



Any man dressing as a woman deserves all the sequins he can get. MUSE investigates diverse lives in drag
Drag Queens M5-7

How they spend your money

● Combined assets total £43,388.28 ● £159,649.97 banked since October ● Full JCRC numbers inside



Vanbrugh
Balance £5,281.92
£5,206.31 PROFIT



Langwith
Balance £5,669.74
£4,080.73 PROFIT



James
Balance £13,331.84
£3,504.97 PROFIT



Alcuin
Balance £2,500.07
£746.72 LOSS

SPECIAL REPORT - PAGES 4-5

York falls out of Top 10 British universities

Laura Connor
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY of York has fallen to 11th place in this year's *The Times* Good University Guide. The University fell two places from ninth last year, after York's total score out of 1000 decreased by 25 points, from 736 to 711, placing it below both Exeter and Bristol, who rose four places and remained in tenth position respectively. University Press Officer David Garner said: "Naturally we would always prefer to be in the Top 10, but the interpretation of the data is something over which we have no control. We are ranked in the Top 10 in other

newspaper league tables." Certain areas of the assessment, including Graduate Prospects and Services and Facility Spending, contributed to York's position, and taken individually placed the University significantly outside the Top 10. Out of 100, York scores only 69.4 points for Graduate Prospects. Bristol and Durham Universities scored 82 and 78 points respectively. Garner added: "Slight fluctuations such as this do occur from time to time in newspaper league tables, mainly as a result in changes in the criteria used by compilers. In this case, the new factor is the RAE. "York did well in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) based on the submission of research by a very high propor-

tion of academic staff, other institutions did marginally better - but based on a much lower proportion of staff. *The Times* appears "We would always prefer to be in the Top 10, but the interpretation of the data is something over which we have no control" not to have taken so-called 'intensity' into account." YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer



Charlie Leyland says that she is "disappointed to see that the institution has dropped out of the Top 10", and that it will give the Union "leverage to demand more student-led reviews of the University." She added: "This year's RAE results were a cause for celebration, but we must remain vigilant and ensure that rewarded research does translate into better teaching and learning for our students." The assessments are based on the 2008 RAE, which measures the "calibre of academic research and influences the destination of £1.5 billion a year of research funding." **LEADER >> Page 10**
COMMENT >> Page 12

Noisettes withdraw from Summer Ball claiming no agreement had been made

Sian Turner
DEPUTY EDITOR

MUSIC ACT the Noisettes will no longer be appearing at the York Summer Ball this year after unexpectedly pulling out with only four weeks to go before the event.

The band, whose recent single 'Don't Upset The Rhythm' got to number two in the singles chart, were set to perform at the Summer Ball at York Racecourse on 1 July.

However, *Nouse* can exclusively reveal that, despite appearing on the confirmed line-up and on promotional materials for the event, the Noisettes will now no longer be appearing.

"I'm obviously very disappointed and annoyed," commented YUSU Services and Finance Officer and event organiser Matt Burton. "A lot of time and effort goes into scouting acts for our events early on at a good price so that we can support their careers and give exposure, but also so that we put on a really good show for our students."

Burton revealed that no reason has been given for the band's cancellation at present, though there are rumours that the drop-

out may be the result of recent success and subsequent disinclination to appear at smaller venues. They are currently set to perform at most of the major British festivals this summer.

"They didn't actually give a reason for cancelling," commented Burton, "though I was told from another Union source that it was due to them getting much bigger and better offers, like bigger gigs and time in the recording studio. Their agents still haven't confirmed why they are unavailable."

Nouse contacted the Noisette's agency, The Agency Group, to question the Noisette's actions, but were told only that "this show was never confirmed. Discussions were made on this event, but were never finalized."

Burton, however, denied such a situation: "[this] is not the case given the document we have signed and agreed both in writing (via email, we keep all copies) and verbally on the phone." The Union is now having to deal with the after-effects of an unfulfilled contract, with hotel rooms booked for the artists now having to be cancelled. Burton condemned their claims as "null and unprofessional." This most recent cancellation



The Noisettes unexpectedly cancelled their summer fixture at York

follows the no-show of band Noah and The Whale, the headlining act for Fresher's Ball 2008 who dropped out at the last minute due to ill-health.

A replacement act will be found for Summer Ball, however Burton remains disappointed at

the loss of such a high-profile act: "Unfortunately, at this short notice it won't be possible to get someone who is now on-par with the Noisettes, but I am hopeful that we will be able to provide someone who will put on a good show for out students."

York Samba Band to play at the Ashes

York's samba band, consisting of people from York University's band Mendigo Surda and students from York St. John, is to play the Ashes this year. The 25 member band is to play every day of the Ashes at the Headingley Carnegie Stadium from the seventh to the eleventh of August. They were found when the Yorkshire Tourism Board spotted the band's MySpace page. They play a mix of traditional Brazilian carnival music, traditional African, Cuban and Indian music, hip-hop, drum and bass, and contemporary house music. The band has previously played at many University events such as Woodstock and Big D.

YUSU prepares for 'Super Tutor' awards

YUSU have begun to prepare for the Supervisor of the Year Awards, which will take place in Weeks 7 and 8 with results in Week 10. The scheme will be led by YUSU Academic & Welfare Officer Charlie Leyland. Leyland has this week also confirmed that the University will be holding a review of the supervisory system at York. This review is intended to improve the role of supervisor for students, as well as improving best practice. Leyland believes that "this is one way of getting student input into best practice and rewarding those who have made a positive difference to students' experiences."

York clean sweep in NUS nominations

Three finalists will represent York at the NUS Awards this weekend. All three finalists are in the media categories, with *Nouse* shortlisted for the Best Student Media award. *Nouse* Editor Henry James Foy has been shortlisted for the Student Journalist of the Year award and recently elected York University Media Committee Chair and *Nouse* Video Editor Anna Bucks has been nominated for the Student Broadcaster of the Year award. *Nouse* and Foy each face competition from two other finalists, whilst Bucks will only face one. The results will be announced at the ceremony in London on Friday night.

Reporting by Nanki Chawla, Laura Connor and Jim Bulley



THE FINAL 100 TICKETS ON SALE TONIGHT.
8PM DERWENT JCR
Your last chance to join the party...



B Henry's staying open to benefit evening students

Jim Bulley
NEWS EDITOR

B HENRY'S is to stay open for the benefit of evening students studying in the Alcuin Teaching Block, the University has revealed.

The decision to keep the bar open for the start of the next academic year has been made in the hope that evening students will use it before, during and after classes.

The new opening hours will mean that the bar is only actually

open Monday to Thursday until about 21:00. The intention is that evening students can get food before their lessons and drinks during and afterwards.

Pro Vice-Chancellor for students Jane Grenville stated that the new plan provides 'Languages for All' and 'Lifelong Learning' students use of the bar and that "when we see how trade is going, we will adjust the hours accordingly." B Henry's will be available to students during the revised hours.

The future of campus bars has

been an issue since the closure of Halifax Bar JJs last year, which was shut down for financial reasons. The future of B Henry's has been uncertain ever since the announcement in November 2008 that a commercial services review had found it to be no longer financially viable.

A motion was unanimously passed in an EGM earlier this year to campaign against its closure, led by former Alcuin Chair Erik O'Connor. The campaign, 'Plan B', has been continued by the current

Alcuin JCRC.

In response to the new plans, Alcuin Chair Ollie Hutchings admits that "whilst [the plan] is great news it is primarily for the evening students and not normal University students."

Hutchings went on to point out that "it's not what the JCR was fighting for" arguing that the bar is not open "late enough or long enough" for Alcuin students to use.

A decision about the future of later B Henry's opening hours is expected later this week.

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The worlds of music and literature boast celebrities who earn millions for being the best. Others earn fortunes as the people behind the people, without whom the stars' careers would not be the same.

Celebrity ghosts >>M12-13

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Tories 'in disarray' over backstabbing claims

Chris Young
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE REPUTATION OF the York Tories has been "tarnished" following allegations of backstabbing by newly-elected Chair Anna Appleton, leaving the society in "disarray".

The victory of Appleton over fellow competitors Charlie Rowley and Ben Alexander Edwards, has been marred by accusations of "backstabbing" by Rowley, who has, along with Ordinary Member Sam Francis, subsequently resigned from the society in protest.

Rowley has stated that Appleton had "almost staged a public execution" in a committee meeting preceding the election. The former Campaigns Officer for the society before his resignation said Appleton had attempted to "truly see me off as a competitor and weaken my position not only in the election but in general as she publicly and personally questioned my integrity".

The battle for the leadership came after Ralph Buckle, former York Tory Chairman, was ousted from his position and thrown out of the Conservative Party following comments made in *Nouse* on 12th May. Buckle, in an attempt to push his own Eurosceptic beliefs, encouraged people to vote for UKIP instead of The Conservative Party in the recently concluded European Elections.

Anonymous comments made to *Nouse* criticising Buckle's actions as Chairman lead to a "naming and shaming" of the source by Appleton during a committee meeting immediately before the elections. According to sources inside the committee, Rowley was directly accused of making the comments.

Rowley believed the clique in the committee had planned to "personally attack" his reputation. "Right from the off there was silence - usually people talk over each other, but there was dead silence because everyone (the committee) knew what was coming," he said.

Appleton, who was chairing the meeting, denied such allegations of backstabbing, but has confirmed that she had heard rumours that Rowley was the anonymous member. Appleton has refuted any claims that she directly accused Rowley.

"The claims are completely wrong. I had no motive to do that against Charlie, especial-



FACEBOOK

"The committee did not treat anyone in any particular way. People voted in the way they thought would be best, not for personal reasons"

Anna Appleton
York Tories Chair

ly as a friend. I wanted to be Chair because I thought I was the best candidate. I never tried to stop him standing, and just want to do what's best for the society," she said.

"The committee did not treat anyone in any particular way. People voted in the way they thought would be best, not for personal reasons," Appleton added.

Rowley denies being the anonymous member in question.



ADRIAN CHOA

"[Appleton] almost staged a public execution... [to] truly see me off as a competitor and weaken my position in the election"

Charlie Rowley
Former Campaigns Officer

Francis, who was not involved with the incident, has said that his reason for resigning was "because of the way the committee had treated one of their so-called friends".

"The image of the York Tories had already been tarnished by the Ralph incident, but this has brought it down even further. The society as a whole is in disarray," Francis added.

"There was no motive to [exclude



JIM BULLEY

"The image of the York Tories had already been tarnished... this has brought it down even further. The society as a whole is in disarray"

Sam Francis
Former Ordinary Member

Rowley]... there was discussion afterwards, but everyone agreed that everything was fine and moved on," stated Appleton.

A member of the society, who preferred to remain anonymous, said that "the committee had found themselves faced with a genuine challenge - somebody who wasn't part of the clique, somebody who wasn't part of the old school Tory stronghold, and they set out to categorically destroy him."

BNP win in Yorkshire despite campus anti-fascist drive

Jim Bulley
NEWS EDITOR

The BNP have won a seat in the European Parliament representing Yorkshire, to the disgust of a strong anti-fascist movement on campus.

The Hope Not Hate campaign, which called on students to vote against the BNP in the European Elections, have reacted in disgust to election results. David Levene, head of the campaign on campus, reassured students that "we will keep fighting to expose these people for who they really are, violent fascists."

"[I] personally believe this is the thin end of the wedge. The BNP will now have access to £3,000,000 per term for communications and allowances, giving them increased credibility and publicity. As of today the BNP are



ALEXANDRU HRISTEA

Exit polls reveal Labour and the Greens led the vote on campus

no longer a fringe party," Levene added.

The newly elected MEP, Andrew Brons, is one of six for Yorkshire and the Humber and is

the first BNP official elected in a major election.

The results of a *Nouse* exit poll showed Labour and the Greens leading campus voting with 24% of

the vote each. National victors, the Conservatives, followed on campus with 21% of the vote.

No BNP votes were revealed in the exit polls.

The Liberal Democrats achieved 19% of the vote, roughly 5% more than the national result. According to the poll UKIP only received 7% of the campus vote.

The remaining 5% of the campus vote was split between Libertas, Jury and the English Democrats with Libertas claiming 2%, Jury 1% and the English Democrats 1%. The remaining 1% of those polls claimed to have deliberately spoiled their ballot paper.

"Anybody who chose to stay in bed, lie in the sun or go to a barbecue, anybody who chose to do anything else, rather than help us campaign now needs to get involved," Levene urged.

YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer Charlie Leyland commented: "Perhaps now the campaigns against the BNP will sophisticate and concentrate on educating people about how they may wish to reconsider their beliefs and alignments with the BNP, rather than the constant and unhelpful 'Anti BNP, Stop the BNP'."

"These ferocious and monotonous campaigns, I believe, may have alienated as many as they have recruited," she added.

Levene finally stated that "I hope that this is as far as it goes, but it is reliant on other people, everybody needs to help. I would like to personally thank everybody who did come out and did work so hard before the elections, but we must continue this work now."

JCRC ACCOUNTS | JCRCs bank thousands

Jim Bulley
NEWS EDITOR

AN INVESTIGATION into JCRC accounts revealed that JCRs are saving money rather than ensuring sufficient funding of college sports and welfare issues.

JCRCs have banked £159,649.97 and spent £140,486.43 since October 2008.

The investigation revealed the range between the amount of money spent on events this academic year, £90,359.49, and the amount spent on welfare and sport, £3,164.73 and £1,766.09 respectively.

Very few colleges are offering free or subsidised college sports to students. James JCRC's accounts only show £28.99 spent on sports, whilst the accounts of Vanbrugh, who claim to offer free college sport, only show £31 spent.

This contrasts with Halifax and Derwent, two colleges who offer more support for sports, who have spent £633.70 and £562.96 respectively. Welfare expenditure includes money spent on improving and enhancing the JCRs.

College income comes mainly from events and merchandise, although some colleges receive sponsorship from local pubs,

bars and businesses.

Union grants to the JCRs also vary, with Halifax receiving the most, £2,240.17, and Langwith the least, £1,559.50. James only received £318.50 this year because they did not need extra funds.

James have also spent the least on welfare, only £67.84, more than £150 less than any other college.

The only college to have made noticeable use of the Jane Grenville fund, granted to JCRs for social purposes, is Langwith, who used the money to help finance common room improvements such as sofas and a television.

Pro Vice-Chancellor for Students Grenville stated that "I'm more than a little concerned to hear that a *Nouse* investigation suggests that much of it remains unspent. If this is true, then may I take this opportunity to remind JCRs that its purpose was to unpick the perverse mechanism of funding college welfare and social provision through ticket sales to alcohol fuelled 'events'."

Grenville went on to state: "I can guarantee that in the present budgeting climate, it will be clawed back into the central finances from whence it came."

COMMENT >> Page 10

All figures correct at 04/06/2009 from JCRC account statements. Wentworth does not have a JCRC

JAMES

Balance: **£13,331.84**

08/09 Income: **£21,253.50**

08/09 Expenditure: **£17,748.53**

Profit/loss since October: **£3,504.97**

Percentage of Grenville social fund spent: **0%**

James have saved so much money that college welfare and sports have suffered massively. Their accounts show only £96.83 spent on welfare and sport, only 0.7% of their balance. James claim they're saving the Jane Grenville fund for Freshers Week, ignoring the fact that it's not intended for alcoholic events.



Took £1,252.26 at Cirque de Kirk

LANGWITH

Balance: **£5,669.74**

08/09 Income: **£15,658.70**

08/09 Expenditure: **£11,577.97**

Profit/loss since October: **£4,080.73**

Percentage of Grenville social fund spent: **57%**

Langwith college has by far the most impressive welfare record. Refurbishments of the JCR meant that Langwith were also able to make significant use of the Jane Grenville fund this year. With a big dedication to sports as well the Langwith JCRC appears to have the highest dedication to students.



Spent £238.60 on new JCR sofas

VANBRUGH

Balance: **£5,281.92**

08/09 Income: **£27,441.78**

08/09 Expenditure: **£22,235.47**

Profit/loss since October: **£5,206.31**

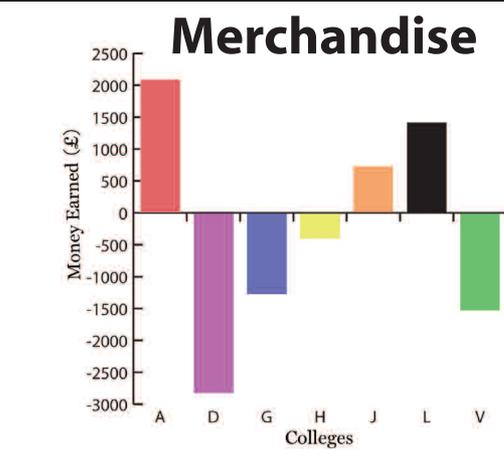
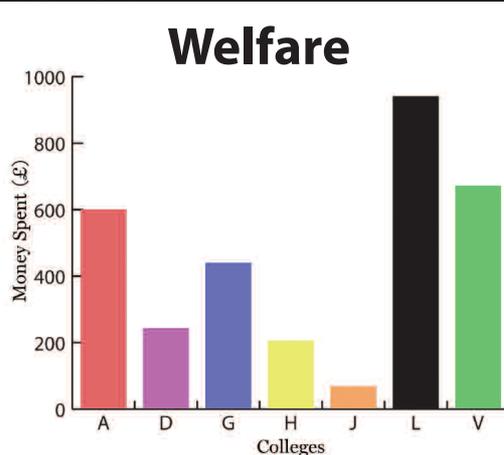
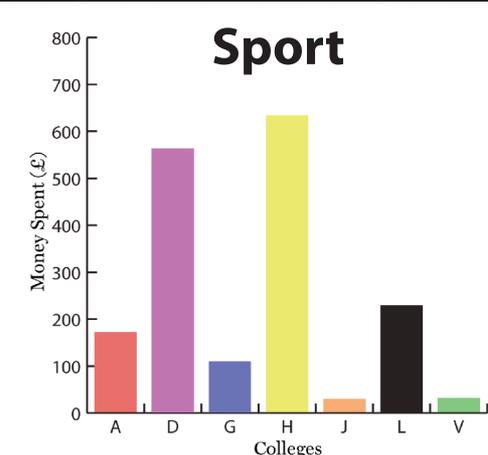
Percentage of Grenville social fund spent: **2%**

Vanbrugh accounts do not reflect their dedication to free college sports, which have yet to be billed, but they do show their poor use of the Jane Grenville fund. Chair Dani Fill argues that the fund will be used to subsidise the college trip to Scarborough, as well as various charitable donations.



Spent £1,146.25 on hoodies

HOW THEY SPEND IT



Derwent and Halifax are streets ahead in terms of sport spending, while Langwith set the benchmark for welfare. James are rock-bottom for both. Only three JCRCs made money from merchandise sales, with Derwent in particular losing over £2,500. Alcuin's merchandise profit offset losses elsewhere.

as welfare and sport spending suffers

GOODRICKE



Balance: **£7,288.07**

08/09 Income: **£34,863.06**

08/09 Expenditure: **£32,368.71**

Profit/loss since October: **£2,494.35**

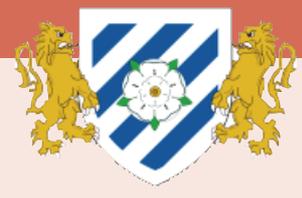
Percentage of Grenville social fund spent: **0%**

Goodricke's recent 40th birthday has left their accounts looking pretty full and their Jane Grenville Fund untouched. When the bills for the event are processed the accounts will look a lot less busy. Goodricke have only spent £109.64 on sport, an unimpressive amount for a college with a proud sporting history.



Spent £1,470 on Manchester trip

HALIFAX



Balance: **£6,880.22**

08/09 Income: **£15,283.39**

08/09 Expenditure: **£12,839.28**

Profit/loss since October: **£2,444.11**

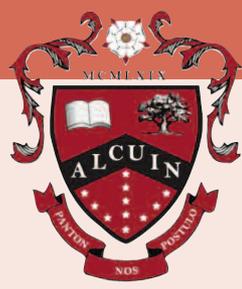
Percentage of Grenville social fund spent: **9%**

Halifax have by far the most impressive dedication to sports, but this may just be a reflection of the size of the college and its proximity to the 22 acres. The colleges merchandise record is a lot less impressive, with a £395.7 loss this academic year alone. Fewer events meant Halifax had less chance of losing money.



Spent £239.31 on a JCR Xbox

ALCUIN



Balance: **£2,500.07**

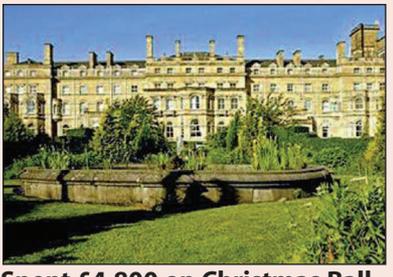
08/09 Income: **£15,665.76**

08/09 Expenditure: **£16,412.48**

Profit/loss since October: **-£746.72**

Percentage of Grenville social fund spent: **18%**

Alcuin are the only college to have made a loss this academic year. Treasurer Anuj Kotecha blames last year's JCR for leaving unpaid events which caused a deficit in the accounts. Alcuin dedicate a fair amount of money to sports and welfare, but it is unimpressive compared to the dedication of Langwith and Halifax.



Spent £4,800 on Christmas Ball

DERWENT



Balance: **£2,436.42**

08/09 Income: **£29,483.78**

08/09 Expenditure: **£27,303.99**

Profit/loss since October: **£2,179.79**

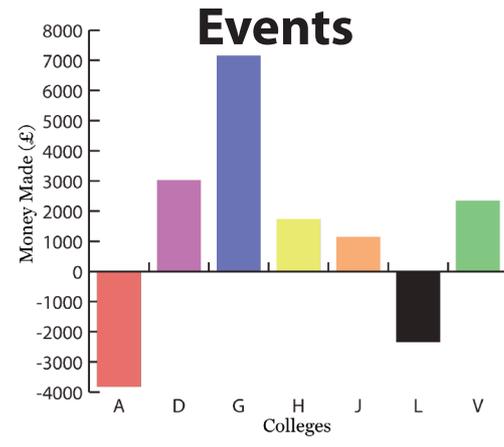
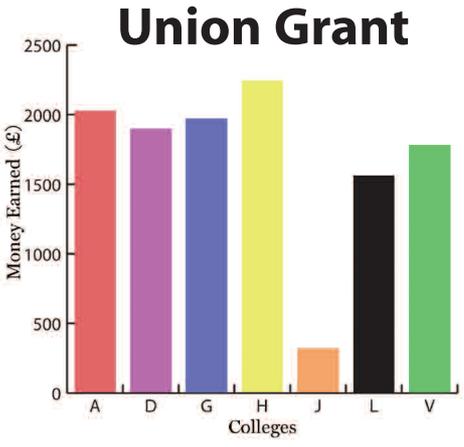
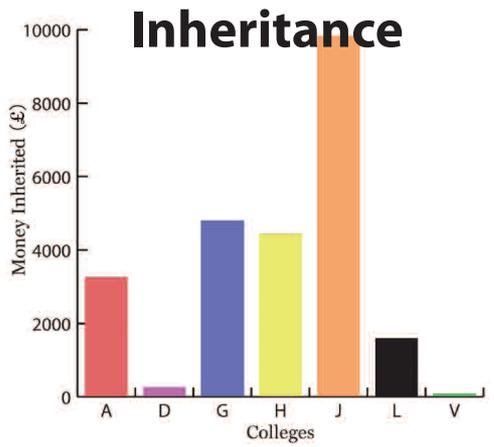
Percentage of Grenville social fund spent: **24%**

Derwent may have the least money at the moment, which shows their willingness to spend money to ensure satisfaction. The total does not include the Big D account that contains nearly £20,000. The JCR spends a fair amount of money on welfare and sport, although it is less than a tenth of their total spending.



Took £397.12 from pool tables

HOW THEY EARN IT



While Derwent and Vanbrugh inherited little from 07/08, James began October with almost £10,000. Goodricke leads the way in event profits, thanks to high Freshers' Week event prices, while both Alcuin and Langwith have failed to turn profit from standard JCRC money-spinners.

Bretts claims U-turn over censorship of

ARRAN BOWEN-LA GRANGE

Laura Connor
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

which may be relevant in York “may not be relevant to the outside world.”

He furthered that it's not necessarily fair that “what you do online when you're nineteen or twenty stays with you for life.” He said: “I think we have to make sure we balance people's right to enjoy their university experience with the need for accountability.”

Bretts, however, has backtracked on his earlier proposals, claiming “It's just something I've thought about, so definitely doesn't fall under the category of ‘changes I wish to make’ or amendments I'm planning as part of being an officer elect, just something I've been thinking about.”

Bretts' proposals, including the screening of articles from Google and deleting articles following a set period after graduation, would mean that archives, such as the archive available on the *Nouse* website, would no longer be accessible to students at the University, despite it being one of the most accurate and concise records of University events.

This would mean that information on past unions and JCRs would no longer be readily available for the use of students, prospective students and elected officials themselves.

Martin Williams, York Vision Editor, said: “If this was strictly



Bretts has argued that stories written about Officers should not be searchable after they have left University

enforced it would seriously damage the freedom of press that is key to democracy... It is not YUSU's job to protect former students' career prospects - the only reason why they would ever push forward with this is to look after their own personal interests, rather than the interests of the Union or democracy.”

Bretts, however, has said that an “awful lot about being a student is about having fun, and doing things that you probably won't be able to do when you're out in the

real world, and I think that its important that people are still able to do that.”

Bretts added that “it's important to recognise that most elected individuals are unpaid, young, undergo very little training, yet are subject to an incredibly high level of scrutiny in both their public and private life.”

A renegotiation of the Media Charter has been stated to take place before the end of this term.

Anna Bucks, YUM Chair, stat-

ed: “The issue that Lewis Bretts has raised is important, but must be subjected to careful consideration and debate. As YUM Chair I will ensure that this is carried out.”

The Media Charter was overhauled in October 2004 by then-YUSU President James Alexander, to prevent *Nouse* publishing the names of four students facing assault charges.

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COMMENT >> Page 10

LGBT Officers defend criticised gender neutral toilets motion

Adrian Choa
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

A CONTROVERSIAL motion for the provision of gender neutral toilets on campus has been passed at a UGM meeting last week.

