed* last? I'm not sure; I hope so, perhaps with some changes. Do I want you to go see it? Yes! It's a powerful show (especially act two) if you look beyond the "Hey, we're

suddenly all dancing and singing" aspect, and it carries a strong message that is still relevant today. Maybe I didn't feel for the characters as much as I felt I could if they had been played differently, but I still laughed and cried (luckily theatres are dark).

Plus, although it may not be original now, its score and book are definitely more original than the jukebox musicals on at the moment. So take your next step on the road to musical theatre appreciation and go and see *Rent Remixed*!



Rent Remixed tackles tough issues like terminal illness, living life to the full. And bro love

Six Virgins get steamy in the shower

Featuring Elena Bailey, Roxanne Crossley, Samamtha Pemberton, Helen Warren, Alex MacKenzie and Bonnie Biddell from the IC Virgins Womens RUFC. Want to give this a try?

felix@imperial.ac.uk



The Great Culture Crawl

Chapter Five – Modern Architecture

British Museum

Architect – Foster & Partners

Another Foster & Partners creation, the Great Court of the British Museum is huge, inspiring and inescapable. Your jaw will drop after entering through the massive main doors – the gargantuan main hall opens up before you and it is difficult not to be taken by its sheer size and scale while also being impressed with the detail – a huge staircase spirals up to a café at the top while groups buzz around the deli counters and within the Museum's bookstore, made all the more dramatic by the blinding white of the interior.

Serpentine Pavilion

Architects - Various

Every summer, the lights go up on the pavilion of the Serpentine Art Museum, reimagined in an array of guises. Why such a big deal? In contrast to the cop-out of the Diana Memorial, the Pavilion is always an interesting prospect, generating the attention of some venerable names – Toyo Ito, Daniel Libeskind (architect of the new Freedom Tower in Manhattan) and Rem Koolhaas have all contributed their energies in previous years. In July 2007, Zaha Hadid contributed her second design to the ever-changing Pavilion in partnership with civil engineering firm Arup, shaping quite beautiful lily pad-like structures that glowed in the darkness. Also of note are the numerous workshops and creative talks that take place in conjunction with the unveiling of each new design.

Imperial College

Architects – Various

Fittingly, for an institution renowned for its position at the forefront of technology, our very own campus takes the cake as far as architectural kudos goes. The ubiquitous Norman Foster designed four buildings alone – the prize-winning Sir Alexander Fleming Building, the shimmering Faculty building, the more understated Flowers building and the monolithic Tanaka. If that wasn't enough, internationally prominent firm Kohn Pedersen Fox designed the shiny new Southside complex – no wonder it looks so good. We are smack bang in probably the greatest concentration of modern architecture in an educational institution and outside of the City. Just don't mention swimming pools.



Written by David Paw, designed by Rosie Grayburn

30 St Mary Axe

Architect – Foster & Partners

Undeniably Foster's greatest contribution to London's dramatic new cityscape, the Gherkin is an ultra eco-efficient office space, a new icon for the city, a masterful and dramatic reinterpretation of the skyscraper and has entertaining spaces to boot. Some laud it and some loathe it but like it or not, the Gherkin – officially recognised as 30 St Mary Axe – is here to stay. The pièce de resistance is the last two floors in the nose cone of the tower, a glass bubble with uninterrupted 360-degree views. For once, the interior justifies the word sensational. There is nothing to get in the way of a breathtakingly awesome view.

Bishopsgate Tower

Architect - Kohn Pedersen Fox

Another proposition amongst the plethora of proposed new skyscraper projects in the square mile, The Bishopsgate Tower is the brainchild of high-rise specialists Kohn Pedersen Fox, designers of the World Financial Centre in Shanghai. If built, it will become the tallest building in Britain – depending on whether the Shard is built first – and one of the tallest in Europe. The design looks enticing. Nicknamed variously "The Pinnacle" and "The Helter Skelter", the tower is one of a few that has enraged those obsessed with preserving the air of the old city, though at what price progress? All we know is, it looks *awesome*.

The Shard

Architect – Renzo Piano

Though only a proposition, the prospect of this 310 metre Renzo Piano-designed creation is controversial although, like the Gherkin, it has the potential for rejuvenation – call it urban re-branding, if you will. A slender, spire-like form at odds with the rotundity of its contemporaries across the river, it is not only the design that is intriguing. Piano proposes sophisticated use of glazing, with expressive facades of angled panes to reflect light and the changing patterns of the sky, so that the form of the building will alter according to the weather and seasons – having said that, you couldn't expect get that much more dramatic than it already is.

Tate Modern

Architect – Herzog & De Meuron

Possibly one of the most intimidating gallery spaces in any major city, the Tate Modern is a remarkable creation. Renovated and re-designed from the shell of the former Bankside Power Station and reopened in the new millennium, this huge space looms dauntingly over the South Bank – after late night openings, the Tate oozes menace but looks fresh and inspiring all the same. Inside, the huge turbine hall is a stark reminder of the building's origins and its annual solo exhibitionist is always a hot topic amongst the city's urbanites. Just outside is the infamous "shard of light" millennium bridge – now stable and affording some of the best river views at night.

Next Week...

Is there a particular guide you'd like? An area of London you'd like covered? Get in touch with us and tell us what you want to read – arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Picture of the Week
Serpentine, by Karl Micallef
Earthquake Engineering

We want to exhibit your art. Send in your photographs.
felix@imperial.ac.uk





Sex and the City – Parisian style

It's not known as the city of love for nothing. We tell you why Paris is the horniest place on Earth and then give you ideas on how to have the sexiest time while there. Don't say Felix never helped your sex life!

Nadine Richards
Travel Editor

Sex? Did someone say sex? Have I got your attention? Good. Now keep on reading! I have to be honest with you: this won't be an account of my sexual experiences in Paris (for that, I advise watching "One Night in Paris" – it's not a personal account by any means, but Salamon's account is surely adequate enough). However, I can promise to reveal to you my sexual encounter along the Seine. In the meantime, let's start with how to have the sexiest time in the sexiest city on Earth.

If Paris is the most sexy city on Earth, then it must also be the most horny. How, you ask, can a city be horny? Let us start with the Montmarre, the red light district of Paris, home to seedy nightclubs and the usual tacky sex-shops. If you're a man and fancy a pleasant stroll amongst the backdrop of neon-lighting, I suggest trying your hand at a nightclub in Pigalle where you'll most likely find women happy to try their hands on you. If you're a woman, then fear not, there are other options for a quick drink and a quick grope in Pigalle: just try standing outside one of the gawdy clubs, and you'll land yourself one very quickly.

Before you worry about the state of my mental health, we really did try

starting our trip in a normal manner. A wonderful scenic stroll along the Seine was the initial plan: and it was certainly as charming as can be imagined. Look at the Notre Dame and Saint Michel Bridge lit up so beautifully at dusk, with all those happy couples drinking champagne and frolicking romantically beside the riverbanks, whilst the symbol of Paris can be spotted mak-

"My fantastic fantasy of finding a fit frenchie to frolic with beside the riverside"

ing its distinct impression against the skyline of Paris. Ok, so the Spanish 13-year olds did harass us constantly with immature sexual jokes along our river cruise of the Seine and somewhat spoil the fantastic atmospheric view, and my fantastic fantasy of finding a fit Frenchie to frolic with beside the riverbanks. But ahh, aren't they so young and sweet really, before they grow into sleazy Spanish men who deserve to be punched in the face for inappropriate comments. Anyway, where was I? As

we promenaded our way across Pont de l'Alma, I recall thinking to myself that Paris was the most romantic city I had ever been to. It suddenly caught our attention that a peculiar old man was standing beside the Seine, wearing a long coat, and, having opened it, he displayed nothing except his nakedness and his Eiffel Tower. Suddenly Paris seemed less romantic – just more like an exhibitionist trying way too hard. (That pun was unintentional, I swear)

So this brings me back to the concept that Paris is the sexiest, most horny city. If this theory can be extended to people, then are the most sexy people also the most horny? (well, I'll leave that to Sarah Jessica Parker to answer. From personal dating experience, I'd say no. Horny people are horny cos they ain't getting any. And yes, usually there's a good reason why.)

All of this brings me back to Montmarre, in particular the Moulin Rouge, which is settled in the heart of Paris's red light district. Sadly, if you're looking for your own courtesan tonight, then firstly you may be a few decades too late, and secondly, you'll have to dish out £100 to see a flash of knickers during the can-can performance. But The Erotica Museum to be found just a g-string's throw away around the corner and may well perk you up instead. And this is actually a classy



This is one of the much tamer pieces in the collection. Printing any of the other ones would probably get us in a lot of trouble



The Louvre: I may have neglected to mention this in my article but perhaps this picture makes up for it

place – white marble floors, gold banisters, and seven floors of penises. Highlights include sculptures of Chinese acrobat-style moves which puts the Karma Sutra to shame, and many a dildo about the length of your coursework and just as fat. Don't forget the old style French porn – one obese old man with two obese old women, taking part in various acts, all with the most

"The man displayed nothing except his nakedness and his Eiffel Tower"

bored expression on their faces. Well, if I were with two obese women or even one obese man then I'd probably look equally bored.

Moving onto Paris's most famous asset – and I'm not talking about cellulite. I mean that absolutely beautiful gigantic lattice metallic structure, pointing so proudly into the sky. Well, it used to have reason to be proud: it retained its title as the world's tallest phallic symbol until 1930. Sorry, I meant tower. The title is now held by Kiev's tower (well fair enough, Ukraine are still lagging with hot tourist sites,

although they did win Eurovision recently). Tokyo Tower tries to butt in every now and then by sticking its 33m antenna onto the end of the tower to try to cover for its inferiority complex. How very Japanese.

Thinking about it rationally, it seems ridiculous to think something resembling an overgrown grey pylon should be something so magnificent. Perhaps it is the harsh, cold, structured feel of the tower, at once so striking and original, which makes it so simultaneously artistic and inartistic. To me, this is what lends it its charm. For the engineers of Imperial, there is an additional reason why the Eiffel Tower may be so sexy: Apparently it was built with "a nonlinear integral differential equation based on counterbalancing the wind pressure on any point on the tower with the tension between the construction elements at that point. That shape is exponential." Uh huh.

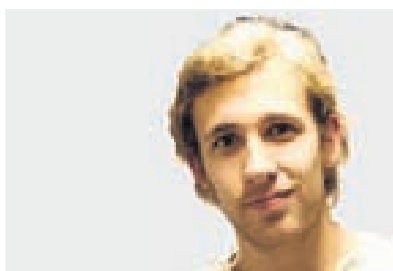
So did I mention that Paris is not only sleazy-sexy but also incredibly classy-sexy? Well, I may have neglected to mention the Louvre, the Arc de Triomphe, the Musee d'Orsay (home to the infamous "Origin of the World" painting. I dare you to google image this), the Sacre-Coeur, and the Notre Dame in all my excitement for the Erotica Museum, but I refuse to be accused as my advice to you is to visit them all! But don't forget that a hint of sleaze mixed in with the class isn't so bad – it is after all, what gives the French their distinct charm.



Film

Film Editor – Alex Casey

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Alex Casey
Film Editor

This week sees the end of another year at the London Film Festival, so as cinephiles readjust to natural sunlight, we at Felix have chosen a small selection of what we thought was worth catching.

It hasn't been an easy choice deciding what to bring you, but we made a few educated guesses at what you'd like to follow and hopefully there's enough to cover something for everyone. Assumptions in place, this week's bumper film section includes profiles on two of America's most interesting filmmakers, Steve Buscemi and Sean Penn, both making the dangerous leap from acting in front of the camera to getting into the director's chair. These are even supplemented by reviews of their two great additions to the festival, both of which are on general release this month.

Don't think that sounds up to much? Well don't be so hasty, because the Felix Film team have managed to acquire 200 free tickets to a preview screening of *Into The Wild* with details following over the next few pages. As if that wasn't a good enough offer, we also got in touch with Rough Guides to bring you ANOTHER competition giving you the chance to win a copy of the new Rough Guide to Film. Just don't say that we never give you anything.

Finally, we've had word of a screening of the award-winning oil documentary *A Crude Awakening* in the Renoir Cinema in Brunswick Square at 1pm on Sunday 4th Nov with discounted access for Imperial students and staff so be sure to check it out.

Maybe we've spoiled you just a tad too much.

Buscemi on getting it wrong

Taking over NFT1, Steve Buscemi headlines the TCM screentalk with a unique style

Since the late eighties, Steve Buscemi has been one of the most instantly recognisable faces of the American indie scene. His roles in such films as *Reservoir Dogs* and *Ghost World* along with his many collaborations with the Coen Brothers in classics such as *Fargo* and *The Big Lebowski* have cornered him a niche in the market playing oddball characters. Now stepping up to the mic at the NFT to deliver one of the festival's eagerly awaited screentalks, Film Felix asks whether or not he can captivate without his characters.

Buscemi has made it surprisingly big in cinema considering that he is known best for supporting roles. He intersperses appearances in independent productions with a couple of big money deals in the likes of *Con Air* and *Armageddon* to "ensure the smaller films get paid for" as he puts it, and you'd be hard pushed to ever call him a sell out.

With *Interview* included in the official London festival selection though, it is his role as director and lead actor that bring him to our glorious city, and whilst not his first stab at directing, the attention the film has already garnered would seem to suggest that this is something he may want to consider again in the future. Yet, despite being selected for a screentalk, Buscemi doesn't seem to have that much to say for himself.

His anecdotes tend to fall way short of the strangeness you expect from his character. For example, when asked about his collaborations with the Coens he lays

the foundations for a great story only for the punchline to be "I read the script fastest and so I got the job" in a nutshell.

He seems to show a certain amount of impatience throughout as well. The talk was not given in the form of a lecture but an on-stage

interview, resembling a press conference with a live studio audience, especially when they open up the floor to questions. In this environment, his impatience is easily understood however.

When invited to talk about your work, anyone with a sense of integrity might expect to discuss the artistic merits on which they are judged, not "How do you feel about being voted sexiest man alive by US magazine?" or "How would I deliver my script into the hands of someone of such stature as yourself?" Brown nosing and selfishness rarely make for a crowd pleaser. In this sense it is hard to get a true view of an actor trying to express a more personal voice as a director.

On topics of suitability however, Buscemi is a man full of praise for anyone he deems worthy of it. He isn't shy about telling of the talent of the Coen brothers as writers and directors but at the same time he avoids gushing uncontrollably. When asked about his influences in moviemaking style, he is similarly quick to point to the influence of the grandfather of American indie cinema, John Cassavettes and the new

style that he brought to film at the time.

