

felix

The student 'news'paper of
Imperial College London

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Commemoration Day 2008

Felix reports on the day itself and the views of the students. See pages 4 & 5

Inside

Politics -
How's Bush doing?



Page 16

Business -
An Austrian view



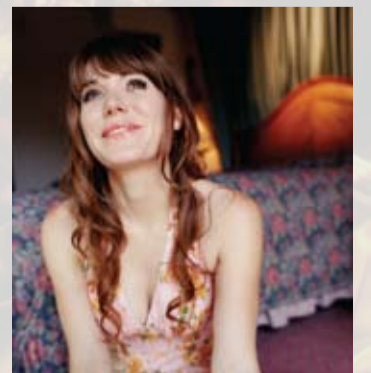
Page 12

Art -
Renaissance faces



Page 18

Music -
Kiley goes Koko



Page 24



The Paragon crisis three weeks later

felix speaks to Paragon freshers who have been moved to other halls, and those who have been left behind

Kadhim Shubber
Deputy Editor

Almost a month after the start of term, 1st year students are still stuck at Paragon Hall in Brentford. As the main strategy being used by College is waiting for other students in Imperial halls to drop out, the 5 undergraduate students now living together at Paragon are left in limbo and facing an uncertain future.

Although listed as “our award win-

ning student accommodation” on the Thames Valley University website, *felix* has been informed that Paragon is actually an inter-collegiate hall. Originally 23 students were destined to begin university this TVU/intercollegiate hall much removed from the student populace. From this group, 5 students failed to fill their place at Imperial. Hannah Theodorou, Deputy President Education and Welfare, and Head of Accommodation Shireen Brown, greeted the students that did arrive. They spoke

to parents and tried to assuage their worries about their accommodation. As a small recompense the students were given free mingle tickets as well as a minibus back from the event. They have also been participating in other halls events such as the Southside boat party and the Southwell trip to Bruges. Attempts to integrate the 1st year students with post-graduates at Clayponds were not received well. 32 inch HD-TVs were installed in the fresher’s kitchens also.

The students are paying around £113 a week for a single, ensuite room in Paragon. The students were presented with a list of possible rooms in other halls and were invited to choose which they preferred. The recipients of the rooms were chosen by random ballot.

Since the beginning of term, all of the female students at Paragon and 13 of the male students have been relocated to Piccadilly Court, Orient, Southwell, Pembridge, Southside and Wilson.

The remaining students are on the

waiting list for rooms in Imperial halls but unless students drop out, there won’t be any openings. Hannah Theodorou said “the students are a priority on the waiting lists for vacancies”. Ironically, although 1st year students are hoping to be moved out of Paragon, postgraduates may soon be moving in.

In the mean time, Fabrice Clarke and the other students have only the cold comfort of knowing that the hour commute each day is good training for 2nd year.



Callum Macbeth-seath is a 1st year electrical engineer student who now lives in Piccadilly Court.

“The College should make less offers next year.”

How did you end up at Paragon?

I originally applied for South Kensington halls and I was given an offer. I wasn’t told about the 7-day reply limit and so when I came back from holiday I realised that it had been withdrawn. It was only days before the Mingle that I was offered a room at Paragon.

Did you enjoy your time there?

It was a strain travelling in the morning but all the students at Paragon got on really well together. We made friends with each other easily and we got to go to other halls events. I didn’t meet any TVU students, we had our own floor so we were kind of sectioned off.

Have college handled this well?

When we moved in the Head of Accommodation spoke to us all and explained the situation, which was good but Hannah Theodorou has been really helpful. She made sure we were able to go to the Mingle and kept us informed about what was going on.



Fabrice Clarke is a 1st year electrical engineer student who is still living at Paragon Hall.

“The College should warn us in advance that if we don’t have offers instead of letting us find out days before the start of term.”

How did you end up at Paragon?

I missed the accommodation deadline because I was waiting for a re-mark. College didn’t tell me that I didn’t have a room until near the end of September. I looked for a flat and I put a deposit down before I was offered Paragon, so I lost the deposit.

Are you enjoying your time there?

Originally it was quite fun, there were 20 of us and we were quite close. Now there’s only 5 of us left and the atmosphere is much different, we’re just sort of waiting around now. It takes around an hour to get into college which is a big inconvenience.

Have college handled this well?

They went to a lot of trouble to keep us happy, giving us free tickets to the Mingle and other stuff. It felt like we were being pressured to move out of Paragon. They allowed us to join in events with other halls, although going to Clayponds was a bit weird.



Adam Cutmore is a 1st year computing student who now lives in Keogh Hall.

“We should be kept up-to-date more about the accommodation process”

How did you end up at Paragon?

Basically, I didn’t get my application in on time because I hadn’t decided whether or not to live at home. I took the offer of a room at Paragon because I was hoping to be moved to another hall. I’m pretty happy now that I’m living in Southside.

Did you enjoy your time there?

It was a really nice hall, it’s only two years old. I had a single, ensuite room which was great but it wasn’t worth the distance from campus. We were all really desperate to move into Imperial halls and we were all very aware how temporary it was.

Have college handled this well?

Hannah Theodorou was really helpful, she set up a meeting so that we could choose which rooms we wanted to be moved for. I think the College have done a good job but I think there is a problem with the application process, we need more info.

felix 1,412

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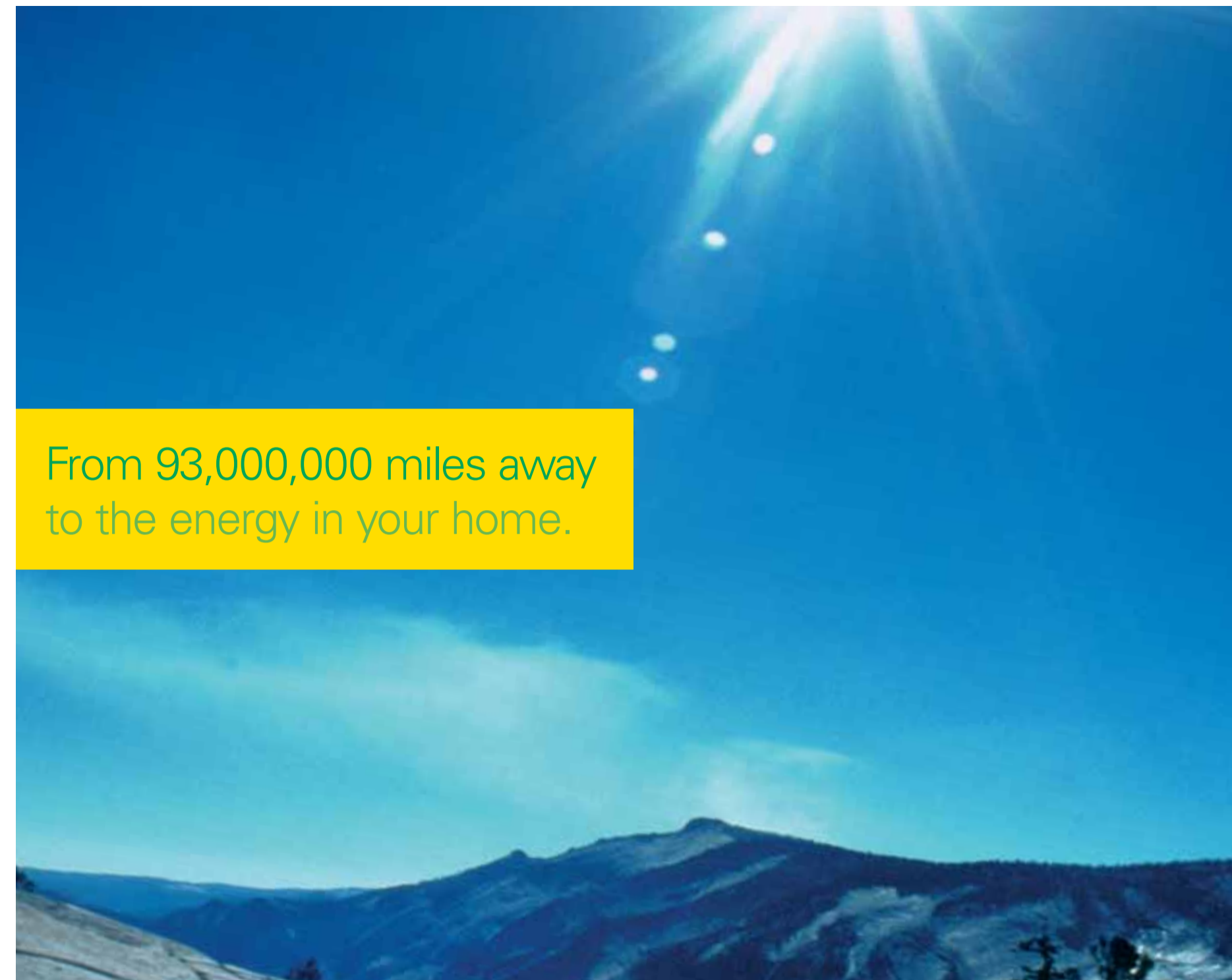
A massive, massive thank you to Kadhim for doing most of my work this week (p.s. I’m not lazy, it was graduation). I owe you big time bruv.

Jov

LOLEATS



OFTEH WEEK



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Commemoration Day 2008

felix Editor in Chief, and graduate of the College, Jovan Nedić describes his experience of the day

As many students enjoyed a welcome day off from lectures, a record number of graduands congregated in the austere setting of the Royal Albert Hall and received the piece of paper that affirms years of study. Amidst the pomp and ceremony, history was being made as roughly half of the graduands, for the first time since Imperial broke away from University of London, received Imperial College London degrees.

Imperial Graduation ceremonies used to be low-key affairs but after WWII it was decided to make the degree ceremony a major event. Officially known as Commemoration Day, it dates back to the visit of King George VI and the Queen Mother in 1945. The graduation ceremony was organised to coincide with the visit which commemorated the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Royal College of Chemistry. The ceremony, which celebrated the oldest of Imperial's constituent institutions, became a commemoration of Imperial students achievements, the first being held in 1948; although it was not held in the Royal Albert Hall back then.

From Royal origins, Commemoration day has become an important event in the calendar and is an opportunity for the Rector to advance his vision for the coming year (and perhaps defend his judgement from the previous. For Sir Roy Anderson it was the first time he has come face to face with a large number of Imperial students (albeit graduating students) and a chance to introduce himself to the student body at large.

Similar to the school assemblies witnessed in many schools across the country, the ceremony started with the procession of various members of the college, as well as the presidents of the faculty unions and the main Imperial College Union [ICU]. Once everyone was in their seats, ICU President Jenny Morgan, gave her welcome speech to all the graduates: a speech which was changed this year so as to give a better representation of the students at the College. Following on from her speech, it was the turn of the new Rector Sir Roy Anderson to give his first Com-

memoration Day Speech.

There were two main themes to the Rector's speech this year: the first was the "increasing role of science, technology, medicine and business studies in addressing the major issues facing the world today." The second was focused on the "issues facing higher education and research in the UK, and how Imperial is hoping to respond to the challenges ahead."

Talking about the first point, Sir Anderson went on to say that "many believe – and I am among them – that the most urgent and pressing need is for intensive research worldwide to develop alternative sources of energy." With most of today's funding focusing on defence, the Rector went on to say that "research that will make cheap carbon capture a reality, or that will provide carbon-free energy sources – such as wind, waves and solar – is not adequately supported." In previous years, universities were the main focal point of pioneering research, and there is definitely a need to shift the focus back on them. Imperial already has a research programme into novel energy methods, with the Rector saying that "this will expand greatly in the coming few years."

The clear message seemed to be that universities, and in particular Imperial, will need to do more in the field of new energy sources, something that I am sure many students and even industries will find welcoming. However, this then led onto the Rectors second topic of the day, where he went on to say that "The UK science budget more than doubled between 1997 and 2000 and in the same period research and development [R&D] expenditure increased by more than 20 per cent in real terms.

However, despite this, we still spend less in these areas than most of the major world economies." In essence, the Rector was pointing out the fact that not enough funding is given to these areas of research, and that potentially, the government should do more to increase it if we are to ever get a feasible solution to the energy problem.

Aside from the theme of research, Sir Roy Anderson went on to talk about the achievements of the College, in par-



The procession at the start of the ceremony, with the student officers and academic staff.

ticular coming 6th in the world in the recent Times Higher Education Survey [THES], as well as the employer satisfaction with Imperial graduates which is ranked equal with Harvard, Yale, Cambridge and Oxford. The Rector also commented on the high number of international students, 46% last year, remarking that this "is enormously to our benefit." However this is a view that many don't share since although many view the high number of international students as an indication of the world class reputation of Imperial College, others view it as detrimental

to the UK students who wish to study at a world class institute. The high calibre of Imperial students was also brought up in the speech, as well as the increasing pressure for providing accommodation for first years students, with Sir Anderson commenting that "We cannot continue on this path. We have therefore started to trial our own entrance examinations with the intent of introducing them in 2010."

With the speeches finished, it was finally time for the graduands to go on stage. Owing to the large number of people graduating, everyone was told

not to applaud, except for the prize winners. Contrary to popular belief, graduands didn't receive any form of documentation, nor did they shake the Rector's hand. Instead every new graduate of the College went up to the stage and shook the hand of Lord Kerr of Kinlochard, the Chairman of the Court and of the Council, followed by the Principal of their respective faculty.

After the long and mundane task of watching everyone go up on stage, it was then the turn of the new fellows, honorary graduates and associates of the college to get their awards. This was then followed by the presentation of the new pastoral care awards, who went to Dr Bob Forsyth from the department of Physics, Karen MacDonald from the Centre for Environmental Policy and finally to Dr Gabrielle Sinnadurai from the department of Computing. Dr Gabrielle Sinnadurai unfortunately passed away before Commemoration Day, and in honour of her efforts and achievements through her time at the College, the awards will in future be named in her memory.

The ceremony ended with Lord Kerr of Kinlochard giving a few anecdotes to the slowly tiring students, as well as thanking all the parents and staff who had been there for their students throughout their time at College.

With the ceremony finally over, the new graduates went their separate ways for official photographs, which could cost as much as £55, followed by lunch with family and friends. The night ended with many converging on the Union for possibly the last time as a year group. The day was long, the day was tiring, the day was expensive (costs ranged between £30 and £175) but it will certainly be one to remember for all the students involved.



Left: Sir Roy Anderson giving his first Commemoration Day speech, whilst a student receives his congratulation from the Chairman on the right

The class of '08 talk thrills and spills

While the rest of you enjoyed a day off, *felix* interviewed graduates about their time at this great institution

**Helen Sinclair
Katerina Neou-North
Helga Magnussan**

Biochemistry BSc



What will you miss most?

Mainly the social life- we had some really good friends within our course.

What advice would you give to freshers?

Have as much fun as possible in your first year because 3rd year is a lot of work!

What would you change if you had the chance to go back and do it again?

Nothing! Seriously, We would put a bit more work in during second year and make more of an effort to be sociable in first year.

Are you enjoying graduation?

Yes! It's really great to see everyone



Dr Simon Leather, lecturer in applied ecology:

"I enjoy commemoration day, supporting all the students I have worked with and finding out what they are doing now"

Tim Keating

**Mechanical Engineering
MEng**



Are you happy with your degree?

I'm really happy with my degree and, despite the imperial stigma, I really enjoyed my time here. I think university is what you make of it- if you come here with no preconceptions and get involved you'll have a good time. The sports and social clubs I've been involved in helped me both socially and academically:

Didn't you spend a lot of your time playing for ULU not Imperial though?

While at Imperial, I played for ULU waterpolo, winning 3 BUSA gold medals and was team captain for a year. Playing for a ULU team was a great way of meeting people from other colleges and finding out about different parts of London.

Do you have any advice for freshers starting your course?

In your first term, do no work, just enjoy yourself!

What are you doing now?

I'm now working full time for Rolls Royce on a graduate training program, I would definitely recommend doing a graduate program, you end up working with lots of people in the same boat.

Looking back, would you do anything differently?

I'm pretty happy with my time at Imperial, possibly I drank a bit too much and should have concentrated more in second year. Oh, and I'd go to Camden more, and Shoreditch!

Alex Dorobantu

**Aeronautical
Engineering MEng**



Are you happy with your degree?

I didn't enjoy it too much, I don't like that Aero has no real pastoral culture, this was especially pronounced as I came straight from a secondary school with a good pastoral atmosphere. However, I do think the situation has improved since my first year.

What did you enjoy most about Imperial?

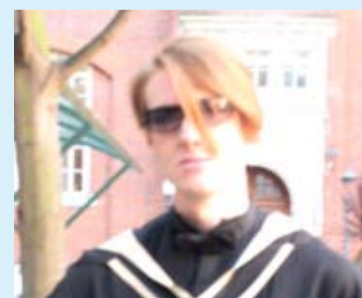
I was part of the mountaineering club, which was really good fun. I definitely recommend getting involved in some sort of club. Other things I enjoyed were Pembridge hall in 1st year and the *felix* cryptic crosswords, we used to take the really big ones away on weekend mountaineering trips with us!

What did you think of the graduation ceremony?

Lord Kerr of Kinloch's speech was really funny, he made the ceremony for me! I feel sorry for anyone who decided not to go.

If you had the chance to go back, what would you do differently?

I'd get an Ace Ventura hair cut. Can you photo-shop my photo to have it?



**Andrew Sommerville
Physics BSc**

How do you feel about your time at Imperial?

When I was at Imperial, I really felt that all was learning to do is how to selectively revise. Now that I've left though, everyone on the outside world treats me like a genius [because I did physics at Imperial], so I must have done something right!

What will you miss the most?

The Felix office. Actually, I think that's the only thing I will miss!



**Steph Alexopoulos
Biology BSc**

What did you think of your course?

My undergrad went by really fast! I really liked my course, and being at Imperial, enough to stay here to do graduate entry medicine.

What do you miss about being an undergraduate?

Miss being on campus now that she's based at different hospitals, not just going and meeting on the Queens lawn for lunch.

Do you have any advice for freshers starting your course?

Try to put things into perspective and make the most of your 1st year, when you have time to branch out and try different societies

What has changed most about Imperial in your time here?

The most noticeable changes on campus have been superficial- such as the library redevelopment, I expect there to be bigger changes by the time I finish my post graduate medicine degree!

The College's Honorary Graduates

Afonso Campos invites you to question the true meaning of being an Honorary Graduate or Fellow as he takes a look at the past recipients of this award

Honorary degrees have been offered since the middle ages to figures that a university supposedly deems worthy enough, or has somehow ruled judgement that they have contributed significant amounts to either society as a whole or a field of academic or non-academic life.

As far as records go, Imperial has been offering either Honorary Doctorates or Fellowships of the College since 1932.

While a lot of those awarded their honours have, without a shadow of a doubt been leaders in their respective fields and instigators of change

and advancement of society, questions may be raised about the reasoning behind some of these doctorates and fellowships.

We have seen Imperial award them to great minds such as Dennis Gabor, Nobel Laureate and founder of Holography, and Dame Carol Black, President of the Royal College of Physicians, member of the GMC and President of the British Lung Foundation, amongst other insurmountable posts.

As Lord Kerr elegantly put it is during this year's Graduation Ceremony, some of the recipients have been the ones "honouring us" by accepting our offer.

It is understandable that universi-

ties must do what they can in order to raise their profiles globally and increase sources of donation. It is not understandable however that some of the people to whom the College confers what is by many considered to be the apogee of qualifications to personalities who are just plain wealthy. Our university is a world leader in scientific research and it is almost expected that all who are graced with these 'prizes' be those who have made significant difference to the fields which Imperial has deeply been involved in since its founding.

By artificially widening their alumni base to the uber-rich, College is more likely than not hoping to reap some fi-

nanial benefits in the form of future donations from these graduates, despite their links to this institution being absolutely minimal if existent at all. A high number of philanthropists and industry magnates such Ratan Tata, chairman of the Tata Group or Mrs Lily Safra, a born-rich socialite have been awarded these Imperial honours. It leaves one to ponder if academia has become so competitive for funding that institutions are almost having to throw away their pride (and sometimes shame) in an attempt to stay ahead of the money-raising game.

Institutions of higher education are becoming quite similar to places such as Hollywood – trying to secure stars

and celebrities in an attempt to boost future earnings.

The model is used by many industries, but it somehow spoils the purity of academia and demeans the past Honorary Graduates and Fellows whom despite not being extravagantly rich, have truly and wholeheartedly deserved what they have been given.

While in some ways treating learning institutions like corporations can be healthy, it is not the way forward for increasing endowments. If Imperial is ever going to come even close to matching Harvard or Yale's financial success, it must instil in its students an incredible sense of pride and belonging to their alma mater.

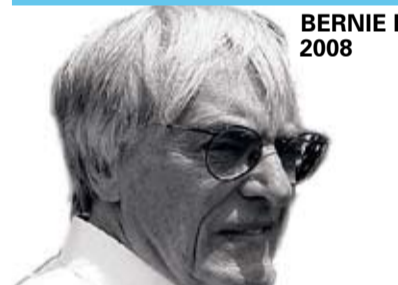
Sir William Castell is the current Chairman of the Wellcome Trust – one of the world's most prominent human and animal health improvement charities. The fund has committed to invest circa £4 billion over the course of the next four years. He was also the Chief Executive Officer for

Amersham, leading the company to become a major player in the medical diagnostics and life sciences arena. Furthermore, his commitment led him to taking up the post of President and CEO of GE Healthcare – yet another massively influential and visible company in the

health sector. Sir William serves as a non-executive Director of BP and is a prominent advisor in the Prime Minister's Business Council for Britain. Not forgetting his altruist side, he has helped revitalise areas of Britain plagued by social exclusion and unemployment. He also took

the Prince's Trust under his wing and served as Chairman for 5 years. He was knighted in 2000 for his services to science.

SIR WILLIAM CASTELL 2008



BERNIE ECCLESTONE 2008

Mr Ecclestone may not have a regal title like plenty of Imperial's honorary graduates but he is the baron of motor racing around the world because of his status as CEO of Formula

One Management. He has built a gigantic empire based on it and created what is arguably the most watched sport on TV, enjoyed by well over half a billion spectators each time the event is on. Under his supervision it has also become a massively lucrative industry. More importantly, Formula One

has made countless contributions to plenty of engineering fields and car manufacturing techniques. Over time, Formula One engineers have developed an incredibly safe and fast car. In fact, would the hydraulics work, the car could actually be driven upside down due to the downforce produced. It

is also a known fact that Formula One teams are big employers of highly sought after Imperial graduates and is currently the university that feeds the highest number of engineers into this industry.

Prince Philip was among the first to be awarded the new Imperial College Doctor of Science honorary degree after receiving the Royal Charter from HM Queen Elizabeth II in July 2007. No one epitomises a 'token' Imperial honorary graduate more than the Duke of Edinburgh. His contributions to

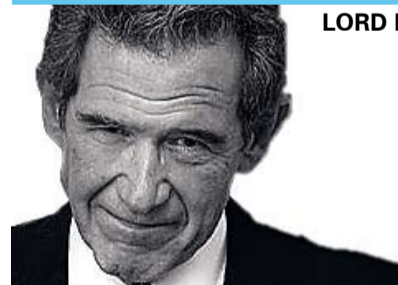
the fields of science, medicine, engineering or technology are not exactly of Homeric proportions and his involvement with the college is pretty minimal. His name however, has ludicrous amounts of gravitas and certainly looks good on a list of *honoris causa* degrees. Obviously someone less cynic could perfectly

argue that offering the Prince this doctorate is a grand gesture of gratitude on the College's part.

Truth be told, HRH is clearly an important figure of our times and having any sort of association with such a figurehead is always an asset for a university that has been been making conscious efforts to

increase its reputation on a national and global level. Even if potentially done for less noble reasons, the alliance to the Queen of England's other half can only help Imperial College.

