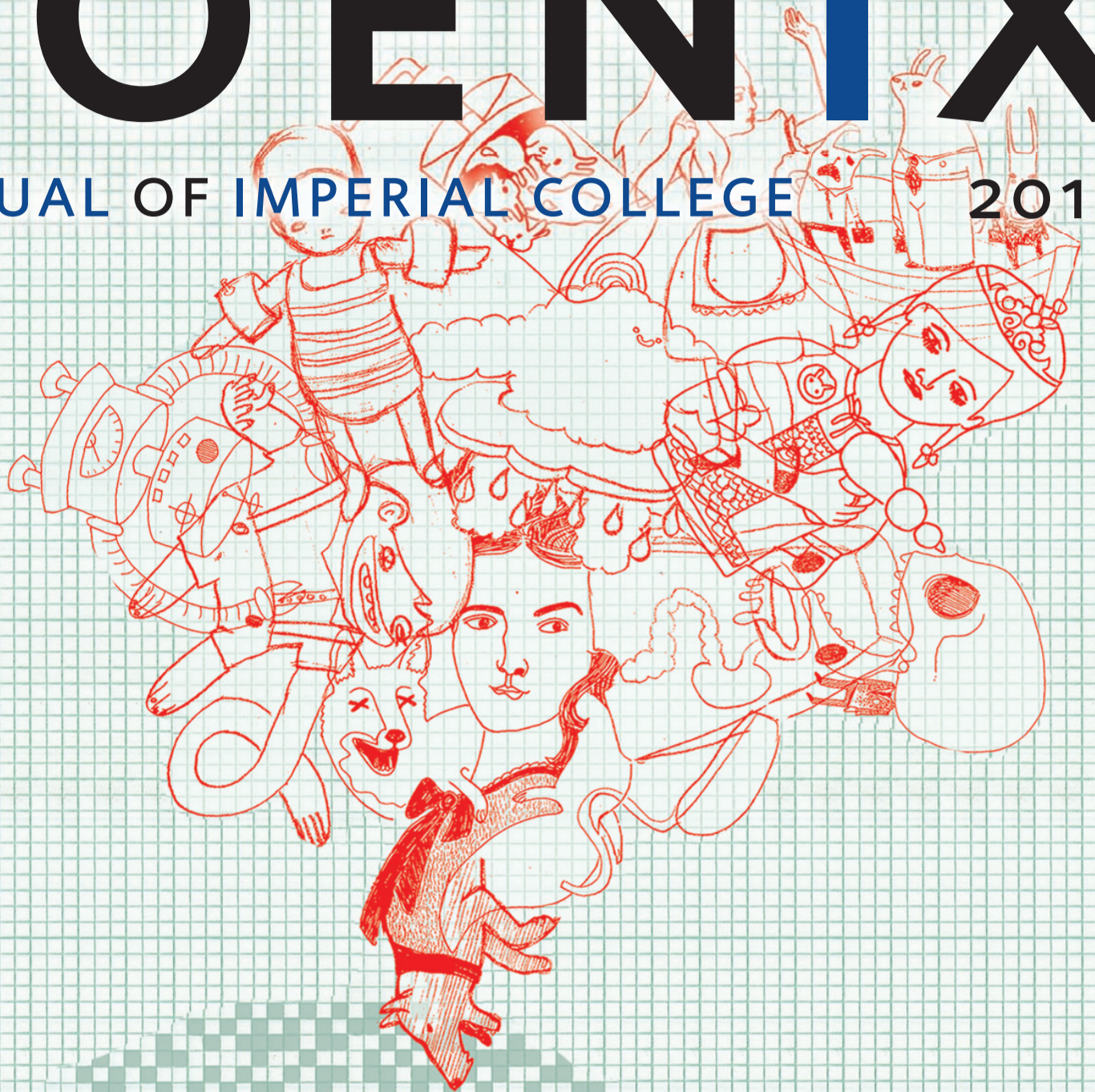


# PHOENIX

THE ARTS ANNUAL OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE 2010



# EDITORS' FOREWORDS

## WELCOME TO PHOENIX

DAN WL  
WAN

KAWAI  
WONG

GUO HENG  
CHIN

I can't image what H.G. Wells would have made of this iteration of the beloved magazine he founded in the 1887 as the *Science Schools Journal*. I'd like to think he'd be proud.

This PHOENIX is an annual, its original form. It's an annual that has moved on with modern times. Formed by students from an institution steeped in such history and tradition, 2010's PHOENIX is hopefully adhering to its founder's literary ethos; H.G. Wells' novels explored the still ludicrous notions of time travel into the future. And here we are, in a new decade, paving the way forward for PHOENIX.

Most importantly however, is that PHOENIX features the photography, sketches, paintings, poetry, prose, and stories of Imperial College students. PHOENIX 2010 does just that.

The editorial team were keen to focus in on life at Imperial from jaunty and creative angles. We called out for anything that was related to life in College, be it a poem on the social failings or a photo of the Library. Throughout, I hope you'll see things that you recognise and can relate to. We've even dedicated a whole feature to College-based contributions and profiles, all of which epitomised our experiences at Imperial for us.

I'm so glad that in my position as *felix* Editor-in-Chief, I am able to simultaneously orchestrate such a wonderful and historic publication in PHOENIX this year.

I hope you enjoy the double-release of PHOENIX and *felix*, because I definitely had fun constructing it.



How people try to vilify Imperial as a cultural desert! This allegation is reduced to a blurred cacophony, when the enthusiastic response overwhelmed our mailbox and we had to expand its size several times.

In words and in pictures; on paper and on canvas; in two dimensions and three, they are all well-thought out pieces. Both students and staff have tackled words, crayons, oils and film with great aplomb. The glorious result is here for all to see. I am extremely thrilled to be part of this creative process.

The artworks presented here covered almost every aspect of life. Infatuation, love, compassion, ageing, fantasy, sex, sexuality... Some works are more difficult to define, and are definitely up for interpretation.

As an artist myself - whose art takes the form of numbered pages - the thrill of seeing a blank page blossomed into something enjoyable is truly rewarding.

And here, I urge students to explore their imaginations. Understanding the working mechanism of the world is without a doubt a creative process. But the appreciation or creation of something tangible, aesthetically pleasing and literally sound adds fruits to the most fruitful of all lives.

My thanks extend to Dan and Guo Heng. They endured innumerable meetings, tirelessly toiled through the process of selecting materials, editing the flow of the artwork as well as laying out this magazine. I hope you enjoy PHOENIX as much as I do.



Negative capability, said Keats, is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason. In a predominantly science and engineering environment that is Imperial, uncertainty and mystery is not well tolerated - they must be dispelled with rigorous experiments, ruthless fact-seeking and arduous calculations. Which is good of course, for what is Imperial but one of the premier science and technology university in the world?

PHOENIX is an oasis of creative expression. There is no irritable seeking after explanations in art. Art is free form, it teases the mind with mysteries and uncertainties. Take a little sip from the well of stories after that long hard day of trawling through dry journal papers. Sit down and rest your eyes on the photographs and drawings after cracking your head on that seemingly unsolvable problem sheet.

Everything in PHOENIX is 'made in Imperial'. This magazine was made possible by the Imperial students who contributed their artistic work and my fellow editors who invested so much time and effort to produce it, a big round of applause goes to you guys.

Amidst the pummeling stress of studies and coursework, like the eponymous mythical bird, let PHEONIX keep creative expression alive.





# PHOENIX

is so much more than paint-by-numbers and undersexed physicists writing love-poems to girls on the Tube. It in fact has a long and highly-coloured past.

PHOENIX was founded in 1887 by Imperial alumnus Herbert George Wells, one of the founding fathers of science fiction. Author, futurist, essayist, historian, socialist, teacher, Wells remains best known for a string of books written at the beginning of his career including *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) and *The War of the Worlds* (1898) which toy with the ideas of humanity gone fantastically, scientifically awry.

Wells was spawned from humble beginnings, born into poverty in Bromley on September 21, 1866. He later won a scholarship to the Normal School of Science, what is now Imperial's Royal School of Science.

His Imperial years marked the origins of his interest in social reform, and Wells soon turned to contemporary ideas of socialism as expressed by the Fabian Society, an intellectual socialist movement which is now a vanguard think-tank

of New Labour. In 1887, he founded PHOENIX (then called *The Science School Journal*) which allowed him to express his views on literature and society but also provided a basis for his fledgling career in fiction: the first version *The Time Machine* was published in PHOENIX under the title, *The Chronic Argonauts*. Major kudos to PHOENIX here. This year was also the last year of his studies; although Wells had successfully passed in biology and physics, a lack of interest in geology (understandable?) meant he failed and lost his scholarship. Never fear, Wells still earned a BSc in Zoology from the University of London External Programme, even if it wasn't until 1890.

I've definitely developed a bit of a soft spot for Herbert. There's nothing I hate more than crippling stereotypes of your standard Imperial student. Apparently we don't do art, literature, philosophy, politics or have a personality... PHOENIX fucks the stereotype and is a massive kick in the teeth to all them haters; don't forget to pick it up and spread some of Herbert's art-love.

- Victoria Brzezinski



# PREVIEW

## 18 > A TEMPEST AMONGST US



4 > MY OWN MAKE-BELIEVE WORLD

6 > MORE TO MEDICS THAN MEETS THE EYE

## 10 > FEATURE STORY: PAUL GARTON GOES TO SPACE



15 > FREDDIE, LORD BYRON AND A PIGLET

17 > KLU KLUX DISNEY

## 22 > COLLEGE'S CREATIVE CAMPUS



28 > DIANA ISN'T DEAD

31 > A GOOD, HARD FUCK. YES. IF SHE YIELDS

## 32 > TRANSVESTITE ATHLETICS THROUGH THE LENS



COVER WRAP IMAGE BY TEMPEST VAN SCHAIK  
EDITORS' FOREWORDS PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREEA BABUIC

# FAIRYTALE



Claire wanted a photoshoot like no other. So last summer, she grabbed Peter for photoshoot that was as kaleidoscopic and surreal as a Jean-Pierre Jeunet film.

"I personally wanted it to be sort of a colourful picture book telling a story about a princess and a prince," Claire said. The photographer is Xiaojie (晓杰), a friend of Claire who majored in photography. Breaking off from the stereotyped studio photoshoots (monotonous, thousand pieces of the same tune, declares Claire), they travelled to amusement parks, rooftops and abandoned railway tracks for the shoot.

Peter was in an especially jovial mood when the top photo was taken. "He was jumping around like a monkey and the photographer captured those precious moment," Claire recalled. "I guess that was one of Peter's special happy mood filled with his young spirit!"

"We then switched to the captain and sailor roles in the railway set, but we couldn't find a "ship" handy, so we came up with the idea of using those railway tracks instead. Those bit of the tracks were not in use anymore, otherwise we would be in serious danger!"

Though each set is starkly different from each other, there is theme that underlies all of them. "We came up with the idea of a fairytale prince and princess. I guess the word "fairytale" emanates from the costumes and lighting effects, especially in the set taken on the rooftop of an apartment." Claire explained.

The pictures may tell of a fairytale, but it also conveys the harmony and peace of "east meets west" concludes Claire. ⌚



# FIVE THIRTY SIX

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BY HENRY BENNIE

Five Thirty Six.  
Discordant chromatic scales wake me.  
Song Birds' tune bounces off  
The breeze block grey.

Five Thirty Seven.  
Bacon tugs at my nasal hairs,  
Seducing the plate with acrimonious oil,  
Beckoning the night.

Eight Twelve.  
'You are in the storm, waves lapping about you,  
Sinking, sinking in the saffron sea!'

God deals in punctured lifejackets;  
can you pass me the mayonnaise?

'He shall save you!'

I hear it is pleasant to drown;  
you are blocking the canned chopped tomatoes.

'He Shall Save You!'

I prefer to spend.

Nine Sixty minus Two.  
Eliot in my pocket,  
Blake in my socket.

Ten Forty Four.  
With mould and stick,  
She cherry pick.  
A boy breaks a branch, crushes a stone.  
Wind Stops,  
Air does not flow,  
Whispers do not gather.  
Souls meet; Wisdom past.  
The broken branch rotten, trodden.  
With mould and stick,  
He cherry pick.

Twelve Eighteen.  
I call her Matilda,  
Even if that is not her name.  
Sandwiches and shortbread  
Are the custodians of the bench  
Keeping us far,  
Holding us close.

Fifteen Zero Three  
I call her Jessica,  
Even if that is not her name.  
Bicycle lamp cello taped to the handlebars,  
Afternoon haze upon my back,  
Tickling my leg hair,  
Afternoon haze upon my mind,  
Setting me loose amongst the fair  
In the Bakelite café  
Noiselessness echoing across the deserted table.

Eighteen Twelve.  
I call her Sophie,  
Even if that is not her name.  
That is her name,  
Lion with thick dark mane,  
Nothing about her plain.  
Rhubarb stuck to my chin,  
Custard drying under my fingernails,  
Waiting for soap.

Twenty One Twenty One.  
Creased cotton sheets listen to the street,  
Uneven feather pillows speak to the window,  
Ajar  
Lies the door.  
She wasn't a whore.

Five Thirty Six.  
No birdsong.  
No Bacon.  
I call them Sophie.



'Would You Go Back?', by Christopher Allan

## SONNET NO. 2

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I dreamt I was in love with you again.  
How my heart raced at your exquisite touch  
upon my arm, my hand; at how you then  
guided my brush to paint, with strokes of such  
delight that each caress the canvas felt  
I also knew, fantastic flights of fancy.  
Emotion, colour, touch, sound seem to melt  
into this light I feel and song I can see.  
Aroused from sleep, the dream retreats from mind;  
Cold morning air dispels its heady mist.  
Alone, I try to catch it, but I find  
no grip can grasp that which does not exist.  
Why did I chase so long what now it seems  
are fleeting images and fading dreams?

*Thomas Dinsdale-Young*

# PERSONALITY

SPLIT

is a sculpture inspired by the Surrealism movement. Here, the bench is split along the middle with each side have a character of its own. The contrast of the cold steel, and the old organic wood represents the character duality that can exist in doctors in response to events unfolding around them. Whether it's their reaction to a traumatic event, or to impress colleagues during ward rounds; an invisible wall is built to hide one's true feelings. Traumatic events, such as death of a patient, is represented by the bleeding heart and it's shielded by the broken mask in attempt to hide the emotional turmoil. The full mask, coupled with the stethoscope, symbolizes the textbook professional persona a doctor would put on in front of patients and colleagues. The bench itself is a metaphor for the need to rest and reflect on both sides of this duality.

THE ARTS EXHIBITION  
CURATED BY THE MEDICAL  
HUMANITIES CLASS OF 2010.

BY JUSTIN CHENG

# ARTOPSY





Mr J.O. told me how bored he got, and that he felt 'trapped' in his ward. To escapes these feelings, he listened to music on his portable radio which unfortunately got lost because he was moved several times from ward to ward. He felt that he got 'confused' (the speckled red and orange fabric, where blobs are coming off like lost memories not totally rooted to what he remembers. Sometimes he felt he was treated like a 'blithering idiot'. That the doctors and nurses did not heed his requests to find his lost radio. It only took me a few minutes to check where it was for him, but it is the minutae that make the difference; knowing about his feelings of being 'trapped', and that his 'desire to get out is great' meant that his radio gained more importance to him, because it allowed him, to at least temporarily escape this 'prison'. This trapped feeling is represented by the green and gold vertical striped fabric, which looked like prison bars, but the green also reminded him of the greenery outside - of escaping and getting back to normality."



# WOVEN TEXTILE

is a textile based artwork dealing with the issue of narrative based medicine and its importance in treating patients in a holistic manner. It recognises that an evidence based approach to medicine is not enough, as there is more to a patient's welfare than purely clinical outcome. By understanding their unique story we can treat the person, not just the disease. The artworks main component consists of garments with fabrics stitched into them as a collage. These fabrics have been chosen by patients during interviews, and symbolise their hospital experience, illness, and lifestyle. It focuses on their emotions and the issues that they feel have not been addressed by their doctors; chronicling a parallel aspect of their journey with healthcare. The garments are counterpointed with an admission that evidence based medicine is needed, but should be balanced and in conjunction with patient narrative.

BY ADAM POPE



'Redditch', photographed by Andy Roast

## EASTBOURNE

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When an old person dies,  
They say a baby is born.  
See grief leads to joy,  
So don't look so forlorn.

But Eastbourne is peculiar,  
Or that's how it's sold.  
It's full of grey care homes,  
Which are full of the old.

And death isn't lazy,  
He works every day.  
So where are the babies?  
Do they all move away?

*Kadhim Shubber*





'Study for a self portrait' by Christopher Allen

*Oil on canvas*

# PAUL GARTON GOES TO SPACE

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BY JADE HOFFMAN

To become an astronaut, you must know physics, so Paul buys three heavy textbooks at the Barnes and Noble in town. He straps them to the back of his bicycle with the loving tenderness of a parent buckling in their youngest child.

To become an astronaut, you must be fit, so Paul runs three miles down the road daily to meet his father's car coming back from work. At the weekend, he just keeps running until he has to catch the bus home. He leans his head right back, sweat-drenched and sticking to the PVC on the back seat, panting at the sky as it keeps pace on the other side of the window. Invariably, it is a patched-and-washed, faded jeans, Indiana blue.

"That's Jack Garton's boy," says Mrs. Patterson, a couple of rows down, nudging her dozing husband. "He's going to go into space."

Mr. Patterson wriggles from her sharp elbows. His voice is a wholesome snarl of phlegm. "What's he gonna do? Run there?"

Paul Garton reads and he runs. And he reads. And he runs. Whenever he can, in between these two things, he tilts back his head and looks up.

\*

If you ask me to pinpoint the exact time I decided to go into space, it probably wasn't Saturday afternoon at the planetarium with my father when I was five. Neither was it dressing up as Neil Armstrong for Halloween in 1971. The exact time I decided to go into space was 1973, when John Glenn had been on the lecture circuit for about four months and ended up in Wayne County. 1973 was the year when John Glenn stopped by his old colleague Henry Duke's, shared

a beer with him on the front porch and met my eyes in the middle of his talk the next afternoon at the town hall.

I remember the sky had been perfectly clear that day and that I had stuck my arm up in the air. John Glenn must have picked it out in that crowded room: that seven-year old's arm, earnest and unblemished, stretching to the moulded ceiling plaster like a sapling.

"What is it, son?" John Glenn turned his keen eye on me. These were the same eyes that had surveyed our earth as a whole; these were the eyes of the man who'd shot from the ground and floated on the periphery, watching whilst we were putting our kids on school buses and reading the morning news. I had almost cracked my wrist on the plastic chairs, snatching back my arm so quickly.

"What was it like, sir?"

John Glenn grinned. He sank back into his chair a little, folded his arms across his chest and grinned.

"You know, every time I'm asked this question, I try to find better words to answer it with," he said. "But I still haven't found anything that quite does it justice." Then he looked straight at me and it was one of those moments of complete epiphanic clarity that other people might write love songs about.

"You've really got to go and see it for yourself," he said.

A man cleared his throat at the back of the room, as though he wanted to add something, but changed his mind. This man was Henry Duke, Wayne County's very own astronaut, but I didn't turn around, I didn't even know who Henry Duke was. I just perched on the edge of my plastic chair and my heart thumped. I was seven years old then, but I wouldn't be forever. One day, I'd be seeing the world as

On February 20th, 1986, Jerry's having sex with the girl Paul's going to marry but, since Paul hasn't met her yet, he sits out in the corridor with one ear pressed to his portable radio, listening to the news report on Mir.



John Glenn saw it, like a marble on the tarmac.

\*

Between 1980 and 1984, Wayne County High School's library registers one hundred and twenty counts of checking out just one particular video tape. All but three of those stamps in the inside of "1969 – The Eagle Has Landed" are for Paul Garton, who watches and re-watches that tape so much in the A.V. room he can tell you every flicker of light on the greyscale horizon and every scuff of static on the audio track.

Paul holds the rewind button and his finger is sure, steady, as the machine pulls it all back. Neil and Buzz jump up and down, they take down the American flag, they leap backwards into the rocket and take off. On the winter solstice, he rides his bike up Hoosier Hill with a thermos of hot blackcurrant to watch the longest night of the year unfold in all of its soaring, speckled glory. He can hear the crackle of that 1969 news report in his ears as he pounds his feet on the pedals; he can feel the warm sizzle of that old tape reel glowing in his teeth and bones when he powers through the cold.

"I don't get it, Paul," says his older brother, Frank. "I think you're nuts." Frank's girlfriend smiles over the dinner table, fork full of spaghetti.

"Oh, I think it's romantic!" she says.

Paul watches that tape over and over, and he reads, and he runs, and he rides his bike to watch the solstice shake off the sun in a twenty-nine degree night. How romantic the whole thing is, Paul doesn't really know. His first girlfriend is sixteen and sleeping in her home in Ohio when he's cycling up Hoosier Hill in 1982. He doesn't know it; the first time he meets her is 1986, when he's sat on the floor outside his dorm room door and she's in bed with his college roommate.

\*

Here's a strange dream I've been having since I was eleven years old.

In this dream, I'm twenty-something, as athletic and as tall as I've always wanted to be. I see myself in the reflection from the reinforced

glass of my helmet, looking out onto that vast blackness I'd only ever seen before in double-page spreads of *The Encyclopaedia of Space*. Silence.

"Hello?"

"You had us worried for a minute there, Eagle." CAPCOM's crackled response.

"Commencing untethered space walk, Houston." I say, seeing the earth down there – that hazy blue-green marble.

"Your wife and kids are here, Eagle."

I'm reaching for the airlock door. "My wife?"

"And your kids."

When I'm turning the door handle, I realise, in that numb and off-handed way in which thoughts occur in dreams, that CAPCOM is actually my dad's voice. I idly wonder when he got this new job, wonder if he's still going to be working at the second-hand car dealership.

"Listen, Eagle. We have a message for you."

"I'm listening, Dad."

I step outside, putting my feet out to no resistance. Like John Glenn said, it's a thing that cannot be described. It's like floating, but it's not. It's like falling, but it's not. Over the radio, there's some static.

"Listen to this, Eagle."

And, whilst I'm there – suspended out alone, hovering uncertainly like those preserved things in the jars at the Museum of Natural History – my Dad starts to play me Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Fortunate Son." I don't really question it; I listen to it, like he told me to. I'm thinking about the times he played it to me and Frank in the car on the way to visit our grandparents and can almost see us both down there – tiny, clockwork movements – driving up the I-69 with Frank giving me a dead arm in the back. Lights – street lights, car lights, whole cities start to switch on and off, and the small earth twinkles gently. When Perth is on, Paris fades out. When Oslo lights up, New York darkens. The process is smooth, flowing and undulating with an eerie, mesmerising beauty.

I take off my helmet to get a better look. I breathe in; I feel okay.

I've never told anyone about this dream, can't really see why I would. Not even when I was in the

hospital did I think to mention this dream but I had it every month or so, almost exactly like this. Sometimes CAPCOM played me some CSNY.

\*

Paul's college roommate is Jerry Secker, a loud, broad-shouldered American History major. If prompted to describe him, Paul will say that Jerry is one of those guys who, when asked casually if they're feeling hungry at all, will reply, "I'm always hungry." If prompted to describe Paul, Jerry will shrug his Atlas-worthy shoulders and say, "He's an alright guy, you know? Quiet. All he does is read and run."

On February 20th, 1986, Jerry's having sex with the girl Paul's going to marry but, since Paul hasn't met her yet, he sits out in the corridor with one ear pressed to his portable radio, listening to the news report on Mir.

"Sorry," Jerry mutters when he opens the door. Paul doesn't mind and says so.

"What are you listening to?" the girl asks, appearing in the doorway, hurriedly dressed and sheepish.

"They just launched Mir," says Paul.

Jerry frowns. "Who did?"

"The Soviets."

"Holy shit, that's bad, right?"

The girl giggles and lands an endearing punch on Jerry's bicep. "No, silly, it's that space thing, isn't it?"

"It's a space station," Paul nods and smiles a little at this girl Jerry's got his arm around. "They're not bombing us or anything."

On this exact day, twenty-four years ago, John Glenn became the first man to orbit the earth in four hours, fifty-five minutes and twenty-three seconds.

"I think it's kind of cool," says the girl. "What's your name, by the way?"

"It's Paul," Paul says.