"The thing I like about Cassavettes is that I saw a retrospective of his works after he'd died and what struck me about them was that it was okay to get it wrong. As a writer I was always told you have to have your beginning, middle and end before you start writing and that was something that had always got me: I would have a beginning but I could never define where the middle would bulk out. What I saw from Cassavettes is that you don't have to always know where you're going and in so many of his films you don't know where you're going to go next so it's alright to be uncertain of that and for me that was just such a blessed relief that I really admired him."

This is a feature not glaringly obvious in *Interview*, although the constantly meandering dynamics of the principal characters' relationship does invest a certain amount of fun into his narrative stylings. However, even when asked about his message in *Interview*, about the media and its portrayal of celebrity these days, he dismisses it as unimportant to the film. "I don't think *Interview* is essentially about celebrity and the culture surrounding it. The way I see it is as a film about two people from completely different worlds who find that beneath the surface they have a lot more in common than is obvious". So, no scathing comment there then, at least not consciously. He's also quick to shoot down the other standard suggestion of credible subject matter: "I certainly don't feel I need a turn to politics to justify myself".

Perhaps this is what may lead to Buscemi's failure as a director over time. To retain credibility, you have to have something to say. Judging from this particular interview, that looks like it might be a problem.

Let's just hope that he finds a clearer voice amongst some better questions soon.

Delicious digging up of much more than just dirt in interview with a vamp

Interview ★★★★★

Director: Steve Buscemi
Writer: Steve Buscemi, Theodor Holman
Cast: Steve Buscemi, Sienna Miller

Alex Casey

The genesis of *Interview* has an appeal more intriguing than its own concept. The film itself is a remake, the original being the work of Theo Van Gogh, a Dutch director little known outside of his own country until his murder at the hands of an Islamic extremist, unhappy with the portrayal of religion in one of his films, attracted the attention of the film world.

In conflict with many European filmmakers, Van Gogh did not shun the Hollywood machine and dreamed of making films there, a dream that his associates did not want to break just because of his passing. Instead of letting his legacy lie in the Netherlands, they took three of his films to Hollywood

for him and set about having them remade with Hollywood stars, the first of which was to become *Interview*.

The premise of the film is simple and much less Hollywood. Steve Buscemi switches sides of the camera to both direct and star here, helming the role of the interviewer, Pierre, a politics journalist sent by his office to interview soap starlet and tabloid bait Katya, the ever-so-appropriate Sienna Miller. Katya, as is described early on, is not exactly the Hilary Clinton-style catch Pierre wishes he could sideline, but rather a fluctuating bust with a very public love life. Is Miller really so unaware that she didn't see her name all over this?

Interview strives beyond simple stunt casting though to question its subjects, and thrives on the assumptions of the audience. Sienna seizes the screen with a sexy, strong performance that leaves you astonished. An audience unaware of her talent react with shocked awe, parallel to that which Pierre experiences at the hands of Katya's surprisingly eclectic attitude. An intellectual tête-à-tête between the pair twists and



It takes two to tango

turns to form the basis of the story, poking delightful fun at the media perception we have of modern starlets and also the underlying similarities that people from completely different

walks of life hold.

If the concept sounds tedious, rest assured that it is not. The central performances are both fantastic with Buscemi managing to direct himself be-

yond the scope his normal supporting roles allow him, and Miller simply glittering with a stunning range. The two leads explore themselves much more than any real interview would allow, and the script dazzles with humour, emotion and wit. The primary setting of Katya's loft apartment allows the camera crew to waltz casually around the action that plays out like dialogue driven theatre.

Interview is a film that within the first half hour wipes clean your preconceptions and admiration floods in to fill the vacuum instantly. At the incredibly short running time of 82 minutes it doesn't have much time to work its magic, but it manages with reels of film to spare. The Van Gogh original may still remain obscure with such a fantastic remake looming over it, but it has done something to bring his name and work to a larger audience. It is perhaps the rehabilitation of Sienna Miller's image that stands to be the greatest achievement of this film however, and all this in spite of the film's clear message that there is always much more than what you see on screen...

An apple a day keeps the bills away

Michael Moore reloads his cannon against the problems of healthcare in those good ol' United States

Sicko ★★★★★

Director: Michael Moore
Writer: Michael Moore
Cast: Michael Moore

Alex Casey

Michael Moore, the loved and loathed walking soap box returns with a look at the healthcare of his good old United States of America. Not exactly a fan of the administration, Moore tones down his aggressive attitude from *Fahrenheit 9/11* but makes sure where he lays the blame for the pitiable state of his country's health service, but does so much more compellingly than his last effort, the result oscillating between a hilarious and heart wrenching tale of the failings of a Government to protect its people.

Regardless of my political allegiances, I found *Fahrenheit* to be a horrendous documentary. Having not seen *Bowling for Columbine*, I felt I was watching the American Jim Royle chasing US senators down a street with ridiculously sensationalist techniques and was incapable of comprehending the support this man had gathered across his country and the world.

Seemingly I was not alone in this, and perhaps someone back at base camp told him to tone it down slightly, because in *Sicko*, the OTT techniques take a backseat (for the most part) and the problem at hand is permitted centre stage.

To me, this doesn't seem to be a point worth arguing on. Unlike the debate over Iraq, free healthcare is some-

thing that we as a country may take for granted. Now imagine if that weren't the case and you had to pay for health insurance, incurring costs every time you wanted to go to your GP and living life in fear that you may get anything more serious than a cough. That's the picture Moore paints here, and it can make for deeply upsetting viewing at times.

I was close to leaving within the first few minutes of this. Gore in films doesn't bother me, although I'm not a fan of it just for the sake of it. Pain however, normally in documentary, is another story completely and the distinction between what a good make up department can do and the suffering of a real person can put me off a film instantly.

Watching a man stitch up a gash in his own leg because he didn't want to pay for help placed him squarely in the latter category but I figured I'd stay past the credits. Let it be known that it is worth doing so, because Moore quickly balances such horrifying images and stories with his Powerpoint style of graphics and a few well aimed swipes at retarded buffoon George Dubya. The laughs may seem pretty cheap sometimes, but they're hearty audience pleasers. This screening had frequent laugh-out-loud moments (even if it were just at those retro pictures of Mrs Clinton) and a round of applause to close.

As for factual accuracy, I'm not one to comment. The shock of his points was slightly dulled when he began a tour of the world seeing "socialist healthcare" in operation in the likes of France and the UK where everyone gets, gulp, free



So, you mean it's really free? Really? No, I mean seriously here

healthcare. At this point his continued gasping at the thought of not being charged on entering a hospital does get more than slightly tedious and the NHS being held up as a model system seems to fly in the face of what our country's media tells us, although we should admit to ourselves we don't have it that bad. Just keep your voice down about

MRSA...

Sicko succeeds as a persuasion piece on a level that *Fahrenheit* didn't, and while I would rather not continue comparing them, Moore's unique style makes it impossible to hold them up individually. His comedy stylings are obviously going to make this appeal to a much wider demographic than

the stuffy professionalism of a Panorama special so he's easy to dismiss as a perpetrator of unsubstantiated shock tactics, yet there's something in his presentation here that strikes a chord. That would be the chord of injustice most probably, and with any luck that might be a key note for the next US administration.

Surfing the New Wave of Romanian Cinema

Stefan Carpanu explores the latest force in world cinema, led by Cannes champ *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days*

The 2007 Palme D'Or winner comes from Romania. It's probably not a terribly exciting fact, as film buffs will have been aware of it for months and the more lay film fans won't really care too much about it. But in its home country, *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days* left many people in a state of bedazzlement – and a pleasant one, if I may say so.

It seemed like something peculiar might happen at the prize ceremony ever since Cristian Mungiu's film was first screened at the beginning of the festival. The buzz was really good, but most would have thought it far-fetched to actually put money on it. By the time the big night had had its turn and Mungiu his award, the whole Romanian media was stunned by the film's success. There was finally a reason to awake from the grave of perennial moral deprecation in order to actually write and talk about something worthy on its own behalf.

4, 3, 2 is the only Romanian film to have won the Golden Palm, but in context it is the pinnacle of a film scene that has been totally revived in the last five years – and the prestigious French festival of cinema was one of the first to notice. Cannes had taken a liking to Romanian movies ever since *The Death of Mr. Lazarescu* (d. Cristi Puiu) received the top prize in the Un Cer-



What's that coming over the hill? It's no Monster

tain Regard category in 2005. It was then followed by 2006's wins of Doroteea Petre (Un Certain Regard – best actress) and Porumboiu's *12:08 East of Bucharest* (Golden Camera and Label Europa Cinemas prizes) as well as both Mungiu's and Cristian Nemescu's wins in 2007 – the latter, sadly deceased, won in the Un Certain Regard section

with *California Dreamin' (Unfinished)*. These awards come to confirm not only a certain penchant for anguishing realism the "French" juries tend to have, but also the high calibre production values of this new, young generation of filmmakers, born and bred in the old communist block.

Cristian Mungiu, 39 years old, was

at his second feature film, after 2002's *West* (in its Romanian title *Occident*), an excellent comedic take on contemporary Romania. However, the Palme D'Or winner is as far away from comedy as they get.

The story of two student girls (Gabita and Otilia), one of whom is pregnant, takes place in the late eighties, when abortions were considered illegal, and it portrays in a vivid and blunt fashion the ordeal through which many women had to go through between 1966 and 1989 (actually, Ceausescu's decision to interdict abortions turned against him at the revolution, as most of the people who took a stand for freedom in it were part of the generations born immediately after '66). That about summarizes the idea that lies behind the film – the first in a series planned by Mungiu about life in communist Romania – but it is the raw performances of the lead actresses and harsh truths that it offers which stick to you once it's finished.

Gabita is played by Laura Vasiluiu, while the part of Otilia is taken up by Anamaria Marinca, winner of the BAFTA best actress award in 2005 for her performance in the Channel 4 production *Sex Traffic*. Personally, I think there is really little to say in a review about the film, because it's just such a tremendous experience – even if not a joyful one.

Beyond the heaps of praise that it gar-

nered, the fact is that *4, 3, 2* managed to fill the dusty cinemas of Romania with eager and expectant viewers, an impressive feat given the desolation that normally fills the movie theatres. Moreover, because many cities didn't have any running cinemas left, Mungiu and his crew went around with the film and projected it for anyone who was interested in watching it.

In the 15 cities it stopped and 3,200 kilometres it travelled, the *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days* Caravan afforded 18,000 people the chance of seeing what is widely considered the best Romanian film of the decade. It surely wasn't as fancy as the 19th October premiere at The Times BFI 51st London Film Festival, but it meant a lot for many people.

Perhaps it's just one of the weird paradoxes of our contemporary, media-driven society that people came to fill Romanian cinemas for a film that is such an opposite of a crowd pleaser – and maybe there's something to be learned from this which could benefit other good films that are often overlooked because of the inconvenient themes they treat.

Whichever the merits of Cristian Mungiu's movie may be, it has one that outranks them all: it made a film become something more to many of the people it was about. And hopefully, it remains just one of the many significant tales of cinema that are to come.

The Wild Ways of Mr Sean Penn

Oscar winning actor and former Mr Madonna talks to Felix about acting, LA love and passion for directing.

Alex Casey

Sean Penn is often admired as the greatest actor of his generation, endowed with a knack of longevity despite playing characters that are not particularly well-liked. This isn't the same as the likes of Christopher Lee where recurring villainous roles fill a filmography out nicely, but rather that of espousing an acting ability so strong that an audience can get past his characters' flaws, even be they rape and murder. This is not to say that audience likeability appears to bother Penn, and in fact, as an actor, he appears bothered that the audience is even part of his work. As he returns to directing however, the burden of the audience and the conveyance of a story would seem to rest much more on his shoulders, so what really is Sean Penn's problem?

Penn doesn't appear to be a media fan. He spends the entire conference we have sat cross-legged, with arms folded and speaks quickly and quietly, almost mumbling at points sending a worry around the room that nobody's microphone would even pick it up. The only time he seems to have a real interest in the event is when he listens to star of his new film, Emile Hirsch, who is sat next to him, fit in a few words, breaking a smile like a proud father. This isn't too big a surprise given the typical banality of these things compared with being on the set of his latest film, *Into The Wild*, carving out a gorgeous slice of old Americana, but you think he'd give us something to work with.

The impression that is given is one of love for his work, rather than the publicising of it, a standard for anyone with the credibility he has attained. His distaste for the media since his marriage to Madonna in the eighties seems to have stuck with him while she has simply turned to playing them like an eight year old girl manages Barbie dolls. But

with a body of work like Penn's, it is easy to understand why it is of more interest than how he's living his personal life.

After a string of roles from the early eighties, he solidified his talent in the early nineties with Brian De Palma's *Carlito's Way* and then got the Academy talking with Tim Robbins' *Dead Man Walking* by 1995. The latter performance saw him receive his first nod for playing a man on death row fighting for life with the help of a nun, Susan Sarandon, who walked away with her own statuette. From there, Penn moved into a different stream and in the early part of this century seemed to develop an interest in documentaries but still turned in outstanding performances in the likes of *I Am Sam*, *21 Grams* and *Mystic River*, the latter of which se-



cured him the Oscar. It is Sam however which offers possibly the best look at his range as an actor though, especially compared with *River and Dead Man Walking*, as his portrayal of an autistic father desperately trying to keep custody of his child (a young Dakota Fanning, before she became the token child in every film that required it) displays an innocence and character skills far removed from the violent personae of the other two.

Into *The Wild* doesn't star Sean Penn however, it's directed by him. The attempt at direction by stars can be a mixed bag though; for every Clint Eastwood success story (well, if success is judged on awards over integrity), there's another handful who just thought that it looked too easy and were just hushed-up. Previous directorial efforts from Penn himself have received mixed response since his debut in the chair back in *The Indian Runner* (1991) and little known subse-

quent works, *The Crossing Guard* and *The Pledge*. With *Into The Wild*, Penn has certainly improved his talent as a storyteller along with his visual eye, but will it be sufficient to break free of the actor tag?

Here's hoping so, for his sake, as Penn has a slightly surprising view of acting: "Most of why I acted in the last ten years was to steal film school time from these guys. Those were the choices I was making, looking at directors that I could learn from." Whatever that says about the wider view actors hold of their profession, it's surprising to hear such an opinion from someone near the top of the pile in terms of acting talent using it as a stepping stone. On direction he states: "If what you're looking for is love and you're looking for it every night in bars in Los Angeles, you're lucky if once every five years you find what it is and then you'll have affairs. In moviemaking, an affair with a piece of material is not going to cut it cause you gotta stay in love for years to get through it. I think I know more what I'm looking for in that love than before."