Proposed by YUSU LGBT Officers Elanin Vince and Peter Warner-Medley, the motion aims to provide toilet facilities for all students who do not identify themselves as either male or female. Narrowly passing with a 50 vote margin, the motion has provoked an outburst of student opinion.

One dissenter, History of Art undergraduate Hattie Buxton commented: “I've never heard of anything more ridiculous in my life. This sort of thing shows how far political correctness has got. Firstly, there isn't a difference between sex and gender. Secondly, science is science. If you are born with male genitals, you are a man. If you are born with female genitals, you are a woman.”

Warner-Medley and Vince were keen to fight back against such opinions: “These sorts of people just show us how important education is,” said Warner-Medley. “People simply aren't not informed enough about Trans issues, leading to this sort of bigotry. Imagine that someone has lived as a woman for the last two years of his life. It



Warner-Medley and Vince want gender neutral provision on campus

would be massively intimidating entering a female bathroom where women might think that they don't belong.”

“It works on both sides,” added Vince. “It will help the men or women who are uncomfortable with people they perceive as the opposite sex entering the loos. Of course, we don't want to promote such views, but they do exist.”

Several other motions proposed by LGBT were also passed, including the right for students to choose what name they are referred to as, and a proposed altering of data capturing methods

Commenting on the latter motion, Warner-Medley said: “It is point-blank an invasion of privacy to ask for sex. It is asking what's between our trousers, like putting on a form how big your penis is.”

Following the backlash of student opinion on the passing of the motions, the officers were keen to emphasise the importance of LGBT's work on campus: “These people just show us much work we have to do. Acceptance, education: these are integral. I recommend that people go out and learn about what Trans really means. Learn. Then comment.”

COMMENT >> Page 11

University weathers credit crunch with minimal loss

Sian Turner
DEPUTY EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY of York has revealed itself to be in “a sound financial position” despite the recent economic downturn.

“Recent movements in financial markets have had no material impact on our income or general financial well-being and our investment plans, including those relating to the campus expansion, continue to proceed unhindered,” commented a university spokesperson.

The figures, recently released from the University Press Office, focus mainly on the value of York's investments over the last three years. With an annual turnover of £217m, investments form a relatively small part of the university's income, but have remained relatively stable throughout fluctuations in financial markets.

York makes its investments

through M&G Charifund, an organisation dedicated to generating income for charities. On July 31st 2007, the value of the university's investments stood at £2.3m. At the same time the following year, they had fallen to £1.7m, but by April 2009, the figure had risen to £1.9m.

“The changes reflect the performance of the stock market over that period,” commented University Press Officer, James Reed. “Over the last five years, the value of investments in M&G Charifund have consistently matched and frequently exceeded the performance of the FTSE 100 Index.”

The University also has considerable investment in property both on campus, some in the city centre and in the Science Park. A recent revaluation of properties in the Science Park revealed an increase in value of £0.9m.

AT A GLANCE

● **Value of short-term deposits:**

July 2007: £52m July 2008: £58.7m Jan 2009: £52.2m

● **Value of investments:**

July 2007: £2.3m July 2008: £1.7m April 2009: £1.3m

● **Annual turnover: £217m**



online articles

mBezel victorious in tightly contested York Apprentice

GEORGE LOWTHER

Ben Gascoyne
 NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE APPRENTICE York 2009 reached its conclusion on Saturday night, as Team mBezel took home the top prize of £1,000 to split between its four members.

After nearly a week of testing challenges, Team Vivacity followed as runners-up.

The winning team held a successful 'Woodstock Warm-up' event in Vanbrugh bar. The event ran in competition with the 'Mr. York' contest held in Derwent bar by Vivacity, and the Vibe Jazz and Arts evening held in B Henry's by Calibre.

The event ran by mBezel won by a margin of only 14 people.

Suraj Gangani, President of York Entrepreneurs' Committee, many were later rejected on the basis that they hadn't fulfilled the criteria of the task, leading to what meant contestants felt was a confusing end to the day.

Despite achieving general success this year, the York Apprentice event did not escape criticism. On the Tuesday of the competition the teams were challenged to provide a service on cam-



York Apprentice team mBezel were victorious by only fourteen points

pus. Despite the teams achieving approval from the York Entrepreneurs' Committee, many were later rejected on the basis that they hadn't fulfilled the criteria of the task, leading to what meant contestants felt was a confusing end to the day.

Following a champagne reception launch event, that featured speeches by former series two Apprentice contestant Syed Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr. Chris Henshall and the Lord Mayor of York John Galvin, the teams engaged in a range of chal-

lenges throughout the week.

In addition to the services task, teams were challenged to market a non-alcoholic drink brand and create a television advert for it.

YUSU President-Elect Tim Ngwena, a member of winning team mBezel, said: "It feels good to have won the competition.. so there's a great sense of relief and satisfaction in winning."

He continued: "As for winnings, I've just finished my degree so I'm sure I'll find something to spend it on over the next month."

ERASING HISTORY

Hackwood: I was hate figure for campus right

Feb 08: Academic and Welfare Officer no-confidenced after drunken brawl

Burton criticised for ripping down York Apprentice posters

May 08: Matt Burton banned from Charles XII pub after ripping up posters

Goodricke JCRC divided

June 08: Goodricke chair expelled long-running following JCRC divide

The year of democracy?

March 2008: YUSU President praised for improving student participation

York's first Student Union venue launched

Jan 09: Campus celebrates opening of first student-run venue

Pirate wins Presidency

March 2008: Tom Scott scoops surprise presidential victory

James JCRC chair removed after losing confidence vote

June 2008: James chair no-confidenced after complaints from JCRC

YUSU accepts mistakes over ethical merchandise

Oct 07: AU President accepts unethical merchandise supplies

YUSU accused of sexism

Oct 07: YUSU accused of sexism over gender-orientated Fresher's week goodie bags

BIGidea

Got an idea?
 about how to improve



cut out the form below

simply
On Paper

and post
 in one of the boxes

in week
7



or
 at www.yusu.org/bigidea

Online

Your idea can be as simple or as complex as you like, just get it down

We're running this event because we realise that whilst you might not have the time to engage with us through a committee, you'll probably still have a plethora of ideas about how we can all make the student experience at York better.

We're after the next Big Ideas relating to **Your Union, Your Uni and Your City.**

Jot them down here and then post this into one of the boxes around campus.

Derwent, Langwith and Wentworth hold heats in preparation for 'York's Got Talent'



Ahsan Iqbal, James Matthews, Krishna Yellapa and Barnaby Francis perform their winning act

Liv Evans
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE FIRST four heats of York's Got Talent took place last week, in preparation for the final which will be held at Woodstock.

The heat in Wentworth took place on Wednesday night, with singer Keri Jens being successful. She was described by Richard

Rhodes, the GSA Internal Officer, as having "a great voice and brilliant stage presence".

The winner of Langwith's Got Talent, which took place on Thursday, was Becca Sanders, who sang an acoustic version of Lady Gaga's "Poker Face".

Derwent's heat was on Friday with *NSync tribute act 'N-Sink' emerging as victors. The heats were judged by individual college chairs,

one of the RAG Officers and the Woodstock co-ordinators. The events raised over £300.

Vanbrugh was won by Chris Schultz and Amelia Hogg, despite close competition from Kate Taylor.

The Goodricke and Halifax events will take place in Week 7, with Alcuin and James in Week 8.

Woodstock will take place on Saturday Week 9.

Survey reveals only 28% of York graduates expect jobs

Laura Connor
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE UK Graduate Careers Survey 2009 has revealed that only 28% of finalists at the University of York expect to join the graduate job market at the end of their studies.

The survey, based on interviews with 16,357 final year students completed last month at the University of York and 29 other leading UK universities, exposed that 34% of finalists plan to study for a postgraduate course.

A further 10% expect to take temporary work, 18% are preparing to take time off or go travelling and 10% are undecided about what to do after university.

The survey aims to disclose how the 'Class of 2009' expect to fare in the graduate job market when they finish their degrees this summer.

It found that just 36% of students, out of all the 30 universities involved in the survey, finishing undergraduate courses this summer expect to find a graduate job.

A Press Release by High Fliers added that "confidence in the graduate employment market has slumped to a fifteen-year low."

The key findings from the research about finalists at the University of York reveals that the top career destinations for the University of York graduates are: media, teaching, charity or voluntary work, marketing and accountancy.

On average, the University of York finalists expect to earn £21,700 when they start work.

It was also acknowledged that the University of York graduates are most likely to work in London or Yorkshire/Humber after university and that, despite this year's

tough graduate job market, 97% of students at the University of York felt their time at university had been worthwhile and would recommend it to others.

93% of finalists also felt that attending the University of York would help them get a good job after university.

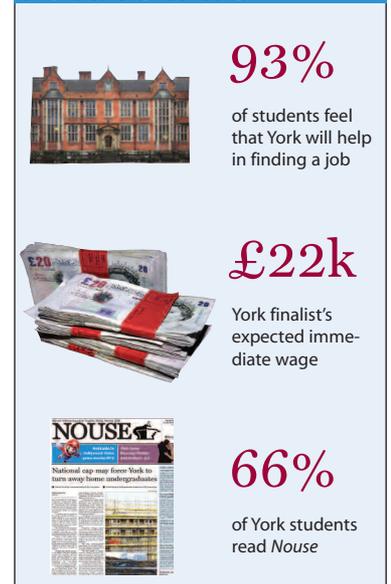
Results from the survey revealed that 66% of the finalists at the University of York read *Nouse*.

The volume of job applications made by final year students has increased noticeably this year, particularly in the early months of the recruitment season.

Despite this, the number of finalists who have received a graduate job offer by a third, compared to 2008.

A total of 337 finalists from the University of York took part in the survey in March, which was published on Wednesday 29th April.

YORK STATS



New constitution passed after "turbulent" year for the GSA

Leigh Clarke
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE GSA successfully passed their new constitution at their General Meeting last Wednesday.

All but one of the graduates in attendance voted for the constitution, which calls for the establishment of an Association Council to make policy, new officer positions and a trustee board allowing the GSA to legally remain a charity.

These changes come after a difficult year for the GSA, in which elections for sabbatical officers have had to be restaged and the association has been accused of not connecting with its membership.

Quoracy was only achieved after members were instructed to call their housemates and encourage them to attend. That there was no way for graduates to vote online is a flaw in the existing constitution, which GSA President Dan

Carr bluntly called "crap".

Carr admitted that it has been a turbulent year for the GSA. Two of the sabbatical officers elected in the summer resigned almost instantly and the results of the subsequent by-election were considered invalid when some members were not able to vote. In the next election both candidates were disqualified, meaning a fourth attempt was required to fill the positions.

Tom Flynn, who with Carr and Eva Fairnell proposed the constitution, said that they now had "a fantastic constitution that will make the GSA into an effective association" and "make Graduate lives in York better". Flynn proposed a budget - the first the GSA has had - which he said was based on a year's spending and would adequately fund the new constitution.

Both the constitution and the budget now have to be ratified by the University Council.

University Challenge team ready for TV

Holly Hyde
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

FOUR YORK undergraduates are to face the task of defending the University's academic reputation on the popular television quiz program, 'University Challenge'.

"We're all really, really excited about the competition" said Laura Horton, York team captain and first-year History student. At eighteen years of age, Horton will be the youngest ever captain and will be accompanied by second-year teammates, Tom Emmett, Peter Searle and Meriel Whalan.

"In terms of the team as a whole, we're one of the youngest this season, with an average age of nineteen. We also don't have any postgraduates on the team which really distinguishes us from our competition," said Horton.

The team will not discover which team they will face until the 19th of June when the filming will begin in Manchester.

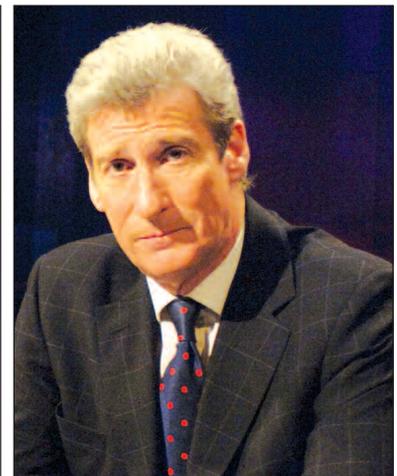
Horton said, "Although a lot of



York captain Laura Horton will be questioned by Jeremy Paxman

people have come up to me and said that if we are put against Oxford or Cambridge then it's pretty much game over, I don't think that's the case."

She continued, "I want to use this opportunity to get people to sit up and realise that actually, we're a really fantastic University, which is why I want to get the team at least



past the first round."

Despite the program's long history since it was first aired in 1962, there has never been a winning team from York before.

"I'd love to see the York team this year do better than we've ever done before, that would mean getting to the semi-finals" commented Horton.

Comment & Analysis

Liam O'Brien



Students must stop complaining and start acting on their grievances

Students need to have the courage to question those they complain about

I often dream of no-confidencing our beloved editor, Henry. Never so strong was this desire as now, with the approaching dawn and my presence in the office uncomfortably colliding. As a direct result of my boss's affable sociability, I had just hours earlier been subject to attend the distinguished 'Mr York', and by consequence caught the perennial whimsy of Dan Taylor's penis.

In fact, no-confidencing Mr Foy wouldn't be too difficult [Henry I'm going somewhere with this, I promise]. With my polished skills in arch sophistry, I would organise a *Nouse* meeting (having got everyone absolutely bladdered beforehand), persuade some of the more doltish acolytes of my case and propose a Chewbacca defence to gloriously overthrow the Foy empire and assume de facto leadership.

Of course, I would never actually no-confidence Henry, firstly because I don't believe that he's a raving incompetent and furthermore because if I did, my friendship circle would reduce in size substantially. Whilst the first motive isn't really applicable on a wider scale, the latter represents the reason we don't question and challenge the decisions of our society and college chairs on a regular enough basis. I, and the majority of you, are cowards.

We have thrust these people into the sacred fraternity of the campus celeb, but I believe the reverence they have been shown, this year moreso than last, is only notional. We hear bitching about college chairs all the time, mostly from people within the JCRC

cliques, so why not address the problem face to face? If you think your society funds are being mismanaged or someone isn't pulling their weight then have a go! Take a close look at the figures released today on college expenditure. Why, despite an enthusiastic surcharge on the Freshers' tickets available online prior to autumn term, does James college appear less disposed towards rewarding those same freshers with small events or trips than, say, Vanbrugh?

A couple of weeks back the chairman of York Tories stepped down from his position after his article in this very rag suggested that students vote for UKIP in the European elections. Comments on our website and everything I've heard since suggest that the ex-chair is, by all accounts, a nice guy. Being nice doesn't get results, though, and the right decision was made. If someone isn't doing their job then it's time to go.

Whilst I'm hardly the definition of a diehard conservative, they had the right idea. If we learned anything from the Grace Fletcher-Hackwood saga last year, when an elected YUSU officer was narrowly no-confidenced for plucky, largely ineffectual fisticuffs, it's that the whole charade is profoundly entertaining.

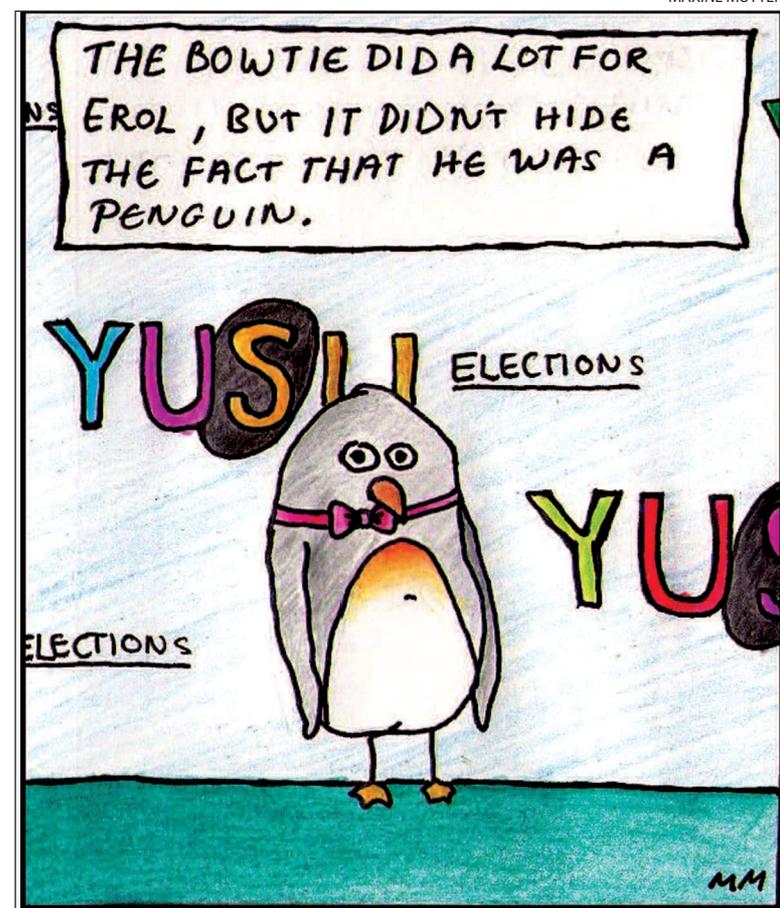
I'm not suggesting that the student body descend into no-confidence induced anarchy, but letting a few selective heads roll would make my dreary days under the waterboard of *Nouse* office banter more tolerable. Everyone's more than happy to click the anonymous 'RON' for YUSU voting, in spite of the knowledge that

people have worked hard and spent considerable time on their campaigns. RON is seen as an acceptable choice not because anyone really believes that all candidates aren't up to task, but because a lot of people perceive putting yourself up for nomination as shameless self-promotion. Why avoid the all-important no-confidence, which is essentially RON with a bit of material oomph?

So let's get the ball rolling with a few material targets. I'm sick of hearing about esoteric and ill-advised student campaigns, and do you know what? If the admittedly loveable Tim Ngwena tells me to "Keep it Cool" one more time I think I might take myself to a quiet room with a rope and stool.

This maudlin garbage that Henry is playing on Spotify is killing me. Bye bye Henry.

MAXINE MUTTEN



Jane Grenville



Why acting warm and cuddly won't work

By the time you read this, I will have sat my first closed exam for 29 years. The prospect of walking into Central Hall armed only with my pencil case is nothing short of daunting. I'm cursing myself for not working more consistently throughout the year, for not consolidating what I'd learnt after each lesson, and for leaving revision to the last minute. And the cause of all this angst? My attempts to learn something that is, literally, foreign to me – Mandarin Chinese.

I decided to learn Chinese for several reasons. Foremost, perhaps, is the fact that there is a sizeable Chinese population on cam-

pus, and I'm PVC for all students, not just the ones who come from a similar liberal intellectual middle-class British background as myself. I wanted to be able demonstrate to everyone that (to the extent that a PVC represents that amorphous beast, 'the University'), the University takes its international population seriously.

Secondly, I wanted to gain some insight into the causes of interpretational difficulties across the divide between Indo-European and Asian languages. It certainly hasn't taken long to find them – a language system comprising of no tenses, no articles, no alphabet and a completely different way of con-

structing sentences creates monumental problems for any beginner, let alone a student trying to express complex analytical ideas at

"Achieving inclusivity requires everyone to get out of their comfort zone"

degree level.

And thirdly, as my ageing brain atrophies, giving it a thor-

oughly rigorous workout once a week hopefully keeps it on its toes.

So I think it's fair to say that I'm well and truly outside of my comfort zone here – not an easy thing to admit to the student population as publicly as this. But it is worth saying, if only so I can make the major point of this little ramble; the VC has asked me to champion the strand of 'Inclusivity' in the new University Plan for 2009-19. And so it seems to me that I can either say 'Let's all be warm, cuddly and inclusive and love one another', or I can point out that to achieve inclusivity requires EVERYBODY to get out of their comfort zone and start making a

real effort to understand and debate differences, and to decide where the extents and boundaries of toleration lie. And of course, the latter is the only honest approach. Toleration is a central tenet of this University and it is hard to put into practice. It requires a breadth of imagination and empathy that really stretches us, and a firmness of purpose that says that some actions are anti-social and cannot be tolerated on an inclusive campus. I'll leave you to think about how we can achieve that – and doubtless *Nouse* will provide a comments section on their website, so I look forward to hearing some of your thoughts.

NOUSE

Est. 1964



The consequence of complacency

The BNP's racist dreams have become a potent reality. For the first time in its 27-year history, the BNP have gained an MEP seat in the 'safe' left-of-centre Yorkshire region. But false illusions must end now: there is no safety in political apathy.

Repercussions of the BNP's enlargement seep into every region of our student microcosm. The BNP were careful in their acceptance speeches to avoid the issue of race; but this is a party who deny membership to anyone of non-Caucasian origin and is committed to "stemming and reversing the tide of non-white immigration." Their extremist stance infiltrates aspects of all our lives and the people who fill them. Now is not the time to neglect your right to vote.

Anti-fascist activity should not stop at the ballot box. As students, we are a body of voters with some of the most passionate political views in the country – and vehemently anti-fascist views at that. We have a responsibility to ensure that the BNP do have the opportunity to further exercise their nationalist muscles. They've already become far too big for comfort.

Yorkshire's Hope not Hate campaign made its presence known on campus, but it's not enough. We need to place disillusionment with centre-party politics aside and recognise the growing authority of an intrinsically racist and increasingly influential party on our literal and metaphorical doorsteps.

Nouse has always remained committed to standing firm behind the democratic cause. Not only does our student media have a responsibility to uphold and advocate disgust of neo-Nazism, but so does our Union. YUSU have a commitment with our students to reflect and represent their views. They should do all they call within their legal powers to ensure that a platform for the BNP is never tolerated.

If we want to remain accommodated with the comfy liberalism of our spoilt daily lives and relationships, where fairness and democracy is taken for granted, we must take individual responsibility and fight against the dangerous, terrifying and disgusting rise of fascism. This doesn't just involve students of York, but the collective responsibility of all students across upstanding Yorkshire universities seeking to guard our rights to equality and democracy. Complacency ends now.

Protecting the past

Much has been made, in both this newspaper and its campus rival, of onomous whispering about media charter overhaul and 'moves to stifle the campus press'. To many on campus, this will both mean little and seemingly make little difference. If the latest threat is realised, all will be affected.

There are very few other, if any, chronicles of life at this University than *Nouse*, and in particular - due to the lengthy gaps between printed editions - its website. Nouse.co.uk's online archives go back to February 2005; finding information on student life at York prior to then outside of the Borthwick archives is an almost-impossible task.

Student life is, of course, not what those who would censor online archives have in mind. When appeals are made to 'balance people's right to enjoy their university experience with the need for accountability', they refer only to the assaults on students, the no-confiscating of JCRC chairs, and the mistakes that they - personally - may well make in their elected, sometimes paid, and always accountable and responsible positions.

This newspaper does not exist to ensure all students who serve in elected roles, doing important work for students, graduate without employment prospects due to unflattering - and easily searchable - headlines. However, those who in positions of responsibility must not be so arrogant to demand a clean slate upon degree completion. University is a place to grow as a person, not a place to have fun and act without consequences.

Removing online articles not only restricts this newspaper's ability to narrate the trials and tribulations of this campus and the figures that come and go, it also prevents it constructing a tale of the great successes and achievements that often occur. This campus has a rich and varied history, and those in power must accept that remembering the bad times is just as, if not more important, than remembering the good.

An uncomfortable position

This newspaper rejoiced at the RAE results when our departments were ranked among the best in the country. Finally we realised that not getting into Oxbridge wasn't as bad as we'd originally thought, because York was prestigious after all. But now comes the revelation that the University has fallen out of the Top 10 in the *Times Good University Guide*. For an institution that prides itself on being one of the best in the 1994 Group and demands of students grades similar if not equal to those required for Oxbridge acceptance, such a slide is simply unacceptable.

York's considered contemporaries - Bristol, Durham, Warwick - all sit comfortably in the Top 10. With York lingering with the Exeter's and Bath's of this world, the prestige that such associations and league position infers looks doubtful for York in the coming future.

The areas in which York score badly are concerning. Poor graduate prospects not only worry existing students, but in the current economic climate, those who are considering their academic future in high schools across the country are unlikely to choose a university whose post-study employment prospects are poor.

This University needs to take this news seriously. It owes it to both the students of today and tomorrow. This newspaper sincerely hopes that Heslington Hall will do everything it can to improve our national ranking

Nouse, Grimston House, University of York, YO10 5DD

editor@nouse.co.uk

No big spenders: JCRCs coveting college cash



Charlotte Hogarth-Jones

Someone once told me that there are three things you should never talk about at dinner parties – religion, politics, and of course, money. Apparently, whilst nasal hair removal, fungal infections and the use of Viagra are happily debated nationwide, everyone makes a beeline for the beetroot crisps when it comes to talking dosh.

Personal spending habits vary wildly, so perhaps unsurprisingly students are starting to kick up a bit of a fuss on how JCRCs are spending their precious moolah.

Half of the student population seem to want college chairs to stain their hard earned funds into some form of York Gringott's on acceptance, never to be seen again. As new allowances are allocated to colleges every year, it does seem a little unnecessary for treasurers to become Gollum-esque, hoarding their shiny pennies secretly, and greeting freshers with little more than bread and dripping on arrival.

On the other hand, the temptation for us all to take the Grenville Social Fund and, what I believe is termed "make it rain" can

be too much. Blowing the budget at a supermarket sweep on elephantine sofas and X-Boxes in the first few weeks of term brings only brief satisfaction – when the springs are gone and the disks are scratched, we start to question just how great those initial investments were.

Yet, as one who tends to

"Elephantine sofas and X-Boxes in the first few weeks of term bring only brief satisfaction"

shamefully fall into the buy-shoes-and-then-only-eat-pasta category, I have to confess my preference towards the latter. Thankfully, I belong to a college which seems to think along the same wavelength.

When I first discovered Derwent was the poorest college, I embarrassingly assumed that the

powers that be had just given way to the same kind of impulse purchasing that I'm so often prone to, splashing their cash on things in shiny packaging left, right and centre. Having taken everything into consideration though, I've decided that I'm really very proud to say that Derwent is a bit on the skint side. They inherited hardly any money from the previous year compared to other colleges, and they've spent the money on what it was designed for – I don't think there's any shame in that. Whilst I am the last person to be deftly hopping around the netball courts, I'm very glad that thanks to my college's initiative, those who want to, can.

