

MUSE.

06/12/11

“Dignifying Dysmorphia”

Polly Borland
explains her tastes

A Beautiful, Invisible Truth

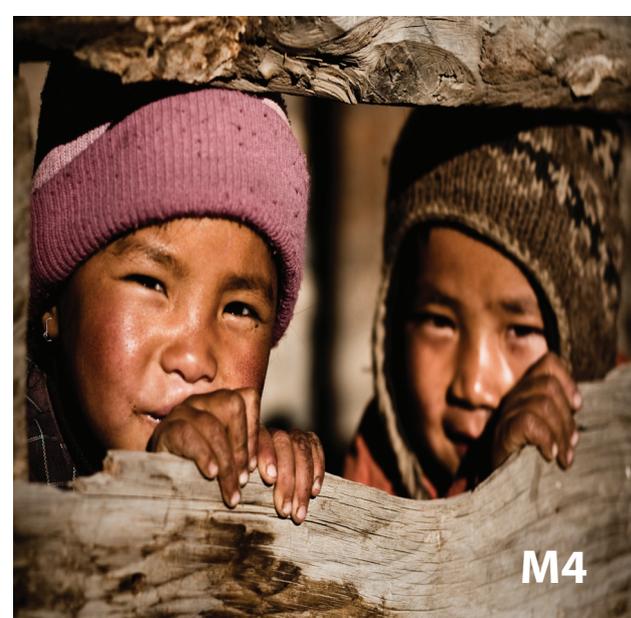
What is it like to live with Asperger's?

Ghurkas in York

How the soldier's adapt to fish &
chips, and Jonny English



Muse.



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Weasley photoshoot: Agatha Torrence



Never Say Never

Mia de Graaf

Perhaps B-Rack was just too unambitious with 'Yes, We Can'. Truth be told, 'yes we can' is a motivational message, but unfortunately it hasn't come to fruit in every way he said it would. It worked well enough, and maybe he'll try to sail on that in next year's elections. However, it has the potential to be so much more. Pretty much everyone has guffawed at the thought of Justin Bieber being king of the world. But one thing 2011 has shown us, in his own words: 'Never say never'.

A week ago today Justin Bieber was named the most searched human being of 2011 on Bing search engine, usurping last year's Kim Kardashian. The Bieb takes his pride of place at spot number uno on our web surfing hit list, and the title as the only male in the top ten.

Some say astonishing, I say foreseeable, but this shuffle means that B-Rack [Obama] has fallen from No. 5 to No. 49 in one fell swoop. Justin is apparently the most trended name on Twitter ever, the most viewed on

YouTube ever, and the most 'elfed' person on elf.com. Ever. He has his own fragrance ('Someday' - the advert of which depicts a girl about 6 years his senior yearning for the 17-year-old), probably a clothing line, and I wouldn't be surprised by some kind of food brand I the near future. Never Say Never.

"Who is this guy?" some remarkably still oblivious people ask; "what makes him so popular?" I thought I had this in a nutshell - and I do stand partly by this claim. If you haven't seen the latest *Twilight* film, there's quite a disturbing, and fundamentally illegal plot twist in which Jacob, "the sexy one" (my own words...), falls in love with Bella's baby - it was that, more than the graphic sex scenes, that had me wincing uncomfortably into my pick'n'mix. I couldn't work out exactly from whence this idea stemmed - to romanticise paedophilia - but my best guess is that they're trying to get at what Bieber has done so well: be a sex god for children. It's a peculiar trend that has been both accepted and celebrated - despite the fact that his Movem-

ber efforts were, well, brave, and he is widely acknowledged as looking like a lesbian (see lesbianwholooklikejustinbieber.tumblr.com. It's gold).

As well as having seen the countless 'vlogs' of toddlers requesting his hand in marriage, or even to "sleep next to him and have lots and fun *wink*", I have born first-hand witness to his hold over the recently-born-woman with my own flesh and blood. At the pantomime last year with my four-year-old niece on my lap, we were awaiting Hammersmith's finest Christmas cheer, which involved listening to chart music - the pre-drinking equivalent for the very underage. A new song starts. As if competing for her life on *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* music round, this doe-eyed girl hears the opening two notes, and with glee exclaims 'Justin Bieber!' before launching into a rendition of his 'baby' song. Astounded that much of this was even in her vocabulary range was my first hurdle, followed swiftly by the grave realisation that she too had been hit by Usher's cupid arrow.

What more could he do? Entice older people? Surely not?

Never say never - perfectly demonstrated by Mariah Yeater - the 20-year-old who claimed to have mothered his child. The story was flawed from the off, as my mother contested at this girl's claim that he didn't use a condom because 'he really wanted to feel it': "as if Bieber was a virgin." Yes Mum, that's the spirit. After an excruciating television interview, in which the channel comically interspersed footage with his song "baby, baby, baby ohhh...", the naïve woman has since backed down (apparently due to death threats, and a counter-suit from Bieber's "people" - as explained to me, genuinely, by a 50-year-old American male Belieber on the 44 bus in York. Never say never).

In a nutshell, this end to the year, that many conspiracy theorists claimed would never come, has taught us one valuable thing that no one - not Obama, not the Queen, not the Bible - has ever truly delivered so forcefully and miraculously: Never Say Never.

Quirks: Famous Brothers

The Miliband brothers had a public political conflict.
Do these brothers get on?



Chuckle Brothers:
Great childhood dentist



Warner Bros:
No hierarchy here



Princes William and Harry:
Crush on the sister-in-law?



Jonas Brothers:
Performing pouts



Wright Brothers
Plane-building japes

Thinking inside the box Camilla Apcar



Joey Essex coming to York was to be the highlight of my TV loving 2k11. And the chance to play some sort of game with him on stage? The excitement! I could show off all my useless knowledge about the Essex clan in a nice quiz, I innocently believed. But no. Instead, a lap dance competition performed on Joey's friend (because the Reem-meister had no idea about it and refused...what a gentleman) made me want to melt away amongst the swarm of girls all desperate to whip their tops off for five minutes of quality time with Joey.

The five American leaders – a President plus Standards, Social, Philanthropy and Entertainment Chairs – of Channel Four's Sorority Girls would have been horrified at the whole competition, because amongst their favourite terms and acronyms is 'inappropriate'. And they take being appropriate to the extreme.

If I were a pledge (a wannabe sorority Sister who goes through hazing while decked out in pearls, pink monogrammed pyjamas and cashmere knits), I'd like to think that the five leaders would initially find me to be the epitome of appropriate. In clubs, I only ever have one drink in my hand: you really can't do the Smack That or Saturday Night Fever disco dances to full effect if you've got two things to hold.

I don't wear above-the-knee skirts without tights: the North is unbearably cold for eight months of the year and I'm not a fan of pneumonia. I don't wear false eyelashes: my one experience with them left me looking like an even more dishevelled version of Katie Price. All examples of totally 'appropriate', albeit middle-aged, logic.

But upon discovering my philanthropy efforts, I sense things would start to go downhill. Would helping to organise a Calendar Girls style calendar be considered an inappropriate fundraiser? Having more than one bit of flesh on show at a time constitutes

being Sorostitute according to Dominique, the Standards Chair. My role in co-ordinating the pages must have made me a SoroPimp. I'm dubious the Sisters would approve.

It gets worse. Any aspiring Sisters who have been promised that a night out won't be 'a late one', should never make well-intentioned plans for the next day that involve going to the British Library to do dissertation research. By 2.30am, if you've already stopped drinking, it's time to face that won't be getting home much before five. Being awake past midnight? In-app-rop-riate.

Last week, I had resigned myself to this fact. Having been up since 7.30 the previous morning and with T-minus 7 hours until I had to be in the company of a pile of musty books, my desperation led me to perhaps the cardinal sin of appropriateness. Dare I relive my PLC (Poor Life Choice)...in my plight towards academia, I sprawled across the corner of a table for a power nap in the restaurant-cum-bar.

Trying to snooze while Rolling in the Deep and Fight For This Love are blasting out of the stereo system proved difficult. Even harder when you're awakened by the stench of breaded brie. Not to mention the establishment's bouncer peering down to ask if you're 'alright'. A bleary-eyed murmur of "I'm just so sleepy" definitely doesn't give the best first impression. So inappropriate.

Evidently, however hard I try I'm clearly never going to be appropriate enough. They've all got double standards anyway. Hannah the Entertainment Chair is eternally caked in a foundation far from Natural Beige, and I definitely spied Philanthropy Chair Arianna in a body-con pencil skirt with a slit right up the thigh. What a Slooter Cahooter.

And aside from the First Battalion of the Yorkshire Regiment, what kind of a club had a ferret as a mascot? Sistas, you've been weighed and measured and have been found lacking. Your definition



Christmas by numbers

10 million turkeys are consumed by the British public at Christmas. That's a lot of dry bird, considering no one likes it.

40 percent of Christmas dinners are cooked by men. Domestic inferiority complexes aren't exactly finished

22 percent of people file for divorce on the 8th January. The pressure Christmas

puts on relationships has a pretty quick turn around.

53 percent increase in alcohol consumption in December. Just *such* a merry time.

600,000 people spend Christmas alone. They're either old, or 'Bridget Jones', and will watch Creature Comforts.



The Ghurkas in York

Tom Witherow meets Nepalese soldiers in Fulford to find out how their families are finding life in the UK.

“I joined in 1996, my wife only came with me in 2006. It was a hard time.” Gurkhas have served in the British armed forces for almost 200 years, but are the sacrifices these soldiers make off the battlefield going unnoticed? What drives them to leave their culture, and often their families, behind to fight for a foreign nation?

Gurkhas are renowned as some of the fiercest and bravest fighters in the world – one former Indian Chief of Staff even said that “if a man says he is not afraid of dying, he is either lying or a Gurkha”. Hundreds of thousands have fought for Britain, twenty-six earning our highest honour, the Victoria Cross.

Gurkha rights hit the headlines two years ago, when Joanna Lumley led a successful campaign to have the right to habitation in Britain extended to those who retired before 1997. A flood of retirees have since left their homes in the foothills of the Himalayas and settled in Britain. Alongside the presence of Nepalese army families, this creates a significant welfare issue. A cultural canyon stands between the rural Nepalese

life of the Gorkhali region and British army life in York. Integration into their new workplace and community is key to creating an effective military unit, as well as allowing soldiers to have a fulfilling life.

Suchant is a Gurkha in 246 Signal Squadron who lives with his wife and two children. “We have a much better life here, it’s better for both of us.” Suchant has served in the British army for eleven years and has lived in Fulford for nine of them. As we speak his wife and children sit obediently behind him. He says something in Nepali – she disappears and returns with two steaming mugs of tea. This alongside the large formal family portraits, the large green statues and the ornate curtains hint at the country they call home. The tension is broken by Suchant’s explanation as to why he joined the army: “Because of the money. One pound is now over a hundred and twenty rupees, that’s big money.” Nor does he pause to consider where he might like to retire: “Once my children have grown up and been educated, there is no point in me being here. I will

Above: Gurkhas celebrate the Hindu festival of Dashain in Afghanistan

But are Gurkhas selling their cultural heritage in order to live the relative high life that the UK offers? He doesn't think so. "We join the army because, obviously, we are allowed to live in the UK, but once we're here we eat Nepalese food, practice Hinduism and teach our children about Nepalese festivals." Sabin is Suchant's next-door neighbour and a fellow 'Sig,' he has two young girls. "I find that sometimes it's hard to keep the traditions going. Sometimes she [his eldest daughter] doesn't want to know, and does whatever the British children are doing. But we have a completely different culture... I'd really like my daughters to understand both cultures, but it's difficult."

Both families are fully involved in both the army and the broader Nepalese community. "My eldest son goes to a local football club, and is a yellow belt in Taekwondo," Suchant announces proudly, "We [246 squadron] play football and basketball inside the barracks." One would consider language a barrier to engaging in popular culture, little did I expect a detailed description of the latest Johnny English film from Suchant's younger son.

Tony Gould, a military historian who has written extensively about the Gurkhas has suggested that lower wages (these have now been brought to parity) and the presence of British Majors as commanding officers (COs) serve to create tension inside the barracks. Suchant doesn't think it's any different to other squadrons. "There are British guys in our squadron, with them we're really quite friendly and lots of British soldiers want to be in our squadron for operations... We invited them to our Dashain celebrations, they even wore Nepalese traditional dress." One would often associate comradeship with the army, but the Gurkhas' unique situation means that this isn't inevitable. Although the celebration of their sacred festival may be a small point, it represents the wider success that the Nepalese have enjoyed in joining local communities.

Dashain is the most-anticipated and widely celebrated festival in Nepal. "In Nepal, all the family come home and gather for fifteen days. We kill goats and cows to guard against demons, and our grandfathers bless us with red paint on our forehead... Here? We had a celebration in our gymnasium." This may have seemed a watered-down affair to newer recruits, but the Dashain celebrations in York promote the same sense of community that you would find in the rural communities of the Nepalese foothills. But now the community being embraced is multicultural.