It shouldn't really come as such a surprise that Penn wants more than someone else's words to work with. He's had a very strong voice of his own in terms of politics, appearing quite publicly to denounce the Bush administration and their war in Iraq, so transposing that eloquence of opinion to a storytelling perspective would seem appealing. He certainly seems to display a real enthusiasm for accuracy in the detail he refers to in recreating the true story of Chris McCandless in this latest picture. Penn has had access to the greatest directing talent in Hollywood and beyond as he says, and it certainly seems he has plenty drive to focus his attentions on direction rather than acting. Could he be the next Clint Eastwood? Not if he wants to remain a rogue maverick.

Emile Hirsch charms as the wild one but old Americana overshadows him

Into The Wild

★★★★☆

Director: Sean Penn
Writer: Sean Penn
Cast: Emile Hirsch, Catherine Keener, Vince Vaughn

Alex Casey

Being selected as the Kyoto Planet Gala in this year's festival is definitely not beyond the scope of reason where this film is concerned as its celebration of nature is unmatched amongst the other selections this year. In fact, the true story of Chris McCandless and his voyage into the wilderness of the United States has such breathtaking images of nature that it's hard to believe a large part of it wasn't funded by the Alaskan tourist board. Fifteen years after the story first unfolded, Sean Penn gives it the big screen treatment it's been waiting for, with a backdrop that you just don't find in a studio.

Chris McCandless was a university graduate back in the early nineties who took off to explore his country away from society, donating all his money to charity and leaving his family no way to contact him. His transformation

into his alias Alexander Supertramp saw him travel between Mexico and Alaska, living on the road and meeting various characters along the way. With the voyage transferred to a cinema screen, it's hard to imagine why America established its greatest cities in places such that nobody would ever see these wonders. Thankfully Penn was on hand to show them what they were missing.

Emile Hirsch throws himself into the central performance with the conviction and look very reminiscent of an early Penn. Without such a performance the film would not work, and Hirsch proves a treat to watch on his adventure. The supporting cast of characters that Chris/Alex meets along the way is full of comfortable performances, including the Vince Vaughn and the ever malleable Catherine Keener, here a hippie on the road with her boyfriend in some very touching moments. It is without doubt the moments of interaction with these people that surpass the film's potential as an advert for America and make the story the real biographical journey of human interest that it is.

Marcia Gay Harden and William Hurt provide suitable motive for wishing to escape your previous life as the unfor-



Yes, "wild" doesn't begin to cover it...

tunate parents whilst Jena Malone's infrequent voice-over as the sister experiencing various feelings about her brother's disappearance reminds the audience that this is a human story rather than just an adventure yarn.

Sean Penn, being a particularly outspoken detractor of the war in Iraq and American foreign policy in the post-9/11 age, expresses with conviction the desire to escape a society controlled by material possessions and hollow preoccupations. His direction seems more fluid than previous outings and raises

his skills towards those of his acting abilities, but with so much passion for this particular piece it will be interesting to see if this can be carried over to other projects in the future.

The primary criticism of *Into The Wild* would have to be that it feels slightly overlong. The episodic nature of the journey is broken up by cutting between pieces in Alaska and the rest of the quest, and then the scenes of the family left behind but as it moves from one set of characters to the next, it begins to get weighed down under the

burden of time. Whilst each person has something to add you can't help but wish they did so that bit faster.

This doesn't stop it being a largely enjoyable film however, and the cinematography will no doubt sweep the boards come award time. If Penn makes it as well, then he could join the hallowed halls of the select few who can call themselves 'actor/director' with any degree of credibility.

Actually, it doesn't take an award to recognise the talent that this film shows.

Free Preview Screening Offer

We have 200 tickets for a preview screening of new film *Into the Wild* to give away. There is no competition, no question to answer, it's just a giveaway.

Film Felix have acquired the Camden Town Odeon for one night only to bring you this exclusive offer on the following date:

Thursday 8th November
6.00pm for 6.30pm

In order to claim your free ticket, simply turn up at the Union Reception on the first floor of the Beit quad Union Building.

Do not despair if you cannot get a ticket at the reception either, as even if you DON'T have a ticket, simply bring along this advert from your copy of Felix and the cinema will supply you with a ticket* on the night.

See you there!

*whilst stocks last



Rough Guide to Film Competition

In order to celebrate the Times BFI 51st London Film Festival and the 25th anniversary of the Rough Guides company, Felix Film are offering you the chance to win three copies of the brand spanning new Rough Guide to Film.

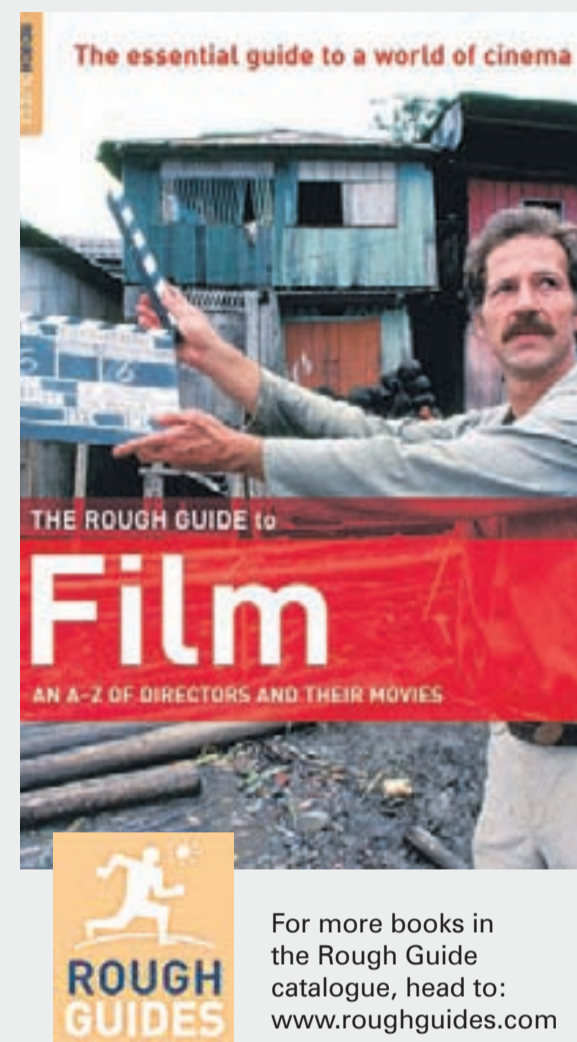
The book is an encyclopedia of movie directors since the dawn of cinema over 100 years ago, discussing their styles, the major movements with which they were associated and highlighting the key films that make up their career.

All you have to do to stand a chance of winning this competition is answer the following question:

Who won the Best Director Oscar at the most recent ceremony?

- (a) Clint Eastwood
- (b) Ang Lee
- (c) Martin Scorsese

Email your answers to
film.felix@imperial.ac.uk



For more books in the Rough Guide catalogue, head to:
www.roughguides.com

The Kingdom moves everyone onto axis of evil

Away from the festival, Robin George Andrews discovers a terror thriller with surprisingly high intellect

The Kingdom ★★★★★

Director: Peter Berg
Writer: Matthew Michael Camahan
Cast: Jamie Foxx, Chris Cooper, Jennifer Garner

So, here we have what is perhaps one of the rarest phenomena ever to come out of Hollywood – an action thriller with depth. Sure, the Bourne trilogy had great introspective characters, but this film deals with hard-hitting subject matter that genuinely hits closer to home.

The film begins by showing the audience a civilian compound in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, suddenly coming under attack by suicide bombers under the cover of the National Guard. With the violence explicit and indiscriminate, it left several poignant, horrifying images lingering around my mind for a considerable duration of time.

Whenever US Citizens are killed abroad, it apparently falls to the FBI to investigate, and after getting past some political bureaucracy, Jamie Foxx and his small team of agents are dispatched to the region.

Now, this could easily have been another terrible jingoistic film involving American killing machines mowing down the clear, definite enemy of freedom, as it were, but fortunately, and to be honest, surprisingly, it most certainly isn't.

With the Muslim characters in the film getting as much screen time and

character development – perhaps more so – than the American leads, there is a clear push by the director to emphasise the fact that despite distinct cultural differences, we are all humans in this world, and that anyone is capable of anything. A minor role in the film encapsulates all the stereotypes many people around the world hold today, by expressing his views that the entirety of a race and religious collective is responsible for the actions of the few, and one that the film very successfully attempts to debunk.

Despite the political weight this film carries, it never once attempts to thrust it in your face; instead, it delicately portrays a human drama unfolding before your eyes, one that is both thrilling and meaningful enough to keep you hooked right until the closing credits.

It is labelled as an action thriller, so do not go into the cinema expecting a full, in-depth analysis of the current situation on the so-called 'war on terror'. I despise the view that a film can either be an action flick or an intelligent eye-opener, and this film exists to throw out these archaic rules set down by hundreds of draconian film critics. *The Kingdom* is indubitably an eclectic, pleasing mix of a thriller based on current events, and it most certainly handles everything intelligently. Nothing seems out of place or biased. This is a film about retribution, loss, and showing that everyone, no matter what age, race, or religion, is capable of evil.

Most of the action sequences occur during the final third of the film, and by this point you will find yourself almost

cheering on the US-Saudi team rapidly gaining on the terrorists responsible for the heinous crimes perpetrated a few hours earlier. I genuinely wanted an eye for an eye by this point – to see those responsible killed in swift retribution. This played into the film's moral core perfectly: essentially, what this film aims to do is show the audience that many people's actions are based on the most primal of instincts, and

in this sense the epilogue is as chilling as the opening scene, with an all too similar mentality being put forward by both sides of the same coin, leaving the audience with a provoking thought to dwell on.

An excellent score and some terrific leads – most notably the endearing Saudi police officer portrayed by Ashraf Barhom – make this a film worth more than the asking price. With no stupefy-

ing twists or unrealistic plot progression, it is entirely believable and is something that no-one can justifiably claim is offensive or Americanised.

So there you have it: an intelligently-handled, emotionally in-depth thriller that is not afraid to show you the dark side of humanity and the cost of following – and fighting against – extremism in the world today. More than your average American thriller, no?



You know, that outfit would look great with a bit more colour in it



Music

Music Editors – Jenny Gibson and Matty Hoban

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

A bumper bag of musical treats

Felix is here serving up more reviews than you can shake a CD case at. With Radiohead's new offering, a potential Bob Dylan in-the-making in the form of Stephen Fretwell and even a Ghost, what's not to like?

Album Review



Radiohead
In Rainbows
★★★★★

Now if mediocrity was currency, and the British alternative music scene was a person, that person would be richer than a member of one of these mediocre bands. Ingenuity and excitement are quite hard to come by in today's alternative music scene, with some albums being as bland and contrived as the above metaphor and a lot of alternative bands being hackneyed, unimaginative- possibly both, or even having all three of the above problems.

But there has been a band, a certain rock outfit which has been the saving grace of British alternative music throughout the 90's and beyond, who seem to still be holding strong where other seminal artists from the past couple of decades have died out (not literally died, I mean have become unpopular or become another band which is not as good). These saviours go by the name of, I believe, Radiohead. Some may say it's Oasis, but its not, it's Radiohead.

Radiohead have been churning out albums and hoards of b-sides which are consistently creative, original and I would even go as far to say "revolutionary" (in popular music terms) for over a decade. Their work has made a place for itself in the list of seminal albums of not only the 90's, but of all time. Such magnificent works for which they are responsible, include their mid-90's album, *Ok Computer* (which topped Channel Four's prestigious "Best albums ever" list), the more experimental 2000 release, *Kid A*, which drew heavy influences from the Warp records brand of electro-stuff, *Amnesiac* (with all recordings made



Don't expect Radiohead's new album, *In Rainbows*, to be quite this tranquil

during the same sessions as *Kid A*) and the more recent release *X&Y*...

Only joking about that last one, it is not a magnificent work. (Nah, I actually quite like that album and Coldplay.)

The band, fronted by Thom Yorke, famous for his trademark falsetto vocals and political opinions (both of which can be sampled on his solo album *The Eraser*), have been fairly quiet since 2003's *Hail to the Thief*, another album that would be the magnum-opus of a lesser bands career but hasn't garnered blanket critical acclaim, leading many to believe Radiohead to have peaked creatively at *Kid A*. But the band return from their "hiatus" with a com-

pletely new album *In Rainbows*, which is currently only available on download from their website with a unique sales approach where you, that's right- you the consumer can choose your own price (however there is a service charge of 45p but still, at least you don't have to fork out £8 for it. Just be grateful that Radiohead have had the decency to liberate you from your consumerist hell). This may seem strange, but this is due to the absence of a record contract and they probably have enough money anyway and if they don't then, they'll have enough if you buy the disc-box (released 3rd December) for £40.

Anyway, that's enough about prices and all that lark, I'll start talking about the actual album content.

In comparison to all their previous albums this one seems far more relaxed, it floats smoothly from start to finish and is set far apart from the tumultuous, mercurial tones of *Hail to the Thief*. Lyrically, it still has the same themes of tense modern living and hellish urban nightmares, but this album is far lighter than *Hail to the Thief* which was teaming with tension and anger, possibly due to the quick "blitzkrieg" style of recording they applied to it. The band seem to have applied the opposite recording technique in this case – as any Radiohead fan will know, they have been recording this album for approximately eight million years.

Anyone hoping for a return of the guitar driven anthems of *The Bends* will be disappointed, and anyone hoping for a reincarnation of *Kid A* will also be so. In fact, anyone hoping for a repeat of another album-style will be disappointed. Radiohead have made a habit of entering a new vein of music with each album and this is no excep-

tion. The album is unlike any other but it is comprised of elements of some, if not all of their past work. To put some sort of relativity into the matter it is as if *Hail to the Thief* has had a car crash with *Ok Computer* and the emergency services turn up, but instead of the emergency services it is actually *Kid A* with *The Eraser* in the background 'rubbernecking'. I hope that confused mess of personification can give you some idea.

The album opens with a hammering electronic beat and Yorke soon enters with his usual vocal acrobatics. After 18 seconds of listening, I was worried Thom Yorke had persuaded the band to make an *Eraser Part 2*, but I was soon saved by the clean, melodic guitar which glides in to the song. *15 Step* (the opening track) builds up gradually and it is clear this is Radiohead as a band. This sets the tone for the rest of the album with the mixture of heavy percussion (reminiscent of *Boards of Canada* at some stages), plenty of bustling ambient noise comprising of strings and synths and a noticeably large presence of guitar. Many fans will be familiar with the three song, *Nude* from various live performances and some bootleg albums of such performances (for the curious, see *Erasing Warnings* which is comprised of live tracks from Toronto). The song is elegant, soft and flowing, building up gradually from an almost Treefingers-esque beginning, transforming into an unfamiliar style. You will begin to question whether this is in fact rock music. It becomes apparent at this point that if *Hail to the Thief* was Radiohead having fun, *In Rainbows* is Radiohead working. The album is consistent but loosely bound lyrically, it is unified by

strands of a minimalistic style, it is mature and thoroughly accomplished, it is clear that Radiohead made this album to be viewed as one work, a united collection of music which is meant to be heard together. The concept of composition of an album is clearly thought of as an art to Radiohead, shown by their unwillingness to let iTunes sell single tracks from the album.