HRH THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH 2007



LORD BROWNE 2007

Formally educated as a physicist at Cambridge, Lord Browne is a great example of persistence, hard work and determination. He joined BP as an apprentice in 1966 and a 'mere' 29 years

later was appointed Chief Executive of the group. Browne was instrumental in changing the focus of BP onto renewable energies and the re-invention of the company to one committed to making a difference and formulating plans to tackle the impending energy crisis. He is the perfect companion to this univer-

sity, given the current and previous Rectors' commitment to establish Imperial as a world catalyst for change and innovation in renewable energies and technologies. Despite some personal problems and resignation from BP, he has left knowing that his efforts were not in vain.

Lord Browne is the current president of the Royal Academy of Engineering and holds trustee positions at the Tate and British Museum. He is still involved with both his alma matters, acting as advisor to both Stanford and Cambridge business schools. He was knighted in 1998.

Arguably one of this country's most famous and active philanthropists, Sir Peter Lampl is the founder and Chairman of the Sutton Trust – a charity that has as its goal the widening of access to higher education for people with less than optimal backgrounds. He has led universities nationwide

to restructure their admissions and recruitment processes to include targets and efforts to offer more people with disadvantaged histories a chance to study at some of the best universities. He has been called a "visionary" by broadcaster Andrew Neil. During the Blair years, he was a regular at Number 10 and

the Department for Education and Skills where he was able to exert some pressure to "do more for social justice". Lampl was able to do most of this from the sidelines – even though those familiar with the work of philanthropists may will undoubtedly know him, he has not become a household name in the

slightest. This kind of anonymity has allowed him to meddle from the sidelines without massive amounts of media scrutiny. A white knight at heart praised by all that know him.

SIR PETER LAMPL 2004



LORD PUTTNAM 1999

The Lord Puttnam of Queensgate is a highly prominent figure in the media world, and due to this position in this field, he has become quite active in politics. Puttnam started

producing films in the sixties and was the driving force behind successes such as Chariots of Fire or The Duellists. His standing in film world propelled him to spearhead Columbia. His time there was less than stellar given some of his anti-establishment views and his unwillingness to fit in with convential

Hollywood culture. This somewhat rebellious attitude has served him well this side of the pond however and has received the Orange BAFTA Fellowship of the Academy, the highest honour awarded.

After being knighted in 1995, his involvement in politics became a big part of his life and he is now a

trustee for the Institute for Public Research. He has also chaired the scrutiny committee on the Communications Bill as well as the Draft Climate Change Bill. He has seemingly no ties with the college bar his title.

Token Honorary Graduates or worthy of the honour? These are just a few of Imperial's most notable recipients of an *honoris causa* degree

Posh enough to wash?



One of the dreaded washing machines, found in the basement of the Beit complex. Observe the extortionate prices.

Ravi Pall News Correspondent

In the current student lifestyle, appearance, hygiene and attitude is everything. Walking down the street it is apparent that clean fashionable clothes are affluent throughout the population of London. One would think it important then that the regular, almost peri-

odic, washing of attire is necessary. Unfortunately Imperial College has deemed it appropriate to milk the student cash cow. As of present the added cost to the student budget for the compulsory task of washing your garments within residences comes to a total of £3. The price of a wash is £2, while the cost for one dry cycle is £1, indeed with some students stating that 2 dry cycles

are needed to dry their clothes.

This years prices are an increase upon last years, where a wash cost £1.50, a dry cycle 50 pence and was free the year before that. Although the washing machines are run by a third part company, the increasing cost of this basic necessity has caused significant anger and resentment amongst students in halls.

No progress for Palestinian student

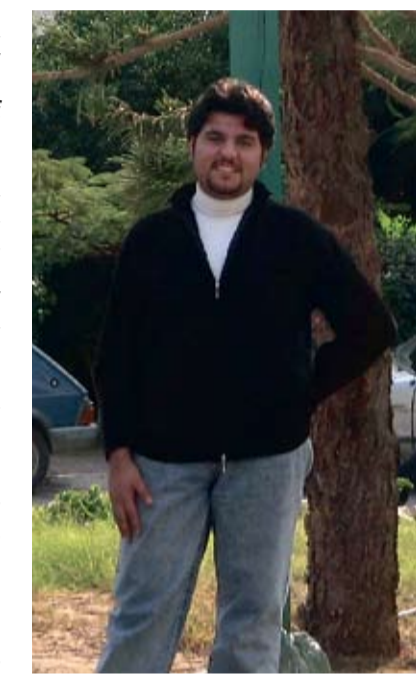
Kadhim Shubber Deputy Editor

With a month of term passed already, and little progress being made by the International Office, it is looking highly unlikely that Zohair Abu Shaban, the Palestinian student who was denied passage out of Gaza, will be taking up his place to do an Electrical Engineering masters at Imperial.

When *felix* first published this story on the 10th of October, a buzz of activity within the student body and the College seemed to provide a little bit of hope for a solution to his predicament. Members of IslamicSoc were organising together, by email, to formulate an action plan that included circulating a petition around the student body and distributing leaflets to raise awareness. However this was nipped in the bud by Nida Harwood, Islamic Society VP, in favour of waiting "to see what the university does". This delay in action occurred after lengthy consultation with Deputy President Education and Welfare Hannah Theodorou. Felix spoke to the International Office this week in an effort to discover whether waiting for College's lead was an intelligent action plan. The International Office declined to provide any specific information on his case. Dr Piers Baker, Director of the International Office said "it's not under our

control and so it's not appropriate for me to comment on this specific case". Given the notable absence of Zohair Abu-Shaban at Imperial, it is clear that the College has been unable to make any progress.

It would appear that Zohair Abu-Shaban will have to put off his dreams for at least another year.



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A. Geek

A. Geek enters a world of pain

I'm thinking of buying a laptop. No, don't get me wrong. I don't want your advice. I don't want you to even visualise it, just keep on reading and avoid the urge to daydream about the decades of my life you'd waste describing how PCI Express works. Buying a laptop is the sort of manly endeavour that must be undertaken entirely alone, just you and your chest hair, cutting down PC World employees with a machete made of cash.

Like all manly endeavours, the first step is to convince the woman in your life to allow you to do it; readers may recall last year's hilarious wrist injury, and the last thing my girlfriend wants is another fortnight where I have a legitimate reason to replace washing up with three hours of left-handed YouTube browsing.

Since the model I have my eyes on – the bonsai-style EEE PCs – have a keyboard squeezed into the surface area of a church mouse's pocket watch, there are concerns that I might trigger a flare-up if I spent hours at a time tapping away on one.

However, she needn't worry, because the odds of me ever purchasing an Internets In A Box are pretty fucking slim. Why? Because JUST LOOK AT

THE DEALS WE'VE GOT ON!!!

Yes. I'm standing wedged between an inane grin and a five hundred pound waste of silicon, and someone actually says "This laptop has a huge five hundred gigs hard drive, so you can store all your music and photos!"

Is... is that an actual line from the advert? Why yes. Yes it is. I consider asking him about that but then decide it would be akin to opening a kettle of exploding worms, so instead I calmly point out that I don't need a laptop that expensive, I merely need something to carry around and do a bit of word processing on.

"This laptop has the Intel Core 2 Duo processor!"

I'm not entirely sure how that's beneficial, so I calmly point out the one that I've been looking at. It looks like something from Battlestar Galactica, and it even has the metallic-blue finish for when you really need to look like a tosser in lectures.

"Okay, sure. We should have one in stock, I'll find out for you."

He disappears.

He doesn't come back.

Now, I've worked in a shop before, so I know that anything can happen to you when you're just walking around and they generally involve you being given

really terrible jobs to do, like emptying three hundred litres of rotten milk down a toilet, snorting the dandruff off the visiting area manager's shoulder pads or something obscene involving a supply cupboard and four hundred mouldy cucumbers. But it was still a little bit strange to be left in amidst a graveyard of display models, waiting for help that would never come.

Still.

That was fine. I didn't need help. Why would I need help? I'm a child of the internet generation! I can make these decisions autonomously and handle this socially complex situation with aplomb and charm. I approach the nearest disciple of the purple cloth. She looks like a thirty year-old, but a thirty year-old who was beaten viciously by her twenties. Using a bat made out of pure Ugly Tree cutoffs.

"Hi, can I help you?" she offers.

I'm thinking probably not, but she can at least get me a box with a laptop in it and a barcode on the front. I explain the laptop I want and she takes me over to the exact fucking same "five hundred gigs" laptop I began the crusade at. Before we go any further I explain to her that I know what I need to know about the laptop.

"Okay. Do you know about our offer

on mobile broadband?"

I do not, and yet I'm immediately struck by the idea that I probably don't want to know, so I cunningly tell her I do, like the smooth operator I am. We proceed onto the actual laptop.

"Oh, this one." She says, stopping at the piece in question. "Yeah, we're still doing this, hang on, let me get you one."

She disappears. A few minutes pass, and I get that uneasy feeling that Jeremy Beadle is haunting me from beyond the grave, camera in hand. Fortunately, this time she reappears.

"So, you'll need a few documents to sign up with the broadband."

"Sorry, what?"

"The broadband. The mobile broadband? Laptop comes free?"

"No, no, I don't want the broadband." I explain, making hand gestures which subconsciously become a stabbing motion.

"Oh. I'm sorry. I don't think we can sell it on its own, let me check."

She goes to check. She doesn't come back. A sprightly, balding man comes over and asks me if I need any help.

I go home and find it on Amazon.

Send your "I Told You So's" in to anangrygeek@googlemail.com. Please allow 3-5 days for delivery of responses.

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Abdul Hannan

The hypocrisy of 'freedom of speech'

There is no such thing as absolute freedom of speech, expression, belief etc; there are always restrictions on how free you can be (and that's self-censorship aside). When it comes to factually reporting on or fictionally describing celebrities, political figures, or religious characters, there is no absolute right or freedom to insult or denigrate that person.

There is however an appetite, in light of the status quo, to push the boundaries of expression, within the norms and the tastes of the "civilized society". The civilized society, in this case, is the Western world, with its values of 'freedom', as defined by its norms, its like and dislikes. It is this 'freedom' loving society that evangelically chooses to impart its values to the rest of the world, through coercion and bullying. It is this 'freedom' loving society that

screams from mountaintops, when anyone dares to question the concept of 'freedom'. It is the vanguards of this society that call people terrorists, for responding to and being offended by insults.

Terrorists? Which terrorist groups does Caz refer to anyway? Clearly it is not Aum Shinrikyo (Japan), Babbar Khalsa International (India), the IRA or even ETA (of Spain). Will anyone even entertain the idea that these terrorist groups would cause trouble for the author of the book (the Jewel of Medina)? Caz quite unashamedly has used conformist self-censorship, to be as vague as possible, to not be (seen) as racist, or Islamophobic, but we know that it means Muslims. The implicit advice to Muslims is, if you don't accept this book as a work of fiction, but take offence, then you are a terrorist.

So much for freedom when it comes

to issues that really matter. The BAE cash-for-contracts scandal, where there was a genuine public interest to know the facts, ended with the fraud investigation being cancelled. Tony Blair trumped freedom with "issues of national security". During Lord Levy's cash-for-honours questions, the courts stopped the BBC from making any reference to the story. In 2004, George Galloway won £150k libel damages from the Daily Telegraph. Justin Timberlake was awarded substantial libel damages in 2003, when the News of World wrongly claimed he had cheated on Cameron Diaz. Papers can't argue that it's their "freedom to make up stories". There are many cases of near factual (not even fictional stories) made up about businesses and persons; and there is no Freedom to make such libelous statements because they might cause damage or injury to the said

persons or businesses. If, however, the subject is a community, or even better a religious group, then it's open season for attacks.

The very author of the book, Sherry Jones, who is quoted as saying "this is about the free world, the future of democracy, and the future of freedom of speech so I'm not going to abdicate that responsibility", highlights the hypocrisy of Freedom of Speech further. When the University of Texas professor Denise Spellberg negatively reviewed her book, Ms Jones demanded Ms Spellberg retract her comments, saying they are "unfair" and "slandrous": Ms Jones is on record saying she "used the most inflammatory language [she] could possibly have used. If you want to incite heated emotions from any religious group you just use the word 'pornography' in the same sentence as their revered figures".



JellyBean

Anything can be fixed/built with foam

If you're a fresher you might not yet realize the magnitude of the ridiculous debacle that is dealing with landlords. Indeed you might well visit a flat later in the year and be shocked at the mess some students live in; (don't worry: it wears off). But student accommodation, my friends, is a beautiful, beautiful thing. My personal sty has such features as: multiple cupboard doors attached upside-down (you'd better hope that attaching doors was a fairly simple process, or at least that having made one mistake you'd not make another) a train and traffic powered earthquake simulation feature that triggers every five minutes and beds that collapse spontaneously yellowing kitchen lino and dodgy plumbing (i.e. toilets that flush upward).

Great! It is nice too to see the attempt to create a more homely feel with the addition of framed pictures on the wall, though the effect is rather lost when you notice the Victorian rural blacksmith scene is repeated three times in one room. (Actually an artsy-type friend of mine pointed out that this was very Campbell and was perhaps an inadvertent work of artistic genius). My friend in the flat downstairs still has a chandelier adorning the high ornamented ceiling of his two-'bed' open-plan kitchen left over from whoknows-when. It glares down disapprovingly, dripping with contempt and cut-glass globules, powerless to oust the hygiene-oblivious plebeians that now live there.

After you get over the fact that your Italian landlords accept rent in cash only and count it in French whilst clearly having connections to some form of mafia group from back home, the only real issue is maintenance, (assuming of course that you managed to persuade

them to get you a fridge before the Christmas break). Most of the handy-men that I have known to visit student accommodation, I suspect, don't actually have opposable thumbs (and therefore probably don't deserve the title). One came to mend my window frame and a chest of drawers. When he left, there was lots of mess, he had hammered things and removed most of the crinkly old paint but I swear he actually changed nothing. But this was nothing compared to what my friend experienced.

There are mice in the kitchen, the stairs are a bit wonky and smoke keeps coming up from the basement flat. What do you expect the 'handy-man' to arrive with? A few tubes of expanding foam. Apparently, any problem can be solved by a Pole with expanding foam. With it you can fill up gaps in the kitchen skirting board and prevent the entry of mice. Fair enough, but the thing was that, rather than moving the fridge to access the wall behind he simply placed a couple of blobs either side of it (coming dangerously near to sealing the freezer door closed); as if mice can't climb over three inches of the stuff.

You can also place vast quantities around the door frame adjoining the basement and use up the excess on the staircase. Of course, you must be honest about the material in use, so avoid tidying up the overflow with anything more than a half-hearted hack with a Stanley knife.

This got me thinking, is there any DIY problem that can't be solved with expanding foam? I figured if you can make furniture from nothing but the stuff, you can pretty much mend anything, right? So in the interest of pushing the boundaries of Material Science I gave it a go. A tube can set you back a

small fortune but I was encouraged by the claim that it would produce 'up to fifty times' the volume of the contents and I had grand ideas of a sofa, or perhaps some form of stylish coffee table for a fraction of Ikea prices. Unfortunately it ran out in no time and took about 24 hours to set. I was worried after the promised one-hour that I had got the wrong stuff because though a skin had formed, the two components of my table were about as structurally sound as a half-filled bean bag. Still, with a little patience the project turned out to be a run-away success; I own a coffee table to die for made of nothing

but expanding foam and a couple of sheets of an old *felix*. It's art and design at its finest. (I think I'll neglect to mention the fact that a couple of seconds after the photo was taken a train activated the earthquake simulation feature, which upset the careful balance between the pint of apple squash and the book and I didn't really have enough hands to save the library book, the table itself, my camera and the carpet at the same time). So there you have it, forget bits of wood, hammers, nails, screwdrivers and core plugs, just get yourself some expanding foam and you're in business.



After owning one of these, you'll never shop at Ikea again



Gilead Amit

Too many mornings by the Albert Hall

Is it evening where you are? I could never handle the writer-reader timezone difference properly, you see. I could go with the assumption that you're reading this assiduously in your Friday morning lectures, but that seems as unlikely as the assumption that you go to your Friday morning lectures. It's far more likely that you're reading this on Monday afternoon, sipping your free coffee in the SCR, scanning me briefly on Tuesday morning as you walk into Beit quad, or lifting your exhausted eyelids in a departmental common room late on a Thursday evening. If that is in fact what you're doing, try not to be overly spooked out. Unless your name is James, you have a mole behind your left ear and are currently resisting the urge to do something amusing with a spoon. Stop that.

Wherever and whenever you are, attempting to cater to all of you is giving me a pretty bad case of emotional jetlag. Because the time of day you read something has a significant impact on your 'relationship with the text', to use a pointless A-levelism. To those early birds among you, good morning. If I've caught you early enough, you're still ensconced in your warm, protective sconces, game for some whimsical raillerie before the day's tribulations commence. For those of you at GMT+5 (noon, Gilead Mean Time), we're playing an entirely different ball game. You've got things on your mind, places to go and deadlines to meet. If it's after lunch time then someone has probably already had the time to annoy you. You want good old-fashioned invective and a liberal dose of vitriol, accompanied with a light cliché sauce to assure you of the righteousness of your wrath. Those of you reading this in the evening, however, are probably looking for something different.

The dying hours of the day are really remarkable. In the preceding hours the mind has been compressed, extended, jumped on, forced into boxes, forced to extract itself from boxes, attacked, teased, threatened, soothed, twisted, numbed and generally mistreated. It is, to put it simply, exhausted. The electronics of the human mind have been ripped out of their sockets come sundown, and strange currents and unusual connections start to appear. Things make sense in the dark that never made sense in the daytime and

will never make sense again. Ideas click, phrases form, theories spring into being and problems vanish. The evening is the best time for a writer to be read at, as one doesn't have to go out there to fetch the emotional reactions: the hearts of the readers come to you.

So I'm hoping it's evening, your time. It's God-knows-what-time on my end - I started writing this on Tuesday morning and by the time I've reached this sentence it's five o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon. But let's not talk about me. If it is evening where you are, look up. No no. Stand outside and look up. And while I realize the inherent stupidity of my giving you instructions to look up while blatantly forcing you to look down, genuinely take a look at the stars. Take a minute. Don't worry about me. I'll wait.

Now when was the last time you did that? Don't worry – this isn't another panegyric about the rare beauty of the cosmos or an opportunity to show off my knowledge of astronomy. The extent of my understanding is that if you look very carefully under Orion's belt, you may be able to see the Big Dipper.

Or at least, that's what he calls it.

No, my central theme this week is a microscopic one. About the size of Antares in the night sky. All I want to point out is how easily things can get out of your control. To take the mundane example that has come to symbolize what I mean, there is no getting away from its exhilarating purity.

A seemingly perfect white circle in a black sky, reflecting all the cyclical patterns of human existence, there is no mystery over why the Moon is such a constant feature of love songs, poems, paintings and mythologies. Because the Moon is, at the end of the day, the artist's closest companion. The one face that unites any creative soul desperate to catch the midnight wave of inspiration, looking on its blank expression out of the nearest window. The light which shines over whatever we do in the godforsaken hours of the morning when we can fool ourselves into believing the world has gone to sleep, and that we are alone with our talents.

For an object with one-sixth the value of Earth's gravity, it exerts an entirely disproportionate attraction over us.



It's not easy to appreciate the beauty of the Hall when it's 9am and you're tired. So take a moment now



$$\frac{1}{2m} \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial x^2} + \psi(x) V(x) = E \psi(x)$$

Podview:

Armed with telescopic hearing, Felix Whitton reviews astronomy podcasts

Astronomy.com



This week's Astronomy.com podcast (official podcast of *Astronomy Magazine*) starts with some advice for "noobies". That's me. Oh, it's only binocular advice.

Remember kids; make yourself as comfy as possible when stargazing. We don't want any neck injuries. Sit back in the chaise longue...relax...wait a minute, I've heard this before (see the Astronomy a Go Go!). Luckily this one is only 8 minutes long. It even manages to make that seem a long time.

Why is it only Americans doing these shows? Where, oh, where is my dry English wit? My dulcet Scottish tones? Nowhere, apparently. The yanks have astro-monopoly, and they're not letting go.

I just checked; *Astronomy Magazine* is Huge (like, Super-massive). The world's "best-selling" astronomy magazine (like there's any competition).

So I'd better watch what I say. I just wish the presenter would stop talking about his June column. No. One. Cares.

<http://www.astronomy.com/asy/default.aspx?c=ss&id=104>

The Jodcast: our podcast of the week!



Yes! Oh yes! Finally a British offering, complete with a Churchill insurance parody at the beginning. My prayers answered. They sound so classy

(despite being from Manchester): "Hello Dave". News from the LHC (not good, but at least Geneva gets heating this winter), and SETI researchers from the University of Hawaii (seriously?) think we might have already seen alien signals, we just don't know it. What have they been smoking? Imperial's very own returning PhD rock star Brian May also gets a mention.

These guys are über-geeky, but in a kind of endearing way. Prof. Jim Cordes from Cornell University joins the team for a chat. He sounds like the guy from the Fast Show. He loves his pulsars: "They just keep giving and giving". Don't I know it. Ahem. Later on, a guy manages the hitherto impossible feat of saying "global warming" in quotation marks. The website for this is brilliant too, and if one hour is too big a chunk of astronomy (and I sympathise) you can download each individual segment separately.

<http://www.jodcast.net/>

Astronomy a Go-Go!



Before I begin, a disclaimer: I'm not a big astronomy fan, but I thought I'd give it a go this week, if only to get it out the way once and for all. So I approached our first offering with an open mind.

I tried not to let the naff acoustic-muzak at the beginning put me off. I really tried.

And then a nasally American lady told me to "Sit back and relax"... well, frankly she wasn't helping. I'm afraid it went downhill from there. October might be a great month for astronomy, but I wasn't persuaded to go out and squint up at the sky.

I fear any of you with such delusions will be scuppered by London's ambient light pollution anyway. Back to nasally-lady: "Take a look at the moon!" she says.

Ok. There it is. The moon. Doing its thing, waxing and waning. Full moon, half moon... Does she do this every month?

On to astronomical highlights...oh God, I can't take another 46 minutes. Skip to the end... some telescope tips, the shipping forecast for space heads, and some jazz-funk to finish. Go away. <http://astronomy.libsyn.com>

Astronomy Cast



More Astronomy Music greets the intrepid listener of Astronomy Cast. The universe is TRYING TO KILL US. Not now dummy, in 2012. Hogwash, says presenter Pamela Gay. We might collide with a super-massive black hole in the centre of our galaxy, but not for 700 million years (how does she know this? If she's wrong, where do I find her?). She has a way with words, Ms Gay: Venus and Uranus are "like problem children", rotating on their sides and generally travelling in the wrong direction. I worry about Pam's kids. And 'wrong' is fairly subjective, depending as it does on our direction being 'right'. At least Venus has a nice orbit. Ours is imperfect. Astronomy Cast is great actually, 90% of it being about disaster scenarios – what happens when the sun fizzes out? Can we see dead stars everywhere? – and other 10% deep questions like 'why are black holes drawn with jets coming out of them, when nothing can escape one?' Even Pam doesn't know that one. Quick, snappy answers, good analogies, and interesting question choices. Mostly involving the end of the universe. Check out next week's episode on aliens.