Legislation passed in 2006 gave soldiers' immediate families the right to habitation for the period of their service. The new law created a fantastic opportunity for families and soldiers, but also a new set of issues relating to integration. Sabin is pleased that his children can benefit from British state education: "[In Nepal] education is not very systematic. Here, they learn English and schooling is better. The only problem is they don't learn to read or write in their own language." Nepali is the only language allowed at home. Their children's assimilation into British, and more broadly Western, culture is a major concern. Suchant feels "they will always think of themselves as Nepalese," but perhaps it is Sabin who is more realistic: "We have to change with the times; we have to keep our mind open. I would love for my children to go back to Nepal and live there but



"I would love for my children to go back to Nepal and live there, but they'll have a different mentality. It's going to be a big change."



Above and top: Sabin and Suchant are both members of 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron

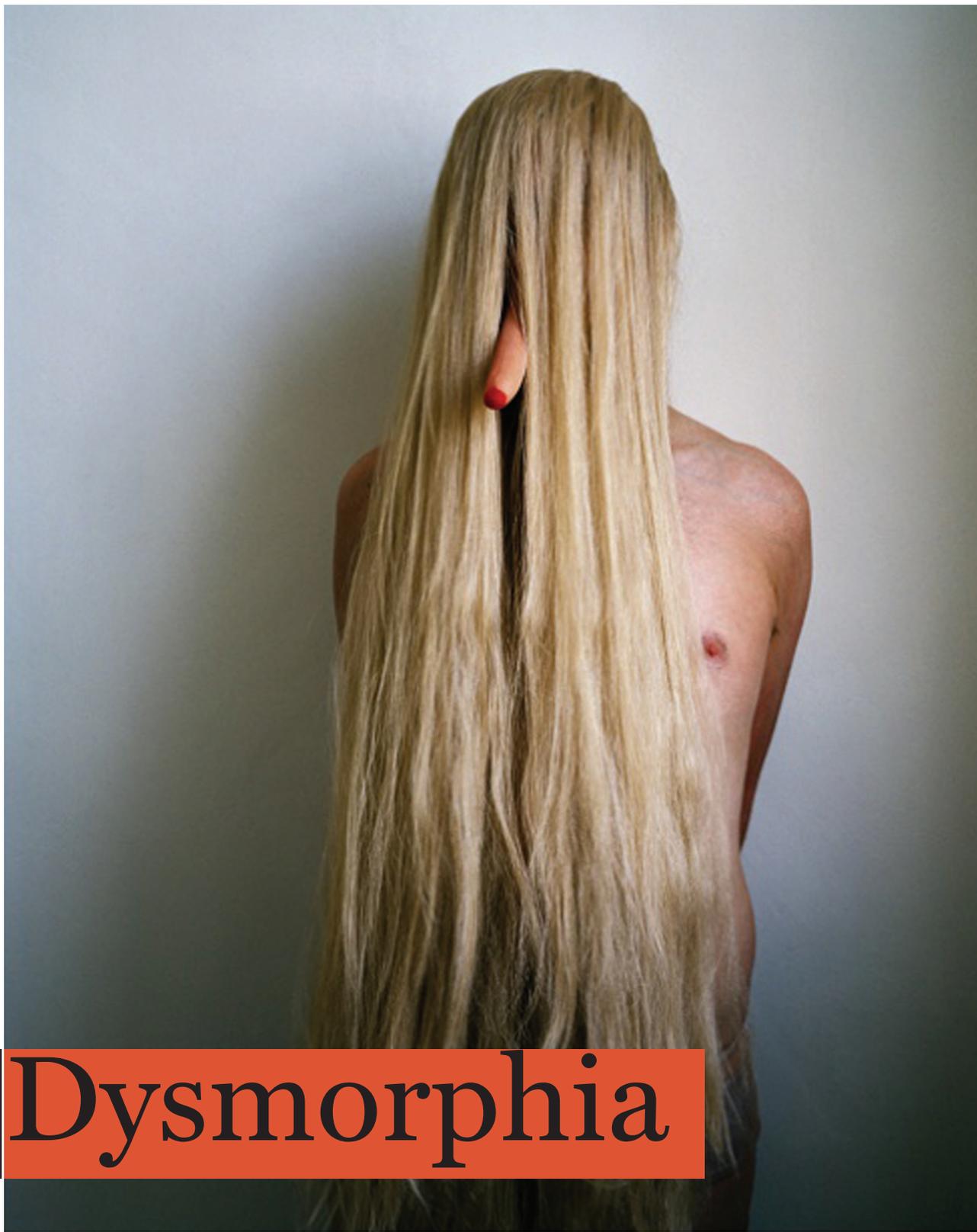
they will be educated here and so will have a different mentality." Both men appreciate that their children may wish to stay in the UK after they complete their education – a potential worry for soldiers returning to Nepal. Sabin is assertive as to where he stands: "without a national health service you have to look after them [elderly family members]... but when I am old I have lots of relatives who can look after me!"

Cuts and redundancies in the Ministry of Defense (MOD) have received widespread criticism. However, no one feels the effects more acutely than the Gurkhas. Many soldiers are edgy about their job security, and Suchant is no exception: "Last year there were twenty, twenty-one redundancies... Yes I worry, if I am not in continuous service for more than five years I don't get my pension... I just have to worry for five years." Sabin is remarkably objective in his opinion of the redundancies. "Sooner or later we have to, because the British government has to save money. We have to understand the economic climate. If they send me home I wouldn't have any hard feelings – they're cutting everywhere, not just in the MOD."

However the Gorkhali choose to portray their situation, the implications of being made redundant are significant. Sabin talks of his family's tradition of serving in the army, saying that most of his caste would seek either an education or a position in the British, or Indian, armies. Redundancy means returning home, it means finding an alternative income, it means re-locating your family and your children's education. Without under-playing the stresses placed upon British soldiers forced to return to 'Civvy Street', one can begin to see why there is a case to be made against Gurkha job losses.

The soldiers' polite manner is striking. It is as though these men feel the weight of 200 years of tradition on their shoulders. Suchant stressed the financial benefits of serving in the British army, whereas Sabin claims an entirely different reason for signing up: "With the British, we have really quite a long history... my forefathers, they served in the British or Indian armies. It's just normal. This caste, they will try and join the British or Indian army before they join the Nepalese army. It's just the way." Perhaps it is the respect to be gained from the image of bravery and courage that encourages young recruits. Captain Marsh, the Chief Welfare Officer, play a central role once recruits arrive in the UK. He is clear on why young Nepalese men choose to go through the gruelling training required to join Gurkha squadrons: "Back in Nepal they are treated like kings." This stands in contrast to academic thought. Sociologists, such as Ananda Shrestha, tend to emphasise the affront to national dignity that comes from serving as 'mercenaries' – however, the experiences of those at Imphal Barracks appear to show little evidence for this.

Some would say that the employment of Gurkhas is a hangover from a redundant colonial past. However, there are strong arguments as to why these soldiers should be embraced as part of the army and wider British culture. Both the sacrifices they make to serve another nation and the cultural diversity that they bring to any area to which they are posted make the Gurkhas deserving of every parliamentary victory they may achieve. And anyone who says Gorkhali soldiers are not part of our community haven't heard Sabin recount his last visit to the local chip-



Dignified Dysmorphia

Polly Borland photographs adults as transvestite babies, and Berlusconi.
Mia de Graaf finds out who the woman behind it all is.

“It’s a long time that the camera has been bringing us news about zanies and pariahs, their miseries and their quirks. Showing the banality of the non-normal. Making voyeurs of us all...But this is particularly gifted, authoritative, intelligent work. Borland’s pictures seem very knowing, compassionate; and too close, too familiar, to suggest common or mere curiosity.” In her essay on Polly Borland’s photography series, *The Babies*, which documented various groups of adults with a fetish for dressing, acting and living as babies, Susan Sontag pinpoints the delicacy and sensitivity in portraying such outlandish and daring topics that has landed Borland her highly esteemed reputation in the art world today.

I catch Polly Borland just before she jumps on a plane from England back to Los Angeles after a fleeting visit. Nonetheless, there’s something calm and lulling that draws you into feeling

like she has all the time in the world to discuss transvestite adult-babies, the Queen, and other such facets of her long and colourful career as a photographer. Borland - a mini, red-bobbed woman, with a whopping pair of thick-rimmed glasses, has a distinctively compelling accent, described by one Australian as “Borland-talk” that you can’t help but engage with.

Leaving Australia in 1989 with film director husband, John Hillcoat (*The Road*), her move, though potentially an illogical one at first, has certainly paid off. Of course, it necessitated a few years of door-knocking to rebuild her thriving career as a portrait photographer, and segway into art photography. Borland recounts this era very systematically: “It took three years. My first job was with *Tatler*, and my second was with *Elle* magazine and my third was with *Harpers & Queen*. I worked with Jessamy Calkin; we teamed up - she was writing and I was doing photos. My real break

came when I got in with *the Independent Sunday Magazine* and *Saturday Magazine*. Mainly I did portraits for them but I also did reportages - I did ballroom dancing before *Strictly Come Dancing*; I did nudists, I went and visited all the nudist camps... I just loved it.”

With firmness in her tone, Borland is more than accustomed to dealing with a challenging audience, and is confident in standing her ground: “You’ve got to know when you believe enough in something to make a stand and in terms of artistic criticism you’ve just got to have a lot of self belief”.

“One thing I did was when there was the show at the National Portrait Gallery here - I had to do a show titled Australia. The Australian government wanted to turn it into a PR event for the then-Australian Prime Minister, John Howard. I basically boycotted the event - they thought I was going to turn up and I didn’t - and instead I got my assistant to distribute press releases about

why I wouldn’t meet John Howard, who basically refused to apologise to the aboriginal people for the genocide that had occurred throughout history. I got a lot of flack for that but I also got quite a few pats on the back.”

The way she puts it, it’s as if she took up the camera by accident: “I did Art History in Australia, I couldn’t really draw but I loved it so my art teacher said, let’s set up a dark room and you can take photos. That really helped start it off. So, I was about 17 when I started to take my first serious pictures and haven’t stopped from there”. Indeed, once things got rolling in the UK she was almost unstoppable, and soon her portraiture had captured the attention of everyone, from celebrities to politicians worldwide, including the likes of Kylie Minogue (a fellow Aussie expat), David Miliband, Gordon Brown, and long time, Melbourne-bred friend, and collaborator, Nick Cave. “I think photography, if you’re in a sort of position, is



“It reminds me- dare I say it- of syphilis”



ABOVE: PHOTO © MARK VESSEY REPRODUCED WITH KIND PERMISSION. LEFT AND OPPOSITE: PHOTO © POLLY BORLAND REPRODUCED WITH KIND PERMISSION

like a passport into other people's lives, you get a little feel and it's really great to meet people that way to take their portrait, you know you get to know a little bit about them.” She ganders comfortably through a few star-studded memories, with a kind of arresting detail and matter-of-fact tone:

“I've photographed Berlusconi. He was like photographing the Mafia, he was pretty hardcore. He did the job, but you could tell there were sort of a lot of things going on that weren't particularly that pleasant, I suppose you could say. But he was really nice - no, not really nice, but he was another incredible experience. I actually love doing the politicians because I'm really interested in power and how power corrupts.”

“Of course,” she adds, “the most significant highlight would have been the Queen, which came much later.”

In 2002 Borland was selected as one of 11 photographers from Britain and the Commonwealth to profile Queen Elizabeth for the 50th anniversary of her coronation. Given a five-minute slot, “a reckie around Buckingham Palace” to pick a room, a choice of outfits, and the option of corgis (which she very reluctantly turned down), Borland's end result - a striking, close up, almost claustrophobic gold glitter and royal blue portrait - is today iconic. The gold was not necessarily planned from the off - “that was a visual device that was actually a solution to a problem, and in a way that's what creativity is - it's creative solutions to logistical visual problems. I was probably one of the few people that had asked the question: ‘if need be can I bring my own backdrop in?’” And just as well, as she received news that her room of choice was unavailable (“instead they offered me the most boring room I'd seen that day - the room where she signs all her documents”). “I had done Peter Mandelson with a shiny background. It'd been a way to make a standard portrait of a famous person into something more iconic and interesting - and also the juxtaposition between a supposedly sort of straight public figure and add a bit of razzmatazz to it. I was interested in the juxtaposition of what would happen if you put a sort of straight person or a dignitary in front of something that was not conventional or that had kind of showman-like connotations to it. I think it was Peter Lilley actually I'd done in front of a disco curtain - he was the first politician I did. So, I was interested in sort of subverting what I was photographing.”

For Borland, the image was a success - although a second backdrop (a deep blue Marimekko screen print fabric, with large blue flowers) was not quite to the Queen's liking:

“She saw the gold backdrop first and I had the floral one behind, because it was literally five minutes so I had to have everything set up ready to go - two cameras, two lights, two backdrops, and it just meant she had to stand in one place and once I'd finished the gold we had to move one of the cameras, move on off the lights, move the gold around. When she saw the floral one she went ‘OOHH’ - like that.” Wheeling through the story animatedly with a detectable smile in her voice, she teeters on a laugh. “Later it didn't actually get officially approved. A year later *the Sunday Times Magazine* ran a story on the unofficial portraits of the Queen and she allowed that portrait to be used and it was on the cover.”

It hints at the comical side to her work, she smirks, “the bobble man” in Smudge “reminds me - dare I say it - of syphilis”.