Of course Derwent aren't the only one's using the Grenville fund as it was intended, and I hope more will follow suit. Think of it, if you will, that your grandparents are giving you some pocket money. It's fine to spend it all, because hopefully if you're very good, they'll give you some more. Just make sure that when they ask you what you've bought, it isn't something you're ashamed to tell them.

Jonathan Fransman



Why we must hold our elected officials to account

From the village parish council to the House of Commons, a necessary condition of any democratic organisation is accountability. Our campus microcosm must not be the exception; the representatives of the Union must be accountable to its stakeholders, the students. Even more crucial is a force that will hold the University – and especially its inadequate, winged-monkey commercial services – to account.

Though the part played by those involved in student politics should not be undervalued, the majority of ensuring accountability rests on campus media's shoulders. This is not to say that it is a burden accepted grudgingly. It would be ridiculous to suggest that, just like their national equivalents, campus media is not motivated by desires which occasionally result in relatively minor issues being blown out of proportion.

Though campus media does make mistakes, the service it provides is invaluable. If plans discussed by the University and the Union to further restrict the media come to fruition, campus media will be rendered effectively impotent.

The welfare argument advanced by the University holds no weight. University employees must be accountable to student consumers. Moreover, they are fundamentally distinct from the average student who is effectively, through the indirect route of YUSU funding, a stakeholder in all Union funded media.

The choice made by individuals to occupy elected positions also ren-

ders them fair game for campus media. This does not mean the individual forgoes their welfare entirely, just that they can be legitimately criticised on occasions which bear relevance to their job role.

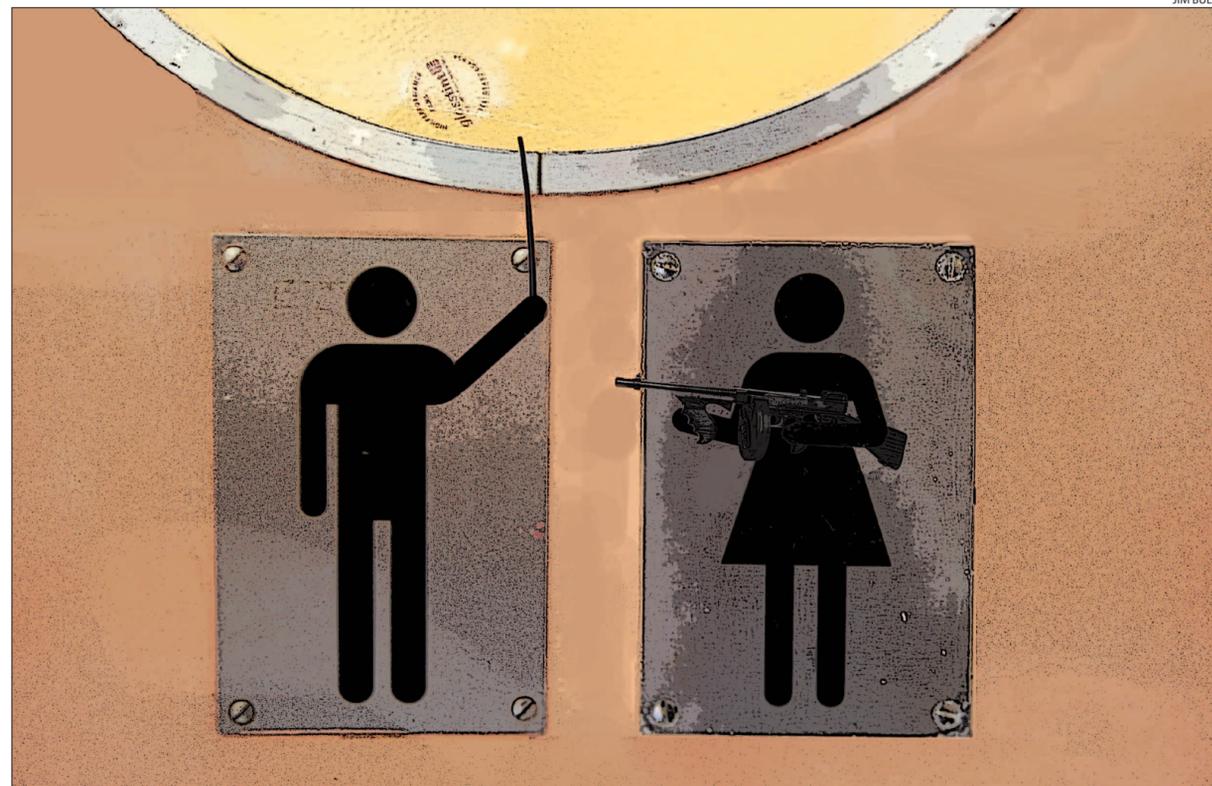
Regrettably – as in the case of a former Welfare Sabbatical Officer – spill-over between work and personal life is sometimes inevitable.

Though the internet extenuates the matter, suggestions that the *Nouse* website should require a university log-in are farcical. The website has become a victim of its own success; the sheer number of hits has publicised the transgressions of York's political sphere to a national audience. For the Union and the University to vindicate this accomplishment in order to hide their own shortcomings would be inexcusable. As well as damaging the reputation of York as a media university, it would constitute the coup de grace for the relative financial

autonomy of Nouse as advertising revenues plummet. The issue will become even more pressing when Vision's new website starts amassing equally contentious content.

This debate should not be conducted behind closed doors. Maybe there are tweaks that could be made to the media charter but nothing viable has emerged to date. Those involved in campus politics must recognise their commitment and the consequences should they renege on it. Media scrutiny is a necessary reality of the job. If the black card and CV points don't seem worth it in the face of this, sit down and enjoy immunity. If you do get involved, do so in the knowledge that the position you occupy can be legitimately and fairly criticised, and will be available for the whole world to see. Freedom of speech cannot be separated from the right to be heard; an attack on either constitutes an attack on both.

HARRIET ARSCOTT



Transgender transgression: how York reacted to GNTs

The reaction to the LGBT welfare motions was disappointing and missed the point completely

The LGBT welfare motions of the last UGM all reached quoracy and passed; perhaps highlighting that the university bubble is far more liberal than the big bad world. However, the most well-voiced reaction to the motions was disappointing.

To sweep aside one vein of argument: practically speaking, what was proposed was not ridiculous. Small changes to the "sex" section on university paperwork is a negligible undertaking. The provision of gender-neutral toilets "where possible" is also not unreasonable. Lest we forget, we're in the middle of a huge campus extension, a perfect opportunity for change and development, and I'm certainly not persuaded that Heslington East is so well-planned and close to completion that the provision of gender neutral toilets would be a great difficulty. Furthermore, when it comes to this campus the use of disabled toilets is an easy and perfectly acceptable temporary solution. It is blowing it out of proportion to see this as labelling trans-gender students as disabled: it is merely a matter of convenience.

But what about not practically speaking? What about those who stood up, if mainly behind a veil of Internet anonymity, and said "man up" and "grow a pair"? Their inconsiderate puns, not mine. The ignorance within the main body of opposition was astounding. It is one thing not to believe there is a distinction between gender and sex but it seems clear that most people simply didn't understand the dis-

inction between the two. Sex is, as Peter Warner-Medley suggested, biological; it is "asking what's between our trousers". The question of sex creates obvious issues for transgender students, who define against their sex, so gender seems the more appropriate question. However, it is not like "putting on a form what cock size are you or how big is your penis", quote Warner-Medley again. Whilst the ignorance of the opposition has been astonishing, the heavy-handed attitude of

"On the whole, it's not bigotry but ignorance that causes the arguments"

some LGBT supporters has exacerbated the situation.

In general, including "T" in the LGBT umbrella is unhelpful in every way other than administrative convenience. By entering into the discussion on transgender we are separating out the issues of gender and sexuality. People are using this debate to take another swipe at the gay community when really it is totally irrelevant. Whilst the gay community are deservedly retaliating, it surely leaves non-gay trans students feeling isolated and misrepresented.

What needs to be taken into consideration is that this is a diffi-

cult debate because for the majority of people it is wholly unfamiliar. I was born a "girl" and I've always felt like a "girl". It did not occur to me that one day I might not feel this way. Why would it? It had to be explained to me that someone might feel that their sex betrays their true gender. Even as someone who's never felt any gender-sex confusion or disparity, I understand, and in a society where it is far from an accepted norm, to be honest, I don't envy it.

Those who are in favour of welfare considerations for transgender students need to recognise the leap in understanding it takes for those who have never experienced gender issues. The misunderstanding of key terminology such as "sex" and "gender" is symptomatic of a wider confusion and it is going to take time and patience to educate and explain. On the whole, it's not bigotry but ignorance that causes the arguments. Some people will of course remain in opposition, but more people would be won over if the main participants in this debate took a step back from all the anger and frustration.

Ignorance aside, it is astonishing that people feel the need to arbitrarily dismiss the welfare needs of a minority, even if it is a minority they do not understand. But with the motions passing, it proves once again that the most well-voiced opinions are the most angry, not the most prevalent. We should be proud to be part of an accepting and progressive community who uphold minority representation.

Loosen the Buckle on Party discipline



Michael Appleton

According to the Conservative Party, York student Ralph Buckle is more important and influential than Lord Tebbit. That's right, a second year university student is more influential than a former chairman, a former right hand man to Thatcher and a peer of the realm.

It is difficult to draw any other conclusion than this when you hear the harsh penalty Buckle paid last month. In an article in this newspaper, he argued in favour of both the Conservatives and UKIP, stating, "I favour the latter and would encourage you to do the same". Tebbit meanwhile urged voters not to "vote for the major parties". Furthermore, it is not difficult to imagine which party an arch Euro-sceptic like Tebbit will be voting for instead of the Tories. Not too dissimilar? Not according to the Conservative central office who promptly expelled Buckle, whilst David Cameron gave Tebbit a slap on the wrist.

Not only is this grossly unfair to Buckle, who undoubtedly would have been treated differently had he been a Lord, but it also gives an insight into the rigidity of party discipline in modern politics.

It's not that different across the floor. Labour would expel me if I urged you to vote Conservative or any other party, and I'm sure the Lib Dems would confiscate your sandals if you said something similar. It appears modern political parties are completely intolerant of dissent. Take the case of Hazel Blears. She criticised Gordon Brown's appearance on YouTube and found herself in the harsh glare of the media over her expenses. I am of course in agreement with the Prime Minister that her claims were unacceptable, but she endured more coverage than other ministers. Meanwhile, during his tenure as Tory leader Michael Howard sacked candidate Howard Flight just for talking about tax cuts. Such is the tightrope that party members have to tread.

This level of discipline is completely ridiculous. It is important for government, or attempting to gain power, but complete allegiance is a nonsense. Politics is all about settling differences; clearly not everyone is going to agree on how problems should be solved.

All Cameron's iron rod has done is disunite the campus Tories. Why would anyone want to join a party as dogmatic as the Conservatives now appear? Anna Appleton has her work cut out to bolster the number of Tories, which is well below what it should be at this point in the electoral cycle. But more than that, she needs to ensure every article she writes, and every speech she makes is approved by Cameron and Co., else she may face the consequences Norman Tebbit didn't.

MUSE.



Breaking the mould

Emerging British artists **M8, 9 & 22**



Content

A little moan to begin. It was with throwaway delight that we saw our campus media friends had adopted a MUSE-esque front cover for their *Scene* publication, but *The Forge Press*? Come on now. The former *Sheffield Steel* have decided to entitle their new supplement magazine *Fuse*. They have also been 'inspired' by our full-stop design signature and lets not get into the crimes of our Oxbridge cousins... But now here's what can be found in the original *MUSE*. New column by HJF p. 4, Antonia 'Intelligentsia' Shaw interviews two emerging sculptors p. 8, *Skins* writer Lucy Kirkwood talks to Miss Connor p. 10. Fashion spectacular starting p. 20, with Clothes Show London report, Alexandra Groover and campus fashion shoot. Fiona Shaw chats to us about her new novel p. 22, and Isaac ponders the merits/pitfalls of the houseparty p. 24, film piracy debate p. 26, House hypochondriac Fransman poses serious questions about the EU elections in his wine column p. 27. Enjoy please, copy if you will.

Image Credits

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Campus Fashion shoot by Sam Newsome

M27 Arran Bowen-La Grange

Will Heaven A recipe for success

Unlike many of my bitter and disappointed peers, I never applied to Oxford or Cambridge. In fact, my teachers sensibly discouraged the idea. "Most decent universities turn students into scholars", one told me, "but at Oxbridge you have to be a scholar when you arrive". I was no scholar. At my very unusual school (don't ask), I was once asked to give a speech about Mozart, lasting fifteen minutes, to a room full of thirteen year-olds. A scholar would have floundered. But the journalist in me took over. "What happened to Mozart's corpse?", I started. "And where, specifically, is his skull?"

Briefly putting modesty to one side, let me tell you that the room full of spotty adolescents sat up, and the ensuing talk was riveting. Sure, thanks to Wikipedia and other such dubious sources that I would come to rely on greatly in my later existence, I did mention Mozart's forty odd symphonies and his twenty operas. However, as the supervising teacher informed me, I was demonstrating not scholarly learning, but the gifts of a budding journalist. (Without realising it, I had begun my journey to these pages.)

Anyway, by choosing journalism over scholarship, I also avoided the dreaded Oxbridge interview. We've all heard the stories. A young man walks into a don's room; his interviewer looks witheringly at him over the top of an open broadsheet newspaper and says, "surprise me". So the young man sets the don's newspaper on fire, and is swiftly awarded a place in the college. Another one: a don stands opposite the door of his study and throws a rugby ball at his interviewees as they enter – if they catch it they're in, but if they drop-

kick it back to him they get a generous bursary.

Universities need more than rugger buggers and arsonists. And I draw only one conclusion from these stories: Oxbridge dons are egotistical maniacs. The professors there enjoy terrifying A-level students so much that the interviews become sadomasochistic – orgies of intellectual masturbation. "What's the most interesting thing about a squirrel?" they ask with a tweedy grin.

Luckily, we didn't have to put up with this shit to get into York. But as I near the end of my degree, the prospect of job interviews in London is less than

"Oxbridge dons are egotistical maniacs tormenting A-level students"

enticing. A friend a few years older than me had the worst interview of his life last week. About a year ago he was made redundant from a firm of head-hunters (always the first to go in a recession) and has been working in a prep school in central London to keep himself afloat. Understandably, though, he has been trying to get back into the City and was recently interviewed at an investment bank.

"OK, so you're teaching at a prep school", the interviewer said ambiguously. "What have you achieved while you've been there?" My friend – let's call him John – racked his brains, and came up with the one thing he had recently

organised: the school's five-a-side football competition. "I organised the whole thing myself", he said proudly, "and it involved all of the pupils." Suddenly, the interviewer expanded slightly, grew a little blotchy and thumped the table, barking "No! No! No! It didn't involve all of the pupils did it? Because my son – Matthew – wasn't picked for any of the fucking teams, was he?"

John thought his interviewer had looked familiar, but only just realised then – as his palms became sweatier and his forehead a little more moist – that this man was a parent at his school. To make matters worse, his interviewer's son, one of the most unsporty children in the school, had point blank refused to play football, and had clearly lied to daddy about it. A sticky situation, I'm sure you will agree. Proud parents don't often back down where their little darlings are involved.

Third years will quickly find that job interviews are mini power trips for those on the other side of the desk. Because let's face it, if you've been tasked with interviewing hundred of graduates, you're probably not a very important person in the grand scheme of things. The office most likely isn't even yours to begin with. So you can be as nasty as you like, and you will get away with it.

The only solution is aggression. Take your own rugby ball in – and kick it at them. If they ask about your career aims, tell them your greatest wish is to become their superior and to sack them in the most humiliating way possible. Oh, and just before you leave, set fire to a squirrel for good measure. Interviewers love surprises.

The XY chromosome a broken man



This isn't real. You know that space in between sleeping and waking when you're blank, blissfully unaware of the cruel farce your life has become? Well mine just came to a crashing end. It's all flooding back to me, the fight, the sobbing, that moment when all that was dear to me dissolved in a sea of salty tears. The moment that the door slammed, and with it shattered all that I had cherished for the last thirteen months, one week, three days, seven

hours and four minutes. The moment she left me.

How could she do this to me? Everyone makes mistakes, and Christ knows I've made loads (I think maybe sleeping with Sha-naynay was the straw that broke the camel of our relationship's back), but to forgive is to be divine (or something). When I think back over everything we've been through, the laughs, the memories we've shared, how HOW could she throw it all away so recklessly? I remember the first moment I saw her – the first week of summer term first year, dancing her heart out on Vanbrugh paradise in the middle of a 24 hour protest against the closing of the Goodricke bridge (she had an incredible social conscience). I knew I had to have her, and immediately embarked on a three week campaign of facebook stalking, texting, 'accidentally on purpose' bumping into her on nights out, finally culminating in a 2am rendition of 'You are my sunshine' under her window at block B new Vanbrugh. Under the relentless tide of my affection she eventually caved, and the blissful summer which followed abides in my memory

as the most magical I have ever experienced.

True, there were difficult times, times when the hazy glow which engulfed our relationship was broken by the harsh light of bitter reality. Like when I discovered her smoking, and weepingly read out "Smokers harm themselves and those around them" until she collapsed into my arms and promised never to inhale the cancerous fumes of her Malbrough Lights ever again. Or the occasion that I forgot Dave and Lucy Fridays and she found me in the pub with Liam and Theo, getting acquainted with my fifth pint and the lovely Alice who works behind the bar. But those can be overcome, like bumps on the yellow brick road of our love.

Maybe it's too soon to give up hope. It's been seven hundred and fifty minutes since she left, I could win her back. Going my own way is not an option, I get my head in the game. It's now or never, I will not let her break free. I must make some gesture, show that I want her right here, right now, and if she lets me in, this could be the start of something new.

Performance aesthetics

My time in the North Room



I've had the wild shites all week. While the boyfriend does his dissertation I watch intermittent Channel 4 between toilet breaks. We're not speaking. Last night he came home gurning like a bastard and insisted we have sex. Three hours later I was wiping spittle off my tits like some Wild West Saloon girl with imperceptible payoff.

I should therefore be grateful for the embarrassing medical distractions. The miniature Vesuvius every time I hit the bog has become the only source of entertainment in my colourless life since he started his third year. Bring me coffee, proof-read the introduction... Fuck off. I'm not going to crawl on my belly like a reptile. Yes, we both know our relationship isn't going to last past the Summer Ball but we can at least enjoy beforehand. Except not even our last night together will be special, because you'll be fucked and I'll be bored. I'll be so bored.

When you call me (rare) I arrange my DVDs into alphabetical order, hoping you aren't going to see through my quotidian list of standard responses. "Hmmm". "Yeah". "Wow that's exciting". But of course you wouldn't, because you're on a third in Sociology and I only went out with you for that 'V' near your cock, and God wasn't everything else a disappointment.

So I sucked you off, gave it an hour and took you off to the library late on

for something exciting. Wasn't in any state to go up a flight of stairs so I dragged you to the North Room and hit the buttons on either side of the shelf with the Tsotsi-taal lexicon I'd looked at some days ago to pass the time.

God these books looked old.

You undid my bra strap and I put it back on and dropped my skirt, I undid your zip while I was there because you know I find your pubic hair disgusting. Poking out of your trousers, decontextualised from your scrotum, it looked so strange and comical. Fuck me, it looked hilarious. Were you going for a slash or were you about have sex with me?

You turned me round and did neither, oblivious to the state of my rectal facilities. We didn't have lube, I was in pain, but maybe if you fucked me harder I might still find some excitement.

Was there a camera in here? I couldn't see one so I imagined one instead, and I stared at it like a bastard. I looked at the ceiling for such a long time. Does no-one use the North Room? I'm quite quiet but you moan like a fucker.

As I perused the spines of the volumes documenting the development of Sub-Saharan language I felt a bowel movement coming on? God that would be funny. But you'd finished, and we left through the library gates sort of hand in hand.

social pariah



towards the pub. "Shit Tom, we're finished." "Yeah." "It's all over..." "Yeah." "Like actually it's done - are they not done? Why aren't they celebrating? Should they be celebrating? Why don't I feel happier? Are you happy? Have we passed? Shit Tom! We're finished!" A duck cackled in the distance. "Yeah."

A boy smiles at me and I smile back as I slip past him to the bar. "You don't remember me do you?" "Uh..." Bad question to ask in

me, a rare golden Ziggys moment... Suddenly I jump as I note a stray hand on my person. "What are you doing?" A new boy struggles to focus on my face. "Sticker! Vote!" I look down at the elections sticker to which his hand was still attached. "That's my breast." My new friend grins. "You have nice boobies." Snap back to reality.

We've lived in our house for two years. It's difficult for your average student to grasp household appliances in that time. "You're going to laugh, but..." "But what?" "I still don't know how to use the grill." "I see." "Can you show me?" "No." He stands in the doorway staring at me. Sigh. "Turn the knob on the left to 9 o'clock to set it to grill, then set the temperature about half way." "Right..." Long pause. "Where's 9 o'clock?" "I'm sorry, I'm not answering that." He sets about rattling in the kitchen. Around me more of the same species sit grooming and picking themselves. My eyes drift onto the green mould behind the TV. I soon find myself considering the black mould in the shower...and the pizza crusts on the table...and the spongy substance under the sofa...home. Bang. Silence. Muttering in the kitchen. "What do you mean you can't put metal in the microwave?"

"Can I have a pint of ale, please?" It is not my fault that I am very polite, very southern-sounding and happen to like ale. The barman looked at me. "Ale?" Pause. "Yes, please." As he pulled the pint he looked me up and down. "Is it cold outside?" he asks. "Pardon me?" "Is it cold?" "Um, not particularly." "It's just you're very...well-covered." Charming. "Oh...thanks." I drum my chipped fingernails on the bar and looked down at my oversized jumper. At least he can't see the holes in my tights. As I walk away a young lady with ample cleavage orders a vodka and tonic - slimline. I hold onto my dignity by a thread because I don't run back and attempt to prove my femininity. "Excuse me Mr Barman, sometimes I wear low-cut tops and drink white wine spritzer. Honest. I don't even drink Coke, just Diet Coke. Gotta watch the waistline. Have respect for me? Please?"

"The exam is now over. If you continue writing it will be considered an academic offence. Now please wait in your seats..." All students stared into the distance, most nursing serious monkey claw pen-writing hand. Outside it was grey. As we trickled out most people returned to the library, some back to bed, only two of us wandered

Henry James Foy

I'm being moaned out of my house. Once a joyful building populated by some of the most exciting people I knew, my abode is now filled with the mumbles and grumbles of those for whom the looming onset of graduation means only one thing: dissertation doom.

It has got to a point now where even a polite "Have you had a nice day?" is a soul-destroyingly big mistake. Without fail, the crushingly predictable answer will revolve around (at least) ten minutes of hyperbole-filled whinings about "the final 1,000 words", or "the tricky conclusion". Seriously, tell somebody who cares. Your supervisor, perhaps.

It's not like I don't care about the education of my housemates. I sincerely hope that they all do incredibly well - and I know they all have the potential. I'm just a little worried that with all this complaining, they can't have an awful amount of time to spend writing.

Frustratingly, there are far easier things to moan about in our grim excuse for a home. This week our drain flooded, leaving the yard - as I like to call it - awash with our raw sewage. My smoking housemate was aghast that his only worldly pleasure would be ruined by uneaten rice and grey sludge lapping up against his Dolce & Gabbana lace-ups. Our kitchen has fallen back into refugee camp mode after a brief period of cleanliness and the water board are threatening court action in seven days. My suggestion that we let them take us on over £138 was met with something resembling "I've got a fucking dissertation to do, don't you know?!" Well, yes, actually. It's painfully obvious.

One of my second-year housemates even went as far as running away to Scotland, well-regarded as the most morose, miserable, complaint-filled place in the whole world, to escape the miserable atmosphere that has engulfed our household like a toxic cloud of mustard gas. I'm worried that if I spend too much time with the doom-mongers, I might start the intellectual hypochondria nine months early.

Perhaps most annoying is the counter-attitude evinced by my two other third-year sufferers, proving an alternative is certainly pos-

sible. One, who literally crawled across his degree finishing line with a face full of stubble and an empty bottle of gin at least did it with a smile on his face, while the other is either blithely skipping towards judgement day without a care in the world, or at least keeping his worries - and his frenzied revision - to the safety of his bedroom.

To add insult to ear-bleeding injury, the two moaners-in-chief have absolutely nothing to worry about. One was selected from a list of 600 applicants to join the best graduate recruitment program for her industry of choice, while the other has a place on the MA course of her dreams. So, you see, it's all for show. I just didn't buy a ticket, nor want one.

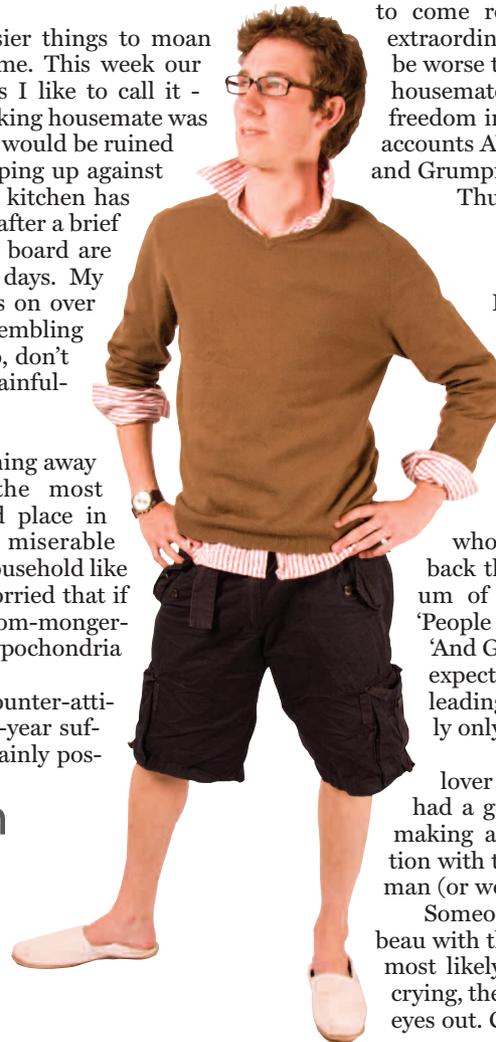
I've been promised that by the time you read this, the agony (for both them and I), will be over. This could be the arsenic lining on my particular cloud. I'm only starting to come round to the horrifying idea that two extraordinarily chirpy and carefree souls may well be worse than the current predicament. Third-year housemate No.1 - the gin bottle chap - exorcised his freedom in various Northern cities, and was for all accounts AWOL for a week. The chances of Grumpy and Grumpier doing likewise is slim.