The only thing I have to say against this album is that it is lacking in any particular stand-out tracks, but that is countered by the consistent quality throughout. It blends minimalism, tuneful vocals with often heavy beats and thrashing distorted guitar, such as in the wild scaling sounds of *Body Snatchers*. On a whole, this album is mellower than Radiohead's previous albums but Yorke's lyrics conjure up images of 21st century alienation and an anxious society which is, in his own words, "terrifying". The album reaches it's peak of mellowness with *House of Cards*, 5 minutes and 28 seconds which float by and could easily lead a listener into a world of slumber. That's in a good way by the way.

Anyway I must conclude due to a word limit [Cough – Editor]. *In Rainbows* is consistent in quality and although definitely not what the fans were expecting, I believe they have delivered something superb, refusing to duplicate any previous works or styles and again reinventing themselves. Although no songs stand out as being classics when you first listen, they will definitely grow on you. If you are a fan buy it, if you have never heard of them, buy it, and if you have heard them and hated them, just pinch your mate's CD and give it another listen.

Deni Edgars

Duke Spirit Competition

Win the chance to see The Duke Spirit play live in your living-room!

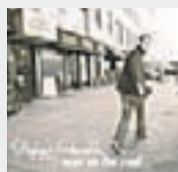
Following the announcement of their latest tour The Duke Spirit are running a competition where a fan will win the opportunity to have the band play live at their own private party in their house to celebrate the release of their latest EP, *Ex Voto*. The party will be held at a fan's house for them to enjoy with a large group of friends. It's a one off, once in a lifetime op-

portunity to have a real rock band play, quite literally, on your doorstep.

To enter the competition, fans must go to The Duke Spirit myspace page www.myspace.com/thedukespirit and complete the entry form by entering the barcode numbers found on the back of the 10" vinyl or the CD EP.

The winner will be selected at random on the 5th November and then we'll start planning the party for early 2008.

Album Review



Stephen Fretwell
Man on the Roof
★★★★☆

Stephen Fretwell, singer-songwriter from Lincolnshire, is described by *Q Magazine* as 'Scunthorpe's finest export... ever'. "Man on the Roof... teems with wit, originality, sharpness and pathos, with stand-out tracks including *Darlin' Don't*, *Funny Hat*, *She* and *San Francisco Blues*. Wonderful" – *Sunday Times Culture*. Fretwell has certainly matured as an artist since the release of *Magpie*, his gold-selling debut in November 04. After receiving numerous plaudits from the likes of *NME* back in 2000, it has been a long wait for album number two. Fretwell has in the recent years supported the likes of greats such as Oasis and Travis. He is the real deal as one would put it.

He is generally recognized music-wise for his sentimental, sombre lyrics on life, trials and tribulations, love, pain and vocally for his gravelly deep voice that conveys so much heart-felt emotion. With Bob Dylan being a huge influence, it's no wonder that one glimpse of his music and one is unassailably reminded of Dylan's ingenious handiwork. Indulge!

The sweet jaunty opening number *Coney* definitely makes you want to sway about to the music. The album declares its magic with the fairground sway of *Coney*, the story of a girl yearning to leave the fairground life but ends up succumbing like we all do. It's a bouncy, flamboyant merry-go-round corker of an opener and strengthened with the "boom-cha-cha-boom" chorus.

His trademark is being very chilled-out and sentimental, Fretwell certainly creates a world of his own. To follow up, the next folksy track *Scar* sees the drums kick off with a lilting rhythm and accelerated pace that contrasts markedly with some of the mellow tracks in this fantastic array of classic tuneage.

The third track, *The Ground Beneath Your Feet* laments on past love, such a prevalent thing that features in just about anything. Those who have ever broke up with a significant other will empathise with the somewhat poignant lyrics. We all fancy a bit of schmaltz from time-to-time really. The interjection of a quick drum roll and guitar hook works a real treat in the middle of the song. The much-adored electric guitar fills the instrumental section towards the end of the song which dynamically plays with the texture and orchestration of this piece. The syncopated guitar arrangement is awesome, as it manages to somehow effectively lift the song from total melancholy. (We don't honestly want to put a gun to one's head in hopeless despair for crying out loud). *Dead* on the other hand, takes a more upbeat turn; a groovy tune. The pace has turned up a noticeable notch with the drumbeat being more prominent as the rhythm intensifies, providing a sense of contentedness and a tentative temporary sense of happiness that is ruthlessly pervasive.

Next, we have *Funny Hat' Ta dah!* An absolute darling of a number. This beauty laments on love, bring delivered with such delicate passion and pathos, one evidently feels a spasm of incredible jealousy of Fretwell for being so damn good! The melody is ach-

ingly melancholic, but nevertheless truly breathtakingly emotional and the lyrics will resound softly in your head. Stephen's voice conveys such tender passion that you cannot help but get teary-eyed at times. Listening closely, his voice is a cross between the lead singer of Athlete, Chris Martin and James Morrison. Sexy and throaty. Hell yeah!

The next track *San Francisco Blues* starts with an interesting bluesy guitar prelude. The chorus reminds one of the Chillies for a split second with the simple quick application of arpeggios and gentle drumbeat. Guitar riffs are seemingly simple but take an enchanting hold. *Now* is equally magical, it impresses with a bittersweet melody in which the piano and guitars feature predominantly. The chorus sees the drums start to kick back in, giving it an uplifting outlook. The next one lasts for no more than 2 minutes. *Saturday* is somewhat gloomy and sadly not really up to the pedestal set by the rest of the album.

Ninth track *Bumper Cars* is more instrumentally based, with a violin accompaniment thrown in for good measure, giving it a rich, full texture. The album then gives rise to *She*, a slow, easy-going tune that is backed up with extra vocals, soulful to be sure. Fretwell has an uncanny way of getting songs stuck in your head all day long. Sweet and melodic. *Darlin' Don't* is reminiscent of Jose Gonzalez with its soft guitar strumming in the background and the mellowness has you unwinding on the sofa, daydreaming about past childhood. You can happily drift to sleep listening to this little number. Once again, sombre melody drift in for track twelve, *Sleep*, bemoaning love and all the emotional baggage that it entails.

The penultimate tune, *The Scheme*, begins eerily with electronic synthesised sounds which slowly creep in stealthily- no trace of the guitar in this one. Instead, the piano triumphs by creating long drawn-out repeated chords that have you almost floating on the clouds. This gives it a somewhat mystical, dreamy, surreal quality. The minimal, almost sparse, use of instrumentation in this track is very effective, doing away with extravagant ostentatious soundscapes and orchestration to allow the fragile but altogether potent melody to do the talking.

The album concludes with the bizarrely titled *William Shatner's Dog*. The last number is highly laidback and casual in the style of the guitar accompaniment. Sadly, the finishing track does not end on a high. A return to the mellowness which he does best. Can't complain.

It's plain to see that this album really has no airs and graces – it is comprised wholly of unpretentious song-writing brought to life by Fretwell's distinctive, breathtaking and altogether euphonic vocal and acoustic delivery.

There are a few minor numbers that do not stand out in blinding fashion, but even though you might not be enthralled by all the tracks, for most of the duration of the album, you will hopefully discover yourself rapt with attention. This collection of intimate, melancholy and compelling numbers will surely have you wanting more. Even though he is outside the mainstream, one cannot deny that he is a great, raw talent with a lot to admire.

Thankfully, his songs do not fall into the category of ten-a-penny that we sadly seem to see in the charts. His songs are interestingly meaningful and palpably tinged with honesty; his vocal range is impressive, and his lyrics are ostensibly confessional and memorable. It is so rare nowadays to find such a jewel amongst the cheese that is ubiquitous in the mass commercial music



Clockwise from top left: Stephen Fretwell in the studio, Frank Turner enjoying some "me" time and Cherry Ghost's Simon Aldred looking pensive. Nice shirt to be fair to him. Not sure about the window decor though

market these days. I digress.

Over the 14 tracks, Fretwell alludes to heartache, jadedness, nostalgia, regret and loneliness. This album is just stunning, it is simply perfect for the imminent long, dark, winter nights. A time-less repertoire. Lights out, let the fire crackle on and fill the room with these beautifully haunting melodies. Dylan fans, here's something for you. Watch out though, Fretwell may well usurp him one day!

Susan Yu

Album Review



Frank Turner
The Real Damage EP
★★★★☆

"I woke on a sofa in an unfamiliar house, surrounded by sleeping folks I didn't know," the EP starts. As a Fresh-er, every morning has been just that.

Frank Turner returns after the 2005 break-up of cult band Million Dead. Turner embarks upon a new direction after the raw post-punk ideals of two highly popular albums with Million Dead. This 'new' sound will be familiar to dedicated fans after Turner's solo acoustic sets became a solid feature of later Million Dead gigs. *The Real Damage EP* sees Turner preview this acoustic folk-sound finally in a right of its own.

Sea Legs and *Sunshine State* show a much softer, more emotional side to Turner's previous songwriting, whilst the fifth track *Heartless Bastard Motherfucker* glimpses at a more familiar, edgier and blues-ier frame. Although the combination doesn't completely work as a five-track record, only the

opening track *The Real Damage* makes it onto Turner's full album *Sleep Is For The Week*. Despite this, the quality of the song writing is ubiquitously top notch throughout the five tracks. Vocal wise, gone are the days of throat-ripping, hundred-mile-per-hour screaming; replaced by a greatly measured and melodic integrity.

It's definitely not Million Dead, but that can only be a good thing for Turner. It's definitely more accessible to a wider audience than his previous musical endeavours, but it may suffer from the size of his record label, Xtra Mile, coupled with his relative anonymity. Hardcore but fickle MD fans may follow Turner's latest efforts with initial dedication but move on once they realise they can't thrash their heads along to it. But you wouldn't want to thrash any of your members along to Frank Turner's material. Calmly tapping your foot will do just fine.

Daniel Wan

Single Review



Cherry Ghost
4am
★★★★☆

Their first album *Thirst For Romance* debuted in the top 10 UK charts at number 7 and received outstanding commendations and endorsement across the board. Following a stream of sell-out gigs around the UK as well as appearances at prominent music festivals including Glastonbury and Latitude, the band is indeed relentlessly recruiting new webs of fans, capturing both new and old audiences with their unique concoction of sounds and lyr-

ics, heavenly heartrending and always beautifully evocative.

4am is the third single from Manchester-based Cherry Ghost. Their music is heavily inspired by the sublime melancholy of acts such as Smog, Johnny Cash and Sparklehorse. Their previous hit anthemic single *People Help The People* is still hot property reverberating everywhere with its radio omnipresence. Simon Aldred, the main singer-songwriter does seem to have a knack of knocking out tunes that are euphonic to our ears, both musically and lyrically of course.

This track begins with a fusion of electronic sounds which steadily leads into a gentle melodic intro, setting the mood to a relaxing time out. It's always good to come back from a hard day's slog, put one's feet up and listen to something like this whilst drinking hot chocolate. Very sweet and mellow, with the acoustic guitar playing pleasantly and shaping the simplistic chord structure. The wistful, almost nostalgic feel emanates not just from the soft crooning quality of the singing and the peaceful guitar strumming but also augmented by the lyrics: 'There ain't no hiding place on Earth that loneliness ain't been first'. The pace is nice and laidback giving you plenty of time to feel the stress of the day seeping out of one's pores.

This little gem of a song is reminiscent of a sweet night time stroll, tinged by the loneliness that is forever prevalent throughout life. Indeed there is some slight resemblance to Newton Faulkner, who also broke into the music scene quite recently with a similar style of the guitar backdrop laced with the easy laid-back singing. It is definitely worth considering playing this album whilst cooking a simple meal or doing some light reading. Cherry Ghost are, without a doubt, a rare find with their atmospheric repertoire of songs. I'm sure they are destined for bigger and better things, ascent is the only way up!

Susan Yu



Sacrificial cheeseburger, my Lord?

In light of the increasing awareness of the meat industry's bad environmental credentials, Noel Forrest explores the virtues of meat and dairy-free eating. Be warned, this article contains cannibalism

By now we've all heard the bad news – eating meat is bad for the environment. More bad news; it will never be regulated enough to be an expensive preserve of the wealthy. Yet more we are too disenchanted these days to sanctify livestock and infuse them with holy spirits, which is a shame. This would have been the obvious solution for most of human history and effective too, as it harnesses a total belief system of the sort we evolved to live with. Chronic meat shortage has played a fascinating role in shaping some of the more bizarre religious beliefs. Hopefully we can avoid the experience of Ancient Mexico where, lacking the large game of Africa and Asia, meat became exclusive to the ruling Aztec classes whilst at times commoners had to make do with the spirulina algae skimmed from Lake Texcoco. The solution was to cannibalise the victims of human sacrifice – as many as fifteen thousand people per year. The priesthood said that human sacrifice was approved by the high gods, and they sanctified it with elaborate rituals performed amid statuary of the gods on imposing white temples.

So let's do a little experiment on ourselves. Say somebody is suggesting you eat less meat, how does this make you feel? Self righteous like you would need acknowledgement? And if nobody would ever know your choice? Like you want to rebel and have more for yourself because you feel you deserve it as you are a winner? Irrespective of how we consciously or sub-consciously justify it to ourselves, somewhere in that psychology is what is known as the Tragedy of the Com-

mons. Because the costs of your actions are diffuse and spread across many others (i.e. the negative impacts of climate change, mainly affecting the poor) but the benefits of your actions are personal, people decide to overuse resources to the point of collapse. However much philosophi-

cal sense it might make to say, "sod it let's just enjoy the moment", it's far more profound to appreciate that it is our programmed human nature to think in this way. With apologies to the academic disciplines skipped

genetic heritage when you ask why we do anything we do in the first place. Seeking status and having children, sport, religion, altruism, aggression, phobias, all our most intense emotions... in my opinion our lives are screaming out our evolutionary history and it gives me a huge kick to see that so clearly, when I know that others don't.