"I'm Joni," she says and steps out, barefoot, into the corridor to shake his hand. When she leans in, the neckline of her sundress falls open and Paul glimpses, beneath the cotton, the pale-skinned contours leading down to her breasts. Joni continues to sleep with Jerry for a week and a half, and after that she dates a boy called Howard for a

while, but she marries Paul in 1991.

\*

I attribute almost everything that happens to me, the good and the bad, to meeting John Glenn that one time when I was an impressionable seven-year old. If I ever met him again, I think I'd ask him to come with me when I apologise to Joni. I would explain to him that he should probably have never come down to Wayne County, never picked my skinny arm out of the crowd, never had a beer with Henry Duke in the Indiana spring.

Sometimes, now, I think that if I had met Henry Duke instead of John Glenn, things would have been a lot different. But Henry Duke isn't allowed to hold talks, or visit schools and town halls, at least, not if NASA's PR department hears about it. And they hear about it. He wrote three articles on his space-travel experiences that were all blocked before they could even feel the cold breath of Time magazine's overaggressive office air-conditioning. They were blocked before he'd even licked the stamps to send them. The best Henry Duke ever did, in the twenty-eight earthbound years before his death, was to write bitter letters to the *Your Say* pages of minor astronomy magazines under pseudonyms. Even then, he was painfully aware that his efforts were futile responses to similarly dispirited people who never found a thing that made their lives feel full. He got little comfort from it.

I never met Henry Duke, or his angry wife, or his angry son. I only heard about him, five years after his death, from the man who shared the hospital room with me. I think sometimes that I'd like to have met him; we'd have a lot to talk about.

\*

Joni turns up at the restaurant Paul works at one day in October. She orders coffee and a slice of cheesecake, and tells Paul that she's stopped seeing Howard, didn't know why she'd even started going out with him in the first place. The first time they sleep together, Joni's elbow knocks his Mir shuttle replica off the dresser and it lands as seven splintered bits of acrylic on the floor.

"Shit, Paul," she says and stops

pulling off his shirt. "I'm sorry. I'll get you another one."

"Don't worry," he says. "I don't need the replica; I'll see it when I get there."

One of the things that Joni loves so much about him, the thing she usually says first when asked, is the way he is so sure of himself. Joni doesn't know if she wants to watch a movie or go bowling; Joni still isn't sure she picked the right meal last night at dinner. But you can ask Paul, and he'll say "bowling", and he'll say "lasagne", and Joni's always admired that. She doesn't know if she wants to go into drama or teaching, but Paul says he's going to go into space and he does.

He doesn't always talk about space, though. Paul and Joni also talk about music that they like, childhood pets and favourite TV shows. Paul knows that, of the things Joni does and does not want, that she wants to sing at least once on Broadway and that she never wants to have to ask her parents for money. Joni knows that, of the things Paul will and will not talk about, he will not talk about his father's experiences in Vietnam. They don't always talk about space, and music, and parents. Twice, they talk about children's names – Emily, Jason, Sophie. Once, Paul asks her to marry him and she says yes.

\*

We went to couples counselling, on Joni's persuasion, once after I came back. My guess was that this all happened whilst I was away, that maybe people we knew started doing things like this – going to sit together on leather sofas in the city to tell a stranger that you're so sick of each other. I agreed to go, just so she would stop asking.

"I don't know how much I want to be sitting in the room when you tell some man we've never met all the things about me that you hate," I said, but we were already in the car on the way there.

"You don't know how much you want anything," Joni muttered to the window. I turned up the car radio but did not recognise the music. It turned out that the therapist was a woman, anyway.

I tried to listen as Joni told this woman about all the things wrong

with our relationship. I remember that she said things about her affair, my absence, my unresponsiveness. They both mentioned my childhood, which I thought was slightly strange and intrusive, but I didn't say anything – I couldn't stop staring at the wall.

The therapist stopped Joni, finally, turned to me and asked: "What do you think about that, Paul?"

"When I was on Mir," I began and Joni leant forwards. "One of the Russian guys – he'd already been there a while when we arrived – asked us to bring up a book of paint swatches because there's almost nothing there that isn't black or white. He'd spend whole hours after work, flicking through this big, glossy Dulux paint book, gazing at the colours."

The therapist nodded and furthered, gently: "How did you feel about that, Paul?"

I glanced at her, shrugged my shoulders. "Oh, it was okay." I gestured to her purple emulsion office walls. "These walls – Amethyst Falls, right?"

Joni listed more things she didn't like about me until our appointment was over.

"I think I'll take the bus back," she said to me, when we were leaving. I didn't try to stop her and she didn't come home. We didn't go to counselling after that.

\*

Paul buys Joni a white-gold ring and they move together to Houston when he's accepted into the candidacy training program at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Centre. In the program, Paul makes friends with Denny Buller – a native to Texas, who jokes about never leaving the state except once, to travel for two days and two hundred miles straight up. Denny Buller and his wife Karen invite Paul and Joni around for barbecues at the weekend. Joni gets a job teaching drama at the local elementary school but quits in 1994 to have their first child, a girl, called Sophie. Paul buys Joni a pair of diamond earrings, buys Sophie a crib and begins training for STS-75 to Mir, estimated launch date: February 17th, 1996.

Physics is not enough for the

Johnson Space Centre, and Paul brings home colossal textbooks with reams of diagrams and fine-print on microbiology, chemistry and materials science.

"At least you'll be fit!" jokes the librarian, but Paul ups his running to five miles a day, just in case.

"I'm sick of this, Paul," Joni yells. "All you ever do is read and run." She slams the door when she takes Sophie to the park but she comes home later, kisses him and says, "I'm sorry – I know how much this means to you."

"I'll try to be better," Paul promises. He calls her from work when he's going to be late; he tells her he loves her. Sophie learns how to walk and talk. Paul learns how zero-gravity effects regulatory proteins in bacterial gene expression, but Denny thinks faster, can run for longer and he gets the placement to join the three Russian cosmonauts out on Mir.

"I'll catch the next one," Paul jokes at Denny's weekend barbecue but drinks a bit too much and yells at Joni in the kitchen when they get home.

The next weekend, Paul leaves Sophie with his parents, and takes Joni to New York. They see her favourite show on Broadway and he pulls her close to him in the hotel bed.

"I'm sorry," he tells her. "I know that I've been difficult, recently."

Neither of them can imagine, then, Paul wrecking the family car in April 1997, or Joni packing a suitcase and moving to her sister's. This is still January, 1996. Whilst they are in New York, Denny's wife, Karen catches measles from her nephew; Denny is quarantined for three weeks and the director of the Johnson Space Centre replaces him with Paul on STS-75.

"I'll catch the next one," Denny jokes on the phone to Paul, and he brings his wife cups of tea until she's well. Paul still reads and runs and goes to work, but he's crossing off days on the calendar like kids counting down to Christmas and pointing out Orion to Sophie in the middle of the night.

\*

I'm trying hard, these days, to fig-

ure out how I could have gotten things so wrong. I've retraced my steps to Hoosier Hill on the winter solstice and visited the house Henry Duke used to live in. I even tried to get an appointment to see John Glenn last month, but ended up sitting in an uncomfortable chair in his offices for two hours, staring at a huge framed photograph of a young John Glenn posing, helmet under arm, in front of the American flag. I'm trying to decide whether I will be Henry Duke, divorced and angry, or John Glenn, polished and proud.

In spring, on Thursday the 22nd of March, the space station Mir was officially de-orbited. It re-entered the atmosphere in the early hours of Friday morning, breaking apart over the South Pacific. It had been whole when I was there, and made of aluminium – not acrylic – but that was then, and Sophie turns seven next week, so I'm trying hard.

Since coming out of the hospital, I've been going to visit Denny, still in Texas, still firing up the barbecue at the weekend, and we talk things over.

"I don't get it, Paul," he says, flipping burgers in the sun. "But I don't think you're nuts. Did something happen to you up there?"

"No, nothing happened at all," I say, and it's the truth. NASA's psychiatrist visited the hospital and spent some time with me, trying to assess whether or not I was plotting a lawsuit or something. The guy in the bed next to me urged me to sue, told me about Henry Duke, and told me I had a really good case. He's probably still there.

"I'm going to go and say sorry to Joni," I tell him.

He nods wisely, flattens the red meat on the grill. "Sure, that's a good idea – but you need to know what you're saying sorry first," he says. "Because she'll ask you and if you don't have an answer... Well, boy, does it drive Karen crazy?"

But Karen still answers the phone when he calls.

"I didn't total my car and check into the loony bin, Paul," Denny says. "You figure out why you're sorry."

So I'm trying to figure that out,

because Sophie will be seven next week and her father is still making appointments with John Glenn and her mother still won't answer the phone when I call.

\*

There is a large portrait of Lyndon B. Johnson's face, jowly and stern, in the lobby at the Johnson Space Centre. Sophie points at it when she goes in, holding tightly to her mother's hand, but only because it's big – she doesn't recognise the face. She might've recognised John F. Kennedy's face, Johnson's popular predecessor, but Kennedy wasn't from the Lone Star State and Texas re-christened the space centre in their son's name after the third heart attack claimed him.

"Good luck, buddy," Denny says and embraces his friend in 1996.

"You're not mad, are you?" Paul asks.

"Not mad, no. Maybe a little disappointed," says Denny. "I thought I was all set, ready to go. I wrote my letter and everything."

"Letter?"

"Sure, you know – I wrote a letter for Karen and for my folks, in case anything happened to me. So they can remember me."

Paul raises an eyebrow. "That sounds a little grim for you, Denny?"

Denny only laughs. "I just like things the way I like 'em." He slaps Paul on the shoulder. "Go make sure everything's ready for my arrival up there, won't you?"

Paul doesn't write a letter, and doesn't need one. Joni tells Sophie to wave at the window and she watches with tears in her eyes when he takes off. Paul's parents are there, too, and Frank.

Among the things Paul takes with him, he has photographs, the book of paint swatches and a Creedence Clearwater Revival CD. Once, Paul Garton's father had driven him – not Frank – out to the Veterans Memorial Park, and told him that there were some days when he wished he'd only ever sold second-hand cars.

Paul makes a two day and two-hundred mile journey as the only American astronaut joining a team of three Russian cosmonauts who are still building and rebuilding

the thing. They speak limited English to him and perform tethered spacewalks to maintain the space station. Paul's been assigned the task of eight biomechanical experiments and all are ultimately inconclusive.

"I'm kind of sick of this," Paul says to the paint-swatch Russian, one hundred and seventeen days in.

"NASA will send another soon," says the Russian as some form of consolation. Paul makes a weak joke about putting an ad in USA Today for a Mir roommate to take his place.

"Probably non-smoker, right?" Paul says. The Russian smiles a little but says nothing. He holds a swatch up to Paul, taps a green square called Willow Creek and gives him a thumbs-up.

"This one is good," the Russian asserts.

In the one hundred and forty-eight days before Denny arrives on STS-76 to relieve him, Paul learns almost all of the Dulux paint names, Sophie learns to count and recite the alphabet, and Joni has an affair with a guy she meets in the grocery store.

\*

Joni picks up the phone on Saturday evening, after I've called four times. She probably picks it up to tell me to stop calling, but I cut in before she slams down the receiver.

"Joni, please," I blurt. "I've already bought her a birthday present."

Joni's voice is cold, I can hear her sister in the background: "Joni, just hang up the phone."

"Oh, right, so that's a good reason to talk to you? That's going to make things better, right, Paul?" she says. "Buying things. That'll fix everything."

"That's not what I meant." I expect the line to go dead but when it doesn't, I venture: "I want to come and see you; I want to say sorry."

"Sorry for what?" (Denny was right)

"Uh – for everything."

She scoffs. "I bet you are." ("Joni – hang up.")

"I am, I am," I start scrambling for words and none of them seem good enough. "I'm sorry for never caring enough about you when I

"I'm sick of this, Paul," Joni yells. "All you ever do is read and run." She slams the door when she takes Sophie to the park but she comes home later, kisses him and says, "I'm sorry – I know how much this means to you."

More than once, when I was in the hospital, I wished I had actually written one of Denny's in-case-of-death letters and burnt up coming home. That way I could've written myself as I wanted to be remembered, and would have saved all of this.

had the chance, I'm sorry for being so self-absorbed, I'm sorry for crashing the car into your sister's garage..."

In 1997, I drove the car at thirty-five miles per hour into her sister's garage door and then punched her sister's husband for not letting me see Joni. He punched me back, of course, and was stronger than me so I fell down cold. It made local news, apparently, but they didn't use any names. I woke up in the hospital, and didn't get out for five months, until NASA's PR department-employed psychiatrist certified me fit to leave.

"Okay, Paul," Joni says. "We can meet for lunch – tomorrow."

Her sister groans in the background, "Joni...!" and Joni sighs before she hangs up the phone.

\*

Paul comes back numb. He doesn't burn up on re-entry; he doesn't suffer any gravity sickness. He hugs his parents, kisses Joni and holds his daughter.

"You seem different to me," he says to his wife.

"So do you," she says, but Paul doesn't feel very different. The only thing that has really changed about Paul is that he doesn't talk about space anymore.

It takes two weeks for him to stop assigning every colour he sees a name from the Dulux range (the front lawn was Green Parrot; Sophie's eyes were Liberty Blue). It takes three weeks for him to realise that Joni had slept with someone else.

It all comes out one evening, a few months since he's known, and Joni breaks down crying after dinner, telling him how sorry she is,

how she wishes it had never happened and how none of it meant a thing. Paul says nothing, doesn't know what to say. As far as he's concerned, this is not a surprise, nor was it particularly upsetting.

"How can you be so cold?" Joni sobs.

He considers this for a moment but cannot find an answer. Joni wears a different shade of lipstick these days. She has new clothes in the wardrobe he's never seen her wear, there's new furniture in the living room, different paintings on the wall. It wasn't just the one-time affair that struck Paul upon coming home, it was like some other thing had moved in to take his place during his absence and Sophie had gotten taller, and Joni had cut her hair.

One night, Joni leans over to him in bed and says, "You never talk about space anymore."

"Well, I've been there now," he says.

"Okay then." And Joni's voice is edged with spite, "So where to now, Paul?"

On Mir, they never turn the lights off because someone is always working. On Mir, you get used to wearing eye-masks when you crawl into your sleeping bag. On Mir, you have to strap yourself down just to take a piss.

One night, Paul walks up to Joni as she's washing up at the kitchen sink and holds her face in his hands. He studies her features carefully, dispassionately, and she doesn't move at all.

"There's a thing about space," he begins in a slow and precise voice. "It seems so beautiful, until you actually get there."

In the month after that, Joni

packs and takes Sophie to her sister's.

"We still have the appointment with Dr. Gould, if you want to go," she says over the phone. Paul stands in front of the half-empty wardrobe and shrugs.

"Sure," he says. "Shall I pick you up?"

"Jesus Christ, Paul."

After their last appointment with the counsellor, Paul is sitting alone in their living room when he catches the end segment on the news. The news anchor announces the safe arrival of Dennis Buller from his one-hundred-and-fifty day stint on Mir, and the brief clip shows him grinning, waving and kissing his wife. Then Frank calls,

"Hey, Paul – I heard about Joni," he says. There's static on the phone line; his voice fuzzes and crackles. "What are you going to do?"

Paul starts drinking, and then gets into the second-hand car that his father had given him (colour: Volcanic Splash) to drive to Joni's sister's. Of the things that Paul wishes he did and did not do, this is always the first one in the latter category.

\*

Denny calls and says, "Be nice, man – don't do anything stupid, just be nice."

"That's good advice," I say. "I'm glad you called."

"What are you going to lead with?"

I don't really know as yet, and she's already booked a table for tomorrow.

More than once, when I was in the hospital, I wished I had actually written one of Denny's in-case-of-death letters and burnt up coming

home. That way I could've written myself as I wanted to be remembered, and would have saved all of this. I could've said to Joni: this is how I want you to remember me – and omitted all of the unfavourable parts.

I would've said to not remember me yelling when Denny was offered STS-75. Try not to think about how many times I've promised to do the things I never intended to do. Please do not remember me as selfish and callous, but bold and passionate.

I could have said, Joni – this is how I want you to remember me. Remember that you met me after work and I kissed you for the first time in the parking lot. Remember that we rode our bikes around town on the day we moved to Texas, remember that the sky was full of sun and that the neighbourhood lawn sprinklers kissed our heels as we sped past. Remember that Sophie has my hair, and my nose, even if she has your eyes. Remember that I remembered these things before anything else, as though they were the most vital things in my life.

"I think I might start by apologising again, and take it from there," I tell Denny. "Maybe not."

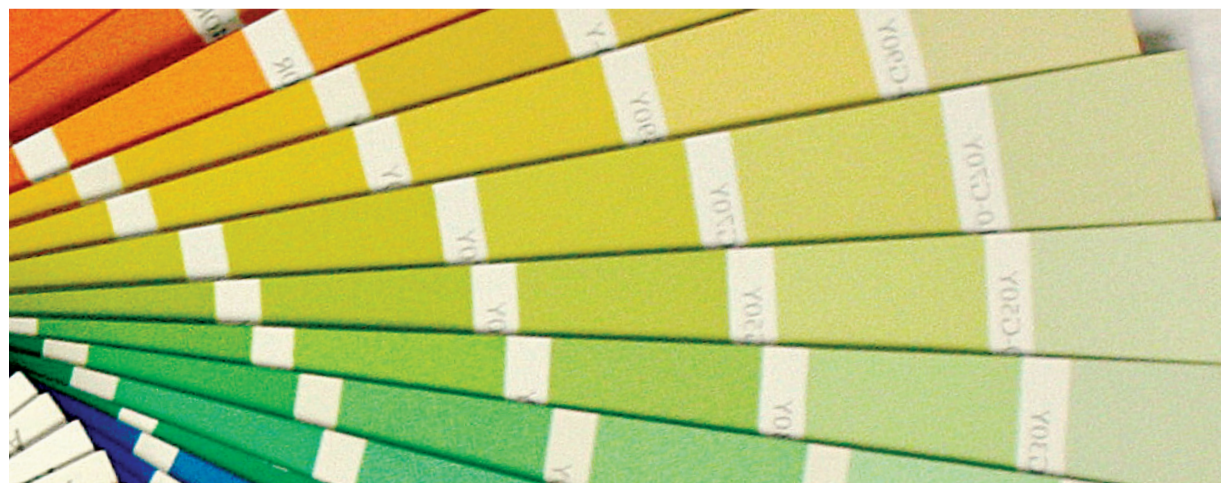
"Just don't do anything stupid," he says. "Listen, Paul, good luck, but I've got to go; I'm training for the ISS."

When he hangs up the phone, I sit back and think about, considering how much of my life I've spent working towards it, how strange it is that I can't imagine going back. An elderly lady who lives a few doors down – far enough to have never heard me and Joni yelling at each other – has told me about her grandson, a nine-year old kid in

Washington who's dreamt of space all his life. She's asked me for advice and I don't know what to say.

I remember what it was like; for her seventh birthday I've bought Sophie a bicycle and I'm planning on taking her and Joni up Hoosier Hill next winter solstice to see the constellations and the shooting stars. I remember what it was like to strive for something so magnificent and unreachable, you never really quite believe yourself. But I also remember one hundred and forty-eight days of looking at the earth like a blue-green marble on the tarmac, where my daughter was growing up, where my brother was learning the family business, where my wife was sleeping with a grocery store stranger. I don't know what I'd say to this lady's grandson, picturing John Glenn in front of the stars and stripes, picturing Henry Duke typing unhappy articles that no-one will read.

I'm thinking about Denny, still set on the International Space Station, never disappointed. I'm thinking about teaching Sophie to ride a bike one day. Most of all, I'm thinking about lunch with Joni and whether she'll be as indecisive as ever with her meal order, and whether she'll ever take me back. This is the difference, I realise, in what you will leave and what you will want back. If they called me tomorrow, and asked me to go back up to the ISS right away, I'd probably say thanks, but no thanks. I'd probably say, sorry, but I'm meeting my wife for lunch tomorrow, and I'm still trying to find some better words.



# SILENT COMPANY

What is it that made you stick,  
by me till death did us apart?  
As my soul begins to sublime  
my memory celebrates our journey  
One that I chose to cherish  
Though this body of mine should perish.

As a child in the arms of innocence,  
I began to take joy in your company.  
As we played on those fields together,  
as birds of a single feather.

You never expected, you never complained,  
never ever smiled, nor felt pained.  
you did not speak, nor did you fear  
And when it did grip me, I knew you were near.

Locked in an embrace, we waded through childhood  
And heralded the coming, of thought and age.  
Hurdles were many I faced to pass,  
At some I thrived, yet some at a loss.  
A steady refuge and a saintly gaze  
An embodied comfort of mind and spirit.

You reminded me oft, the fragile mind;  
that when hearts be broken, spirits be awoken.  
Locked in gaze and a choice of finger,  
we waded through life with a sprightly ember.

The bounty of seasons passed me by;  
and time wasn't left, in enough to buy.  
Our jog became struts, body began to wither;  
not much was left that we needed to weather.

You stooped as i did, we leaned against the other.  
At last we choked and breathed our last together.  
As men cast the shadows of their past,  
you exist as the present till the very last.

*Aditya Sankar*



'Elephant with a Nose Bleed' by Jack Jelfs



'Untitled' by Meredith Thomas

# FREDDIE BERRINGTON -LANE: A BRIEF HISTORY

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BY ELLY REYNOLDS

“CAUTIOUSLY HE OPENED THE DOOR AND PEEPED AROUND IT TO SEE A PIGLET SITTING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM.”

When Freddie Berrington-Lane was born it was into a very troubled existence and it all started with the origins of his name. His mother had been one of the Berringtons of Somerset, an old family that could trace its heritage all the way back to the Bayeux tapestry – “Richard Berrington has been worked into it, holding a horse you know” – and its tyranny over the farmers that worked on the Berrington estate almost as far. Deidre Berrington had been a beautiful, intelligent, lively young woman destined for great things, until she met Archibald Lane, a violinist with no money and no talent to speak of outside of Cornwall. They met at a party, they danced well into the early hours and at dawn they fled to Dover and got a boat to France.

The family was in uproar. Who was this man with the common name that their Deidre had run away with? She had left a letter, clearly explaining her absence and expressing her hope that she would see them all again soon. The family took the letter and put it on the fire, then wrote to the lawyers and had her name removed from the family tree.

So when Archie and Dee returned to England they found the door to Berrington Manor closed firmly against them and settled in London to a miserable marriage. Five years later Archie left, fed up with his wife's ineptitude at darning socks and boiling potatoes, and Deidre threw herself on the mercy of an aunt who took in her and her son, Freddie.

The next fifteen years weren't so bad. Deidre dropped her husband's name and sat quietly during afternoon tea visits to Berrington Manor until slowly her parents got used to her being around again. They didn't care very much for her son though, so she continued to live with her aunt who thoroughly enjoyed reminding her how wickedly she had behaved. But for Freddie, life ran quite smoothly. He went to boarding school and played rugby and cricket – being a skinny boy he wasn't very good at either but that never seems to concern gym teachers. He worked very hard at History and got a place to study at Oxford. The family suddenly started to take an interest – it was fascinating to them that a non-descript violin-player with an unfortunate surname could produce such an intelligent boy. They paid his fees and were satisfied with his grades, but in the second year something rather unfortunate happened.

Returning to his room late one night after a dinner where he may have had a little too much to drink, he could hear a faint snuf-

fling sound coming from inside it as he fumbled with his keys outside the door. Cautiously he opened the door and peeped around it to see a piglet sitting in the middle of the room. Slowly Freddie eased himself passed the door, closed it quietly and surveyed the little animal warily. He had no idea how it had got there but dimly, in the back of his wine-muddled brain, he was recalling a rule that the college had concerning Lord Byron and a bear – or was that at Cambridge?

Probably at Cambridge, he finally decided, looking up at the clock on his mantelpiece and realising that he had been leaning against the wall for a quarter of an hour. The piglet, meanwhile, had dragged his dressing-gown off a chair and was making itself a bed. This would never do! Freddie still had no idea who had let the piglet loose in here, but he knew he would have to get rid of it and quickly if he wanted to avoid a disciplinary hearing. Carefully, very carefully, he crept across the rug towards the piglet, his arms outstretched. At the very last minute he made a sort of dive at the pig but perhaps not as gracefully as his addled brain may have predicted because the piglet shot between his legs, squealing unnaturally loudly for such a little creature and he toppled to the floor and got tangled in his dressing-gown.