Thus, to avoid inflicting the same upon second-years next year, myself and my other co-years in the house are holing up in a 3-bedroom retirement flat. Still, if I happen to grab you outside the Jet Garage on a gin run, don't ask if I've had a good day. I'll have serious vengeance issues.

If there's one thought that has crossed my mind most in the past week, it's whether or not the heartbroken lad or lassie who risked all self-respect and dignity to win back the lover they had lost through the medium of Rape Alley's uncompromising tarmac. 'People make mistakes', it began self-affirmingly, 'And God knows I've made loads'. At this point I expected some juicy gossip to emerge, hopefully leading to the writer's identity, but unfortunately only affirmations of love were to follow.

But did it work? I imagined every jilted lover whose ex was emotionally unstable and had a good stock of white paint in their garage making a rather uncomfortable phone conversation with the dumped, who would in turn curse the man (or woman) who had the romantic idea first.

Someone out there may have won back their beau with the biggest gamble of their (love)life. Still, most likely is that someone who spent three days crying, then one night painting, is still bawling their eyes out. Chin up. Everyone loves a trier.



"I'm worried that if I spend too much time with the doom-mongers, I might start the intellectual hypochondria nine months early"

The Strip Rhiannon Williams





A life in drag

Is classic, comic drag becoming irrelevant? As the definition of 'drag' continues to diversify, **Liam O'Brien** interviews Dusty 'O', Amber Dextrous and Davina Sparkle about their acts

My first face-to-face encounters with drag came fairly late on in my teens. It was my grandfather's seventieth birthday at the Homeguard Working men's club in Garston, a small, some would say 'rough', part of Liverpool. It was a club (now sadly closed) that accommodated both deadly serious rounds of nightly bingo and sordid gossip, the interplay of the two never so clear as when the bingo caller hollered "Legs 11" to the chorus of elderly women cackling "round yer neck".

On this particular night, in the belief that my grandfather probably wouldn't be celebrating much longer, Uncle Tony had appropriately donned a miniskirt, high heels, a cheap blonde wig and smeared on some lipstick to recite a crude poem about the sex lives of septuagenarians. With completely unshaven legs and a carefully coutured moustache, he grabbed the compere's microphone and reeled off line after self-penned line of unpalatable, dis-

gustingly salacious lyric. He finished to considerable applause and tottered his wayward gait back to the men's toilets. As the bingo prizes (for the bingo didn't stop even for a birthday), comprising Argos hair rollers and the market stall rip-off of Scalextric were handed out, the compere rounded off the evening with her softly sozzled take on Billie Jo Spears' 'Blanket on the Ground', cigarette in dutiful hand.

While Uncle Tony could hardly be described as being at the helm of a neat, professional operation, the fascination endured. In an arena where one would expect jibes and jocular heckling, the sweet, well-worn image of a man dressed as a woman for pure comic effect was received without prejudice. 'Drag' takes on more meanings, more connoted occupations with every passing year as diverse personalities further invent and revive its history. But here was a reminder in a pure, simplistic sense of its essential strain.

Drag is entertainment, and never

**Image from
Lipgloss series
by Elisabeth
Hoff**

was this so apparent as in my first forays into the Liverpool club scene, which were peppered with the witty bile of DJ Lavinia. Lavinia didn't put a great deal of effort into achieving an impressive drag look, let alone one pertaining to some realistic expectation of feminine quality. He (for there is no real point in using 'she') had a wife and three kids, and his spouse loved the fact his job was to be a drag queen. A wife, certainly, would have to sympathise, as Lavinia stopped songs to pass judgement on the artists ("The Spice Girls are a bunch of dried up old slappers"), and press upon the audience the odorous state of his vagina. After a clubgoer drunkenly inquired as to why he had opted to ditch his usual blonde wig for a brown alternative, Lavinia responded "I can't afford to do my roots 'cos of the credit crunch". On spotting a group of youths jerking in accordance with their Poppers headache, the DJ implored a middle-aged man to "Come here! If you've got any money you'll pull any

one of these whores."

DJ Lavinia certainly gave you some sound bytes to remember the next morning, alongside his rarely updated musical library. The comedic vein in drag is clear, and its association with scathing comedy was propelled into the mainstream first by Dame Edna Everage in the seventies and later by Lily Savage in the nineties. Paul O'Grady's persona was especially significant. A drag act on daytime television talking about shoving sage stuffing up the back passage of "Our Vera"? Yes, that happened in the nineties. Drag Queen Amber Dextrous credits Everage and Savage with "bringing the drag scene out of the gay bars and into the real world." She observes that "Even now there isn't really a mainstream drag queen on TV".

The innate hilarity of man in drag is something that is being challenged, however, by contemporary drag queens seeking to expand the field by which a drag artist defines herself. Jodie Harsh,



probably the most well-known active drag figure in the country, has taken on a special role within London's artistic community. Regularly papped alongside the cream of young London's celebrity talent, Harsh is more feminine, more fashion-conscious and more business-orientated than the classic drag queen model, as jarring as that sounds. DJ sets, nightclub promotions and careful aesthetic guarantee entry into the pages of *Dazed and Confused* and *i-D* and a consistent stream of low-key appearances on the terrestrial network.

My brief encounter with Jodie Harsh was profoundly humourless, however. Having exhausted myself dancing to her setlist at Circus in the (again, no longer extant) Soho Revue Bar, I had decided to sit down with a few friends in a quiet corner of the corridor. We were soon enough told by Jodie, security guard in tow, to stand up and dance or bugger off.

Dusty 'O', a longtime figure on the London drag scene, was about to go for dinner with Miss Harsh as I interviewed her. Dusty tells me that there is a tight-knit drag community, and that there isn't the bitchiness you might expect from people you would imagine to be competing against each other for gigs at the top London nightspots.

"Lady Lloyd was my lodger until recently. We all work different markets. I work pretty much as often as I want so I don't feel threatened by anyone. There is enough for us all."

It would certainly appear so, as a life in drag has made Dusty many friends, including Pete Burns and a host of other celebrities who found fame in the 1980s, when Dusty first appeared in London clubs: "Boy George is one of my best mates. Steve Strange is also a friend and I get on really well with Chris from the Pet Shop Boys".

All of this is a far cry from Dusty's less than optimistic start in life: "I was born in the hell hole that is Walsall in the West Midlands. I came to London 23 years ago and I can't imagine living anywhere else now". London represented an escape for Dusty, an essential flight from an area of the country that was not yet ready to accept her sexuality.

The name of a drag artist is often a sexual pun, but the name 'Dusty' holds for its owner a special relevance: "Dusty was the name the kids at school tortured me with. I was a Dusty Springfield fan. They liked Spandau Ballet. It was my 'gay' name. I turned it on its head though, adopted it and made a mint on the journey. So thanks

to all those small minded homophobes who are still sitting in their council flats in Walsall, getting fat and never doing anything! Your kind words helped me no end! Ha!"

Obviously walking around the streets of London dressed in ostentatious ensembles is likely to engender some negative reaction, but Dusty insists that, removed from Walsall, she now has the ammunition to battle back: "Sometimes people get clever; I can deal with it. They usually wish they hadn't bothered."

There has been tangible change in the country's attitude towards drag and other manifestations of alternative culture over the past thirty years. Dusty has seen this change take hold and develop, but says: "Drag has always been there. I think my club Trannyshack has helped focus kids who want to dress up, be it drag or not. Drag is kind of cool at the moment. Mainly 'cos the club has done so well and received so much attention. It goes in cycles. In the nineties Kinky Gerlinky [a London clubnight] was massive and drag was more mainstream. Then it went quiet. Now the wheel has turned our way again."

Drag has recently been thrust into media spotlight by virtue of two very disparate drag entities. The first is

what will surely be the short-lived fame of Mamma Trish, a mime drag persona in the classic mould, who appeared in the semi-final of Britain's Got Talent. Her outfits showcased her portly person, showered, of course, in tasteless glitter. However, the real development in drag is in how con-

"Dusty was the name kids at school tortured me with. It was my 'gay' name. I turned it on its head and made a mint"

temporary drag queens like Harsh and Lloyd have rendered the boundary between traditional drag occupations and the outside sphere increasingly permeable. Dusty arguably helped invigorate the slow increase in drag queens achieving minor celebrity status through consistent high-profile work and a fashion sense that is deeply and unwaveringly on trend.

Dusty believes however that there are more important things than individual status. A thriving drag scene needs to look at itself in the mirror and ensure that its original verve has not dissipated. Dusty errs on the side



Clockwise from left: Dusty 'O', Amber Dextrous with Electra Fence, Davina Sparkle as Cher, Davina press shot, David Pollikett pre-transformation, Jodie Harsh

of caution: "I am not keen on how corporate things have joined together with chains of gay bars and clubs owned by the same person. It takes the character out of the scene."

For Dusty the gay scene and drag culture are indelibly linked. There is no separation from drag and everyday life. On a personal level, David Hodge [her real name] and Dusty are one and the same, and Dusty feels "more confident when I have my face on because I think I look better. It's the same with anyone. If you have a new haircut or a new top you have more va-voom. My look just takes 3 hours to put on! I'm high gloss and high maintenance!"

The London drag scene requires its best-known names to evade traditional drag garments and keep in tandem with the capital's ever-shifting style. "I am not a tits and feather boa type gal," Dusty protests, "My look is more of a [Vivienne] Westwood one really. I don't do stand-up or sing 'I Am What I Am'. I am a dj and club host. That's what I have done for over twenty years."

Despite the vast differences between traditional drag queen cabaret and its modernised, slick London sister, Dusty praises the work of the acts travelling the country from Working Men's club one day to a hen do the

emphatic version of themselves or something entirely separate from their normal life. David Pollikett [aka Davina Sparkle] easily distinguishes between the two, and his act is in the vein of acidic comedy that Dusty so admires. Kensington-born, Pollikett moved to liberal Brighton to pursue his career. I interviewed Pollikett in character: "I work wherever they pay me dear!" he opens, "seriously, it can be the Social Club in Rochester or the Red Lion in Dudley, just depends who rings and what the job is, I work abroad in Thailand and the USA as well".

Briefly back to the pre-persona voice, David describes his alter ego Davina as "a cuddly but tarty Auntie who is gobby and blue but very caring."

Quickly switching back to Davina Sparkle, the differential between the two is nevertheless highlighted: "I'm never in drag darling in the street. How common! I'm a cabaret performer so I get ready in the venue, and NEVER parade around in sequins otherwise, it's amazing how many people think you're a tranny!"

Cardiff resident Paul Coombes [aka the wonderfully named Amber Dextrous] has been a comedy drag artist for the past thirteen years, and was featured in the media for helping his mother through cancer; building her self-confidence and self-image through simple, delicate but effective procedures like showing her how to treat her newly acquired wigs.

Coombes, too, likes to distance Amber from himself: "The persona tends to come on as I'm getting ready. Once all the make-up and the outfit and the wig comes off that goes away and it's just me again. But when I'm onstage there's not a hint of Paul anywhere; it's very much Amber Dextrous."

Contrasting, too with Dusty's phenomenal daily routine, it takes Coombes "about 50 minutes to get ready. I start firstly with the make up, so everything goes on from concealer, face powder, lip liners, eyeliner, liquid eyebrows, eyelashes, eye colours, lipsticks and straight after that the tights go on. If I need it on a bad day I'll wear a corset, and then the frock, the jewellery, the wigs and the shoes."

Amber Dextrous is a personality that through every facet evokes unabashed comedy. The outfits embody a brash, elemental physical comedy to go with the onstage verbal repertoire. Coombes has a busy schedule and does the 'full spectrum' of engagements geared towards the drag artist: gay clubs, hen and stag nights, civil partnerships. He notes especially that "I've done my fair share of social clubs and working men's clubs and sometimes they can be the best gigs you've ever done."

The crowds at working men's clubs haven't had any problems with Amber Dextrous. Coombes says "I've only ever

had problems doing stag nights. It's just the general heterosexual male attitude of 'I'm not going to laugh at the gay bloke dressed as a woman in case my mates take the piss out of me'."

Surprisingly, Coombes' dullest and least enthusiastic crowd have been those composed of transvestites, and is keen to distinguish between drag and transvestism: "Despite the fact they dress as women, underneath it all it's really just a big room of straight blokes. They imagine drag as us taking the piss out of them."

"Being a drag queen is just a job. It's part of you but it's still just a job. I don't wear women's clothes around the house. It all lives in a room upstairs and it comes down when I'm working. For them it's a way of life. They enjoy it, that's what they want to do. It's a personal pleasure, whether sexual or otherwise. But I get no turn on from wearing drag whatsoever."

Being an active member of the drag circuit does cause Coombes some problems though, especially in terms of maintaining relationships. "There are plenty of people that can't handle what I do for a living," he admits, "they can't separate my drag from me. Either they have a problem going out with a man who wears women's clothes or they have a trust issue. So if I'm going to work in a gay bar or gay club I'm going to be onstage and obviously I'm going to have attention when I come off stage and they think I'm going to cheat."

Coombes asserts though, that above all, drag is meant to be fun. This individual genre of entertainment has spawned a talented list of cabaret performers, comedians and personalities without whom our cultural influences would be indefinitely poorer. Drag queens like Davina Sparkle and Amber Dextrous, through their earnest slog up and down the country, are ambassadors for a specialist scene, employing drag as a way to connect with people, right there in their faces, and to sustain a feasible living.

The seemingly separate world of London drag culture is equally important in that it renders the public aware of drag figures in a way that small performances can't. It was ambition and talent that propelled Paul O'Grady and Dame Edna Everage into the spotlight, and the Twenty-first century is in desperate need of its own mainstream drag figure. I'd expect, given the current thrust of the capital's drag scene, for such a figure to emerge through stylistic, artistic or musical means rather than through comedic aspirations.

Whatever future drag might carve out for itself, its history is secure. Regularly plundered and appropriated for our student parties, and even a hairy scouser coughing up rude poetry, drag is a subsidiary entertainment that will always be found, drag queen-dependent, funny or interesting. **M**

next: "I think they are amazing. I love 'em. Good comedy drag is my fave thing! Those gals WORK!"

The key in understanding the difference between progressive, postmodern drag in London is Dusty's statement: "There is no persona."

For Uncle Tony, DJ Lavinia and the other drag artists I interviewed, the personality is the ego to the id, an

Sculpting the future of British Art

Antonia Shaw interviews two emerging British sculptors - Candida Powell-Williams and Saatchi Sensation Mark Davey - discussing their work and the challenges that face them

The current UK art scene is incredibly exciting and bursting with talent. The country is overflowing with galleries and museums, and support for modern art has never been stronger. Artists such as Tracey Emin and Grayson Perry have achieved a form of celebrity status. With some of the highest calibre art schools in the world and with patrons such as Saatchi, we are fostering the most promising artists of our generation. Emerging sculptors, Mark Davey and Candida Powell-Williams, are both bright young sparks and look set to have their names established in the contemporary art canon.

Davey and Powell-Williams are both recent graduates from the world famous and immensely respected Slade School of Fine Art. Powell-Williams has recently been granted a place at the

“I’m sick of hearing that, as a female sculptor who makes large-scale works, my art is commenting on my gender”

notoriously competitive Royal College of Art to continue her artistic development. Davey was one of four winners of the prestigious ‘4 New Sensations’ award in 2008. ‘4 New Sensations’, a competition launched by the Saatchi Gallery and Channel 4 in 2007, finds and showcases the most imaginative and gifted art school graduates in the UK. Saatchi’s nod bodes well for Davey – for as history can attest, Saatchi rarely backs a losing horse.

The art of the twentieth-century broke all boundaries and transformed the art object into something unrecognisable by traditional standards. The formalistic, conceptual and material innovations that took place completely changed the nature of art. To be successful in today’s world, an artist must discover and develop original ideas. This is no mean feat. Twenty-first century creatives face the challenge of bringing something new to the already sated table.

I would have imagined that Davey and Powell-Williams would purposefully seek to carve a unique niche in which to position their artistic practice. However, both artists refute this. Powell-Williams believes that “The idea of being novel is a futile argument. Novelty is more to do with the audience’s response. Contemporary audi-



ences expect to be shocked and wowed and therefore it makes it difficult to achieve”. Davey agrees: “I am not intentionally trying to create something novel or original. If your goal is to do that, then you are shooting yourself in the foot as I feel that’s almost impossible today, just as it seems difficult to shock anymore.” Instead both artists claim that their work is inherently unique, favouring the status of the autonomous artist. Davey insists that he simply “creates what is important to me”. And Powell-Williams explains that her work is “all about me being the maker, my fingerprints and my choice of colour, that’s what makes it original.”

Powell-Williams states that the stimulus of her “work comes fundamentally from a desire to make but is led by our daily exchanges with the material world, the way we use objects and structures and our expectations of objects.” She finds the humour of Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton and the work of artists such as Franz West, Rebecca Horn, Paul McCarthy and Kippenberger influential. Conversely, Davey alleges that he takes less inspiration from other artists, although his work involving fluorescent strip lighting appears indebted to the minimalist sculptor Dan Flavin, and his use of text is akin to that of Bruce Nauman and

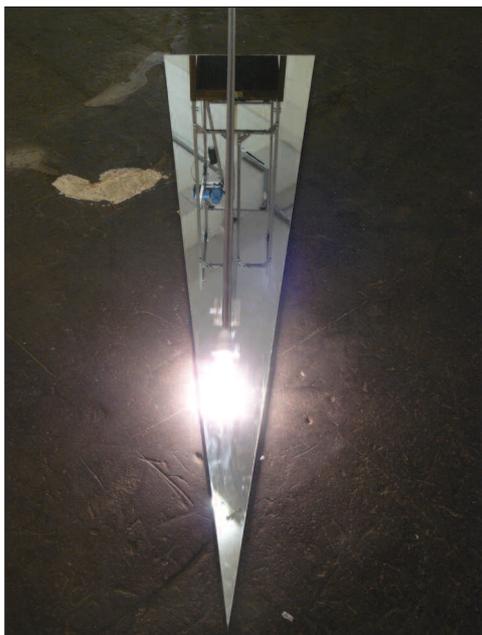
Tracey Emin. However, like Powell-Williams, he too finds the “experiences in everyday life” most motivational, such as “certain types of chair in a restaurant, to a shop window display, to the way things or people accidentally touch/interact in the ‘real’ world.”

Both Davey and Powell-Williams discuss their work, perhaps inadvertently, with a Minimalist rhetoric, echoing the concerns and interests of Judd, Morris – leading artists of that 1960s movement. Indeed Powell-Williams asserts that she is “more interested in an experience of objects in a phenomenological sense. I enjoy the power of the aesthetic in a sort of theatrical sense,” and in doing so brazens Minimalist buzzwords. Whilst Davey chastises the limitations of painting in a very Juddian language, believing that a “painting hides away on a wall, being restrained to its edges. By default, it is limited by the finite size of the stretcher. It’s limited in the things that it can do and in the dimensions it can inhabit.” When the Minimalist movement first came into fruition in the 60s, charges of over-conceptualisation and a lack of aesthetic were levied it at by major critics of the time. Yet neither Davey nor Powell-Williams (despite using a Minimalist vocabulary) believe that they are concept-led, with Davey

claiming that it is “very definitely secondary to its aesthetic. The spectacle of when the materials touch, the construction and how the piece actually functions and presents itself to the viewer are prime concerns of mine.”

Due to the fewer creative limitations involved in creating sculpture as opposed to painting, it is often bandied about that three-dimensional works have more relevance to contemporary practice than two-dimensional ones. Davey certainly sides with this line of argument deeming that “sculpture is not just more relevant to contemporary art, but to the world we live in and our society itself as well. It inhabits physical space; it puts itself on a level playing field with the viewer, and has the inherent power to challenge and to be noticed. It is everywhere and all around us. From the way a street lamp flickers to the way someone has decided to stack their deckchairs in their front garden.” Powell-Williams concurs, believing that “sculpture’s relationship to space and our bodies makes it impossible to ignore and will always remain relevant.”

Physical interaction, or its absence (“unfulfilled bodily interaction” in Powell-Williams’ case), is a principal concern for both artists. Davey explains that the object-subject relationship is



Opposite page: Mark Davey, *Untitled 2*, 2008

Clockwise from top: Davey, *Triangular*, 2008; Davey, *Poker and Chair*, 2008; Candida Powell-Williams, *Balanced Trap*, 2009; Powell-Williams, *Wobbles Small*, 2006-7; Powell-Williams, *Untitled*, 2009.

so imperative to his work because “first and foremost, they are physical things in a room; they are sculptures. But also because of the language I use; that of flashing lights, moving parts and sound. These devices force themselves upon you. I hope they are what will draw you to the work and keep you engaged.” The phenomenological interaction between the viewer and a modern sculpture is intrinsic to the process of engaging with the work. And as this relationship with the object is instinctual or pre-lingual it could be argued that contemporary sculpture is the most accessible of the modern arts.

Movement in a sculpture has a significant impact on the spectators viewing experience and both artists are interested in kinetic sculpture – although Davey has explored it more to date. A moving work contradicts our assumptions of the static nature of sculpture, anthropomorphises it and can have a mesmerising and hypnotic effect on the viewer. Additionally the visual interest of the work is heightened and rendered somewhat instable and tense, as a different form is presented as the sculpture undergoes its flux. Powell-Williams is “interested in movement in relation to the functionality of objects and the potential for movement or function.” Whereas, Davey is “fasci-

nated with the repetition that the movement provides; just as you think a light is going to smash or a piece of the work is going to topple, it stops just short of that crucial point.” He adds that movement “has very erotic connotations and undertones,” yet he refutes the fact that his “gender is particularly played out through the work I make. I suppose a lot of it is very phallic, but I can think of plenty of female artists who use similar themes in their practice.” Female artist, Powell-Williams, forcefully insists that she is “sick of hearing that, as a female sculptor who makes some larger scale works, my art is commenting on my gender. I refuse to consider it as a major role in my work. I’m not trying to say anything about my gender. I suspect that for men it’s less of an issue.”

Both Davey and Powell-Williams face many challenges ahead. Whilst we have a utopian idealisation that art is separate from our capitalist world it is in fact very much a commodity – indeed many artists, such as Warhol, have explored such issues. These young artists recognise the financial strains that lie ahead of them, as Davey points out “The cost of materials and studio space is crippling”. However, they both remain staunch in their artistic process, and refuse to demean their



work by simply churning out commercial saleable art. Powell-Williams heroically states, “I’d rather work in a boring job during the week so I can make what I want than try to sell work that I don’t believe in.” Whilst Davey taunts, “if I wanted to make lots of money from my work, then I would have been a

painter!”

Aside from financial instability, essential questions about the nature of contemporary are currently being posed – and it is Davey and Powell-Williams who must formulate a retort. In particular, Powell-Williams feels that the role of the gallery in exhibiting artwork will be reconsidered, and she considers how art will evolve. She ponders “what to do with the surplus of images and objects, and if artists should be more concerned about being green.” She also frets, “That what I am told is the future of contemporary art (I’m thinking of the Altermodern exhibition at the Tate) cannot possibly include me, and more to the point, that I won’t want to be part of it.” Being a contemporary artist is fraught with difficulties and dilemmas, and indeed being an artist can be perceived as a ‘calling’. As Davey neatly put it, “I think being an artist is one of the hardest jobs you can do. But I wouldn’t swap it for anything.”

More of Davey’s and Powell-Williams’s work can be viewed at: www.mark-davey.com and www.candidapowell-williams.com. You can also see video footage of their moving sculptures. Both will be collaborating on a sculpture to be exhibited opposite The Courtyard from 16th June - 3rd July M

Lucy Kirkwood

Laura Connor interviews the young playwright and *Skins* writer



Theatre has embraced a new culture: the culture of youth. Bright and hopeful young creatures are sprouting up from every corner of the industry, set to transform the way the generations of today and the future are responding to the stage. Over the past few years, the industry has witnessed a significant group of writers, all with their birth-dates lodged firmly in the eighties, scoop recognition and awards galore: Polly Stenham's debut play *That Face* won the *Evening Standard's* 2007 Charles Wintour Awards; Natalie Abrahami won the James Menzies-Kitchin award producing *Play* and *Not I* in 2005; and Bola Agbaje's first play *Gone Too Far!* won the Laurence Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliated theatre.

And then there's Lucy Kirkwood. Despite still being in her twenties, Kirkwood expresses a degree of antipathy towards this youthful direction in playwriting; whether it was the key to her success or not. "I think it's kind of shitty how youth-focused new writing's become. Obviously it's worked in my favour, but when was the last time you saw a new play staged at any of the big London Fringe theatres by an unknown writer in his/her forties? [It] doesn't happen."

Whilst still in the midst of her English degree at Edinburgh, Kirkwood was plucked from virtual obscurity to become winner of the prestigious PMA award, and has never looked back since. From there she received her first two professional commissions from the National Theatre studio and the Bush. The irony is that the award winning play in question, *Grady Hot Potato*, had been rejected by the National Student Drama Festival, only to then be passed on to the jury of the PMA award.

So what is the key to cracking the more 'mature' facets of the industry? Kirkwood suggests that it may be youth's optimistic vision: "I always find myself leaning towards hope. Maybe that's a function of me being a bright-eyed twenty-five year old - as age encroaches I'll probably become a pessimistic and bitter old crone who writes nothing but interminable dystopian epics in which everyone dies at the end. Horribly."

But it is easy to see why Kirkwood's plays are so enthralling. They are "ambitious" and "daring" according to the *Edinburgh Festival Guide*, "dark" and "dramatic" according to *The Independent*. Such experimentalism ultimately contains a degree of risk, however. *The Edinburgh Festival Guide* goes as far as to suggest that Kirkwood's innovative play *The Umbilical Project* (2006) contained an element of the "indulgent". Kirkwood doesn't see this as necessarily relevant, however; she sees audience reception as simply stemming from the quality of the writing. "I think it's more about how well written it is. An audience will

go pretty much anywhere with you, if they feel they're in good hands," she explains. "I have no desire to align my work as a whole with one particular genre. Right now I'm working on a play about sex traffic, one about Chinese-American international relations and a really odd comedy about spinsters...I like to keep things interesting for myself."