As a minor aside, am I really the only one with an internal dialogue of constant judgment? I would go so far as to say that it is basically what it means to be a human – expressionlessly choosing the best course of action, while our minds are swirling through various options and calculating the self-interest factor. A human face is a poker face – we do or say one thing, and think something completely different. I say that we are selfish, no matter how we justify it to ourselves or what we think of ourselves, and reason follows passion anyway.

Of course we shouldn't fight this, as it is our nature, and we have nowhere else to go, but how can we break that circularity for the necessary preservation of our environment? Maybe that's why government regulation needs to play a part – but that's short sighted too through the four-year term system which forces excessive voter pandering. In my view, the answer is tribalism. We need to recapture those spirits in a system of branding and labelling upon which, as a group, we can heap moral significance and push the conformity onwards, providing that acknowledgement and recognition we all seek. What about corruption? Can't we design a system around that? It's not enough to rely on good people, we know people are conniving and deceitful (sorry to say!) so we need it to be

acceptable to check our neighbours are in line if we all did this it would be fine. Why isn't it acceptable for us all to invade our neighbours' privacy and check they're not making bombs in their attics? That's a pretty dark question in my view, and an important one too.

Well actually, there is one place where it happens every day and it's also the place where most meat is bought. It's the supermarket. Oh, how the housewife frets over her see-through basket! Are those chocolate biscuits peeking out between the wires just too naughty? Should I have really gone for

"The solution to chronic meat shortage was to cannibalise the victims of human sacrifice"

organic muesli? It's the perfect example! And Grannies are the exception that proves the rule. They've garnered respect and so can get away with their tartan fabric trolleys, and fill them up with dog food and hairspray. But here's my point: we need more see-through baskets in our lives and we need to be seen to be putting the right things in them. Follow some of the meat-free recipes on this page and you'll be on the right track, plus you won't have to eat dog food; for while this may be equally cost-effective, I fear it may also explain a fair portion of all those tartan trolleys.



in between, our moral compass is short-sighted in the self interest of our genes. We only tend to look a few generations into the future (before our own genome will become fragmented in successive halvings) and we make selective altruism towards our closest kin, with whom we share most genes (I'm thinking of Christmas presents), or make altruism in expectation of reciprocation.

It's easy to see the relevance of our

Some vegetarian recipes to cleanse your meat-riddled conscience

Basic Tomato Sauce

This is a cracking recipe that gives a far-better sauce for pasta than anything bought ready made.

Cheese = cows = methane = 23 times worse than carbon dioxide... but what about the farmers?

Optional cheese topping, let's say.

1. Get a good glug of olive oil in a moderately heated saucepan.

2. Throw in two roughly chopped cloves of garlic (flattening them with a knife blade makes peeling easier). Let them sizzle briefly, but just as

they start to become coloured brown, pour in Italian tinned chopped tomatoes (one tin for two people with pasta), a generous handful of chopped parsley, salt and pepper.

3. Simmer it for 15 minutes and you'll end with a rich and thick sauce that clings well to pasta.

4. Finish it with another glug of olive oil, off the heat.

If you're having with spaghetti, best get the sauce going first, and then they'll be ready together.

Noel Forrest



Roasted Vegetable Cous-Cous

This looks like an exact recipe but almost any veg will do, and the cous cous does not need to be so fancy.

500g cous cous
750 ml boiling water
1/2 tsp bouillon powder (or crushed stock cube)
1tbsp oliveoil
1 onion diced
1 tsp mustard seeds
1 garlic clove crushed
salt and pepper

1 red pepper cut into 6
1 yellow pepper cut into 6
1 bulb fennel cut into 6
2 med courgettes cut into 5 cm chunks on diagonal
3 red onions peeled, cut into 6
2 med aubergines cut into 5cm chunks
4 tbsp olive oil
dash tabasco
1tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 clove garlic crushed
salt and pepper



1. Heat oven to highest setting.

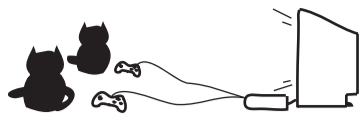
2. Place the cous-cous in large pan and pour over boiling water and bouillon powder. The cous-cous will be soft as soon as all the water has been absorbed (follow the instructions on the packet if you're unsure).

3. Meanwhile heat oil and fry the onions until golden brown. Add mustard seeds, crushed garlic, salt and pepper. Mix with the cous-cous and set aside.

4. For the roasted veg, mix all the veg with olive oil, tabasco, balsamic vinegar, garlic and salt and pepper and place in an oven-proof dish. Bake in preheated oven for 35 mins or until charred and tender. Serve piled on the cous-cous.

5. To finish, garnish with a sprinkle of chopped mint or coriander if you fancy.

Noel Forrest



Games

Games Editors – Azfarul Islam and Sebastian Nordgren

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Azfarul "Az" Islam
Games Editor

Normally, I'm not much of a handheld gamer. I've randomly had goes at the Gamegear, Gameboy, Gameboy Advance(s) and the two newer ones over the last decade or so. Sure, I did have quite some fun with the games, but never did I find a handheld console beckoning me to purchase one for my own. Given that I had a deluge of great games to get through on my PS2, my gaming time was devoted to such.

Then I realised only recently that I wasn't exactly playing the most enticing games on these Console Minis.

A week ago, I had touched WarioWare (pun intended) on the DS and I've found myself completely hooked. And what's not to love? Designed as a series of ephemeral mini-games, you end up breezing through the zaniest variety of tasks you'll have attempted in a game thus far. Within a span of a minute or so, I picked a nose, made a couple fall for each other, connected a lightbulb and sucked an entire galaxy into an unforgiving swirling vortex. All in a day's work, really. Insane. There's hardly any time, initially, to climb the learning curve. The instructions are basic and minimal: it's upto you to figure out how to succeed and then do so - all within a span of five to ten seconds.

Similarly, I've been able to muck around with a PSP for quite some time as well. Virtua Tennis didn't end so well with the A.I. trouncing me until I realised that I was playing on the highest difficulty. It's quite a different feel from its console brethren, but that doesn't deny the game some impressive visuals and solid gameplay mechanics. Later on I got in a couple of hours with Metal Gear AC!D. Now, I'm a Metal Gear fan first and foremost (judge me by my Halo articles at your own risk heh) and AC!D is the furthest departure from the series I've seen. They turn a spontaneous, stylistic stealth game into, of all things, a tactical card-based battler. It's not Magic: The Gathering or Duel Masters, but it's still a design decision that's bizarre at best. Within a span of two hours, I had to come to grips with a rule system that lacked intuitiveness, a few rounds of bad luck when drawing cards and a group of enemies who spasmed between absolute idiots to ruthless pack hunters. And yet, it was a *thoroughly entertaining* experience. Oddities involved having cards for every. Single. Action. Movement? Check. Climbing over waist-high boxes? Check. Random, insignificant task requiring basic motor skills? Check. The soldiers I was assigned to kill were an odd bunch. During an alert scene two of them, on the verge of tracking me down, ended up in a storeroom and did god-knows-what for the entire sequence until the alert was taken off. Yeah, definitely not creepy [sarcasm].

However, the overall experience left me realising that handheld games have really carved a fantastic, more focused niche for themselves over the years. I definitely need one now *hint hint*



Phantom Hourglass class

Eduardo Vasquez-Silva finds a silent cartographer and goes on another epic quest



Link Teaches Writing™

The Legend of Zelda is a franchise full of surprises, as fans never know what to expect from each game, but they know that a game with the princess' name on it is guaranteed to be great (for those thinking of the CDi disasters, do yourself a favour and assume they were never made). Take Ocarina of Time, for instance. The jump from 2D to 3D was something that concerned many gamers, as it was hard to imagine how things would work in a polygonal world. Luckily, the wizards of Nintendo did what they do best and delivered one of the finest pieces of software ever to grace a console. *The Wind Waker* also surprised many with its different looks and combat system, but again, it was one of the best games on its system.

So when Nintendo announced that there would be a sequel to *The Wind Waker* (TWW) on the Dual Screens, I got really excited, but felt a bit sceptical at the same time. Mainly because the cartoony art style of TWW never really convinced me, and the fact that Link would only be controlled using the stylus was something I couldn't see working very well. Luckily, I was wrong. *Phantom Hourglass* has now become my favourite DS game, and probably the best one out there.

What makes this game so damn good is actually the way it is controlled. As I said, you control Link by simply touching on the screen wherever you want him to go, and he will faithfully follow. However, it happens to work fantastically well. Fighting is as simple (and surprisingly satisfactory) as tapping on your enemies, although some require a little more skill than others.

This is a Zelda game and most standards are here: lots of dungeons full of

enemies and puzzles that will push your brain harder than *Kawashima's Brain Training*, lots of different weapons, places to visit and people to talk



Cue Indiana Jones' theme

to. However, it is the new way in which all these features are implemented where this game excels.

Phantom Hourglass does a fantastic job at using all the capabilities of the DS. To use certain weapons, such as the boomerang, you simply draw on



Hackity-slashity fun returns!

the screen the trajectory you want it to follow. Then let go. Enjoy. Repeat. It never gets old.

Some puzzles are so inventive, they

actually require gamers to think in ways they are not used to. I particularly remember an enemy I was told was "sensitive to loud noises". What



The Treasure is a lie!

I thought would be one of the most predictable ways of defeating an enemy ended up being one of the biggest surprises I've had while playing games. All I did was throw bombs at him, hoping he would run away crying due to the noise, but nothing worked. After a



Cue more Indiana Jones' music

while, I remembered that the DS has a microphone incorporated. I thought about it for a second, but then I just went for it and yelled at it. To my sur-

prise, the foe did actually get scared, as did the rest of the people who were on the bus with me.

One of the most inventive uses of the touch screen is to actually write memos on your map or sea chart. This being a Zelda game, this comes in very handy, given that there are places you know you'll have to come back to when you are appropriately equipped, or people you'll have to do favours to.

Another thing that really helps this game stand out is its presentation. It's just beautiful to look at: the colours are bright, animations are smooth and the sound demands the use of headphones. The music is really good, my favourite tune being the one you hear while you are cruising the seas, which is good, because you'll do it a lot.

For a DS game, this is a very long one. The main adventure can take from 12 to 15 hours to complete. However, this is one of the things that really, *really* bothered me about Phantom Hourglass. There is one temple that you have to revisit several occasions, and every time you go in, you have to go through every single room you had already beaten. Again, and again, which is kind of repetitive. I found this a lame excuse to make it feel like a longer lasting adventure. Fair enough, you'll eventually get upgrades that allow you go through it quicker, but that doesn't help the fact that you are doing the same stuff over and over!...phew...I had to get that off my chest....Well, I guess it really isn't such a big deal, after all. It's probably just THE ONE thing that keeps this game from a 10/10.

Overall, this is an awesome game: it looks great, the sound and music are top-notch and the puzzles and gameplay do the console fair justice. It will stay in your DS for weeks, and if you don't have a DS, go buy one now. Trust me, it's that good.



Reader Rating: 9.5 / 10



Wordoku 1,385

		H	R	K		A	E	T
			T					C
	T	A			O	S		
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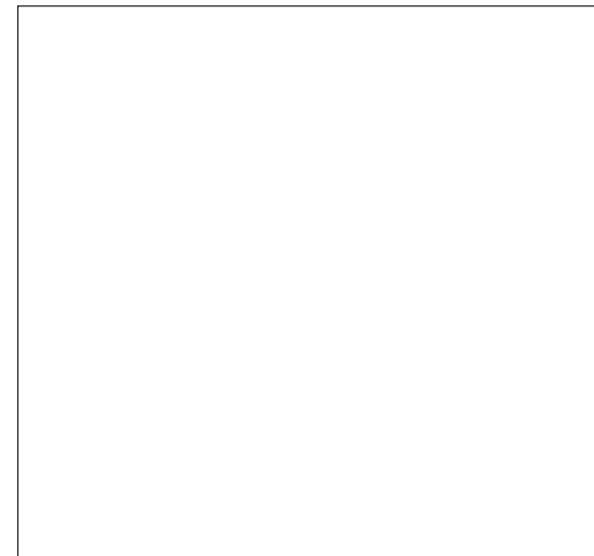
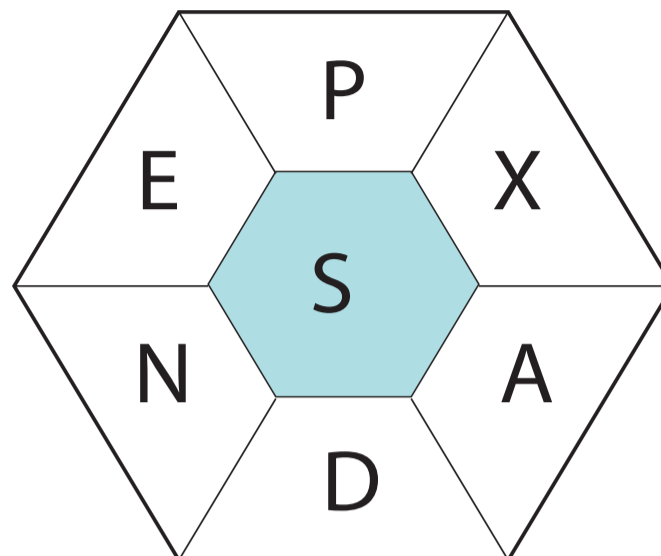
Solution to 1,384

C	T	A	I	Z	Y	M	G	O
O	Z	Y	G	T	M	I	C	A
G	M	I	C	A	O	Z	Y	T
I	A	O	Y	C	T	G	Z	M
Z	Y	G	O	M	A	T	I	C
T	C	M	Z	I	G	A	O	Y
M	O	Z	T	G	C	Y	A	I
A	I	C	M	Y	Z	O	T	G
Y	G	T	A	O	I	C	M	Z

Wordoku is identical to sudoku; we've just replaced the numbers with letters. Once you've completed the puzzle, there is a hidden word or phrase to find. Email in your answers to sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk.

The winner of the Wordoku 1,384 was **Louis Tsang**. The hidden phrase was "ZYGOMATIC".

The Polygon of Deathly Despair



How to rate yourself:

Under 10 words: I'm surprised if you have the ability to read with this score!

10 - 18 words: I despair of you.

18 - 24 words: Now we're getting there, but don't get complacent!

25 or more words: You cunning linguist! Your grasp of English is turning me on baby... oh yeaaaaah...

Last week's solution:

The only seven letter word was:

SATSUMA

Congratulations if you got this.

Other words included:

amass, mass, mast, masts, mats, muss, must, musts, muts, smut, smuts, sums, tams.

How to play:

Using the letters given, not more than once, make as many words as possible. They must be at least four or more letters long and each word you come up with must include the central letter. Capitalised words, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in "-ly", comparatives and superlatives are disallowed.