And so Borland reached a summit,

so to speak, of the portrait world.

“Now I hardly ever do portraits unless it's someone I know or a friend, like Nick Cave, you know, people I know. My main area of interest is my own personal work which I now exhibit and the reason for that is because you've got the freedom to be more creative - the sky's the limit, so my art work is definitely more interesting and, in a sense, more important to me now.”

“The portraiture was great but I kind of got to a point where I thought ‘well how many famous people can you meet?’ It becomes after a while a little bit soulless as well, because you are getting an idea of someone sort of like an inkling of what they're like and who they really are but I like more depth and I like relationships to be not so, kind of, wham bam thank you mam, which is really what a portrait is: you go in, you have an hour at the most if you're lucky - or a day, half a day - and I just think relationships developed over time are just more satisfying, interesting and have more depth, which is really what happens in my personal work, you know it's an ongoing, to a certain extent, collaborative process.”

In a forward for *Smudge* - Borland's latest, and, in her own words “probably some of the most difficult, challenging work I've done - people found it disturbing, they're not pretty pictures” - one of the book's three subjects, Nick Cave, says: “I am struck by Polly's deep love for her subjects and the dignity that exists in their dysmorphia. Because her pictures are never voyeuristic, never observational and never merely shocking. Rather, Polly seems to me to be shooting into a distorted mirror and simply bringing back heartbreaking refracted images of herself”

Indeed, Bunny was the product of years of photographing Gwendoline Christie - having been struck by her towering physique, seeing her around and about in Brighton - and although *The Babies* documented a much bigger group of people, Borland is keen to stress that: “I did actually kind of identify with them. I think they understood that I understood them. They said it was all about motherhood and because my mother died when I was quite young I sort of understood that so there was kind of a rapport there anyway”.

Now, having relocated to Los Angeles, for husband, Hillcoat's work, Borland's next working relationship will have to be taking the form of something rather less animate: a doll.

“I've decided, because I don't know that many people in America, I'm going to handmade a kind of weird doll and do all the things to it that I would have done if I knew someone really well and could take photos of them. I'm going to sort of dress it up, maybe a bit like how the smudge people are dressed up, and use mirrors and things like that. It enables me to do it in my own home - because here I don't have a studio - so it kind of makes everything a lot more miniature and, yeah, it's a logistic solution to a kind of problem of relocating and not knowing anyone in.”

She repeats again an ethos that seems to have carried Borland's multi-national career: “Photography gives you a passport to the world. My choice probably would not be Los Angeles but in actual fact my spiritual centre is within me. I think your home is where your loved ones are, and really my home is with John and Louis [her son]. I can create my work wherever I am.”

Reeling out memories and images of the 60s storybook that's inspired her doll venture, Borland seems to already be creating her next little world. **M**

Watching in the Wings

Family politics has forced David Miliband to reconsider his career. **Martin Spurr** finds out why it's not the end.



“I hate being in opposition, you can only talk - you can't really do anything”

Politics is often a very cut and dry affair when it comes to the people who participate in it. Issues and ideas are spun into a confusing web of rhetoric and style, but reputations can rise and fall within a moment. For David Miliband that moment was 15 months ago when Ed, his brother and political rival, won the Labour leadership election.

Never mind the three years spent as Foreign Secretary, nor his various roles at the heart of the Blair government; the brotherly contest stuck because of its symbolism. David's actions for the foreseeable future are defined in many people's minds by the outcome of the leadership contest - an outcome which left David as the loser.

However when I met with David before his talk, alongside other student media outlets, the man before me had seemed to come to terms with what had happened. Although there was considerably more enthusiasm for speaking about foreign affairs, there was an acceptance that questions about his relationship with Ed, and the comparisons and differences between them, were a part of his political life and not something he could merely sweep aside.

On being asked whether in the next few years he saw his role as a thinker, a

creator of ideas, or as a frontline politician, he said: “I am going to try and do what's best to support the party to win the election and win the confidence of the people. I think that's hopefully partly about ideas. I'm doing a commission on youth unemployment at the moment. I founded a leadership academy for community organisers, training 10,000 across the country. I am also keeping up my interest in foreign policy. I did some teaching in Stanford in America.”

But sensitive to the subject we are skirting around, he feels the need to openly address his absence from the front bench in the House of Commons. “I think I made the right decision not to go into the Shadow Cabinet, if that's what you are asking, because I think that would have reinforced the soap opera.”

Politics as a whole is often seen as a soap opera, one that you would do best to escape from. But Miliband spoke, and stood as a man who didn't appear to intend to escape just yet. Of course, it is only too easy to be deceived by the political rhetoric of a politician on a comeback, but within the realms of false propositioning, authenticity is surprisingly transparent. Miliband delivered his various responses at York with a sense of vision and focus, not just

on short-term policy and politics but with a grander perspective - the desire to change the world was still apparent.

“The truth is, when people say how are you doing? I sort of say, well I hate being in opposition and that's because you can only talk - you can't really do anything.”

Perhaps the easiest way for Miliband to go after losing out on the Labour leadership would have been to recline to the edges of politics, slowing preparing to leave completely and take up a role in a global organisation or lecture in America. But instead Miliband is visiting 20 universities across the country - fading into the distant background does not seem on the agenda.

His mannerism and tone of voice hark back to Tony Blair; and although his greeting felt like he was asserting dominance in the conversation before I had even begun to speak, there seems to be more substance to him as a politician than many of his contemporaries. Perhaps the art of spin is so embedded within him it has become indistinguishable from his real beliefs; but just maybe this is what Labour, or politics in general, is missing at the moment. There is a growing discourse that says Miliband would, and still could, do a better job than his brother; and that is

hard to dispute when you see him talk forcefully about global issues. Statesman-like almost.

But Miliband wouldn't be drawn on explaining anything he would have done differently to Ed. “I think that he is standing up to David Cameron, but he is doing it in his own way and he is not trying to copy Cameron or Blair or anyone else which I think is the right thing to do.”

He seems to accept the position he now finds himself in. “I am not going to speculate. It's better not to get into a hypothetical situation. So I'm supportive of the leadership of the party and accept what happened, and I'm not going to create any sort of alternative. We are different people with different approaches, but he won the job so it is up to him to do it.”

This pragmatic view on family relations seems to highlight his approach to politics. By facing questions rather than side-stepping them, this should surely make his position stronger. The first rule of any political scandal is to admit to it; take one large hit of condemnation and then hopefully it will die away. Miliband seems to be taking this approach to his own problems, hoping that by answering these awkward questions face-on they will soon cease to be asked.

However while Ed remains Labour's leader and while feeling is more of indifference rather than warmth towards him, questions will always be asked because David was the alternative. But politics changes fast and Miliband's conclusion that today's politics is as unpredictable as ever, leaves the door open for him to return.

"I think we are in a very open period of politics, I think anything could happen at the next election, and obviously the Labour party has to put itself in a position, in terms of ideas, and in terms of organisation, that scales the mountain which was presented by our big defeat at the last general election."

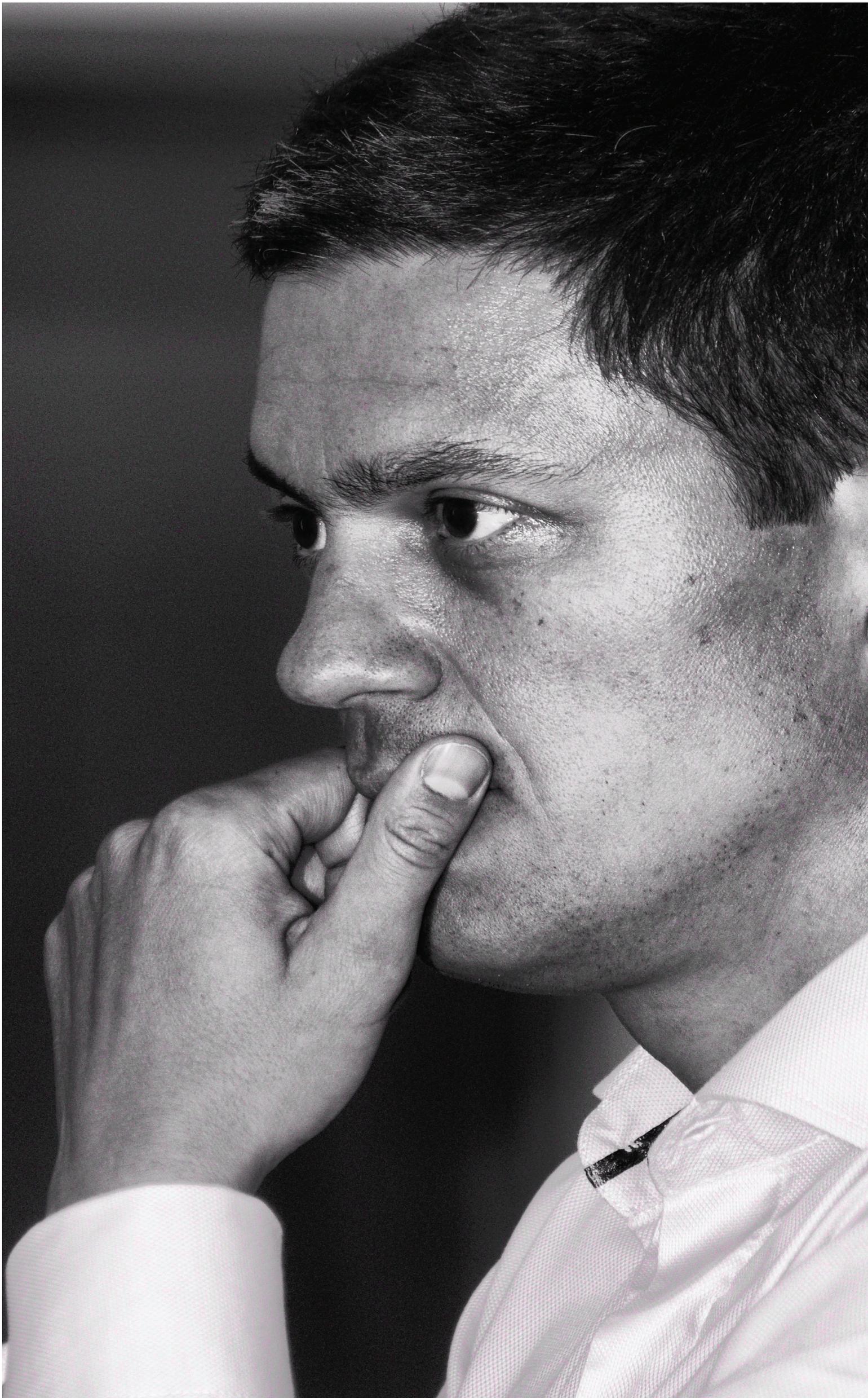
He muses later about the qualities of leadership, claiming that passion is more important than vision: "If you haven't got passion you are not going to be able to motivate or engage anyone and your vision will be desiccated if it isn't backed up by passion". It was clear that Miliband himself still had the passion; why else would he go on a tour around twenty universities? But has he got the drive and capability to overcome the hurdles that have presented themselves in his way over the last few years? Listening to him talk leaves little room for doubt.

His sound bites are as good as anyone's: "Lib Dems present themselves as partners, I think they are the puppets," and his jovial comment about it being ironic that he has set up a leadership academy shows the path he is trying to head down. But it seems, this sense of humour and outside perspective on parties and situations has arisen and been clarified from not being part of the cabinet. And it is precisely this 'view of the underdog' that is now playing to his strength; he can see what's going on, what needs to be done, because he isn't at the eye of the storm.

It is a position that, in any job, can facilitate for a window of opportunity. It is not inconceivable to see David take the leadership away from Ed after a general election in 2015; the fact that "anything could happen" perhaps is why Miliband is still in the game - waiting for his opportunity to arise again.

More likely is a return to frontline politics and the Shadow Cabinet at some point over the next few years. This is something he hopes can be realised again in his career. "I hope Labour's back in government again and I hope that I'm still old enough, or young enough, to benefit from it. You don't know what the future holds, but of course I want Labour to be back in government, being in government is an enormous privilege and it is sort of what politics is about." That sense of frustration permeates his words again - he is a man of action and openly acknowledges the restrictions to a politician whose party is not in power.

As Matthew Festenstein, the Head of Politics at York, brought the public talk to a close, he praised students and staff for their "awkward questions"; and out of the corner of my eye, I saw Miliband mouth to his interviewer "they weren't that awkward". Maybe his intellectual powers and political skills were not tested to their full amount then, but it seems that he will get the chance to fully utilise them once again if the current fluctuating world of politics paints out a path for his return. "It often takes a Tory government for people to remember what they miss out on with a Labour one." The unpredictable nature of politics that has forced him to reconsider where his career is going, may also be the catalyst in starting his climb back to the top. M





A beautiful, invisible truth

It affects more people than we realise and seems to go hand in hand with intellectual brilliance. **Bella Foxwell** discovers what life is like living with Asperger's

What have Einstein, Bill Gates and Michael Jackson got in common? Apart from being super-talented, your first thought might be that they all seem slightly strange, bizarre even.