Although Kirkwood may be reluctant to align herself with one particular genre, her work abruptly aligns itself not only alongside the industry's love-affair with youthful experimentalism, but with the rise of female dominance. It is significant that the list of influential young British playwrights is predominantly women, from Polly Stenham to Bola Agbaje. Arguably, in recent years the doors to British theatre for women have remained firmly closed. Whilst women have made significant rises in the workplace, the British theatre still seemed reluctant to embrace change. But change is on the horizon. The appointment of Vicky Featherstone in late 2004 as the first artistic director of the National Theatre of Scotland was seen as significant, and the numbers of women easing themselves into jobs in major theatres, especially the Gate and the Bush, has been rising ever since.

Kirkwood has a very direct attitude towards how far she thinks equal-

ity in the industry has come. Does she think there is an even representation of male and female influence? "Certainly not." And is this because male writers are more encouraged to work within the industry? Seemingly not: "If anyone tries to tell you this is because of a lack of women writing, break their face."

Sexual equality is an issue close to Kirkwood's agenda. She is writer in residence at The Clean Break Theatre Company, which describes itself as a "theatre working with women whose lives have been affected by the criminal justice system," a project about which Kirkwood is passionate. But just how effective is the theatre in addressing and challenging prejudices against women? "I think when theatre's done well it can be the most powerful calling card for a 'cause' - the trick is convincing the audience they're not watching a play about a 'cause' - they're just watching a good play." This may be true - and Kirkwood gives me a solid list of candidates who achieve this. But what about her own writing? Here, Kirkwood expresses a little deflation. "I was surprised when no-one seemed to read *Tinderbox* (2008) as a feminist play."

Despite their reception, she still sees her projects as influenced by female issues: "I would call myself a feminist, by which I mean feel very

strongly about the predominantly masculine exchanges and cycles and systems of power that govern our society both visibly and tacitly." She is keen though, to prevent these views from being seen to define her work.

Kirkwood hasn't only spread her creative vision across the theatre industry. She is also developing a TV series with Kudos Film & Television and writes for the Company Pictures TV series *Skins*. She describes the transition from playwriting to television writing as "like feeling another set of muscles you never knew you had getting stronger and stronger as you exercise them more."

By flexing her promising muscles in both mediums, Kirkwood is sure to have an interesting career ahead of her. She says that she has plans to continue working in both theatre and television "until the point that I'm chucked out." Despite her unprecedented success, she retains a focus on reality: "I know it won't always be like this - but the wonderful thing about writing is that you can just do it. You can just sit down and start typing."

Hopefully, her vision of age's unpleasant encroachment eventually tarnishing her work will be evaded because a change towards the radical and the risky has given the industry an assertive boost. Kirkwood has proven this with candid brilliance. **M**

Above: Lucy Kirkwood
Below: production shot from Kirkwood's *Tinderbox* by Simon Annand



Playing real good for free

Olivia Houghton wanders the streets in search of melodies and the bustle of buskers

“We spent our last pennies on a van so there was no money to eat or buy petrol. We busked on the street and realised that singing together really worked. We earned loads of money and it took us on incredible adventures.” Busking isn’t always as exciting as this but it’s certainly a phenomenon deeply rooted in our society. Let me take you back to the year 451 BC. Roman law ruled that anyone composing or singing libelous songs in public would be prosecuted on pain of death. Thankfully, laws have changed a little over the past 2000 years and are now less drastic. There is now no law in Britain prohibiting busking. However, many local councils have decided to pass a by-law concerning street musicians in their constituency. Regulations vary from town to town, ranging from a complete ban to a warm welcome. York City Council states that busking “provides interest for both locals and tourists”, but buskers are here required to apply for a license.

London’s Covent Garden, the heart and soul of the West End and famous, among other things, for being home to the only busking pitch in the world dedicated entirely to classical music and opera, takes legislation one step further. All musicians and street performers must audition to secure a busking pitch in this tourist hub and then compete against each other for prime-time slots each week. Mitch, a Covent Garden busker and member of string quartet Bowjangles, defends the managements stipulations: “They know how many people are going to be down here and they will get a bad reputation if there’s a really awful performance going on and everyone leaves. So you have to go through the whole audition process to mean that you’re actually giving people a good time.”

Successful auditionee Seija, a Finnish born, Australian singer is trying to forge her way in the operatic world. The opportunity and experience she gains from her time busking in Covent Garden is invaluable: “Down here so many people come past I get lots of auditions and extra work out of it, it’s really beneficial to my career.” It’s not all glitz and glam though, Seija tells me there are ups and downs to busking in Covent Garden. “Some days are great and some are terrible. The winter can be really awful because people aren’t down here.” This wasn’t the case when I visited - the market building was rammed -but this too can be problematic; “it can work against you if it’s really busy because of the high noise level. It really tires you out, my technique had to improve really quickly here so I didn’t damage my voice.”

The need to protect your voice is something that singer-songwriters Susie Ro and Ayla soon realised when they started touring the country busking and they now take a portable amplifier with them wherever they go. “We always drag it up little cobbled paths because you can pretty much guarantee that’s where the nice places for busking are.” Susie Ro continues, “we have found that amplification really helps with busking. People can sit at a distance and listen to a concert and enjoy the music. It appears more professional if we’re amped and people like that. We’re not exactly suit and tie kind of appearance, we look less like homeless people if we’ve got an amp.”

Back in Covent Garden everybody looks very professional and they like to put on a show to get noticed. “We do a choreographed performance and we definitely try to get people involved. We retain an audience like that so we make more money,” says Mitch, adding that “kids are good for us because we can go and play to them.”

But in 2008 the governing body of Covent Garden is alleged to have proposed cuts in allocated busking time of 30%. Unsurprisingly, there was much furor, resulting in petitions and busking protests, which involved musicians performing the cancan whilst playing their instruments. “People come here to see live shows,” Mitch objects, “I don’t think people really come here to shop so trying to cut the busking down is like trying to cut down what Covent Garden is about.” When I contacted the management they maintained that this wasn’t the case and that no cuts have been made. The time frame for each slot is thirty minutes, as it has been in previous years. But, the new guidelines, they say, ensure performers work between these given time allocations to avoid the performance clashes and overlapping that had happened in the past. It is clear the performers are riled up but there certainly wasn’t any shortage of entertainment when I visited.

“This is proper busking, with proper street performing” Steve, another member of Bowjangles, tells me, “It’s professional busking.” This notion contrasts with my initial understanding of what busking is. To me, the practice of playing music on the street in exchange for tips has always appeared to be something of a spontaneous act. Natural and almost off the cuff. I have been proved wrong and as the aforementioned regulations attest, it is often far from an act on a whim by fanciful musicians. Or even, as I had also supposed, primarily a monetary necessity. Rather, it is often in their desire to get noticed and become successful that pro-



Susie Ro and Ayla entertain passersby in Totnes, Devon

fessional musicians still return to the streets to get their music heard by unsuspecting audiences.

I cannot have been the only person to think of busking as an impromptu act. Many are unaware of the hurdles through which the aspiring busker must jump if he or she wants to busk legally. Musicians casually embellishing our street corners with melodies belie the regulatory framework that supports the busking system. Susie Ro and Ayla are two musicians who flout convention and current practice. Their thoughts on busking present a very different outlook from these strictures and confines. “It’s a really great way of creating bridges between certain groups of people.” Ayla frowns as if to think, then elaborates, “there are certain audiences that we would normally connect with, by busking you expose yourself to people who wouldn’t see you otherwise. You can have really beautiful moments with strangers. There’s some kind of magical space round busking.”

With their debut album *She and I* not long released, for Susie Ro and Ayla busking means more than just earning money. “Since we recorded our album it’s about the CDs as well. Singing to people, busking, is promotion for the album. It’s an exhausting way of making music and making money though so we combine busking with gigs and that’s how we survive. The aim is to be able to

From the eloquence of Seija’s professional busking (her deep slow curtsey at the end of her set left me in no doubt of her high aspirations within the operatic world), to Susie and Ayla whose serious but soulful attitude suggests a much closer relationship with the music and what it means to them. Not least because they have written it themselves.

To reach a state where we can talk about professional busking we have come a long way from Roman law. It seems to me that, by administering regulatory systems of varying degrees, local councils and London borough managements are making attempts to engineer a social atmosphere. Nowhere is this more true than in Covent Garden and the London Underground (which, in 2003 launched ‘official’ busking pitches at designated and highly sought after spots). These managements have realised that buskers will continue to entertain crowds and passers-by even if it is illegal. However, by licensing and auditioning each performer they are able to monitor and control to a greater extent that which is played, and at the same time appear to be supporting the practice. Perhaps they are, but on their own terms.

Personally, I am torn between the benefits of a legal and legitimate platform for buskers and the restrictions that this places on them. Essentially they are being monitored: from the hours they play, the location they choose, right down to the sort of music they busk with, the authorities keep tabs. In our technophilic age maybe these regulations will advance to a future where buskers need not leave their homes to entertain. Instead their image and music will be projected to designated pitches where admirers may make a donation of their choice by swiping their personal chip (embedded in their arm, of course) over a credit point. Although this extreme example is unlikely to materialise, the conjecture however exists to highlight the irony of an art which is essentially organic in its nature being subjected to regulatory systems. **M**

“We spent our last pennies on a van so there was no money to eat or buy petrol so we busked. We had incredible adventures”

live from our music.”

It sounds like there is a knack to successful busking and all the buskers I’ve met have left me in no doubt that it is an unpredictable pastime. However, I have come across buskers who approach their art in different ways.

Behind the limelight

There's another side to celebrity. **Holly Thomas** talks to the people behind the people



Everyone wants to be the star. Who cares about the backing singers when Beyonce's on stage? How many people know the names of Obama's bodyguards- compared to the millions worldwide who listen to his speeches? No-one wants Robin if Batman's available.

But we need the Robins. The music and literature industries are brimming with names recognised the world over, the Rowlings, the Jacksons, the Timberlakes. They are giants in their fields, and justifiably so. Yet they are the tip of the iceberg, their fame the face of a world teeming with a largely unsung population of sidemen, of supporting acts, choreographers, and ghostwriters. These people are the glue, supplying much of the talent for which the rich and famous are lauded, and in many cases laying the foundations for their own future stardom in the process. But is it actually preferable to remain in the shadows? If you are doing what you love, perhaps it is better to do so almost anonymously, free of the scrutiny and accompanying pressures which are the main (only?) downside of a life in the spotlight. On the other hand, an 'apprenticeship' as the shadow to another's celebrity can be a step on the ladder to success in one's own right, one which serves to develop a creative artist. Prior to her own meteoric rise to fame, Lady Gaga wrote respectively for Britney and the Pussycat dolls. Now she dominates the charts independently, with the conviction of an artist who has served her time outside the limelight. Below are the voices of a lead guitarist and backing man, a ghost writer, and a choreographer. Their careers are exemplary of the advantages gained both behind the scenes and centre stage.

Andrew Gross wrote six books as a ghost writer for mega author James

Patterson. Patterson ranks second in the world only to JK Rowling in terms of book sales and has sold about 150 million books, making him about \$50m a year. Gross is now a bestselling author in America, Australia, the UK and Singapore in his own right.

"Why does anyone who's a successful businessman end up a thriller writer? They get fired. That's sort of what happened to me. I just came home one day without a job (Gross had previously worked in women's sports clothing as the president of le coq sportif, a French company). I'd left a little too much blood on the field to go back to it, and I'd been harbouring the idea for a political thriller. So I came home and said to my wife 'give me a year to execute this'. The year turned into two- I had to go through the process of getting an agent and finishing a manuscript, and it basically got rejected by twenty people. I was sitting feeling sorry for myself when, like a bad melodramatic novel the phone rang, and the person on the other end said "Would you be willing to take a call from James Patterson?". Out of the blue, that call literally changed my writing life. I went in at the deep end.

The reason Patterson found me, so to speak, is that this manuscript that I wrote which didn't get published was passed on to him with a note attached to the cover that said "This guy does women well". This has been my way into the business I guess. I seem to write with a sensitivity towards that side, and strong heroic women populate my books with Patterson. I don't know that that [writing women] would be his strongest suit, but it's something I do naturally. I guess it's just part of your creative DNA, some people do spies well, I do women well. The man who I have as an ongoing character is probably an idealised version of who I

would like myself to be.....

It was difficult playing 'second fiddle' to Patterson. During my time with Jim there was no getting out at all. My face, my presence brought up questions that he didn't really want to deal

"Image without music is a waste of time, but with the two together you get Elvis's fantastic quiff, the Beatle's jackets"

with- who's writing etcetera.... And at the time I was the only person really doing that kind of thing- now people are much more open about their relationships and the process. Back then, people didn't really want attention drawn to it. I feel, and think Jim would feel, that I did have a good hand in those books, to make them better books, and I'm sure that had a good effect on his career. It was frustrating not to be at the front of the market

[That said] I was in love with the job. Having spent two years in the wilderness the urge wasn't ego for me, it was feeding my family, and feeding it pretty damn well, doing something that I really liked. A couple of years before I couldn't even get my book published, so for me it was a great opportunity, a great gig and I would have continued it indefinitely. And for Jim I know that it was incredibly convenient 'being' Patterson because who knows who's doing what on his books. I would say that every book I wrote with Jim came from his idea, his central concept, and he certainly gave me a terrific launch in my own career. Everyone assumes that he's taking

someone's book and stamping his own name on it, making millions of dollars at someone else's expense, but it's not like that at all.

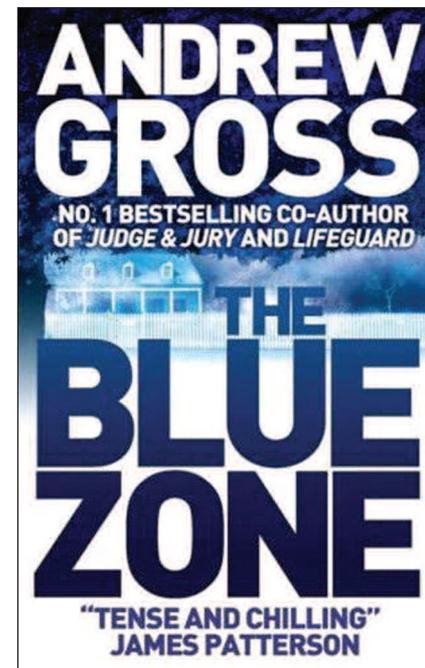
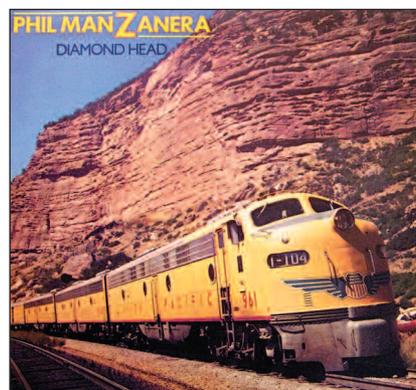
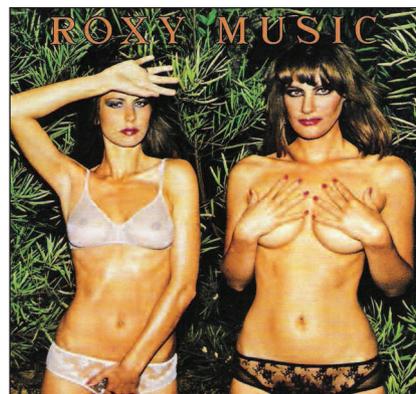
He [Patterson] was a staunch believer in outlining books in advance, chapter by chapter. He would present me an outline, I would change a lot, and he was very flexible towards me. Certainly by the end of the seven years he was just vetting the things I was saying, and I would go to town and do most of the work. He had the final draft, but the majority of it was just speeding it up, making it tighter. That was his way of standardising the brand, so to speak. I would advise any writer to take this gig because it was extremely remunerative too, in some cases into seven figures. I think those days are gone though, even with Patterson, I had the advantage of being his first, maybe closest [ghostwriter]. And for the degree to which you can look at it as an apprenticeship I think it's really worth doing- learning where to drop clues, build suspense.

[Going it alone] was just sort of an accident. I went to a dinner party. This couple had come in his n her Ferraris, talking about all this glamorous travel they were doing. Then a month later in the New York times I read that this very same person had been arrested for money laundering to the Columbians. Out of that came the outline for The Blue Zone. I found an agent within an hour that I wanted, and within a week four publishers were bidding for it. I got a three book deal from this outline. Of course by that time my resume included six number one bestsellers, and there was the curiosity out there as to what I would do.

[On whether Patterson is now his 'ghost'] I do hear his voice, yes. In a default situation I do always revert



TINA TURNER ONE MORE TIME LIVE IN CONCERT



From right: Manzanera and Andy Mackey in concert, Tina Turner concert poster, Roxy music album cover, Manzanera album cover, Manzanera in Roxy music, Andrew Gross's The Blue Zone

back to what he would say- when I'm thinking whether or not I'm going to kill someone, put people into bed together.....and I do usually obey the voice! When I look in the mirror I see his face behind me a little bit."

Phil Manzanera is the lead guitarist of Roxy Music, the seventies super group which along with Bowie represented the arty, fashion-conscious end of glam rock. He has since enjoyed a highly successful solo career, written for Pink Floyd, and with artists such as Brian Eno, Tim Finn, Robert Wyatt, and David Gilmour. He owns his own recording studio where artists such as Annie Lennox have worked.

"When I joined Roxy they'd already been going for a year. In fact, I'd been in a band at school, at exactly the same time Bryan Ferry was forming the embryonic Roxy. The first time I auditioned I failed the audition, but I remained friends with them all. The person they originally got turned out to be not quite right after a few months, and so they asked me to join. I was four years younger than them, they'd all been through university and seemed quite grown up. Bryan Ferry and Eno were teaching in fact. I did feel slightly intimidated, but not in a bad way, I was in awe. They had friends who were very talented, and they were very talented. But after the first album my own creativity came into play.

In those days you joined the navy to see the world, and it was like that. I was twenty one, I wanted to travel, and I had no long term thoughts about my career. It was like Christmas every day. That period was very exciting because it was all so new. When we first appeared on Top of the Pops people couldn't believe it- we were so different, no one had seen anything like us before. People thought we were from another planet. We were interested in

fashion, the whole history of Rock and Roll is about image. Image without music is a waste of time, but when you get the two together you get Elvis with his fantastic quiff and gold suit, the Beatles with their Beatle haircuts and Beatle jackets. It's the entire aesthetic.

"In hot pants and bras you can't hide, you've got to have tough skin to repel the death stares! Women nudge their husbands"

I would say I had more of a creative connection with Brian Eno [than Bryan Ferry]. After he left the group I continued working with him for another four years, and then through all my musical career really. Before I joined Roxy I was going to avant garde music concerts on the south bank and stuff like that, and I'd bump into him.

Right from the beginning people started doing solo projects. Bryan did solo stuff, I started doing solo albums... but Roxy as a beast is quite 'different' in the way we work as a band, we're always doing a million things at once.

You learn how to work the system. If you play as Roxy music, you can probably seat ten thousand. If you're Bryan Ferry, then you don't book more than probably two or three thousand, if you're me then not more than a couple of hundred...I'm joking. All my live stuff has some connection with me personally though. Unlike the rest of Roxy I was brought up in South America, in Cuba during the Revolution, Venezuela, then sent to boarding school in England. Much of my music reflects that. Roxy had a very distinctive 'look', you can hang a lot of visual

imagery on a band, my stuff is much more personal."

Clare Turton is a professional dancer and choreographer who has worked with acts such as Take That, Pink, Ricky Martin, Cher and the Spice Girls. In 2000 she auditioned for Tina Turner's live show, and has been with her ever since. She is now Tina's 'dance captain', and performs with her as her lead dancer.

"I've been with Tina since 2000, doing corporate gigs and shows. I was working as a dancer and Tina was promoting the single 'When the Heartache is Over'. I sent in my audition tape, she looked at all of the tapes and chose three of us. I've been with her [on and off] ever since.

I've never had the loyalty she shows from any other artist. When she brings you into the camp and allows you into the family, it's such a beautiful thing. Other artists are wonderful too of course- I'd been devastated when Take That split, because I really wanted to dance with them growing up. So when they reformed and I danced with them it was surreal, they're really sweet guys. Tina spoils you though, a lot of artists you work with are very insular onstage, they do their job but never interact with anyone else. You're just the backing dancers. Tina's very engaged, she'll give you a cheeky smile, share a moment with you, and those moments are so precious.

Lots of people are sceptical. They think the dancers do the hard work. But there's never any inconsistency in Tina's performance. Every single night she gives the same level of energy and professionalism. So when you're working with someone like that and witnessing that, it pushes you a little bit harder. Even if you feel tired, and your muscles are sore, you think well she never takes it easy, so you don't either.

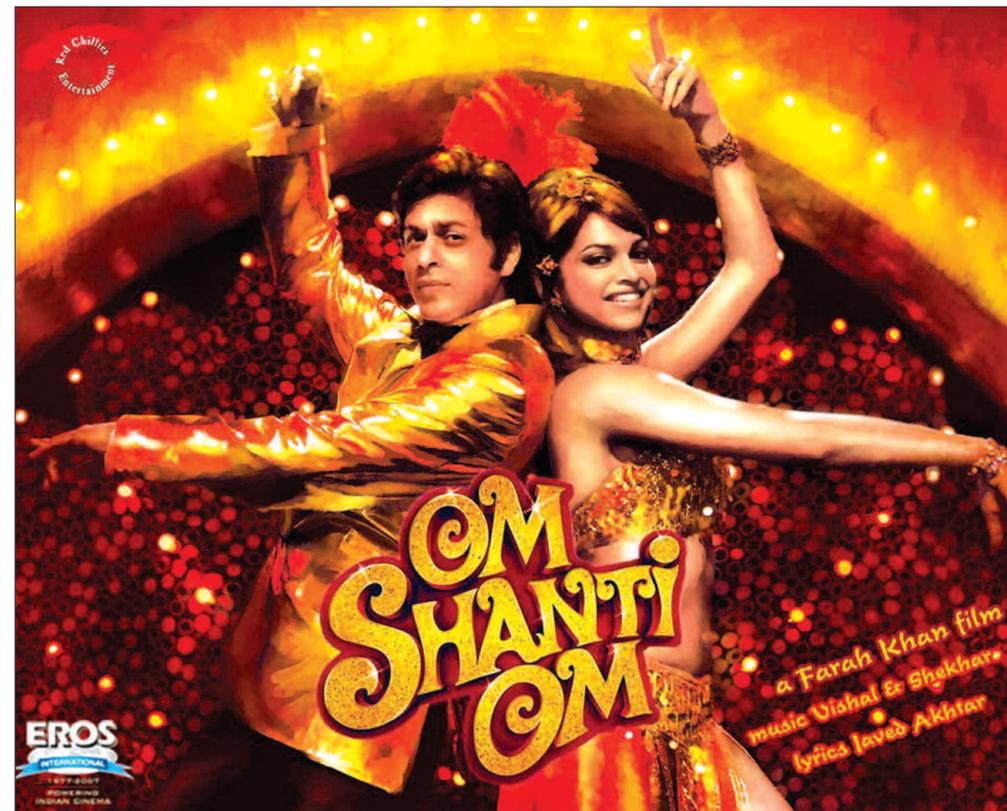
It's so much fun. There's so much camaraderie, and that comes from Tina as well. She's a really cool boss. She's a perfectionist and rightly so, and that filters right down the crew, so everyone is very particular about their role. She's hands on with everything, from the set, to the choreography, to the music. Everything is reported to her because she knows that even the smallest thing is a vital element in the whole show.

It's normal for artists to come in for rehearsals and go at half pace because they're saving themselves for the show. But as soon as Tina comes in she's singing and doing the dance routines full on, all the time. She has such a vitality for life and it's so inspirational. Nothing gets under her skin, she's so matter of fact about everything.

You get some women in the audience who are really supportive and love us straight away. Then you get women who are a bit tentative. You see them nudging their husbands, "What are you looking at?". In the hot pants and bras we can't hide, you've got to have tough skin to repel the death stares! But then they come round and everyone ends up having a brilliant time.

[Sometimes it's when things don't go to plan that you can tell a real star] One night, her shoe came off. These are the moments when I look at her and I think, you're so amazing. Her shoe came off and no one really noticed, because she still stood there, talking to the audience. Then one of the guys onstage placed the shoe in front of her, like a Cinderella moment, and she slipped her foot back in and carried on with the show. Pink does that sort of thing all the time, forgetting the words, laughing, and starting again.

Tina's so relaxed, I have no idea how she does it. I'm trying to work that one out. And when I find out I'm hoping to apply that to myself!" **M**



Bollywood

Henry James Foy charts the Indian film industry's irresistible journey west

Boy meets girl. Preposterously society-defying courtship ensues. Flashes of innocent eyes and longing stares. Antagonist steals girl. Girl goes crazy during pre-marital dressing session. First of many dreamy song-and-dance sequences supported by thousands of handily choreographed house servants. Rain. Faux-kissing. Dancing. Rain. More dancing. Happiness in the form of marriage, societal breaches reconciled, suitor despatched.

There's usually some form of Romeo and Juliet plot in traditional Bollywood movies, but who cares? Revered suave-talking, hydraulic-hipped actors and stunning, fair-skinned high-pitched seductresses have made for an unbeatable combination – enthralling billions across the sub-continent.

But Bollywood has overgrown its geographical and cultural constraints and is taking the international market by storm. The Indian diaspora, rooted in the UK, the US and the Middle East are changing the Bollywood ball game.

Last year's *Slumdog Millionaire* achieved what Bollywood has been threatening for a decade. A "homage to Indian cinema," according to Co-Director Loveleen Tandan, its writer studied the Bollywood genre prior to penning the script, and its plot, soundtrack and audience-winning formula is

undeniably Indian.

From London to New York, packed theatres were enthralled by the rags-to-riches love story from the slums of India, and people across the globe were humming its hinglish pop-bollywood musical offspring, *Jai Ho*.