An example of a word you can't do in this particular Polygon is "virgin". Clearly, this is not possible because you are missing the letters "v", "i", "r", and "g".

H to the o, r, o, sizzle copes – it's the Horoscopes



Aquarius

You will wake one morning next week with a massive growth on the side of your face. Then you will discover

it is in fact the kebab you were eating when you fell asleep last night. On to more positive news, you will find that kebab makes quite a good breakfast, although it is written in the stars that you will see it again later in the day...



Taurus

The recent full moon means the spotlight is on you and you must perform and recite the entire works of

Wordsworth through your nose before your kneecaps turn into Coco Pops and explode. Think carefully before you eat anything hairless this week, and watch out for falling coconuts.



Leo

No you are not cool for thinking that you look awesome in your new track-suits. When I am king, tracksuits will

be outlawed and you will burnt alive in your extremely flammable attire. Yeah, you, I am talking to you! It is a tracksuit, not 'running attire' and you will die die die die die die die die die die die.. DIE!



Scorpio

Due to the near collision of Jupiter and the asteroid "Arsticus" your week will be somewhat mixed. Your socks

will melt and stick your feet to your shoes on Tuesday. Avoid riding mechanical bulls at sex-toy parties. In fact, avoid sex altogether this week, especially as you can't remove your shoes.



Pisces

You will meet your anti-matter self wandering around somewhere in Chem Eng. You will then disappear in a blinding

flash of logical impossibility, taking most of Chem Eng with you (what a shame). Note that this is not an excuse not to hand in your coursework on time. Lack of existence is not an excuse!



Gemini

As Saturn is moving retrograde you will feel the need to gorge on cheese and mince pies. This is not the time to start

new pieces of coursework as you will just end up writing shite. Wait until next week when Uranus will be rising and inspiring you to great feats of literary genius. Avoid red doors, they will lead to uncontrollable hiccougs.



Virgo

On Monday you will hear a sheep sneeze violently. This is extremely fortuitous and slightly outweighs the intense

emotional rollercoaster that having Mars orbiting your sign produces. Gather some of the sheep snot and keep it as a talisman for good luck in the future. On Wednesday you will discover that you have a genital wart.



Sagittarius

This week you are fat! Yes, you have gone over your ideal weight and everyone hates you for it. The only solution is for

you to vomit yourself into nothingness. That's it, shove those fingers down your throat and HEAVE, HEAVE, HEAVE! With every heave you are achieving more social acceptance. People might start talking to you again.



Aries

After your encounter with the Grundfuttock last week, your bottom has been strangely sore and rather red.

I told you to run away and hide, but oh no, you don't listen to horoscopes because they aren't "scientific". Well you're paying for it now! Repeat after me, I will heed the horoscopes!



Cancer

With Mercuy rising through your sign in the celestial heavens, make sure that you start many arguments. Avoid

large men in hats. Also this week represents the best chance you have for the next 20 years in which to have a threesome. Good luck and use rohypnol if necessary.



Libra

Your recent letter to the campaign against curtains society has been returned unopened. This is a sign from

the heavens. Give up your hatred and learn to accept curtains into your life. Embrace blinds instead, and don't forget to water your catapillars.



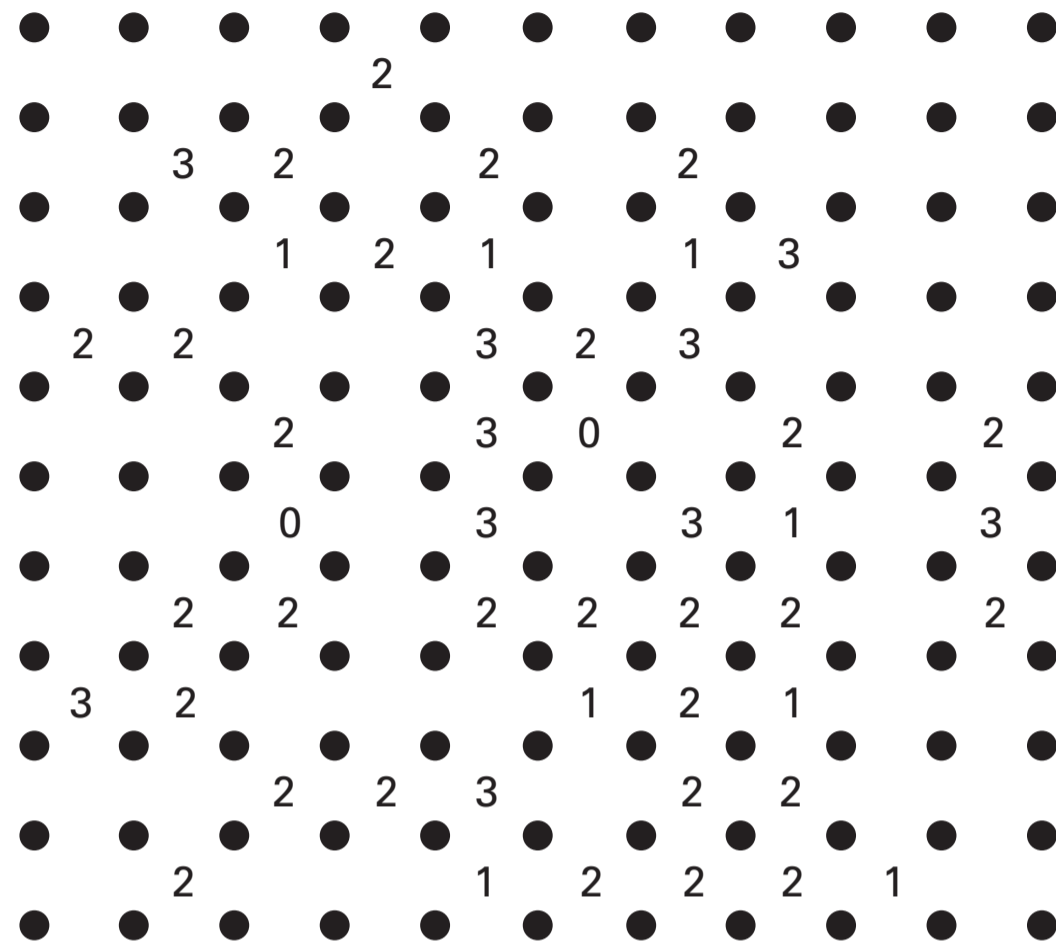
Capricorn

This week you read the above horoscope and complain. BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT YOU DO!

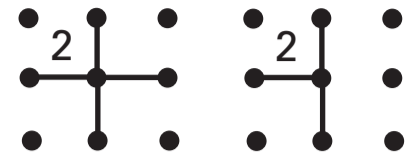
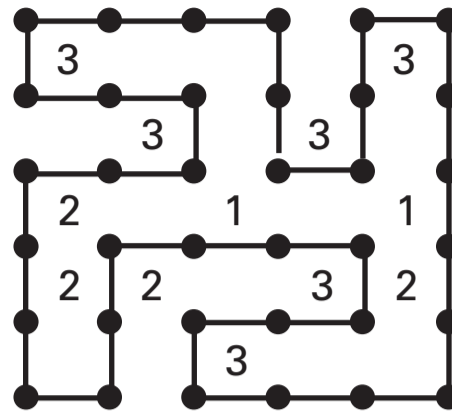
You take any sort of amusement out of any situation and whinge, whinge, whinge until even your kidneys are lashing out condemnation. That or you are bulemic. In which case, sorry.

Slitherlink 1,385

Slitherlink 6 – Hard

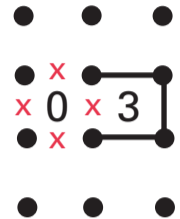


Answer for Slitherlink 5



Squares are not allowed either. There are never cells containing the number 4 in Slitherlink.

So, where do you start? The most common place to start on a Slitherlink grid is by drawing crosses around any zeros. Drawing crosses is purely done to so that you know where there can't possibly be a line. So, take the pattern below as an example. Begin by drawing crosses, then by filling in some lines:



How to play:

Crudely speaking, Slitherlink is similar to Minesweeper mixed with a dash of Sudoku.

The object of the game is to draw lines between the dots to create one long, and most importantly, looping line. It should have no start or finish; just like an elastic band.

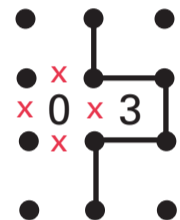
Each number indicates how many lines should be drawn around it, for example:



Cells which don't contain a number can be surrounded by any number of lines.

Remember, the line must form a loop, so the line cannot branch. The following situations are not allowed:

Now the lines can only continue in the following directions:



Ha, ha! We've sprung a gigantic 10x10 on you this week. Enjoy and keep linking!

Hugo Competition

Exclusive Competition from Hugo Fragrances!



HUGO Fragrances are giving you the chance to register for complimentary tickets to their next incredible HUGO URBAN RULES concert taking place in London on December 4th. US RnB star Amerie, upcoming funk-meisters Unklejam and the winner of the next round of the HUGO URBAN RULES music campaign will perform at an exclusive show at Neighbourhood especially for urban music fans.

To attend this one-off musical showcase, and also receive free fragrance samples just register your details at www.hugofragrances.com/urbanrules. Hurry because the deadline is 25th November!

To celebrate this event HUGO Fragrances are also delighted to be offering three lucky people the chance to win a HUGO Deep Red gift set. Deep Red is a distinctive, seductive scent for the woman who insists on wearing a fragrance that is consistent with her values of fun and independence. For guys, there are three limited edition bottles of HUGO Green, the modern classic that's as distinctive as the man who wears it.

To win one of these prizes, please answer the following question:

Amerie is following in the footsteps of which famous artists who have taken part in HUGO URBAN RULES over the last 12 months?

Send your answers in to felix@imperial.ac.uk, including your name!

For more info on the HUGO URBAN RULES campaign and how you can get involved, log on to www.hugofragrances.com

Logic Puzzle: Rugby match

(Any similarities to persons living or dead is purely coincidental!)

	FLY HALF	HOOKER	FLANKER	PROP	NO. 8	SCARED OPPOSITION	GOT SIN BINNED	BALL TO THE BALLS	MAN OF THE MATCH	SCORED A TRY	ODD SIZED FEET	SHORT AND PLUMP	SQUIDGY	VERY LONG ARMS	TALL AND FRECKLED
LUKE															
ANJIT															
OWEN															
JOV															
JOE															
ODD SIZED FEET															
SHORT AND PLUMP															
SQUIDGY															
VERY LONG ARMS															
TALL AND FRECKLED															
SCARED OPPOSITION															
GOT SIN BINNED															
BALL TO THE BALLS															
MAN OF THE MATCH															
SCORED A TRY															

any obvious or stated deductions. Find the corresponding row and column on the grid and place a tick for 'Yes' in the box, and a cross for 'No' in the cells next to this one vertically and

Using the clues and logical deduction alone, work out how all the people involved in the match relate to each other. The puzzle can be solved without guesswork. Make use of the grid to cross off and tick the combinations that you have worked out. Read through each clue and make

horizontally. Ensure that you read the clues carefully. They can sometimes reveal multiple hints! Remember that elimination of alternatives is a key method. That is where the grid is so important - it allows you to see the possibilities left with ease.

- The player with the odd-sized feet was a prop. He isn't Anjit, who was sin binned.
- Anjit isn't short or squidgy. The player who is tall and fleckled wasn't the hooker.
- Owen wasn't the prop and didn't get Man of the Match or Scare the Opposition like one of his teammates with his amazing haircut.
- The player who was squidgy didn't have a ball to the balls. Neither the squidgy player or the tall, fleckled player was flanker.
- The player who was Man of the Match isn't short or squidgy.
- Joe (who isn't squidgy or fleckled) scored a try.
- The fly half was Luke, who wasn't squidgy or fleckled either.

1st XV triumphant Pre-season training a hit

Rugby



Imperial Men's 1st XV 31
Portsmouth Men's 1st XV 0

Jovan Nedić
Sports Editor

After last weeks impressive performance against Hertfordshire, Imperial were ready to take on Portsmouth at Harlington. Building on last weeks performance, only one change was made to the team.

The game started a little slowly for Imperial's liking, with the forwards being shooed back a few times in the scrums, however Portsmouth were unable to stop the free flowing style that the 1sts also have. This became evident when Flannan O'Maoney slid through the defence and then off loaded the ball the prop forward who gained 30 meters before going to ground and winning a penalty. Winger Rob Phillipps happily went across the try line to give

Imperial the lead.

Portsmouth did not take to this too well and their tempers started to fray with late, high and dangerous tackles happening all over the place, and eventually a fight. This only spurred on the Imperial pack who turned over a Portsmouth scrum which Joe Brown pounced upon and scored a try, leaving the score at 10 - 0 at half time.

In the second half, you could sense that Imperial had a point to prove, and they did. The forwards started to rumble the ball, setting up rolling mauls with Alex Johnstone and Tom Zeal scoring a try from it. The backs were running tremendous lines, especially Tom Carroll, but it was Alex Johnstone who charged down a kick and scored another try, leaving the score at 31 - 0 at full time.

A tremendous performance from a team who, according to the coach, still haven't gelled fully! Man of the Match went to James Petit for his outstanding performance, and Twat of the Match went to Terry Addo for his cameo second half appearance.



Tom Carroll and Giles Mumford breaking through the line

Alissa Ayling

As many of you know, this year saw the first Pre-season Training Week for the sports clubs taking place from Monday 24 to Friday 28 September.

The week was set up to allow ACC clubs the opportunity to get fit and ready for the upcoming season after the relaxing summer break. Approximately 65 people from different clubs such as Rugby, Hockey, Netball, Volleyball, Badminton and Swimming, signed up for a week of gruelling circuits, agility training, and sports specific warm-up exercises, as set out by the Energia fitness team.

The athletes were not only put through their paces indoors at Ethos

with some tough circuit training but outdoors too, in Hyde Park.

"As a first attempt at running a programme of this type, the week was an unprecedented success," commented Luke Taylor, ACC Chair. "The Training Week was a great inspiration for the ACC clubs to adopt a more professional attitude to their sport, and also to have a bit of fun before term started. Hopefully for next year we can adjust the content of the Training Week program to better reflect what the sports teams want to see included, but the turnout of over 30 members from the IC Rugby Club proves that there is the desire in the ACC for something of this sort to be offered to clubs."

All in all this was a positive week for

those involved, as they have all started the season very well and are benefitting from the time and energy they spent in preparation for the start of the competitive season. The results from BUSA and ULU competitions over the last 3 weeks have reflected their hard work and determination.

The organisation, funding and preparation for the week was a joint effort by the ACC and Sport Imperial and as a result has created some great links between students and the Energia staff in Ethos. This will no doubt benefit the future development of sport at Imperial and provide students with the opportunity to gain professional advice throughout their university sporting careers.