<http://www.astronomycast.com>

Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2008



"Night griffon" By Safie Al Khaffaf (Russia): 15-17 year old category © Safie Al Khaffaf / Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2008

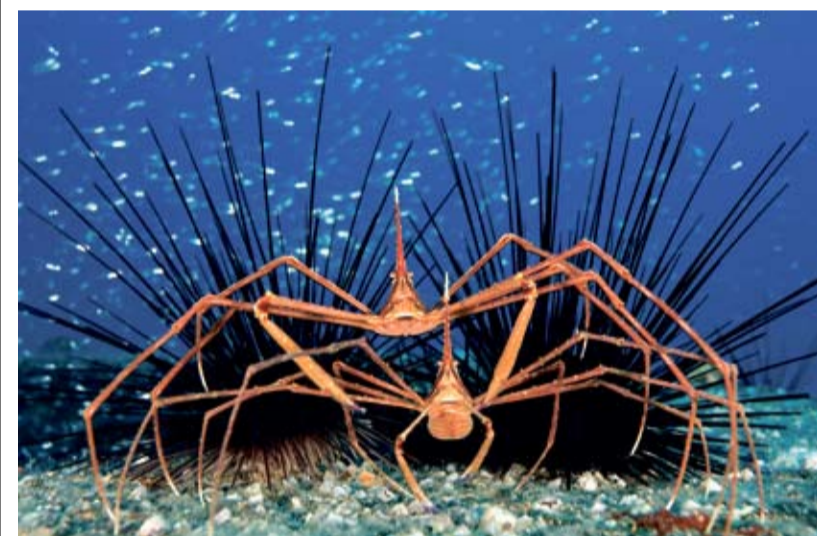
The exhibit opens on the 31st October at the Natural History Museum. Here are two of the highly commended photos from this year.

"Night Griffon"

"At dusk, Safie's natural-history group set up camp near the Kirtik river, on the Russian side of the Caucasus mountain range. As darkness fell, Safie set off to look for insects to photograph. Searching some rocks with her torch, she suddenly realised she had illuminated a pair of eyes. Just metres away, staring back at her from its perch, was a griffon vulture. 'I was shocked - and impressed by the striking beauty of the bird,' she says. Safie quickly took control of the situation and shot two portraits. The moment was fleeting. The vulture hissed loudly, launched off and flapped into the night."

"Daddy long legs"

"Jordi came across this strange arrangement of spikes and spines while diving near Puerto de Mogán off the southern coast of Grand Canary in the Canary Islands. As he moved in closer, he realised they were a male and female arrow crab backed against long-spined sea urchins. The female had eggs in her swollen abdomen, and her mate was standing over her, clasping her with his clamps to stop other males from mating with her. Arrow crabs are often found with sea urchins, presumably using them as protection from predators – their impossibly long legs useful for avoiding actual contact with the urchins. 'The spikes and tangle of long legs made a wonderfully graphic image,' says Jordi, 'and the cobalt-blue background with a school of small silver fish flitting past was like a sky of stars. I also found their behaviour very interesting – this image is not just a portrait, it's a story.'"



"Daddy long legs" By Jordi Chias (Spain): the underwater world category © Jordi Chias / Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2008

Smart Drugs, Dumb Students

Fatimah Mohamied
Science Correspondent

An article in *Nature* by Cambridge neuro-psychologist Professor Sahakian showed that 17% of students use drugs to increase their cognitive and brain function. These drugs are usually used to treat mental illnesses. An example would be the drug 'Ritalin' which treats children with Hyperactive Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD). *Nature* journal also conducted a survey in order to discover the number of people using drugs to increase their 'brain power', it was found that 1400 individuals had confessed that they used cognitive enhancing drugs for non-medical reasons, most were either students or shift workers.

Amongst 20% of these users, 44% of them used the drug Provigil; a drug that eliminates daytime tiredness in patients with narcolepsy (a rare sleeping disorder).

So how do these healthy people get these drugs? It was found that these drugs were obtained online or by overseas prescriptions.



Professor Sahakian stated that there is an urgent need for safety tests, because the long-term effects of these drugs on healthy people are currently not known.

In addition, Professor Sahakian was concerned at the ages groups of these drug users, this is because of the belief that the drugs' popularity are spreading to consecutively younger people and students.

The Academy for Medical Sciences (AMS) declared that not only Ritalin was being used for non-medical reasons, but so were drugs that are used to treat Alzheimer's. It was said that this drug was used to boost memory

and alertness in healthy individuals. AMS also acknowledged the possibility of these drugs being used to gain an unfair advantage in examinations.

They are looking into using drug tests in the future before examinations to prevent cheating.

Fellow student newspaper, *The Beaver* at LSE, reported heavy use of these so called smart drugs or nootropics at LSE as well. Apparently the drugs are used as a substitute for hard work, but also help in concentration and in extending working hours without the need for much sleep.

Ant opinion leaders and political activists make their views heard

Miće Tatalović
Science Editor

Ant societies have individuals that make decisions for the entire colony and so act as political leaders.

As in Britain, in ant kingdoms the queen has only a symbolic political role. Instead of the queen or some special caste making important decisions, well-informed individuals make decisions for the entire colony, which the others then follow. These leaders even change their minds when they learn about a better course of action. This flexible behaviour of the well-informed individuals helps ant colonies survive in time of distress and highlights how, even within this 'simple' animal species, personality may play a crucial role in the survival.

Talking at the 4th European Conference for Behavioural Biology at Dijon, France, biologist Nigel Franks from Bristol University presented his research on ant decision makers. Franks and colleagues studied colonies of rock ants (*Temnothorax albipennis*) in the laboratory in an attempt to understand how the colonies of tens or hundreds of insects, make a common decision about where to move when their nest is destroyed.

Researchers already knew that rock

ants prefer dark, flat spaces with narrow entrances for their nest sites, quite the opposite of what a modern human may like. They also knew that, to inform others of a good nest site, rock ants lead or carry them directly to the new nest: the more individuals that see and approve of a new nest the quicker, and hence safer, the move is. But who makes the initial decisions to move and where to go?

To answer these questions Franks and colleagues set up experiments in which two new nests were made available to an ant colony whose original nest was destroyed. By tagging each individual with miniature ID tags, the size of Queen's eyes on a pound coin, researchers were able to observe who finds the new nest and recruits new members to it first.

The results were surprising. The same few individuals, the ones that are most physically active, but otherwise quite ordinary ants, find the new nests first and decide to recruit others. Franks said the remarkable thing is that in the middle of the move, these same individuals already look for other potential nest sites and if they find a better site they change their mind and start recruiting to this better site. He adds that the same few individuals act as both decision makers and consen-

sus-breakers and so, believe it or not, "play the role of political activists" in ant societies.

Decision-making in other species may differ from the model displayed by ant colonies. Speaking at the same

conference, Marie-Helen Pillot, a biologist from Paul Sabatier University in France, said that in sheep, perhaps unsurprisingly, any individual that moves first is followed by the others. In flocks of geese, however, it appears

that although any group member may suggest a move, only certain individuals have the authority to be followed by others. This is according to Amandine Ramseyer from University of Strasbourg in France.



CREDIT: AUDREY DUSSUTOUR, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

The ants marching under the command of their leader. Look familiar to anyone?

Corrections: last week's Red List update article was written by Dominic Andradi-Brown and not by Erika Cule. Apologies for the mistake.

If you're one of the handful of graduates who join Bristows each year, you'll be exposed to top tier work right from the start. You'll also be surrounded by some of the most respected lawyers in their fields. This is a firm where you'll learn fast and be stretched, but you'll also get plenty of support and encouragement along the way. There's no over-hiring of trainees, either. We're particularly proud of the fact that so many of the lawyers who trained with us have gone on to become partners.

We would like to invite you to come along to our Career Presentation and Drinks Reception to learn more about the training offered at Bristows. The Presentation and Drinks will be held in the Huxley Building, Lecture Theatre 340 level 3 on Wednesday 29 October at 6.30pm until 9.00pm.

BRISTOWS

An Austrian perspective on things

Can Carl Menger and his countrymen tell us anything about the current financial crisis?

Edward Townes
Guest Writer

To most people economics is a social "science", but it is actually filled with wrong opinions and faulty predictions. Economists in practice take a variety of positions that can be divided into 'schools' of thought, where certain theories of generations of individuals have inspired a specific way of interpreting human action. One of the minor schools in particular differs in some truly profound and fundamental ways from other mainstream ones, such as the Keynesian or Chicago schools. It is called the Austrian School, and it has some very interesting explanations for today's financial mess, which I will attempt to impart.

The Austrians were dominant in economic theory in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and they were the first to explain the Great Depression and why centrally-planned economies are logically impossible to succeed. Nevertheless, they were relegated to a minority position as a positivist revolution in economics led by the man who said the Great Depression could never happen, John Maynard Keynes, unfolded in the 1930s. There were many reasons why the Austrian School was pushed aside but most importantly because Keynes' statistically-based theories validated, and therefore could be used to justify, the government's attempts to intervene and manipulate the markets.

Several leading Austrian scholars predicted today's economic problems, just as they also predicted the downturns in the Great Depression and the 70s, and they explain that the root cause is the same each time. Mainstream economists generally blame the business cycle on some variant of errant human nature, such as greed or confidence. I personally found the mainstream explanation entirely wanting, for why should such an abundant



Printing money may be easy but it is certainly not the solution to this crisis

high time preferences want to spend their available money quickly, whereas people with low time preferences generally save their money, and thus expand the supply of money available to be borrowed at the bank. Your time preference depends on a large number of things, such as your anticipation of children, personality, wealth level, etc. The aggregate time preference of everyone in the economy gives us the savings rate in that economy. People who want to borrow money for investment, or otherwise, comprise the demand for credit, and together the supply and demand for money meet to form a market price on money through time, which is the interest rate. The interest rate tells entrepreneurs the minimum return on investment or "profit" that they need to achieve to justify making the investment. Thus, the balance between the supply (savers) of money and the demand (borrowers) for money is absolutely central in determining economy-wide economic behaviour.

Enter fractional-reserve or no-reserve banking supported by a central bank, with its ability to produce money out of thin air. In today's world nearly all central banks practice "no-reserve" banking in that they do not relate the quantity of money they issue to any fixed ratio of hard commodities (normally gold) that they hold to back the paper currency. You see, in a free market banking system, currencies would inevitably be backed by hard commodities otherwise those currencies would be vulnerable to runs. However, under fractional or no reserve central banking, there are laws created to enforce this fiat monetary system, such as legal tender laws and "lenders of last resort" (central banks) laws. By contrast, in a

free market banking economy, if someone wants to expand the amount of money (by mining gold for example), they have to take resources out of the economy and apply them more profit-

ably than the interest rate. Thus there is always a balance and restriction on the creation of money.

However, in our current monetary system, which is not backed by any hard commodity, the central bank can literally create money out of nothing, and then put it into the banking system so that this new money masquerades as savings. In doing this, the central bank inflates the supply of money, and thus manipulates the price of money (the interest rate), whilst debasing people's savings and depreciating the purchasing power of the currency. This is why central banks claim to set the interest rate in the economy; in fact what they are doing is controlling the crea-

savers is thrown off. Prices are simply market information for people managing resources, so when the prices are artificial, entrepreneurs' actions are systematically misguided, because they've been given misinformation.

So when a central bank manipulates the money supply with fiat (paper) currencies under fractional or no-reserve banking, it has the devastating effect of distorting the balance between savings and investing, creating mal-investment in the economy which at first appears to be a boom because people are expanding production chains with the cheap credit to meet the expected new demand for goods. Except that the expansion becomes more and more

unstable and must come to an end because the actual balance between saving and consumption is not what the interest rate suggests it is, and a painful recession, or price correction must then take place to liquidate the mal-investments.

But there is more to it. The central bank can keep the charade going for a while by creating consumption demand though artificially cheap credit which allows people to borrow money at a artificially low interest rate, to spend on cars and other such things. Unfortunately this kind of economy is inherently unstable because it is driven by debt instead of savings. All it takes is one contraction in the money supply (a "credit crunch", if you will), for the entire thing to fall in on itself as no new money is made available to service debts. This economic boom and bust is a natural consequence of our monetary system and today's financial crisis should thus be absolutely no surprise.

This is a brief explanation of what the Austrian School has to say about the business cycle. Each time that the central banks provide artificially cheap credit, as facilitated by fractional or no-reserve banking and fiat currencies, the bubbles manifest in various different areas of the economy. Today, the immediate bubble to burst was the real-estate one. The reasons for this bubble existing the first place is most importantly the cheap credit, but secondary blame goes to many well-intentioned, but classically misguided, US government efforts in the 90s and earlier this decade to get banks to loan to individuals who were not qualified for the loans, i.e. "sub-prime". This was compounded by laws such as: the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977; the quartering of Fannie's and Freddie's reserve requirements which were quasi-government entities with all the moral hazards that ensue; land-use regulations; the dissolution of a law (the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933) that divorced investment and commercial banking, and various others that created a flawed framework within which normal profit seeking behaviour became systematically destructive.

Our problem now is that most people, including most economists, misdiagnose the causes of today's financial crisis. Therefore, instead of allowing unsound investments to liquidate, the governments of the world are intent on making more money out of thin air in order to price fix the value of loans which in reality are virtually worthless.

I believe that we are faced with two possible solutions, which can be blended, to the problems of the mal-investments that were created by the artificially cheap credit. On the one hand we can allow prices to correct themselves quickly without government intervention, in the process creating a large amount of losses for the people directly involved in the mortgage derivative market and other markets that were similarly, but to a lesser extreme, affected by central banking. On the other, we can fight the ultimately inevitable and necessary price corrections by using government gifts of large amounts of cash created out of more debt, further boosting inflation and the debt burden which may well be enough to send our already weak economy into a prolonged depression.



The raging bull of Merrill Lynch, bull down!



Carl Menger, founder of the Austrian school.

human characteristic as greed suddenly become systematically destructive in a specific time and place? Or, if consumer confidence was the only problem, then surely we could propagandise our way to prosperity? The issue with the Austrian explanation is that it is politically unpalatable, and as a result you will rarely hear this point of view. Here goes:

First, a quick lesson on money and monetary policy. Let's say I give you

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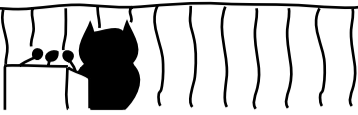
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What's Bush been doing?

With the Presidential election dominating the news, *felix* checks up on 'Dubya'



Kadhim Shubber
Politics Correspondent

Like death and taxes in life, nothing is more certain to feature daily in the news media than the U.S. Presidential election. It is to journalism what jokes about the gender ratio are to Imperial; unavoidable. The number of column inches devoted to discussion on the virtues or shortcomings of John McCain and Barack Obama is even more impressive than the mammoth sums of money raised by the Obama campaign.

With that in mind, let's examine another topic and, instead of asking "Does McCain represent 4 more years of Bush?" or "Does Obama lack the experience for the most important job in the world?", let us wonder; what has George W. Bush, as both politicians from both parties openly and repeatedly disavow themselves of him, been doing in his last days of office?

Obviously the financial crisis hasn't escaped your notice and, one would hope it still catches the attention of, in the words of The Daily Show host Jon Stewart, 'still – President' Bush. While the crisis unfolded Bush stuck firm to the Reagan-Thatcherite philosophy of refraining from government intervention but when the fall of Lehman Brothers shocked the financial sector and the economy in general, he embraced the adage, as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke paraphrased, "There are no atheists in foxholes and similarly no ideologues in a financial crisis". Thus came Presidential Addresses to the American public warning of the greatest crisis since the Great Depression; I'm sure he almost came near to screaming 'all is lost' whilst pulling out his hair, just in case people accused him of underestimating the enormity of the situation.

Last Sunday the Cubans, led by Raul Castro, celebrated the Cuban missile crisis and scaring the crap out of the Americans. Let's hope we don't see another Bay of Pigs, one illegal war is enough of a mess. At least Russia has a cease-fire in Georgia, ending that rampage.

It appears that in the last couple of days the conservatives have been up to their tricks again, trying to evade a ban on overseas donations.

The Church of England is doomed according to an immigration minister, which comes at the same time as rather a lot of people getting rather angry over abortion - mostly those religious types.

When having a minor crisis attempting to think of something other than the disappearing economy and the battle to be the next "leader of the free world" to write about, one particularly inspired chap told me to write "any old bollocks, it's only a student newspaper."

Well, my friends, we here at Felix are serious about these few scraps of paper but we need your input to make it better and enable me to be lazy. Palm leaves and grapes please.

With no planned campaign appearances this election and the handling of the financial crisis falling to the Fed-

eral Reserve and Congress, Bush has been looking to shore up his legacy on the international stage, notably by abandoning almost every foreign policy decision of the last 8 years. The U.S.'s hard line on North Korea has vanished as completely as McCain's post-convention bounce. The oppressive nation, that was once part of the infamous 'Axis of Evil', is now treated to regular talks with the U.S. and has recently, in a move aimed to save the progress made on North Korea's nuclear programme, been removed from Washington's list of state sponsors of terrorism. Pyongyang had begun to end its' freeze on nuclear activity because Washington refused to remove North Korea's status as a sponsor of terrorism until a list of its' nuclear assets, that the regime had submitted to the U.S., was verified.

Now that the dismantling of North Korea's nuclear programme now back on track, the Bush Administration is clearly taking heart from the success that diplomacy has brought, where tough words and threats failed. It is trying to apply the same lessons learnt in North Korea to Iran, with the hope of persuading the theocratic regime to end its nuclear activities before, rather than after as in the case of North Korea, it tests a nuclear weapon. A U.S. Interests Office is due to be opened in Tehran in November; an Interests Office serves the purpose of an embassy but doesn't carry the acknowledgement of formal ties that an embassy carries. This move ends a 29 year freeze in U.S.-Iranian diplomatic relations and shows the commitment to diplomacy of an administration that knows it doesn't have the political capital to order strikes before its term ends.

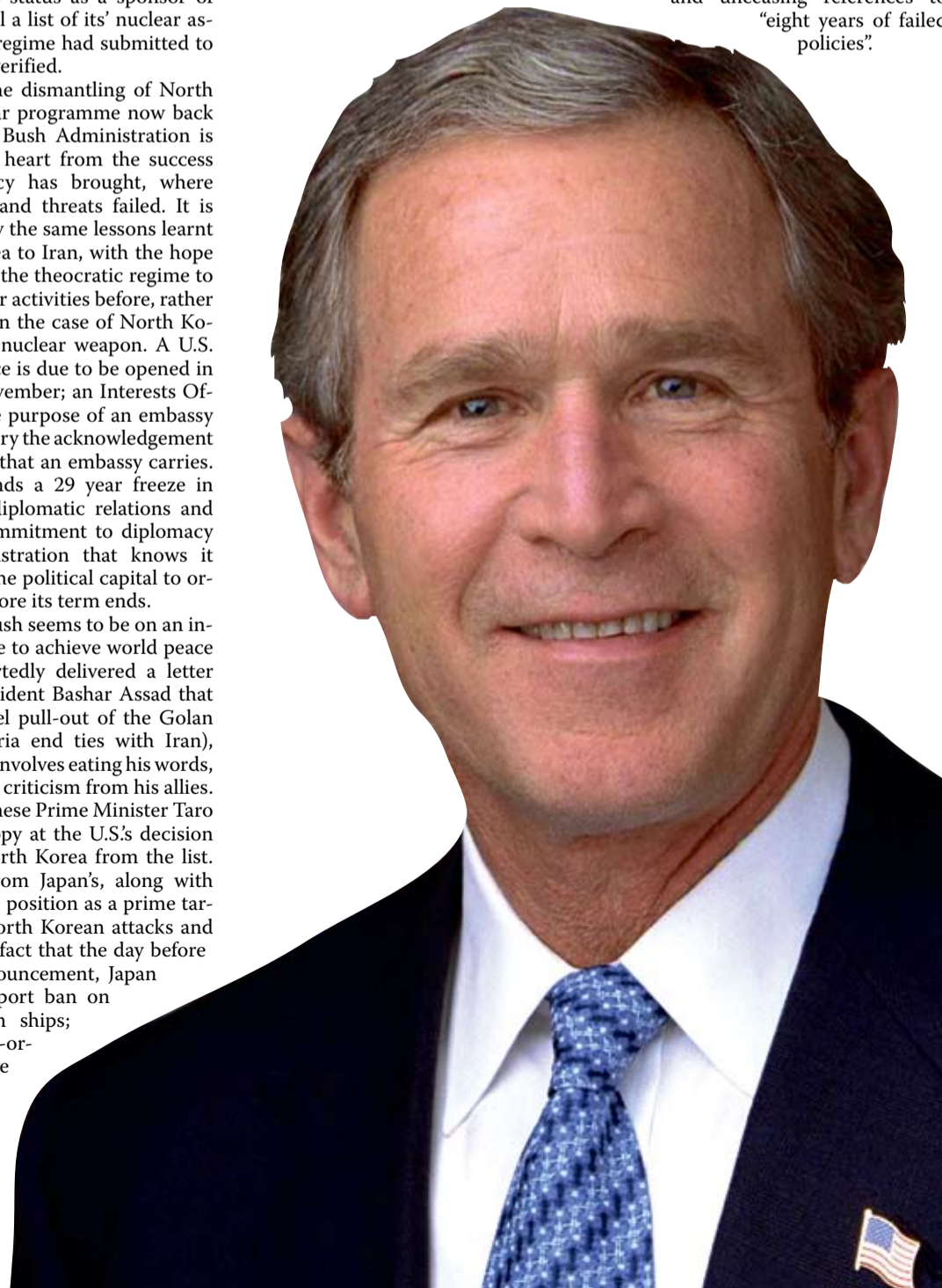
Although Bush seems to be on an intense scramble to achieve world peace (he has reportedly delivered a letter to Syrian President Bashar Assad that proposes Israel pull-out of the Golan Heights if Syria end ties with Iran), which mostly involves eating his words, he faced some criticism from his allies. The new Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso is unhappy at the U.S.'s decision to remove North Korea from the list. This stems from Japan's, along with South Korea's, position as a prime target for any North Korean attacks and also from the fact that the day before the U.S.'s announcement, Japan extended its port ban on North Korean ships; the lack of co-ordination here is painfully apparent.

Japan's port ban began in October 2006 after North Korea conducted a

nuclear test but the lack of progress on the ban stems from a dispute in the 70's and 80's caused by the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korean agents. The issue evokes strong emotions in Japan. A telephone call between Condoleezza Rice and the Japanese Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone degenerated into a shouting match as Rice demanded of the Japanese, "get out of our way and let us do this". As China's strategic weight increases, and Japan's conversely decreases, this is likely to be the tone from Washington in coming years.

Things aren't all bad for George Bush. Despite disagreements with the Japanese and the rather pre-

mature schadenfreude of his German allies on the financial crisis, there are things that should make his day better. Some publications, such as Newsweek, are already asking "What did Bush get right" and the growing consensus within the United States is that the Surge has corrected the errors of the Iraq war. If this doesn't put a smile on his face, maybe hosting a global financial summit in November will; nothing raises your spirit than being given the chance to act important in front of your peers, even if you barely deserve the opportunity. In the meantime, U.S. President George W. Bush would do well to turn off the T.V., put down the newspapers and ignore the constant and unceasing references to "eight years of failed policies".



Cuba commemorates the Missile Crisis

Raz Jabary
Politics Correspondent

Exactly 46 years ago the world was on the brink of nuclear war when things got heated up in the Atlantic between the American and Soviet naval powers. The 1962 Missile Crisis as it is now known saw a crucial turn in relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, leading to among other things the setting up of the hotline between the White House and the Kremlin with the attempt to prevent risky future stand-offs.

The commemoration of the Crisis in Cuba was celebrated last Sunday with the opening of the first Russian Orthodox Church in Havana that was attended by Raul Castro, which is his first commemoration of the Crisis as Cuba's head of state. The opening of the Church on October 19th, being dedicated as 'Day of Russia' was an attempt to improving Cuban-Russian ties, which were damaged after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Metropolitan Kiril, head of foreign relations of the Russian Orthodox Church, had travelled from Moscow to Havana in order to be present at the ceremony. "This is a monument to Russian-Cuban friendship and all the efforts that have preserved our relations including the most difficult moments of the Cold War", he said.