What if I told you that they are all thought to be Aspergic? It might help explain a few things such as Jackson's inappropriate behaviour towards children and Gates' single-minded focus on technical minutiae. Asperger's syndrome is one of the disorders on the autistic spectrum. It is a milder and higher functioning form of the condition that afflicted Raymond Babbitt, the

character played by Dustin Hoffman in *Rain Man*. It is still largely unheard of because the 'symptoms' so to speak, are so easily likened to mere eccentricities. However, as a psychological condition it is, for most sufferers, a daily struggle.

On Friday 18th November, a boy featured on *Children In Need* expressing his gratitude for a charity that had helped him develop skills to deal with his Asperger's in his day-to-day life. I'm sure most people were baffled as to what was wrong with him at first glance. It's an invisible disability. Something that is strange and a little scary because you cannot define it by a wheelchair, a hear

ing aid or an obvious physical difference. It's all in the mind.

Lili Wilson is beautiful, intelligent and witty. "Meet her for half an hour and you will be charmed by a young girl who appears 25, not 16" explain her family. "Meet her for any longer than that and she shuts down, retreating into the parallel but safe world of television. Her intellect is that of a woman beyond her years but the emotional part of her brain is on par with a 12 year old. This chasm between wisdom and maturity is baffling and renders her paralysed with rage a great deal of the time. It just doesn't make sense that someone so clever is unable to tell her left from right or make sense of the most basic social cues."

For years, her family thought she was just a difficult, bratty madam. "We thought her clumsiness was exaggerated, her hatred of going into a shopping centre full of people was a symptom of being a drama queen, and that her difficulty in getting a nice group of friends at school was simply bad luck. We had no idea that it was all part and parcel of Asperger's, and that's because it's so difficult to diagnose in girls."

Aspergic or not, girls will put on a disguise in order to seem normal. Any differences they feel they have to others are covered up, and most girls face bullying and have major mood swings, particularly once they hit puberty. So with that in mind, how do you distinguish between your average teenage girl and one with Asperger's? With great difficulty, is how. "Lili was ferried between numerous so-called specialists, councillors and psychiatrists for two years before she underwent a psychometric test, which determines how the mind works. This revealed Asperger's," explains her sister, Claire.

It's relative anonymity – it was only made a standard diagnosis in 1992 – and the fact that many cases are so mild, make it extremely hard to pick up on. When the Wilsons finally did receive a diagnosis, their lives were turned upside down. It gave them an answer, at least, for behaviour they just couldn't understand, but it also thrust upon Lili a label she didn't want to have.

One father of an autistic child, Jonathan Shestack, describes what happened to his son, Dov, as "watching our sweet, beautiful boy disappear in front of our eyes". At two, Dov's first words - Mum, Dad, flower, park - abruptly retreated into silence. Over the next six months, Dov ceased to recognise his own name and the faces of his parents. At age 9, after the most effective interventions available, Dov can now speak 20 words.

Of course, "Lili's Asperger's is not as severe as this form of Autism and she does have the ability to live a very successful life if she finds her niche" says Claire. What is similar is the change in Lili from pre-puberty to today, because of being in an environment – school – where everyone feels insecure, and anyone that appears different is voted off the island.

Robyn Steward, a woman with Asperger's, who mentors others with the condition and offers support and advice to families, said to me, "imagine driving round a tricky car park with both of your wing mirrors cracked". Such an image allows for the tiniest appreciation of what it's like for someone with Asperger's. This handicap in picking up social signals whilst trying to navigate the trials and tribulations of school life explain why Lili was constantly bullied.

"She was targeted because of her weight, but also for her strange tastes,

which had a whole lot to do with sharks and not a lot to do with make up or boys", says Claire. "Asperger's doesn't allow for the recognition of many subtle social cues like sarcasm or seething anger, and this meant that vulnerable Lili would get lured in by false pretences and vicious pranks, not ever once realising people's true intentions."

The problem was that this wouldn't be like what bullying would be for you or I. It takes on a whole new and sinister meaning when you are desperately trying to make sense of the emotions and actions of others, even though they are completely concepts. Whereas most

people would act instinctively to certain types of situations or behaviours, someone with Asperger's has to act cognitively, which means that every piece of information received has to be processed and thought through before acting upon.

Susan Albinson, here at the University of York, says of secondary school "I still get nightmares about those 5 years sometimes... I had no real friends to speak of and was permanently just beyond my limits. I'm not sure that the school even noticed that anything was seriously wrong until I had a massive screaming meltdown two thirds of the

way through Year Ten".

As somebody who has experienced Asperger's first hand, Lili's sister Claire explained that the hardest part of the condition is not all the odd quirks such as hypersensitivity – Lili cannot for the life of her wear any woollen clothing and can hear a clock ticking in the next room – but it's the apparent lack of sensitivity. "For me, I get nothing back in terms of love and affection," says Claire.

Emma, 20, from Manchester University reiterated this point. "I suck royally at expressing empathy. You tell me something awful, and I feel for you. I feel really intensely, as a matter of fact. I want to hug you and make you feel better. But... I can't. It's not inhibition, it's not psychological damage. I just can't."

What's remarkable, though, is that Emma and Susan even made it to university because most Aspergics won't. Routine is vital, and allows those with the condition to flourish. The sporadic and barely-there contact hours of many university degrees and the focus on personal time-management are a nightmare for 'Aspies'. If one in 100 people have the condition, as recent research has shown, then there are around 150 students at University of York who may or may not know they have it.

Those anonymous people should be applauded and supported. Every student at this university should be aware of Asperger's, because that housemate that you live with, that you think is just plain weird, may be struggling to cope.

Many mimic behaviour they see on television, or interactions other people make, and try to use this to fit in. Susan explained to me that she "had to learn social skills out of books and by painful trial and error. My ability in that area is rather limited and social occasions such as the Christmas Formal would test them to, or even possibly beyond, my limit. And if I get pushed far enough beyond my limit, 'meltdown' does not do justice to what happens."

Even for people who don't have Asperger's, the Christmas Formal isn't everyone's idea of fun, but for those who do, they certainly have a far harder time of it. They may make Einstein look average, but socially, life is harder than any quantum physics equation.

The best thing about meeting Susan was that she described her Asperger's as the 'keystone of my personality'. "Asperger's Syndrome influences every aspect of my psychological life, and if it was outright cured, I would not be me - you'd just have a more-or-less empty shell. That's why the 'cure autism/Asperger's' folk really get up my nose - ameliorate the more seriously debilitating aspects of the more severe expressions of the condition, I can understand. Outright cure? No thanks. We 'spectrum folk' cannot change - and I for one, do not want to."

Both the families, and individuals themselves have shown that if you are aware of conditions such as Asperger's then you can deal with most types of people and make society a healthier place by keeping an open mind. Mental health doesn't conform. It can't be neatly tied up but treating everybody equally and not taking people at face value can allow you to embrace the invisible, beautiful truth.

As a fantastic article on the Wired website stated: "For all we know, the first tools on earth might have been developed by a loner sitting at the back of the cave, chipping at thousands of rocks to find the one that made the sharpest spear, while the neurotypicals (Aspergic term for the rest of us) chattered away in the firelight". M

"You cannot define
it by a wheelchair,
a hearing aid or an
obvious physical
difference.

It's all in the mind."



Fashion.

Fashion Out of Hand

Andrew Adenmosun talks to flourishing designer Kathleen Kye.

On the star that certainly caught our eye at London Fashion Week was Kathleen Kye. Kye, whose fans include Kate Moss and Jamie Hince, is also one of the latest of Vauxhall Fashion Scout's "Ones to Watch" designers. She gave us an insight on her collaboration with Adidas, her influence by Professor Louise Wilson OBE and her race to the top.

Q. You studied at Central Saint Martins, which has produced some amazing talent. Who would you say was/were the key designer(s) that influenced you?

A. It was a big honour that I could study at such a prestigious college. Although I respect all the upperclassmen, the biggest person who inspired me was Professor Louise Wilson OBE. She taught me almost everything that I have to know in fashion design.

Q. You have used finger and hand gesture shapes in your designs, where did this design silhouette come from?

A. I was always very curious about the human body, shapes, and how it works. Usually, garments are another layer that is added to the human body. But I wanted to take something that is already there in human form and make it into another layer.

Q. I read that you are now focusing on your t-shirt line in Korea. After studying in London would you say that your designing has now been influenced by the diversity you were surrounded by?

A. Actually, the basic wear line is a collaboration with the graphic artist, Keenkee. It's just another project that I am doing at the moment. Currently, I am making some pieces for All Right Reserved, Hong Kong, regarding Adidas x Jeremy Scott and another season in London Fashion Week. Also, I am sponsored by Seoul Fashion Center in



Korea. I can say that I am heavily influenced by London, the city's style, its diversity and funkiness.

Q. What do you like and dislike about the London look?

A. London has a diverse look that doesn't necessarily care about trend, which I appreciate. However, the increase of high street fashion brands kind of messes up the city's style.

Q. What is the design ethos behind your work?

A. Kye's design ethos is to represent fun-loving new menswear shapes that

distinguish from the conventional patterns. All men possess a fantasy about being "macho" although this is being depressed at the moment in the name of a civilised society. Kye's concept in menswear designing is to represent inherent manliness with some elements of fun in it. Fashion designing is in the thick of commercial interests, but wouldn't it represent a cultural endeavour also?

Q. Describe your look in three words.

A. Fun, rude, edgy.

Q. What would you say was another main highlight in your career so far?

A. I am currently working on a project with Adidas Hong Kong. I am sponsored by Seoul Fashion Center. Also, I will have a showcase in London next season sponsored by the Korean Culture Center. And I am a part-time TV show presenter on a fashion channel in Korea. Oh, and I am currently working as a stylist for world famous band, 2NE1.

Q. If you had to relate music to your designs, what genre of music would you choose?

A. Urban hip-hop music.

Q. There seems to be a sense of aggression in your designs and prints, is there a meaning behind this?

A. I like fashion that has a strong statement. The theme for SS12 was militarism. To show the conflict in it, I made a gun shape out of skulls and bones.

Q. Would you say that you are trying to appeal to a broad audience?

A. I am trying to make a statement as a designer rather than making something that everybody would like to wear. However, as I am starting a women's wear line next season, I will try to incorporate both statement and wear-ability.

"All men possess a fantasy about being macho"

Men's Trends

Andrew Adenmosun
DEPUTY FASHION EDITOR

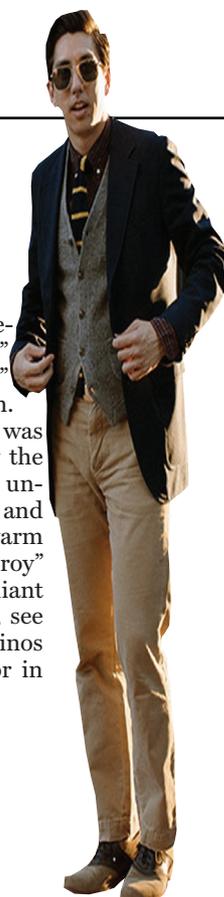


Shearling, otherwise known to non-fashionistas as sheep-skin, will definitely keep you looking hot this cold season. The soft and heavy textures make sure that you are ready to battle with any blizzard that approaches whilst also looking strikingly stylish. Whether it is the latest Burberry Prorsum mid-calf men's shearling boots at £495 or Zara's double sided asymmetric shearling jacket at £79.99 (zara.com or in stores), make sure that this hot trend is visible in your winter wardrobes.

On the might say that this was a bit off-topic for Christmas, however, fear no more chaps - the classic tailcoat has been revived this winter. With all the Christmas balls and work parties fast approaching why not exceed the mark with a slick 1950's style tailcoat. This will not only ensure that you are the most dapper fellow at the party, it will also guarantee that you have a Christmas full of compliments. There is nothing worse than a poorly tailored tailcoat so for an extensive range of quality made and shockingly affordable tailcoats have a glimpse at www.savvyrow.co.uk with prices starting from as low as £64.



Twined and corduroy abbreviated as "Tworduroy" are fast becoming the "it" fabric to be seen in this winter season. Long gone are the days when this was seen as solely for golden oldies, now the look can be regarded as the classic understated overstatement. The subtle and comfortable material along with the warm colours they come in makes "Tworduroy" a combination that is uniquely brilliant for the chilly season. For inspiration, see Topman's latest range of corduroy chinos starting at £36 (www.topman.com or in stores).



Beauty

Top 3 Xmas beauty treats

Christmas is the perfect excuse to ask for indulgent gifts you could never justify splurging



your student loan on.

Number one on the stocking filler wish list is Biba's lip gloss cocktail ring (£15 House of Fraser). It not only looks great with its gold and black art deco design, suitably matched to any festive outfit, but also has the bonus feature of a built in shimmery pink lip gloss to ensure a perfect pout throughout the night in case you are found wandering near the mistletoe.

Favourite beauty store, Sephora, has teamed up with the iconic Karl Lagerfeld, for an exclusive Christmas collaboration. The collection comprises of beautiful eyeshadows in the shape of Lagerfeld and glittering nail varnishes, both of which are luxuriously packaged in gold and black boxes complete with Karl Lagerfeld's signature. The Karleidoscope fragrance, suitably named after the man himself, also promises to be a must-have stocking filler.