Running in Hyde Park, some of these girls really have a weird way of running

Fixtures and Results

in association with Sports Partnership



Saturday 27th October

Football - ULU

ICU Men's 1st	N/A
LSE Men's 2nd	N/A
St. Bart's & London Men's 1st	5
ICU Men's 2nd	0
ICU Men's 3rd	1
King's College Men's 2nd	1

Tennis

ICU Men's 1st	1
UCL Men's 2nd	9

Monday 29th October

Badminton - ULU

Queen Mary Mixed 1st	N/A
ICU Mixed 1st	N/A

Basketball - ULU

ICU Men's 1st	N/A
Goldsmith's Men's 1st	N/A

Netball - ULU

ICU 1st	Played the whole match
King's Medical's 3rd	Bugged off at halftime
ICU 2nd	35
St. George's Hospital 3rd	12

Goldsmith's 2nd	29
ICU 3rd	23

Squash - ULU

ICU Men's 1st	3
UCL Men's 1st	2
King's College Men's 2nd	1
ICU Men's 2nd	4
UCL Men's 2nd	4
ICU Men's 3rd	1

ICU Women's 1st	N/A
St. George's Hospital Women's 1st	N/A

Wednesday 31st October

Badminton

ICU Men's 1st	3
Queen Mary Men's 1st	5
Kingston Men's 1st	5
ICU Men's 2nd	3
University of Exeter Women's 1st	4
ICU Women's 1st	4

Fencing

ICU Men's 1st	119
Southampton Men's 1st	124

UCL Men's 2nd	118
ICU Men's 2nd	128

Football

St. Mary's College	1
ICU Men's 1st	1
ICU Men's 2nd	1
University of Essex Men's 3rd	2
Royal Holloway Men's 2nd	4
ICU Men's 3rd	1
ICU Men's 5th (ULU)	2
Queen Mary Men's 3rd (ULU)	1

RUMS Men's 4th (ULU)	2
ICU Men's 7th (ULU)	1

ICU Women's 1st	0
Queen Mary Women's 1st	1

Hockey

ICU Men's 1st	3
Uni. of Hertfordshire Men's 1st	1
ICU Men's 2nd	14
University of Essex Men's 2nd	0
ICU Men's 2nd	2
ICU Men's 4th	0

Brunel Women's 2nd	1
ICU Women's 1st	6

Lacrosse

ICU Women's 2nd	2
University of Sussex Women's 2nd	1
Royal Holloway Women's 1st	1
ICU Women's 1st	2
ICU 1st	4
Uni. of Hertfordshire 2nd	0
ICU 2nd	2
University of Essex 3rd	1

Rugby Union

ICU Men's 1st	31
University of Portsmouth Men's 1st	0
ICU Men's 2nd	17
University of Portsmouth Men's 2nd	5
LSE Men's 3rd	12
ICU Men's 3rd	39
ICU Women's 1st	21
UCL Women's 1st	17

Squash

ICU Men's 1st	5
UCL Men's 2nd	0

Queen Mary Men's 1st	0
ICU Men's 2nd	5

Table Tennis

ICU Women's 1st	2
University of Surrey Women's 1st	1
London South Bank Men's 1st	5
ICU Men's 1st	7

King's College Women's 1st	2
ICU Women's 1st	3

Tennis

ICU Men's 1st	5
University of Portsmouth Men's 1st	5

ICU Men's 2nd	8
Kingston Men's 1st	2

King's College Women's 1st	3
ICU Women's 1st	7

Saturday 27th October

Football - ULU

Royal Holloway Men's 2nd v ICU Men's 1st	21
LSE Men's 2nd v ICU Men's 2nd	17
Queen Mary Men's 1st v ICU Men's 3rd	17
King's College Men's 3rd v ICU Men's 4th	17
UCL Men's 5th v ICU Men's 5th	17
King's Medical's Men's 4th v ICU Men's 6th	5
ICU Men's 7th v Queen Mary Men's 4th	0

News in brief

Developing Excellence Scheme (DES)

Nick Gore

The Developing Excellence Scheme (DES) aims to provide a range of support mechanisms for our elite athletes and to aid sporting development whilst studying at Imperial.

The support is available to individual athletes and teams. DES may cover coaching, equipment, entry fees, travel costs, support services, nutrition, physiological testing and more.

In 2006-07 DES made awards to athletes across ten sports including Ice Hockey, Tennis, Cross-country, Fencing, Cricket, Sailing, Rugby and Trampoline.

Support of up to £2,000 or the equivalent in services, is available to current Imperial students who;

- are performing to a high stand-

ard in their chosen sport

- have aspirations to compete nationally and internationally
- are representing Imperial in British Universities Sports Association (BUSA) or other approved competitions.

In return, recipients are asked to represent Imperial at sporting fixtures and assist the College in promoting the profile of their chosen sport.

Applications can be made throughout the year, although decisions on awards will only be made at the quarterly Panel Meetings. These meetings normally take place in August, November, February and May.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Sport Imperial website:

www.imperial.ac.uk.sports

Hyde Park tennis partnership

Alissa Ayling

A new partnership has been formed between Sport Imperial and Hyde Park which allows all students and staff at Imperial to benefit from discounted rates for the tennis facilities, with additional benefits such as booking in advance and receiving discounted rates at the on-site shop. Aside from the benefits being offered, this partnership has been arranged to allow our IC Tennis Teams

to play their BUSA fixtures on a Wednesday afternoon within a short walk from the college.

The courts are situated in Hyde Park at the top of Exhibition Road and also provide viewing facilities for those who want to support Imperial in their BUSA competitions. If you have any further questions about the Hyde Park partnership please contact;

Alissa Ayling
a.ayling@imperial.ac.uk

Imperial Team of the Week



Rugby 1st XV

This week, *Sports Partnership* along with *Felix Sport* have chosen the Rugby 1st team as Imperial's Team of the Week. The side pulled off a nail biting 20 - 19 win over Hertfordshire 1sts, who could have won it in the last second had one of their Saracens Academy players not missed the penalty. Oh well!

Currently lying 2nd in their table, they have won three out of their four BUSA games and continued their winning streak at home against Portsmouth this week, with the final score being a respectable 31-0. Full match report can be found on page 36.

Well done lads and keep it up!

Post workout nutrition

Ben Richens

There is a story of a man who, when charged with a crime he had committed some years ago, had as his defence that since every cell in your body dies and is replaced that he could not have possibly been the same man he was seven years ago and thus was not guilty of the crime. While I'm not sure how true the story is, it illustrates the point that the body is continually undergoing a process of cells dying and being made

So what are we making these new cells with? The stuff we eat everyday of course!

The process of your body recovering, repairing and getting fitter due to your hard work in the gym will be significantly increased by having the right post workout meal – whether you're sweating it out on the treadmill, working 'the guns' in the free weights area or working your 'abs of steel' on what looks suspiciously like an old space hopper, get the post workout meal right and you're onto a winner.

Before we get into the nuts and bolts of the meal, let's talk about supplements. The use of supplements is contained in the word – it should be supplementing what you're getting from your food, not replacing it. So before you go spending your hard earned student loans on the latest "evolutionary ionised whey protein with cell volumisation" have a look at what all your meals of the day consist of. In most

cases once you create the right balance with all your meals, you won't have the need for supplements. Remember you can always ask the Energia gym team if you are unsure.

The ratio and amount of macronutrients (carbohydrates, protein and fat) in the after workout meal will differ according to what you have done in that session, your lean body weight and other variables but a good guide is to have a 2: 1 ratio of carbohydrates to protein.

What it all means

I'm a big advocate of making your own post workout meal, whether that be bringing it with you to eat after the gym or going back to your digs and rustling it up there and then. In addition to the meal being full of the right things it also needs to be consumed within an hour of your workout finishing - your body is in need of that food to start the recovery process so don't hang about! A good tip is when you prepare your evening meal to make double the amount of the meal you will be eating so you can eat one lot then and save the other for after your workout the next day, but remember not two lots of curry and chips please!

Don't stick to the same thing all the time! Different foods have different amounts of vitamins and minerals necessary for recovery and growth so change around the ingredients to optimise this. Below are two examples of meals which would be good post workout meals enjoy!

Spinach salad

Spinach leaves
Ham (both the spinach and ham are chopped up)
Mushrooms
Tomatoes
(at the end of frying the mushrooms you can add the spinach and ham for a short while)



Tuna sandwich

1 can of tuna
2-3 spoons of mayonnaise
4 slices of wholemeal bread



THE LINKS CLUB
1926

Links Award

The Links Club of the City and Guilds of London, would like to announce their award for any student within the City and Guilds College who is an active member within the Guilds or who has excelled on the sporting front.

The award is a bursary of £250 and will be presented to the eventual winner at The Links Club annual dinner in June 2008.

Candidates must submit an application no longer than 300 words, either by email to honsec@linksclub.org or hand it in to the CGCU office in a sealed envelope by 1st May 2008. Entrants must outline why they believe they deserve the award.

Mens 2nd fend off St George Fencing 1st lose out to ULU

Fencing

Imperial Men's 2nd	128
St. George's Men's 1st	121

Maurice Berk

Imperial Men's 2nd Fencing team got their season off to the perfect start with a hard fought victory against St George's 1st team that went right to the wire.

Late arrivals dictated that Sabre would be fenced first. St George's took an early lead when Will Hoy found himself defeated 3 – 5 in the first match and despite Luka Lukic, Maurice Berk and the aforementioned Will battling valiantly, it was a lead they were never able to overcome, eventually succumbing 38 – 45 in that weapon.

Foil was up next and this proved to feature some of the most controversial and electrifying moments of the match. Ez Hassan eventually made his way to a 5 – 3 victory in the first match, with tensions running high over debatable referring decisions. Next up was Norris who struggled in his first contest, managing 4 hits to their 7 and surrendering the lead. Nathan Blundell scored 5 in his first, leaving the contest balanced on a knife edge at 14 – 15. Norris then redeemed himself with a fine 6 – 2 victory over the opposition captain before Ez further extended the lead to 25 – 20. Nathan then produced some simply sublime fencing, thrashing their best foilist 5 – 1, apparently putting the game beyond doubt at 30

– 21, and earning himself the Man of the Match award. Yet rather than rolling over and accepting their fate, St George's bounced back with two massive victories, leaving the final score for foil a nail-bitingly close 45 – 43.

Going into epee, the combined scores stood at 83 – 88, requiring the final weapon to be won by at least 5 points. Luka set the ball rolling with a 5 – 3 victory and Maurice's blushes due to a 3 – 7 defeat were saved when Ez followed this up with a 7 – 2 victory, leaving Imperial 3 points in the lead. Maurice's 5 – 5 draw in the next match up did nothing to change the situation

while Luka's hard work to extend the lead by 2 points in his 5 – 3 victory was partially undone when Ez found himself on the wrong end of 5 – 6 score line. With 4 points in the lead and 3 matches to go, team captain Maurice stepped up to the piste and exploited the inexperience of his opponent to the full, with a resounding 5 – 1 victory, increasing the lead to 8 points and seemingly putting the match beyond doubt. Ez drew his final match up 5 – 5 while Luka made sure with another excellent performance in a 5 – 1 victory, leaving the final score for epee 45 – 33 and the combined score 128 – 121.



St George's captain charges down the piste at a resolute Norris

Fencing

ULU Men's 1st	129
Imperial Men's 1st	97

Beth Jelfs

The first match of the season saw the Mens 1st Fencing team away to the University of London. With both Team Captain Chris and Club President Chris having spent much of the summer training with the ULU team, there was a certain amount of healthy rivalry going into this match. First up was the foil match, having both fenced ULU's top foilist on many occasions, there was much debate over which Chris should take the anchor position for the final bout. Captain Chris decided against taking it himself which meant he started the match with the first bout against their top foilist. Despite a hard fought fight, after losing this first bout the Imperial team never quite managed to regain the upper hand with Nathan, the one member of the team to never have fenced any of the ULU team, having the most success (who said left-handers were awkward). Chris decided to substitute himself for reserve Alex for his final bout, but even this change to a fresh fencer did nothing to save the foil team and left the other Chris with an unenviable chase in the final bout. With the pressure on Chris went into the bout knowing that he had beaten his opponent before, though this though was not to be his day and the foil victory went to ULU.

Epee was up next, despite being experienced fencers all three of the epeeists are freshers so this was their first BUSA team match and added to that they were going into it knowing the team really needed a win in epee to keep them in with a chance of winning. The first bout started well for Ed but after a close fight eventually went ULU's way. Sjoerd and Alessandro's bouts followed in a similar vein and despite the best efforts of all three fencers by the time it came to the final bout, short of a minor miracle, a win was realistically beyond Imperial's grasp. Despite this Alessandro was not giving up that easily and gave the ULU fencer a good run for his money.

Finally up last was the sabre and short of winning by a huge margin this was mainly for the pride. Sabre started well with an easy victory for Charlie over the injured ULU captain and continued well. Despite being primarily a foilist Alex had the best performance of the match in sabre (and was ultimately the only member of the team to avoid the forfeits in the bar later). All was looking good until the final bout where, despite good performance, Wookie gave away 11 points of their lead before finally managing the 5 needed for a win in sabre. Unfortunately this win in sabre was not enough to make up for the previous losses and ULU won the overall match. All that was left was a trip to the ULU bar for a drink with our hosts and to administer the forfeits for bad performances, though whilst there, small consolation was found in the news that the Mens 2nd team had at least won their first match.

Table tennis domiante Kings, then fall to UCL

Table Tennis

King's Men's 1st	1
Imperial Men's 1st	16

Table Tennis

Imperial Men's 1st	8
UCL Men's 1st	9

William Do

After two seasons away from the BUSA league, IC's Men's Table Tennis team made their return this time with the strongest squad to date.

Our campaign kicked off a few weeks ago at King's College. Imperial started off like a steam train taking the first eleven rubbers without reply, at which point I became the weakest link and allowed King's to pull one back! There were times when King's did look threatening especially towards the end of the match but IC was quick to respond and closed out the match 16-1. It was a dominant performance from the team. Serkan, Gaetan and Kevin were unbeaten and in particular, Kevin won all his matches without dropping a set!

IC went into the next match against UCL with real confidence boosted by the support of the home crowd. There were two changes to the team with Wei Lun Wong and Eddie Liu joining Gaetan and Kevin in the line-up.