The background of the Missile Crisis in 1962 was the stationing of potential Soviet nuclear warheads on mainland Cuba that were in reach of targeting main American urbanizations. Knowing this, the Americans posed a naval blockade on Cuba with the attempt of disrupting the movement of shipments to and from its southern neighbour.

The height of the Crisis was reached on October 27th when Soviet battle-ships were approaching the blockade around Cuba, before an agreement was reached between the White House and Kremlin just moments before the would-be clash. Although Cuba was possibly spared utter destruction, Fidel Castro accused Khrushchev of not 'standing up to the U.S.' and blamed him for not consulting him on the decision to retreat the Soviet ships. Claiming that the Cubans were the ones living through the toughest of times, indulged in the conflict between East and West, Castro demanded to play a major role in the matter. Several biographies on the Lider Maximo, including 'The Real Fidel Castro' by former British ambassador to Cuba Leicester Coltman, describe how Fidel burst into an outrage upon hearing the news of the Soviet retreat and even made Khrushchev out as 'the son of a bitch'.

The 77-year old Raul Castro was one of the main figures in the 1959 overthrow of the Batista regime in Cuba, alongside his brother Fidel, revolutionary Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos. The reforms implemented by Raul from February this year when he was appointed the official follower of Fidel, which allowed Cubans to make use of modern technological communication equipment such as mobile phones and the internet, seem to conflict with the fact that Raul has been the one seen as more extreme. During Fidel's years as head of state, Raul's often more leftist Socialist beliefs allowed the former to justify his position to the outside world to remain in power by asserting that if he were removed, 'firmer ones' would take over. Whereas Fidel Castro had not

affiliated with the Communist Youth Party during his student years at the University of Havana, Raul was often found to show direct sympathy to the party and was seen involved in its campaigns. In fact, had it not been because of the strategic and economic interest in siding with the Soviet Union during the Cold War era, and of Fidel's association with Che, some analysts believe that Cuba might never have turned Communist after the triumph of the 1959 revolution. It was Raul who introduced the would-be legendary Che to his brother Fidel in Mexico City in 1955 and it was he who was the first to take the step of befriending the KGB service by establishing contact with secret agent Nikolai Leonov.

With Fidel's closest lifetime associates Che and Camilo deceased, it is the question whether nepotism did actually play a role in the appointment of Raul as his follower. In contrast to Fidel, Raul has often been perceived as 'more amiable and quiet' and also differs in physical built. This has led some to believe Fidel and Raul merely to be maternal 'stepbrothers'.

On Monday October 20th the Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque arrived on an official visit to Mexico, where he was welcomed at the airport by cheering crowds shouting 'long live Cuba, long live Fidel, long live Raul!'. Roque spoke to Mexican business leaders on the salary reforms in Cuba that ought to ensure that 'waiters do not earn more than doctors'. Currently, most Cubans hold government jobs and earn the equivalent of an average of less than £12 a month. Last week, Cuba's state-owned oil company said the country may have more than 20 billion barrels of oil, a claim which if true



The revolution goes on as Cubans celebrate the Cuban Missile Crisis

would place Cuba among the top 20 oil producing countries in the world and could generate unprecedented wealth for its government.

On May 23rd 2008, speaking to the Cuban exile community in Florida, American Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama said he will seek direct diplomacy with the Cuban government if he be elected, something that has not happened since John F. Kennedy's presidency. Republican candidate John McCain denounced these promises and reiterated that Obama appeared to be 'too soft' in dealing with this matter. Most of the Cuban exile community in the United States, consisting mainly of well-paid professionals, is eager to see the overthrow of the rule by the Castro brothers and make

the journey south to their country of origin. With currently a majority of the 11.5 million strong Cuban population born after 1959, it appears to be Raul Castro's task in the current government to maintain the atmosphere for the change brought about by the Revolution in Cuba and prevent citizens, particularly the younger generations getting alienated and instead showing sympathy to the country's long-term Socialist political struggle.

It seems to be the question whether American-Cuban ties would be restored to what they were before 1959 with the change in the top men of both countries, a question which may be answered in less than two weeks time after the American presidential elections on November 4th.

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Colin Powell declares support for Obama

Salman Waqar
Politics Correspondent

Colin Powell, the former US Secretary of State, announced his endorsement to the Democrat campaign last week. Speaking on NBC's 'Meet the Press', Powell expressed his disappointment and dissatisfaction with the McCain campaign.

"I think we need a transformational figure. I think we need a president who is a generational change and that's why I'm supporting Barack Obama, not out of any lack of respect or admiration for Senator John McCain," said Powell, who had also served as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Clinton and Bush Jr administrations.

Powell's support will provide a boost to Obama's perceived lack of foreign policy experience and national security credentials. But Powell doesn't believe this to be the main hurdle in Obama's quest for the White house. The constant aura of negativity and smear tactics that are, in Powell's view, being used by the McCain campaign are just a step too far.

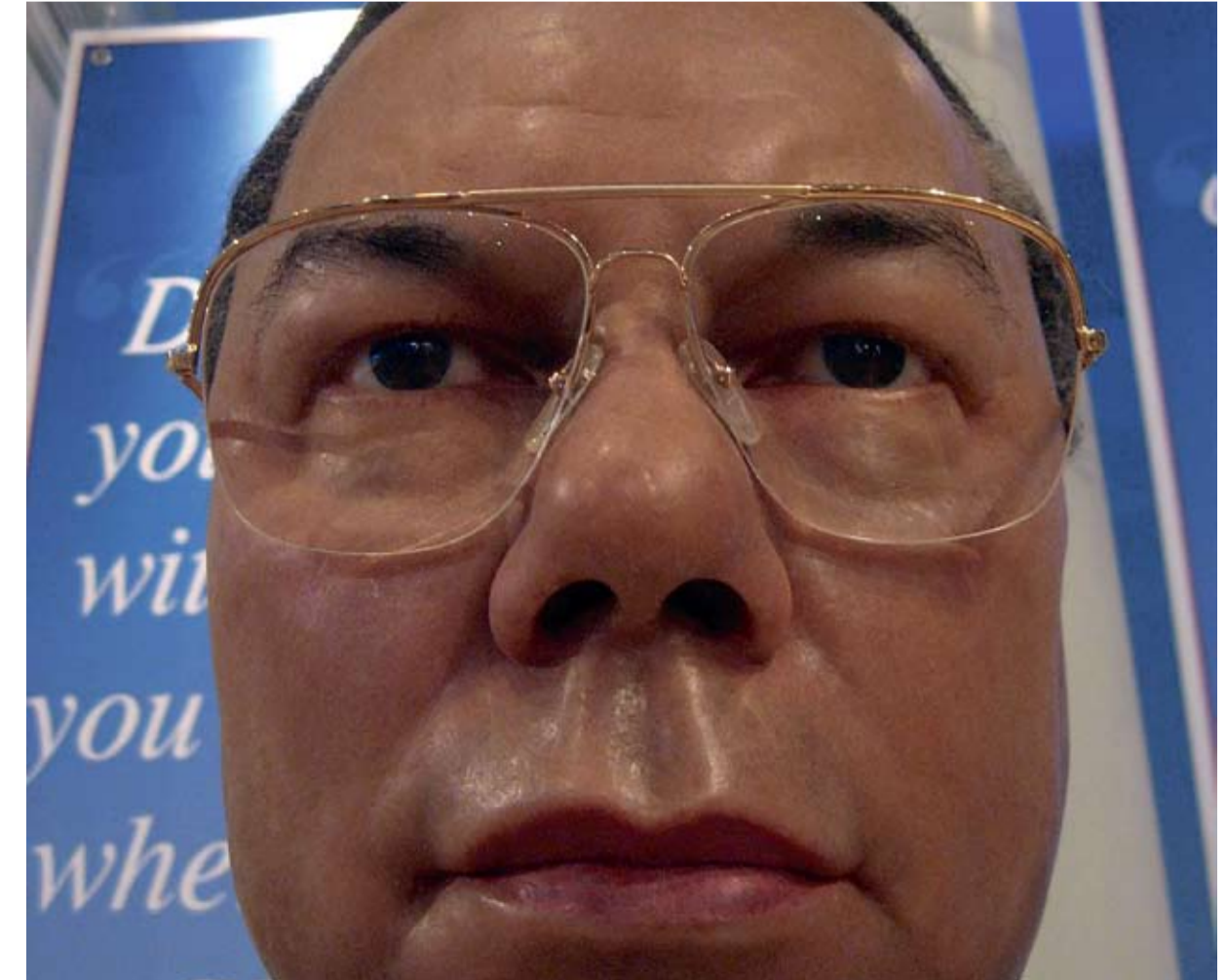
He remarked that senior members of his own party were talking about Obama being a Muslim. To which Powell rebuked, "Well, the correct answer is, he is not a Muslim. He's a Christian, has always been a Christian. But the really right answer is, 'What if he is? Is there something wrong with being a Muslim in this country?' The answer's 'No, that's not America.'"

McCain brushed off the revelation by saying, "Well, again, we have a very, we have a respectful disagreement, and I think the American people will pay close attention to our message for the future and keeping America secure. We're long-time friends. This doesn't come as a surprise." He went on to state that he had the support of numerous other senior and respected figures of the Republican Party, such as Henry Kissinger and Alexander Haig.

However, Powell didn't stop there. He went on to further attack his Party for their ever-increasing drift to the Right and how this trend looks set to continue under McCain.

Furthermore, he expressed his disillusionment about Palin, believing her not to be ready for the Oval Office. Powell's words are likely to have a significant positive impact on the Obama campaign. As a 26-year veteran of Congress and having played an active role in the Vietnam and the Gulf wars, his support provides the Obama campaign with some serious ammunition.

Even though the polls are showing that Obama is in the lead, anything is possible. Palin's cameo comedy appearance on Saturday Night Live, which drew a record viewer turnout, went to show that the McCain campaign may still have a few tricks up its sleeve. But with the dark clouds of Troopergate over Palins shoulders and McCains inability to arouse the voter's passions, will such novelty items shift American voter's opinions? Only time will tell.



In direct conflict with his own party, Colin Powell has given his support to Barack Obama



Mine eyes have seen the glory

Rosie Grayburn is engrossed and enamoured at the NG's new exhibition, *Renaissances Faces*

The new exhibition at the NG, *Renaissance Faces*, was hailed as 'something good, rather than something lots of people will like', a.k.a. an average variety of exceptional paintings. Most things at the NG are bound to be OK due to the incredible expert knowledge of each curator about their field, which always leaks out in either the audio guide or the blurb by each painting: "To hear our curator of Northern European Renaissance Female Forms tell you more about her nipples, press the green button". All in all, you always tend to leave their exhibitions feeling that was money well spent, even though you have no idea how you're going to use all those shiny, new postcards you just blew your budget on.

I loathe the space they use for their paying exhibitions. The crypt-like Sainsbury Wing basement is suitably neutral for any use but I really wish they'd use the main building for these things, if only for the feel of some natural light and the elegant walls. However, the grey neutrality of the Sainsbury Wing seems quite suitable for their Renaissance paintings as it mimics the blank religious homes most of them probably occupied in their heyday.

I enter the semi-Blockbuster *Renaissance Faces* with trepidation but soon relax into paintings-mode with the help of the soothing, Welsh tones of the nice lady talking on my audio guide. Audio guides are most definitely worth every penny if you do like learning about the art and stories behind the paintings. The blurb is not enough and they hardly ever blurb about technique, paint or history in depth. They cost £3 for students, which works out as two hours of fun with some Renaissance music thrown in, too!

Following the proper etiquette of exhibitions, Room 1 contains all the oldest portraits of the Renaissance. In 1400, people suddenly decided that they wanted to be remembered for who they were as individuals and not as generic workshop copies of a face. The first portrait is a stunning profile of the daughter of Henry IV. It is in fantastic condition and has clearly been restored or tidied up for display – the blue of her dress is rich and the gold pattern is ornate and pure. She sports a fashionably Renaissance hairstyle – a plucked hairline. Yes, girls: a receding hairline was all the rage!

In the 15th century before the full frontal portrait became popularised, a profile was the angle of choice. This

was not to hide the fugly side of your face, but this angle was said to be the most memorable view of a person and showed how virtuous you were. They were obviously emulating antiquity, like Roman coins etc. However, they soon realised that was a load of bollocks and as you walk around the room, you notice that the portrait are gradually turning to a full-frontal position. Clever curators!

Bellini's portrait of Doge Leonardo Loredon really turns your head in this first room. The Doge radiates power from his visage. The amazing life-like features of his head show the advancement of technique with the use of paints. I'd like to think I'm a bit of a paint geek and it's fascinating to note the change from tempura-based paint to oil paints. Oil paints dry much more slowly than tempura or egg-based paints so artists realised they could spend much longer manipulating the colours and shapes on the canvas or panel. The resulting naturalistic works are fine in detail and much more interesting to look at.

I'm afraid to say I fell for a young man while I was at the gallery. The young man in question was painted by Botticelli and he was my favourite in the whole exhibition. He seems so unre-

markable at first but I ended up gazing at him for almost 15 minutes and had to keep coming back to him to see his self-assuredness and deep eyes. I was absolutely captivated.

On entering the second room it was like I was walking into a Renaissance house where everyone looks up from their tasks to see who's just come in. I felt like I disturbed a couple of people reading as they glance up angrily from their books. These portraits seem far less posed even though they all were probably sat for.

The faces in this room seem to have more personality, perhaps due to the better use of light by painters. We also start to notice another Renaissance trait in these paintings – the use of symbolism in vast quantities. Art Historians, have a field day! There is an unnamed lady in one painting. What is her name?

Well, Margarita of course! Her dress is embroidered with daisies, she holds a string of pearls and a pet dragon – all of which means Margarita or are synonymous with Saint Margarita. Another example of symbolism is shown obviously with "Man holding skull and a pansy". No, he does not want to kill all the Gays: he is meditating on death. The skull means death and the pansy

(or *pensée* in French) means thought.

My favourite painting here was the portrait of Lady Anne Lovell by Holbein, one of my favourite artists. She looks so modest but the portrait does show her wealth very discreetly with her beautiful, expensive ermine hat. I love Holbein's elegantly twirling leaves as a backdrop and the inclusion of her pet squirrel eating an acorn. The lady was identified partly because of clever addition of a starling to her picture. Starling is a play on words of the lady's ancestral seat, East Harling. Clever, eh?

By this time in the exhibition I have noticed a lot of these paintings actually come from 'The National Gallery London'. I am disappointed that they have just been moved downstairs from their usual spots in the main gallery to form an exhibition with other works of a similar genre. Is it just a cheap trick by the NG or a money-saving scheme in the midst of the threat of recession? Eventually I decide to feel proud that so many of these lovely, lovely portraits belong to us as a country (Insert National Anthem here). Also, I guess they do make more sense when put into a context like this exhibition.

Room 3 highlights the use of portraiture in marriage negotiations and

courtship in 15th century Europe. Firstly, we see the Renaissance's perfect wife. Boys take note. She has blonde, lightly curling hair, pure, pale skin and she holds an orange blossom in her delicate hand symbolising chastity. This portrait was obviously sent to the lady's hubby-to-be to tantalise his taste buds. Phwoar.

As we know, Henry VIII also partook in these portrait courtships. He found his 4th wife, Anne of Cleves this way – just like a Tudor dating agency. Interestingly he also sought out other prospective brides before he [wrongly] chose Anne 'take two'. His court painter, Holbein, was sent to Brussels to paint the famously beautiful Christina of Denmark. At the age of 16 she had been widowed already and Henry was interested. In the portrait she is dressed full length in black and has a foxy look in her eye. Fortunately for Christina the marriage negotiations came to nothing, and Henry took Anne of Cleves instead.

Room 4 passes quickly although I enjoy learning about Jan van Eyck, of whom everyone seems to have heard but me.

There are several of his well-known paintings displayed here and you can appreciate his absurdly good technique and skill with paint. Right on cue, the NG pulls their expert on Northern European Renaissance paint out of the bag so they can tell us all about him on

the audio guide. I love van Eyck's self-portrait – he looks shrewd and cocky. He knows how good he is and he wants that to be preserved forever!

You will all recognise 'The Ugly Woman'. This timeless portrait may be a satire on lust or a cruel mocking of an ugly person in love. She clasps a rosebud next to her wrinkled cleavage, offering it to the man in the painting next door. Funnily enough, she is the best thing in Room 5, under the theme 'Love and Beauty'. Everyone else here is boring and beautiful, modelled on Michelangelo's David or the ideal woman.

The variety of drawings in the next room keeps us interested as the exhibition draws to a close. There are fine Holbein sketches, a self portrait by Pontormo (the 1st Calvin Klein model) in his underwear and a portrait of a corpse. This may sound rather sinister but the artist has actually used his death sketch to make a portrait of the man with his doting grandson. The result brings the man back to life in a colourful and very sweet commemorative painting. Sniff.

For some reason, the last room of the exhibition is dedicated to the ruling powers of the Renaissance: that is the Church and the monarchs. It is a little demeaning after seeing all those wonderful portraits to be reminded about who really was in charge of this 'rebirth' of the arts. Ah well, it is a nice

history lesson, and Phillip II of Spain's 'swagger portraits' do fit quite nicely in the space. Also, this is the first room where we actually get to see some Titian portraits. I am unimpressed. Although his technique is clearly innovative, the colours aren't as rich as I like, nor are the features as fine. However, his portrayal of Pope Paul III does get across his unequivocal power. This guy is scary and must have been incredibly formidable in real life. Shiver.

So, in the Renaissance, for the first time people wanted to be remembered as the unique person they were. This is clearly demonstrated in this exhibition with the huge variety of people on display – it's like going to a fabulous party full of witty, attractive people. There are Medici bankers, virtuous wives, bored and rich young men, Emperors and popes... In my opinion, *Renaissance Faces* is a blockbuster of an exhibition. I learnt so much and it is really quite magical being able to look into these 500 year-old faces which are so wonderfully preserved.

I wonder, in 500 years time when there is a '21st century Faces' exhibition at the National Gallery, how will we be remembered?

Renaissance Faces is on until 18th January. It costs £10.50 with your student card and it is well worth the money. Do it, do it now.



What a pretty picture you drew. Bless.

The high price of living the dream

Katie Clemence stays gripped through Australian playwright Andrew Upton's darkly comic play, *Riflemind*

It was a long time since I'd been to the theatre, so I remember feeling slightly wary as I idled in the foyer of Trafalgar Studios before the start of what I'd just learned was to be a play of two and a half hours. I hadn't had much sleep, so I hoped the show would be exciting enough to keep me awake and gripped.

The show, directed by Phillip Seymour Hoffman, is set in modern times-

it focuses on the relationships between the members of a once-iconic band (Riflemind) attempting to get back together and go on tour. We've all seen how successful reunion tours can be, but a highly-strung frontman, junkie bassist and broke drummer lead the audience to question whether it will really work this time.

The play revolves around John, the lead guitarist. Having walked out on

the band, causing the split, he arranges a reunion for them in his decadent country house. He has starved himself of music for 6 years, choosing instead to lead a life of abstinence with his yoga-obsessed wife, Lynn.

Their delicate equilibrium is shattered, however, by the arrival of the band; old relationships are rekindled while John and Lynn are again tempted by the alcohol and drugs they swore to

never abuse again.

John Hannah shines like a Scottish beacon in the role of John, the moody, world-weary protagonist, whilst Susan Prior emerges as a compelling character in her role as Lynn, the dutiful housewife who gave up her days as a wild child to save her marriage.

Critics described the play as "darkly comic" and "explosive", and I would be inclined to agree with them – the play

boldly explores the dark secrets of human relationships, using suspense and intrigue to keep the audience wanting more.

Overall, if you are looking for a frightening insight into the moments of desperation, insecurity and anxiety that characterise the human race, coupled with awkward and at times bleak humour, then *Riflemind* is right up your alley.



It's very difficult to decide which is more attractive. I'm not too sure why we're deciding but I'm going to go for the fruit.. delicious.



John Hannah, left, as John in Andrew Upton's new play *Riflemind*. Did the chap playing the guitar just fart? How terribly rude.

The Little Sparrow takes flight

Caz Knight keeps warm with some scintillating vocals, courtesy of a new biopic of the great Edith Piaf

Anyone who thinks they have never heard of Edith Piaf will know exactly who she is upon hearing her distinctively powerful voice sing just a few lines of 'Je ne regrette rien'. Regarded as one of France's greatest popular singers, she was able to bring tears to the eyes of many who could not understand a word of French.

Standing only 4'10" tall, the "Little Sparrow" was anything but in character and energy, living a hectic and eventful life involving numerous boyfriends, husbands, car crashes, morphine addiction, being brought up in a brothel, helping French prisoners escape Nazi persecution, colossal fame and extraordinary talent.

Much of her life remains mysterious despite many written biographies, as well as the film about her life, *La Vie en Rose*, although the legend that she was born on the pavement of the Rue de Belleville in Paris is most likely incorrect! The Donmar Warehouse's production moves from its home in Covent Garden to the Vaudeville Theatre to continue its run of Pat Gem's *Piaf*, thirty years after its birth by the RSC in 1978.

Lasting ninety minutes with an absence of an interval, the play's pace is fast and was obviously written with the assumption that audiences had a good idea of the content of Piaf's life and stardom. Details and characters about the singer's life, which ebb and flow out of the story at a startling rate (bordering on being rushed) were often easy to overlook as we struggled to keep abreast of developments and names. Further confusion was added as many of the actors adopted the role of several

"The stunning talent of Elena Roger compacted into a feisty, female fireball"

persons: was that her boyfriend/agent from before or a new one?? The choppy transitions between scenes were executed cleanly, morphing seamlessly between both moods and settings; Piaf's costume changes occurring on-stage as the actors re-dressed her in and out of her trademark black dress, the sparrow's diva streak letting it all ensue around her.

The stunning talent of Elena Roger – with all the potency of a large, orotund opera singer, compacted into a feisty, female fireball – is the raison d'être of the show. Her depiction of Piaf is stunning, from the start as a loud-mouth, spitting, sluttish street urchin and throughout the play as she rises to fame increasing in self-importance, still maintaining streaks of her humble origins and promiscuous ways, until the end as the singer descends into frailty, unhappiness and alcoholism as cancer consumes her.

I had doubts about how French her accent sounded, thinking it was more Italian, but given Edith Piaf's mixed Italian and French heritage, it seemed fitting. A superb effort also came from



It's hard deciding whether to drink with sophistication from the glass or to throw restraint to the wind and chug from the bottle

the hair and make-up team who managed to age Piaf very well with some convincing wigs.

Lorraine Bruce as Piaf's "partner in mischief", Toine, gave a very funny performance helped no doubt by her bulky frame, boisterous mannerisms and loud cockney accent albeit rather odd given the Parisien setting. The

sexual chemistry between Rogers and Philip Browne, who took the part of boxer Marcel Cerdan - the true love of Piaf's life, was electric and stood out despite a short scene between the two. Edith and Marlene Dietrich (played by Katherine Kingsley) share an onstage kiss which will go down well with any heterosexual males and girls will be

pleased to see two taut, sculpted, shirtless boxers fighting in the ring.

Roger's voice contains all the force required to chill the audience in a similar way that Piaf would have done and retains the singer's warbling vibrato sound which seals the play with the much loved and anticipated 'Je ne Regrette Rien', which merited the stand-

ing applause it received.

The show is a real treat and those who hate musicals need not worry: this is more of a play-cum-concert with none of the abhorrent choreographed dance routines, group singing and ghastrly scores which plague many West End venues, only beautiful renditions of Piaf's music.