Featuring at number three on the wish list are Deborah Lippmann nail varnishes. It will be a challenge to not find a shade you absolutely love. The celebrity manicurist, has produced a variety of glitter nail varnishes. There is "Boom Boom Pow", "Hit Me With Your Best Shot" and the "Dark Side of the Moon" amongst the named goodies, enjoy!

Campus Style Icon

Muse searches campus for style icons and their inspiration



Ben Cross, first year English student

How would you describe your look?

I'd describe myself as a matured, nightmarish, sado-masochistic Peter Pan. My look is dark, mysterious and aggressive. It challenges norms and transgresses them, by adopting women's clothing (skinny jeans) and adapting different styles. I've taken indie and mixed it with gothic and rock influences.

Who are your major influences in terms of fashion?

Howard Marks for his open shirts, Russell Brand, Jim Morrison, Noel Fielding's surrealism and Johnny Depp's accessorising and layering.

Would you agree that music influences your dress sense? If so, which music genre would you say influences yours?

Definitely I believe that music is not only for the ears, but it is also a culture. If I had to choose a music genre that has influenced my look I would say rock, then perhaps some old school hip-hop because of its edginess and jewellery.

Andrew Adenmosun
DEPUTY FASHION EDITOR

Christmas Must Haves



Whether you're going away for the weekend, or simply have a lot to carry, sometimes a satchel or handbag just isn't big enough. Introducing the holdall. Roomier than a normal bag, yet not as big as a suitcase, it offers space without looking stupidly oversized. This holdall from River Island is practical and on trend, the reinforced straps ensure it won't break, and available in a trendy Navajo pattern or the subtle studs and black leather, this look is set to stay for seasons to come. *Serena Rudge*

Christmas parties always present the need for a new dazzling dress, resulting in a shoe dilemma. But Larin has created a number of amazing designs for the festive party season, ranging from flats to heels and platforms. Yet, the best bit is the detachable ornaments on the end of the shoe which makes these shoes truly unique and at the top of your wish list. Choose from bows, jewelled clasps, or patent twirls and adapt your shoes to your outfits. *Helena Davies*



"There is a transformation that takes place when you wear a SpiritHood. This experience is un-definable, and completely unique to you . . ." and we couldn't agree more! They're the warmest of winter warmers: a hat, scarf and gloves combo in a variety of furry animal styles, with a pro-wildlife message at the label's core. LA's faux fur, animal inspired Spirit Hoods have already gained a huge following from the coolest of fashion packs, both Jessie J and Ke\$ha have been spotted in them. As you put on a hood, you supposedly adopt that animal's characteristics and its spirit, and as you purchase your furry disguise you also donate 10% of the sales price to protecting the endangered species that Spirit Hoods base their creations on. Win win. *Rachel McIver*

I would have expected, but could this be due to the nature of some of the items on sale? When one looks at how the selected designers have gone about choosing their 'sum up' object, I wonder if they have got it on the mark.

For starters, most of the big fashion names involved have not gone for anything clothing related. There is a lighter from Versace and a David Bowie record from Frida Giannini amongst the bunch. But what about the clothes? This is a fashion based auction after all with a trend hungry audience wanting to get a piece of the trendy pie.

Chanel's genius, Karl Lagerfeld put forward a small grouping of items, which make up his signature look. Lagerfeld's tie, featuring two delicate gold pins (a camera and paint palette), and a white collar, both of which the designer has presented on a velvet Chanel hanger are most yummy. The iconic designer has also used Tippex to write "that's all I did" on the tie, explained in his quote: "You see that's all I did in the last 20 years...Chanel

and myself. A camera for all the photos I took. A palette for all the sketchbooks I made." Not only is the item wearable, but many, including myself, would treat it as a form of art installation to be worshiped rather than worn. But, either way, Lagerfeld has made a perfect selection given the brief.

Compare this to the bizarre item presented by that of London based set designer and illustrator, Gard Card, who has worked with a long list of talents including Stella McCartney, Hermes and Comme des Garçons.

Card included in the collection the not so pretty sculpture of a man who is suffocating. Although he has recently made the transition into the world of art, I cannot help but think an illustration or a more conventionally attractive piece might have raised a higher bid. He said, "...masking tape and me go back a long way. In fact, the first thing I ever made



for Dazed [Dazed and Confused magazine] was with the stuff, so it seemed appropriate to return to the material for the [Magazine's] anniversary. What could be more fitting for a time capsule than a suffocating man gasping for air for eternity?" It is all very arty and conceptual, but who wants to bid for Card's grizzly offerings when you could buy a Swarovski crystal encrusted lighter courtesy of Donatella Versace?

The original question is not easily answered. Items that sum my life up over 20 years consist of a diet coke can, Reebok Classics and hair rollers. So who am I to question the likes of Gary Card. But it is an interesting money making stunt, that despite not raising a huge amount, still makes the fashion brain itch.



To buy or not to buy?

Paris Bennett
FASHION EDITOR

If you had to choose one object that represented you over your lifetime, what would it be? Tough one. But this is the question that designers including: Karl Lagerfeld, Sarah Burton and Tabitha Simmons have been faced with. Over the past two decades (so basically my entire life) which item sums you up without the need to utter a single word?

The idea behind this fashion item selection is all in the name of charity. 34 pieces of swish designer memorabilia were, last week, gathered to create a 'time capsule' in which they were eventually auctioned, with all money going to Oxfam. The event brought in £4825.72, which is not as much money as

Arts.

Daphne Todd- A Woman's Work

The portrait artist has painted her mother's corpse, and Prince Charles, but she tells **Sophie Walker** why she is never satisfied.

Daphne Todd was the first female president of the Royal Society of portrait painters from 1994 to 2000, and she won the BP Portrait Award in 2010 for a controversial portrait of her 100 year-old mother's corpse. But this is a humble lady.

She has just returned from South Africa and Tanzania as the Chief Tour Artist for the Prince of Wales and the Royal Duchess, which she says was really rather an "extraordinary experience".

Daphne's portraits are renowned for their honesty, which is a product of her insistence on painting from real life, rather than from photographs. I ask how, on the Royal tour, where the couple would go to up to 7 venues a day, was conducive to her style of observation. But she says, "I couldn't work in a way which was appropriate to recording greeting line ups with locals singing and dancing, and then there were walkabouts, because I need a lot of time. There was no expectation that I could, but it was a question of simply recording my experience, indeed I'd never been to Africa before."

"The tour security was amazing, but I was a little scared when I was painting in Soweto. I couldn't dawdle, whereas when my daughter was small I used to forget to pick her up sometimes because I was so engrossed!" She is clearly consumed in her work, even when she was grieving,

"I wanted to demonstrate what you can do as a human being, in the time given, so the portraits are like British studies. You're constrained by real life anyway, so it was exciting rather than frustrating. At the end, when I showed the Prince and Duchess, what I had done, they seemed very pleased."

Although Daphne was proud of the portraits on the tour, I ask her whether she always meets her expectations. "Very rarely, but that's the point - to always be unimpressed really, otherwise why would you do it?" Her humility is surprising considering how much of her work has been validated by such prestigious awards over the years, including being awarded an OBE in 2003 for services to the arts.

There is a little wise scepticism regarding the extent to which the awards validate her work though.

"I've been around long enough to know what jury's want - they tend to look for something unusual. There is a lot of luck in it. Not getting into a

certain competition doesn't mean your work isn't any good, it depends on the panel, and whether or not they had a nice lunch."

"I have been pleased with what I have won though, because when I was at the Slade back in the day, we were told that women can't do it; there are no great women artists. Winning a little prize is silly but it proves to you that you can do it, as a woman", she says quietly triumphant.

As the first female president of the Royal society, it's poignant and it saddens me, that a woman who has made such an extraordinary contribution to art, feels her legacy is undermined



that has defined the success of the People's Portraits, a project funded by the artists themselves to paint working people. "It was our way of saying, 'look, these are the people of the backbone of the society. It went down terribly well, it wasn't just portraits of people at the top of the ladder.'" However, the collection's permanent home now is at Girton College, Cambridge. Maybe Liverpool would have been slightly more appropriate.

Daphne's advocacy of traditional teaching characterises the mark she left not only on the society, but on the Heatherly School as well.

"I'm a natural conservative. I wanted to help stop it going the way of the other art colleges, now it's all conceptual art, and very few places actually teach drawing and painting. It's mad in my view - Britain had an international reputation for our fine art, we had the very first national portrait gallery, and it's the ridiculous the way things have changed.

Is it a cultural thing?
"It's gone beyond that. We now have a set of teachers in art colleges who just don't have those skills so it's gone through a whole generation. The right critical comments about painting are not critically made anymore. Galleries and Tate and the Turner prizes have brought in non-traditional painters, and it just hasn't stopped."

But Daphne is not against progress altogether, indeed, portraiture doesn't have to be old fashioned and formal. There are some painters that are straddling the divide between the generations but, "people who commission portraits are generally conservative themselves, and they don't want to be painted bright pink, they want a likeness!"

Our generation is one desperate to make an instant YouTube hit, rather than long-term impact. Fame has become such an important part of getting on in life. Daphne laughs, "it's a particularly male thing to be extreme and to make your mark."

I end by asking Daphne if she has anything that she wants to leave her mark on, anticipating no radical answer. I was wrong. "I feel like I'd like an entirely different style of painting, but it's a bit like travelling, you think you'll leave yourself behind and actually you take yourself with you."

No doubt wherever she goes next, if she takes herself, that won't be such a bad thing.

merely because of her sex. She admits to "still having a huge amount of self-doubt". But, her achievements ought to dissolve any doubt. At the society, Daphne was responsible for some inspired, progressive moves.

"I looked outwards rather than inwards. I realised we should help other people rather than get them to help us, as poor struggling artists. I instigated a connection with the Changing Faces charity that's gone on since my time in office; they even have their own prize because it prospered so well. The good you do always comes back to you."

It was this sort of attitude, of making portraiture accessible to the masses

Editor's Picks.

8-10 December,
Blackbox Theatre, 19.30
The Trial Stephen Berkoff

Pop along to the Blackbox Theatre if you are keen to witness the emotional terror our protagonist Joseph K experiences following his arrest for crimes he is not guilty of. Berkoff will transport you into a world where justice is negotiable...

28th October 2011- 21 January 2012,
The Young Vic, 19.30
Hamlet Michael Sheen

The Young Vic hosts the long awaited production of Hamlet, having been described as "unbearably moving;" Sheen's interpretation is something not to be missed this Christmas.

Mary O'Connor
ARTS EDITOR

Christmas Read

Huckleberry Finn

In celebration of this month being Twain's 176th birthday.

Set in 1830s Missouri, *Huckleberry Finn* tells the story of 'Huck', a boy with an abusive father, and a slave boy called Jim. In a wonderful odyssey, this strange pair travels down the Mississippi River meeting treachery, death and stealth.

Jo Rendall

Lumiere: Chaos of opposites?

Celia Scruby investigates the role of creativity Vs. science within public art installation.



When considering the myriad ways in which Art and science can influence or be reflected by one's beliefs, one may turn to Installation art. With the increased refinement of technology, artists have been able to use more experimental media, and as a consequence the turn of the century has seen a trend of deeply interactive art; with installations using digital, video, film, sound and sculpture. Lux Scientia, a trans-European project recently focused in on the obvious presence of science and technology in Installation art. The project commissioned three artists: Simeon Nelson, Dominik Lejman and Leonardo Meigas to create an artwork exploring or explaining a scientific principle, to be exhibited at Lumiere, the four day Light festival which took place in Durham from the 17th-20th November.

There is an intrinsic tie between art and belief: you only need to look at the captivating stained glass and stonework of York Minster to acknowledge this as fact. Dominik Lejman's installation "60 second Cathedral" inverts the common perception of religious buildings; as the artist himself highlights: "we are used to thinking about the Cathedral as a permanent set of architecture and also a set of certain values". His work instead plays on the idea of impermanence. In his installation, we see the image of 32 sky divers who coalesce for 60 seconds at a starting height of 6000 kilometres to form the shape of the vault in Durham Cathedral. Lejman's installation isolates the vault's motifs from their original religious setting, yet still retains their fundamental connotations. He says this action allows us to reconsider the "many situations we tend to

regard as the permanent, as, in fact very ephemeral;" an interpretation he is only able to convey through a prism of scientific understanding.

The elements come together in the unifying action of Creation which Simeon Nelson conveys in his installation entitled 'Plenum'. The caption for his piece reads: 'If you could witness the creation of the universe, what might it be like?' Nelson explains that in his work he is attempting to amalgamate "lots of different strands, a mythic way of seeing the world, a metaphysical way of seeing the world and a scientific way of seeing the world". 'Plenum' is a projection of sequence: it begins as a miniscule dot, intimating the beginning of the universe, and then proceeds to expand quite explosively into a grid. The perfect grid of points resemble stars, but then slowly burst into chaos. Nelson explained this as "greater and greater degrees of chaos but at the same time beauty and freedom". His idea of forging a Creation myth founded on science is achieved through his use of music and projection: when one image is represented visually, another is simultaneously constructed sonically. This beautiful interpretation of creation as a natural phenomenon, a scientific process and religious notion seamlessly embrace the collaboration of art, science and belief.