Written by legendary Indian composer A.R. Rahman and performed by US supergroup the Pussycat Dolls – more famous for records such as *Don't Cha* and *Stickwitu* – it sold over 1.7 million copies worldwide, and *Jai Ho* – Hindi for 'Victory, Hooray', will compete with 73 other entries, including 'Slumdog' to become the millionth word of the English language on June 10th.

Danny Boyle's movie, which scooped 8 Oscars, is not the first to realise the Bollywood potential. Gurinder Chadha's *Bend it Like Beckham* and *Bride and Prejudice*, and Daisy Mayer's *The Guru* all borrowed heavily from the Indian genre, while 2001's *Monsoon Wedding*, focused on a New Delhi marriage, was a huge success worldwide.

As a result, the gulf between Indian and the Western film is shrinking dramatically. Oscar-winner Penelope Cruz has gushed over prospects of figuring in a Bollywood movie, stating: "I am a great fan of Indian cinema and I would love to work with Shah Rukh Khan," while

supermodel Naomi Campbell, after wowing casting directors at a Mumbai fashion show, is planning a return to India to audition for a Bollywood movie.

In turn, British-born Bollywood actress Katrina Kaif, star of 2007 movie *Namasteey London*, has recently signed a deal with toy company Mattel to be the new face of Barbie for the doll's 50 birthday.

Slumdog, *The Guru* and *Monsoon Wedding*, however, are British movies with Indian aspirations. It was more Salman Rushdie than Vikram Chandra – and anyone who has actually visited Mumbai would immediately see *Midnight's Children*-like embellishments in *Slumdog*.

Yet Bollywood movies, shot by Indian filmmakers using Indian actors are making just as much noise in the West. Bollywood is shrugging off its immature tag, and the home market is enjoying the change. While rain-soaked dance routines are by no means a thing of the past, directors are tackling far more serious topics than the traditional boy-meets-girl script.

In 2006, *Rang De Basanti*, about India's struggle for independence, made a profit of over £15 million, despite having a tragic conclusion, no glamorous female lead and a very small dosage of singing and dancing. In fact, the film's heroine was played by a white

British actress.

Om Shanti Om, which premiered in London and grossed over \$3.5 million at the US box office, the highest ever for a Bollywood movie, parodies the Indian film industry, while Ghajini, incidentally the highest-grossing Bollywood movie ever, is an Indian twist on the 2000 Hollywood film *Memento*.

As a result, over 90% of *Om* and Ghajini's revenues were from worldwide box office receipts.

If there's one man who represents the sheer value of Bollywood's potential export, it's *Om Shanti Om*'s star, Shah Rukh Khan. The 43-year-old actor, director, producer and Indian demigod, is the undisputed king of Bollywood. Think George Clooney meets Brad Pitt, with liberal dashings of Jonny Depp and Leonardo DiCaprio. Ultimately, any comparisons fall short – you have to see, nay feel, SRK's deity-like persona in India.

Reportedly charging over Rs 300 million (£4 million) per movie,

"Bollywood has overgrown its geographical and cultural constraints and is taking the international market by storm"

Bollywood's largest paycheck, SRK – as he's fondly referred to back home – and his films are constantly smashing box office records and scooping awards.

His most recent blockbusters, *Don*, *Chak de India*, and *Om Shanti Om*, in which he plays a James Bond-like renegade, Indian hockey's only saviour and a biographical-like film superstar respectively, earned a combined \$31 million outside of India, a testament to his international superstar status.

Indeed, Shah Rukh Khan's pres-

Clockwise from left: posters from *Bride and Prejudice*, starring Ashwaria Rai; *Om Shanti Om*, starting Shah Rukh Khan; *Namasteey London*, starring Katrina Kaif; a scene from *Slumdog Millionaire*; and *The Pussycat Dolls* in Indian-influenced dress



ence in living rooms, multiplexes and village cinemas across Asia and the Middle East makes him Newsweek's 41st most powerful person in the world. Khan, a Muslim married to a Hindu, is an idol in countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan – where a ban on him by the mullah's have driven sales to the black market – and his secular nature sees him as the only other Indian on the magazine's powerlist with Congress leader Sonia Gandhi.

Today, India produces over 1000 films a year – around three per day – for a market of 3.6 billion cinema entrances every year. This clearly puts Bollywood ahead of Hollywood by one measure – approximately 450 films were released in the USA in 2007 with 2.6 billion viewers.

However, in terms of money, Bollywood is by far the poorer cousin. The industry is worth around \$1.5 billion, while in the US, experts predict Hollywood brings in around 40 times that figure.

Film songs dominate radio playlists and CD, ringtone and download charts. And then there's the multitude of endorsements, advertising deals and product placement that swamps the country.

After the team's shocking performance in the recent Cricket World Cup, advertisers pulled down billboards featuring cricket stars – the

country's other religion – and replaced them with Bollywood names overnight.

Vanita Kholi-Khandekar, Indian media consultant, states: "It is very easy to understand the Indian market if you know one immutable fact – that Indians love films. For the majority, entertainment means films and music means film music."

Bollywood movie soundtracks account for around 70% of India's music industry. For comparison, International music makes up barely 5% of the Rs 15 billion (£205 million) annual market.

It's simple. For Bollywood to get anywhere near it's US counterpart, it needs western cinema-goers and associated product consumers. Ticket prices in Mumbai start at around 8 rupees (10 pence), while a West End cinema is likely to charge nearer £10.

Filmakers are taking note. According to research company Neilsen, the UK has the largest audience for Indian cinema outside the sub-continent. Bollywood currently makes up around 1.5% of the UK gross box office, larger than the total of all European releases, while Indian films made up 16% of UK releases in 2006. British movies

made up 13%.

Today, a London premiere is standard for a big Bollywood movie with international dreams. Indian celebrities in the British consciousness, such as Shilpa Shetty, who became famous for enduring the late Jade Goody's racism on *Big Brother*, are valuable bridges to the press, while Bollywood superstars make the most of their invitations to the BAFTAs and other award ceremonies.

This is the international recognition that Bollywood craves. As directors and producers love to grumble, an Indian movie has never won the Best Foreign Language Film at the Oscars, and only three – including *Lagaan* – have ever been nominated.

Not to be outdone, Bollywood created the Indian Film Academy Awards, held every year since 2000 across the globe, with all the glitz and glamour of its American cousin.

According to industry sources, the choice of venue for the 2007 event, which has never been held in India, was between the rain-soaked Yorkshire city and New York. The superstars may have had to hitch up their saris when wading through the puddles, but the North of England represents a sizeable target for the Bollywood marketers.

In fact, Indian film-makers are now looking towards the UK as both a place to film, as well as sell, their releases. Huge Bollywood hits, such as Shah Rukh Khan's *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham* and Katrina Kaif's *Namasteey London*, were shot in full or in part in the UK, where policy makers and industry heads are encouraging directors to visit.

As many as 60 Bollywood films every year now include scenes shot in London. No wonder that the city is now going all out to woo Bollywood like never before, and that's big business for the British industry.

Agreements between

government departments and the Film and Television Producers Guild of India make for money-saving accommodation, equipment and location deals for Indian filmmakers, while a tax-saving scheme for Indo-British movies is currently being worked on.

There's even a Bollywood acting school in the UK's capital. Specialising in dancing, singing and over-acting – one assumes – the Ealing Institute of Media provides a RADA-like introduction to the industry for £6,000.

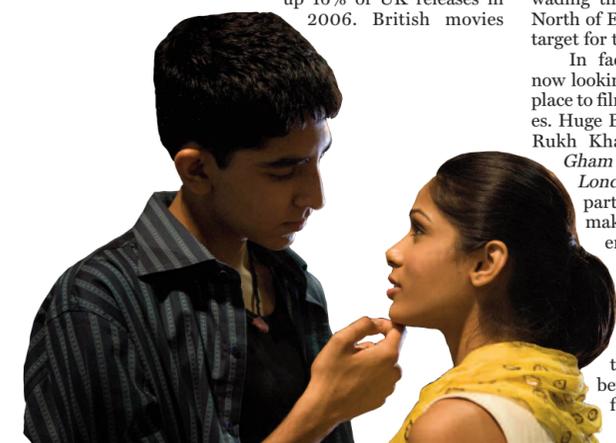
But there are inherent dangers to Bollywood's seemingly irresistible quest for global parity with the Hollywood film machine. Bollywood's enduring charm lies in its unique acting style, bizarre plotlines and extravagant sets and songs.

For the hardcore fans, a certain amount of unintentional comedy and cringe-induced wincing is all part and parcel of the Bollywood appeal. SRK's *Don*, a self-aware parody of the western thriller genre works in a way that *The Bourne Identity*, with all its realistic gadgets and government agents, simply cannot.

The best Bollywood films are preposterous, over the top affairs about reincarnation, revenge and rejoicing – with lots and lots of consequence. It's no coincidence that the first movie to show in Kabul after the Taliban fled Afghanistan's capital was a Bollywood epic.

Thankfully, a time when Bollywood movies will compete with Hollywood's blockbusters for the big money is still far off. The \$40 million grossed worldwide by *Om Shanti Om* might get Indian moneymen rubbing their hands, but it pales in comparison with 2007's biggest release – *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*, which took over \$950 million.

But don't write off Shah Rukh Khan, Katrina Kaif and India's other superstars becoming a very big part of the international film industry. 1.3 billion people can't be wrong. **M**



The God Man

Talking to David Tammet, **Sian Turner** explores the cryptic world of genius savants

“I’m seeing things in my head, like little sparks firing off, and it’s not until the very last moment that those little sparks tell me what they mean. I’m seeing the numbers, but I’m not seeing them, it’s strange. I’m seeing pictures, shapes and patterns... Almost like a square, with the texture of water drops, ripples almost, like something reflective. It’s something you can look through,

“I experience numbers in a very visual way. Sequences of numbers form landscapes in my mind, like a fourth dimension”

almost metallic, like a bubble. It’s like a half-cloud... Bit like a flash...”

Daniel Tammet is describing what goes on in his mind when he does mathematical calculations. He speaks eleven languages and has memorised and recited Pi to 22,500 decimal places. One of fewer than fifty such people in the world, he is what is known as a prodigious savant.

The term savant (deriving from the French ‘savoir’ – to know) literally translates as a learned person, but has no precise definition or related diagnosis. However, it has come to be associated with those rare individuals like Daniel, who suffer from developmental disorders (usually a form of autism) but develop one or more areas of extreme expertise, ability or brilliance. Despite suffering from Asperger’s Syndrome, Daniel’s ability with num-

bers classes him as a prodigious savant: his level of skill qualifies him as a prodigy, and would be considered phenomenal or genius even in a person without any cognitive disability.

Daniel’s amazing abilities have made him into something of a celebrity. The focus of media attention both in his native Britain and abroad, he has been the subject of documentaries, newspaper stories and has appeared on various talk shows, including David Letterman. Most of these appearances require Daniel to display his skills by performing large calculations in his head, something which he claims he has been able to do since the age of four, when he had a series of quite serious seizures as a child and was diagnosed with epilepsy. “It’s from that time that I started to see pictures in my mind, and images started to form,” he says.

Both David’s Asperger’s and his great fascination with numbers were apparent from an early age. At school, he didn’t mix with other children, preferring his own company and that of the numbers inside of his head. He would read the numbers on the hopscotch painted on the playground and search for the figures within the patterns in tree bark. “Numbers have always been, for me, the most real thing,” he comments. “Since I was

five, numbers have been the way in which I’ve looked at the world around me, so I always count things. I’ll look at something and say, that looks like 131, for example, or that looks like 52. I always thought that was how everyone experiences numbers.” Daniel has clearly always been more at home in a

world of numbers than people, and his narrow interests and lack of social interaction

as a child would, by most measures, class him as autistic. However, Daniel is unique amongst most savants because he has, throughout his life, picked up sufficient social skills to function normally within society.

Much of his ability results from a synaesthesia that he believes has its root in the epileptic fits he experienced as a child. For Daniel, every number up to 10,000 has its own distinct and unique image that appears in his mind whenever he sees the number, and he describes the process of performing mental arithmetic as like that of travelling through a landscape:

“I experience numbers in a very visual way, using colours, texture, shape and form. Sequences of numbers form landscapes in my mind. It just happens; it’s like having a fourth dimension.

“One, for example, is a very bright and shiny number, like somebody flashing a light in my face. It’s a very interesting number. Number two is like a movement, right to left, kind of like a drifting motion. Number six is very small, it’s the number I find hardest to experience in any sort of meaningful, visual way. It’s often the absence of something, like a chasm or a black hole. Number nine is the biggest number, it’s very tall and can be quite intimidating.”

Daniel’s response to numbers is unique; where most people see a black shape on a page,





he experiences a textual and highly detailed image, and reacts emotionally to each shape. Whilst number nine is intimidating, he finds Pi beautiful. This cross-activation within Daniel's brain – the activation of areas responsible for emotion and sensory awareness as the result of visual stimuli – is what is known as synaesthesia, and is the key to his almost unconscious ability to do enormous calculations in his head.

In 2007, Daniel wrote *Born On A Blue Day*, a memoir which documents his childhood and experiences of living with both Asperger's and as a savant. An intimate portrait into a highly unique mind, the book portrays both Daniel's immense abilities but also the difficulties of day to day existence with such gifts. In one section, he describes the extent to which numbers control his life.

"I have an almost obsessive need for order and routine which affects virtually every aspect of my life. For example, I eat exactly 45 grams of porridge for breakfast each morning; I weigh the bowl with electronic scales to make sure. Then I count the number of items of clothing I'm wearing before I leave my house. I get anxious if I can't drink my cups of tea at the same time each day. Whenever I become too stressed and I can't breathe properly, I close my eyes and count. Thinking of numbers helps me become calm again."

Such descriptions capture well the dichotomy of Daniel's existence; both immensely gifted but also grappling with the social difficulties of Asperger's. However, his articulate expression of the processes that go on

in his mind mark Daniel as particularly special amongst savants, and especially important for scientists' understanding of the condition, as for most such rare abilities usually come with a much more severe mental handicap as a price.

Dane Bottino is a fifteen year old American savant and self-taught artist. He began drawing aged 2, but suffering from severe autism, he lost his lan-

"Here is the dichotomy of Daniel's existence: immensely gifted but also grappling the difficulties of Aspergers"

guage skills around the same age. Drawing soon became his primary mode of expression, and by age three he displayed a perfect grasp of perspective and would provide his mother with grocery lists of immaculate images of everything he wanted. Although he now has rudimentary language skills, Dane prefers to express himself through art. Stephen Wiltshire is another artistic savant, known as 'the human camera' due to his ability to draw a landscape perfectly after just seeing it once. After one helicopter ride, Wiltshire drew a perfect replica of London right down to the number of windows on the major buildings. He too is autistic, and did not speak his first words until he was five.

The most famous, and arguably the most talented, savant of today is American Kim Peek. Brought to the

attention of the world as the inspiration for the Oscar Award-winning 1988 film *Rain Man*, Peek has a photographic memory and has remembered everything he has read since the age of four. Born with brain damage, Peek's parents were told to institutionalise him at nine months old. They didn't, and by age four he was reading encyclopaedias. By fourteen he had finished the high school curriculum. Described by his father as "a living Google," Peek can read a book in an hour, and remembers approximately 98.7% of everything he has read. It is claimed that he can recall the content of some 12,000 books from memory. His brain damage, however, means that he is unable to live without his father, as he finds motor tasks such as buttoning a shirt difficult.

Whilst both Daniel and Kim appear to have been born naturally gifted, or had their gifts emerge very early in childhood, it is possible for individuals to develop savant-like abilities later in life. Such rare individuals are known as Acquired savants.

Orlando Serrol was born and grew up a perfectly normal child until he was hit in the head with a baseball bat aged ten. Recovering from the incident without any medical attention, he appeared to have escaped unscathed aside from minor headaches. However, he soon began to display an ability to perform calendrical calculations of baffling complexity. He is now able to recall the day of the week, the weather, where he was and what he was doing for every day since the accident, and is known as 'the calendar brain.' Serrol's transformation is particularly interest-

ing as his special skills appear to be the only side-effect of his accident, suggesting that once a particular part of the brain is stimulated, it is possible for any individual to acquire the levels of genius displayed by savants.

Dr Darold Treffert, a worldwide authority on the savant syndrome, has been pondering this question for much of his life. He describes what he refers to as a 'little rain man' that exists within the brain of every individual, offering the potential of gifts like those of Daniel or Serrol, if it could just be unlocked.

Savants like Daniel and Kim have travelled the world to display their great gifts to the public; Kim has been questioned by a hall of Cambridge undergraduates to prove the extent of his vast knowledge, whilst Daniel learnt Icelandic in one week for a live discussion on Icelandic national television. These appearances captivate audiences and cause us to rethink our concepts of human intelligence and potential.

Despite being hailed as the 'Rosetta Stone' amongst savants and the key to unlocking the mysteries behind this most fascinating of conditions, Daniel remains somewhat modest about his abilities:

"The line between profound talent and profound disability is really a surprisingly thin one. What I do, I don't think it's something supernatural, I don't think it's something that can't be explained. Who knows, there may be abilities here that everyone can tap into somehow."

For more images by Stephen Wiltshire, visit www.stephenwiltshire.co.uk **M**

Above left: Daniel Tammet, on The Hour Show. Above right: Stephen Wiltshire works on a landscape of Madrid from memory, with examples of his artwork. Left: Kim Peek with father Fran

FASHION.

Clothes Show London 09 Hannah Smith



Struck by her unique



Twenty years after its departure to Birmingham, the Clothes Show returns to its roots in London, held in the vast ExCel Centre. It is now the largest fashion and beauty event in the world. A village of stalls was enough to exhaust even the most determined shopper, with an eclectic collection of new designers, unique vintage, customised retro and high street all under one roof. My visit on Sunday afternoon was advantageous, catching the last bartering moments for a true bargain from weary designers that had been on their feet for three days. One vintage dress and a treasure trove of jewelry later...

Nestled amongst the stalls was a champagne nail bar (if that's your sort of thing), a waterfront café overlooking the river, a Style Stage and an indoor Designer Beach complete with frolicking semi-naked models. There was also plenty of celebrity endorsement, with Erin O'Connor, Creative Director

of the Clothes Show, Hilary Alexander (Fashion Director at the Daily Telegraph) and Nicky Hambleton-Jones (10 Years Younger) to name a few of those in the Industry offering their fashion expertise.

The highlight of the day was the Fashion Theatre performance, hosted by an incredibly glamorous Louise Roe and Channel 4 cool kid George Lamb, looking sharp in spring pastel colours. Following, however, was a truly horrendous band called Vice, who gyrated around on stage like The Backstreet Boys; dressed awkwardly in experimental nu-rave attire they looked like shiny Ken dolls, they would have clearly been more comfortable in matching neutral linen suits. The Clothes Show was actually their debut and some were very excitable. Beyond that, however, the show was actually highly entertaining. The theme was 'A day at the Pier' and for 45 minutes an energetic group of dancers delighted the audience with imagi-

native and diverse performances, from ballet to ballroom to break dancing. They embodied the ebb and flow of waves and a twirling carousel in scenes throughout the Blackpool-esque summer day such as an ice cream parlour. The modelling interludes between dancing were, in contrast, comparatively dull.

The clothes followed the theme, some easily encapsulated the best of the high street with easy, youthful looks from spring/summer 09 collections, despite the appearance of a sequined Union Jack bikini that forced a physical recoil. The swimwear was sweetly displayed as though in a 1950' beauty pageant, though the classic all-white ensembles seemed a wasted opportunity not to showcase some more exciting pieces. All-in-all, it was a wonderfully indulgent day; a celebration of all things girly. I pitied the boyfriends who had by this point accepted their fate as mobile coat-hangers. Bless them.

Sofia Redgrave



waiting for a train to London (I'm going to Graduate Fashion Week so keep your eyes out for interviews and all the coverage next edition) and a large gaggle of girls have just passed by.

Every one of them was dressed up to the nines with full-on big hair, dark eyes, fake tan, six-inch strappy indented platform shoes and 'on trend' clothes. This, you could say, is a group of girls having fun and dressing up for a night out, but, it's 1.30pm on a

"Stay away from heavy make up, fake tan and six inch platforms"

Saturday afternoon! I'm still enjoying a Starbucks skinny Latte caffeine hit and reading the weekend papers while they all seem to be ready for a big night out. Something is wrong.

The physical addiction to look perfect

and emulate stars such as Posh and Cheryl means that girls are too scared to leave the house looking anything but. Feeling inadequate without cake loads of make up, towering heels and fake tan is becoming an easily perceptible trend. Just last week during our recent spell of sunshine, there was a sudden appearance of very orange-coloured streaky legs in York. Fake tanning was the only way the girls were going to get their legs out.

There are even some who feel it necessary to sport their high heels on campus, tottering into lectures and looking very uncomfortable with their feet thrust so far forward there is a gap at the back of their shoes. The girls at the train station might have been on their way to the Races or out to lunch to celebrate a birthday - both valid excuses to dress up - but they went about their outfit planning the wrong way. Their way equals looking like a daytime drag queen.

My way to avoid the dilemma of looking too done up during the day is to not think of it as dressing up at all. Be it summer weddings, village fete's, Sunday lunch,

Henley or Wimbledon we are all going to have to master the smart, 'I made an effort' day time look this summer.

If hats are called for, don't spend a fortune on naff headpieces, invest in a panama or straw hat which looks classic but also work wonders on the beach. Wear block coloured dresses or ones with geometric patterns to give a modern twist on the floral tea dress. Stay well away from black as this can propel your look from daytime chic to trashy and never ever enter into the Formal Wear section of any department store. Whites can wash out pale skin so go for unusual pastel colours such as light greys and nude pinks and then layer them for an individual look.

Remember, don't worry about having to look well dressed during the day, and don't plan your outfit in too much detail. Stay away from heavy make up, fake tan and the six-inch platforms and you might just avoid end up looking ready for a night out at the Soap Awards. The look is okay for parties and clubbing but just unforgivable during the day.

The 'Cheryl Cole' look has officially spiraled out of control. Women who think they are sporting a highly fashionable on trend look are in reality looking more and more desperate and chav-tastic.

I am sitting in York Railway Station

Alexandra Groover

collection at London Fashion Week, Liam O'Brien interviews Alexandra Groover

The Californian Alexandra Groover represents a new entry in the youth fashion canon. Her starkly rendered, emphatically sculptural designs are beginning to capture the gaze of the fashion forward, and this increasing attention is hard-earned. The London-based Groover has carefully planned her ascendance over the past few years, and has learned through her association with the cream of UK design talent: "I received my fashion design degree from Rhode Island School of Design in the U.S., but what brought me to London was a placement at Zandra Rhodes studio and a term abroad programme at Central St Martins in 2002. I was in the same class as Christopher Kane and Gareth Pugh, and needless to say, it was a fantastic and inspiring experience to be in the same studio with such talented, driven people."

Groover chose to stay in London, and was determined to set up her own label in the capital. Her aim had always been to "eventually set up my own label, but I knew that I had to have a job first to raise funds and time to make a business plan. It was while I was working for a small design studio that I realized that I had the right resources and that it was a good time to start a small label of my own."

After learning practical skills from work placements with other designers, Groover desired the creative freedom that having

your own label provides, realising that "I would prefer to pursue my own vision rather than have the security of working for someone else," and insisting that she "was grateful of what I learned from working for other designers, but I knew that it [setting up her own company] was the only way I could find this type of work fulfilling."

Groover made a soft launch of her label in 2008, but the full thrust came in February of this year at London Fashion Week (LFW), with her debut show at Vauxhall Fashion Scout (VFS), an arena for fledgling designers to catch press attention. When the *MUSE* fashion team saw the show we were impressed by the clear thematic and creative wearability in comparison to other Scout shows, and the designer acknowledges that "VFS was a great opportunity to show my work to the press, buyers, and public. It was very beneficial to me as a new designer because until I was given a show (despite already having stockists), I found it quite challenging to grasp the attention of the press. A fashion show takes a lot of money and resources, but it is also a very special opportunity to gain exposure and also be taken more seriously by buyers and press. After my show, my catwalk photos were posted on *Vogue.com*, I noticed a drastic difference in the amount of response and attention I received from press and buyers who had previously chosen not to respond to me at

all."

The sophisticated Black label collection shown at LFW that catalysed the upsurge of interest in Groover was "inspired by the architecture of shells. Made from only the finest fabrics, the garments concentrate on the various sculptural effects that can be achieved as fabric is applied to the body. The pieces often incorporate structural fabrics like felted wool together with the flattering, body skimming properties of bias cut silk, making the visual impact of the pieces both classic and avant-garde." Incorporating physically tenacious fabrics with the elegance one associates with the famous diagonal cut allows for a controlled, elegant sense of movement.

Movement is the motivating concern of Groover's Grey Label, which employs a freer cut with more discernible ornamentation. The collection "is a series of kinetic garments inspired by the graceful movements of jellyfish." These designs appear to be more immediately saleable, more likely to become the stockist's fancy.

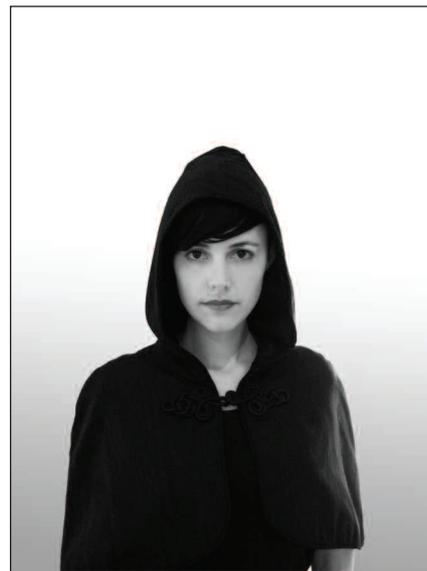
When I press about her about future collections, Groover insists that "at this time, I am mainly concerned with treating fabric as a sculptural material." For the foreseeable future it would also seem that her garments will remain in monotone: "I do not feel the need to have colour, as I prefer to focus on silhouette and textural manipulation to cre-

ate interesting details and I think that colours would only distract from these subtle details. Black is the natural answer for me, as it is the colour (or absence of) that I enjoy wearing the most and also seeing on other women. It is also fantastic to work with when it comes to adding other accessories, hair and makeup that do not necessarily have to be black."