DramSoc's first show of the year

Tosin Ajayi casts an expert eye over the first performance of DramSoc's 'The Importance of Being Earnest'

DramSoc's opening salvo of the year is Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, an 1895 comedy which is probably Wilde's best-known play.

The play opens with Algernon, an aristocratic young Londoner, receiving his friend Ernest Worthing, whilst waiting for a visit from his aunt, Lady Bracknell. Ernest then professes his love for Lady Bracknell's daughter Gwendolen and states his desire to marry her. Due to a cigarette case that he left in Algernon's care, it unfolds that Ernest is actually Jack Worthing, and has created the Ernest persona so he can come on jaunts into London from the country. As he says, 'I'm Ernest in Town and Jack in the country'.

Despite Lady Bracknell's objections, Jack proposes to Gwendolen, planning to kill off the Ernest persona should she agree. But she blows that notion out of the water with the line "the moment Algernon mentioned that he had a friend called Ernest, I knew I was destined to love him". She is determined to marry him, regardless of her mother's wishes, as long as his name is Ernest.

At this point the real thrust of the play kicks in, as a case of mistaken identity ensues, with Algernon going to the country pretending to be Ernest, while Jack starts to spread the news that Ernest is dead. Algy (or Ernest) soon meets and falls for Cecily, Jack's (or Ernest's) impressionable young ward, and wants to marry her. She is as keen to marry him – as long as his name is really Ernest. To revive a well-worn theatrical cliché, hilarity ensues.

The well-rounded cast really get into their roles and it was obvious everyone enjoyed putting the play on. Some of the dialogue zings back and forth and the cleverness of Wilde's writing really comes to the fore.

The best lines of the play undoubtedly fall to Lady Bracknell (Rebecca Jones). An example of this are the words to her daughter: "when you do become engaged, I or your father, should his health permit, will inform you of the fact. An engagement should come on a young girl as a surprise, pleasant or unpleasant as the case may be. It is hardly a matter that she should be allowed to arrange for herself."

There is much more in a similar vein – you could fill a book with the lines she utters – and indeed, Wilde has. Brilliantly made to embody all of the social hypocrisies of the period, Lady Bracknell is one of those towering characters that chews up the spotlight whenever on stage (most memorably played on screen by the late Dame Edith Evans, and in the last screen adaptation by Dame Judi Dench. If she wasn't on stage for such a short time, the rest of the characters would live in her shadow, and the play picks up considerably when she bursts in for the first time. Rebecca Jones' performance is the most stylised in the play and the clipped tones that she speaks in make everyone in the audience feel as chastised as one of Lady Bracknell's subordinates.

The other performances are good, and a lightness of touch required for such a romp pervades the whole production. Special mention must go to Gilead Amit who played Jack Worthing, who has the sometimes thankless task of being the straight man, permitting the farce to unfold around him, especially in relation to Jan Szafranski (Algernon) whose performance

sometimes flies perilously close to caricature. The Algernon/Jack interaction is central to the play working, and the work of Amit and Szafranski keeps the play ticking over nicely.

And now for the criticism: the first act takes a while to get going, and the cast don't seem to truly believe the coincidences that lead to the inevitably happy ending. There's a bit too much 'nudge, nudge, wink, wink' going on here. It's not giving anything away to say that a few people get married, but at some points the casts look embarrassed for that to be the case. From a technical standpoint, good use is made of the three location set, including an interval set-change that will leave those paying attention wondering "How did they do that?". Plus there is some stressing that will have you wondering if there are any plants missing around college.

As an introduction to Wilde, this production works really well, and those who are conversant with the playwright will be pleasantly surprised. The most appropriate adjective for this play is 'feel-good'. People will leave with a smile on their faces, and if this is a taster, it bodes well for the other productions that DramSoc has planned for this year.

DramSoc's Production of 'The Importance of Being Earnest' has two more performances, Friday 24th and Saturday 25th of October. 7pm, Union Concert Hall.

Director: Kristen Farebrother

Producer: Pietro Franchi

Cast list:

John Worthing, J.P Gilead Amit

Algernon Moncrieff Ziggi Szafranski

Hon. Gwendolen Fairfax Fran Buckland

Cecily Cardew Lauren Waterman

Lady Bracknell Rebecca Jones

Miss Prism Robyn Jacobs

Canon Chasuble Mark Manders

Lane, manservant Daniel Naujoks

Merriman, butler Tiberiu Chis

DRAM SOC Invites you to attend the Freshers' Performance of Oscar Wilde's

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST





On the evenings of
Thursday 23rd to Saturday 25th October
Doors open 7:00pm (curtain up 7:30)
Union Concert Hall

Tickets: £2 Students/£4 Non-students/ Free for DramSoc members






imperial college union



Seconds after one of the shocking revelations made in Act 1 – Oscar Wilde was a homosexual!

Warning - not for the faint-hearted

Catherine Jones goes to the Olivier to see a merciless and gut-wrenching production of *Oedipus*

Sophocles' *Oedipus*, the ancient Greek masterpiece, is a play charged with a powerful and emotional poignancy in Alex McGuinness' adaption at the Olivier theatre, Southbank. It is the story of ill-fated Oedipus' frightening process of realising he has killed his father, and bedded his mother.

Ralph Fiennes put on a terrific performance, starring as the naive yet exceptionally arrogant king. My lasting memory will be of the exquisite anguish of the fallen Oedipus, fist clenched in mouth, then curled up foetally as he struggles with the realisation of his true identity.

For the uninitiated, I'll begin with a brief synopsis of the plot. Oedipus's fate is predetermined at birth by Apollo. The prophecy states he is destined to kill his father and bed his mother. As a consequence, Oedipus is abandoned by his parents and left to die with his ankles bound. Surviving this ordeal,

he is adopted into a royal household in another kingdom. As an adult, things take a turn for the worse when Oedipus kills an elderly man one night at a crossroads. This man, unbeknownst

"it is a play charged with a powerful and emotional poignancy"

to Oedipus, was his father, the King of Thebes. Oedipus, still unaware of his true identity, solves the riddle of the Sphinx, winning the throne of Thebes and the hand of the Queen, his biological mother. With this part of the destiny fulfilled, the play begins with the kingdom of Thebes beset with a

plague-like curse. Oedipus the King comes to the aid of his subjects, setting out on a mission to bring the murderer of the dead monarch to justice.

Fiennes played an arrogant Oedipus, throwing his weight around as the autocratic leader. A good performance from Fiennes – as you would expect from an Oscar-nominated actor. My only qualm was the pre-recorded howls of Oedipus's self-mutilating pain, losing authenticity when played from an off-stage amplifier. As for the supporting roles, Jasper Britton's Creon had boyish charm reminiscent of a young Jeremy Clarkson. Claire Higgins' Jocasta gave an interesting performance, highlighting the sexual tension in their sickening relationship and Teiresias, the old blind prophet played by Alan Howard, had gravitas, with a slight Irish twang to his gravelly accent. Praise also goes out to an excellent chorus.

The staging was vaguely reminiscent of a courtroom, aptly framing Oedipus'

detective work. Dramatic shadows and clever spotlighting added drama to the bleak and desolate stage. Sharply dressed in formal suits, a bald Ralph Fiennes did look every bit the lawyer when cross-examining Teiresias and Creon. Perhaps the suits were a bit too timely, evoking clichéd comparisons to deflated Wall Street traders.

A discussion of Oedipus is not complete without some kind of reference

"I left the auditorium exhausted"

to Freud. Freud suggested the Oedipus myth is poignant because it touches on something darker in the human psyche, the Oedipus complex, a subconscious childhood dual desire for incest and patricide. On the surface this

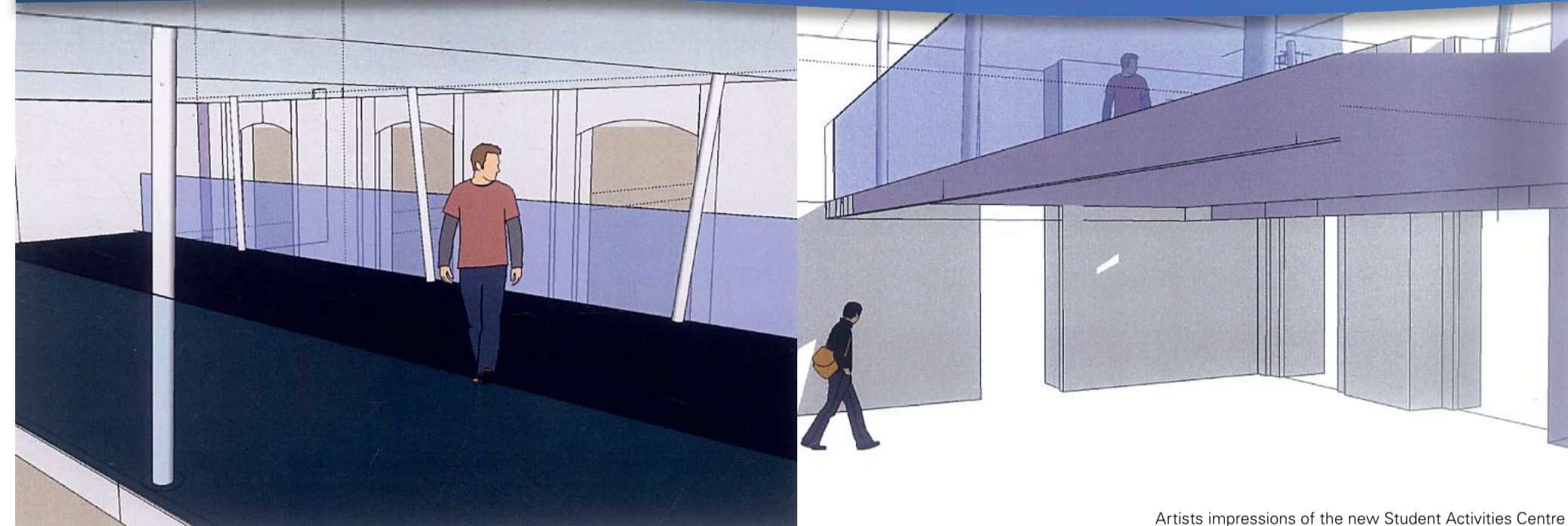
seems a very strange idea, but I think there may be some truth in this. Adam Phillips, an eminent psychotherapist and author, puts this idea well in a recent interview in the Times; "As boys growing up, most of us play this game of distancing our mothers and not letting them in, and inviting them in and being very needy".

To conclude, this is a very insightful play, and an excellent production. If forced, I'd give it 8 stars out of 10. Why only eight? It was difficult to have the stamina for the intensity of the production. I left the auditorium exhausted. I guess Freud might claim it was the Oedipus complex at work in my repressed subconscious. I think it could have something to do with the omission of an interval break. Hmmm. Maybe let's just blame fate...

***Oedipus* runs until January 4th at the Olivier theatre.**



Obviously this production of *Oedipus* contains zombies and is more gory than *Saw V*. Probably not as gory as *Hostel*, although nothing is likely to ever be.



Artists impressions of the new Student Activities Centre

Union Building Redevelopment Update

Work is well underway on phase two of the Beit Masterplan, the three phase project to modernise and make better use of the space in the Union Building, Beit Quadrangle. The first phase saw the installation of a new Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant lift as well as a new 2nd floor mezzanine level chair store, changing room shells on the 2nd floor mezzanine and 3rd floor and access improvements from daVinci's to the Quad.

The second phase will see the completion of the new mezzanine level splitting what was the Union Gym in to two floors. The new floor created will be the home of a new Student Activities Centre (SAC) which will provide a larger and better-designed space for all of the Clubs & Societies to use as a base for their activities. Half of the SAC will be suspended from the ceiling with workstations and equipment for Club &

Society use. The main Union Reception will also be housed in this area providing the first point of call for all visitors to the Union. The other half of the SAC will hold The Advice Centre, providing a more high profile space for our independent, impartial and free advice service. When the whole project is complete the space below the SAC will be the new Union Offices where the Sabbaticals and staff will work. It is hoped that by having the people that run the Union closer to the heartbeat of the organisation, the Clubs & Societies, it will help us stay more member focused.

The space freed up from where the old SAC was will be used to create brand new fully-equipped meeting rooms and Club & Society stores and in turn the space where the old meeting rooms were will be turned in to a state-of-the-art dance and activity space. This floor will be fitted with sprung floors, mirrored

walls and brand new changing rooms offering a superb space for our Clubs & Societies to use throughout the year.

So, where are we now with all this work? Our team of builders have already made a good start to the new mezzanine level on the second floor.

Work is also under way providing services to the new floors including networking, electricity and air conditioning. We are aiming to have all the work finished by the end of the Summer Term and will be completing these works in phases. We will keep you up-to-date with what is happening in Felix and on our website and hope that any disruptions caused by these works will be kept to a minimum.



The Union Building before the additional floors were added

The obvious aim of these works is to make our Union Building much more inline with what our members, you the students, want and need from it. Having been designed and built nearly 100 years ago, with additions made in the 1950s, the demands on it have changed massively; something that will be addressed during this project.

HAVE YOU TRIED?

Our new and improved evening menu.

Available from 17:00 - 21:00 across the Union.

Choose from a fantastic selection of snacks, pizzas and main courses, order at the bar and we will bring the food to your table once it is cooked!

Check our website to see the full menu.



Music

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Music Editor

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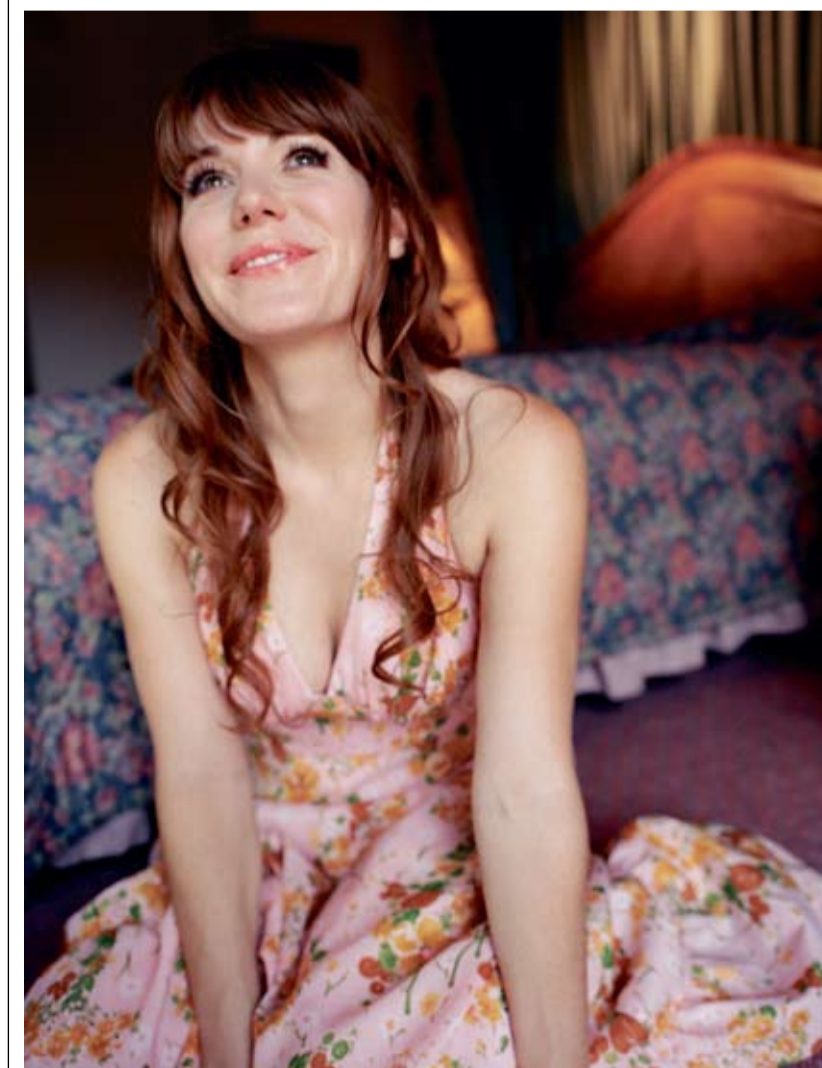
Kiley goes Koko... kind of

OK, technically Jenny Lewis, former front-femme of Rilo Kiley, but I couldn't resist the alliteration. *felix's* friend Emily Wilson headed to Koko to check her out

In the great Gwen Stefani/No Doubt tradition, Jenny Lewis has ditched her Rilo Kiley band mates in favour of going solo. She has also, somewhat alarmingly, ditched their indie rock style for something a little more country and western. On her first album, *Rabbit Fur Coat*, she was billed alongside The Watson Twins but her latest effort, *Acid Tongue*, is by her alone. I booked to see Jenny Lewis live before I'd listened to *Acid Tongue* – a risky move given I hadn't been too impressed by *Rabbit Fur Coat* – given that it would be the next best thing to seeing Rilo Kiley (who last year cancelled the gig I had tickets for, damn them!). So I was pleased by how impressive the new album was and arrived at KOKO with much anticipation.

The support act Benji Hughes was pretty good as support acts go, if you're into very hairy fat men with voices so deep the words slur into one. He also stumbled on to the stage a few times during the main set for the occasional backing vocal contribution. The venue was filled to capacity even before Benji took to the stage, with an unexpectedly high proportion of older music lovers. Later on, during the main set, I was bewildered to have two women easily in their 60s push past to stand in front of me. Old lady smell is not something you expect to experience going to a gig. I can only imagine that the older crowd were keen country music fans intrigued by new talent.

Lewis herself succeeded in being kooky enough to make sense in the context of KOKO, wearing a circus master jacket and high-waisted dungarees that couldn't have worked on anybody else, with a black felt hat on a long mane of messy hair she apparently hadn't bothered to comb beforehand. She managed to combine a laid-back dippiness with commanding stage presence, added to her indescribable vocal talent.



Jenny Lewis plays live somewhere. I don't know where, but it's not Koko. I don't know when either.

anybody else, with a black felt hat on a long mane of messy hair she apparently hadn't bothered to comb beforehand. She managed to combine a laid-back dippiness with commanding stage presence, added to her indescribable vocal talent.

On the whole most of the songs came from *Acid Tongue*, but early on a rendition of "The Charging Sky" revealed that *Rabbit Fur Coat* was not to be neglected, and did manage to improve the album in my eyes. The clear highlight of the night was "The Next Messiah", also arguably the best track on the new album. If I had to recommend just one Jenny Lewis track, I'd tell you to check out this one. It was spectacular

"there was much audience-muttered debate as to the gender of the drummer"

live, and stunned me both with Jenny's astounding voice and the also the backing instruments. But also very very good were 'Jack Killed Mom', which I don't see how anybody could listen to and resist the urge to tap a foot at the very least, even though Jenny Lewis in no way offers music that is very danceable. Also, 'See Fernando', which saw Jenny up on top of her piano. One song I was less impressed by live was 'Carpetbaggers'. On the album this is a duet with Elvis Costello and one of my favourite tracks, but without Costello being involved it wasn't quite as good.



Jenny Lewis enjoys apples

pressively flexible musicians appearing alongside Lewis. The same musicians appear on the *Acid Tongue* recordings, and include Lewis's long-haired guitarist boyfriend Jonathan Rice. I noted there was much audience-muttered debate as to the gender of the drummer, later introduced as Barbara Gruska.

It's always a good sign when you go home and the music is even better to listen to than it was before. Overall, this is one of the best gigs I've been to this year - Jenny Lewis managed to sway not only me, but a whole audience of people who arrived with a "would rather have seen Rilo Kiley" attitude.

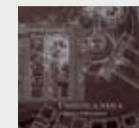
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Music

Music for your mind and music for your soul

An album review duplex from opposite sides of the music spectrum: Jóhann Jóhannsson and Count Bass D

Album Review



Jóhann Jóhannsson
Fordlandia
4ad
★★★★

Jorga Costa

So Iceland's financial situation has apparently become so bad that the entire nation was recently put up for auction on ebay.com with a starting bid of only 99p (Björk, unfortunately, not included). Though economic woes have recently pushed the country into the headlines, Iceland is of course much more famous for its vibrant and eccentric music scene. Múm, Valgeir Sigurðsson, Emiliana Torrini, Amiina, Sigur Rós, The Sugarcubes – the list goes on and on, making it seem like every second person in this tiny nation is either a fisherman or a musician. Extending that list is composer and producer Jóhann Jóhannsson, and while his music might be more classical and stately than that of those aforementioned artists, it is by no means any less captivating.

'Fordlandia's title track starts the album on a note so gentle that it might take you a minute to realise the soft sighs of Jóhannsson's strings, but they're

there and they're utterly gorgeous and they sweep out a circular theme that swells the piece into a thirteen minute-plus epic. These strings are joined by brass and other orchestral elements along with skittering electronic percussion and if Matthew Cooper eased up on the synthetic arrangements, this is what Eluvium would probably sound like.

Supposedly the second in a planned trilogy based on the influence of technology and American brands (the first, 'IBM 1401, A User's Manual', was a eulogy to the computer of the same name), 'Fordlandia's organic heart pulsates with the aid of some very clever and subtle electronic processing. On 'Fordlandia – Aerial View', a restrained and despondent string quartet floats above muted bass rumbles, an effect

"a restrained and despondent string quartet floats above muted bass rumbles"

that's akin to being buffeted by high turbulent winds while making Fordlandia (Henry Ford's disastrous Amazonian rubber plantation – thank you once again, Wikipedia), sound like one

very bleak, melancholic place. The sadness continues with the organ requiem of 'Chimaerica', a track that becomes even more funereal as ever loudening, electronic shuffling threatens to shatter the piece and throw it down a deep, dark abyss.

It all sounds rather heavy, and the fact that this is essentially a concept album means that the threat of pretentiousness is always hidden behind the next ridiculously long track title ('Melodia (Guidelines For A Propulsion Device Based On Heim's Quantum Theory)', anyone?). Luckily, Jóhannsson largely lets the music do the talking and all the press release guff about doomed utopias, dead Greek gods and crippled German physicists isn't absolutely necessary to know in order to enjoy the beauty of these eleven tracks. Part of why it all works so well is down to Jóhannsson's restraint as a composer and even as it sometimes sounds like an orphaned movie soundtrack, he never succumbs to Hollywood sentimentality, nor does he overuse themes – something which marred the otherwise elegiac beauty of his debut *Engleborn*.

From the quietly propulsive 'Rocket Builder (Io Pan!)', to the Howard Shore-esque choral work on the 'The Great God Pan Is Dead', Fordlandia remains intimate and absorbing. Jóhannsson has yet again succeeded in making another masterpiece record, one that opens up and becomes richer the more you listen to it. I can only hope that dodgy economics won't push him out of his day job.



Jóhannsson is known for spending 18 hours a day in photo booths

Album Review



Count Bass D
L7
1320 Records
★★★☆☆

Peter Sinclair

"Out in the streets you won't survive with wack-ass beats." So says the mythical MF Doom, close friend, confidant and multi-time collaborator of Dwight Farrell, AKA Count Bass D. With his latest LP *L7*, CBD is less concerned with survival than with evolution, his self-imposed isolation within the music industry proving to be a continued catalyst for a mental progression of hip-hop in a direction anti-parallel to the mainstream of the industry, and even orthogonal to the sub-genre of underground, 'left-field' hip-hop. Count Bass D is an anomaly – an individual, self contained musical entity.