Leonardo Meigas, an Estonian artist explicitly links this triumvirate in his installation called 'The Hartman Grid'. His piece was inspired by the German oncologist Dr Ernest Hartmann, who believed humans who spent a lot of time at the point where the Earth's electromagnetic plates intersect may be more likely to develop certain diseases. Meigas' grid is made

up of a network of luminous flumes which symbolise these lines of natural radiation. As the colours within these pipes flow vertically and horizontally, they represent how these channels of energy intersect to form a grid in the first place. What is controversial about Meigas' piece however is that many are not sure these grids of natural radiation even exist. But, it is clear that Meigas' belief in their existence is resolute, as he told me of the recent loss of his brother-in-law to cancer, making him determined to raise "awareness for this scientific theory through artistic means, [which] will save thousands of people's lives". Did he see himself as an artist or scientist? Not unsurprisingly, he gave me a rather proverbial response, saying that he was "trying to visualise this phenomenon as an artist. Simultaneously, the piece is also a declaration to science".

His answer particularly resonated with me as it elucidated the multifaceted nature of the installations; and not just those at the Lumiere Festival, but also on a much grander scale. Following on from this, I began to consider the absolutist nature of my own question: why did I think Meigas had to be either a scientist or artist? The polarisation of Art and science is underpinned by many social structures. Our universities categorise courses as either Arts or Sciences, and most people make the distinction between an artistic or scientific mindset. This leaves us with the enduring question: will the increasing popularity of Installation Art begin to dissolve our black and white approach to Art and Science, or is this division too deeply routed in society to deconstruct?

Russia:
Is Art "the opium of the people"?

Mary
O'Connor
Arts Editor



One are the dark days when art deemed 'offensive' to society was subsequently banned. Or so we thought. In fact, the looming spectre of censorship haunts us once more, in the wake of the passing of the anti-homosexuality bill in St Petersburg at the beginning of November; casting ominous conjectures as to the fate of the rich artistic landscape of Russia and other countries, if the blight of "political correctness" continues to be persuasive. Marx warned that religion must be erased as an "illusory happiness of the people." Art, however, does not fall under such a negative light: contrary to the perverse ideas of the Russian government, it should not be stifled as merely "propaganda". Regrettably however, the banning of "inappropriate" art and media internationally has increased.

Art - be it literature, visual or performing, is liberating both for the artist and the receiver, enabling the assertion of a sense of self by way of the creative process. As Ian McLachlan, the co-creator of the upcoming pamphlet *Confronting the Danger of Art* comments, art can be something of an escapist endeavour: "...it can be the role of the artist to offer us an alternative perspective...and in so doing, to free us to think or be something else." As human beings we all have our unique way of perceiving the world: art in all its forms gives us this freedom to explore ourselves and the universe as individuals, and thus we can come to affect our own self-expression in terms specific to us, through art. Modern artists, Tracey Emin and Daphne Todd, are no strangers to this: both women deal with traumatic issues (feminine depression and grief after the loss of a parent) within their respective artworks but somehow reach clarity by using art as a means of catharsis.

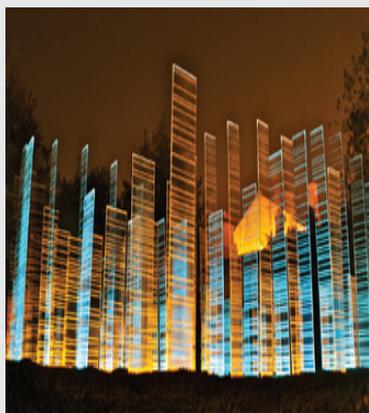
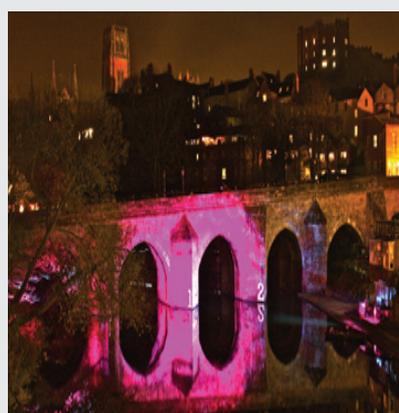
Additionally, the Arts are invaluable as an educative tool especially for those who remain ignorant of their exploitation. Indeed, the history itself illustrates Art's positive educative effects, most especially seen through the French Revolution. In 1789, the clergyman Abbe Sieyes published a pamphlet entitled, "What is the Third Estate?" attacking the unjust structures of the Ancien Regime; aimed at politicising the ignorant lower classes to claim

their own rights against the over-privileged upper classes. One does wonder what France might be like today if a revolution had not occurred. We have art to thank in part for that. In recent years, as political correctness has become almost hysterical, more artists being banned by governments anxious to prevent its messages subverting conventional thought. Most surprisingly, even Britain, as a westernised and democratic nation is guilty of this. In 2008, the now poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy's poem, *Education for Leisure* was removed from the GCSE English syllabus because its content promoted 'knife-culture and violence' to the outrage of teachers, students and other poets alike.

Similarly, quite recently there have been incidents of the censoring of art and media, most notably in Russia. On 26th November, an interactive installation piece entitled "The Stars Speak" by homosexual artist, Vasily Klenov was ejected from an exhibition hall after Klenov refused to remove from the piece, terms insulting the Prime Minister Putin that a visitor had typed in. Equally, just this week, Italian clothes company Benetton were forced to retract an advert featuring the current Pope Benedict XVI kissing an Egyptian Imam. The frequency of such bans is a worrying signal that individual creative license is on the rocks, and the proposed absolute ban of public homosexual expression or "propaganda" would be another nail in the coffin of artistic initiative.

Art will never cease to encapsulate the human condition and experience in society. Phil Cooper, also co-creator of "Confronting the Danger of Art" commented further on the Arts' relevance to British society today: "the world is in a real state of flux at the moment...and it's in these times that people need artistic expression". Censorship needs to be overcome and resisted now. In the case of the Russian Anti-Homosexuality bill, we must not let any more talented art be extinguished by a perceivably corrupt, homophobic government merely wishing to quench what they perceive as "deviance." I would encourage you all to sign the LGBT international petition to obstruct this legislation, if art means or has ever meant anything in your life.

Durham's Lumiere in pictures



Music.

Electric Six: The Gay Bar Band

Dick by name and by nature? Dick Valentine talks to **Alex Swadling** about being Rock 'n' Roll.

After introducing myself to Dick Valentine, Electric Six's frontman, there is a lengthy silence. So lengthy that I suddenly desperately want to slam the phone down and email his manager saying it was all just a joke. No one was supposed to get hurt. I giggle nervously. His Detroitian drawl finally reaches my ears. "Oh sorry, I'm uh, getting inundated with all kinds of uh, UK press at the moment." This is a bit uncomfortable.

Dick Valentine, or as his mother calls him, Tyler Spencer (which is actually quite a cool name – like a boxing champion, or a slightly intimidating but an essentially friendly dog) is charmingly carefree and blunt. Like Dick, the rest of the band brandish equally fitting stage names – The Colonel, Johnny Na\$hinal, Smorgasbord, Tait Nucleus? and Percussion World. Ironically, Dick seems to care little for personas and while I admire his bluntness, it also makes me want to apologise for calling. Instead, I decide to ask about the latest album, which was released this October.

"It's very user friendly, you know, it lets you in and won't let you go until the final note."

As for the majority of the UK, Electric Six will forever remain the "Gay Bar" band. "I'd never been to the UK when I wrote 'Gay Bar'. I just thought it was a funny one-and-a-half minute song with a repetitive riff," Dick informs me. "I don't think that I ever would try to write a hit. I'm not that person. Generally, anyone I've ever met who says 'oh this is gonna be a hit' are assholes, so I try not to be like them." Trying to veer away from the unexpected success of "Gay Bar" and "Danger! High Voltage," I decide to educate myself pre-interview with a militant listening of their seven albums since *Fire* (2003). However, I found that the latest offering *Heartbeats and Brainwaves*, with its slightly intergalactic ambience and daring (if not slightly random) layering and intersecting of different genres, took a little longer to engage with. Valentine cuts me off. "Well that could just be your opinion." Awkwardness levels peaking... "I just know once I started listening I couldn't stop. I continued listening over and over again. I didn't feed the cats, they died, my wife left me. I was just sitting in the chair listening over and over again".

Ah. This is the kind of Electric Six frontman I wanted – irreverent, insincere and cheeky. However little or much respect you have for Electric Six, there is little mystery and pretension around their style—pleasurably silly, dance inducing alt rock—and with eight studio albums in the space of nine years, it's no mystery that they work hard either. After their 2003 moment in the lime-



"Constantly improving, constantly evolving. We're becoming deities"

light, three members left the band, leaving only two original members. "Every line-up change has generally been to improve the band", Dick insists.

So you're actively improving yourselves? "Constantly improving, constantly evolving. We're becoming deities."

Despite Dick's joking, their dedication and perseverance in spite of these obstacles (including being dropped from their American label on the eve of the release of second album *Señor Smoke* and pissing off Queen drummer, Roger Taylor, with the video for their cover of "Radio Ga Ga") is commendable. Marvelling at this ostensibly effortless musical endurance, I question their creative ease. "I vomit songs?" Why did I ask that? "Oh! Oh no, we have six people in the band, everyone contributes their own y'know? It's actually easy when you're motivated to keep doing it, when you're desperate not to go back to the factory," Dick clarifies, luckily catching my inarticulate drift. "It's just rock n roll music – it's not the hardest thing. We always approach it like that. I think a lot of bands get into trouble thinking rock 'n' roll music means more than it does."

Art for art's sake! It means what it

**Above:
Electric Six**

says! As Dick points out – "the songs don't necessarily need to make sense, just add up and get where it needs to go. It doesn't have to mean anything; it doesn't have to have a point."

There's no issue in offering fans some auditory escapism from the difficult issues that often figure lyrically in music (like sourcing a shag now you're single or reiterating the weighty responsibilities of a Friday). Still, if this kind of dismissal is just blasé arrogance on his behalf then really, why do they bother? Pushing it, I decide to underline the slightly ridiculous vein of Electric Six's mainstream success. I ask Dick how he feels knowing that the most career-defining and iconic image of the band's success is of him donning a chin strap, top hat and bulging in spandex panties: The 'Gaybraham' Lincoln.

"It feels okay" Dick responds nonchalantly. "I don't really care how I'm being iconised"—not entirely sure if the insincerity was detected or if his humour is especially arid—"maybe that's what people think the band is about but if you're home and in your kitchen like I am now, and the sun is coming through your window, you know that none of that really matters." This is surreal. "That you are who you are, and as long as you keep putting one foot in front of the other, nobody is gonna take that away from you".

After this strikingly sincere comment, I'm left feeling confused. It's difficult to determine what exactly is arrogance

or parody with Electric Six. It's probably this tension that has given them the cult following they have, also being aided greatly by their constant touring and infamous high-energy live shows.

"We are a rock 'n' roll band that plays rock 'n' roll songs, and we are very good at mingling after the show and making new friends. If you have a financial problem or you need advice, we can give you money or some advice," Dick says earnestly. "We have a new song, 'It Gets Hot,' that comes across really well live," he continues. "Really gets you wet with anticipation".

But are you equally, uh... wet, with the idea of constantly ploughing on like this?

"That's the best term I can think of, ploughing on. For no other reason we can't help but to plough on. To rub some dirt in its face," Dick states. "It's our factory. I was institutionalised – this has been a substitute."

Self-deprecating, sarcastic and contradictory – that's what the Electric Six frontman is. I have spent the past thirty odd minutes feeling reasonably uncomfortable and disappointed that I didn't warm to what I assumed to be a friendly and quirky band, but then again Electric Six aren't ever logical. In fact, they're just doing what they like to do – ploughing on. Like Dick says – "It just needs to go somewhere, it doesn't need to go to a logical place[...] it just needs to go somewhere".

REVERB.

"We were dubstep before dubstep. We were all about the bass."

Korn, renowned innovators of dubstep, discussing their latest collaboration with SkilleX.

Starting Over

Business or pleasure? Alex Edgerton muses on reforming.

With the recent news that Black Sabbath have decided to dust down their matching crucifixes and hit the road again, it now seems likely that any disbanded group could suddenly pull the rug from under their fans by announcing a reformation. This comes not long after the overwhelmingly surprising reform of the Stone Roses, with all the band members performing some of the biggest volte-faces in music history (Mani once famously saying that the band would only reform when Man City won the Champions League). After these announcements, it wouldn't be ridiculous to think that maybe Morrissey and Johnny Marr could patch things up after nearly 25 years of resentment and make the fantasy of a Smiths 30th Anniversary Tour a reality. In fact, so frequently are bands reforming these days that even after the sad break-up of R.E.M. a few months ago, many people saw it as a given that they'd be getting back together in a few years for a globe-trotting reunion tour.