A moment later a porter was charging through the door, his bowler hat tilted slightly backwards due to the speed of his movements, and demanded to know the reason for the disturbance. He took one look at the piglet, one at Freddie fighting to be free from the clutches of his dressing-gown and shook his head grimly.

The next day Freddie Berrington-Lane was sent down from Oxford for the disregard of the rule forbidding the housing of unusual pets in halls of residents. His great aunt vowed that her heart would stop with the shame, but not before it was overcome with palpitations at the sight of the bill that was enclosed with the letter, demanding that the carpet in the student room be replaced. Freddie returned to his aunt's house under a very large cloud.

Meanwhile, Lord Berrington, Deidre's uncle who was currently in charge of the estate, had died, leaving four daughters and three grieving widows all desperate to know who would be getting the house. The earlier wives, not to be at a disadvantage to the latest, moved back into the house, refusing to leave until the will was read. The lawyer was called for and pronounced Freddie Berrington-Lane as the next male in line to receive the estate. The wives were outraged. Who was this cousin that nobody had ever heard of? Freddie was sent for.

Freddie arrived at the manor one grey morning and stared up at it

from the safety of the back seat of the cab. He had never been here before, his grandparents lived in a smaller house a few miles away and his grandfather's brother had never asked him to visit. The cab driver asked pointedly for his fare and Freddie knew it was time to get out. Watching the cab drive away, his suitcase feeling heavy in his hands, he climbed the stairs and knocked on the large front door.

A grim-faced butler opened it, looked him slowly up and down, sniffed and stood back for him to enter. He was wearing a black armband and a mournful expression on his face. Slowly Freddie looked around the hall: it was immense, dimly lit and deathly quiet. For a fleeting moment he considered the possibility that nobody was in but then all at once the three wives were in the entrance hall, bearing down on him with invitations to breakfast and malignant looks in their eyes.

Freddie probably wouldn't have lasted in the house until the end of the day – with all the false kindness, and angry looks flashed in his direction when the wives thought he wasn't looking – if it hadn't been for Marie-Claire. She was the daughter of the most recent wife, who had caught Lord Berrington's eye in a line of chorus girls in the West End – Marie-Claire's mother had had the longest legs. This third wife had been living in the manor for under a year and would probably not have managed to hold on to her husband for much longer because they had very little in common and were constantly fighting. She was demanding and childish and he was stubborn and impatient; luckily for her they were still married when the heart attack came along. Her daughter was very pretty, very polite and very clever. She batted her eyes and smiled and Freddie suddenly found himself accepting an invitation to dinner. He stayed the rest of the week, and the next, and finally the two divorced wives cut their losses and went home.

Meanwhile, Freddie and Marie-Claire had been making plans. They packed up their things and got a boat to France, Freddie returning to the country in which he was conceived and Marie-Claire visiting for the first time her mother's homeland. They moved into a little cottage in the South where Freddie immersed himself in History books, eventually one day publishing one of his own and Marie-Claire's mother remained at the manor, deserted now of all the servants but content in the knowledge that she had beaten the other wives for it.



## THE LITTLE FOX

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**A**s the night creeps through the dark veins of the city streets, silence overheard only by the whimpering wind, the world stands ready awaiting the new day.

The citizens sleeping soundly in their beds as the world turns instead, seeking for a long lost sibling gone ahead.

The cold air breathing down the backs of the midnight slackers, who break barriers between reality and dream, just by their presence in this livid scene.

Lovely sounds of the solitary hounds cowering for the lack of life, hunting heroes for a cackle or strife.

And the lone fox, tiptoeing through the streets, laughing at the high-heeled feet, craving the slightest piece of meat.

Eat, eat, all he wants is to eat.

Look into his eyes and to your surprise you will see nothing but a piece of yourself, discretely distorted by your trickling health.

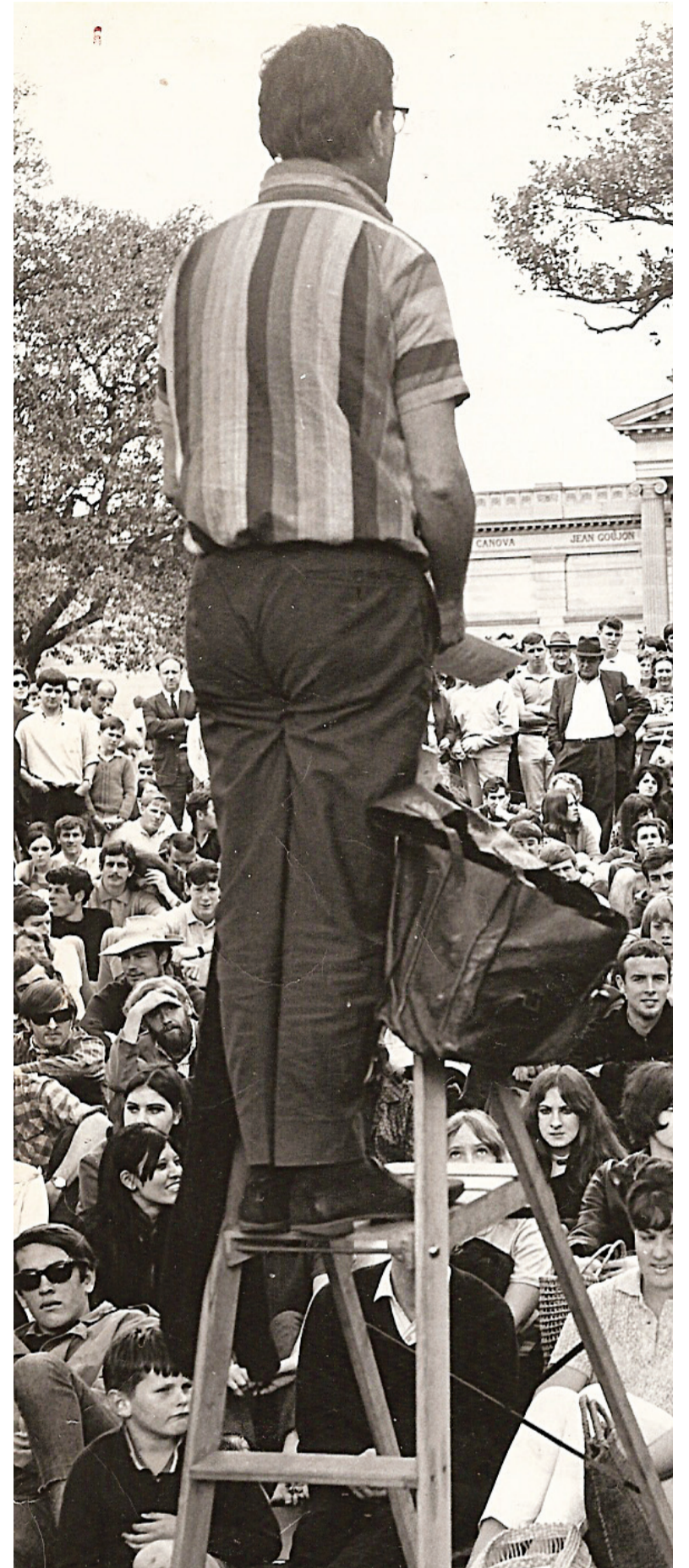
Feeling the hushing hum of the vibrating vendors he flees to a more discrete venue, surely to find some plump spectator willing to part with a shackle or two.

And there he runs,  
off again,  
before you could even count to ten.

It's like a game with him,  
for by a single whim and a gong from the clocks.  
Gone.

Good night little fox.

*Victor du Mesnil du Buisson*



## DUB & HYDE

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Whomping bass lines and cowbell treble,  
It's the sound of our youth: teenage rebels.  
It's about finding yourself amongst the crowd,  
Find a soap-box and announce it loud:  
'We're the bright young things!'  
We split ears and let it ring  
Across the park, from our corner,  
'This is us!' hears the yesteryear mourner.

*Dan Wan*





'Disney Klan'd' by Chris Clarke

*Spray paint & Stencil on photograph; Mickey: Marker Pen & Acrylic on Photograph*

This piece employs an unashamed use of the Banksy style of Stencil Graffiti to satirise racism. The figure of Disney's Mickey Mouse, who encompasses both black and white, is apparently surrounded by tall and foreboding members of the Klu Klux Klan, whilst apparently explaining the absurdity of the situation. This serves to highlight the ludicrous nature of racism as a concept in today's society, where it is possible for a cartoon character to be scrutinised over issues of race and a society of ill informed and closed minded people wearing dresses can become a taboo. It seems that it requires 2D thinking to explain the flaws of racism to such people, so maybe it is time to stop fearing the use of their image as such mindless hatred deserves no control over what we may think and say.

# A TEMPEST AMONGST US



The 'Friday's Children' plush toys (2007) are part of Tempest's Ellommenopee label she set up in 2002



## TEMPEST VAN SCHAIK

**Born:** 1985 in Johannesburg, S. Africa

**PhD in Bioengineering, Imperial College**  
**BEngSc(BME) Biomedical Engineering,**  
 The University Of The Witwatersrand (S. Africa)  
**BSc(Eng) Electrical Engineering,**  
 The University Of The Witwatersrand (S. Africa)

Creator of **Suzy Pedigree** and  
**Ellommenopee** creative brands



**W**e all know the stereotype of an Imperial student. Look around you. If you can't see at least one person that fits like a glove, you're it. Unless you're sitting next to Tempest van Schaik, that is. She's a first year PhD student in the Bioengineering department by day, and a prolific artist by night. Born in Johannesburg in 1985, she's been living in London for about a year now. Her work has been exhibited across South Africa whilst she completed a stonking two degrees at The University Of The Witwatersrand in Biomedical and Electrical Engineering. During that time, she set up two creative brands, *Suzy Pedigree* and *Ellommenopee*. As she moves onto pastures new (and climates colder), a name has already been made for herself here at Imperial. Her pieces have been featured in the Imperial College St. Mary's Art Exhibition and Imperial's Women in Science, Engineering and Technology photography gallery this year. A scientist, an engineer, a businesswoman and an artist. Our hats are off to her.

### YOU'VE BEEN IN LONDON FOR 6 MONTHS, HOW'S IT BEEN TREATING YOU?

After graduating in South Africa I rushed over to start in Imperial's Spring term. On my first day at Imperial I was still living in a hostel, so it was pretty tough settling in. What I love about London is how it's impossible to be bored. There are always amazing art exhibitions and concerts showing somewhere, and because of the density of universities I've been regularly going to academic talks by top thinkers in every field from evolutionary biology to religion, psychology and climate change.

### MANY PEOPLE HAVE LAMENTED ON IMPERIAL'S NATURAL LACK OF CREATIVITY BEING A SCIENCE-ONLY INSTITUTION. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO COME TO IMPERIAL FOR YOUR PHD?

I chose Imperial purely from an engineering point of view: for the quality of research in my department, the facilities and the engineering education I would get. I expected to have to pursue creative endeavours on my own, outside of university.

### WHAT INTERESTS YOU ABOUT YOUR PHD AT IMPERIAL?

It draws on a broad range of multidisciplinary skills from my undergraduate engineering degrees, but also requires learning new topics such as chemistry. Because it's empirical research I'm not confined to my desk, but use the electronics, chemistry and tissue culture labs where I enjoy working with my hands, whether it's to find ways to sew with microscopic wire or to suffocate a colony of cells. I also value getting a broad education and enjoy the regular supply of bioengineering academics presenting their research.

### HOW ARE YOU USING YOUR LIFE AT IMPERIAL TO INSPIRE YOUR ART?

Imperial is a few minutes away from some of the most beautiful museums in the world. This means that if I need inspiration I can marvel at grotesque deep-sea fish, romantic steam engines and opulent royal tapestries.

### HAS STRIKING A BALANCE OF PRIORITIES BETWEEN YOUR ENGINEERING DEGREE AND CREATIVE AMBITION BEEN CHALLENGING?

Yes, it's always been difficult and I have to make



sacrifices to have time for both. I like to work towards specific deadlines like competitions or shows so that my art doesn't go by the way-side. That said, engineering and art deadlines have an uncanny tendency to cluster together which can be stressful.

**ELLOMENNOPEE IS YOUR STEADILY GROWING CREATIVE LABEL. WHAT'S THE ETHOS BEHIND THIS?**

The name Ellomennopee (pronounced "LM-NOP") comes from my misinterpretation of the alphabet song as a child. It's a moniker I use for my works of art and design. Originally in 2007 it was the name of my brand of hand-made plush toys which sold in retail stores. The success of the toys made me realise that since leaving school, I had neglected my artistic side. From then on I vowed to stay involved in art for my own happiness.

**WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY PRODUCING FOR IT?**

I'm currently working with some rather austere art supplies to build up a portfolio to show to galleries in London. I'm busy researching the kind of galleries I'd like to exhibit in and the myriad of art competitions that are held in London. A lot of my creative energy has gone into my flat, which was an uninhabitable wasteland when I first moved in, but is now looking quite nice.

**WHAT DO YOU ULTIMATELY WANT IT TO BECOME?**

I want to grow my name as an artist so I can be exposed to more creative opportunities. I've noticed a positive feedback effect whereby the more people who know your work, the more chances you get for exciting creative projects. My dream would be to be given a huge public space, a huge budget and free reign.

**WOULD YOU SAY YOUR ULTIMATE CALLING IS TO BE AN ENGINEER OR AN ARTIST?**

Ultimately I'm a combination and I would be unfulfilled without both in my life.

**ASSESS THE CREATIVE SCENE AT IMPERIAL...AND HONESTLY!**

I am impressed with what Imperial has to offer, considering it is a science university. There are great student societies like PhotoSoc, and Leonardo for fine arts which offers weekly classes. Since I've been here I've been involved in two Imperial art exhibitions, and there's also the annual ArtsFest. Imperial has its own exhibition space, the Blythe Gallery which is inspiring to visit and also gives a platform for students who wish to exhibit. The Blythe Centre's music facilities are also fantastic and I'm planning to book some piano time soon. Perhaps Imperial's creative scene could be enhanced by collaborating more with our neighbours at RCA and RCM? 🧘



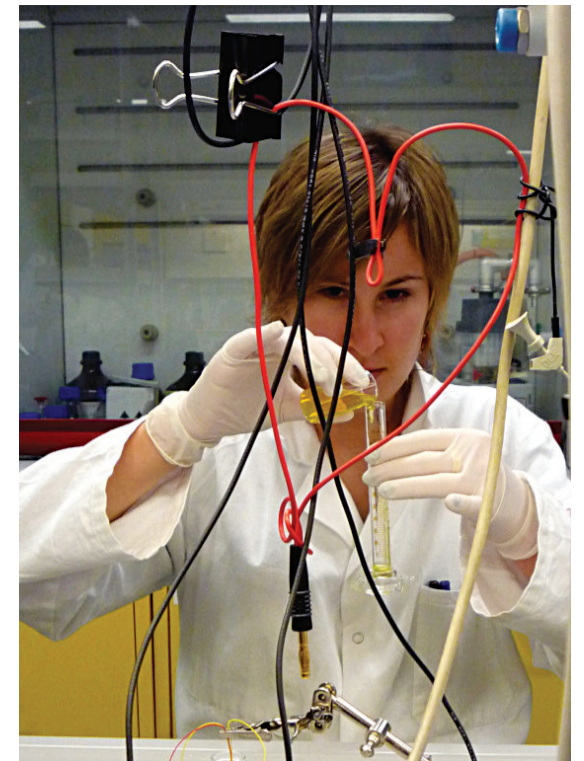
'The Waterbabies Is A Scary Book For Children' (left) is based on Charles Kingsley's Victorian-era fairy-tale and "Does Not Your House Dream? And Dreaming Leave City For Hilltop?" (right) is taken from poetry by Kahlil Gibran



Collaborating with Jenna Burchell, 'Cameos and Genotypes won the Best New Media prize at the national Thami Mnyele Fine Arts Award and was then purchased for Unisa's permanent public collection



'In Mothballs' was created for the City Slickers exhibition, which has travelled across the globe



Clockwise, from top left: 'Cloud Factory' is one of the winners of the Mingo Lamberti t-shirt design competition. The entry for the "Far Far Away" competition was exhibited at Biblioteq (Cape Town)

Top right: 'I Heart Electrochemistry' was runner up in Imperial's Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WSET) photography competition.

Middle right: "Benign/Malignant?" was made after studies of excised tumours and visits to the children's cancer ward at the Johannesburg General Hospital.

Bottom left: The piece 'Riding to Hounds' was awarded 2nd place at ICSMart St Mary's Hospital Art Exhibition.





'Samson and Philistine' by Tom Mole



'Untitled' by Christopher Allen



'Chair' by Caia Dominicus

# IMPERIAL RULE

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This is your home. From the mini heatwave that is the library to the 1960s' unwanted baby that is the Blackett Laboratory, this is your home whether you like it or not. Recreational societies have been the mainstay of arts on campus, and it is from them that most of the contributions in this feature are sourced. Through these, PHOENIX looks to celebrate all the love and lackings Imperial College has flagrantly tossed our way these past years.



Photographs by Olivier Pernet

There was a student from Imperial  
Whose failure with women was serial  
Try as he might  
They always took flight  
So he got his thrills from his course material

*Christopher Gardner*



'Queen's Balls', photographed by Daniel Wong

# COLLEGE



A College to my name, nothing to my heart,  
Though grass greener, consider stone pave warmer.  
Whilst the turbines of my mind speed faster than I can think,  
The pressures, the thoughts and the people fade fast.  
Passing nausea hides away behind a moment's blink.

In between the turbulence I find a solace.  
Monday's blank canvas stays still in the winds,  
Whilst Friday's paper whistles across the mile,  
A mile by mile, a square of Smoke where my livelihoods lie.

That patch a comfort, my pawns to play,  
Competition is leadless, but fruitless at best.  
As the strings are pulled and my show is made,  
I look beyond this garden where my seeds are sown  
To the weeds of height unimaginable.

Yet I know amongst selfish nature  
Lay delicate flowers, ones there, there and there.  
Like those that have risen East and those that have risen near  
And the ones that are soon to cease.  
They all flaunt and flutter in breezes,  
But in breezes only ever found by me.

Dan Wan



'Untitled', photographed by Nick Kay



'Snow in Early January', photographed by Alex Guite



# PHOTOSOC

“A bunch of crazy guys,” says my friend, when I asked her about her involvement in Photosoc committee for over two years. “Crazy about photography of course.” More than a hundred years after it’s founding, Photosoc is still the thumping heart of the photography scene in Imperial. Photosoc’s repertoire offers something on the plate for both experienced and beginners, for both hobbyist and hardcore enthusiast.

“Joining Photosoc allowed me to take my photography to a whole new level. From the trips to exhibitions that are organized and subsidised to being able to bounce ideas off people to having access to almost any piece of equipment I can think of, Photosoc has a lot to offer” said Slobodan Radoslavljevi.

“Photosoc has a good combination of keen film camera users and digital camera users, plus they have a range of tutorials and talks from professionals, as well as nice equipments for photo developing,” describes Charles Poon, who used to be the photographer for his high school, “I have learnt much from fellow photographers, and find it really easy to enhance my skills especially on film developments and editing photos through photoshop.”

The key event that made Photosoc what it is today is the acquisition of a darkroom in the West Wing of Beit Quad back in 2001. The darkroom opened up a whole new facet of photography for its members.

“Up to this year, I had never had any experience with film photography, dealing purely with a digital workflow. Once I attended one of the many Photosoc film developing and printing sessions, I was hooked!” said Tristan Brown, “I am now an avid film photographer, and can’t think of an enjoyable use of an evening than locking myself in the darkroom with a big bag of rolls.”

Photosoc also serves as a platform for its members to showcase their pictures. They have a flickr group where members post up picture taken during Photosoc excursions, and an annual exhibition at Imperial’s very own Blyth Gallery.

Their exhibition this year, It’s a Small World, deals with the microscopic to the epic, challenging the viewer’s perception of size and scale.

“This year we tried a couple of different things like trying to display a couple of pieces in the physical form of their subject,” explained Slobodan. “It involved lots of wire and glue and was maybe more trouble than it was worth, but was nice to look at.” The results are particularly interesting exhibits like the panoramic shots hung with bent iron strips to create a circular display that engulfs the viewers in the landscape, and a sequence of water droplet photos hung in a helical cascade which exudes a sense of temporality and motion. - **GHC**

Photography by Jonathan Kim (Photosoc Chair 09/10)





# LEOSOC

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## Q1. WHO OR WHAT ARE YOU?

Leosoc is short for Leonardo Society, or, more officially, Leonardo Fine Arts Society. Don't let the name scare you off! We're basically a group of Imperial students (and the odd lecturer) who enjoy doing art as well as science.

We have weekly sessions in term time when we all meet up, and with the help of our qualified teacher Gareth, make a mess and hopefully some art along the way.

We also have a studio at our disposal in the union building where it's possible to do your own thing during the week.

## Q2. WHY ON EARTH ARE YOU CALLED LEOSOC?

Why Leonardo... this question has frustrated many a person and the answer lies back in the years of history that precede us, with our Forefathers, those great people who founded L\$eosoc.

They discovered, much to their dismay, that the name "art society" had already been taken by a bunch of unscrupulous students - these people were not artists but appreciators of art, and can oft be found going to the theatre together at cheaper prices than those that mere mortals have to pay.

So our Great Forefathers were left with a conundrum. "What shall we call the fantastic society we have just created?" they puzzled over it for weeks and came up with "leonardo society", naming their club after Leonardo Da Vinci - a man of both science and art such that they hoped their followers would be...or maybe they just happened to be in Da Vinci's bar in the Union, who can tell?

Peacock, by Chris Clarke (LeoSoc Chair 10/11)



## FASHIONSOC

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I remember strolling into the Oxfam Shop on Gloucester Road, timidly asking for the manager. "Can we borrow some clothes for a photoshoot please?" From then on, there was no going back. We put together a shoot in less than a week. We had Toni&Guy do the models' hair. We waved some inspiration photos in the air and pointed 'This, we want this hair on her'.

We spotted a wedding dress. The shooting location was the basement of the Oxfam Shop. There were three floor to ceiling cages for sorting out the mountainous donations they received every day.

This kind of collaboration is always fun. And it never ceases to amaze me the talents we have at Imperial. We have photographers who excel at capturing emotions and producing photographs of fantastic compositions. We have students who can do make up and hair like professionals. Not to mention the models, who are very photogenic and patient; who also have the stamina to toil through the long hours of posing and hence the stiff muscles!

But FashionSoc does more than that. We run sewing lessons. From sketching the dress to actually making one - the process is a lot of fun. Getting to wear a dress that has a tag that reads 'Made by' and not 'Made in', is the most satisfying feeling in the world. It makes us feel we are 'unique' because we wear 'bespoke, one off pieces'.

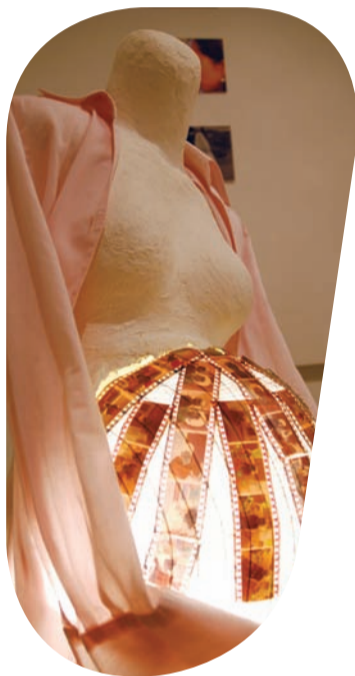
We planned to do a fashion show this year to showcase our society's work. Unfortunately it didn't materialise due to the small number of garments we had. Next year though, we hope to see your work on the catwalk! - KW

Clothes provided by Oxfam  
Model: Annabelle Harris  
Photographed by Andreea Babuic

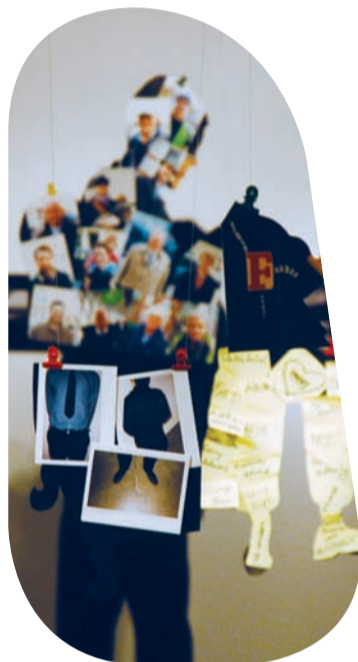
# TO FIVE SIGNIFICANT FIGURES

(TO 5 S.F.)  
(TO 5 S.F.)  
(TO 5 S.F.)

“THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES WE ARE SURROUNDED BY THOSE WHO INSPIRE US, THOSE WHO GUIDE US AND THOSE WHO DESPISE US. IT IS TO THOSE THAT WE DEDICATE THIS.”



MOTHER



FATHER



GRAND-  
PARENTS



YOUR WORST  
ENEMY



ONE'S SELF

Leosoc and Photosoc collaborated in pairs to create responses to the idea of a family member. Each character inventively appeared in the gallery using a variety of different media. In the corner of the gallery, nostalgic memories of a fading grandmother appear as a sculptural installation of trinkets, mementos and bon bons held in place by wizened hands. The body remained deliberately incomplete as she physically fades away; leaving evidence of a life lived in old photographs which gently fall to the ground. The grandma was contrasted with other family members such as mother and father and the dark family member no one wants to be associated with.

*(To Five Significant Figures was the collaborative effort between Leosoc and Photosoc. The exhibition on the Blyth Gallery from 23 – 26 February in conjunction with Arts-fest 2010. Photosoc and Leosoc collaborates annually for an exhibition.)*

**Credits:**

*Mother by Susana  
Grand Parents by Roxane, Ellie and Honor  
Father by Jonny and Stan  
Worse Enemy by Maria, Sam and Alfred  
One Self by Kuok, Andreea and Ruth*

## BLYTH GALLERY

The Blyth Gallery, found on the fifth floor of the Sheffield Building, houses a variety of different exhibitions each year, exhibiting both in-house exhibitions of current staff and students work and professional exhibitions of London based emerging and established artists. Snippets of the art world are brought to Imperial College's door step. The gallery provides the opportunity to learn about a contemporary fine art scene in London and explore different concepts and motivations for making and reading art. These meanings can be a little difficult to access from a predominantly scientific background, therefore the Blyth offers the opportunity to meet informally, chat about the ideas and share thoughts about each exhibition over a lunch hour in the gallery space.

The Blyth Gallery has hosted some interesting shows. Photosoc's exhibition moved through a series of photographs of shifting scale, moving from the microscopic to curving panoramic landscapes. As each image remained of almost equal proportion, the viewer awareness of their own size becomes more acute and heightened as they walked around the show. Some of Leosoc's exhibition explored the breaking down and reconstruction of familiar icons within a fine art context. Images such as Van Gogh's Sunflowers and Munch's The Scream were dissected and each fragment explored by one artist before the painting was remade. The exploration of a fragmented image by multiple artists, transformed the origi-

nal, yet they still remained readily recognisable and identifiable with contemporary fine art masterpieces.

The gallery is an artist led project space which dedicates itself to showcasing a selection of work from a variety of different backgrounds.

Mini autobiography: (Mindy Lee, the curator of Blyth Gallery, gives a short introduction about Imperial's in-house art gallery. Mindy graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2004 with a Masters in Painting. Her works have been exhibited both in the UK and internationally and are also held in several private collections. Besides running the Blyth Gallery, she lectures in the Visual Arts module for BSc Medical Engineering in Imperial College.)

BY MINDY LEE

# A MINI DIANA MADNESS

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BY MATT ALLINSON





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**T**hese photographs were taken using a Lomography Mini Diana, available from various outlets including their fantastic flagship store on Newburgh Street, the internet and Urban "overpriced Primark" Outfitters.

Lomography specialise in re-releasing old film cameras and the Mini Diana is their cheapest and funnest model. You can wind the film on as far and as little as you chose, allowing for overlapping and double exposure until your heart's content.

It's a learning curve, but it's fun. Also it's a camera you can love, but not have to worry the fuck out of because of its cost and fragility. Ever since Christmas when I got one of these my SLR has sat in its painfully costly NASA- designed travel bag gathering dust, while my Diana bangs around in my backpack with my textbooks wherever I go. If my Nikon is my fat old wife, the Diana is my 17 year old Russian girlfriend.

At the cost of sounding like a Turkish salesman: If she sounds right for you, check out [www.lomography.com](http://www.lomography.com) or go to their flagship store next time you're in Soho. ⌘





A painting inspired by the mythological character Cassandra who was gifted by Apollo with true foresight but cursed by the fact that no-one would believe her prophecies. She is ultimately a figure of tragedy.

'Cassandra' by Tom Mole

60cm x 84cm. Oil on canvas



'Untitled', photographed by Ali Hosin



'Girl on Crimson Sheets', by Chris Clarke

## ON THIS NIGHT

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A good, hard  
fuck – yes  
if she yields.

Turning to cavities  
and caresses,  
as the anointed  
undresses.

*Here.*

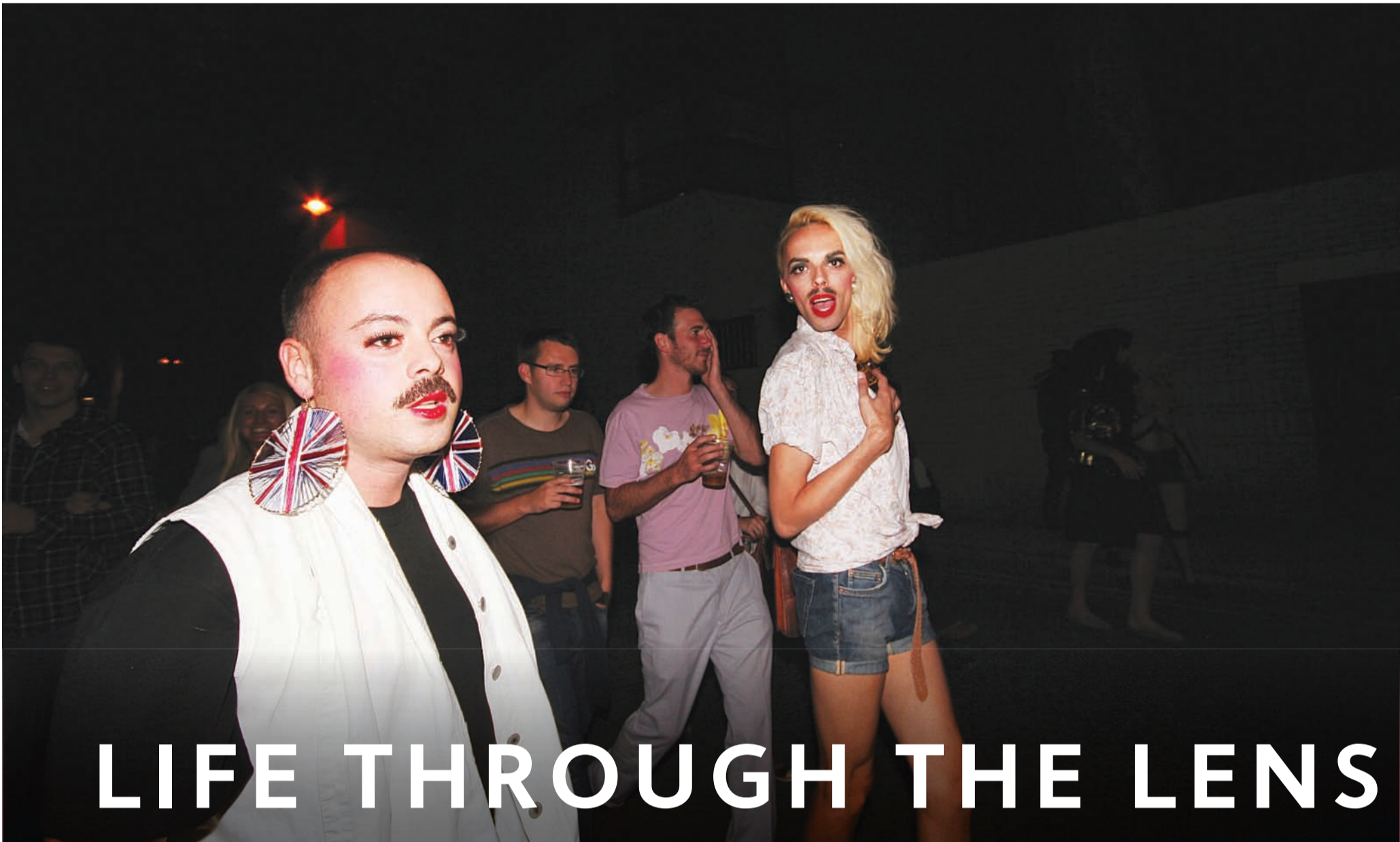
But too much,  
surely.

To wait for  
on this night,  
with a DO NOT DISTURB  
sign  
on the handle of the door.

There will be no  
leftovers  
for the dog.

*Here. Put your leg here.*

*David Carr*



# LIFE THROUGH THE LENS

BY TRISTAN BROWN

It's ten o'clock on a Saturday night. People of all ages are out around the town. Drinkers are down in the pubs, clubbers out in the clubs, couples were... doing whatever it is couples do. Stepping out of the tube station, I am greeted by a group of middle-aged ladies all dressed up raring to go on the prowl. "Hey You!" they shout at me; their tights are a little worse for wear, and their make up is a little shoddy but I'm a forgiving guy, so I greet them anyway. They aren't particularly attractive and I swear the blonde has some rather excessive hair down her cleavage.

After a couple of minutes, my somewhat misplaced-where-the-sun-don't-shine brain starts to kick into action: the deep, coarse voices, the diva-tastic hair, the unnecessary extra blusher (blue so didn't suit her). I sigh. At least I'm in the right place.

After a brisk walk through two parks, one friendly neighbourhood, one not so friendly estate and a few

"To little surprise, I am greeted by a six foot man dressed from head, and indeed, to foot in a kimono. Of course I am."



alleys, I finally reach the venue. To little surprise, I am greeted by a six foot man dressed from head, and indeed, to foot in a kimono. Of course I am. Complete with a thick and voluptuous wig, had it not been for his massive collar bone or his stubble or perhaps the pointed nose, I would have mistaken him for quite a her. Quite an impressive her.

Dear reader, allow me to attempt to enlighten you as to how I managed to get myself into such a situation. I'm a bit of a photographer, I do so enjoy it and I take pleasure in lively subjects. Surfing the web for events to photograph leads me to a myriad of options, naturally. The one event that really caught my eye though, was entitled "the Tranny Olympics." Intriguing. Always up for new things, I thought why not? Twenty minutes later, after a quick call to the organiser, I was the official photographer for the Tranny Olympics 2009.







“...when you have a camera around drunken people, it's even worse. Every Tom, Dick and Dickhead wants their shot taken, hoping to be seen in tomorrow's Metro.”

The venue was a warm, homely pub that probably would have looked quite regal and amicable during the day. Oh sweet irony, as tonight it would be home for around three hundred of London's most fine transvestites. As I approach the entrance, the hefty chunk of meat of a bouncer rolls his eyes at me, “Good luck in there.” He says. Interesting.

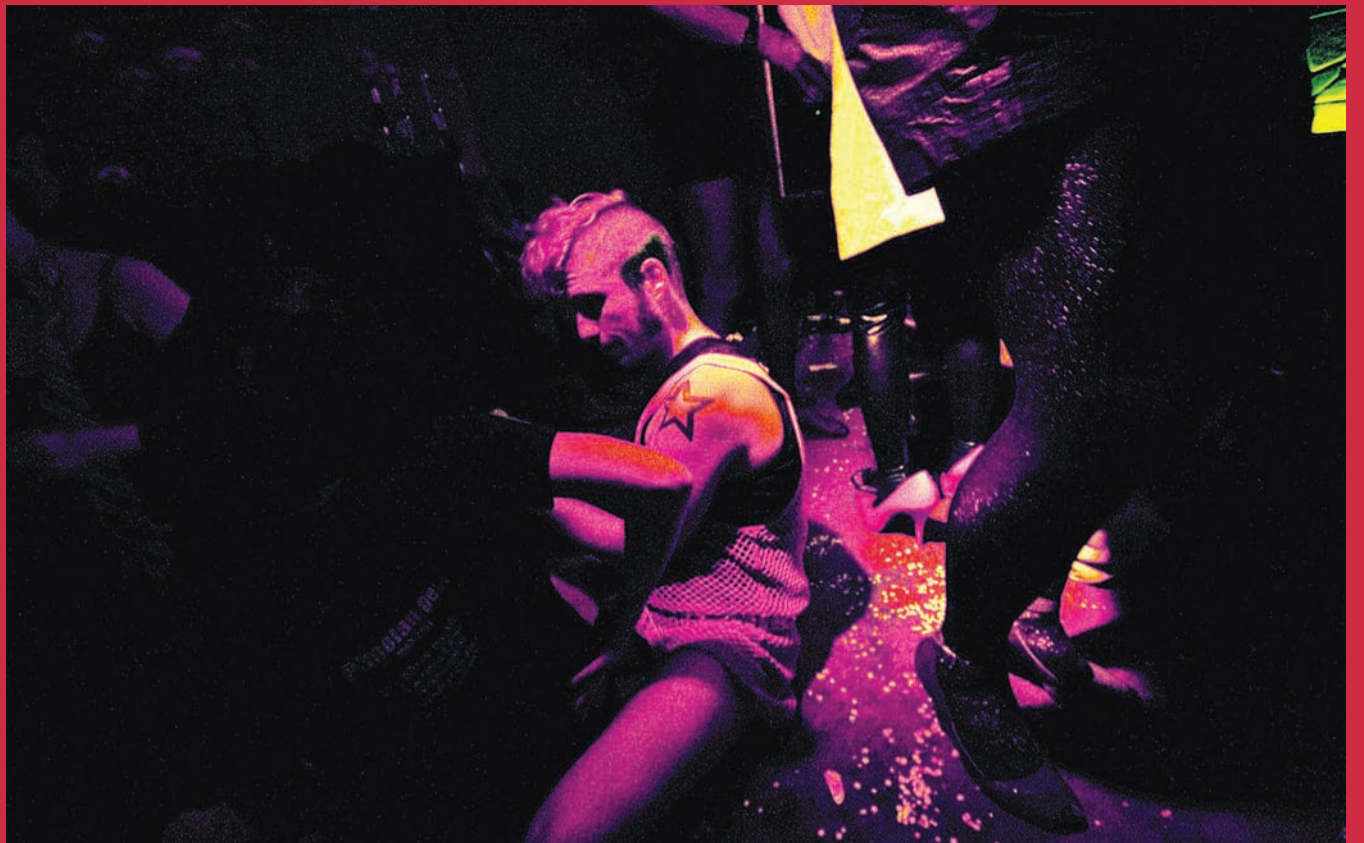
As with any event, I fire a few test shots to try and get a feel of the lighting. Blank; Keep forgetting to take off the lens cap. After having looked around, making sure nobody saw my schoolboy error I removed the cap, plugged in the flash and wandered around. There were some interesting costumes donned by a few of the participants that night. There was Jesus in a traditional white robe and stilettos, a leopard-tutu-donning Santa/Member of Ramstein, a slim Freddy Mercury in hotpants and an eloquent Elton John dressed like a nun.

Moving swiftly on, whenever you have a big camera in a small area, people look at you. It's awkward and sometimes a bit uncomfortable. When people are drunk they lose their inhibitions. It's awkward and sometimes a bit uncomfortable. But when you have a camera around drunken people, it's even worse. Every Tom, Dick and Dickhead wants their shot taken, hoping to be seen in tomorrow's Metro. Sure, that can be fun, but when its one of those extremely insecure men trying to impress his mates, it just gets old very fast.

After some on-stage humping, stripping and dancing the highlight of the night is announced, the “Tranny Olympics 100m Sprint.” This sounds promising. The pub starts to clear out onto the streets. I have to say, it is among one of the surrealist situations I've found myself in. Imagine for one moment it's about eleven at night, you are in the middle of a street surrounded by hundreds of transvestites, lining up for a race down an alley. I think it was about now I noticed a young Asian boy carrying a sex doll two sizes too big for himself; mentally, I named him Ernie. Ernie proved to be the most popular man that night, definitely getting all the ladies. And men.

Once the race was over, the crowd decided to go on protest. Everybody marched towards the high street, chanting “One, two, three, four! Tranny Rights, we want more!” Bemused drinkers came out of their pubs to view the spectacle and take some photos from their phones. Hrmph. Amateurs.

If you don't carry an SLR at all times, you ain't a photographer. *(continued overleaf)*





From the distance, I spotted somebody else armed with an SLR; as soon as I had spotted their body and lens, I immediately became protective. Any photographer who claims he has never suffered from the hideous ailment known only as lens-envy or lens-lust is a liar. I looked down pitifully at Alyona, giving her a timid pat. She has been with me years, and that's time no camera can replace.



I digress.

As my night comes to an end, I look back at all the people I had met that night; still drunk off their, by now at least, horribly dredged lipstick, smudged mascara and sweaty-perfumed head. Despite not having anybody I knew tag along with me, I had still had one of those nights in the areole of my life's most memorable nights. As a photographer. Life through then lens, eh? Not bad. Not bad at all. ⌚



TO THOSE WHOSE  
WORK WE  
COULDN'T FEATURE,

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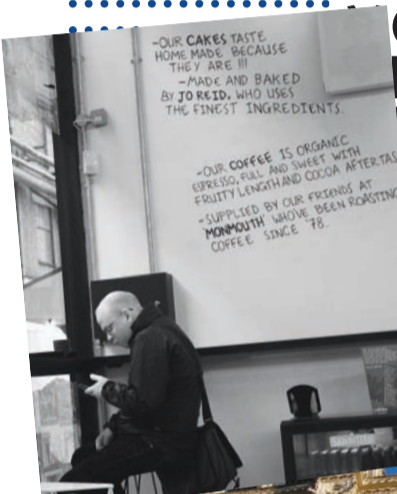
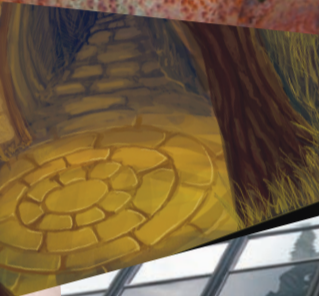
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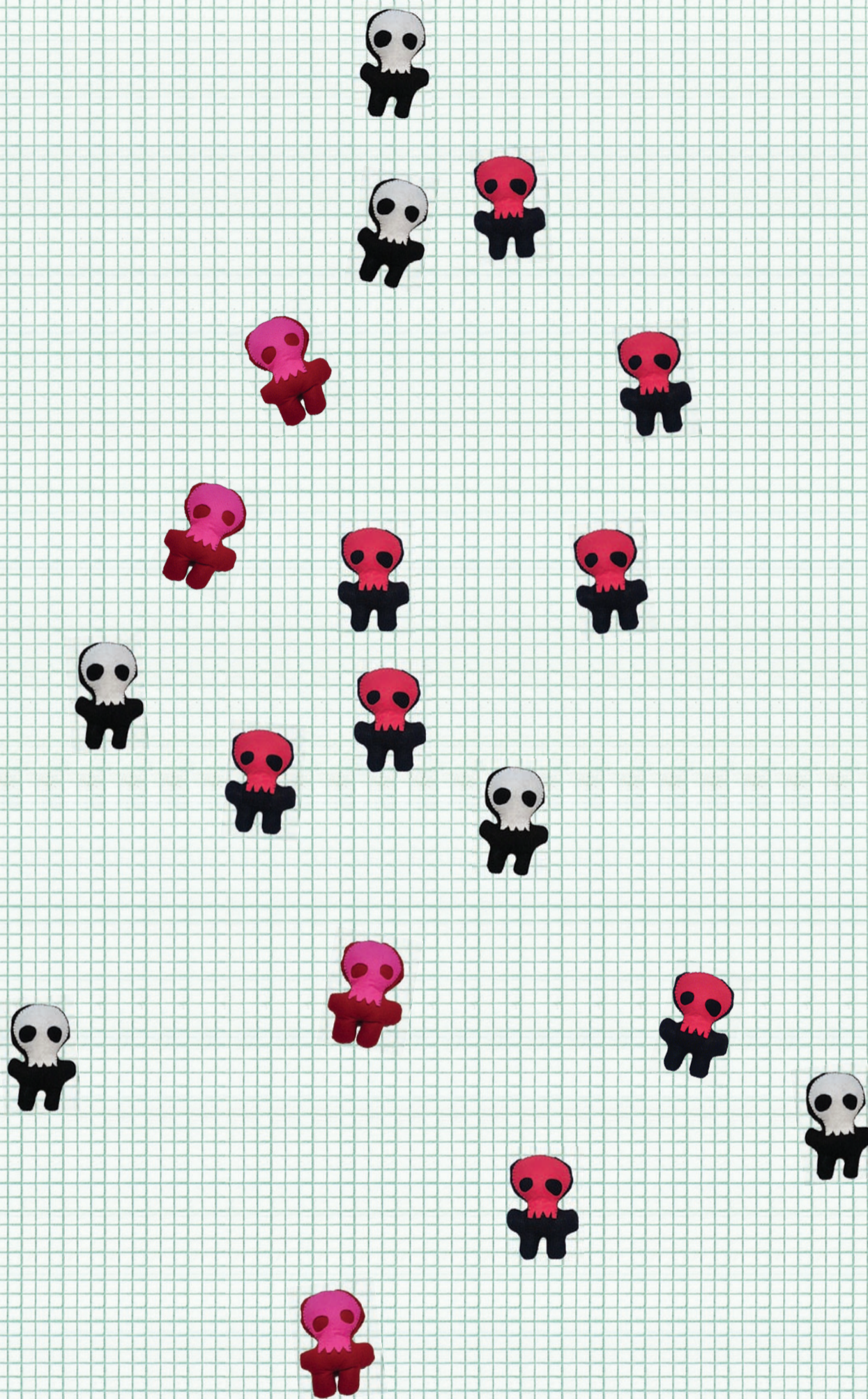


SPECIAL THANKS TO  
DAVID PAW. THIS WOULDN'T  
BE HERE WITHOUT HIS WORK  
OVER THE PAST 3 YEARS.



- UNUSED WORKS BY
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- PAUL HARVEER
- EBITIMI ALAIBE
- ALICE CLINCH
- CHARLOTTE RIDLER
- DAVID HARRISON
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felix publications



# felix

The award-winning student newspaper of Imperial College

"Keep The Cat Free"

Issue 1,464

felixonline.co.uk

PULL OUT EDITION  
04.06.10

With Alex's election, the Union now has a full house.

But do the Sabbs have all their cards on the table?

And is the welfare of the students at stake? See page 3



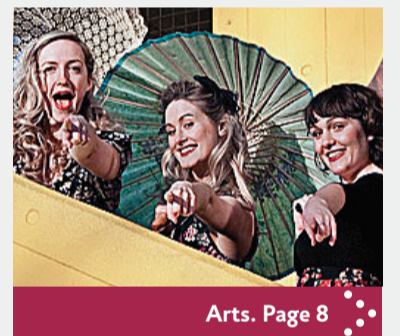
## This week...

Imperial's magic car on the Magic Roundabout



News, Page 2

Cheeky cabaret: The Three Little Maids



Arts, Page 8

felix goes backstage with John Mayer



Arts, Page 13 & 14

Froyo: Android's coming of age?



Tech, Page 16

## PHOENIX 2010

Accompanying edition of this year's Imperial College arts annual





# Imperial Supercar breaks record

Alex Karapetian

Imperial students who form the Racing Green Endurance (RGE) team have successfully driven a modified electric sports car around the M25 twice on a single charge, breaking the prior record set by the Tesla last year.

The RGE team drove the first lap at 55mph using 42% of the total energy stored and drove the second lap at 60mph. The car, a specially modified electric supercar called the SRzero, is based on a chassis and body from the SR8 by Radical Sportscars. It sports two lightweight motors designed and built by EVO Electrics - an Imperial company. The 1100kg SRzero has a top speed of 200km/h, can accelerate from 0-100km/h in 7 seconds and is capable of fully charging its 56kWh battery from Thundersky in just 6 hours.

Imperial's RGE team testing the SRzero against the M25 is part of their build-up to an attempt to drive through the 26,000km Pan-American Highway in July. Commenting on the M25 test, Imperial said that "part of the project will help assess the performance and endurance capabilities of electric vehicles over long distances. We also hope that driving the car across two continents will raise awareness along the way about the benefits of electric vehicles and dispel the public perception of electric cars as slow and unattractive, with a limited range."