Alexandra's decision to keep her label in London and to show here as her name grows in stature is the capital's cultural gain. The city is the perfect situation for her and other upstarts: "There is a large concentration of people who want unique clothing and take more risks with what they wear (compared to smaller cities and towns), but this also means that there are more designers competing against each other to get these customers."

Groover extols the way in which the artistic community is given a chance to thrive through "a number of great government and/or privately funded programmes that give new fashion designers a lot of support and exposure," but warns that "funding is not easily gained, as there are usually thousands of applicants and very few openings/slots available each season." You wouldn't expect Groover to face too many obstacles, financial or creative, in the near future, however.

Groover's collections can be viewed in full at www.alexandragroover.com



Left to right: Shell hooded jacket (Black Label), arca coat (BL), shell jacket from front, Ephyrae dress (Grey Label), Alexandra Groover

Photographs by Susan Surface

Ones to watch Hannah Smith

WEBSITE: FASHION TWEETS

DESIGNER: HOUSE OF BLUE EYES

MODEL: EDYTHE HUGHES

TREND: CAMILLA AND MARC



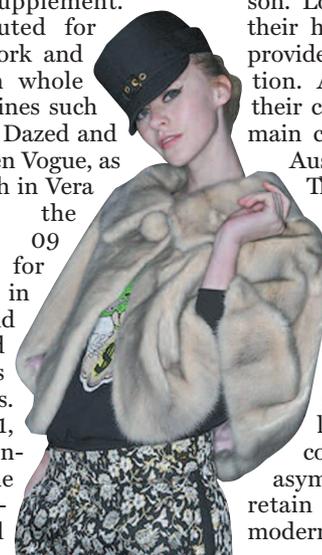
Twitter is increasingly playing host to delightful fashion banter. The fashion team's favourite at the moment is iamMademoiselle, with tweets provided by the writer responsible for *Elle's* tongue-in-cheek back page. 'Confessions of an Elle girl'. She regularly updates readers with jovial chat, industry insight and personal tales. The latest tweets debate the troublesome issue of the sandal/sock combo for the office and track her struggles with calorific value: "OMFG, there are 1,000 calories in this bag." The infamous (fake) Anna Wintour Twitter is not for the faint-hearted: "Patrick reminded me today over lunch of that time when PETA laced my pinot grigio with arsenic & instead of killing me, it made me stronger."

The project of established London stylist and outrageous personality Johnny Blue Eyes, The House of Blue Eyes is a collaborative fusion of fashion, film, music and performance art. The label was launched in September 2008 at 'one of the best parties of the year' according to the Sunday Times.

Johnny welcomed his guests on stage absolutely naked, and Kate Moss got so excited she joined in the catwalk show wearing a top hat and carrying a silver and ebony cane, after four stark years of absence from the runway. Johnny is inspired by Warhol's factory set up from the 1960's, and his dark, theatrical collection Glam Dandy Clown brought together affordable vintage with unique couture.



Gracile, blond haired, blue-eyed nineteen year old Edythe Hughes appeared last on our pages in the LFW supplement. From Ohio, she debuted for Calvin Klein in New York and has since appeared in whole host a fashion magazines such as Harper's Bazaar, Dazed and Confused and Teen Vogue, as well as on Oprah in Vera Wang. For the Spring/Summer 09 shows she walked for Armani and Marchesa in Milan and New York, and was in greater demand for Autumn/Winter this year, appearing 18 times. Under Elite, Models 1, Why Not and Ford agencies. She is clearly at the beginning of an increasingly high profile and



Camilla Freeman-Topper and Marc Freeman launched their swimwear collection this season. Lounging around on Bondi Beach in their homeland of sunny Australia clearly provided the perfect backdrop for inspiration. Available at Shopstyle.com, their collection is reflective of their main clothing line as exhibited at Australia Fashion Week.

Their swimsuits and bikini separates are pretty and feminine, with delicate frill details adorning bandeau and 50's sweetheart necklines. The vivid colour blocking and asymmetric straps retain this season's fresh modernity.



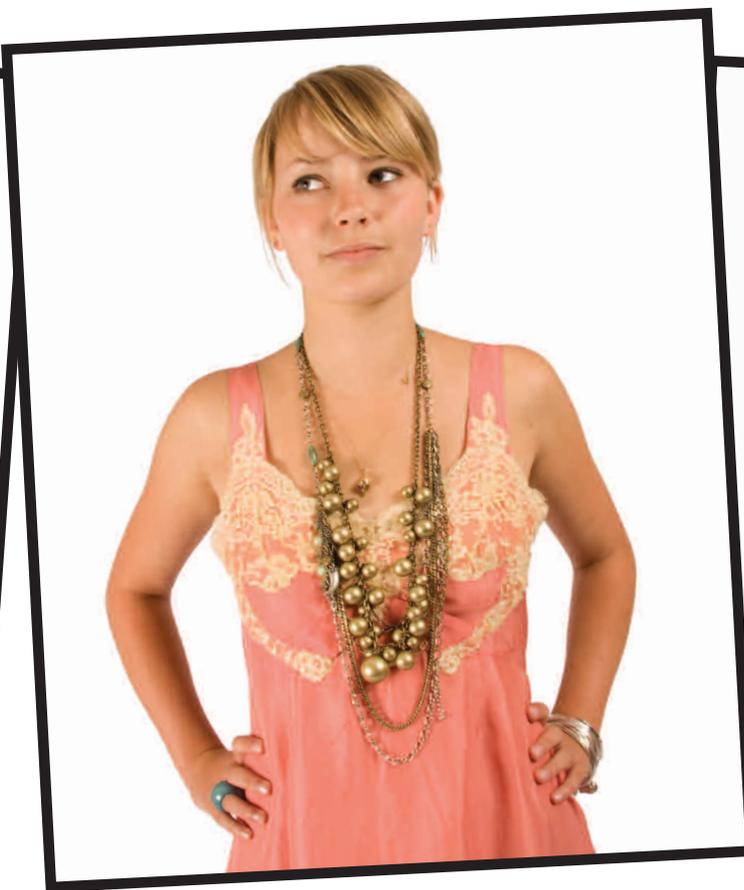
Fashion



NATALIE ORGILL
English and Politics, 19, London
North London girl Natalie is a self-confessed "Topshop whore" but also enjoys a browse in H&M and Harrow boutique Hip Parade. "I love big patterns and massive bright colours in dolly-esque styles. I take inspiration from Gwen Stefani whom I love, but I can't say I'm as outrageous as her!" *All Natalie's dresses from Topshop*

Show us your style

The Fashion Team took a peek into the wardrobes of four girls at York. We asked them to put together their favourite outfits which reflected their personal look



HARRIET PEARSON
History of Art, 19, Cornwall
Harriet's wardrobe is an eclectic mix of high street, hand-me-downs and designer pieces. "I find treasures where ever I travel, from Russian markets to South African street stalls. My golden rule is to accessorise every outfit, turning a boring look into something exciting and individual" Her three favourite shopping spots are Topshop, Portobello Road Market and Opium in Cornwall. *Pink dress Paul & Joe, blue shirt Vivienne Westwood*



AYAKO ISHIZAKI *exchange student, 21, Tokyo* A fan of monochrome tones, Ayako contrasts sophisticated skirts and dresses with boyish trainers and simple t-shirts. "I'm obsessed with sneakers. I have a classic style but I create a twist by buying high quality fabrics with sharp individual tailoring." Ayako finds most of her key pieces in Tokyo's vintage and thrift boutiques. *Printed skirt Agnès B, crochet cardigan Junya Watanabe for Comme des Garçons*



EMMA HALLETT *Sociology, 20, LONDON* Emma is a self-confessed fashion addict. "When I buy clothes I look for things that stand out, something out of the ordinary. I'm a big fan of British Designers such as Stella and Alexander McQueen." Emma loves to shop at American Apparel and Urban Outfitters. *Geometric leggings from Deep, Pirate outfit Vivienne Westwood*



ARTS.

Sian Turner talks to author and writing fellow at York, Fiona Shaw, about her newly released novel *Tell It To The Bees*

As the current Royal Literary Fund writing fellow at York, it is Fiona Shaw's job to offer writing advice and guidance to students, be it on an academic or personal level. She holds a PhD in the poet Elizabeth Bishop, and has just published her third novel.

Set in the 1950s, her new work, *Tell It To The Bees*, centres around the question of what would happen if two women fell in love and one of them had a child. As Julia Weekes' marriage falls apart, her son Charlie forms an unlikely friendship with Jean Markham, the local doctor, who keeps the bees to whom Charlie confides everything. Her son's new friendship allows an intimacy to develop between the two women, an inti-

macy that changes all of their lives forever. Shaw describes the work as "a three-hander novel," as it moves fluidly between the lives of the three main characters, Julia, Charlie and Jean. "I wanted to explore having a child at the centre of a novel," she reveals. "I wanted some of what happens between the adults to come through the way of a child. He's sort of like an emotional barometer for what's going on between the adults." She admits a particular partiality for the character of Charlie, whom she based on herself as a child: "Charlie is very much a boy and he's very much a fictional character, but if he's drawn out of anybody, he's drawn out of the child that I was, or the child that I might imagine myself to be if I had been born a

boy." Charlie's curiosity as a child and his desire to watch the world, to observe its nature echoes Shaw's own childhood temperament, where she would spend hours watching the activities of ants.

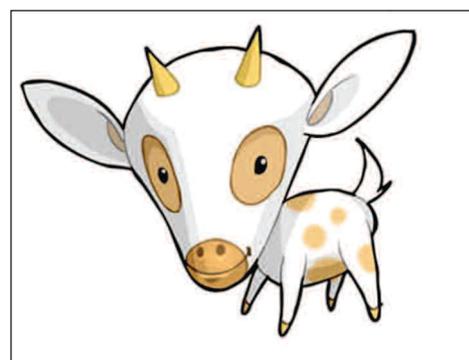
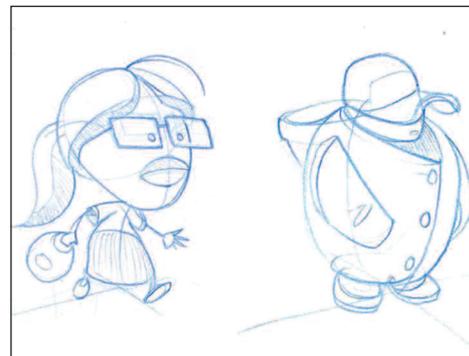
With two novels preceding *Tell It To The Bees* (*The Sweetest Thing*, 2003, *The Picture She Took*, 2005), Shaw has an established reputation, with a critically lauded body of work. However, her first venture onto the literary scene was not a work of fiction, but a memoir – *Out Of Me* – in 2001. Charting her slide into severe post-natal depression and her desperate attempts to free herself and rebuild her life, it was this work that first launched Shaw as a writer. It was not an easy process, however: "I was very glad I wrote it, I'm still glad I wrote it, I'm glad it's still in print," she says, pausing momentarily to consider her words, "but the writing of it had an emotional cost unlike any of the other novels. The publishing also took a real toll in a way I don't think I could have anticipated. There was a lot of publicity, and most of it was very positive, but it was also very exposing, and hard on your family." Shaw's openness and willingness to share with others a period of her life which saw her undergo emotional turmoil and electric shock therapy lead to a nomination for the MIND prize. *Out Of Me* now features as a set text on the training course for many health professionals.

Describing writing as "most definitely a need, and sometimes a release too," Shaw explains her novels coming to her "very, very roughly, often in the form of a time period and an idea that I want to explore through a story." All of her novels have a very strong grounding in a particular historical period, and she confesses that "it actually feels less nerve-racking to write about that than it does about my own time. I guess in a more pragmatic way too, you're free from having to write about mobiles, about Twitter, Facebook, any of that stuff!" She is currently beginning work on a fourth novel.

Tell It To The Bees is now available nationwide for £9.99

Photograph courtesy of Fiona Shaw

Peter Dobbin



Geoff Currie speaks

The ability to create a character or scene in one's mind is rare. To transform that idea into a world on paper is a powerful gift, which Concept Artist Peter Dobbin has developed since his days drawing dinosaurs as a young child. For Dobbin, the process of creating environments on paper is a daily occurrence, fraught with the challenge of pleasing designers of major TV advertisements and video games.

Based in Hackney, Dobbin draws inspiration from his surroundings. "This area



Antonia Shaw



literature of our age explores themes of futuristic desolation, such as Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Huxley's *Brave New World*. Both these seminal works have both been adapted to film, which sit thematically alongside the American blockbuster movies tolling the end of the world.

Artists have also toyed with dystopian

"Dystopian art taps into our state of morbid curiosity"

issues and tropes. Georges Bataille's sadistic strand of surrealism manifested shortly after the turn of the century where he and his followers embraced the underbelly of human existence. Voids which penetrate the surface of Lee Bontecou's 1960s reliefs are often read as 'warnings', foretelling the dread that will ensue from our abuse of mankind and our earth. Contemporary sculptor Anya

Gallaccio frequently works with perishables, conceptualising death, societal decay and waste products, she leaves her work to physically rot in a gallery space.

Our bizarre idea that creative works are the product of neuroses, personal difficulties and political ideologies is in keeping with our penchant for the dystopian. Indeed our society likes to believe in the therapeutic quality of art, that an artwork is both an emotional release for an artist and a window into their angst ridden mind. Yet we can question whether works such as Bill Viola's film *The Passing*, depicting his mother on her death bed, tap more into our state of morbid curiosity than act as therapy for the artist.

Society's interest in the macabre and the dystopian could be accredited to the Freudian Death Drive. Yet why we seem to be so fascinated in depressing subjects and concepts is not really of interest to me – and it would be futile and foolhardy for me to try to address such issues here. But what is troubling is the effect that this fascination has on the reception of works which do not fit the

dystopian model.

The prominent art critic, Waldemar Januszczak, unintentionally highlighted this dilemma recently. In his review of the latest Whitechapel installation he made very telling statements about the work of Isa Genzken. The critic deemed only half of the show a success. Raving about Genzken's early works which he described as "doomy" and "austere", he criticised the remainder of the show claiming that it portrayed a "party-loving Genzken popping all the corks upstairs" and that it was "a bit Blue Peter". I fear Januszczak has fallen into the trap that we have inadvertently concocted. Namely, that if an artwork is the polar opposite to the "doomy" dystopian, we pass it aside as fluff and assume that there is little depth to the work aside from formalist properties.

The macabre has infiltrated our art – and there is nothing inherently wrong with this. However, we must ensure that we do not overlook contemporary works that reject the dystopian outlook for a more positive approach.

macabre obsession with our own mortality and a general dystopian outlook are both prevalent fascinations in today's society. Unsurprisingly, this climate has seeped into the cultural produce of the twentieth century. Some of the most famous

Concept Artist



to Concept Artist, Peter Dobbin, about the technical processes behind his artworks

boasts many artists; there is evidence of low educational achievement in schools, poor housing and a considerable amount of crime. The diversity and mix of cultures makes for an interesting subject," Dobbin explains. Many of his personal projects display his affection for this area of London.

Dobbin has developed graphic designs for popular video games such as I-Ninja, and he is currently working on storyboards for the new Harry Potter game. He sketches the major scenes on the movie set of the new

Harry Potter film. These are then transformed into storyboards - often done on post-it notes - and given to the graphic designers.

The producers of the game rely on Dobbin to give them an accurate sense of these scenes. A blue drawing pencil is used to create the foundation marks which help Dobbin visualize the overall structure. The finished characters are later placed within an environment giving the computer animator an idea of the final product.

The role that Dobbin plays between companies and computer animators is crucial, as he must be able to convert their spoken idea into an illusionistic reality on paper. As Dobbin explains, "When I am asked to consider taking on new work, I normally visit the company for an initial meeting and I am given a brief. It is my job to visualise these ideas. I normally start with thumbnail sketches. The intention is that a roughly drawn small sketch conveys the composition and style without the detail."

The job often entails tight deadlines and long hours, however Dobbin's creative process has adapted to the fast past environment that he works in: "I have learnt to trust my instincts."

In the final process of colouring, Dobbin explains, "many Concept Artists use software such as Photoshop. It has advantages such as being able to add effects and shading. It also has the benefit of having the undo button."

Images courtesy of Peter Dobbin. More can be found on www.peterdobbin.co.uk.

Arts reviews

PRODUCTION:
THE HOMECOMING
VENUE: YORK THEATRE ROYAL
REVIEW: JONATHAN
KERRIDGE-PHIPPS

☆☆☆☆

By plucking a glittering star out of the firmament, director Damian Cruden has had his hands burned. A taut tale of male barbarism and female emancipation, *The Homecoming* is the best play by the greatest of all modern playwrights. Done well, it is still as relevant and thrilling as the day it was finished.

What a pity then, that each actor, with the notable exception of the excellent Suzy Cooper (who played Ruth), was guilty of a sloppiness that threatened to undermine every moment of import. Simple blocking went awry and lines were fumbled and ad-libbed. The

worst culprit of this latter felony was Sam Hazeldine - a lamentably feeble, at times almost lachrymose Lenny. Overall, the tenor of the piece was flat and far too plausible, and exuberant jazz played between scenes, murdering the tension.

It wasn't all bad. Suzy Cooper was a provocative, strutting and sexily territorial Ruth and Dawn Allsopp's set design (although somewhat after Peter Hall) was meticulous. However, Cruden and his cast were wholly unequal to the peculiarly pleasing, dissonant rhythms and screaming silences which famously serve to characterise and punctuate Pinter's dialogue. If anything, this production exposed the play's enigmatic character.

The Homecoming is showing at York Theatre Royal until 20th June.



PRODUCTION: A WINTER'S TALE
VENUE: DRAMA BARN
REVIEW: BETH GANDY

☆☆☆☆

Given the infamous uncomfortable nature of the Drama Barn seats, staging a three hour Shakespearean tragic-comedy would seem a brave choice, especially following the influx of lighter comedies on this season at the Barn. However, the nature of one of Shakespeare's less well known plays gave the audience a thought-provoking, intense and at times hilarious spectacle.

The acting of the major parts was flawless. Dominic Allen, as Leontes, could not be faulted. He

played the jealous, remorseful and angry King of Sicilia to perfection. His madness and overflow of emotion ebbed into the atmosphere of the play. Following this Allen took on the character of the roguish pedlar Autolycus, and brought laughs about allowing the play to flow from tragedy to comedy seamlessly. The portrayal of Camillo was also noteworthy; although slightly awkward at first, the performance blossomed into a perfect comedic performance. These larger parts may have at times over-shadowed the enthusiastic, if slightly weaker performances of the minor parts, however this was arguably inevitable with such a large cast.

The prop of the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths was very unconvincing. However, the use of a white basket representing a gateway to Bohemia was clever and employed well. Additionally, the lively performance by a four piece band was a well thought out Shakespearean element.

MUSIC.

Estella Adeyeri interviews the DJ and beatpoet team, Dan Le Sac vs Scroobius Pip



DJ Dan Le Sac and performance poet Scroobius Pip together form the duo best known for their hit 'Thou Shalt Always Kill' back in 2007. Now with a string of festival dates lined up this summer and the promise of new material shortly heading our way, the two are proving to be more than simply a one-hit wonder. Having started out as solo artists, the alliance of Dan Le Sac vs Scroobius Pip came about somewhat by chance, as Scroobius describes: "Despite growing up about five minutes from each other in the same town, we didn't really meet properly until college and then working together in a record shop. This loose connection helped us to re-meet

over MySpace several years after we stopped working together in a record shop, and then we started working together again - not in a record shop."

Dan continues, "I booked Scroob to play at my night Ibetya. In between booking him and the night I did a few remixes of his solo album (*No Commercial Breaks*, 2006), and somewhere along the line we wrote 'Thou Shalt...' People were talking about us like we were a band before we had really thought about it - that's why we have such an awkward name."

As a band they went on to produce music that is seemingly impossible to define, as Scroobius says: "We don't really fit into any one genre - we slip in

and out of the indie crowd, hip hop heads, dance kids, poetry types and everyone else in between." Their musical influences are equally diverse, with Dan describing them as "artists that you can't really hear in [our first] record - people like Joy Division, Mogwai and Godspeed! You Black Emperor are the reason I make music."

The poetic influence of Scroobius Pip is also integral to their sound. Scroobius says that he originally got into performance poetry because he "wouldn't have to rely on anyone else. It's a scene within which you only have yourself to blame if you don't progress. There's no unreliable drummer or drunk bassist to blame." He also gets

Dan and Scroobius.

very involved in the production process of the band's music videos. "The 'Thou Shalt...' video was dreamed up by our regular video genius, Nick Frew. The two of us then met up and went back and forth with ideas. For the next three or four videos I came up with the starting ideas and, again, we sat down and expanded upon them. I really enjoy that process."

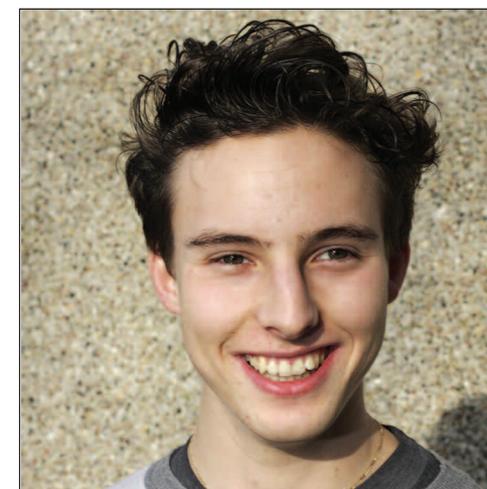
Earlier this year the band released a reworked version of 'Thou Shalt Always Kill' featuring hip hop veteran Posdnous of De La Soul. Upon asking how the collaboration came about Dan replied: "Our label Sunday Best had wanted to re-release 'Thou Shalt Always Kill' for ages but it never really worked for us - the idea of re-releasing your most successful track is really cringe-worthy but when the opportunity came along to work with Pos on it, it began to make sense. It felt like we had the chance to get someone else's perspective on the record."

This year though they are looking to move on from 'Thou Shalt...' from their first album *Angles*. They are currently demoing tracks for a brand new record. Scroobius says: "This is actually our 'taking it easy' summer, despite having twenty-odd festivals booked. The main focus is new material. We have turned a lot down this year so we can keep working away on the next album. But we aren't looking to rush anything - we want to make sure the second album is as good as we can make it."

Asking which festival they are most looking forward to playing this summer, Dan replies immediately with Barcelona's finest: "Sonar, Sonar and Sonar. It's easily the festival I've most wanted to attend, let alone play, in my life time. From what I can gather it an awesome festival and we've got a fairly big posse from our label going so it should be double dope."

So whether or not you think they're just a band, Dan Le Sac vs Scroobius Pip are sticking around, continuing their eclectic mix of poetry and electro that has proved to captivate audiences. If you catch them at a festival this summer you may hear a snippet of some of the new tunes they have in store, otherwise keep your eyes and ears open for a new release next year.

Isaac Hewlings



piles of detritus for any scraps of value. A can of Carlsberg and a mysterious bottle of 'bacon vodka' emerge amongst the thousands of cigarette butts. A modest bounty, to be sure.

It appears to me that there is no better an expression of youthful energy and joy in life than the humble house-party. Made icon-

"The Sylla and Charybdis of lad-rock besets the gentleman"

ic in a thousand music videos, (anyone remember the Jimmy Eat World 'The Middle' video?) and another thousand American High School series, surely this represents the high-water mark of socialising? There is a special kind of pleasure to be had knowing that in one building, there is likely to be at least two people inexpertly 'making love', some others passed out, and another sat

clinging to the toilet like a mariner on a sinking ship. The house-party represents an enchanted world comprised of deferred responsibilities, misplaced optimism (that stain will come out no problem, right?) and free from mortgages.

This leads me to wonder about the taxonomy of the house-party, and the consequent etiquette that each type entails. What is the free-wheeling, amorous gentleman to do in such an event? At the large, music-oriented party should the gentleman consider the dance floor his theatre of battle, or negotiate the whimsical charms of the crowds of randoms that await? The dance floor lures the naïve gentlemen into its heady cacophony - however, being by nature a wandering creature he may likely shun the music and dancing, and head into the crowds of expectant strangers. Ready to cause quite the stir with well-timed *bons mots* and verbal ripostes, he cruises through the currents of people like a schooner smuggling rum upon the waves of the Caribbean. Of course, the physical pay-off of the gentelady's embrace is

somewhat more distant and the chance of the gentleman's slurring words causing confusion to the unaccustomed simpleton, is a dangerous possibility. Into the wind he sails once more.

Similarly, at the smaller kind of box-social, which provides its audio stimuluos by way of iPod or the like, a whole new set of dangers arise. The Sylla and Charybdis of someone choosing bland lad-rock besets the gentleman with quite the dilemma. Undoubtedly emboldened by the port and brandy he has consumed along his adventures, the gentleman (certain in the knowledge of his unassailable taste) attempts to play an uplifting polka on the much abused sound system. But, should he do this, the potential pitchfork-wielding mob of the initiated heathens may shun his esteemed choice. Thus, the problems that beset the gentleman at all stages of the house party are numerous and dangerous too. But spurred on by his noble quest of consuming the finest alcohols and disseminating his finely poised wit, the gentleman plows on into the night.

Hope. Peace. Soul.

The King Blues' frontman Johnny Fox talks punk and politics with **Estella Adeyeri**

Johnny Fox and his band The King Blues aren't your stereotypical bunch of punks. Armed with acoustic guitars and a ukulele, they've given the genre's rulebook a total revamp. Currently they're touring a second album *Save the World, Get the Girl*, which mixes tales of protests and poverty with songs about love and *Back to the Future*-style fantasy. Catching them during their sound check at Fibbers, I had a chat with Johnny about how it all began.

"When it started off it was just me and [our guitarist] Jamie with one guitar and two vocals, we went around like that for a few years. We wanted to play with punk rock bands, in that kinda scene." Unfortunately though, their image seemed didn't seem to fit the mould. "When you go around saying you're an acoustic two-piece, it conjures up images of James Blunt or something, you know, people got very turned off and we found it hard to get a gig. We got a lot of doors closed in our faces."