We got off to a great start as Gaetan

opened up proceedings with a dominant 3-0 win over Jonathan De Wind. UCL hit back immediately with Rizwan Umarjee beating Wei Lun 9-11, 11-9, 11-6, 11-9. Eddie was up next and he edged out a close first set against Jackie Cheung, then raced through the second set before Jackie took the next two to force a decider. It was a tight final set but it was Jackie who prevailed making an inspiring comeback to win 11-13, 6-11, 11-7, 11-6, 11-9. UCL's Number One player Chaoen beat Kevin 11-2, 11-5, 11-6 in the fourth rubber of the tie to extend their lead to 3-1 after the first round of matches.

Gaetan and Wei Lun scored two crucial wins over Rizwan and Jonathan respectively to bring the score level at 3-3. IC continued to give it their all but a stubborn UCL surged ahead to open up a 7-3 lead. Eddie lost to Chaoen in four very close sets while Kevin also lost a tight encounter with Jackie Cheung. Gaetan went 2-1 down against Jackie and showed his battling qualities to take the match into the deciding set, but it was to no avail as Jackie closed out the set and match 11-8.

Eddie and Kevin fought back to reduce the deficit to 2 points but it only delayed the inevitable as UCL moved into an unassailable 9-5 lead. We kept going and won the remaining four rubbers to make the final score 9-8 and these points may well be valuable towards the end of the season.

In our next match, we face South Bank, a university renowned for its table tennis excellence but the team is now settled and we are ready to take on anyone!



Ping-pong, ping-pong, ping-pong, ping-pong, ping-pong, point to IC

How to train the abs, Part II



Andy Mitchell
Energia Fitness Instructor

Last week we looked at reasons not to crunch. So, what exactly should you be doing to train your abdominal muscles?

When all is said and done, there are certain times and certain reasons why you would add crunches into your workout, though these are generally due to rehabilitation purposes. If having read this you still insist on doing crunches then at least do them on a SwissBall rather than the floor and also come and ask an Instructor how to do the exercise properly, as I see very few people in the gym performing the technique correctly.

Leg-raises are also a problem abdominal exercise, but are often performed in the gym. Most people believe that this exercise will work their lower abs and this is true, as long as you perform the exercise correctly. Unfortunately if you go to the gym and observe most people performing this exercise, they are doing it incorrectly resulting in them over exercising their hip flexors (which can lead to lower back injuries) and placing large amounts of pressure on their lower backs. The lower part of the rectus abdominis inserts into the pubic bone of the pelvis and does not connect to your legs. Therefore swinging your legs up, down and

in any other direction, does not work your lower abdominal muscles. The only way you can exercise the lower abs through the leg-raise exercise is by maintaining a neutral pelvic position (from activation of the lower abs) against the pull of the hip flexors on the lumbar spine (the origin of the hip flexors). As I have said, from observing people performing the leg-raise exercise in the gym you can clearly see that their lower backs are coming up off the floor showing no sign of lower abdominal activation. Furthermore, if you like getting your mate to throw your legs towards the floor to enhance the exercise, you are only adding further pressure to your lower back increasing the risk of injury. Many people will claim they can feel their abdominal muscles working in this exercise, in most cases it is the hip flexors that you can feel as they originate from the lumbar spine below your abdominal muscles. Having tested hundreds of people on this exercise only about 1% has ever been able to maintain neutral pelvic position whilst slowly lowering their legs down, let alone anyone who can do it with a friend throwing the legs down! If you would like to test the strength (or sadly in most cases the weakness) of your lower abdominals drop by the gym and an Instructor will be able to show you how strong they really are!

So what exercises should you be per-

forming in the gym to get functionally strong abdominals? The oblique muscles (the side of the stomach) are the most used stomach muscles in everyday life and sporting activities. Therefore these should be trained more often than the rectus abdominis. Exercises such as Russian twists and woodchops are ideal ways of developing strength and power in these muscles. As I said earlier the rectus abdominis is designed to work as a stabiliser of the lumbo-pelvic region and so are actually best trained with an exercise such as the plank (a great exercise but commonly performed incorrectly, again see an Instructor to learn to do them properly) or through other exercises such as cleans, squats and deadlifts. Explosive exercises using Medicine balls and Tornado balls are also a great way to develop strength and power in all of the abdominal muscles.

Sadly there is not enough space to write about all these exercises in detail and this article only touches the surface of an area of training that is highly complex. Even to go into how many repetitions and sets to perform would take up a whole article! I can only suggest that if you would like to know more about abdominal training or ask any questions related to this article you come and see me some time on the gym floor where I can go further into the topic.



Yet another homo-erotic photo of some guy's abs

Sports league

Week 4 and a lot more results are in, most of which are wins.

The ranking of the teams is based on the Felix Index (FI), which is calculated as follows: $FI = (W*5) + (D*2) - (L*4)$. Only teams with 5 games or more will be considered in the overall champion-

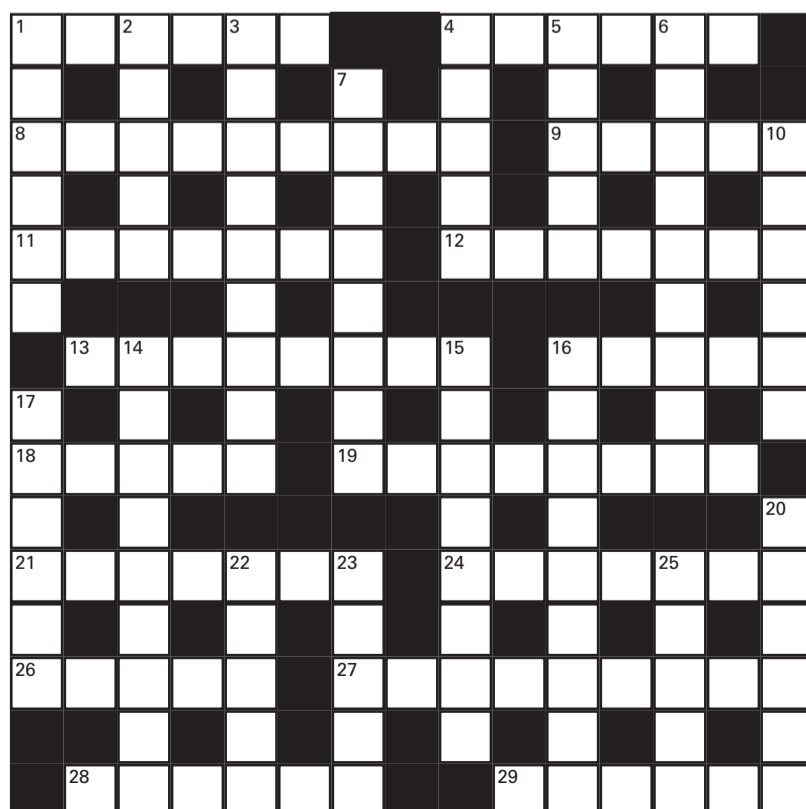
ship at the end of year.

With this week's results in, Netball 1sts are again top of the league, with squash men's 1st and tennis men's 2nd also winning their games. Football Men's 3rd and 2nd teams are having a tough time tho, lying at the bottom.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	%	FI
1 Netball 1st	3	3	0	0	168	59	109	100	15
2 Squash Men's 1st	3	3	0	0	15	0	15	100	15
3 Tennis Men's 2nd	3	3	0	0	28	2	26	100	15
4 Hockey Men's 1st	3	2	1	0	12	3	9	66.7	12
5 Rugby Union Men's 1st	4	3	0	1	74	37	37	75	11
6 Fencing Men's 2nd	2	2	0	0	256	239	17	100	10
7 Rugby Union Women's 1st	2	2	0	0	71	22	49	100	10
8 Table Tennis Women's 1st	2	2	0	0	8	2	6	100	10
9 Volleyball Women's 1st	2	2	0	0	6	1	5	100	10
10 Football Men's 1st	3	1	2	0	5	3	2	33.3	9
11 Rugby Union Men's 2nd	4	2	1	1	74	77	-3	50	8
12 Tennis Women's 1st	2	1	1	0	12	8	4	50	7
13 Cricket Men's 1st	5	3	0	2	926	678	248	60	7
14 Hockey Men's 2nd	3	2	0	1	20	6	14	66.7	6
15 Squash Men's 2nd	3	2	0	1	9	6	3	66.7	6
16 Squash Women's 1st	3	2	0	1	9	4	5	66.7	6
17 Basketball Men's 1st	1	1	0	0	70	42	28	100	5
18 Netball 2nd	1	1	0	0	49	29	20	100	5
19 Hockey Women's 1st	3	1	1	1	10	7	3	33.3	3
20 Rugby Union Men's 3rd	4	2	0	2	90	39	51	50	2
21 Badminton Men's 2nd	2	1	0	1	9	7	2	50	1
22 Table Tennis Men's 1st	2	1	0	1	24	10	14	50	1
23 Basketball Women's 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24 Cricket Men's 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25 Equestrian 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26 Equestrian 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
27 Fencing Women's 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
28 Golf 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29 Lacrosse Women's 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30 Netball 3rd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
31 Tennis Women's 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32 Volleyball Men's 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
33 Water Polo Men's 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34 Football Women's 1st	2	0	1	1	1	2	-1	0	-2
35 Badminton Men's 1st	3	1	0	2	12	12	0	33.3	-3
36 Hockey Men's 3rd	3	1	0	2	3	2	1	33.3	-3
37 Hockey Women's 2nd	3	1	0	2	3	16	-13	33.3	-3
38 Lacrosse Women's 1st	3	1	0	2	15	31	-16	33.3	-3
39 Squash Men's 3rd	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0	-4
40 Badminton Women's 1st	2	0	1	2	8	16	-8	0	-6
41 Tennis Men's 1st	3	0	1	2	8	22	-14	0	-6
42 Fencing Men's 1st	2	0	0	2	216	253	-37	0	-8
43 Hockey Men's 4th	2	0	0	2	2	5	-3	0	-8
44 Football Men's 2nd	3	0	0	3	2	9	-7	0	-12
45 Football Men's 3rd	3	0	0	3	0	11	-11	0	-12

Crossword No. 1,385

Answers to: sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk



ACROSS

- 1 Ran down the row. Tight fit! (6)
- 4 Lines of written characters (5)
- 8 100 dollar earphone destroyed by companion (8)
- 9 A pound of sulfur explodes calamari (5)
- 11 Exert a pull on an Austrian thesis (7)
- 12 Is the rainy season in Vietnam on soon? (7)
- 13 A friendly arrangement of sole around some ciab (8)
- 16 Cut back on the heroin jollity (5)
- 18 Unloaded artillery – a generally accepted principle (5)
- 19 Tiny tree pruned for ever (8)
- 21 Manic ex is disturbed American (7)
- 24 Scanty Underwear ripped to shreds in Italy (6)
- 26 Nose stretched by lasso (5)
- 27 President is confused vote loser (9)
- 28 Fly from T.S. Eliot twice (6)
- 29 Legless gypsy takes a little bit of luminescent quartz (6)

DOWN

- 1 Sleep disturbed by ambrosia (6)
- 2 Playfully insult cook (5)
- 3 Manoeuvre a choice around a period of history (9)
- 4 Potent fertiliser (5)
- 5 Mermaid confused by sap (5)
- 6 Wealthy ruler of a planet and some craters (9)
- 7 Boar pelt, though tattered, is easy to carry (8)
- 10 Annoying that parts of a carob can be poisonous? (7)
- 14 Howard in run-down old boat (6)
- 15 Hard on construction (8)
- 16 Stray omen misinterpreted in religious residence (9)
- 17 Metal in prayer shows foresight (6)
- 20 Some semolina around a messy sty, what a method (6)
- 22 Blazon chosen by confused redocats without much ado (5)
- 23 The gall of a North Eastern preacher to lose some prudence! (5)
- 25 Regions of the pancreas operated on (5)

Once again welcome to the crossword section. Your puzzle setter Enoch has scribed another marvellously monochromatic grid for you lovely people to fill will luscious letters.

Whilst last week I suggested Chablis, this week's crossword is complemented best with a nice fruity Beaujolais, being slightly more of a meaty texture. Send your answers to sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk and impress us. We're waiting! Oh go on, you know you want to!

Enoch

Solution to Crossword 1,384

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



En garde!

Double whammy of fencing match reports, see page 38

2nds win despite lack of subs Disabled badminton event held at Ethos

Netball

Canterbury 3rd	29
Imperial 2nd	49

Frances Thomson

Unbeaten this season, Imperial Netball 2nds team had another victory this Wednesday with their BUSA match away against St. Canterbury Christ Church's 3rd team.

After the antics of last week, with the double-booking of Holland Park's courts with the Imperial Tennis teams causing our first BUSA match to be cancelled, it was hoped that the match on Wednesday would run more smoothly.

However, only having a squad of 8 with a player down due to injury, getting a team together for the game proved to be more challenging than first thought. Eventually a 3rd team player was recruited on the day to complete a 7 player squad, only for the 1st team to take one of our players hours before the game!!! Fortunately, the 3rd

team captain came to the rescue and we set out for our 3 hour journey to Canterbury.

After a quick warm up, we got off to a slow but good start to lead 12 - 5 in the first quarter. The game then picked up in the second quarter and we extended our lead to 28 - 11. The ball was getting fed into the shooting circle much quicker and the play down the court started to flow with greater control.

The third quarter was eventful with Imperial storming ahead 40 - 19, with everyone playing more aggressively. Jackie, the Goal Attack, playing brilliantly as ever, managed to knock over her defender (who was a bit of a) and there was a brief appearance of Anna's underwear during her spectacular fall on court.

After having travelled so far and with no substitutes, our team started to tire in the last quarter while the opposition continued to substitute on fresh players. The match was won with a 20 goal difference with a final score of 49 -29. Having bonded so well and with our play continuously improving, we look forward to a highly successful season in both our leagues.

Nick Gore Sport Imperial

Organised by Badminton England and run in conjunction with Sport Imperial and Imperial College Badminton Club, a special event was held at Ethos, the emphasis of the day was on fun, friendly competition and inclusion. It aimed to show that those with disabilities can play alongside more able-bodied players in a social setting.

The Badminton Club provided 16 volunteers to help throughout the day. They began at 08.30, setting the nets at the right height for wheelchair users (1.4m), registering participants etc. Where possible, volunteers aimed to run Men's and Women's matches separately and endeavoured to play both singles and doubles matches.

All the volunteers did very well mingling with all the participants and getting involved in as much as possible. Some of the participants travelled from as far as Scotland, demonstrating the value of an event of this kind. The Badminton England Representative, Jon Train, has even mentioned the possibility of making this an annual or

bi-annual event.

This is true partnership working in action – an excellent example of col-

laborative working by a National Governing Body, Sport Imperial and the Badminton Club.



In case you can't spot the disability, the guy has no leg. Well played!