The move is a step forward for electric cars, following the unprecedented performance of the Tesla Roadster which additionally travelled 313 miles on a single charge and was featured on Top Gear. With the twin motors of the SRzero tuned for endurance



Dave thought it'd be like Mario Karts. 2 years later he still hasn't dropped a banana on the road

rather than performance, Imperial said "it has an average running cost of one penny per mile and a range of approximately 400km before the battery needs recharging."

The project is part of the Energy Futures Lab, Imperial's sector for energy research. Director of the Energy Futures Lab, Professor Nigel Brandon, said that "apart from being great fun, we hope that the Racing Green Endurance project will show the world the

leaps and bounds that electric vehicles are making" and that "this project is also helping the next generation of UK engineers to gain valuable experience in the field, which is vital for their careers and the future of British manufacturing."

The Imperial team will embark on their 26,000km journey from the northern tip of Alaska to the southern tip of South America through 14 countries in July.

# Former Sabb tells students in need of welfare to "learn to speak for yourself"



Carter was Deputy President (Finance & Services) in 2008/09

Former Deputy President (Finance & Services) Christian Carter was asked to give his views on whether students run for Sabbatical positions out of passion for student issues or a cynical desire to fluff up their CVs. Instead he suggested that student officers only exist for students who "can't speak for themselves" and ridiculed students who require welfare or educational support.

Christian Carter's statement in full:

"The university will always need student representation for those students who can't speak for themselves. For those students who aren't morons then the sabbatical officers are a waste of time. As a student, ask yourself this question. Have you ever needed the help of a sabbatical officer? If the answer is yes, and it was for Welfare or Educational purposes then I feel sorry for you and you should learn to speak for yourself and challenge your department. If it was for a club or society related issue then your answer could probably be answered by a member of staff. If it was for any other reason then you are a proper hack and probably need psychiatric attention."

# felix 1,464

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04:06:10

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# Are Sabbs interested in helping students or furthering their careers?

Matt Colvin finds out what motivates student officers and interviews rivals Alexander Dahinten and Chris Darby

This year's Sabbatical Elections left many questioning the intentions of Sabbatical Officers following the withdrawal of two candidates – from the same position. Ben Stubbens stood down during the election for Deputy President (Education) after accepting a work offer from Rolls-Royce and Meera Ganeshadevan withdrew, after having been elected into the position, in order to work for Credit Suisse.

Naturally, questions have been raised regarding the intent of those who stand for paid positions in the Union. Do Sabbatical Officers really have the best interests of the student body at heart or are they in it to further their own prospective careers? Is it even that simple? *felix* was able to speak to the newly-elected Deputy President (Education), Alex Dahinten, on the issues surrounding Sabbatical positions.

***felix*: With the recent departure of individuals to take up work placements rather than contest positions in the Union, do you believe that those who stand for Sabbatical Elections have the best interests of the Union and university in mind or are they only aiming for an extension to their CV?**

**AD:** Having an election this late in the year naturally invites this ques-



Meera Ganeshadevan and Ben Stubbens both withdrew after receiving job offers

tion. Many people at Imperial generally think that getting involved in the Union is a CV-filler, however once you are involved, it's pretty clear that it is a lot more than that. If you are willing to spend a whole year of your life doing a job which you do not like or feel you will be any good at, then why run? Even though it is paid, the prospect of being accountable by the whole student body should put off the "CV-fillers".

For this election, I feel that all of the candidates were sincere, and had the Union's interests placed before theirs. I can't recall anything similar happening in the past years.

***felix*: What led you to run for the position now instead of earlier in the year?**

**AD:** During the first elections, I thought

Alexander Dahinten was recently elected as Deputy President (Education) after a close contest with defeated Presidential candidate Chris Darby.

of running, however at the time I had plans to go travelling for a year. Once the elections passed, I began to regret my decision and therefore when I heard that Meera stepped down I felt it was the right decision to make.

***felix*: If you were in the same position as those who left for work placements, how would you consider the issue?**

**AD:** It's a difficult choice to make, since you do always want the security of having a fall-back plan.

However by not letting the students know that you are totally behind your campaign, you are deceiving them. I ran because I am 100% committed, so as far as I'm concerned I will be starting on the 1st of July (unless of course I get an internship offer from Credit Suisse!).



## Former Sabbs deny running for election to fatten their CVs

**Jenny Morgan** – Union President 2008-2009

"I believe that the vast majority of people who stand for election have very good intentions. To be good enough to be elected as a sabb it is highly likely you have racked up an enormous amount of experience within the Union and therefore know what you're getting into, and feel strongly about issues you want to change."

**Chris Larvin** – DP Finance & Services 2007-2008

"There are many different motivations or types of people who stand for election, and it is usually split between people that know what they're doing and people who don't. There are better ways of enhancing your CV!"

**Mustafa Arif** – Union President 2003-2005

"All the sabbaticals I've known have been motivated by the best of intentions, not for CV points. I turned down a couple of well-paid job offers when I stood for election in 2003 (and again when I stood for re-election in 2004). The same was true of other colleagues."

**Hannah Theodorou** - DP Education & Welfare 2008-2009

"Ultimately there are more valuable opportunities out there - I think it is very rare for people to do it solely for CV purposes. If they did, they would find the job very frustrating and will get little out of it - it's reflected in their work and the effect can be demoralising for the people they work with."

## Chris Darby: selfless servant or self-serving?



Chris Darby is Equal Opportunities Officer in the Union and newly elected Academic Affairs Officer for CGCU. Having stood for both Union President and Deputy President (Education) this year, *felix* spoke to him in order to determine his reasons for attempting to become a Sabbatical Officer twice in the same year.

Regarding running for the presidency, Darby explains that, "After the positive change I made as Equal Opportunities Officer, the Union suggested I run for it." In addition to this, he has clear views on what a Union President should be capable of achieving: "If the President is in a position of supporting welfare well and is able to take more of a management role, then that's a good

thing." Welfare and education are important yet "neglected" issues according to Darby; he believes that there are instead "other priorities" current Sabbatical Officers are too focussed on. As an example, he finds fault with the Union's handling of February's 'One World Week', simply stating that "nobody knew about it".

With regards to then standing for Deputy President (Education), Darby explains it as a natural progression, stating that he had "support from people like Ben (Stubbens)". Discussing Meera Ganeshadevan's departure, he feels that "(Meera's) heart wasn't in it", yet acknowledges the "difficult situations" that those who left for placements found themselves in. Concerning Alex Dahinten's running for the position, he is far more praiseworthy, suggesting that, "his reasons (for standing) were much more sincere".

Darby is clearly passionate about the Union and the state of welfare across college, and whereas some may see standing for multiple positions in the Union as an individual merely attempting to further themselves, in this case, the answers seem to suggest otherwise.

**"The Union suggested I run for President"**

# Graduate jobs annihilated by recession

New research shows that only a third of graduates expect to find a job after university. Alex Karapetian reports

- Average debt of £25,000 for some London students
- Imperial graduates owe up to £8,000 more than average

Graduates leaving University in the coming months are preparing to take low paid jobs due to the recession's profound effect on employment in the UK. Students are expecting to accept work in bars, supermarkets and call centres, according to a press release by High Fliers Research.

The survey of over 16,000 final year degree students showed only a third of the graduates expecting to find a job after University, with only a quarter of those on Arts and Humanities courses preparing to find jobs. Graduates face record levels of debt, with average loan repayments upwards of £18,000 for a three year course and rising to £25,000 for some parts of London.

Research shows that thousands of students are considering taking a post-graduate degree course as an alternative to having to find a job, effectively remaining within the academic bubble. Figures indicate 26% of students intend



I bet you're sick of hearing about graduate prospects: One week they're good, the next they're appalling

to remain in Higher Education after their degrees.

Martin Birchall, Managing Director of High Fliers Research, said "students taking courses such as Arts and Humanities courses, including fine art, drama, dance, music, history and geography are likely to be the hardest hit."

"The recession may be officially over," he continued, "but with a record number of students due to complete degrees in the coming weeks and tens of thousands of last year's graduates still looking for work, there is widespread concern that competition for graduate jobs has never been fiercer." Birchall addressed the research's main

points, highlighting that "students from Arts and Humanities courses and those who've had little or no work experience during their time are the least confident about the future."

The High Fliers press release indicates that "many of this year's entry level vacancies will be filled by graduates from the class of 2009 who failed

to find work". Key findings include just 36% of final year students believing they will start or look for a graduate job, while 14% have yet to decide what to do next. 45% of leavers describe prospects as "very limited" as confidence in the graduate job market is at a fifteen year low. 33% will take any job they are offered, pinning their lack of confidence on the aftermath of the recession. A further fifth also admitted that the scarcity of jobs has meant they've had to apply to employers that they "weren't really interested in".

This implies that large numbers of students will undertake low paid jobs, failing to use skills they learnt whilst earning their degree for many years. The report shows, however, that while the number of students applying to investment banks has increased by a sixth, fewer have applied to Engineering or IT jobs. The most popular destinations for applications this year have been in the media, teaching and marketing.

The survey was conducted across thirty universities, including Cambridge, Southampton and Imperial with face to face interviews of students representing a fifth of the national final years.

Students preparing to leave Imperial were expecting to pay back as much as £25,700, which is £7,700 above the average debt for students on a three year degree.

## The world beyond College walls



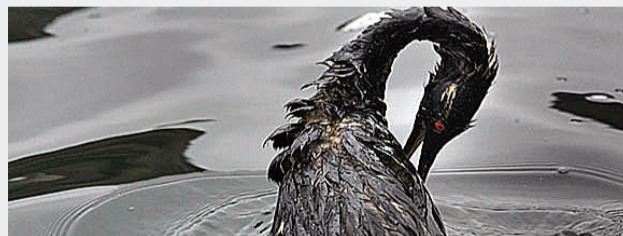
Israel



Mideast protesters have formed a flotilla that has ended in tragedy and international uproar. The formation, consisting of six ships, under Comoros, Greece, Ireland, Kiribati, Turkey, and American flags, carried 663 passengers from nearly forty countries and 10,000 tons of supplies. The plan was to break the Israeli blockade and to deliver supplies to Gaza. Israel initially signalled that it would not allow this to happen and reportedly offered to divert the blockade to Ashdod, where facilities had been established to receive the protesters and transfer their aid to Gaza after inspection. What happened next is unclear, but what is known at this juncture is that the flotilla was eventually boarded by the Israeli military, seven protesters were killed and dozens injured. Ten Israeli soldiers were injured. An enormous debate over the facts ensues via diplomatic channels, newspapers, television news programmes, and YouTube.



USA



The bonanza in the Gulf of Mexico rolled on this week. The attempt to plug the spill via top kill, which is a strategy to pump dense mud and perhaps shredded tyres into the oil well, failed. An attempt to modify the well with a diamond saw and equipped robot also failed when the robot got stuck. Cleanup workers in many reports have claimed that they are under strict orders not to allow the capture or release of images of oil-soaked wildlife: such images were a major source of controversy during the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska. The U.S. Department of Justice announced it was opening a criminal probe of BP, Transocean, and Halliburton as required under various environmental laws while President Obama announced that he was in favour of repealing "billions of dollars" worth of tax cuts for oil producers and diverting the funds towards green energy research.



Norway



Norway has jump-started international plans to slow climate change. The country pledged \$1 billion in aid to Indonesia in an effort to protect tropical rainforests in the country, which are heavily forested for the palm oil trade. The aid programme, and others like it, will be used as an incentive for poorer countries not to cut down tropical forests for economic gain. The plan is one of the first realisations to arise out of commitments of funds made by industrialised nations at the Copenhagen summit. The move was described as positive by climate change scientists because deforestation is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emission. Simultaneously, Norway managed to receive the commitment from other industrialised countries for a further \$500 million in aid commitments, bringing the total to \$4 billion. Further commitments at a tropical deforestation conference this week may bring the total to \$5 billion.

By Tom Greany





# Summer.Ball

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# Positive discrimination undermines pride

**Eleanor Berry** argues that's there's nothing positive about discrimination in an equal opportunity society

A couple of weeks ago on the BBC's Question Time, the panel lamented the lack of women and people from ethnic minorities in politics. I do believe that the interests of the country would be best served by having a government that completely represents the proportions of men, women, religions and colours amongst the British people, but only if all of these people want to do, and are up to doing, the job. Simon Hughes of the Liberal Democrats (who have 57 white male MPs) said his party had failed and should introduce positive discrimination to even up the numbers. But whatever happened to the idea of the job going to the best candidate?

I hate positive discrimination. If you are not the best candidate then you should not be getting the position. If political parties start aggressively supporting positive discrimination how will anyone ever know if the candidate they are voting for has any idea what they are doing, or if they were just put there to fill some kind of quota. I appreciate that the current bias towards white middle-aged men can discourage

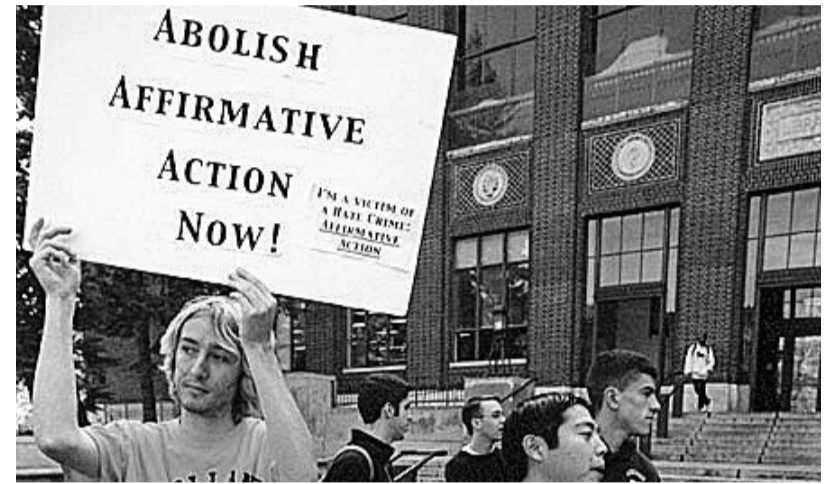
people who are not really represented by the MPs in the House of Commons from wanting to enter into politics. If you see barely any women in political jobs then perhaps this means, as a woman, you would feel unwelcome in that sort of position. There are few role models in place to aspire to. However, these issues do not justify giving someone a post because of their gender or colour – discrimination by any name is still discrimination.

Instead of promoting people into jobs just because of their sex or racial background – traits which none of us can change – time would be better spent encouraging people from all walks of life to apply for these jobs. In the end, by a law of averages, you will end up with the ideal proportions of representation without having to resort to positive discrimination. I'm not naive enough to think that this would be a quick process; giving women and people from ethnic minorities safe party seats is a much faster way to even up numbers in the House of Commons. However, it seems that by using positive discrimination as a tool to fill quotas the political parties could

**"We all deserve the same opportunities, but it is up to us to make the most of them"**

be giving fuel to people who are sexist and racist to say that these MPs are not suited to a career in politics. If it was made clear that every candidate went through the same rigorous selection process then surely everyone would be on an even playing field. Otherwise, we could end up with a collection of substandard MPs or, worse, a collection of brilliant MPs who are ignored because they are considered to have only got the job because of their gender or skin colour.

Equality, to me, is the most important thing any society can aspire to. We

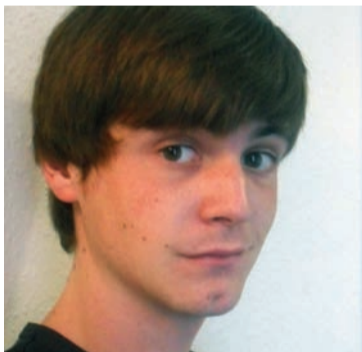


Affirmative action has sparked controversy in the U.S. since President Kennedy introduced it in 1961

all deserve the same opportunities, but it is up to us to make the most of these. I don't want to be handed a job solely because of my gender. If positive discrimination continues, and becomes yet more aggressive, it will lead people to question whether they really got a position on their own merit. This kind

of discrimination undermines pride in oneself; how can you be pleased with your achievements if they were given to you because of something you didn't choose and are unable to change? In the world of work it can sometimes be better to be simply regarded as a human being rather than a sex or a colour.

## Phil Sandwell's brain wanders off its leash



**"Logic is useful, but it can't compare to the unchained imagination thinking up absolute rubbish"**



People think far too much. If we aren't thinking about our exams we're thinking about our work, thinking about what to do or how to do it. What I think we all need to do is take a moment to sit back, breathe deeply and relax.

In a university environment it is only natural that your brain starts to perform in a certain way. In such a science-dominated environment as Imperial, a special mindset built on the foundations of reason and rationality develops, allowing students to base balanced judgements on careful thought and consideration. At least this is the theory. In practice, the result is more often than not the thoughtless overapplication of inappropriate logic, often ending in someone trying to resolve some differential equations in their head. While this approach is highly commended in the

fields of rocket science or fluid dynamics, it is completely pointless in response to the sorts of questions that generally arise in day-to-day life. If, after asking someone which cashpoint I should go to, they gave me a well-worked and entirely reasonable statistical analysis of why I should go to the one round the corner, I would look at them blankly and walk away. If, on the other hand, someone else told me I should go to the one round the corner because last time they went there it was sunny, I would happily take their advice without a second thought. Unfortunately, as we've all experienced, asking an insignificant question often receives a less than trivial response. Not only does this force me through a course of involuntary mental gymnastics to humour, let alone follow, their argument, it gets me no close to withdrawing my money.

A symptom of thinking too much is

thinking too little. This is most often manifested in the form of sitting in front of some form of screen, gormlessly staring into the middle distance and letting whatever you aren't really focussing on wash over you. The self-hypnosis is normally broken by either the adverts on 4oD coming on or the lecturer changing his PowerPoint slide, both of which make you realise that you have very little idea where the preceding fifteen minutes went. This is the vegetative state of the brain caused by either the overuse of or exposure to, among other things, needlessly complicated cashpoint directions. In this powered-down scenario, the mind tries to recover by either absorbing information by osmosis (such as when watching the entirety of Brass Eye) or becoming dormant and impervious to external stimuli (such as staring your way through another Thermodynamics lecture). The

human mind is a little like my aging laptop; every once in a while, if you work it too hard, it'll emit a submissive whimper and put itself in a conciliatory, self-initiated sleep mode.

The best level of intellectual excursion is when the mind is ticking over just enough to keep itself going, but not enough to justify any sort of deep thinking. This state of mental-third gear is normally attained either when lying in a park in the summertime, after an endless conversation with good friends in the small hours of the morning, or when mildly inebriated. Best of all is the incomparable combination of the three, when the least-used part of our brains is let off its leash and allowed to wander freely. Imagination, upon entering Imperial, is generally confined to the visualisation of situations for the purposes of problem solving, and even then we are normally instructed on exactly how to

do that. Much better is when your imagination can breed creativity; while this normally results in the talking of complete nonsense, like whether Batman and Spiderman could ever be friends or whether dinosaurs would make good pets (answer: definitely yes), this is exactly the sort of cranial activity that is good for the soul. As useful and practical as logic is, it can never create, or compare to, the freedom of an unchained imagination thinking up absolute rubbish.

The brain is a wonderful organ, but we all take it for granted. With the exception of the liver, it is the one part of us that we thoughtlessly and thanklessly put under great stress on a regular basis. Once your exams are over and you finally have time to relax, give your mind the reward it has earned over the past few months. Go and lie on the grass in the sun and tell someone what the clouds look like.

# Rhys Davies puts his tongue to toad



“The mix is just right to have a potent hallucinogenic effect. It makes for quite a high... so I’m told”



In these days of Facebook and Twitter, of Blackberries and iPhones (and iPads too now), we are in a position to receive and disseminate information before it has even been created. That’s quite a feat, and yet I still feel a warm fuzzy glow of nostalgia come over me where letters are concerned.

Everything just feels so much better with a letter. Personal correspondence becomes more intimate when the lover discards their spell-checker in favour of a fountain pen, and business is so much more official when you can see your name through that little polythene window on the front of the envelope. Besides this, there is the nervous excitement that a walk down to the mailbox can bring and the resultant joy when you discover a letter inside.

And then there are the stamps. Tiny little squares of paper, inconsequential in themselves yet they have the pow-

er to ferry parcels all over the world. Across borders, across continents, even (especially given Royal Mail’s work ethic, or lack thereof) across time! There is also the delicious yet alien taste of licking the back of one.

What is it that goes into that gum? That curious, quintessential flavour that lingers on the tongue and prompts an absent licking of the lips and a fervent wish that Aunt Margaret lived in Russia, not Reading. Royal Mail have kept tight-lipped on the recipe lest it fall into the wrong hands and wreak havoc on us all. After much persuasion (and a sack filled with doorknobs), I was able to glean some vital insights. For starters, did you know a stamp contains 5.9 calories? Fascinating!

But more importantly, I have discovered the dark secret behind the stamp’s secret ingredient. The clue is in the licking. As Freud delighted to

point out, we humans have an insatiable preponderance to lick things. It isn’t surprising, given we have more than 8000 taste-buds on our tongue alone. However, trouble arises when we start to lick things that we really shouldn’t.

To begin with, there are toads. Toads secrete a noxious chemical cocktail to put their would-be predators off their dinner (which would be them otherwise). And yet we lick them because in a few species, the mix is just right to have a potent hallucinogenic effect. It makes for quite a high...so I’m told. There are also poison-dart frogs which are slightly less fun (and considerably more lethal) to lick.

Deepening the connection between licking and psychedelic experiences is LSD. Little squares of paper, with one lick and you’re floating in the clouds, listening to rainbows. Does any of this sound familiar? Does it sound scary? It

should because in addition to the vast reams of paper Royal Mail import to make their stamps, they also import a vast quantity of toads.

This is the reality of things, as I understand it. The glue on the back of stamps is made from toad-sweat. But why? There are so many other, far more attractive, alternatives. The reason is one of self-preservation. Why do you think we still have letters at all in the age of e-mail and internet? We do not buy stamps for letters; we write letters to lick stamps. To continue business, Royal Mail sought to make a franking system that people wanted to use, and keep on using. The idea was there with LSD on blotter paper but unfortunately, it’s not addictive, which was the entire point. Also, people tended to do strange things to their letters while tripping.

Being the wild bohemians that they were, Royal Mail knew there was more

than one way to get high and so turned to toads. Obviously they couldn’t use any of the more fanciful species – someone might notice – but after a careful investigation, they found one with just the right balance of addiction and psychedelia. And that brings us to today, where we write with resentment a torrent of thank-you cards and yet revel in licking the myriad of stamps for them.

And there you have it. The truth. I’m not proud of what I did to acquire it but some things need to be known. Of course, you can choose to disbelieve me – maybe I licked one too many toads myself – but let me ask you one question. If stamp glue were really something mundane and boring like starch and resin, why exactly is stamp collecting so popular, especially amongst the house-rave scene?

Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have to go and post a letter.

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Email contacts

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

News: [news.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:news.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

Comment: [comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

Business: [business.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:business.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

Science: [science.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:science.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

Politics: [politics.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:politics.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

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[music.felix@gmail.com](mailto:music.felix@gmail.com)





# Three cheeky 'n charming Little Maids

Lucy Harrold joins The Three Little Maids for a chat at the Royal Academy of Music to chat about their upcoming concert, comedy cabaret and whether scientists are good in bed

**How did you meet and where did the name Three Little Maids come from?**

**Alex:** I met Kate at Kings College where we both studied music, I went up to her on the first day and said "I think you're really pretty" in her specs and floral shirt, Kate replied "Ok...my name's Kate" and we went from there.

**Jen:** I met Kate and Alex through Kings' Musical Theatre Society, which they were ruling over at the time and I would then be passed the crown for. They were living in a house on Old Kent Road with my new boyfriend and ended up liking me more!

**Kate:** And then we did a cabaret show called "And Then There Were Six" with three other boys, we dropped the boys to make Three Little Maids.

**Alex:** Then I discovered our very handsome pianist Leo when he was repititeur for IC MTSoc's spring show 'How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying' which I appeared in.

**Kate:** We're called the Three Little Maids because there's three of us, and we're girls

**Alex:** The Three Little Maids song is from the Hot Mikado, a jazzed up version of the G&S classic.

**How would you describe your style**

**"I'll wank over some Sondheim, Kate will pay homage to Judy Garland..."**

**and who do you think you appeal to most?**

**All:** Cheeky charming close harmony cabaret!

**Jen:** We're like the Poo-poo (Puppini) Sisters and the Andrew Sisters but better.

**Alex:** There's lots of three part girl groups but they've all jumped on the retro bandwagon and niched themselves. They just do one style or a nov-

elty thing like jazzing up pop songs. We do a bit of everything.