Protection of personal freedom seems to be the source of his isolationism and the theme of a lot of his lyrics. Freedom from contractual obligations, freedom from hostile influence both in his life and his music. This attitude gives his music a distinctive flavour, which is entirely of his own creation. This is not to say his latest record is totally uninfluenced by other artists – there would be no music if there were no musical influences, rap music in general being particularly heavy in the throwbacks with its extensive use and reuse of

samples and beats – but his influences are all intentional. They come from the same places as where his passions lie – gospel, funk, soul (his last.fm profile says he's listened to Marvin Gaye's *Here My Dear* 77 times). There are elements of classic jazz in the format of a lot of the songs which take a very relaxed and liberal attitude to structure, favouring instead a kind of organic textural development, not quite on the

same level as the total structural decomposition of the post-rock kind, but certainly as close as hip-hop can get. J Dilla also, whose name is mentioned in virtually all discussions on contemporary hip hop, is definitely a source of inspiration also, him and CBD both favouring MPC cut-and-slice sampling techniques. The list of influences is extensive, but it's the way they are digested and assimilated by CBD which

keeps the sound so unique.

All music with such an overt shunning of contemporary sources risks inaccessibility, and this album is no exception, occasionally straying into abstraction and tracks which, for the regular listener (as opposed to the hip-hop connoisseur) can be confusing and somewhat unpalatable. I don't think it's due to some cocaine-drenched overindulgence on CBD's part, it's merely the inevitable consequence of stubbornness in the face of the predominate direction of the music industry. His opinions on the industry as a whole are made clear on the track 'Y.B.A Square', which features a vocal sample of some-

"...not quite on the same level as the total structural decomposition of the post-rock kind, but certainly as close as hip-hop can get."

one talking about its total corruption and money-orientated direction, over some laid back but complex sample-work. This sentiment is admirable, and it is precisely this which will make this



Count Bass D wearing a keyboard

album for some an attention grabbing, interesting, thought provoking listening experience, but I think the point will be all too easily missed by a lot of listeners.

I've had to bite the bullet of realism and give this album three stars, but it doesn't particularly do it justice, and it is not particularly accurate. For a lot of listeners this album will be worth a one, but a sizeable minority, myself included, would give it four or five – three is just the average. I personally found this a great release from one of hip-hop's few true innovators, and would definitely recommend this to anyone wanting to know hip-hop's full potential as a creative, uncommercialised genre.

I want that dress and I want a matching quilt too



Count Bass D surrounded by fucking musical equipment and shit



Rosie Grayburn
Food Editor

Oriental buffet disappoints

The Sandwich Shop is safe as the MDH's new venture bombs quite dramatically



Imperial's Oriental Buffet

★★★★★

MDH,
Sherfield Building

Best: Unlimited jasmine tea
Worst: The rest...
Go for...: Somewhere completely different. Oriental Canteen or Little Japan near the South Ken tube for similar oriental grub.
Price: £5

I'm sure by now all the Freshers would have figured out where to feed themselves within the campus: the Union, JCR, SCR (if you're smart enough to be a postgraduate) and the various departmental cafés. But good golly – what the hell have they done to the Main Dining Hall? Last week, my friend and I found out about the brand new £5 "Oriental Buffet" there and having just got through our very first (and very boring) lecture of the year we thought we deserved a mini feast, so we walked in. Considering it was all-you-can-eat

for just £5, we weren't surprised to see a fair number of diners there, although the size of the tables was overkill – on average only about three to four people were sat on each ten-seater table. If anything, it felt like we were eating in a prison dining hall. It's fair enough that they were trying to bring in the layout of a typical Chinese restaurant, but anyone with common sense would have used tables of different sizes – preferably a combination of four and six-seaters. Another immediate let-down was the fact that there were no chopsticks – instead they had pairs of lollipop sticks which you link together at the top. Even a Chinaman like me struggled with those vessel-blocking blades, let alone students from the rest of world.

"Our IC spring rolls would probably put Gordon Ramsay in a coma!"

Having said that, it's the food that ultimately determines how long a restaurant can last for. We didn't have high expectations from a £5 buffet, and my friends know that I'm picky with food most of the time, but even a regular 'Chinese take-away' would cringe at what our so-called catering team served. On a positive note, we were welcomed by the familiar chow mein (placed under a bright red light,

for some reason) and prawn crackers, which can't possibly go wrong. But what confused us was the bowl of french fries next to the chow mein. Fine, let it be a small element of the Chinese/fish-and-chips hybrid take-away shop. Further down the aisle they also served chicken wings in sweet soy sauce; my childhood favourite.

Things started to look grim when we moved on to the pool of chicken in black bean sauce. Frankly what made it just slightly better than Paper Tiger's (just down the road near the Tube station; NOT recommended) was the greater meat content. Our hope increased as we approached the spring rolls and the Thai fishcakes, only to be greatly disappointed. Even the take-away shops know that spring rolls are not made out of mushy vegetables wrapped in deep fried socks. Seriously, we really couldn't find any fish in the so-called "salmon fishcake". If Wether-spoon's burgers (which are OK) could make Gordon Ramsay puke, our IC spring rolls, and fishcakes, could probably put the great chef into a coma, and Jamie Oliver would actually murder someone.

Luckily, the "restaurant" did provide unlimited jasmine tea along with Chinese teapots and cups, which my poor friend and I consumed plenty of, to dilute the crap inside us.

I don't know if the buffet is a permanent catering service but, either way, do take our advice: save the fiver for a bonsai plant or a lucky bamboo plant instead – they won't kill you.

Richard Lai

"Thou shall hev a fishy on a little dishy"



Spicy Fish Stew

Serves 2 fat bastards or 3 skinny cows

Cost: Approximately £6 all together

We should all eat more fish. This stew is the quickest, simplest and tastiest way to cook it and it'll keep you warm on these cold London nights, like a big fishy hug in a bowl. Feel free to adapt the fish/cabbage/veg combo as you see fit but please make sure your fish is MCS (Marine Conservation Standard) certified as it means they come from sustainable habitats. A happy fish means a happy stew. If you're not sure, ask the nice man on the Sainsburys/Asda fish counter.

Ingredients:

1 tbsp oil
1 onion, chopped
1 leek, sliced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1tsp cumin
1 tsp paprika (add more if you like it hot)
100g squid rings or other seafood (optional)
1x 400g tin tomatoes
½ a tin of chickpeas (use the rest for hummous!)
½ savoy cabbage or 1 head of pak choi with the leaves removed
A large white fish fillet (350g) cut in half for a 2 person serving
Lemon wedges, parsley and chunky bread to serve

Fry the onion, leek and garlic in oil on medium heat until transparent. Add your seafood, spices and chickpeas. Turn up the heat and cook for 2 minutes with stirring. Tip in the tin of tomatoes then fill the empty tin half full with water and put that in too! Bring to the boil then taste the mixture. Add seasoning appropriately. Stir in the cabbage or pak choi. Place the fillets of fish on top of the stew and cover the pan. This will allow the steam from the stew to cook the fish so make sure the lid fits snugly. Steam for 8-10 minutes. To check the fish is cooked the flesh should flake away easily from the skin. Dish up into bowls or deep plates and serve sprinkled with parsley and with a squeeze of lemon...

Daddy dearest, take me to...

...the Prince Regent on Gloucester Road, it serves up top grub



The Prince Regent ★★★★★

25 Gloucester Road
Phone: 020 7589 0905
www.theprinceregentgloucesterroad.co.uk

Best: Tasty pudding and enormous sausages
Worst: The price - a few pounds more than the same food at the Queens Arms
Go for...: The 2 courses for £10 seems like good value but the portions are a bit small.
Price: £9.50 for mains - somewhere to drag the parents to!

importantly) was next to a radiator! The pub appeared to be inhabited by business parties and groups of professors, including a few of my own lecturers. This prompted a mortifying situation when you see a teacher outside of school, you just have to hide anywhere you can! Oh the shame!

Not only was the menu as advertised outside, but as it was between 12 and 3, the lunchtime '2 courses for £10' deal was also available. Dad opted for this, choosing chicken livers with bacon and rocket, whilst Mum and I picked the venison sausages with sweet potato mash and redcurrant jus. We had to wait a little while for the food to arrive, but the dishes were freshly prepared in the open kitchen, from which we could see sporadic bursts of flames appearing.

The presentation was basic but effective. I don't like all this faff that makes your plate look so huge that you can't manage it all. The bambi-meat sausages had an ideal texture and flavour: not so rough that it feels like sawdust in your mouth, but not so smooth that you know there isn't much meat in there. The sweet potato mash was light and creamy and had the flavour of the redcurrant jus which finished the plate

off nicely. I do like 'jus' even if it is a little pretentious and all you northerners are going to tell me it's just gravy! Dad's plate of livers, although very tasty, was rather on the diminutive side. But that was fine as it meant he could finish off the huge sausages we couldn't manage!

After our mains, the nice blonde waitress then informed us that the pana cotta advertised on the set menu had all been eaten. Instead we were offered sticky toffee pudding; Dad's face lit up! The pudding was sat in a sea of delicious butterscotch sauce and topped with a very posh looking vanilla ice cream. It was light and not too sweet. A perfect end to the meal.

The Prince Regent is definitely one of those places to take the parents when they say "we're coming up to London, let's do lunch". Although £10 for two courses isn't too pricey, it's definitely not student pricing. In addition, the portion sizes on this deal are minuscule, compared to the other main courses offered around the £10 mark. So if you are after a filling meal but aren't too fussed about how many courses it comes in, just go for a large main.

Lucy Harrold



Squashed Chicken Salad

Serves 2 rugby players or 3 ballet dancers

Cost: Approximately £6 all together

This lovely autumnal salad has seasonal butternut squash in it. Alternatively if you can be arsed peeling and scooping out a pumpkin, use that instead. I could eat this salad all day long. It's so moreish and healthy too! It requires some store cupboard ingredients like balsamic vinegar; which is useful to have around, just like emergency contraception. Remember, the tomatoes are good for your sperm, boys. Enjoy, my pretties!

Ingredients:

1 butternut squash, peeled, scooped and cubed
1 pack of cherry tomatoes
1 head of lettuce (it's cheaper than those wanky bags of salad)
2 chicken breasts, chopped (buy it from a butcher for super cheapness – supermarkets rip you off)
2 rashers of bacon, cut into bits
25g sunflower seeds

Dressing:

1 tbsp each of honey, balsamic vinegar and mustard
2 tbsp water

Pre-heat your oven to 200°C. Put your cubed squash onto a baking tray and bake in the oven. After 15 minutes add all the tomatoes to the tray and put it all back in the oven for another 10 minutes. When the tomatoes are in the oven, start cooking the meat. In a large pan, fry the chicken and bacon for 10 minutes. While that's cooking, start piling the salad leaves onto plates. When the bacon has coloured, add the sunflower seeds to the pan and stir it all together, so that the seeds pick up a lovely salty flavour from the bacon. Check the chicken is cooked then pile the meat mixture on top of the salad leaves. Keep the pan to one side – you'll need it for the dressing. Take the veg out of the oven and pile that on top of the meat too. If you keep piling the salad will eventually sag a bit, so you can get it all on. To make the warm dressing, put all the dressing ingredients into the pan used for the meat. Turn up the heat and boil for a few seconds. Then, pour over your salad. You have before you a tower of salad, protein-y joy. Salads aren't for fairies.

Imperial College
London

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The battle of minds

Director Ron Howard proves that politics has something of a boxing match in it, in the adaptation of Peter Morgan's play

Frost/Nixon ★★★★★

Director: Ron Howard
Writer: Peter Morgan
Cast: Frank Langella, Micheal Sheen, Kevin Bacon

Zuzanna Blaszczak
Film Editor

Just before entering the cinema to see the newest Ron Howard feature *Frost/Nixon*, someone asked me whether I was interested in American politics and if I'd seen the original Nixon interviews conducted by Frost. As I met the aforementioned person barely a minute beforehand, I decided it would be foolish to confess that I am utterly ignorant about history; politics in particular.

To keep my pride intact I made up some excuse, saying that I tried to see films with a completely open mind, without previous prejudices and preconceptions and other such hogwash.



A gentlemanly handshake or an intricate psychological act?

I was also visibly deflated. Had I just spent 11 quid to sit through a two hour long opinion-forming, propagandist semi-documentary? Despite that, I started scouring my brain for the keyword 'Nixon'. Success! I found an entry in my brain's version of the Internet Movie Database. Nixon, Watergate, Redford and, aha, *All the President's Men* - that's what my knowledge of the Watergate affair came down to - a Hollywood blockbuster from the 70s when conspiracy theory was 'cool'. And here comes my first surprise: you will not learn any more about that extremely embarrassing moment in American democracy from this movie, even though it's structured like a historical documentary.

The director assumes that American political history is part of the core curriculum in every nation's education system and hence does not waste valuable film reel to go into any detail about the political espionage, illegal break-ins, tax and campaign frauds and secret hush funds that make up

Watergate, the affair that is responsible for the 'gate' ending given to every political scandal ever since 1972 and the reason for the first and (so far) last time an American president resigned his position.

Instead of focusing on rehashing the drama and excitement of the immediate aftermath of the affair, the movie centres on a series of four interviews with Tricky Dicky (Nixon's nickname while in office) which were created and conducted by an English TV presenter David Frost a few months after the frenzy died down. In order to find his way back to the American TV scene Frost came up with the idea of interviewing the ex-president who had yet to confess to being part of Watergate.

The movie hinges on these two wonderfully complex characters for whom the outcome of the interviews becomes a matter of winning or failing at life. Nixon saw the interviews as an unmissable opportunity to regain the respect he craved. Armed with his ex-chief of staff Jack Brennan (Kevin Bacon) and a group of biographers and PR sharks he prepares himself to convince Americans that his presidency was a success. By the end of the story, Frost finds that he has put everything he has - money, career, reputation - on the line and he realizes that the only way he can come out successful is if he prevents Nixon from redeeming himself during the interviews. What follows is a truly gripping encounter, a boxing match where rhetoric replaces punches, psychological games replace the footwork and thorough research of the subject replaces powerful left and right knock-out hooks.

Joining the rest of the audience in the applause at the end, the little eloquence I possess disappeared completely and all I was left with was a very surprised 'wow'. Can politics really be this interesting?

Intelligence is Relative

Burn after reading ★★★★★

Directors: Ethan & Joel Coen
Writers: Ethan & Joel Coen
Cast: John Malkovich, Tilda Swinton, George Clooney, Brad Pitt

Priya Garg

So when I went to see this movie, I had absolutely no expectations. All we garnered from the trailers was 'wham' lots of famous actors are in it, 'wham' it's funny and 'wham' it's a Coen Brother's film. Which is essentially, all it really is.

The style of this film is slick, witty and irreverent. The plot-line itself is almost devoid of true end-point material, but the real genius is in the comic acting and the delivery.

Francis McDormand plays 'Linda Litzke' a lonely, hapless and somewhat ageing gym employee who is on a desperate quest for plastic surgery. Teamed with the hilarious and moronic Chad Feldheimer (Brad Pitt) they

chance upon a CIA agent's memoirs in the ladies' locker room, and believing it to be 'real high-up intelligent spy stuff' they quickly get themselves whisked into a world of secrecy, Russians, bribery and disappearing bodies.

John Malkovich is superb as a grouchy old agent who 'doesn't have a drinking problem' and finds himself unwillingly mixed up in the plot-line which revolves peculiarly around his relationship and concurrent divorce with his 'cold, stuck-up bitch' of a wife, impeccably delivered by Tilda Swinton. George Clooney is brilliant as the paranoid womanising character Harry, who dips in and out of all the characters' lives with no real purpose, and the expressions he provides, trust me, are priceless. This film centres on the confusion created by nothing leading to a lot of something. I don't want to give any more away, as the surprises are just so perfect. I would thoroughly recommend you get yourself down to see this - for a comedy that is like no other. It's not a rom-com, chick-flick, it's a laugh-out-loud cleverly made little film that will hold your attention for the 96 minutes and longer.



It's nice to see actors having fun the old-fashioned way.

A beginner's guide to the cinema brought to you by the Film Cynic Clinic

Stuart Higgins

This week we look at what could be considered quite simply the most important part of any film experience. It is of course the cinema, and this article will attempt to examine the delicate interplay of this ancient popcorn-strengthened establishment and the films we see within it. Nowadays with the plethora of methods for distributing and viewing movies, of which 98% are illegal, it's important to take a sentimental look back on the institute that started it all.

Thanks to market forces, most cinemas now reside on the outskirts of towns alongside other quality establishments such as bowling alleys, fast food outlets, and drug dens. For those lucky enough to find somewhere vaguely near habitation, your first experience will be the £2+ parking charge for daring to park nearby. Some hospitable multiplexes will refund the cost of parking, provided that you retain your ticket stub, car parking

ticket, have received the appropriate stamp from the cashier, have arrived between 3.00-3.05pm and are over 65. This inevitably lulls the majority of us into not bothering, upon the simple and reasonable excuse that life, quite frankly, is too short.

Assuming that you've managed to find a parking space, far enough away from those kids who seem to be using aerosols as flamethrowers, the next shock is inside. As you glance over the red information displays, which alternate faster than strobe lighting, you'll come across the small sticker by the ticket desk listing the prices. That can't be right! It must be a typo - someone must have put the decimal point in the wrong place! Oh no, they haven't. It's a shame that you can't barter nowadays. If you could, then there'd be the chance to offset some of the ticket price by part-exchanging the car you arrived in. But it's okay if you haven't brought that because full of cash with you. There's always a cashpoint nearby, complete with a minimum £1.50 charge for us-

ing it. Never mind, there can't be that many other opportunities to spend your hard earned cash (or perhaps a not-so hard earned student loan) before settling down to see the film. However as the sickly sweet scent of despair wafts over from the food counter you can't help but glance at its preservative, conservative, E-number-rammed goodness. A cinema is one of those few places where you can successfully exceed the daily recommended allowance of salt and fat four times over with just one hotdog. Similarly the pick and mix counter is perhaps one of the more fun elements of confectionary purchasing, but it's worth bearing in mind that in the current economic climate, it's cheaper per gram to buy gold bullion than a handful of jelly beans.

Laddled down with popcorn and coke, both of which seem to be sold by the tonne, you can eventually struggle past the attendant into the bowels of the building itself. There is something strangely enthralling about watching

someone carefully tear a stack of tickets in half, tell you which screen to go to, whilst simultaneously texting their mates. However you're nearly there. Once you've stumbled up the poorly-lit steps and found a seat that's far enough away from the couple snogging noisily at the back and those kids in the corner who seem to be using aerosols in flam-

ethrowers, there's a chance to relax.

So sit back and enjoy the half hour of adverts, however tempting they might be, because after the adventure of getting here, you haven't got money left to spend on them anyway.

Comments?

Send to: not_gavin@hotmail.com



Films we love at Imperial

Imperial College students, lecturers and staff share their treasured movies with *felix*. This week: *Howl's Moving Castle*

Emma Stokes
Student

It's pretty difficult to choose a favourite film - what makes one film stand out from the rest and warrant being championed? For me, it's the feeling I get when I watch it - it's the film I put on when I need cheering up, or to regain my faith in humanity! My favourite film is 'Howl's Moving Castle'.

For those of you who have never heard of it before, 'Howl's Moving Castle', or 'Hauru No Ugoku Shiro', is a Japanese anime film directed by the legend of the anime world, Hayao Miyazaki. The story is set in a magical land and tells a heartwarming and uplifting fairy tale.

To give you just a taste: there's a castle which can be in four places at once; there's Sophie, a young girl transformed into an old woman by an evil witch; there's Howl, an extremely handsome, but very vain wizard, as well as many more imaginative yet surprisingly human characters. Classic escapism, and

yes, I love it!

'Howl's Moving Castle' has a very unusual (for anime) mix of European and Japanese styles due to the British novel it is based on; think a quaint Austrian town and steam trains with Miyazaki's distinct styling. I find the attention to detail and character animation in the film extraordinary - the castle alone is breathtaking. Every frame would stand alone as a true work of art, showing traditional animation is anything but a thing of the past.

In my opinion, anime is best watched in Japanese (with English subtitles) - the language it's created in. However, in this case, I would recommend the English dubbing, as the film benefits from the gorgeous Christian Bale as Howl, screen legend Lauren Bacall as old Sophie and Billy Crystal, who is hilarious as a fire demon.

Underlying the main story, as with every Miyazaki movie, is an important message. In this case, it is a very strong anti-war message, along with undercurrents of the power of love, in-

ner beauty, and self-esteem. All of this, however, is done without being childish or clichéd, which can happen so easily in movies these days. Instead, it draws you in and is so human, feels so true to life, that even the most cynical person (me) will be utterly convinced, despite the film not having a particularly strong storyline. Plus, and more importantly, it gives you the warm and fuzzy feeling that we all secretly love.

If there's a film you just can't stop talking about, a movie that inspires you, a feature that changed your life or one that is your only remedy for a miserable day, we would love you to write about it and have the guts to share it with the rest of Imperial, just like Emma.

Send a few hundred words about the film you love to:
film.felix@imperial.ac.uk



That's the strangest castle I've ever seen. Where's the moat?

Raw to the core – Gomorrah

Gomorrah ★★★★★

Director: Matteo Garrone
Writers: Various
Cast: Salvatore Abruzzese, Simone Sacchetti, Salvatore Ruocco, Vincenzo Fabricino

Jonathan Dakin
Film Editor

Most people take for granted the fact that they live in the 'developed' world, a place where modern medicine, plumbing and central heating are seen as a basic human right. But as Gomorrah shows, Italy, a 'developed' country, which is classified as one of the 'Big Five' nations of Europe (along with us), proves that aspects of the 'developing' world, such as complete poverty and dog-eat-dog violence, can be a lot closer to home.

Gomorrah tells the story of two rival gangs living in and around a rough council estate in Naples, Italy. But these gangs are not how we would view them. These young men do not sit at the back of a bus in hoodies and blare

music from their mobile phones, nor do they have huge ugly dogs to make them look 'hard'.

The youths in this film kill each other for a living, deal drugs and help dump toxic waste for Mafia crime lords as part of their normal lives. And if you want to be a part of the gang, all you have to do is prove yourself as a man: by being shot while wearing a bullet-proof vest. Although this sounds shocking, and pretty average fare for a normal gangster film, it makes the film all the more disturbing to watch when you know it is real.

Based on a true story written by Roberto Saviano, Gomorrah begins with an unexpected and jaw-dropping opening, setting up a film that you know will be completely unpredictable for the entire journey, forcing undue tension in the audience that stays with you for the duration of the film's 137 minutes.

The plot of gangland murders and drug deals is told through the eyes of several different characters, chopping and changing abruptly as it jumps from one life to another. The protagonists with whom we 'hang around' vary from the likeable Toto, a young boy who works in a shop for his mother,

and the despicable Boxer and Pitbull, two teenagers who aspire to be like their hero Scarface and kill as many people as they can.

As this is a slow-burning drama, it is hard to actually explain a specific plot thread as there are so many, but all of them are portrayed in such a realistic and terrifying way that you will be compelled to stay in your seat until the explosive conclusion.

The cast and director are just a few of the reasons why Gomorrah is good on so many different levels, as it also raises a myriad of profound issues including identity, poverty, and most importantly, how people can live this lifestyle on a day-to-day basis and consider it 'normal'.

This is edge-of-your-seat stuff that is not for the faint of heart. It is, however, highly recommended for all those who consider themselves to be 'film buffs', as this is a well-crafted piece of cinema.

Gomorrah is a film that combines strong performances with raw realism. Mix this together with the fact that you know it all really happened, and you're left with a film that will haunt you for days after watching it.



Stealing guns from the Mafia can make you do strange things, like forgetting to put your clothes on.

Coming soon:

Mark Wahlberg as Max Payne

Jonathan Dakin

For those of you who are fans of Batman Begins and the Resident Evil trilogy, this is a film to watch out for, as it is already causing a stir in film fanatic circles. "Why?" you may ask.

Well, not only is Mark Wahlberg starring in this computer game adaptation as the title character, a vengeful policeman searching for retribution against those responsible for the death of his wife and child, but the cast also includes Mila Kunis - who some may recognise as Jackie in *'That 70's Show'* - as a sexy assassin who aids him in his quest, as well as rapper Ludacris and new Bond girl Olga Kurylenko.