It's not hard to see why these bands, or any other broken up ones, would reform, especially considering the lucrative financial incentives from a world tour. Black Sabbath are set to make over £100 million from their 2012 reunion tour, while the Stone Roses are reportedly making £10 million just from their three Heaton Park gigs in July with an additional £1 million for every one of their many festival appearances in the summer. More astonishingly, ten years ago ABBA were reportedly offered \$1 billion for a 100-date tour. Bands are often open about their fiscal motivations for getting back together - John Lydon admitted that he only reformed The Sex Pistols so he could afford to do the same for PiL, while Bob Nastanovich revealed one of the main reasons that Pavement extended their gloriously ramshackle reunion tour was to pay off his gambling debts. Thank God for that man's crippling addiction.



Recently reformed Black Sabbath.

However, it would take a real cynic to agree with Shaun Ryder's assertion that the only reason bands ever reform is 'for the money'. It doesn't take a massive stretch of the imagination to suggest that maybe these groups are reforming for the reasons that they began in the first place: the joy of playing music together. Blink 182 were encouraged towards reconciliation in 2009 after Travis Barker's tragic plane crash, along with the sudden death of long-time producer and friend, Jeremy Finn. Similarly, Blur's incredible Hyde Park shows and Glastonbury appearance seemed definitely to be more the result of two old friends (in this case, Graham Coxon and Damon Albarn) finally burying the hatchet than it was a bitter pursuit of a quick pay check (and the same can perhaps be said of the Stone Roses reunion).

Although there's still the question of what these reunions have done for the legacy of said bands. The criticism often lobbed against reformed bands is that their performances, both on record and on stage, sully the group's reputation or

a fan's memory of them since their comebacks are rarely going to match what they did in their prime. Eric Avery even left Jane's Addiction in early 2010 because he disagreed with the band's decision to head back into the studio to make a new album (the first as a full band since 1991's phenomenal *Ritual de lo Habitual*), and in a way he has good reason to. Since it's virtually impossible for a band to fully recreate what they did five, ten, maybe twenty years ago, any music they make now is going to be different. Call me romantic, but the music we have from bands that will never reform (usually through a member's death) hold a certain significance and value, since we know that this is all that we will ever have from them. There's a fascinatingly conflicted sense of wonder and anger that we'll never be able to see the Velvet Underground, Nirvana, N.W.A., Pantera or the Beatles (to name just a few of many) in their original form again, and one that should be preserved. However, having said that, I've still got my fingers crossed for that Smith's reunion.

Local Spotlight.

A quick peruse of the songs available on home grown York-based Miaow Miaow's Myspace shows a band with enough musical diversity in four songs to cover several bands' entire discographies, and their bio does not exactly help clear things up: their genre is listed as "tropical"- they state their influences as Foals, Ratatat and Metronomy and they have done a cover (and quite a good one I should add) of Daniel Bedingfield's "Gotta get Thru this". A few more listens in, and what sticks are the math-rock riffs of Antidotes-era. Foals, a love of French language and not taking their music too seriously. And no harm the latter does, with every song bringing both witty charm and bucket loads of ener-

gy to the table. Half-way through "Reverse the Charges, Breathe Harder," I believe I may have accidentally put on some middle-class grime, with an appropriately dirty bassline amid some fairly hilarious lyrics, whilst "LADVENTURIN" feels somewhere between an Of Montreal pop meltdown and The Klaxons' apocalyptic urgency.

Luckily Miaow Miaow's chief noise maker, Pete Wise, simplifies things for me: "We're four young men from York seeking to enliven a rather sleepy and melancholy UK music scene with our unique strain of mathy electro-indie. Our interests include toy synthesisers, writing filthy lyrics and generally making merry." Intrigued? Confused? Either way, Miaow Miaow are releasing

a new single at the Dutchess on the



Sincere.

Reviews.

Artist: James Blake
Date: 27th November
Venue: Leeds SU
Review: Rory Foster



What he lacks in stage presence James Blake tries to make up for in bass. That was the impression I got in the middle of a vibrating Leeds crowd whilst trying to decide whether this was a good gig or not. As a big fan of both the man's work before and after his self-titled album released earlier this year, it saddens me to say I'm not sure it was.

There were moments of greatness. Gig and album opener "Unluck" warms up both the crowd and his two-piece band with its bizarre time signature and soulful vocals. "I Never Learnt to Share" is equally impressive; the marriage of choral and synth cascades reproducing the album's powerful buildup. But what lets him down the most is the transition between his bass-heavy instrumentals and intricate pop & soul tracks. The audience appears similarly split; half



love, the other half CMYK - a recreation of the club tune that first got people interested in the twenty-something Goldsmith graduate. Whilst the latter does impress (despite most of it being played by the drummer tapping the right samples) the former feels hugely drawn out to appease the crowd. The same goes for a lot of the more popular songs, for the obvious reason that Blake doesn't actually have that many songs that work for a 'live' band. In the end we got a taste of both spheres of Blake's music, but with neither really fitting comfortably within the 90 minute space he has to fill. It's always the same problem. James Blake's persona is part bass DJ, part singer-songwriter. He's trying to please both, but

Artist: Joker
Date: 15th November
Venue: The Dutchess, York
Review: Joni Roome



The Bristolian prince of dubstep left his doubters silenced with an electric show supported by Royce Rolls. Hailing from Manchester where bass music has a healthy scene, I was keen to see what York had to offer and as luck would have it Joker was my first taste north of the Pennines.

The punters seemed slow to arrive with the support acts not dragging many to the dancefloor, but as the time approached midnight and birthday boy Royce Rolls took to the decks, the 400 capacity venue started to fill and the night truly got started. After a blistering set from Royce, Joker took to the stage with a huge reaction from the now larger crowd. The next ninety minutes was a showcase of the reason Joker has been so acclaimed over the past few years - dropping



classics like "Tron," "My Trance Girl" and "Purple City" as well as newer tracks from album *The Vision* he put together a crowd-pleasing show notably playing a totally instrumental set. Even after his time was up he took to the stage to spin some more tunes in an impromptu encore/ full on stage party with the supporting DJ's, MC and a random guy in a Brazil football shirt. The night ended with a bottle of Jack Daniels being passed from the DJ through the crowd epitomising the friendly nature of the scene. It was disappointing to see such a big name producer fail to sell out a small venue but the quality of the set made up for this and served to make the night one which will live long in the memory.

Nouse Playlist.

Power Alex Swadling

Finding ourselves up in the dizzying heights of the Nouse editorial team, we're in need of a timely tyrannical soundtrack to power our new reign.

"Raw Power" - The Stooges

Some 70s rock when Iggy's face was less terrifying.

"Go Your Own Way" - Fleetwood Mac

Except you can't, because I'm in charge.

"I Want to Conquer the World" - Bad Religion

And I will, although Greg Graffin seems to have better intentions.

"Hidden Dictator" - Kreator

Or not so hidden, thrash metallers Kreator have caught the drift.

"I Can't Control Myself" - The Horrors

Definitely the frustrated soundtrack of our future.

Film.

Reviews.

Wuthering Heights

Lulu Smyth talks to actor James Northcote about his portrayal of Edgar Linton in the new film *Wuthering Heights*.

When we think of *Wuthering Heights*, several images often spring to mind: a bitterly passionate, articulate Heathcliff; dark, intense romance; the Gothic and the supernatural; Kate Bush flailing about in a chiffon nightie. It's no surprise, then, that Andrea Arnold's brutal adaptation has caused so much controversy. Going against the conventions of the 'period drama', she has cast a black actor as Heathcliff, ignored the character of Lockwood, used a handheld camera, and heavily edited the famous dialogue. While in Bronte's version, Heathcliff says: "I vociferated curses enough to annihilate any fiend in Christendom", in this interpretation he grunts: "F--- you all, c---s".

Despite the upset this might have caused, there's a definite sense that the film is loyal to the book. As one critic has pointed out, by ignoring the frothy Olivier-esque layers and connotations, Arnold "pushes the story all the way back to its original 1847 incarnation". It's important to remember that *Wuthering Heights* is not a love-story, but a disturbing tale in which nature is the main character. It's this rough and intense atmosphere which also pervades the new film.

However, although 'rough and intense', Arnold's interpretation is not traditionally 'gothic' in the same way that the novel is. In the book, Cathy's ghost is alluded to as early as chapter one, and the supernatural becomes increasingly prominent as the story progresses. In Arnold's film, this is replaced by a more physical strangeness – for example, we see Cathy, as a child, licking blood off a wound on Heathcliff's back. James Northcote, who plays Edgar



"We were told by Andrea that she'd prefer for us not to read *Wuthering Heights*"

Linton, mentioned this when speaking exclusively to Nouse: "Although I can't speak for Andrea, I think the film is so physical that the only experiences of the supernatural that there are shown as normal things that happen, rather than extraordinary or magical. They're just physical experiences, as much as eating or drinking or dying." This may explain why the film leaves us with such a disturbed feeling – in the world of Cathy and Heathcliff

(which is literally cut off from civilisation), horrific, primal acts like these are considered to be normative.

When discussing this dirty, primordial world that Heathcliff and Cathy privately inhabit, Northcote brings up the portrayal of setting and class in the film, and how it differs from other interpretations: "Often the Earnshaws are shown as quite well-to-do, even though the Lintons are much richer, but I think it's more effective if you

get a sense for the difficult way of life that these people are living," he says. "When my dad (who's from Yorkshire) saw the film, he said it's the first time he's really seen the poverty, hardship and strength of the people who lived in those circumstances [in an adaptation], and he thought that kind of dirtiness was a lot more accurate."

It's perhaps because of this need for actual, rather than literary, accuracy that the cast were actually directed not to read the book. "We were told by Andrea that she'd prefer for us not to read *Wuthering Heights* if we hadn't already. I think she didn't want us to get any preconceived ideas of the characters we were playing," Northcote explains. "She discouraged us from trying to construct a different person that we'd then step into. For her, it was more important that we were just as natural as possible. In fact, I think Andrea chose people because she believed they were like the characters she wanted in the film. I remember her saying to me that she had picked me partly because Edgar can come across quite badly in the book – as someone who is fairly patriarchal and set in the ways of the time. She said she needed someone so 'nice' that that wouldn't happen!" He later adds: "c- we could only see our own scenes a few days before, which was pretty exciting for me as an actor."

It might seem strange for anyone who hasn't seen the film for the director to turn away from the original text, but Arnold's creation is so raw and fresh that the distance makes sense. She has reminded us of the dirtiness and brutality that is woven into the original 1847 narrative, and presented us with a film that is

Film: *Moneyball*
Director: Bennett Miller
Starring: Brad Pitt
Runtime: 133 mins
Review: James Tyas



Moneyball might seem to be a hard-sell for British audiences due to its subject matter. Despite being a US national pastime, the UK remain impervious to the charms of baseball. Thankfully for us, *MONEYBALL* features very little actual baseball: interest doesn't stem from what happens on the pitch but what happens off it. Brad Pitt is Billy Beane, general manager of the cash-strapped and ailing Oakland A's. Seeing several of his key players being pilfered by teams with deeper pockets, Beane becomes disillusioned with his inability to afford players to replace them and decides a sea change is essential. During a failed negotiation with another team he happens upon Peter Brand, a young statistics

boffin, played by Jonah Hill, who gives a wonderfully understated performance.

Beane and Brand set about piecing together a team of misfits and has-beens whose collective ability is greater than the sum of its parts. If Beane can pull this experiment off he will revolutionise the sport.

Writing duo Steven Zaillian and Aaron Sorkin (of *West Wing* and *The Social Network* fame) go about it with brio producing a script full of wit and subtlety encapsulated in an electrifying scene in which Beane and Brand frantically bluff their way through a deal across three different clubs on three phone lines. On paper this sounds dull, but on screen it sings.

Bennett Miller directs efficiently allowing the film breathing space to let the performances and script shine. Subtlety is the key in *Moneyball*, on the surface an unappealing film about sport statistics, but with a human heart making it the best sport film since *The Damned United*.

The Rum Diary - ★★

Arthur Christmas - ★★★★★

See full reviews online at nouse.co.uk/muse/film

Film: *My Week With Marilyn*
Director: Simon Curtis
Starring: Michelle Williams
Runtime: 99 mins
Review: Hannah Wills



Simon Curtis' *My Week with Marilyn* endeavours to document the intense production week of Sir Lawrence Olivier's 1957 hit *The Prince and the Showgirl*. Based on his true account of his experience as the 3rd assistant director, we follow the young Colin Clark's entrance into the frantic world of filmmaking. Fresh-faced Eddie Raymonde takes on the role of Clark with an innocent charm that predictably catches the attention of Monroe (Michelle Williams). They fall into a tensely short-lived love affair after Marilyn adopts him as her confidant, revealing the insecure woman behind the

world's biggest star.

We are transported to Pine-wood Studios where we begin to meet the glorious array of supporting cast (with the exception of Dominic Cooper and his frequently diminishing American accent); bringing together the likes of Judi Dench as Sybil Thorndike, Zoe Wanamaker as Monroe's protective acting coach, Emma Watson as the wardrobe mistress and Kenneth Branagh's superb performance as Olivier, adding a 'prima donna' theatricality that encompasses much of the film's humour. In terms of dramatisation, I was impressed with how the film does not attempt to overly glam up and sensationalise the concept of Monroe romantically involving herself with a younger man whilst popping pills and excessively drinking. This is partially down to the typically British cast and setting, but primarily down to Williams' splendid job of im-

DVD BAROMETER

Ones we want this Christmas



Ones to go Straight to Charity

Film Editor, Elle Hoppe picks what we'll be watching this Christmas

Bridget Jones. Why? Because mothers' are still trying to set us up at Turkey Curry Buffets.