**Jen:** We do just what we want to do, we try not to do things others could do, we put a bit of ourselves in it.

**Kate:** It's a cross between cabaret and comedy! Our rule is for every serious song, we'll do three funny songs. And we do always pay homage to our true love, musical theatre. But the 60s pop songs have been going down well in our Old Vic Pit Bar gigs.

**Alex:** The thing I'm proud of is not taking ourselves seriously, we're a little bit silly and have remained true to our individual personalities and our loves, I'll wank over some Sondheim, Kate will pay homage to Judy Garland...

**Most of you have links with Imperial through MTSoc and MTSoc tour, so can scientists make good performers/lovers?**

**Jen:** My boyfriend is a scientist and he loves musical theatre. Scientists are good because there's a connection between Maths and Music.

**Alex:** Well, mines a wannabe scientist, he's a bit of a geek and reads the New Scientist.

**Kate:** My dad is a scientist and he loves the Maids, secretly he wants to be one of us. I've heard he's an excellent lover.

**Jen:** Scientists work very hard so they need some relief

**Alex:** They have to think creatively, be brave and take risks just as actors do.

**All:** Our conclusion is...yes!

**What do you enjoy most about performing together and what's your favourite venue and dream venue?**

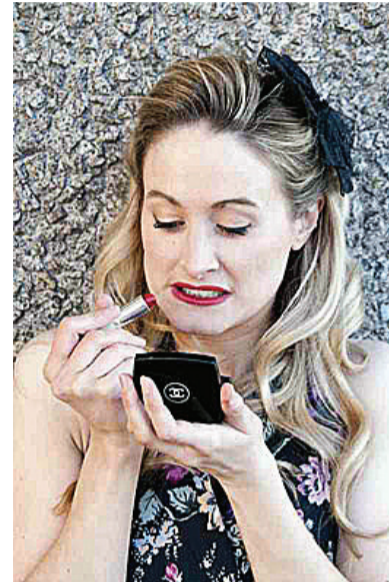
**Kate:** The Old Vic Pit Bar!

**Alex:** Royal Festival Hall would be my dream as I have fond memories of playing in orchestras when I was little. The Albert Hall would be amazing too but we also work well in small intimate venues so I think the Menier Chocolate Factory would be great. We did some gigs in Jen's hometown of Norwich at the Sewell Barn which was lovely and intimate.

**Jen:** I like working with these two because they make me laugh. My pleasure is to work with such talented people as these guys. They have these amaz-



Alex Young: "Maid in Taiwan"



Kate Marlais: "Maid in Heaven"



Jennifer Woodward: "Bar Maid"

ing arrangements and I'd never get the opportunity to work with people like them anywhere else.

**Kate:** I enjoy our banter, we're never quite sure what we're doing next. Alex generally plays Mum and I'll talk until someone tells me to stop.

**Alex:** I feel we have a real partnership so that we can trust our instincts to know what to do on stage. We can be ourselves with people we trust.

**If the Three Little Maids could be joined by 3 Little Men, who would your dream men be?**

**All:** Oooh!

**Jen:** Philip Quast! And Hugh Jackman (Alex intercepts with a cry of "No not Hugh Jackman!") And Zubin Varla! He was in Jesus Christ Superstar and he's in Warhorse at the moment.

**Kate:** Can he be dead? Gene Kelly, and he'd choreograph all our numbers.

**Alex:** I would have the Australian god Philip Quast too. Or, I think we'd push all of those in the sea if Stephen Sondheim joined us on the piano. Leo can join in and clap along, or turn the pages.

**What's your favourite song to sing?**

**Kate:** I know what I like- Chattanooga

Choo Choo.

**Jen:** Send in the Clowns as that was the first thing we arranged. Also, Wash that Man as I'm a real Rodgers and Hammerstein geek. Plus Leo does an awesome version of Sesame Street so that'd be his favourite.

**Alex:** I like Drive My Car too, we do a great version ala Lily Allen which the audiences love. Three Little Maids obviously, our title song. Everyone loves it when we do it as an encore as we can just mess around and it goes down really well. The other two don't agree but I like closing with Better from A Class Act (Lucy at this point cries I love that song!).

**Kate:** I'm totes over it. It went down like a sack of poo last time. I know my favourite! Man in the Mirror! How did we forget that? It's the best thing you'll ever see ever! Jen gets all black on us.

**Alex:** Kate rives around on the floor.

**Jen:** Alex bursts out from a curtain.

**What's in store for the Three Little Maids and yourselves individually?**

**Kate:** Worldwide fame, millions in the bank, lots of lovers.

**Jen:** This summer is packed with private gigs. I really enjoy doing private gigs because the good thing about

them is that as we arrange our own songs, if someone has a favourite song, we're happy to accommodate. Plus from each gig we get another gig, which is a bonus!

**Alex:** We're hoping to have some sort of Industry launch in London, invite anyone who's interested to see us or manage us or hire us!

**"No, not Hugh Jackman!"**

**Kate:** I'm doing a musical at the Young Vic, The Human Comedy in September.

**Alex:** I'm singing in the Stephen Sondheim performer of the year final, hopefully that'll go nicely. Plus I'm playing Desiree in A Little Night Music at RAM.

**Jen:** I'm starting RAM in the Autumn but at the moment I'm a primary school teacher.

**Leo:** I'm musical directing Hamlet the Musical at the Edinburgh Fringe.

We were hoping it would star Tim Minchin but sadly he's turned down the role.

**Alex:** I want to play Ophelia! If Leo can wangle it. And if it pays.



# Straight, gay and all shades in between

After getting to know the The Three Little Maids, arts editor **Lucy Harrold**, listens to their perfect harmonies

The comments from my companions as we reached the Old Vic Pit Bar were ranging from "ooh, this is a nice theatre" to "if Jeff Goldblum is there, I'm going to go up to him and ask him if he wants a blowjob". And I guess these two remarks sum up what the Three Little Maids are all about charming and nice with a naughty irreverent edge. The bar itself is small and cute, no more than an anteroom to the Old Vic staircase, with some rather reasonably priced drinks on offer (if you're feeling really posh there's Tatty for £7.50 a glass). The crowd varies from trendy young things to elderly theatre goers with the odd celebrity chucked in for good measure (Omgod it's Neil from the Inbetweeners!).

But to the Three Little Maids themselves, all look charmingly gorgeous

and well complemented by some custom made bunting and their pianist Leo. The set didn't exactly start with a bang but the '60s medley performed was nice enough, including a Lily Allen-esque rendition of I'm Into

**"If Jeff Goldblum is here I'm going to go up to him and ask him if he wants a blowjob"**

Something Good. The Lily Allen style was later echoed in an untempo arrangement of The Beatles "Drive My Car" both with some effective shaky

egg and cowbell action from the girls. Highlights of the first set included an authentic trip back to the '40s with Catagoona Choo Choo ala The Andrews Sisters, an impromptu cameo from Leo singing Cabaret and a very smooth Moon River with an almost dreamlike quality with its lilting melody. The downside with this first set for me was the sound quality which made it difficult to hear the Maids' sparkling wit and ad-libbing as well as many of the intricate harmonies. Another issue with the venue was the number of people pushing past to get to the bar, but again, there's not much you can do about this in a bar.

The second set contained my absolute favourite number of the night: Maid in the Mirror. Yes, you heard me right; a girly take on that Michael Jackson classic Man in the Mirror complete with impassioned hand gestures,

a few sch-mos and he-hes and some very impressive riffing. Also rating highly was a rather unique version of Sesame Street, I'd never have expected to find a children's TV theme tune in a Cabaret set but it was charming and very well done.

**"Maid in the Mirror...a girly take on that Michael Jackson classic"**

After a short break, the Maids were back for their final set which took on a more musical theatre tone starting with a few Sondheim classics- the well performed, if slightly predictable

You Could Drive a Person Crazy and a beautiful arrangement of Send In The Clowns. This was followed by another highlight that caused most of the crowd to burst into fits of laughter- a well judged I Know Him So Well with brilliant impressions of Elaine Paige and Barbara Dickson by Kate and Jen respectively.

The Three Little Maids definitely stood up to their motto of Cheek Charming Close Harmony Cabaret, it was a fun evening filled with perfect harmonies and some great comedy moments. I'd love to see them in a Cabaret orientated space so that their personalities could really shine.

If you're interested in where the Maids will be next, check out their website [www.threelittlemaids.net!](http://www.threelittlemaids.net!)

## Shunt Collective's play Money sets our hearts racing

The experience of the production – highly interactive, alternating between claustrophobia, disorientating confusion and visual excitement – was fantastic. Locked inside an industrial mill-like structure containing a three-leveled stage, the audience was subjected to varying kinds of theatric abuse: first pitch black darkness, billowing winds and the overbearing sound of an onrushing train, followed by bribing us, the audience, into good humour through free champagne and multicolored plastic balls to throw at each other, and finishing with a group sing-along and a House of Commons-style ruckus. RSC it wasn't; challenging, different and fun it was. Continually moved around the stage's different levels, harassed and provoked, our audience shifted from severe shyness at first to keen involvement by the end.

The production company Shunt have to be praised for pursuing a change to conventional theatre that draws a concrete line between audience and cast. This sought to confuse that boundary,

forcibly bringing the audience into the show and making them keen participants. Each show becomes different to the last as different audiences react in different ways. The fractured narrative serves to confuse the audience until they learn to adjust to it.

The play itself was not as enjoyable, indeed it made little sense, supposedly based around a financial crash and loosely following the plot line of a businessman first seeking start-up capital, then relishing his success but with much of the text cut out by the production.

Characterisation besides this lead role was weak and unneeded, however, because the priority was clearly the visual, experimentative and interactive aspect of the show, based in what appeared to be a giant industrial revolution-era contraption.

A twisted, mute monster moved freely around the various levels of the stage, an Orthodox Jewish family lived in the bottom stage next door to a steam room, plastic balls fall from the sky, it doesn't make much sense, but was bloody fun nonetheless.

**Dominic MacIver**



**S**peculation, why it is the one inducement we have to live... why on earth would you have me loosen my purse strings and risk my fortune, if you do not promise me some extraordinary enjoyment, some sudden happiness which will open heaven to me?

Poignant words. Especially in 2010 when we are still smarting from the collapse of a certain banking establishment and all its ensuing economic and monetary chaos.

Words that would have also been said with a sense of irony following the collapse of the Union Générale's on the Paris Bourse in 1882. A fiasco that precipitated a recession that lasted well into the following decade.

It is the downfall of this financial institution which inspired Emile Zola's 1891 novel L'Argent, which in turn inspired Shunt Theatre to create their own abstract interpretation, Money.

Located in an old tobacco warehouse just a hop over the river from London's own financial district, the Shunt Collective treat us to theatre as we have never experienced before. A huge three-storey box, stairs climbing its visible side, stands industrial and threatening in the warehouse space. Quite a contrast to the scene before it where the audience sit by the bar under fairy lights, at tables and chairs, as

ushers wearing riot helmets stoically give out coloured balloons. Moments later the balloons are snatched back and we are forced out of our seats, up the iron stairs and into the pitch black box itself.

For the next ninety minutes the cast of six baffle us, astound us and even sometimes scare us with their random take on Zola's story.

Neur, his girlfriend, the steam room guy and the spooky, painted and half-naked acrobat that inhabits the rafters invite the audience in to answer back, participate (if brave enough) and to even throw balls at them. You will not have seen a play in which you are relocated upstairs after half an hour to watch the action two floors below through Perspex floors. You will have not been served champagne mid-show either, or sung along to Randy Newman, karaoke style. And nor will you have had a Willy Wonka's factory experience where the 'vessel' you reside in ejects steam, blows air and reverberates all around you. Nor is it likely that you will ever witness a play that unfolds around, above and below you... at least for quite some time.

Money is virtually unfathomable for the most part. But for all the pain, adrenaline and fear inflicted on our senses: who cares!

**Caz Knight**

# shunt

**Want to see it?**

5 pairs of tickets for a performance on Tuesday 8th of June at 7.30pm are available FREE to the first FIVE people to send an email to: [nahum@shunt.co.uk](mailto:nahum@shunt.co.uk)

Money is booking until September

HALF PRICE TICKETS are also available for selected performances in June (Tue, Wed & Thu)

Tickets are £10 (Normal price £20) Book online at [www.wegotickets.com/f/971](http://www.wegotickets.com/f/971) Promotional Code: 5hunt

[www.shuntmoney.co.uk](http://www.shuntmoney.co.uk)



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## Socks And Sandals?!

For me, it's not a matter of fashion, it's a matter of health. If I don't wear socks, I get blisters the size of basketballs.

Second Year Medic

I wouldn't dream of wearing socks with sandals. But, I don't wear socks normally anyway. Or pants.

Third Year Physicist

My girlfriend gave me an ultimatum. It was her or the socks. With a choice like that, what can you do? Needless to say, I dumped her.

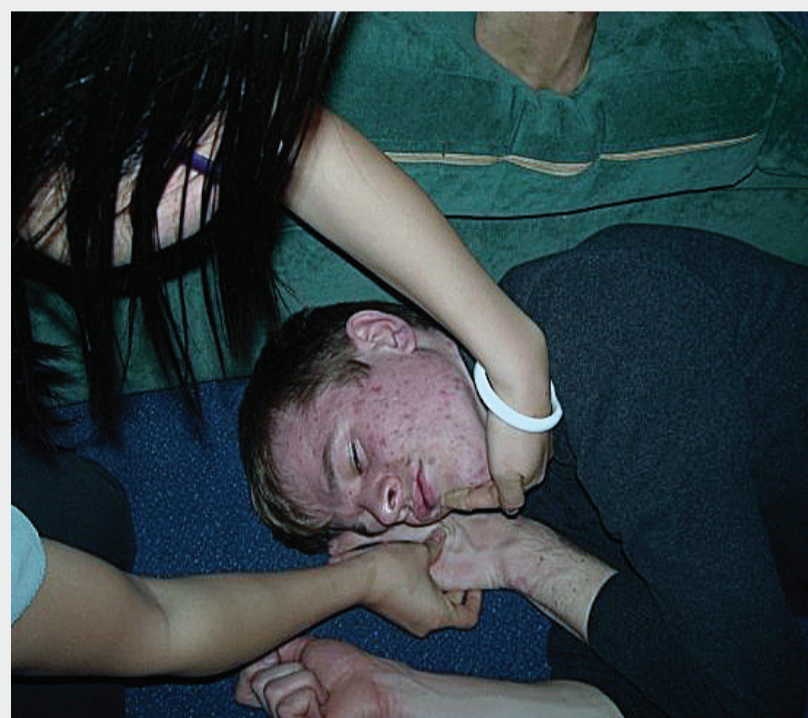
First Year Chemist

## Drunken-Mate Photo Of The Week



When your mate is trapped in a cubicle, priorities are a must. You must never seek out help before you get plenty of photos for Catnip.

Got a picture of your mate being an absolute waste of oxygen? Well, get your camera out and email your drunken mates to [catnip.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:catnip.felix@imperial.ac.uk)



Certain skills are essential for a successful night out. Holding the vom in until the taxi stops is obvious; others are more subtle...like knowing the recovery position.

Senders must have permission to use submitted photos and accept full responsibility for them

## Showdown! FOIL Vs. LOIL Do we "love our Imperial lives" or do they fail hard? You Decide!

Just caught myself considering carrying out a chi squared test to see if my kitchen is infested. **Verdict: FOIL**

UCL slips to 9th in university rankings! **Verdict: Epic LOIL**

A professor instructed 150 sex-starved MechEng students to, "Obtain maximum head for minimum work." Like they needed telling! **Verdict: FOIL**

Only at Imperial would you get either Alpha, Beta, Gamma or Delta as a mark on your lab report. **Verdict: LOIL**

I've started to dream about having an infinity button on my calculator. **Verdict: FOIL**

Up to 80Mbps internet connection. **Verdict: LOIL**

I finished my exams on Tuesday and was given next year's project today. **Verdict: Harsh FOIL**

Ugh, the exams are taking their toll. It was a comfortable win for FOIL this week.

What do you think? Is Imperial an academic haven or a socially-inept hell? Both?! Let the Cat know!

## Host your own night in Metric next year

When Metric, your new nightclub, opens at the start of the next academic year there will be a chance for you to host your own night. Open to Clubs, Societies and Projects as well as Halls of Residence, this is a great opportunity to team up with the Union Entertainments team to host club nights and events for your fellow students to enjoy.

Hosting one of these nights will be a great way to raise the profile of your group, as well as making a little bit of money for it. It is well worth your time and effort as it can help you to promote your group to other students and help them learn more about what you do. It will give them a chance to experience something new, and for your members it will be a fantastic opportunity to put on an interesting and exciting event for others to enjoy. The theme of the event doesn't have to be tied into your group's core activities; it could simply be an idea you've had that you think others will enjoy taking part in.

Although we want as many ideas and people to take part in this process as possible, there are also some things we don't want. We would like events people can take part in and enjoy – this is what these nights are all about. However, we don't want events that people come along

to simply for cheap alcohol and a cheap night. These nights are not bar nights or opportunities for budding nightclub promoters!

In the past there have been many successful events held by students such as Imperial Idol and Battle of the Bands. When Metric opens were looking for more events like these.

To host your night in Metric you need to go online to [imperialcollegeunion.org/metric](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/metric). Here you will find more information on the process to get your night chosen. There are also some example events to get your creative juices flowing! Fill in a request form, complete it and then submit it. Then our newly formed Entertainments Committee will look at the requests and inform the successful applicants. A date can then be booked and planning can start.

The application process is now underway. If you are interested in hosting a club night in Metric next term (October – December 2010), fill out the form available online from [imperialcollegeunion.org/metric](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/metric) and send it to [dpfs@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:dpfs@imperial.ac.uk), or hand in a printed version at Union Reception, Floor 2M Union Building. **The deadline for submissions is midnight 15 June.**



Head online to [imperialcollegeunion.org/metric](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/metric) for more information and to download the application form

## Still a chance to name the bar

Keep your ideas coming in to name our new bar. The deadline to get these to us is **next Friday**. You can submit your ideas by commenting on our blog at [imperialcollegeunion.org/phase3](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/phase3) or by tweeting using the tag #phase3.

The new bar will have a clean, bright and fresh feel. It will be the place for you to get a drink, meal or watch sports on the overhead projectors in a nice relaxed, spacious atmosphere. To help you visualise your new bar the latest pictures of our Phase 3 development are on the blog. These include pictures of your new bar, and

will hopefully inspire you when thinking of suitable names.

We have had some good ideas and some not-so-good! We are not sure that "Chubby Salamander" is the best name! Many people are liking the idea of even calling the bar Phase 3! So what do you think? Remember we need your suggestions especially if you don't like any of our current ones. Otherwise, you may end up disappointed!

The Phase 3 blog is also the place to keep up-to-date with all the latest news on our new nightclub and bar.





## MUSIC

Music Editors: Alexandra Ashford, Kadhim Shubber & Luke Turner  
 Online Editor: Christopher Walmsley  
 music.felix@gmail.com www.felixmusic.tk



# Backstage at Wembley with John Mayer

## Luke Turner Music Editor

So John Mayer might be an international, ex-Jennifer Aniston screwing, rock superstar and that does give him some right not to care about budding London musicians, however he defied stereotype and was generous enough to add a couple of names to his guest-list at Wembley Arena last week. Beats paying the 50-odd quid to hear him whine about sleeping with a broken heart... don't worry Mr. Mayer, there are plenty more Ms. Aniston's in this world.

Arriving at Wembley, while the sun was still shining, was a change. The support act, which was the charm-

ing Ellie Goulding, was just about to take to the stage for her largest, probably most terrifying support gig. She valiantly beat her drum and sang her siren pop songs to a largely uninterested, half-filled arena. Feeling slightly sorry for her, I overexerted myself in support. Her sound was huge, her band was tight and the songs flowed out as if she was a Wembley veteran. Admittedly, with that kind of power coming from the enormous stacks, which hung from the ceiling, it's hard not to sound overwhelming, but Ellie came through convincingly. Sweetly thanking the crowd she humbly left the stage to give way to the force that might be John Mayer.

Swiftly making our way to congratu-

late Ellie and see the action behind the scenes, we thought it was time to grill Mr. Mayer. Through a weave of deserted corridors and dressing rooms we came across life. A hub of crew all kitted out with torches and radios, musicians a-plenty, security a-leaping and a partridge in a pear tree. Despite some misconceptions, backstage is not the drug-fuelled eternal party some may think and there was definitely no partridge, there was, however, a certain American guitarist. Being his first time playing in Wembley, John's nerves must be giving him some kind of grief but he didn't let on; cool as ice he described the venue as "The Madison Square Garden of the UK", this is probably true but certainly not on the

aesthetic front. He towered above all of us and made little effort to break the ice (fair enough when he's about to have to break the ice with about 6,000 adoring fans, he needed all the lines he could get).

From this encounter I learned that he was not going on stage with Pino Palladino (bassist) or Steve Jordan (drummer), from his 'Try' and 'Where the Light Is - Live in LA', blues trio albums. This left me massively disheartened as to be honest that is the only reason I thought he was any good to begin with. Instead he would be playing his soppy love songs. Despite my best efforts I could not get anything out of him about what it's like to be in bed with Jennifer Aniston. He was whisked away from us to prepare and Ellie had just cooled off from her set. Giving our love and congratulations to her, we took our places to see the man.

There's no question that John Mayer has stage presence, and as he plucked his way through the first few numbers, the largely female crowd showed no sign of stopping the relentless screaming and love-struck wailing that seems to follow John. He had a tremendous band that communicated perfectly and kept the wall of sound, behind John's intricate solos, flawless, huge and as tight as they could be. There were moments where the backing singers had something not quite right but it quite clearly made little difference to the spectacular sound that was coming from the stage. Reeling off many of the hit songs that the girls could easily sing along to while lusting after him, the experience was beginning to get a little painful, as I knew that there was

far more talent on that stage than was being shown. I clearly spoke too soon as he then erupted into some tearing blues riffs and squealing solos that gave me a taste of the John Mayer I had come to know. There were some questionable movements by John, looking as though he was getting a bit more pleasure from his guitar than his guitar was willing to give, but the skill was on another level.

There was a constant theme of him having quite long, one-sided conversations with the crowd that seemed to me like he enjoyed the sound of his own voice a bit too much. This view of him that I had formed was completely redeemed with a little dedication from him to us, our desire to see his blues trio music mentioned backstage must have left an impression on him. Sending his band off and taking the stage on his own, he proceeded to play my favorite blues song of his. We were amazed at what he had just done, in a sold-out Wembley arena. With a glance and a nod, he brought his band back onstage, and fell comfortably back into his pop songs, he had done enough, he was superb.

Having played for nearly two hours and having left the stage, he returned for a humble encore, as the applause was never ending. All in all it was a dynamic set, with perfect sound and glimmers of blues excellence, intertwined with slightly generic love songs and hiccups. It cannot be denied that he writes beautiful music and is a living guitar legend, despite his skills not fully manifesting themselves this evening, they do exist and he left everybody wanting more, well-done Mr. Mayer.



If I had the choice, I'd probably have him instead of Jennifer Aniston...

He towered above all of us and made little effort to break the ice, (fair enough when he's about to have to break the ice with about 6,000 adoring fans, he needed all the lines he could get.)

## Reviews

### AUTECHRE OVERSTEPS WARP RECORDS ALBUM



For more than a decade now Autechre's works have tended to be tough to approach. Indeed this duo of programmers didn't wait for the Year 2000 to issue their vision of the music of the third millennium: cold and disorienting rhythm sections interwoven with, sometimes, harrowing ambient sounds (noises?). Yet, even if "Oversteps" still fits this description, this new release does not require a hun-

dred listens like the previous records to be appreciated. It is much more based upon atmospheres and melodies ("r ess", "d-sho qub") and the dementia of their rhythm machine seems to be almost cured despite one or two relapses ("qplay"). As a simple and very coherent album "Oversteps" is a good surprise in a kind where showing off over-complexity reigns.