Include stylish directing, an action-packed plot and a whole lot of guns, gore and girls - what more could you ask for?



Mark Wahlberg looks hot.

Competition

This week we have three DVD copies of *Asylum* to give away.

Asylum is a terrifying tale of a group of undergraduate university students discovering that their dormitory was formerly an experimental mental health institution, which soon reawakens their own buried personal traumas.

This disturbing horror film will be just the thing to watch from behind the sofa while ignoring Trick or Treaters on Halloween night.

If you would like to win *Asylum* just in time for Halloween, then all you have to do is answer the following question:

What is the name of the serial killer in the *Halloween* movies?

Send your answer to film.felix@imperial.ac.uk before 29th October. Winners will be announced in next week's edition!



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Prizes courtesy of Entertainment in Video



Nightlife

Nightlife Editor – Catherine Jones (CJ)

nightlife.felix@imperial.ac.uk

“What’s the Matter with you, eh?”

Nightlife Editor CJ, puts the new multi-million pound nightclub at the O2 comes under the spotlight

Matter

★★★★★

‘This is Not London’ presents Moshi Moshi Records’ 10th Birthday Party.

Best: Hot Chip
Worst: Travel issues
Go for...: The impressive headline acts.
Price: £17.50

Recently built in what was once the Millennium Dome in London’s Docklands, *Matter* is a huge 2,600 capacity venue. Brought to you by the co-creators of Fabric, it hosts mixed gig and club nights, luring club-goers out of central London with massive headline acts, such as the mighty Hot Chip. *Matter* is a bit of an out-of-town club superstore.

Much hyped, judging by the Freshers’ week leaflet campaign, the club launched on September 18th, starting with a series of mixed indie/dance nights, all falling under the ironic title of “This is Not London”. Previous attendees range from dance favourites, Simian Mobile Disco and Armand Van Helden, to indie’s Reverend and the Makers and Mystery Jets.

Last Saturday, *Matter* hosted Moshi Moshi Records’ 10th birthday party. Moshi Moshi Records are a London-based indie label, with a large array of talent, including Bloc Party, on their books. The party featured a strong line up; Hot Chip, Kate Nash, and Florence and the Machine, amongst others.

It was a successful night overall, attracting a hip indie crowd. Headliners Hot Chip played a storming live set, the fantastic sound system doing justice to their talented percussion section. A moshing/dancing combination was evident on the packed dance floor. Elsewhere, James Yulli was a particular favourite in Room Two.

Matter, on first impressions, seemed stark, sleek and kind-of-cool. Proportioned on an industrial scale, *Matter* looks very much like a warehouse. The interiors: smooth concrete, lit dramatically with coloured neon light. It has a cinematic quality, evocative of a futur-

istic sci-fi film.

The main room is very impressive both architecturally and technically. The sound quality was excellent, with stunning visual projections on either side of the stage. Those avoiding the downstairs can congregate around the upper floor balconies, still with an excellent view of the stage. If your stomach is strong enough, the best views in the house are on the precarious-looking Indiana Jones style bridge, suspended 50m above the dance floor. (This is prime pulling territory).

Overall, the phrase “total design” springs to mind. The sheer care taken over design is evident, using innovative technology to enhance the dance floor. The idea is, by pumping out certain bass frequencies to your feet through speakers embedded in the dance floor, you feel a stronger urge to dance, as your brain’s perception involves processing vibrational information too.

Also worth a mention are the generous bar and toilet facilities. The bars and the bar staff were so numerous, you could just nonchalantly stroll over and order a drink at your leisure. Drinks were reasonably priced. £4 for a spirit and mixer is not too outrageous.

The catch; getting there was by no means straightforward. Tedious would be a polite description.

With the tube shut for engineering work, we chose to travel the fabulous way, taking the special Thames Clipper services to the O2. Or so we thought, forgetting that in London you can never rely on public transport. Imagine our dismay on arriving at the pier, on time, as planned, only to find the only boat in the vicinity was a party boat. Karaoke was in full swing, trashed party guests singing along to the *Dirty Dancing* soundtrack. After much confusion, and time wasted, Waterloo pier prevailed. The Thames clipper journey was beautiful, as you might expect, and worth a trip in its own right. As a transport form though, it’s too extravagant at £5/£6 each way (Oyster is not accepted).

The most disappointing aspect of the evening: the cold, quiet 15 minute walk to the club entrance from the pier. Perhaps it’d been to take the tube to Greenwich North. Compared with the buzz of people and sound in cen-

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUCY STERNE



PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUCY STERNE



PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUCY STERNE



PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUCY STERNE



“This is not London” continues this weekend, with Justice on Saturday night. Advance tickets have sold out, but if you want to risk the journey, 300 tickets are available on the door.

Act. Normal.
(they won’t suspect a thing)

A new rave indie disco. Dance to D.I.Y disco. Indie electro punk rock, Old Skool, Hip Hop with a kick back of Grime plus a flavour of 80s and 90s retro pop.

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Friday 31 October
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Fashion

Fashion Editor – Daniel Wan

fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Daniel Wan
Fashion Editor

A-List on the cheap

Victoria Masding discusses the celebrity-highstreet culture

I am a sucker for supply and demand. If something is in short supply or limited edition, damn it, I want it! That's why I end up putting massive maximum bids on Ebay, then hoping no-one pushes up the price on that 'too cool' jacket; but that is not my point.

Recently, you have probably noticed lots of clothing chains have started to introduce quick turnover capsule collections, often fronted or even 'designed' by celebrities. Even though I know I am being manipulated, it's not all bad.

Uniqlo, for example, teamed up with Logan Power Graphix and The Kusano Design Office to produce a range of unique limited edition T's to be sold in their NYC flagship store. Of course, this worked out for the guys at Uniqlo; the T-shirts were a sell out. It appeared the allure for consumers was not simply the limited stock, but also the design talent behind the T's. Definitely a hit.

Another hit earlier this summer was when online fashion megastore asos.com teamed up with graduate students from The London College of Fashion and launched the ASOS LTD 100 Collection. An online frenzy ensued thanks to well planned publicity during Graduate Fashion Week and celebrities like model Agyness Deyn showcasing it.

Best garments. Most items sold out in minutes, each design perfectly unique in existence. Convincing people their clothing purchase is an investment is one can even exist) to anyone in fashion.

Hence, I present to you the Sick/Shit Wall. Now looking at it, the wall is rather ankle-or-below-based. I don't have a weird foot fetish as you might think. This week's wall has been especially assembled with the inspiration of the other editors in the felix office. I'm not lazy, I'm just all up for team participation. That's the official line anyway.

Our main article this week addresses the issue of celebrity capsule collections that have invaded the highstreet in recent years. Kate Moss has some credibility in her launch of her Topshop range, whilst Pixie Geldof and the like have none. They don't have any real license to launch anything other than a valid career which isn't leeching off their name. I'm waiting for the launch of a male celebrity collection. I laugh at the thought of someone like Pete Doherty selling replica garments through Topman, featuring his signature skag-induced-soilage marks. To treat you lucky fashionistas, we're introducing another new feature which follows on from the Freshers' guide to local shopping in the SW's. Anonymous is based on Kings Road, which I demand anyone that goes to Imperial and remotely interested in some serious shopping to go down to and spend a few hours of your otherwise worthless lives looking at things you probably can't afford. We owe an introduction to two new writers for felix fashion, Victoria and Swiri. I'm sure you'll be reading a lot more from them in the coming weeks.

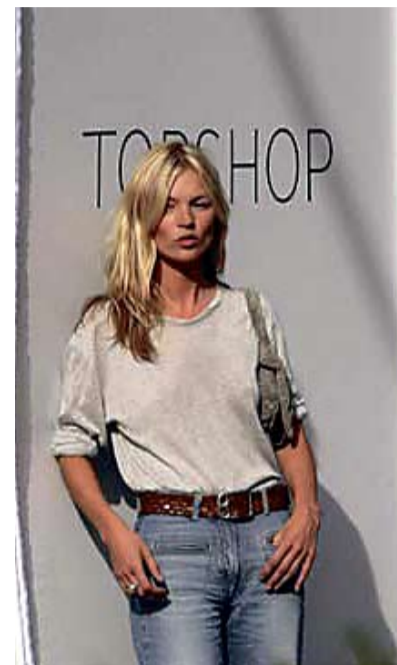
As I've always said, and I'm becoming a bit of a parrot, if you want to write for felix fashion, email your articles to fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk. Contributions are welcome and makes my life a lot easier. Maybe I am lazy.

clever, and not without a glimmer of truth with designer John Galiano and model Erin O'Connor among the College's Alumni. These pieces could have been designed by the big names of tomorrow and as such this was the key focus of this endeavour.

Mainstream designer collaborations like the Victor & Rolf and Stella McCartney for H&M lines were also successful, as well as their smaller Madonna-fronted range.

I guess the heavyweight of celebrity fashion collections would be Kate Moss for Topshop. Again, the design quality is good – in part due to ripping off her existing wardrobe, but you cannot argue with the phenomenal success of her range. The pictures of devotion on the faces of hundreds of eager shoppers outside Topshop Oxford Street at the launch were almost biblical! She has since become a seemingly permanent fixture of the Topshop brand.

It is not all good news, however. If you've seen any recent magazines you will know that Peaches (Geldof) is a Topshop whore – she clearly wants what Kate Moss has. Sadly for Peaches her younger, more attractive sibling, Pixie, has scored the deal with New Look. Not that I am particularly impressed. I think the correct term to describe my reaction would be that I 'scoffed' when I heard the news. I prefer the Gilmore Girls to the Geldof girls. Pixie's collection seems to be standard 'rebel teen' fare, uninspiring whilst filling me with smouldering in-



Topshop meet Kate, Kate meet three million pounds

difference. Nor was I a fan of the Lily Allen/New Look combo. I struggle to see the relevance of this pair in connection to clothes designing. I don't like the 'any-celeb-to-boost-sales' pattern. It's the Mary Kate and Ashley theory. They could offer your own shit to you with a sticker of their faces on it and we would buy! We're clearly doomed to be consumer clones! Fuck it – bring it on!



Rolled-up jeans
Its getting colder, so this is probably the opposite of what you want to be doing; but being practical is for losers who turn up the heating in their room to simulate Level 7 Dungeon environment. Roll up your jeans, anywhere up to just below your knees, and watch your ankles go blue.



Nike Hi-Tops
I wasn't ever too sure about these. A little Chav and a bit Nu-rave. The News Editor, oddly enough, has convinced me otherwise. Get the right colour, but don't dress too in-your-face, otherwise you'll just be another pretentious prick. And we don't need more of them at Imperial. Plus, Nike have some new sweet variations on these out.



Sandals
Many women have this thing – they wear sandals to 'fancy' events. They do this regardless of the time of year or amount of expected precipitation. Very few high-heeled sandals suit women without making them look somewhat 'cheap'. Unless you have abnormally good-looking feet and have found some incredible sandals, this is a dreadful idea. No one wants to see your horrible toes.



Shopping locally in the SWs

What has Swiri Konje's boutique-spotting yielded this week?

Anonymous by Ross & Bute. It's a designer boutique on King's Road next to the famous Bluebird Café. At London Fashion Week their amazing display of dresses was a treat for my sore eyes. Watch out for their spring collection but in the meantime, their autumn winter dresses are just the thing to go for.

Mixing style with comfort and putting your figure in the best style possible is just what you want at this time of year. Were I deep in the pockets, this will be my number one shop, so if you are, why don't you make it yours?

Of course if you want to spend that huge amount of money on a perfect birthday dress, or those amazing set of heels which you will wear only twice a year, then for the love of Satan splurge, go this shop. You won't regret it.

www.anonymousclothing.com
328 Kings Road, London SW3 5UH
Telephone: +44 (0)20 3006 4220
Email: shop@anonymousclothing.com

This week is clothes, next week it's shoes. Watch out as I bring you little titbits about shops to visit before you leave London.

ANONYMOUS
BY
ROSS+BUTE



Technology

Technology Editor – Ravi Pall

felix@imperial.ac.uk

Automatic backup with Mozy

Marc Kerstein tells us how the online backup service, Mozy, saved his e-life

With hardware getting smaller, and hard disk storage getting bigger, we continuously hear horror stories of notebook fires and overheating.

Sure, this is quite a rare scenario. However, my worry-o-meter increases along with the noise level of my Macbook Pro's fans, and the redness of the skin on my lap. But the fire could be caused from anywhere in the house. It might not even be a fire, but any form of disaster, and my data, along with all copies of backups will be destroyed.

How can I prevent my paranoia? I could use my 1 TB Terastation more often, or find some automatic software to backup my file changes on regular intervals. But I lack physical protection on local disaster.

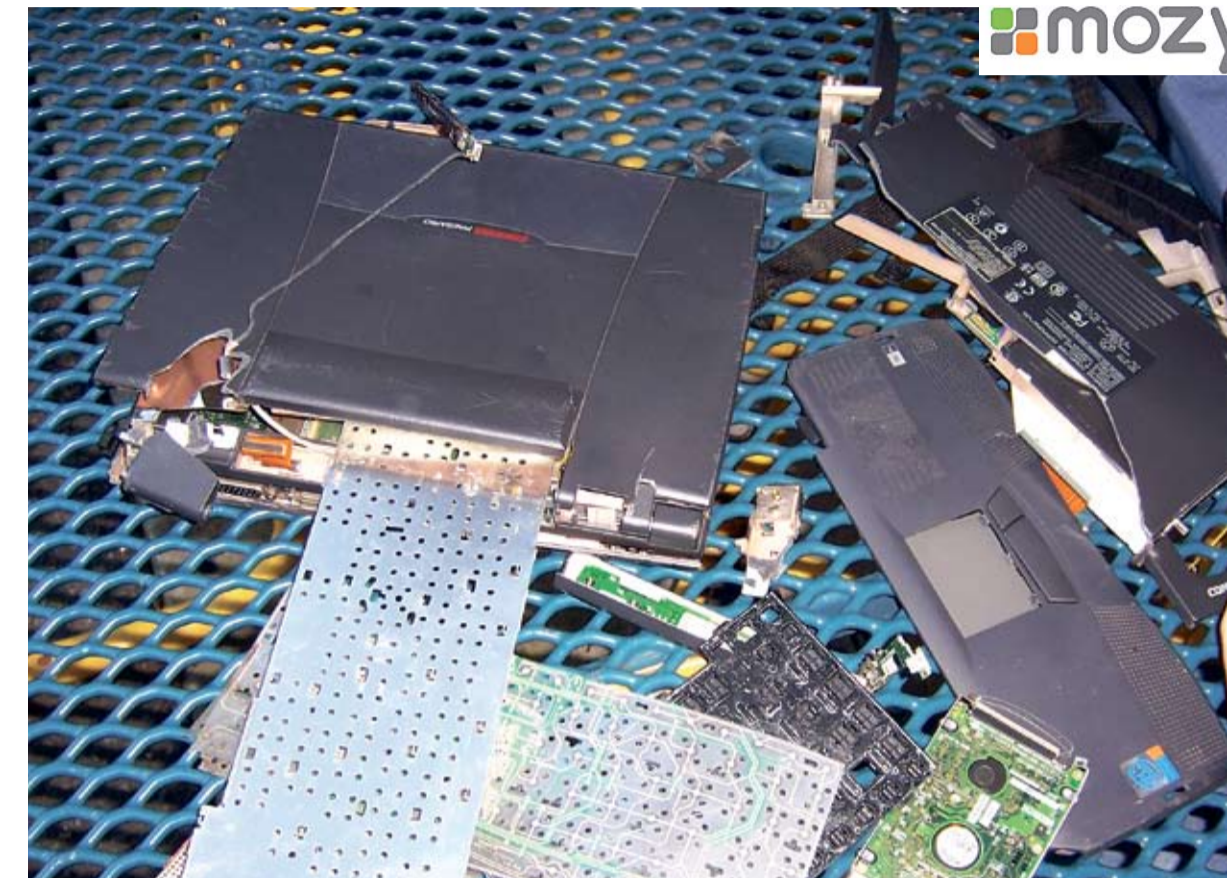
I could promise to burn a monthly DVD, and send it to a friend's house. Here, I lack security of data, and risk being lazy and forgetting. The list goes on. And sure, security is no big issue when using software such as Truecrypt, but this is another step between me and regular backups.

In an ideal world, I would have a free, "infinite" storage, earthquake-proof underground-bunker, which I could make regular and encrypted backups to with software which regularly looks for file changes and backs up on computer inactivity.

Unfortunately, we are not in an ideal world. There is a small choice of two configurations for the ideal world: The storage is as above, but not free. The storage is not infinite.

My worry about the first, is missing a payment. Being a student, I feel very likely to miss one of my monthly payments, and therefore will lose my backup data. A personal choice would be to have the limited space, but with all the data protection and services as listed.

There are numerous solutions, such as Microsoft's Sky Drive, XDrive, cron jobs, etc. One really caught my eye since it was in beta, and that was Mozy. Mozy's award-winning backup software promises "insurance for your data", and it definitely delivers



Laptop broken. What will you do now? Oh wait! Mozy saves the day. Laptop still broken though.

what it promises.

I have used it since Mozy was in beta, and have always been satisfied. Backup settings, firefox bookmarks and essential work-related documents made my free 2 GB storage limit feel

"There is not a single bad thing to say about Mozy... not one"

more than satisfactory. Mozy's backup sets are very intelligent and easy to use, something anyone who has had experience with iTunes' smart play lists or similar and/or statements can

master in seconds.

There was a point where I had to stop using Mozy when switching to my Mac. There was no alternative available, and I really loved Mozy's solution. My prayers (and emails) have been answered recently when Mozy announced their Mac version, which is equally excellent and unobtrusive. I forget it even runs and backs up my data whilst I deal with my leg burns.

Is 2 GB too small? Not a problem. You can easily upgrade your account to a Mozy Home account, giving infinite storage for \$4.95 / month. Or, you could take my method, and use referrals. Four referrals give an extra gigabyte of storage, and gives each person who uses the referral code to sign up their share of the same space, and therefore both benefit from the Mozy referral system.

One thing I am yet to understand about Mozy's software, is the difference between their personal software (Mozy Home) and their business solution (Mozy Pro). Mozy Pro is more server orientated, but does not offer too much more, and in fact, does NOT supply infinite storage. Unless the extra features are needed, I recommend Mozy Home for now.

I would begin this paragraph by saying "Overall," but there is no need to. Mozy is truly a great piece of software, and I am unable to say one bad thing about it. I am not saying that Mozy is great "overall", but completely. This unobtrusive application runs in your Windows XP/Vista system tray, or if you are using the (better) Mac OS X, it will run in your menu bar. Even with it installed, try not to spill that pint. Waste of beer.

Google Android. The iPhone Killer?

Ravi Pall
Technology Editor

A new and exciting platform has risen from the Internet powerhouse that is Google. With the ever-increasing popularity that is the mobile telecommunications market, various strides to improve the functionality and ease of use of these devices have been made.

The biggest revolution in recent times being Apple's popular iPhone. Revolutionising the way mobile phones are used, the iPhone has brought full web-browsing, email, music playback and many other features in a new and intuitive way. However there is a new threat to this young super power. That threat is the

Google Android platform.

Unlike the iPhone, Android is only the operating software. Designed by Google and free to be manipulated by client users. The Android platform, with its first iteration the T-Mobile G1, is right on track to provide an alternative user experience. Android's customising ability allows users to have an equally intuitive and "fun" adventure when using their phone.

With compatibility for almost any feature the phone's hardware may contain, end-users will be able to browse the Internet, email and add applications like the best of them. Android has also been successfully installed on current phones such as Nokia's N810 Internet tablet, with intriguing results. Expect Android to filter its way to future phones.



Look at him. So cute. I want one... or 2, maybe 3. Gimmie, gimmie.

Headlines we couldn't fit in

Apple releases new MacBook & MacBook Pro's

WiiFit outsells GTA IV

Sidesight project-multi-touch beyond the screen

Google open sources Android project

Solid Alliance puts 2GB pen drive in finger ring

Production of Intel's Clarksfield to begin this year

Editor finds old Atari 2600. Is extremely happy

World cup 2010 - London may view action in HD

PES outsells FIFA 09 in weekly games chart

BT launch free mobile broadband for business'

UK receives ASUS eee touchscreen desktop PC

BBC iPlayer now compatible with more PMP's



Is your club cooler than the cat that got the cream? Write to us. felix@imperial.ac.uk

Knit Soc won't stitch you up

At 4 pm *felix* received a phone call: Would anyone like to come and visit the first Knit Soc meeting of term? By 6pm I was knitting, but not without a lot of sweat and tears.

Alice Rowlands
Novice knitter

equipment and wool that members need!

Knit Soc is one of the few societies at Imperial to boast about having boys in the club. One, of several males at the first meeting, was DPFS Christian Carter, who is currently knitting a very fetching turquoise scarf. Apparently knitting is a good way of keeping busy when you can't find any students that need your help!

Finally, I ran out of searching questions to ask the Knit Soc old-hands and had to have a go myself. The 'knit stitch', shown below, is apparently the easiest of knitting stitches. If that is the case, my initial attempts suggested knitting was beyond my levels of co-ordination: It took me over half an hour to complete one stitch. Once I got going I proudly finished over twenty rows. Unfortunately, my work was around three times as wide, after twenty rows, as it was at the beginning. What began as a scarf, now most-closely resembles a pair of under-pants!

Rosa explained to me that Knit Soc began when Jenny (Knit Soc president and knitting enthusiast) used to spend a lot of time in halls knitting. Rosa had done some knitting while at school and other friends in halls also wanted to get knitting! After a while, the girls decided that knitting should be available to everyone, so decided to start Knit Soc!

Since Spring term last year, Knit Soc have been holding meetings in the union bar, often attracting over thirty knitters in one meeting!

Jenny explained to me that Knit Soc caters for all standards and disciplines of needle work. Often providing all the



Felix is knitting himself a scarf, the purple compliments his eyes.



Alice Rowlands
Section Editor

This year, felix is going to have a far more varied and hopefully relevant clubs and societies page. In a couple of weeks (with the help of DPCS Lily Topham & Rachel D'oliveiro) we'll be bringing you a "What's on" section that's a guide to all of the events happening through the coming week.

We will also be looking for events to cover and weekly meetings to attend, in an attempt to find the weirdest and most wonderful activities happening on campus. For this to happen, we need clubs to get in contact with details of up-coming events for us to attend (if these include refreshments that will keep me doubly happy!). Particularly interesting will be events that provide good photo opportunities, and new skills for Felix to learn.

Coffee Break

coffee.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Ravi-Patt
Coffee Break Editor
Felix
The Cat

Ravi is a re-app, he has re-app stuff to do. Little freshers to attend to, so hello if you're one of them! It wouldn't be a problem, but his column is all empty.

Now I'm getting scared, because I don't know what to say. I'm getting rather worried, the end of the page is far away.

If only I could go back and just start playing with my wool, life is a lot easier when *felix* is nice and full.

I could try and write a lot of words, telling you *felix* is great, but I don't have much to say on that, its really quite a state of late!

But this week is much better. I challenge you, the reader, find a mistake in this weeks *felix*. If you would rather not, check out the lovely pictures below.

Photoshop Competition - 4



This weeks winner. Team Joseph Gobbels. Again!



Next weeks RAW image for you to go wild. See www.felixonline.co.uk

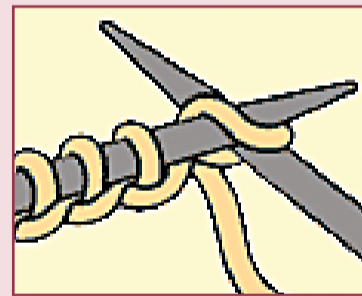
Congratulations to this week's winner, Team Joseph Gobbels. We honestly thought that this picture was too hard to make fun off, but hey Team JB came through again. We apologise to our dedicated competitors for the

late uploading of the picture to our website. Well done to the observant of you who still managed to submit an entry. This week I loved the way the Dirty Sanchez boys are rocking out with their instruments.