Love Actually. Why? We're yet to have an emotional greeting at Heathrow. Here's to hoping.

Elf. Why? This Christmas we're sticking to the four main food groups: candy, candy canes, candy corns and syrup.

The Grinch. Why? Because we can't wait to gorge on Who-Pudding and rare Who-Roast Beast

It's a Wonderful Life. Why? George is the only man who would lasso the moon for a gal. Chivalry is dead.

Food & Drink.

Petit Fours

The Experiment- Panettone

Panettone is the most elegant take on the Christmas sweet. It isn't a cake but a bread which literally translates as 'little big bread'. Originating from Milan, it is the national Christmas cake of Italy. A myth exists that a Milanese baker, called Toni, created the Panettone when baking for a rich family. It became a Christmas tradition due to baker, Angelo Motta, who between the wars lucratively advertised the Panettone through platforms such as the Giro D'Italia, where the winning cyclist of each stage was awarded a giant Panettone. Alongside the German Stollen and the chocolate Yule Log, this is a bread which is setting a new trend for something 'else' on Christmas day. In comparison to the brandy fed British cake, it's quicker, lighter and less of a hassle.



- Ingredients: 500g white bread flour
1/2 tsp salt
2x 7g sachets of easy to use yeast
120ml lukewarm milk
2 medium eggs
2 medium egg yolks
160g butter softened
85g caster sugar
115g chopped mixed peel
75g raisins*

A bucket with just over 2 litre capacity/ deep cake tin

No UK celebrity chef has shown us how to make it. Even ITV's Italian import Gino D'Acampo has left the way unmarked, and so naturally the calibre of recipes available to us is low with variations amongst them being high. Responses on the internet suggest that the bread is notoriously difficult to get right, and so an element of excitement comes from testing your abilities and sheer luck with the yeast and your kneading technique.



This recipe is based on Shehezerade Goldsmith's mini Panettone recipe. You can add rum, fresh fruit zest, dried cranberries, and vanilla extract, but the basic recipe is a good place to start. The great thing about a Panettone is its stout nature; you can really play with it and experiment with the flavours that dot your bread.

I've swapped the recipe's little moulds for a cooking pot because the fun of making a Panettone comes from its sheer size. It is a centre piece to slice or grab.

A bucket is great to achieve a dome-like shape for Christmas, and a deep cake tin will give the look of a traditional Milanese Panettone. This recipe should serve 12.

1) Sift the flour into a mixing bowl, add the salt and make a well in the centre.

2) In another bowl, whisk together the yeast, milk and whole eggs. Pour this into the well, fold in a little of the surrounding flour to make a batter. Leave to rest for 30 minutes.

3) Add the egg yolks, butter and sugar and mix them and the rest of the flour into the batter with a fork. Then bind everything together into a ball with your hands.

4) Knead the dough for 5 minutes (to knead, press and stretch the dough away from you, then lift the edges into the middle, give it a quarter turn and repeat). Leave to rest in a warm place for 1 1/2-2 hours or until doubled in size. Scatter over the peel and raisins and gently knead these in.

5) Grease and line your chosen tin with greaseproof paper and pour the mixture in. Avoid leaving dried fruit exposed on the surface of the bread as this may burn during cooking and turn bitter. Set aside, covered with a dry tea towel, and rest for 1 hour. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 180C/160C fan/350F/gas 4.

6) Brush the top of the bread with melted butter and bake for around an hour, give or take. When it starts to brown on top, cover with tin foil to avoid burning.

What to do with left overs:
Panettone and marmalade bread and butter pudding

Panettone trifle

Toast with butter or jam

Dip in with a glass of milk

Rookie Wins

Oven cook cocktail sausages for 2/3 of the cooking time, then take them out of the oven.

In a bowl, mix 2 tablespoons of honey with 2 tablespoons of whole grain mustard.

Put the sausages in the bowl and mix. Put them back in the oven and cook for the remaining 1/3 of the cooking time. Serve at the Christmas table as a nibble or a trimming. Also nice in summer on a rocket and lemon juice salad.



Lost in the supermarket

Christmas trimmings call for copious amounts of fresh vegetables. The quality of fruit and veg at Country Fresh beats the supermarkets hands down.



Rookie Errors

A Mocha is an espresso shot combined with hot milk and cocoa powder. V-Bar's defacto definition digresses by replacing cocoa powder with at least two shots of hazelnut syrup. Too sweet and wrong.



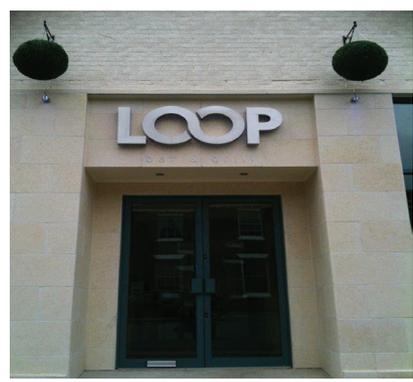
For those with nothing

Tis' the season of Christmas formals, but if you've lost all your money, why not attend Derwent's Alternative Christmas Formal. It starts with a 'Chicken and Bacon Supreme' and ends with a McFlurry. Dress remains 'strictly formal'.



The Review. The Loop Bar & Grill

Ajoke becomes obvious on arrival: this place isn't in the loop. You'll find it just outside the city walls hanging onto the edge of the ring road. And so we enter the outworn trope of the suburban trying on the urbane. The website situates the restaurant 'close to the Barbican centre' whilst the eye places it by a charity store, why so? Why pretend?



Address: 2 Fawcett Street
Price Range: £25-40



At some point during the last century, straight forward British food got a makeover. Pubs were given the 'gastro' prefix, and restaurant chains whose carte-du-jour rose and fell around The Steak were shifted into the category of a 'Grill'. Whether this is a case of shining an incurably bad section of the national palette or whether it is a PR spin on what really is good British food is as debateable as entering these places.

of meat and a distinct lack of salad, and the steak is served with a fairly nondescript garlic butter sauce. Nevertheless, this was the unrivalled winner of the evening, introducing the usual scenario of showstoppers shrinking the burgers and the pies to space-filling flotsam on the menu. It is a repetition of the usual grill downfall.

The Loop fits remarkably well into this category, bearing a self-consciously hip and ambiguous name which screams for 'updated eat' as its byline. This runs through the food, with chips stacked like Jenga blocks next to an 80s revival of the 'Surf 'n' Turf' classic. The steak is cooked perfectly and the prawns are full of flavour. For the bothered, there is a lot

The Mixed Platter starter is tasty but doesn't depart far enough from the infamous Slug & Lettuce platter. Ribs, chicken wings and onion rings merge with the usual beige-battered party nibbles. There is nothing fresh, conceptually or truly in the choice of starters.



Desserts are also your stock characters: chocolate fudge sundaes, cheesecake, sticky toffee pudding etc. This is the malaise of the middling restaurant, where paying a little more doesn't always add to the experience.

I entered **The Loop** under celebratory circumstances and the good dozen of us had a great time anyway. Parents included meant champagne and free-flowing wine, so we filled the place with an injection of humour that the interior lacks. The space is lofty but hollow, the modern décor feels fussy and sterile and the bar sits unnaturally by the eating area. The floor space ambiguously floats between the concept of 'Bar' and 'Grill'.

From quick thinker to fast mover

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The Final Say.

The Christmas Tradition

Hannah Ellis-Peterson



Christmas traditions; we all have them. In Holland they all black up and throw coins at prostitutes. The Austrians run through the streets in devil masks, unnecessarily hitting people with sticks. In Venezuela, everyone rollerblades to Early Morning Mass, whilst exclaiming "Jesus is born" (incidentally, my favourite tradition ever).

In my family, come Christmas afternoon, we mark this most holy of occasions by the playing, and subsequent throwing, of board games. What always starts out as a tender familial bonding moment over a game of Operation never fails to turn into a scene from a particularly wrought episode of Father Ted, only with fewer priests and more Whiskey. Ever been bludgeoned with the egg-timer from Articulate? Or been hit in the eye with a Pictionary pencil (admittedly that time it was me doing the throwing)? The Uno incident of Christmas 2006 still remains a taboo topic at such gatherings. Yes, family-inflicted pain, gluttonous suffering, and in the case of the Dutch, mildly inexcusable racism, is what Christmas is all about.

Yet maybe thanks to TV brainwashing finally convincing us Christmas is nothing more than Stacy Soloman force-feeding you Iceland's finest festive chocolate donut deep fried prawn turkey gammon platter, our tradition-induced euphoria has been taking something of a skewed turn. Take a recent incident at the York St Nicholas Grotto, where, after being made to wait for those valuable moments on Santa's lap, tempers seemingly turned sour.

"One man verbally threatened the lady who is dressed as a Christmas tree" recounted the grotto organiser (I quote verbatim). "Another of the elves was so upset that she has resigned. It was a complete nightmare."

What kind of human being verbally abuses an elf? The social questions raised by the incident, quite apart from why parents are continually willing to place their



children on the laps of old, bearded men, are boundless.

And the absurdity of the whole festive fandango doesn't end there. The Daily Mail hasn't stopped waxing lyrical about a distraught 6 year old who a supermarket Santa arbitrarily dismissed to his 'naughty list' (I would argue an occupational hazard of visiting a grotto in Morrisons). To make matters worse, this year's "Christmas chart hijack" is attempting to pit Nirvana, arguably the least festive band ever, against the perma-tanned TOWIE collective and the annual X-Factor armada. Can you imagine what Kurt Cobain would say if he could see 'Smells like Teen Spirit' become Christmas number one? He'd probably commit suicide all over again.

I'm not religious. Not even close. My house once got struck by lightning on Easter Sunday, which should tell you all you need to know about my pious inclinations. But when people start going Clarkson on Santa's little helpers to the tunes of 90s grunge rock, you can't help but feel the spirit of the season needs a saccharine boost. So thank the Lord, we have Katie Price's seasonal new novel 'Santa Baby'. Snobbish sarcasm aside, Jordon's tale of Angel, baby Honey and newly discovered half sister Tiffany (the promotional video is a must-see, mainly for her original, and sparse, interpretation on the traditional Santa outfit) is a reminder of the glorious abandonment of good taste that has become the global Christmas tradition. Christmas spirit is essentially the product of our repressed penchant for Mariah Carey, Noel Edmonds and all things inflatable being allowed to roam free for this one sacred month. And damn is it fun.

I'm not quite suggesting do as the Japanese do and have your traditional Christmas meal in KFC, but use this window of tackiness to be bold in your festive decisions. Dig out your complete works of Cliff Richard. Read erotic fiction on the train. Don those PVC dungarees with pride; it's

Strictly Confidential



Last Word

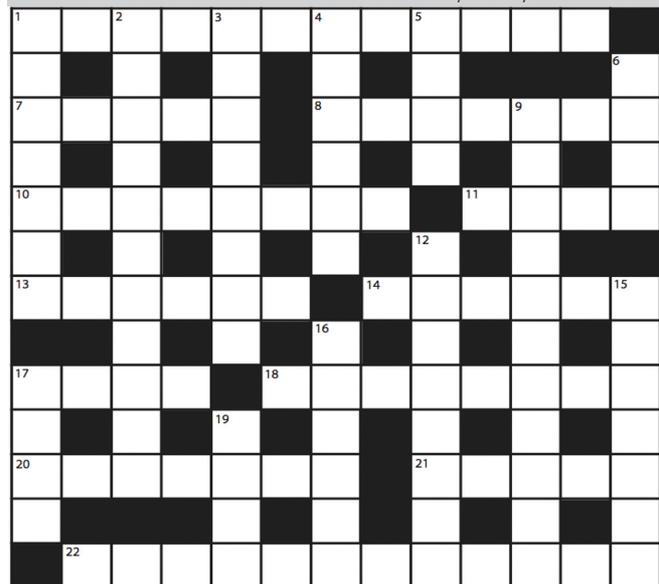
Each man kills the thing he loves,
the coward kills it with a kiss

Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde died 111 years ago this December. His tomb is being rededicated, with a craze of kissing it to pay homage to the above.

The Nouse Crossword

Answers available on www.nouse.co.uk/muse/columns



Across

1. Deficient in courage (12)
7. A room's furnishing (5)
8. North American bandit (animal) (7)
10. Highly pleasing to taste/smell senses (8)
11. Ancient Egyptian goddess (4)
13. Actor turned President (6)
14. The centre vein of a leaf (6)
17. Daintily attractive (4)
18. Three wheeled vehicle (8)
20. ___ Home, goose film (3,4)
21. Popeye's girlfriend (5)
22. Stingy (12)

Down

1. ___ On The Roof, musical (7)
2. Ceaselessly (11)
3. An airport building (8)
4. A scolding (6)
5. Great accompaniment to curry (4)
6. Films about an insect colony (4)
9. Something in the way (11)
12. Reveal (8)
15. Alcohol manufacturing house (7)
16. Unwoven fabric (6)
17. Coffee house (4)
19. Movement in water (4)

The Nouse Sudoku

Answers available on www.nouse.co.uk/muse/columns

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