- Flavian Vansyngel

### THE DEAD WEATHER SEA OF COWARDS WARNER BROS ALBUM



Jack White takes more of a backseat than ever before, bringing Alison Mosshart to the helm of this spooky yet sultry blues outfit. The album kicks off with "Blue Blood Blues"; with bass stomping all over it and Fertita's guitar shrieking in discordant yelps. WTF 'shake your hips like battleships' means I'm not quite qualified to say, all I know is, it moves my bones. "Hustle and Cuss" sees them slip into a more chilled groove akin to 70s soul band Funkadelic, which contrasts with the

twisting snake-like "The Difference Between Us" driven by Fertita's Hammond organ and Lawrence's bassline. It's notable that this album is a more collaborative effort than their first album, with White restricted to the odd burst of showmanship, like his distinctive guitar solo on "Gasoline". Whilst several tracks feel unrefined and in need of trimming, the overall result is impressive, and serious kudos to them for finishing on a jaunty graveyard theme. - Tom Jennings

## Most listened to this week by Felix Music members on last.fm

1. Radiohead
2. Florence + The Machine
3. The xx
4. LCD Soundsystem
5. Muse
6. Crystal Castles
7. Caribou
8. Yeah Yeah Yeahs
9. Bob Dylan
10. Coldplay



I've got a deal for you guys, if you can get Barry White to number 1 next week, I'll do something unfathomably embarrassing; I'm open to suggestions on the group wall. Barry White. Number 1. YES WE CAN! - Kadhim

# Switchfoot on UK leg of world tour

Rhys Davies queues, parties and gets his water confiscated. You can never be too careful at Christian-rock gigs

Last Tuesday, I went to see Switchfoot at the HMV Forum in Camden, as part of the UK leg of their worldwide Mess of Me tour. The band, originally from San Diego, California, and their music have been variously described as surfer, alternative, rock and Christian. While the C-word can put some people off, it's refreshing to hear deeper lyrics in songs like "The Sound" (civil rights) and it never feels preachy, because that is not what the band is about. "These songs are about things I don't really understand: God, girls and politics," Jon Foreman, Switchfoot's front-man, told the crowds. I think there's something we can all relate to in that.

The evening started, as all concerts must, in the queue outside. Since Switchfoot isn't really well-known on this side of the Atlantic, I wasn't expecting a crush but I was surprised by the way the queue snaked around the back of the venue and into a nearby business park. It was all very amiable, despite the grey early evening drizzle that was beginning to come down. From what I (over)heard in nearby conversations, there was a healthy mix of Switchfoot virgins and veterans, like myself. On the door, the bouncer confiscated my water – I can understand that; London tap-water is pretty strong stuff.

The Forum used to be an Art-Deco cinema and this is apparent in the music-hall feel to the interior. It is by no means a large venue but this added a more personal edge to the night. Even standing at the back (which, admittedly, was not far away), I still felt really connected to the act. The hall was full but not packed, so there was still room for some healthy rocking out.

Warming up the crowd was The Audio Cartel, which sounded like a stereotypical rock band. They had a lot of electric guitar riffs...and not much else. After they left and the techies had fiddled around a bit, a second supporting act took to the stage. Again, a band I had never heard of, this time called Flood of Red. They didn't differ too much from the first act, apart from some head-banging thrown into the mix. Overall, they were a bit too much hard rock for my liking. It wasn't until past 9 when Switchfoot finally made an appearance; I was not greatly amused by this since the doors had opened at 7.

However, any gripes I had swiftly fell away as the band promptly opened with "Needle and Haystack Life" from their new album "Hello Hurricane." As I scanned the stage for lead singer Foreman, he appeared on the stairs above the crowd and sang his way through



They're all wearing exactly 3 pieces of clothing, must be their thing...

the fans (I'd like to see that at the O2!). In seconds, the crowd was alive with excitement. Switchfoot then dipped liberally into their back catalogue to play some real crowd-pleasers; I swear the audience went mental when they started playing "Gone".

The set-list had something for everyone; fast, slow, new, old, it was all there.

Energetic songs like "Oh Gravity!" gave way to slower, more balladic ones like "Your Love is a Song" before bringing things back up to pace with the likes of "Bullet Soul." The crowd loved every minute of it. They were jumping and shouting and cheering and singing along with everything and Foreman played them brilliantly. It made for a

real collaborative effort. Even without the fans' copious help, Foreman was an impeccable showman, bouncing around the stage with near-limitless passion and energy. By the end of the night, he was drenched in sweat.

As the concert drew to a close, I was disappointed that, given that they had played so many of their best songs, Switchfoot didn't play "Hello Hurricane" from the album of the same name, an instant classic in itself. But I should have known better. They had saved it for the inevitable encore, called out by the crowd ululating the opening notes while stamping their feet. As a song to go out on, it truly elevated the evening to a top-class performance by a most awesome band.

Switchfoot have headed off to Germany now for the next part of their tour but if I've piqued your interest, they will be playing at the Download Festival later this month. Go on, check 'em out – you might just like them!

Switchfoot  
 HMV Forum  
 1st June  
 ★★★★★☆

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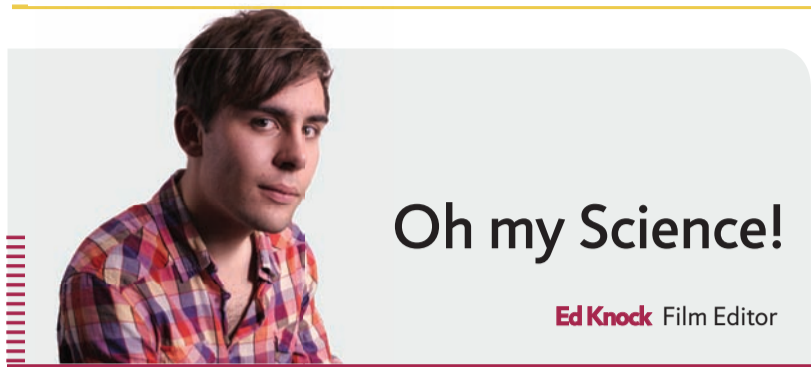
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FILM

Film Editor Ed Knock  
film.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Oh my Science!

Ed Knock Film Editor

Oh God, it's so ridiculously easy to rip into the scientific accuracy of films that I usually turn a blind eye and hope my intellect hasn't been permanently damaged by the typical onslaught of pseudo-technical jargon that would make Faraday incinerate his lifetime work and declare humanity isn't worth the benefits of electricity.

It's usually the physicists among us who get to raise their eyes to the heavens and groan at the blatant impracticabilities of burrowing to the Earth's core to nuke it back into full function and somehow prevent more lightning storms from destroying global landmarks. It baffles me how movie posters proudly display 'from the director of *The Day After Tomorrow*' as an indication of quality. "Neutinos! Mutant! Earthquakes! Noah's Ark!" barks a semi-stoned Roland Emmerich at his special effect gurus and Hey Presto! Six months down the line and we have *2012* and a fat pay cheque in the pocket of the said lazy German b\*\*\*ard.

Fortunately, my subject, chemistry, is usually too dull to receive the special attention from Hollywood. "Oh My God" is not the obvious reaction to "the chromium ion is increasing its oxidation state, it's going to precipitate into a new complex!" Whereas imagine Jon Voight's sincerely shocked expression when he hears "the quantum intensity of the Higgs bosons are reaching critical point, five hundred more joules of dark matter and the galaxy will be crushed inside of a black hole!" Oh Jon, remember the 70s when you used to make good films? After pulling me out of the shower, my therapist forced me to watch *Midnight Cowboy* seven times to heal the mental anguish caused by *Transformers*.

What has triggered this tirade of complaining, you might be wondering. Well,

I settled down to watch *Iron Man 2* the other day; it was as I predicted, terrible but the abuse Jon Favreau decided to give chemistry took me by surprise. If you haven't seen *Iron Man 2* and are dwelling in patient anticipation of its (not so) thrilling plot then I don't advise reading on, or in Internet speak - \*\*Spoiler Alert\*\*

Our hero Tony Stark has developed a nasty rash due to poisoning from the mini nuclear fusion reactor sticking out of his chest. It's alright though, as Sam Jackson gives him a healthy dose of lithium dioxide to treat it. Wait a minute Sam, you could have used any of the thousands of real chemicals to cure this mythical condition but no, you've managed to force the lithium atom to accept three more electrons pairs than is physically possible. I know I'm being pedantic, but any half-bothered teenager with two C's in GCSE science could tell you that lithium dioxide is a made up chemical. How hard is it to say di-lithium oxide instead?

It gets much worse though. Apparently, LiO<sub>2</sub> isn't a very effective cure for the metallic blue spider rash and so Tony decides to make a new element himself. Using a giant spanner and a laser he manages to overcome the problem of overcrowding in the Periodic Table and make a nice shiny metal. Last time I checked, someone hadn't forgotten to discover the element between palladium and silver because there can't possibly be one! I suppose children will now be squeezing toothpaste into the bathroom sink: "Trying to make a new element Mummy - just like Iron Man."

These crimes against science combined with Sarah Jessica Parker's face prominently displayed on billboards are making me feel so depressed, I'm rather tempted to try drugs. If you need me, I've gone to see Robert Downey Jr about a briefcase.

Date Night fails to impress

Date Night

Director Shawn Levy  
Screenwriter Josh Klausner  
Cast Steve Carell, Tina Fey, James Franco, Mila Kunis

John Park

We are first introduced to the Fosters. Claire (Fey) is a realtor and Phil (Carell) is a tax advisor. They are married with kids and once a week, they have a date night, an evening spent outside their house, away from their children; just the two of them having a not-so-special meal in a local steakhouse. But their lives have become so repetitive and bland that there is no spark anymore. They are both so tired all the time and there seems to be no such thing as passion in their marriage.

Eventually they want a break and something entirely new. So on yet another date night, they go to a big, fancy, glamorous restaurant in the city, without a reservation. They manage to get a table? Not a chance. But by saying they are the Tripplehornes, they are able to steal someone else's reservation. So far so good: they're having nice food, spending a great time, and things are really starting to look up. But this is until a couple of mobsters (Common, Jimmi Simpson) pay a visit to their table. It turns out that the Tripplehornes are in some serious trouble for angering a gangster boss. The bad guys now think the Fosters are the Tripplehornes for obvious reasons and of course, they will stop at nothing to kill them. So the Fosters need to think and act fast: run away from the two assassins, find the real Tripplehornes and clear their names.

The familiar concept of mistaken identity works well to begin with, with Fey and Carell making an incredibly likable but more importantly, a convincing couple. There is nothing extraordinary about these two people, both in terms of their looks and occupation, so it's not too difficult to in-

stantly relate to them. They're helpless and hopeless while being chased down by these two professional killers and this is where their remarkable chemistry pays off. The chase itself is far from impressive, just some textbook stuff that's hardly anything special but it's the dialogue that comes out of our leads' mouths that at least keeps the film going with a sustainable, comic tone. The outrageously preposterous things the two not-so-special civilians end up doing do have their moments of solid comedy for which the two outstanding leads deserve a lot of credit. Would this have been possible without Fey or Carell? Very unlikely.

But the trouble is, as the film progresses, it presents an incredibly unbalanced, unfocused mix of action and comedy that never quite reaches the high standards to satisfy the two very different genres. We are introduced to more characters: Mark Wahlberg is Holbrooke, a security contractor who refuses to put on a shirt. James Franco and Mila Kunis are the real Tripplehornes and Ray Liotta is the angry villain. What these supporting characters lack is any sense of purpose and memorable quality. Yes, Wahlberg works out and his shirtless appearance is very different to what Carell's must be like (ha ha), but this cannot last long. Franco and Kunis are a couple of dim, low-life, love-struck idiots who get into awkward, childish arguments. The supporting characters do not carry much humour, which is a shame given the unlimited talents of Fey and Carell.

The action isn't much better either. There are some gunshots fired and there is the inevitable car-chase that the trailer spent so long on advertising. But the chase turns out

to be something that goes on endlessly in a completely adrenaline-free manner. The cars look slick, they are capable of travelling at very high speeds and there is explosive music to go with that sequence but when this uninteresting, one-note action carries on mindlessly, that's exactly when the film starts to lose the plot and fails to engage the audience thoroughly. Exactly what did the Tripplehornes do to upset Liotta so much? After a while, this seems lost on us, completely irrelevant, and it's not as if the conclusion is at all satisfying.

What started off so well soon turns into a mediocre action/comedy romp wannabe. This should have been a lot more character-driven given the talents involved, but director Shawn Levy makes the fatal mistake of loading this with action scenes that are far from spectacular. Shockingly unmemorable, the leading pair deserves so much better - any future collaboration between the two will be more than welcome, just not with the same director and writers.



Summer Highlights



Scott Pilgrim vs. The World

Hey, did you see the film where Michael Cera played a socially awkward teenager? In *Scott Pilgrim* he breaks that typecast, well a little bit. Based on the cult comic book series of the same film, the titular hero of the film falls in love with the girl of his dreams. Unfortunately, she has quite a history and Cera has to shed off his geeky persona and battle his new girlfriend's seven exes (not all of them male). The film is heavily inspired by computer games and has a very unique graphic style. It looks like heaps of fun from the trailer and Michael Cera's natural charisma should complement the fast-paced action perfectly. He gets to wield a flaming sword - awesome!



Toy Story 3

The franchise that made Pixar a household name returns with its third installment. Andy's all grown up now and is going to college so he donates his beloved toys to a nursery. Not delighted by a lifetime of abuse by toddlers, Woody, Buzz and gang hatch an escape to rival that of Steve McQueen.



Jonah Hex

Megan Fox in a corset. Josh Brolin plays a disfigured gunslinger with supernatural powers who seeks revenge against the man who murdered his family. There's bucketfuls of action involving dynamite-firing crossbows. Did I mention Megan Fox in a corset?



# Android goes Froyo-tastic

**Feroz Salam** shows you why Froyo is Android's coming of age

When Google announced the Android mobile operating system in late 2007, the reaction it received was at best, lukewarm. Coming only a few months after the release of the iPhone OS, which had taken consumer markets by storm, most analysts were cautious about the announcement despite the fact that the OS had the backing of Google. The first release of the open source OS did nothing to enthrone them with only a relatively small number of manufacturers taking the OS on board and producing rather clunky handsets; Android proved to be unattractive and sluggish. Along with a relatively small developer market, there seemed no way that Android handsets could legitimately compete with the gloss of the iPhone or the sleek business chic of the BlackBerry.

Yet only two years down the line, there's been something of a revolution in the mobile market. As the look and feel of the iPhone OS has remained relatively stagnant, Android has reinvented itself in a new stylish format iterating rapidly with each release building solidly on its predecessor. The developing OS was backed by a lineup of neatly designed, powerful smartphones from major mobile manufacturers, which allowed Android powered handsets to overtake the iPhone to become second to the BlackBerry in terms of sales figures in the US. With the release of the next major update of the OS Android 2.2 (codenamed Froyo) earlier this week, Google seems to be looking to consolidate this position, now marketing the system as a mature OS that can compete with the best.

Quantitatively, Froyo is stunning. It's not often that the jump from version 2.1 to 2.2 offers a 450% speed increase (yes, that's 4.5 times faster), but Google



has managed to pull it out of the box with some impressive optimizations. Neat improvements in the way code is run means that Android apps are nowhere near the sluggish monsters they were from the first few releases. The browser also got some attention in this iteration with Google proudly proclaiming that Android now has the fastest mobile browser and now comes packing in-browser Flash support while working smoothly with HTML5, something that the Google execs have rightful reason to crow about.

In addition, the release also has a slew of new features designed to make it easier for both developers and users to manage the apps they download, from auto-updates to a new web-based Android market. Google has been very open about the fact that these improvements have been made keeping developers in mind, seemingly looking to expand the Android Market to a size comparable to that of the incredibly successful iPhone App Store. That said, it has also managed to throw in a sizeable number of new features

for users too, with a revamped media player, on-demand movie streaming, Exchange support and app storage on external media.

All the signs seem to be pointing to 2010 being the year in which Android makes it big. Slow unsteady beginnings haven't deterred Google from persevering with the operating system, and the results have been impressive. With a range of major hardware manufacturers throwing themselves behind Android, there seems to be a consensus that Android is the way forward in an industry looking for an answer to the ambitious expansion of Apple's product line. Froyo is certainly a firm step in the right direction from Google, with enough for both the consumer and the developer to be a very successful release. The number of Android products to be released over the next year is a testament to the confidence that manufacturers have in this license free platform. So if you're looking for a handset that's cheaper and more versatile than the iPhone, you should definitely give Android a good look.

## Slick as a Slate; Thin as a Tablet

**Samuel Gibbs** Technology Editor

Tablets all around us! Yes, it seems just like the netbook before them, tablets are going to be the must have PC in the home. Problem is for the most part the tablets that we've seen and are on sale now aren't all that cheap. From the iPad at £429 the prices essentially go up. Still that's the price you pay for bleeding edge, next generation tech right? Yes, but more often than not we're not seeing bleeding edge, revolutionary or even evolutionary tech.

Most of the non-ARM based tablets pack the ubiquitous and often tedious Intel Atom CPUs. OK, if you want to run Windows or another desktop OS then you're going to have to use the x86 instruction set, which lumbers you with the Atom unless you're willing to go the way of the Core 2 Duo CULV (that's Consumer Ultra-Low Voltage for those at home), which often lumbers you with sky high price tags.

Intel's 'Oak Trail' Atom based System-on-a-chip, SoC for short, is on its way into tablets in the Q1 2011 time frame. Similar to Intel's 'Moorestown' SoC, which is aimed at smartphones, Intel is hoping that by combining the CPU with a full chipset all on one piece of silicon it will allow thinner, power sipping, fanless tablets with the option of running Windows 7 along with other OSs like Chrome OS or MeeGo.

Talking of Chrome OS, it looks like we're going to see Google's cloud computing, tablet orientated operating system this autumn on devices. It's likely that Google will push out a beta version of Chrome OS in the interim, possibly even around Apple's WWDC

time frame, to steal some thunder.

The problem with Chrome OS, as far as I see it, is Google's other pretty successful mobile OS, Android. As you've read from Feroz, Android is coming of age and is finally at the point of being a mature mobile platform. Why is Google trying to split the market with its Chrome OS? We've already seen Android running on tablets, smartphones and smartbooks, powered either by ARM or x86 CPUs. Why doesn't Google just stick with Android and put the thoughts and UI paradigm from what it's trying to do with Chrome OS into the little green machine?

If you want an example of a decent, albeit small, tablet running Android you've only got to look at the recently released Dell Streak. It's a 5 inch mobile device that does everything your phone does, but has just enough screen real-estate to make it as a small tablet.

In fact, the pretty impressive Dell Streak has been in the news this week for two very good reasons. Carphone Warehouse are selling the Streak on its own for £429, but it's available gratis with a £25 per month data contract or £35 per month voice and data contract. Of course O2 is the official carrier of the Dell Streak, but its price plans haven't been announced at the time of going to print. Considering how much the Nexus One and iPhone 3GS cost on contract, the Streak looks like a veritable bargain, something that's reinforced, quite literally, by the amazing Gorilla glass that protects the device's display. It's able to take a full force stab with a ball point pen with nary-a-scratch. Impressive stuff indeed.

## Weekly Wrap-up: A quick guide to the best of the rest you might have missed

What did this past week in tech hold in store for us all then?

Well it's been tablet fever over at the geekfest that is Computex this week. After the iPad launch last week here in the UK, we're now hearing about a true cornucopia of new slate devices.

First up we've got the ExoPC Slate, an 11.6 inch Windows 7 tablet running a custom software layer that is both unique and incredibly easy to navigate. Of note here is that if you do need the full Windows 7 experience, it's just behind the gloss of

the Connect Four style interface. The device is powered by a 1.6GHz Intel Atom N450 backed up by 2GB of RAM and a 32GB SSD. They've even managed to squeeze in two USB ports, an SD card slot, an HDMI out, a webcam and Broadcom's Crystal HD chip for 1080p playback. The touchscreen itself is capacitive and sports a 1366x768 resolution making it 720p. If you're after a full Windows 7 experience in a slate form factor this might be your best bet, but we're only talking 3ish hours of battery life here so best make whatever you're doing quick.

Asus was out in force at Computex, this year with its Eee Pad range. The 12 inch EP121 sports an Intel Core 2 Duo CULV

CPU, Windows 7 and a purported 10 hours battery life. 10 hours is pretty ambitious for a full desktop OS tablet, but Asus has had experience with its EeePC line at reaching enviable battery life so I wouldn't put it past them. Just don't expect it to be all that svelte having to pack a sizable battery. Also onboard the EP121 will be a webcam and 'at least' one USB port.

Asus also had a 10 inch Nvidia Tegra powered tablet running Windows Embedded Compact 7, which is Microsoft's new OS for ARM powered devices that aren't phones, but also aren't powerful enough for a full Windows 7 install. Other details are a bit sketchy at this

time but both Eee Pads will range in the \$399 to \$499 price bracket on launch. Just don't hold your breath for these because we're looking down the barrel of a Q1 2011 release window.

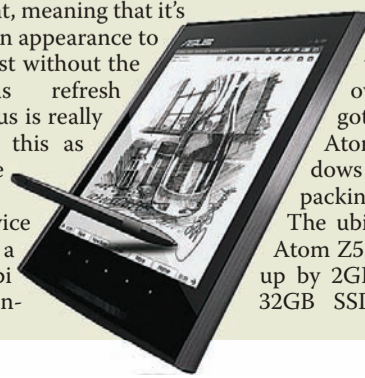
If you were looking for something to take down digital notes on, perhaps Asus' Eee Tablet (not Eee Pad) will fit the bill. Rather unusually, it packs an 8 inch 1024x768 greyscale TFT-LCD touchscreen without a backlight, meaning that it's similar in appearance to E-ink just without the atrocious refresh rate. Asus is really pushing this as a note taking device with a 2450 dpi input sen-

sitivity, a 2MP camera on the back for snapping lecture slides and a MicroSD slot. It's got 10 hours battery life, so it's not in the E-ink class, but it should present text books and eBooks pretty well with the ability to make hand drawn notes at the same time. The Eee Tablet will be priced in the \$199 to \$299 bracket and will launch in September ready for the back-to-school season.

MSI wasn't to be outdone by its Thai compatriot outting two tablets of its own. First up we've got the 10 inch, Intel Atom powered, Windows 7 Home Premium packing WindPad 100. The ubiquitous 1.66GHz Atom Z530 CPU is backed up by 2GB of RAM and a 32GB SSD, whilst harbour-

ing two USB ports, an HDMI output and a built-in webcam. MSI have included their Wind Touch UI, a basic skin on top of the Windows OS providing easy access to applications on the 1024x600 capacitive touchscreen, which should make using the finger un-friendly Windows 7 a little bit easier to manage.

MSI also showed an Android, Tegra 2 powered 10 inch slate with a more curvaceous look, which will be aimed at the end of the year for \$399.



# Hangman

hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Beginner's Guide to Being an Art Student

Hi, you're probably not going to understand this sub-head because it's like so metaphysical and deep, you know?

**A**rt - it's alright. Art students however, @£%R\*@£FWN\*H@\*£HFD N\$\*&£\$£\*!@&\*DHJ7 h&QSIFWNBG@\$\*SY@\* .... make me want to repeatedly punch the nearest object. I now owe the *felix* office a new keyboard, but for now I've stolen the puzzle editor's keyboard - he's the guy that does the puzzles. Look at him all like, 'where's my keyboard? I can't do my puzzles without a keyboard. Puzzle editor is angry rarrrr' Stupid puzzle guy can't even solve a fucking puzzle and he refers to himself in third person as puzzle guy. Puzzle editor is weird. But enough of puzzle guy! I was talking about art students, f - @£T\*£\*R]ERIPESRE(£\$G(\$EH\$EPH, shit now I owe puzzle editor a keyboard.

### Step 1 Dressing the pART (Ha!)



Now the first step to becoming an art student is dressing appropriately. You are beyond fashion. Your clothing is an expression of your personality and is a window into your soul, therefore you should look stupid and pretentious. As a guy, wear a dangly earring in your right ear, not because you're gay, but because you're alternative. Complement this with something stupid and dangly around your neck. As a girl try wearing a dark shade of lipstick that matches your Victorian child's dress with those weird shoulders. Remember girls to always look up to the right, as this makes you look pensive and creative. The right hemisphere of the brain is your artsy side. You may notice that the female art student in the picture above is actually looking up to the left, but she's non-conformist and doesn't conform to brain hemispheres.