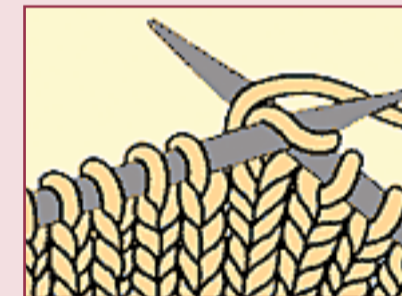
This week's image is of the tiny coffee van that drove into the quad dispensing free coffee. It was very nice, and we liked the price. We're not really sure what you can do with this one, but that's why we outsource to you.

The high res picture can be found online. Click on Coffee Break in the sections tab. Email your entry to coffee.felix@imperial.ac.uk with your team name and .PSD file and you'll be entered into the FUCWIT league.

The knit stitch, a step-by-step guide:



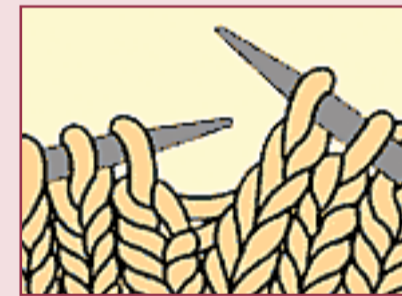
Step 1: Hold the needle with the cast on stitches in your left hand and the loose wool at the back of the work. Insert the right-hand needle from left to right through the from of the first stitch.



Step 2: Wind the wool from left to right, around the back, and over the point of the right-hand needle. Make sure the wool is tight, as this will make step 3 easier.



Step 3: Use the right-hand needle to draw the wool through the stitch, forming a new stitch on the right-hand needle.



Step 4: Slip the original stitch off the left-hand needle, making sure to keep the new stitch on the right-hand needle.



Christian Carter, DPFS, shows-off his knitting skills in the SAC, while he waits for people to turn up to his Wednesday afternoon clubs and societies clinic.

Stuff IC Students Like!?! :)

5. Discount:

People like free stuff. Students like free stuff even more. Students at Imperial College London appreciate a good bargain, and gain immense satisfaction when they get discount, and the real world doesn't. Some would say it's not worth shopping somewhere if there's no student discount available. We at *felix* agree. In fact IC students have enjoyed student discount even more as of late. Why?

Well it's because ICU as of this year has disaffiliated from the NUS.

Now with most stores advertising discount for NUS card holders, IC students enjoy it when their standard issue student ID is accepted. Believe me when we say no where we have been has ever refused the IC student card for discount. This includes cinemas, restaurants, clothing stores, video game stores, HMV, Zavi and Pc World amongst others. Now if only our tuitions fees had student discount



Please sir. May I have some discount? I'm a student... Alright then.



2nd Amendment fail



Hotel sign fail



Supermarket fail



Drink with me, I'm Snaky B

and this week I'm dressed as Mel C

Snakey B has been quite unhealthy in the last few weeks. I've been drinking snakebites all day and eating nothing but butter.

To try and correct my heart-stopping lifestyle I'm following in the footsteps of the most musically talented Liverpoolian of the last century; that's right, The Beatles were crap.

Yeah, I'm Sporty Spice y'all! You might

think that my music career is over, but do you know that I toured Canada this year? And also that I'm writing songs for my 5th album?

It doesn't matter that it will be recycled pop trash that Britney Spears didn't deem good enough for her, what matters is that I'm still a quasi-celebrity. I'm not even Z-list.

In other Wikipedia sourced facts I have co-written the most UK number

one singles of any female artist. Snakey B knows how to use a computer, I bet you think that you need thumbs and such for access to the inter-webz but all you really need is to be as ubiquitous as me, Snakey B. Yes... run to your dictionaries!

When you figure out what that big word means, use it in every sentence! Who will I be next week? Probably someone cooler. Snakey B out. Peace

Imperial College Health Center

Don't forget to register at the Health Centre and make sure you are up to date with your MMR and Meningitis vaccines
For more information visit www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk

How to save money the Tamara way

With all this talk of a credit crunch and financial crisis, I asked a good friend of mine to give me some tips on saving the pennies during these hard times.

The crisis has, of course, touched even those of us who are financially comfortable. Even we are thinking about economising.

Economising on heating
This is incredibly simple. We lowered the temperature in our guest house to +14 degrees. It cannot be lower because it would start to damage the antiques. If guests arrive we can make the room comfortable in 2-3 hours but what is the point of paying for heating an empty house? Of course, with 800 square metres like ours you're not going to save much but many people have much bigger guest houses.

Economising on food
For me this is the easiest of all limitations. Food is not a very big deal to me. Here however, there is much scope for economising. First of all, I have asked the food stylist to be around for the buying of food in Provence and Bordeaux. Buying food here makes it slightly less expensive and I am more certain of the quality. Secondly, I drew the attention of the junior chef to cheaper local stores. Before, I used to worry about the quality but this was silly. The fresh bread and local vegetables aren't too bad.

Economising on transport
I almost immediately gave up on personal transport. In the current situ-

ation this is a big drain on funds and also a headache. To my surprise, the Lexus turned out to be bearable. Also, Jonny (the driver) says our LS600 us a very cheap car to run. I highly recommend it, don't take that as pestering advertising.

Economising on housing
I have heard that many people advise to rent out unused property, but of course this is very tiresome and takes a long time. For example, we've been trying to rent our properties in Chelsea for almost a month and we're really struggling to find a decent realtor. I'm hoping it will sort itself out soon. This should cover the costs of keeping the golf grounds and the gym decent.

Economising on personnel
You get used to them and they become practically part of your family. But in a crisis we must tighten our belts. I had to say goodbye to the groomer (hair stylists for the pets) and asked the food stylist to take care of buying food as well. The curling instructor also had to go, but my husband thanked him properly and I hear considerably helped his home country, Iceland.

Economising on entertainment
For many this will be a huge shock, but I am a quiet homey person so for me it

is not too difficult. My husband bought a music system - Steinway Lyngdorf which has a reasonably good sound so now we listen to many musicians as recordings rather than inviting them to our place. I couldn't help inviting Elton though to play a bit on the piano. I don't like how he sings particularly but his playing is wonderful.

Economising on hobbies
Yes yes, now I have to economise on the most pleasurable things. For example, this year I decided against my idea of completing my collection of late impressionist paintings. This would have required too much spending. However, I found a bargain in a golden sarcophagus from the epoch of the middle kingdom.

Economising on the small things
Here I'll repeat the time-honoured wisdoms. Ask the doorman to programme this system so it turns off lights when you leave a particular floor. Ask the accountant to be more careful with the funds. Round all bills only to the nearest thousand. Find something which has become more of a drain on your health rather than a pleasure and sell it. My husband, for example, sold the bank and I - my collection of black diamonds even though I had to give away a percentage to the sharks from Sotheby's.



In times of need - save money on clothes

Horoscopes: felix editors' inside jokes edition

This week we said FUCK you guys, and made the horoscopes about ourselves... Enjoy

Aquarius
This week you sit apethetically in the lecture theatre, listening in on quite possibly the most boring speaker in the world. Why the fuck is there a compulsory lecture about CV's? Good thing the unsuspecting lecturer is going to die of the overdose of crack cocaine. She shivers, but it's not because it's cold.

Pisces
This week a tempestuous argument over the spelling of hummus will seize control over your colleagues. The local restaurant insists it is spelt hommos, and an editor's mother provides hummos to the mix, while felix agrees it is hummous. No one cares as long as no one starts a jihad. "Durkka durka moha..." ok maybe I shouldn't.

Aries
This week a discussion about ancient mythology erupts within the irritable bowels of felix. It's not long before the words "1 Egyptian!?" are spoken in an apparently witty comment. Too bad heart disease runs strong throughout the editors family. The story promptly makes its way into the horoscopes.

Taurus
This week you discover for the first time bambi was a dude. I can't believe I masturbated over him/her/it. Now I feel dirty. Whadafuh? That'll be the new word we created to explain this wretched situation. All this arises due to the word bambi meat being submitted by an editor who obviously deserves more time in the psychiatric ward.

Gemini
This week one editor will decide to become a loan shark. ENOCH will want to borrow £1, and will blindly accept all terms and conditions. Pay him back ENOCH. Quickly before the term "my money or your life!" becomes a blood-curdling reality. The moral of this story; pay back my DOLLAR fool!!! In an unrelated incident, the crosswords this week will be heavily altered.

Caner
This week you decide to see how much sugar you can consume while writing the horoscopes. After 6 cans of relentless, 4 packs of chevits and a peperami for good measure, you find time slows down to a sloths pace. To alleviate yourself from this torture you start having sexual intercourse with your keyboard. Sticky.

Leo
This week you discretely begin to resent the other felix editors for the music they rampantly play on their computers at full volume. The situation becomes decidedly worse when certain editors begin to sing with tones similar to that of the African Bullfrog. Due to the sad state of affairs, every occurrence results in an angel vomiting.

Virgo
Did you know, that as I write these very words, a semi-naked man is being rubbed down with hot oil in this very office! I know what you're thinking; Jov's gone mad and spent all of the felix budget on hookers, again. Unfortunately no, that's not why. If only I was lucky enough to be rubbed down by a gorgeous Polish blonde, instead of the Serbian bear currently doing it.

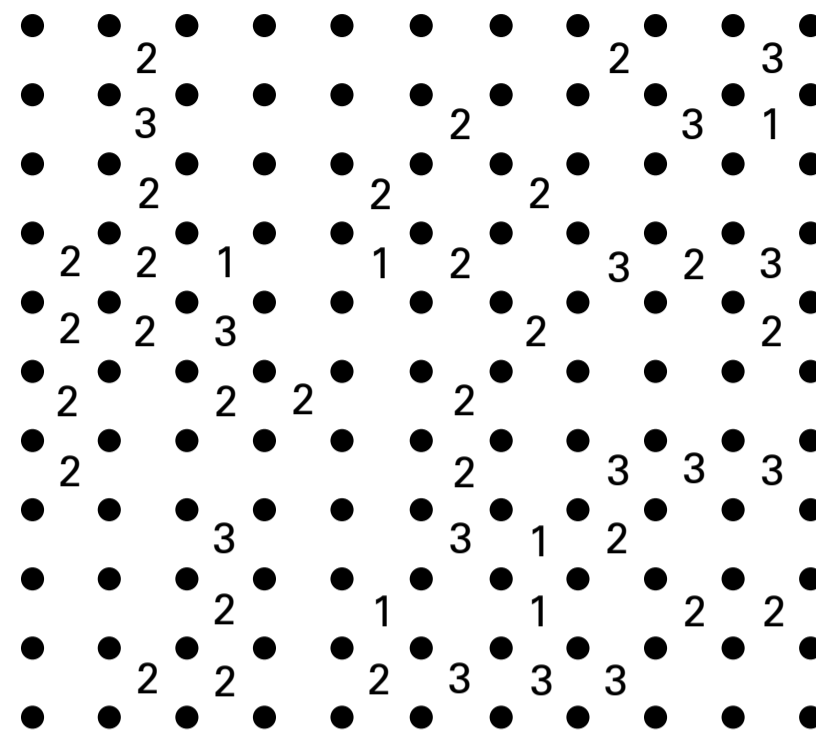
Libra
This week, the office has been rather full of old types, apparently they used to work here. But judging by the smell in the back office, they were living here! Now that they've graduated, they have poncey Bohemian lives where they make films, and say things like "carte blanche". Fortunately they haven't left behind the Imperial arrogance we all love.

Scorpio
This week I have mostly been doing my knitting, yes knitting. No it is not just for Grannies and no, I don't know why I'm telling you this. Except, I know you will understand. You've always understood me, I honestly don't think anyone else really does. I don't know why you won't just marry me, I can knit now, and cook, I'd be a lovely wife for you.

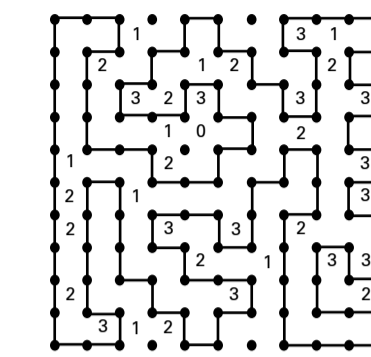
Sagittarius
This week it has been officially decided that this is the last Horrorscope to be written. What to say... what to say... Mmm difficult. Ok, I fingered myself in the ass last night. I was showering and it was quite soapy, I wanted to know what it would feel like. Long story short, I should have taken a dump before hand and it took a long time to clean up the shower... I have no dignity

Capricorn
The majority of you feel excluded from the horoscopes. Luckily 60% of you will be hung in Beit quad pirate style. Leaving the other 40% to hide in fear. A futile attempt, as the rogue Hangman team will find you, and peel your skin from your flesh in a leisurely pace. Collecting the HIV ridden blood for their child molestation purposes.

Slitherlink 1,412



1,411 solution



The winner of Slitherlink 1,411 was **Jimmy Bibby!** I'm totally lying. No one actually entered this week! Please enter. My life isn't worth living otherwise. We'll give a prize out in the summer. It'll be good.

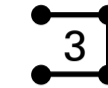
How to play:

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

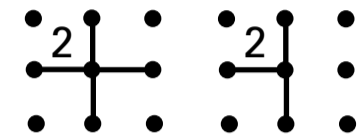
long, and most importantly, looping line. It should have no start or finish; just like an elastic band.

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.

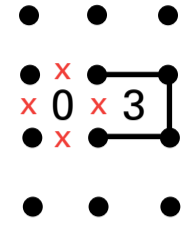
Remember, the line must form a loop, so the line cannot branch. The following situations are not allowed:



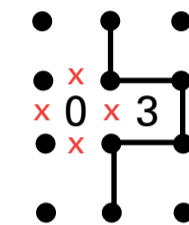
Squares are not allowed either. There are never cells containing the number 4 in Slitherlink.

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:



Now the lines can only continue in the following directions:



Wordoku 1,412

E	M	B			L	R			
			B	K	I				
		K			M				
L	E	C							B
			L		C				
R						U	L	C	
			C			M			
				I	L	U			
			E			C	R	L	

1,405 Solution

E	J	V	H	S	N	O	M	A	
N	A	M	O	E	J	V	S	H	
H	O	S	M	V	A	N	J	E	
V	B	O	A	J	H	M	E	S	
M	H	A	S	O	N	J	N	V	
J	S	E	V	N	M	H	A	O	
S	V	J	N	A	O	E	H	M	
A	E	H	J	M	V	S	O	N	
O	M	N	E	H	S	A	V	J	

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

Hokay, so we screwed up. Last issues Wordoku was uber hard, the winning phrase was "JOV HAS MEN". [I do have a great team behind me. - ed.]

Tamara says: "Kill two birds with one cock!"



Dear Tamara,

My roommate's boyfriend had a go while she was in the shower. For the last few weeks, when he sees me in the corridor, he brushes past a little too close. When she leaves the room, he'll always make a suggestive comment or two. A few nights ago, he came round and as soon as the door closed on her going to the shower, he put hand suggestively on my thigh and whispered "... What do I do?"

Torn.

Dear Torn, Judging by the fact that you did not slap him in the first place, you yourself wouldn't mind a go. Suggest the idea of a threesome to your friend - tell her how much guys would like you if they thought you two got up to girly sausage-free slap and tickle. She'll soon catch on and you and the guy can have guilt-free sex, just remember to remind her sometimes. You'll never have to watch Heroes reruns until they take the sock off the door again.

Dear Tamara,

My boyfriend promised to help me write into Felix about his need to talk dirtily about science in bed. I sat down at my laptop, ready to write to you and instead of helping, he's been on the phone for the last 40 minutes to a friend from his course discussing chemical reactions. It disturbs me because I know he'll discuss the same reactions with me later. Help, my sex life is at stake!

Inert gas.

Dear Inert gas,

Does the science talk not turn you on just a little bit? I admit, I find it a welcome change from the "Ooh baby, what a naughty nurse you are" and similar. I find dressing up in a lab coat and introducing props such a blackboard and conical flasks into the bedroom really helps me get in the mood. If this makes him too hot, cool him down with some liquid nitrogen. May I suggest some phrases you can use in response? - Baby, have we now reached thermal equilibrium? - Shall we increase the

entropy in this room? - Let's discover the resonant frequency of your bed! - Do you want to see my Higg's boson? -



Got a problem?
agony.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Footballers' frolics in Eastern Europe

Mustapher Botchway
Imperial College Football Club

Tour started at the union with Tapeworm (Simon Kilroy) masquerading in his Friday night at Fabric attire, a mankini. Before I reveal that he was duly twatted in his nether-regions with a football, a brief introduction to tour shall be given.

Every year, ICUAFC gallivant to an overseas country, normally in Eastern Europe to bring their unorthodox but celebrated methods of socialising to the region. In addition, the beautiful game that is Matchbox is played, alongside the optional football matches.

Last summer, the destinations were Prague and Berlin. Tour secretary Skypesex, less often known as Chris Parrott packed the 8 days away with a multitude of activities, the first being a plane flight.

The year before, the less organised tour sec made us wing it to Bulgaria.

Upon arrival at Prague and getting the hostels sorted, IC dined at what happened to be a "Perfect Restaurant". The more cultured among us went to McDonald's.

Club Mecca was the first club ICUAFC graced with their presence. Disappoint they did not with electro, sunglasses in the dark, upper half nudity, vodka, stage climbing and "sharking" all taking place. Club Mecca was also the destination where it was discovered that some Americans which were present in the union in the spring term had followed us from said place to Prague. The claim that they hid in the baggage area of the aeroplane are yet to be verified. For more details on the early morning jaunts ask Vertical Rat (Alex De Figueiredo).

The next morning (Sunday) had us practice the unlawful activity of drink driving. Go karting was eventful with Chromosone (Alex Childs) managing to break a kart, the track, his phone and knob within two laps of the circuit. Fastest man on the day went to Michael Hughes, in which he celebrated by playing table football with the track owner's daughter whilst the rest went back to the hostel - the 5th floor of a historic building, with no lift, a floor above a police station - to let the hangovers have their fun.

In preparation for the first of three football matches, Moonface (Mitchell Fern) and others were rewarded for their carefree, blazé manner by being accosted by what I can only describe as a sex salesman. Amongst the standard patter of offering opportunities to solicit with barely legal fe/males, Moonface commended the salesman's inclusive nature. He politely declined attending and/or participating in an erotic burlesque featuring people of all creeds, heights, weights and sexual (gender) preferences. Jake Tucker (Christopher Killin) on the other hand couldn't resist.

Roger (Ed Lobb) naturally assumed the role as the coach Imperial College Tour Football Club, managing to give a game to all thirty-something IC foot-



Clockwise from bottom left: Footballers atop a Berlin monument; Coach Lobb and squad; Das Boot; The Tour mantra, revealed on the pub crawl

ballers, in their first match against FC Bankovni Balet. After a spirited display from 2.7% of the team, Green Card (Sam Rickards), IC lost 3-1.

The stadium in which the match was played holds over 100 000 people. The End.

After the match, IC's local Prague guide and some of the home team players joined IC as they played Matchbox in a bar. The UEFA European Cup Final happened to be on in the background.

The evening's events started at Batalion, a 24 hour pub. Prince Harry (Frank O'Neill) was on majestic form with his pint ingesting and sleeping at the bar abilities.

Monday morning brought the internal beach football competition, which S. Analdonkeyjuicelover (Sim Anandajeyarajah), Barack Obama (Yours Truly) and Prince Charles (Adrian Doyle) missed due to the inability of the rest of the touring party to knock on their room door when it was time to go. Shite Garo (Michael Donovan) scored an overhead kick, which did just about nothing in his attempts to rein in his ego inflation problem.

The beer crawl given by an unsuspecting but extremely helpful Czech local occupied the evening. After walking for 45 minutes in search for the first beer, which set us back 80 shiny pennies and which happened to be in another football stadium, Prince Charles decided to make up for missing the beach football by necking a glass of vodka with ananas (pineapple)

juice between each watering hole.

Nearing the end of the night he passed out near a crossroad. There is widespread debate about the cause of this sudden loss of consciousness. Some say the alcohol, some point to the discussion that took place between Dilbert (Scott McKenzie), Steve McLaren (Pete Hunt), Green Card and Burkinžralok (Louis Burkinshaw) about who the best player in the club was.

Rumours that Phalludopoulos (Michael Pursey) slept on the pavement floor outside the club - a 5 story building catering for all needs: 1st floor being a cloak room with cheesy music, 2nd floor housing a strip club, 3rd floor being a dance club, 4th floor a quiet room, full of books and board games and the 5th floor being home to a 60s and 70s disco room - IC ended up in after the crawl have been verified.

FC Predni were the opponents for the second match of tour. Roger, this time fortified with a mostly sober team and a pen and paper, produced a tactician's masterclass at halftime when the scores were locked at nil a piece. Making an 11 man substitution, ICUAFC went on to win 3 - 0.

The second event scheduled by Skypesex was a train ride from Prague to Berlin the next morning. Drew Peacock (Ricky Verra) armed with some music produced perfect conditions for a rave. Naturally some ambassadors and their daughters joined in the festivities, with the club producing their best renditions of classic jumpen hits.

Shite Garo, Obama and Snout Jimmy (Adam Gill) had so much fun that they decided to miss the Berlin train station and continue to Hamburg.

Back at Berlin the first stop was the Circus hostel bar, home of the infamous boot challenge. Finish it in under 90 seconds and keep the boot, under three minutes and you receive the alcohol à gratis. Prince Charles devised a plan to successfully complete the boot later on that week.

The fascination or beaches didn't stop there as the touring party left Circus hostel bar to a nightclub with said theme. Geldautomat (Daniel Wilson) did his tour shirt proud by making a large withdrawal. The next day IC found a group of randomers to play a football match with. Tag-Along (Noah Stevens), Brokeback (Simon Parker) and Mountain (Stewart Masters) decided to stage a mini tour Bola Bola between themselves. The first round was completed as the final whistle of the match went.

The next day, Roger, Barack, Moonface, Shite Garo, Snout Jimmy and Beadle (Jeremy Lovett) took part in a Scrabble tournament. The end.

Rematch (Justin Winehouse) decided that Erol Alkan wasn't up to scratch at the nightclub and mitigated his displeasure by creating some oragami before passing out in the beer garden.

The final match arrived on the penultimate day of tour and it was a fiercely contested match against the Berlin branch of one of ICUAFC's sponsors,

KPMG. It being Romain's - whose tour name is particularly offensive - birthday that day he thought it would be good to score from fifty yards, minutes after having a glass of gin. So he did.

The final night of tour was shared with Romain's birthday, which meant one thing, kebabs and alcohol. After the Italian restaurant reneged on IC's booking, they decided to have kebabs before witnessing Prince Charles' attempt to complete the boot. Romain got lost on the 100 yard walk from the kebab shop to Circus hostel bar and this delayed proceedings for an hour. Shatters (James Skeen) decided to fly in from the UK to share our final night on tour and fail in trying to drink a boot. Prince Charles successfully finished the boot which left IC in good spirits for the tour awards ceremony.

Man of tour went to Chromosone for his antics which included losing all of his belongings at the train rave and dressing up as a phallus on the pub crawl.

Player of tour went to Roger for managing the 4 matches and producing a 75% win rate.

A special mention goes to Chris Parrott for organising what is thought of as one the best football tours in recent club history. The time and planning done was incredible and it showed, as there wasn't a day where the club didn't have anything to occupy themselves with, thereby producing an excellent club event which will be remembered for many years to come.