### Step 2



Remind people that you're an art student by telling them you just "get things that they don't". Talk about yourself and how you're so complicated and depressed, yet enigmatic and avant-garde. If the conversation is veering towards something non-you related, quickly turn the topic back to yourself by asking them if they'd like to hear the poem you've written. If all else fails, just sit there and pull the "Ugh you're so narrow-minded" look, depicted above.

### Step 3 Let's go to Spandex

Step 2 is talking about yourself; Step 3 concentrates on talking about all the amazing places you've been. Now as an Art Student you hate others engaging in your one-sided conversation so avoid this by going to really obscure locations and finding a small quirky inscrutable club or bar. You can eliminate the dreaded possibility of another member of the conversation having been to your chosen venue by making it up. Shakespearean sounding names work great, like 'Othello's' or 'the Iago' or just put random words together like 'tin sprinkle' or 'spandex soldiers'. Well, maybe not Spandex Soldiers, but I had such a great night at Tin Sprinkle the other night. It's in Spurt. Oh my God you've never been to Spurt? You know it's like really far East London, just north of the Tempest Avenue. It's like so indie and everyone there is like really on my level you know? Oh man, you guys just don't get me.

### Step 4

Art Students don't do art, they do interpretive art, which is easy. You've just got to know how to talk utter shit about nothing. So just draw abso-fucking-lutely anything in the box to the right.

Now look at it and write down the first two words that come into your head in the box below. This is your title. Art students will spend about three months of thought and portfolio work on the title.

Now fill in the blanks with words and you have your interpretation.

"This expresses my feelings of deep \_\_\_\_\_ and symbolises a hidden and unforeseen \_\_\_\_\_, which modern society looks upon with \_\_\_\_\_"



## TWITTER



SexyOsama69

Lol. A taxi driver shot and killed loads of randomers lolol



The\_Cleggomatortrontown <3

dude what's wrong with you? There's nothing funny about that



Barack\_attack\_l33thaxor

Oh here we go again, 'WA WA WA I'm Nick Clegg and I have no sense of humour WA WA WA'



Cameron\_DA\_Maneron!!!

Jesus Christ Cleggman just lighten up a bit, why do you always have to put a dampener on evrything?



SUPERACEGORTHEROAR87

Dyu remember that tiem I pushed Cleggman on the bon fire? IT WAS A JOKE! Cleggman doesn't get jokes

## THE NEWS WITHOUT THE

# KOREAN METH SMUGGLERS FACE FIRING SQUAD



# COFFEE BREAK

Coffee Break Editor Charlie Murdoch  
coffee.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Sean Farres Puzzle Captain

Once again I'm being forced to write the introduction to Coffee Break in the absence of Murdoch. Literally, chained-to-the-desk forced. Fortunately nobody bothers checking what I actually write so I just got to fill up the space with random musings. Out of interest has anyone out there seen my keyboard? Of course, I am typing on a keyboard now, but this is not MY keyboard. My keyboard is an offshade of white, with a QWERTY layout and very distinctive but difficult to describe balls of dust beneath the keys, and the spacebar's too loose and the return key jams occasionally.

If you find a keyboard matching this description please bring it down to the felix office so I can confirm whether or not it's mine. It's quite important to me. I bought it into the office from home. It was bought for me by my grandfather. He's no longer with us... He danced his last dance... He kicked the bucket... It was a very emotional experience for my mother. She loved that bucket and hated his dancing and was looking for any excuse to justifiably ask him to move out. To add injury to insults, he tripped over the bucket when leaving and twisted his ankle. He can walk fine but he sure misses being able to dance.

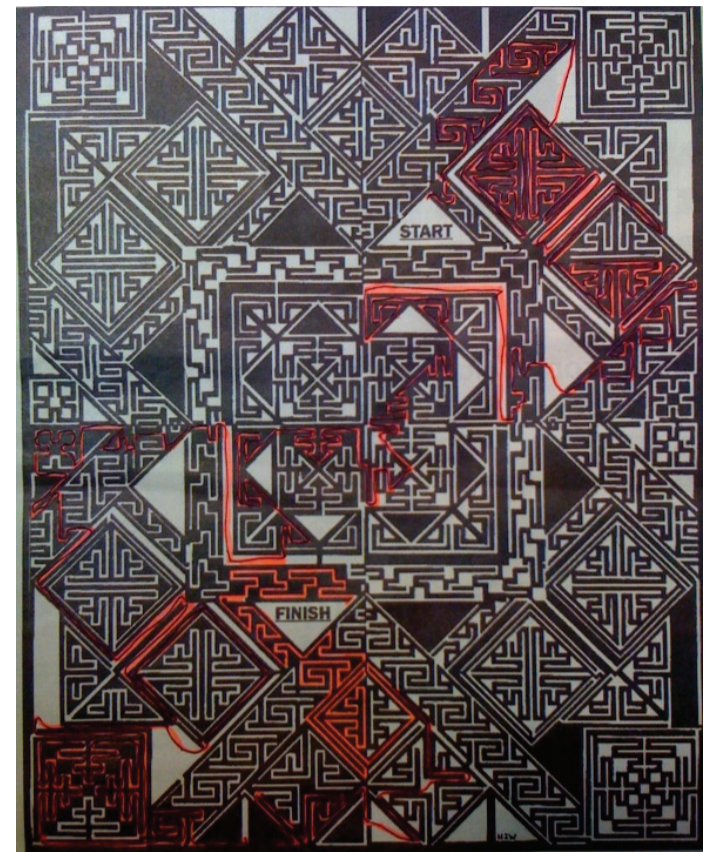
## Solutions for Arrow Maze and Relic 1,463

Arrow Maze was broken last week as many of you noticed. A few of you wrote in to notify me. I am fairly certain only one square was in error, unfortunately no solution submitted was able to show this and my solution sheet has been misplaced within the office. I apologise profusely. - Puzzle Captain.

There were several entries for our new Relic puzzle which last week featured the maze to the right. The first correct submission was by Sheryl and has been included as photographed to the right. We apologise if in print it seems just a bit too small to view!

Again I've got a bit too much space to fill... So here's a joke:

**Why do undertakers wear ties?**  
*Because their profession is very serious, and it is important that their appearance has a degree of gravitas.*



Quote of the Week

H. G. Wells: "Our true nationality is mankind."

## FUCWIT League Table

<b>Teams:</b>		
Harry Potter Trio	264 Points	
The Tough Brets	215 Points	
The Cool Kids and Fergal	40 Points	
<b>Individuals:</b>		
Sheryl	245 Points	
Matthew Colvin	243 Points	
GLT	156 Points	

The Felix University/College-Wide Invitational Tournament League is new and improved, with an iPod nano for both the team and the individual with the most points at the end of the year.

5 points for the 1st correct answers for all puzzles on these pages, 4 points for 2nd, 3 points for 3rd, 2 points for 4th and 1 point for 5th.

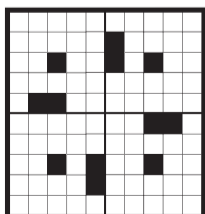
Now then FUCWITs, answers to [sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk). Go!

## Slitherlink 1,464

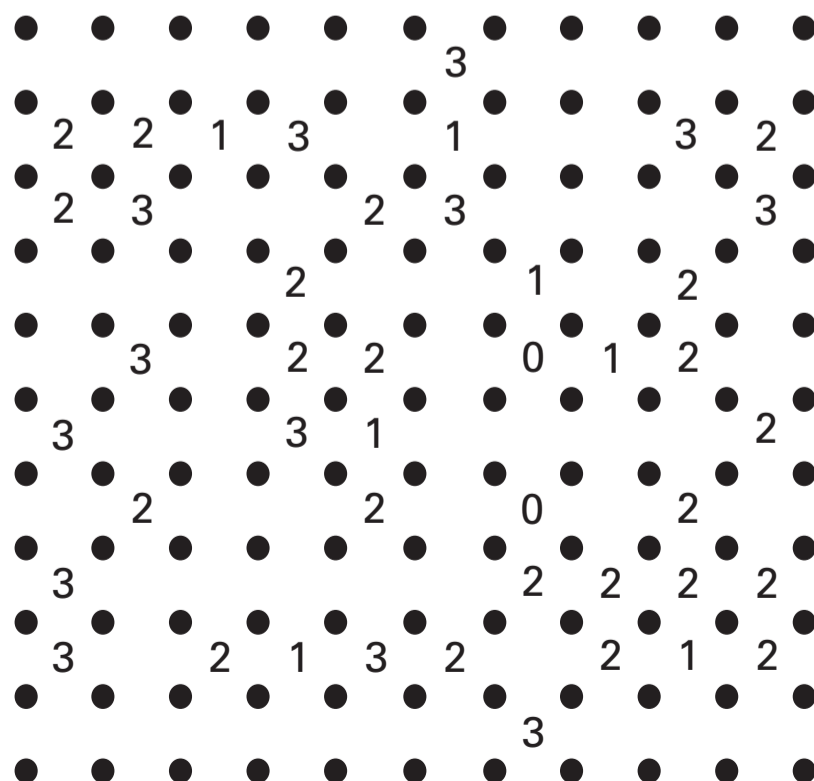
Here is Slitherlink, back from the dead! (Or rising from the ashes of Nonolink if you will.)

For all those that were upset to see it masked beneath (a not always solvable) Nonogram puzzle. I hope I have satisfied your cries for it's return in this (what I hope will prove to be) slightly more challenging form!

For those who are wondering what happened to the Nonogram puzzle, it too is somewhere amid the ashes of the Nonolink but has developed a case of pneumonoultramicroscopic-silicovolcanoconiosis and needs some time to recover. The last time we saw it however it was displaying the pathetic attempt at a puzzle of:



Which it tried to assure us represents a 'phoenix' in Conway's Game of Life.



## Wordpath 1,464

ORIGIN:

RISE

DESTINATION:

FIRE

Solution 1463

EXAM  
MINE via  
EXAMINER  
LINE (LS)  
BASS via  
BASELINE  
PASS (LS)

How to play:

Make a path from the origin word to the destination word by taking steps between words using one of the three following methods:

**Letter Substitution:** Substitute just one letter.

e.g. WORDS -> WARD

**Anagram:** Rearrange the letters.

e.g. WARD -> DRAW

**Wordslide:** Replace the current word with a new 4 letter word from any 5+ letter word that contains them both.

e.g. DRAW -> WING (via DRAWING)

No consecutive steps may be made by the same method.

e.g. WORD -> WARD (by LS) -> WARE (by LS) would be **invalid**.

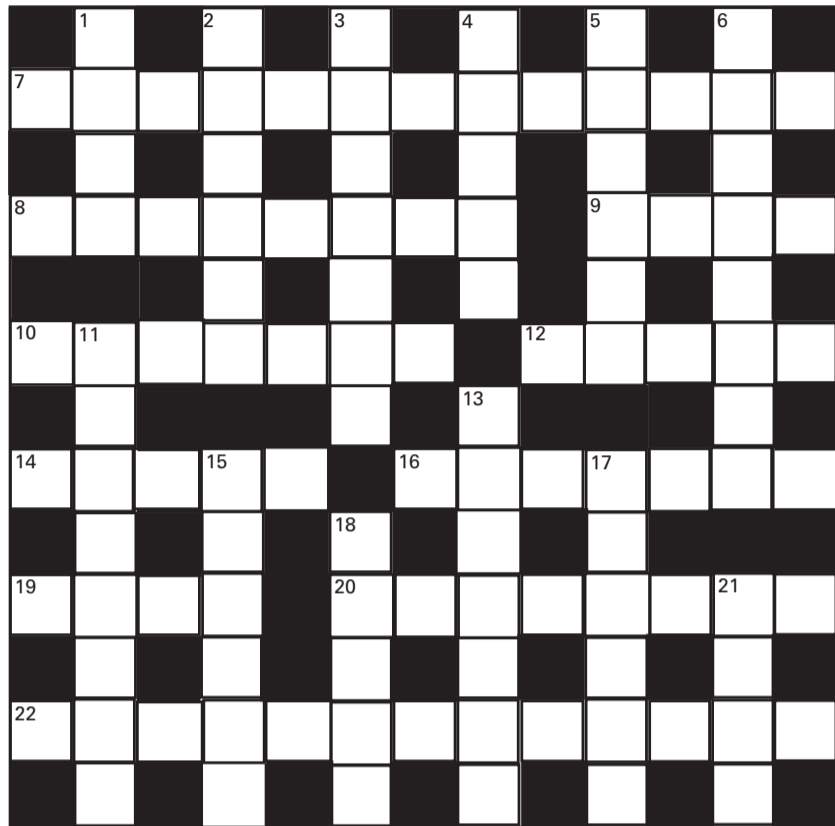
Points are awarded for the earliest SHORTEST valid path between the two words. Dubious words will be checked against the OED. Send your solutions to

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

**Mark Mearing-Smith** took the points once again this week! Will he make it a hat-trick or will you be the one to stop it from happening?!

**Scribble box**

# A quickie (crossword) 1,464



### ACROSS

- 7 Yellow pages? (9,4)
- 8 Without underwear (8)
- 9 Flying saucers (4)
- 10 Dave, Boris, or Gorgeous George? (The answer is not 'complete bastards') (7)
- 12 Legbone (5)
- 14/16 "Worst crossword ever" - Cook icy gumbo (anag.) (5,4,3)
- 16 See 14 (4,3)
- 19 Fragrant herb (4)
- 20 Pigfoot (8)
- 22 Manly aviators (anag.) (9,4)

### DOWN

- 1 Toybricks (4)
- 2 Landowner (medieval) (6)
- 3 Natter (4-3)
- 4 Pry (5)
- 5  $\theta > \pi/2$  (6)
- 6 Capital of Hawaii (8)
- 11 Like 6 down or Um-Bongo (8)
- 13 Turn awry (bang a spliff?) (2,2,3)
- 15 Amourified (2,4)
- 17 Gearsack (3,3)

- 18 Data (5)
- 21 Be-hind - parliament of 1648 (4)

### Solution 1463



**Matthew Colvin** won this week. There wasn't much competition. Only Matthew's 1st place, 5-point, and the 2nd place, 4-point prizes for the crossword were awarded this week. Send in your solutions, don't let these points go to waste again! Or you could just drop us an email/solution to let us know you like our puzzles!

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

Crossword by **Peter Logg**

### Scribble box

# Halloumi-scopes: Horoscopes do it Greek-style

So their economy is in the toilet – who cares? They've still got plenty of cheese! Salty, squeaky, rubbery cheese.



### Aquarius

It's 1am on a Friday night and you're in the mood for a kebab. You order the usual and when it comes, there's this big chunk of eraser on top. You ask

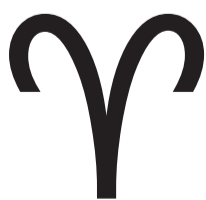
why there's a pencil-case on your food. The guy says it's a gourmet kebab, designed by Heston Blumenthal. You take a bite – it tastes like HB pencils. That'll be £11.99, please thank-you, sir!



### Pisces

It's BBQ time and a friend asks for help carrying a melon. Sure, how hard can it be? You break an arm trying to lift it; it's denser than a black

hole. Apparently, Cern have branched out into groceries now. Aware of the danger you are all in, you lift the melon up over your head and run heroically down the street. You slip, the melon falls, the world implodes. Bravo!



### Aries

You're in the middle of a banging sweet orgy. Oh yeah! Well, actually, it's a three-some... except it's more like just you. But there's still loads of people

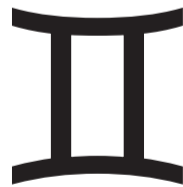
watching, that's got to count for something. You're in the lecture theatre, masturbating into a sock. You were giving a presentation and, to relieve the pressure, imagined everyone naked. What else could you do after that?



### Taurus

You're walking into college when a pigeon decides to take a crap on you. Ugh, and on your new coat as well! That cost 1.7 student

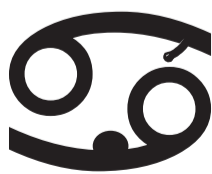
loans! Enraged, you throw a stone at the flying rat. You miss but the bird is terrified. It voids its bowels all over you. Horrified, you look up just in time for the pigeon to land on your face. Turns out you did hit it - and kill it! Pigeon-murderer...



### Gemini

You've gone to Richmond to see a film and you're understandably nervous. You've heard awful stories about south of the river. But

the streets are clean, the shops are pretty and the people are nice. Oh, how you were wrong! After a most pleasant stay, you return to the Union for one last pint. Smelling the South London on you, a pack of rabid MechEng tears you to pieces.



### Cancer

Imperial has made you so desperate that you're cruising for MILFs near the local school. A man comes up to you and compliments you on

your boyish looks. He offers to take you home. Assuming that he's a swinger with similar intent, you agree. The night is a blur but you wake up in knee-highs with lemon bon-bons inserted where they shouldn't be. Zesty!



### Leo

You've heard that Cleopatra bathed in milk to preserve her beauty. In order to stay awake and revise, you run yourself a bath of instant coffee and jump

in. Maybe you should have let it cool down first. To soothe your scalded skin, you take a shower, having first crushed a gross of ProPlus into the boiler. It works though! You stay awake all night, right up until your heart explodes.



### Virgo

With excitement and frustration, You sign up to an online dating site. Finally you get your first e-mail asking to meet. You turn up in the JCR with a bottle

of baby oil. You're disappointed when your tutor shows up. Oh, just another meeting. He starts rubbing your leg. Or not. Months later, you graduate with a 2:2. "Poor student, worse lover."



### Libra

To reverse Imperial's drain on your coolness you've started wearing sunglasses everywhere. Even indoors. Shame you look like a blind person. Even dogs

think so. A confused guide-dog finds you and leads you to cross the road. But you don't want to cross the road! Angry, the dog bites your hand. You run away from it...and straight into an oncoming lorry. You gives the lorry rabies.



### Scorpio

Books stretch out infinitely before you. There's so much to learn and so little time! You jerk awake; it was only a dream. Your big-breasted girlfriend strokes

your chest and suggests a blowjob might make you feel better. You smile as she descends. You jerk awake. Damn, *that* was just a dream! You're in the library, books really are spread all around you...and you've just come all over them.



### Sagittarius

Instead of revising, you spent your time teaching squirrels to bring you crib sheets, bribing them with peanut brittle. On the day of the exam, you summon your furry

followers and ace the exam. As you leave, the squirrels are outside, waiting. They want their pay. You finished the brittle last night with a weird-ass kebab. They rip out your throat and bury it. Yes, they eat more than just brittle now.



### Capricorn

It's a glorious day and you're soaking up the rays outside the Union. It's perfect weather for a G&T. Except instead of gin, you have vodka and instead of tonic,

you have more vodka. It's a bit warm so you drop in some vodka ice-cubes. You pass out and when you wake up, the Rugby team have tied you to a tree. Someone is talking but you can't make it out what they're saying. Is it, "Pint?"



## A fairytale ending

### ICU Snooker beat York in a dramatic fashion to claim gold medal place at the BUCS Championships

Sam Dennis Snooker

For the past two years, Imperial college have won a bronze medal at the BUCS Snooker Championships. However, losing our club's best player last year through the selfish act of graduating, as well as another key 1st team player choosing to focus on his degree, our team was looking average at best. With only two surviving members of last year's bronze winning team, 1st team captain Sam Dennis brought up three new faces from the 2nd team.

After our poor performance in the Midlands cup earlier in the year, realistic chances of equalling our results from the last two years and claiming a further bronze medal was low. However, with regular team practice sessions, the new look team was improving every day.

The first round of the Championships was a league of five teams, all to play each other in a best of ten, with each player playing two frames against an opponent from the opposing team.

With a 5-5 draw to an impressive Manchester 1st team, a 9-1 loss to favourites Cardiff 1st, followed by two 6-4 wins against Durham 1st and Cardiff 3rd, we finished the first round losing out to 2nd place on frame difference. This meant we qualified for the knock-out Trophy event, where we had won bronze for the past two years.

Late on Saturday night saw our first knock-out match against a strong Queens 2nd team. After a 2-0 loss from Lawrence Wild and a 1-1 draw from Duc Tien, we found ourselves in a difficult position, especially as team captain Sam Dennis and Ken Ng had lost their first frames. These results meant the score was 5-1 to Queens in a first to 6 match. We were feeling down, we were playing bad, all was lost! But then, from nowhere, our 'B' team arrived to give us some much needed support. Suddenly morale was high, Ken began winning his final frame and Sam smashed in a 31 break to take the lead in his match. With these two frames on the board we were 5-3 down with just our very experienced Hari Arora left to play.

Hari's had thankfully exchanged his general 'smash everything as hard as possible' playing style for a more controlled, technical game. This resulted in a massively tense first frame where Hari rolled in the final blue before having to use the long rest to sink the pink. Final frame and Hari needs to win to draw the match level and force a decider.

To our horror, Hari found himself 20 points behind, but a valiant fight back saw a tight fight on the colours. Good pots from Hari on the yellow and green, followed by a fluke from his opponent on the brown, which was responded with a fluke by Hari on the blue (where it actually went in a pocket a full 12 feet away from the one he was aiming for) and a stylish pot on the pink to win and

equalise the frame scores to 5-5.

Sam Dennis was nominated to play the single frame play-off game and to progress the team to the semi-finals and be guaranteed at least a bronze medal. Sam's pulled through with a series of medium sized breaks and exhibition style pots, creating a 40 point lead; the pressure was off. Another couple of impressive pots saw the victory sealed by the captain. Suddenly, the team with no realistic chance of medals found themselves in the semifinals after being 5-1 down in a first to 6 match.

Semifinal match was against Cardiff 2nd. Having been embarrassingly beaten 9-1 to Cardiff 1st earlier in the tournament, the team was adamant not to be beaten by another Cardiff team. The match started off quite close, with 1-1 draws from Lawrence and Duc. With a win from Sam and another draw from Ken meant we were winning 5-3 going into Hari's match, so even if he were to lose 2-0, at very least we would have another play-off match. Fortunately though, Hari came through for the team once again, winning the first frame to send us through to the final 6-3.

At this point, we had out performed the last two years and were guaranteed at least a silver medal.

The final is played in a slightly different format, instead of adding up the amount of frames won, every player plays a best of 3 match against one opponent, and it is the number of matches won that counts. Therefore, with 5 play-

ers on each team, the final is won by the team that wins 3 matches.

The final against York 2nd started with wins from Lawrence Wild and Sam Dennis, who's frame difference for the team tournament was an astonishing 12 wins to 2 losses, put Imperial 2-0 up in the first to 3 match. With Duc Tien winning his matches, it seemed that we were just minutes away from claiming Imperial's first BUCS Team Snooker gold medal.

But things took a turn for the worse. Duc's opponent came back strong and won a close 2-1 match, making the score only 2-1 to Imperial. The final seemed to be slipping away as both Ken and Hari were losing their matches. Ken fort back bravely in the second frame equalising his match, only to be out played in the decider, to lose 2-1 and level the overall match to 2-2 with, once again, just Hari's match to be played.

Hari, after losing the first frame came out strong in the second, raking up a 20 point lead. However, with the York player only requiring one frame to win the match, he came back hard. But with the whole of the 1st and 2nd team behind Hari, he pulled through to equalise his match, meaning the result of the final was all down to his last frame. The match was finely balanced at 2-2, and 1-1 in the final match.

Hari, once again made a great start pulling 20 point clear of his opponent. But once again, the player from York came back strong and was winning go-

ing into the colors, just 6 balls left on the table would decide who won gold. Once again, it seemed like the final had got away from us with Hari losing so late in the frame.

But then Hari seemed to get possessed by some sort of Ronnie O'Sullivan/John Higgins hybrid. He played two amazing snookers, and then then kept composure when the rest of the room were ready to explode with excitement, and smashed home the blue, in true Hari Arora style, before coolly rolling in the pink to win gold medal for Imperial College 1st team.

Other results from the weekend: the 2nd team lost to Oxford 1st and Exeter 2nd before beating Ulster 2nd team. These results meant they qualified for the team shield event where they went out to Southampton 2nd team.

There was not much success in the singles event, both Ken and Hari made it through to the second round before getting knocked out. Sam Dennis however made it through to the last 16.

As captain, I would like to Congratulate the rest of the 1st team, Lawrence Wild, Ken Ng, Duc Tien and Hari Arora as well as the 2nd team Victor Loi, Lewis Guan, Grace Yip, Nigel Rozario and Amish Patel, for all their support. Without them we would have most likely lost to Queens in our quarter final match. And finally a thank you to everyone showing their support on our website throughout the weekend, especially Nigel's mum.