Undeterred by such rejection, the duo proceeded to take a DIY approach to gigging - transforming squats and derelict shelters into makeshift venues. "We used to go around in the middle of the night, find abandoned buildings, kick in the doors, and make these unused places used again. And people would come down just to party and have a good time, not necessarily to see us. But then word of mouth quickly spread and more people started coming down, we added members and that's how it all started out as such."

But the band is about more than just their music; they're also bound through their shared political views and a desire to give a platform to their mind-set. "I think it's nice for us as a band to be grounded in that sense because we were very much activists before



we became musicians, you know? That's kinda how we were meeting each other, through doing these political things rather than going, 'alright we're in a band, we're writing political songs, what can we do?' It was very much the other way round."

Their political awareness is shown in their lyrics right from first album *Under the Fog* with songs like 'Chimp in a 3 Piece Suit' (said chimp refers to George Bush) and 'Come Fi Di Youth,' a backlash against the

BNP's youth recruitment drive. Despite having a few more mainstream songs on *Save the World, Get the Girl* (recent single 'I Got Love' received a fair amount of radio play), the band's underlying punk roots still remain.

"I think that if you look at the message of the album as a whole, it's kind of about battling, or balancing personal life and personal politics. There's some fairly militant messages on that record, and you can kind of

take from it what you want. If somebody only wants to take a three minute pop song from it, and they wanna lose themselves, dance around, forget about the boredom and the bullshit, then they can escape for three minutes and that's wonderful. But if people wanna dig deeper and take more meanings from it, that's even better."

The album's closing track 'What If Punk Never Happened?' - a commentary about an "alternative reality situated just outside of Clapham" where there's no community, no regard for political activism, and most importantly no punk rock - sees Johnny heading down a performance poetry route. I asked him for the inspiration behind this apparently new move: "I'd just had the song title for a while. Then when we had a week off, the first in seven months or something, I booked a little solo tour going round in a van with three of my mates, just playing acoustically in little places. And I just came away so inspired by them - they were so enthusiastic and buzzing, and there was a great feeling of camaraderie, so I was really inspired when I got home. And I sat down and went 'bang bang bang'...it just all came out at once. Sometimes I'm there racking my brains with songs and they take years, and other times like that one they just come straight away."

When asked if there could be more of a performance poetry influence in the future, Johnny replies "I'm a massive fan of poetry as a whole, I think there's some great stuff out there and I guess that yeah, we'll probably carry on."

With Johnny and The King Blues it's not just, or even all, about their music. It's also about their message; music is just their chosen medium for inspiring and informing us all.

Nouse Playlist

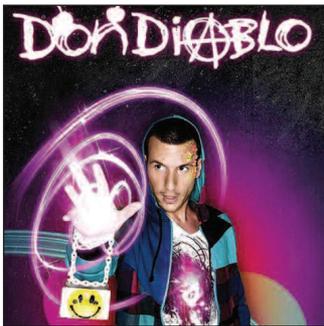
Laura Hulley Kasabian - 'Fire': The Coventry band are the current, post-Oasis kings of 'lad-rock'; but Kasabian's latest offering from their third album is actually not too bad at all. They've cast off any further attempt at poor Screemadelica imitations, and gone for a Rolling Stones-esque, folksy, loud-soft, psychedelic-laced track. The lyrics leave a lot to be desired, but I'm surprised to say I quite like it.

Isaac Hewlings Don Diablo & Example - 'Hooligans (Noisia Remix)': The original mix is staunchly at the peak of the dance charts at the moment, and is gathering momentum, with Zane Lowe and Trevor Nelson giving it airtime. The Dutch pair Noisia have turned their hand to everything from breakcore to house, and their ample technical skill is on display here. This is an unrelenting buzz-saw of a

track, which is smarter than it initially sounds.

Tom Killingbeck Children - 'The Power Spirit': Indie thrash metal on speed? It'll never work. Well, that's what they said before NYC's Children set guitars to stun then boosted through several ADHD riffs, screaming about making love and Black Sabbath, with everything turned up to 11. The video features the band running through the woods playing solo after solo in romper suits.

Estella Adeyeri Alessi's Ark - 'Over The Hill': Folk-pop songstress Alessi provides the perfect soundtrack to your summer: all airy vocals and light acoustic guitar melodies, 'Over the Hill' should be accompanied by a lazy afternoon spent making daisy chains. This promising young artist is sure to appeal to fans of Laura Marling.



Gig reviews



ARTIST: CURSIVE
DATE: 19TH MAY
VENUE: FIBBERS
REVIEW: ESTELLA ADEYERI

★★★★☆

As five quirky alt-rockers took to the stage, the crowd's atmosphere was one of bubbling anticipation - the criminally underrated band Cursive were about to unleash their divine musical force upon their devoted following. Kicking off a stellar set with the haunting 'Butcher the Song,' they then changed pace through Wizard of Oz inspired toe-tapper 'Dorothy At Forty.'

Vocalist Tim Kasher held our eyes and hearts as the band played songs from their impressive back-catalogue, as well as tastes from forthcoming album *Mama, I'm Swollen*, including new single 'From the Hips,' - a sensual, cynical indie number sure to entice new fans into the fold.

Halfway through Kasher decided to make the gig more intimate, carrying his mic stand and guitar off stage and into the crowd -

much to the delight of camera-happy fans. He went on to perform from the floor of Fibbers, before stepping up to howl 'The Great Decay' from a table-top. Changing scene again Tim set up shop by the bar, but returned to stage just in time to treat us to classic 'Art Is Hard.'

New epic 'What Have I Done?' saw the band off stage, until some predictable cheering lead to their welcomed encore. Ecstatic fans were treated to early hit 'The Martyr,' producing the loudest crowd sing-along of the night. The muted sound of bells signalled the apocalyptic soundscape of 'Big Bang,' then Cursive fended off the threat of feedback to end triumphantly on a breath-taking rendition of 'A Gentleman Caller.' With this inspired performance and an outstanding new album, Cursive are ones to watch in the oncoming months.



ARTIST: BEATCAKE
DATE: 1ST JUNE
VENUE: FIBBERS
REVIEW: EDOUARD DE LE

ROCHFORDIERE

★★★★☆

It's been a busy few days for electronic music in York. After the recent success of Breakz (who brought dub-step royalty Benga to York), and the solid turnout of the now established Idioteque, Beatcake had to muscle-in on what is an increasingly contested 'underground' arena.

As such, 'Beatcake' attempted to fill the crowd onto the sizzling Fibbers' dance floor. And it did, emphatically.

Behind the decks were Nikhil Datta and campus-legend Ilias Simos (aka Nik-L and Bebe Barbu), alternating short sets of their particular styles. Accordingly, Nikhil, who besides mixing produces music in a variety of styles, focused on a collection of heavier, synth-led, bass-weaving electro. Meanwhile Ilias explored the realm of bleepy minimal/techno tunes.

As a result, although both DJs brought their distinctive touch, there was nonetheless a refreshing coherence in the sound they provided. It is also pleasing to see DJs interact with the crowd so much, without doubt helped by the fact that they generally opt for using only vinyl and no laptops.

As per usual in York, the crowd was a blend of those who like to be seen in 'trendy' events and those who came just to have a good time, but overall a friendly atmosphere dominated the place. A second drop of Nathan Fake's track 'The Sky Was Pink' left the more enthusiastic dancers asking for more at the end of the night.

After such a successful initial event, the two are contemplating a second event, so look out for another episode of Beatcake in week 9!

FILM.

Duncan Pelham

Without a little forward thinking, studio complaints of piracy will fall on deaf ears



Almost every student, except for a few shining beacons of virtue or inept technophobes, have watched a film either streamed directly online or downloaded onto their hard drive. And justifications tend to insist something along the lines of 'look, if it's any good, I'll go see it at the cinema. I don't think you will go see it at the cinema. I think you'll reach down, pick up that bag of crisps, balance them on your stomach, along with your laptop, ash tray and god-knows-what-else; press play, and simply watch it again.

The Movie Picture Association of America calculates that the film industry is losing an annual \$6.1 billion dollars to piracy worldwide - some daunting figures. And who do they point the finger at exactly? Students. Of course it's an estimate of potential - not real - profits lost. The statistics incorrectly assume that, if you weren't to have found the pirate copy, you would otherwise have paid to see it at the cinema. Despite exaggerated figures and scare-mongering, there's no denying piracy is damaging ticket sales. The film industry's prime strategy has been half-arsed attempts at deterrence, with DVDs abound with dramatic slogans demanding: 'surely you wouldn't steal a car; or a handbag?' No I certainly wouldn't. But snagging an old lady's handbag is a little different from skimming a couple of pennies off studio execs' six figure salaries. Of course, the ramifications of piracy run much deeper than this - reaching into the pockets of even low level projectionists - but no matter how much guilt-lobbying the industry attempts, cash-strapped students aren't going to change their ways on ethical grounds.

The music industry cleared up its piracy problem by abolishing Napster and provided easy electronic access via iTunes, eMusic and so on. But the film industry - backward and obstinate as ever - refuses to properly address this. And to exacerbate matters, film releases are brought out at different times in different countries. Eager UK film buffs anticipate releases that have already hit cinema screens stateside a good three months earlier - it's no wonder they get impatient and resort to internet copies. And before they know it, they've seen the latest Oscar-winning epic ruined on a 12" screen, by a flickering camcorder, obscured by silhouetted figures rustling popcorn. And, worst of all, you're subjected to the irritating tendency of American audiences applauding every remotely exciting setpiece or amusing wisecrack.

Recently an industry insider, presumably a minor copy house worker, leaked an unfinished version of *Wolverine*. The now notorious copy saw the invincible Mr Jackman leaping from buildings, but with wires still attached to his waist. This insight into Hollywood special effects was undoubtedly more intriguing than the dismal feature itself, but that's hardly the point.

As audiences battle recession, the film industry must move with the times: a good start would be to provide feasible electronic sources, uniform film releases and a reduction in extortionate cinema prices.

FILM: POUR ELLE

DIRECTOR: FREDN CAVAYE

STARRING: VINCENT LINDON, DIANE KRUGER

REVIEW: AMELIA MCPHERSON

RUNTIME: 96 MINS



Never has a film been more aptly named. From the opening of *Pour Elle* (*Anything for Her*), Julien's every action is governed by his increasing determination to help his wrongly accused wife escape from the justice system which has so dramatically failed them. Such drive makes his increasingly erratic behaviour plausible and understandable as his desperation drags him into a criminal underworld which he's fully unprepared for. Whilst the film's engaging, if you're hoping for France's latest top-notch 'haunted-couple' thriller from the same stable as *Caché* and *Ne le dis à Personne*, you'll be disappointed.

As everything collapses around him, Julien's anger and grief compel him to turn away from the law and enlist the help of an unlikely prison-escapee-turned-trashy-crime-novelist and a gang of overtly suspicious-looking criminals. *Pour Elle* is really a one-man show, however, and Lindon successfully captures the frantic loneliness of his character. Kruger is similarly strong, and scenes between them have a gut-wrenchingly dismal edge -

their chemistry becomes the highlight of the film. Other characters are similarly grounded in the film's tragic premise, and Julien and his father have that delightfully understated communication that can only be celebrated on film.

Soon deviating from its gritty, Scorsese-esque opening, *Pour Elle* becomes a sentimental exploration of the destruction of this family's life which, though a little over-egged, seems fully authentic. The film is sufficiently moody, but production quality takes a back-seat: it's a conscious decision to present the film in grim greys, but the film still lacks artistic flair. Instead, Cavayé relies on the plot to do the work, and this is the film's downfall: the story simply isn't robust enough to cope. The plot isn't adequately fleshed-out or intricate enough to provide any brain-tease, and it undertakes a hard slog to what is ultimately an anticlimactic finish line.

If Cavayé's intention is to turn away from 'intelligent thriller' and move towards a strategic, suspenseful and moving drama which explores the

FILM: LOOKING FOR ERIC

DIRECTOR: KEN LOACH

STARRING: STEVE EVETS

ERIC CANTONA

RUNTIME: 116 MINS

REVIEW: JO GLEDHIL



Ken Loach's new picture sees the renowned social-realist director turn his talents to a more light-hearted and accessible picture. *Looking for Eric* oscillates between social commentary and whimsical escapism, combining a painfully real exploration of depression, anguish and lost love with wonderfully timed humour, heart-warming humanity and a crowd pleasing finale.

Steve Evets plays Eric Bishop, a lonely Mancunian postman whose life is falling through his own fingers. Left to bring up his two unruly and unresponsive stepsons, Eric finds solace from the noise, mess and disorder of his life in a room plastered with Man. United memorabilia. After one particularly trying day, Eric steals his son's weed, and hears the voice of Eric Cantona, who, spouting proverbial philosophy, becomes his imaginary friend - a desperate mechanism for dealing with a life that is overwhelming him.

The real-life drama that



ensues forces Eric out of his apathy as he deals with his gun-toting stepson's involvement with a local gangster. After a particularly insightful sequence in which Cantona reveals the importance of trusting your team, Eric eventually allows himself to rely on others and rallies his workmates to help orchestrate payback on the gang-leader in the soaring, delightful climax of the film.

Filled with beautiful epigrams, humour, sadness, violence, solidarity and love, this film is not short on content. Loach has created a wonderful picture that deals nicely with the anti-Thatcherite concept of what man can achieve collectively. And who knew that Cantona could play the trumpet?



catastrophic individual consequences of a series of fateful occurrences - à la *Crash* and *Babel* - then it fails: the film isn't particularly atmospheric, nor is it well-timed enough to emotively pinpoint critical moments in the story: coverage of the way in which Lisa is framed for murder is so brief and unexplored that it undermines the event's significance. Such bizarre timing becomes a tool to gloss over weak patches in the plot, and, not sure where to go, the film fails to be the sophisticated,

intelligent thriller it's billed as.

To top it off, *Pour Elle*'s clichéd, cop-out ending leaves no ends tied up (which in a 'thriller' such slow-burning should be a crime), but is no contemplative, open-ended triumph either, and comes close to undermining all the film's positives. In truth, though, the film's more mediocre than terrible. It's graced with a strong cast and a plausible yet tragically coincidental premise, and Cavayé's direction is watchable - just don't expect it to live up to its predecessors.

FILM: IL GATTOPARDO (1963)

DIRECTOR: LUCHINO VISCONTI

STARRING: BURT LANCASTER

ALAIN DELON

CLAUDIA CARDINALE

REVIEW: VENETIA RAINEY



Luchino Visconti's *Il Gattopardo* (*The Leopard*) is acclaimed as being the centrepiece of Italy's golden era of cinema - and rightly so. Based on Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's same-titled novel, its spectacular sweep follows the noble Salina family as they struggle against the changes sweeping their country in the wake of the Resorgimento (the official unification of Italy).

Burt Lancaster plays Prince Salina, a man caught between his recognition of the need for change, and his dislike of the new things that will inevitably replace him. Originally brought in against Visconti's wishes, Lancaster's Salina draws the audience's attention throughout the film's three hours, capturing the delicious decadence of the film in what many have seen as a performance based on the director himself.

The famous ballroom scene is an extravaganza of visuals, sounds, and scripting. Claudia Cardinale plays Angelica to stunning perfection, and the camera



linguishes on her in a manner reminiscent of Victor Fleming's techniques in *Gone with the Wind*. The language of the film isn't much changed from that of the book, and consequently retains its literary sophistication. From the pervasive presence of death to the issue of the South personified by Sicily's disabling heat and cruel landscape, the film offers itself as a veritable feast of scenes and ideas.

Despite being an avowed Marxist, Visconti's obsession with lavish display, drama, and richness of detail often worked to the detriment of any message contained within his films. Nevertheless, *Il Gattopardo* can only be described as glorious, and is an absolute must see.

FOOD & DRINK.

RESTAURANT: MASON'S BISTRO BAR**ADDRESS: 13 FOSSGATE****PRICES: MAIN £15, LUNCHTIME TWO COURSES £9.50****REVIEW: GINA HESLINGTON**

☆☆☆

If you need to commemorate the end of exams and feel you deserve a touch more class than a night of debauchery in Ziggy's and a Yummy Chicken to celebrate, then Mason's Mediterranean bistro is for you. Be prepared to blow the rest of your student loan and gulp cheap 'Vodkat' from a flask for the last few weeks of university life in the process, but the experience will be a night to remember, unlike most of the ones in Tru which are best left forgotten.

Main meals start from £15.95 but a choice of orgasm-inducing dishes from North Africa to France seduced me into selecting the roasted quail with pan juices and a rosewater jelly and sauté chicken livers to start – I felt that if I was going to be able to appreciate the internal organs of a butchered animal anywhere, here would be a good place to give it a try. Had I been in less of an offal-centric mood choices included a tempting sounding steak with black truffle butter. Vegetarian diners were not ignored, being offered a classic bouillabaise, or stuffed aubergine for the truly converted. An enquiry into the wine list reduced me to selecting the cheapest house white available for £13.50, but the promise of an overt bouquet with a

'gooseberry pungency' made my unhappy liver give a sigh of relief. For social climbers a bottle of 'Pol Roger White Foil champagne' is available for a mere £42.50. Chin chin.

As the drinks flowed and the conversation became evermore loud and less intelligent our table of student rabble began to feel increasingly out of place in the cool, old-fashioned ambience of Mason's. Formerly the home of a high quality grocer of the same name, the restaurant has maintained its traditional charm complete with original wooden features, which no doubt make its usual clientele of the elderly rich feel comparatively more youthful. Unable to remember 'the good old days' I was instead impressed by the grace and character of the restaurant-cum-museum complete with its fascinating collection of 'living fossil' diners, indeed more than our money's worth.

The starters arrived and looked delightful, and despite the complimentary noises that my friends were making in the midst of consumption, one mouthful of my chicken liver reminded me that offal is offal, not matter how expensive or well dressed. Though no doubt the best prepared in York, I



couldn't help thinking it would have been better appreciated packaged in a pouch of Whisker's finest cat food and fed to a lonely spinster's overweight cat.

Ravenously hungry I keenly awaited the mains and was justly rewarded. The quail was beautifully succulent and though swimming in a soup of juices rather than fly-

ing in a summer sky, my conscience was somewhat eased upon realisation of the fact that unlike the chicken, this little bird hadn't died in vain.

Desserts were expensive but delicious, yet I have a small suspicion that they are shipped in rather than hand crafted. At the stage of the night however, I was thorough-

ly inebriated enough to devour both my own and scrape the bowls of my friends. As a food reviewer you get the privilege of 'trying' a bit of everyone's in the name of research and upon this night I used that carte blanche to the maximum. If that's not a reflection of the quality of the food, I don't know what is.

WINE Jonathan Fransman

Are you one of those insufferable bores that still insists on dwelling on the European elections even after the voting has taken place? We at *Nouse* can help you resist the temptation while still allowing you to make that ever so important political statement. Wear your political persuasion like red wine lips and hangover booze breath with this guide to European Election Party Political Plonk.

Labour

Labour in 2009 is the political equivalent of Thai Fusion cuisine; desperately outdated and utterly spineless. Even the spin doctors have realised the Sisyphean extent of their task; a Gary Glitter comeback tour would undoubtedly be far easier to orchestrate than a Labour party victory at the polls.

One name in particular springs to mind when thinking about spin in the wine world, the over-priced and over-hyped **Cloudy Bay, Sauvignon Blanc, 2008** (various suppliers, circa £17.95).

The new vintage reportedly delivers "deliciously vibrant aromatics that infuse the tropical fragrance of fresh passion fruit and juicy pineapples with garden-fresh basil and the spiciness of crushed tomato leaves." Upon tasting, I was unable to discern any of these subtle aromas and was left with nothing but a rather unpleasant – albeit expensive – taste in my mouth.

Save the money and opt for the dry yet gooseberry packed **Wither Hills, Sauvignon Blanc, 2008** (Oddbins, £9.99).

Conservatives

What is the essence of the Conservatives? Cameron is little more than Blair repackaged to suit current trends; he loves the environment, he's cool - albeit with a hint of immigration sharpness. The beating heart of the party is to be found elsewhere in the Tory hereditary peer. Perpetually inebriated, asleep or outrageously inappropriate, this dying breed serves up a veritable smorgasbord of political hilarity on a daily basis. What do they drink? Claret, of

course.

As we all too often find ourselves in the unfortunate predicament of not being able to fit the Cheval Blanc into the confines of the weekly budget, the lovely **Chateau Charron 'Les Grappes' 2007, Bordeaux** (Oddbins, £9.99) is more than sufficient to satisfy those right bank cravings at a fraction of the price

Lib Dems

Only one thing springs to mind with the Liberal Democrats: high alcohol. Maybe this is the reason why the party fosters such high levels of support amongst students; God knows it can't have anything to do with their policies.

Try the behemoth **Aussie Chalk Hill, 2007, Sangiovese** (Oddbins, £12.99). At 15.5% ABV this spicy little number would give even Kennedy a run for his money.

Green

Try the charming Fair Trade and organic **Bodega Furlotti, Soluna Malbec, 2008** (Everywine.co.uk, £9.99 in a case of 12). Though the natural accompaniment would be a great chunk of Bife De Chorizo (Sirloin Steak), the Fair Trade and organic factors render it a perfect accompaniment to a car-

bon tax debate and a couscous salad in your North London venue of choice.

Just be a good green and swallow down the hypocrisy - the carbon footprint on a bottle of this Argentinean would even make the Range Rover set balk.

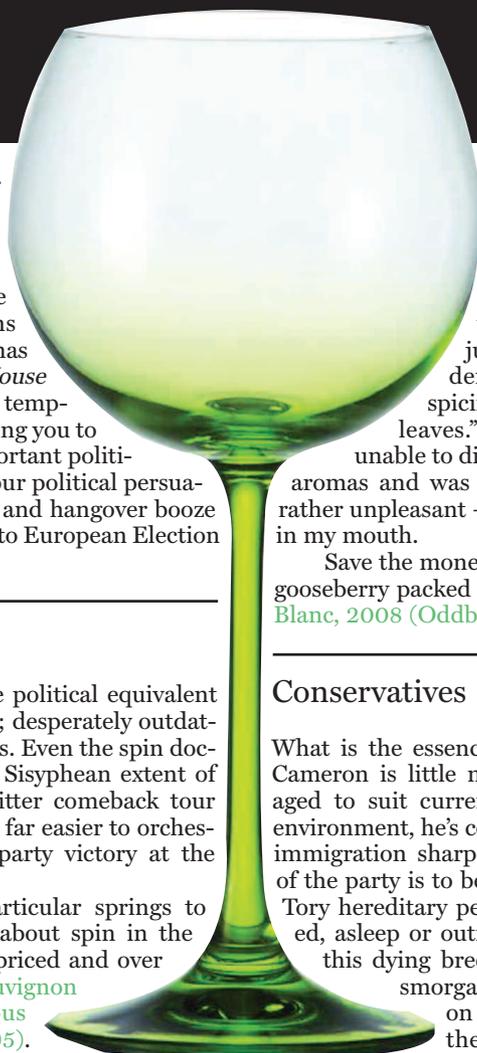
BNP/UKIP

When thinking of English wines, one thinks Chapel Down. English vineyard, English workers and English owners. If you can temporarily subdue your rabid sense of jingoism and ignore the decidedly non-English grape varieties, celebrate the election results with the excellent **Chapel Down NV Brut** (Waitrose, £12.74).

If you can't bear to let those immigrant grapes anywhere near you, opt for **Carling Lager NV** (Tesco, £3.64 for 4x500ml Cans), a drink which serves as the perfect aperitif for those planning to commit GBH.

Christian Party

If you've plumped for this lot, which proposes an end to secularism, and a return to Christian values, you're probably best sticking with the only soft drink to be seen with: **San Pellegrino** (Tesco, 87p). Room temperature, of course - anything else would be a sin.



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Criss
Noice

Eleventh place is just the start of York's journey to Vocationville

The University has dug its own grave and will struggle to regain its ranking

As if the current graduate climate wasn't frightening enough, the University of York has given its graduates something else to lose sleep about with the announcement that it has fallen out of the top ten Universities in the country, according to *The Times*. Looking at this year's list, it's clear that York has not been pushed out of the top ten; it has dropped the ball.

The University's most pressing problem is that it is currently attempting to be all things to all people. Rumours are that Cantor is advocating a raise of the budget cap that aims to retain a level of exclusivity in higher education, while at the same time doubling the size of campus for the benefit of subjects like 'Film and Television'. It's a well known fact that if you try to do too much, you're likely to fall flat on your face. This University needs to focus on enhancing already established subjects for the current crop of students instead

of diverting resources toward vocational subjects.

Up until now, York has been seen along with Durham and Warwick as the first stop for those who have had their Oxbridge

"if you try to do too much, you're likely to fall on your face"

applications swatted away. With the arrival of Heslington East and its vocational clusterfuck, we are in grave danger of wandering into the territory of being compared with Oxford Brookes, Southampton and Brighton. Lovely places, as long as they don't live on your CV.

Predictably, Oxford and Cambridge are at the top of

this year's list, but the back end of the top ten this year is comprised of Exeter and Bristol. Now, I know that Yorkshire is primarily known for cricket and real ale but I refuse to be beaten by a pair of cider swilling South-Westerners in an academic standoff. How we're supposed to have pride in our University when it can't hold off the challenge of two competitors too close to Wales to be considered civilised is beyond me.

So, what do we expect from York in the future? Well, with the imminent expansion of the student populous combined with a frankly unprepared staff contingent, we can only expect a slippery slope to Vocationville. The powers that be made the executive decision that a bigger campus will somehow produce better results, but they forgot one thing: If you put enough monkeys in a room with a typewriter, one will write you Shakespeare. Not all of them.

Raf
Sanchez

Brown will find a way to Labour on

By all accounts Gordon Brown is clinging to power by his chomped-down fingernails. The disastrous constellations of an election mauling and his botched handling of expenses have aligned. Even the image in his toast must look like the moving vans outside Number 10.

But as bad as it looks, I think there are three important reasons why he'll survive.

Number one: the survival instincts of Labour MPs are telling them to do nothing that might risk triggering a general election and Brown's whips will be exploiting this ruthlessly. In hundreds of phone calls to backbenchers the message will be the same: if the Prime Minister goes down it will go to the country and you're out of a job.

And they aren't exaggerating. I spoke to a Labour staffer who was knocking doors last weekend and received a face full of expenses-pigs-troughs-all-bastards vitriol for her trouble. She told me of the "mortal terror" in her MP's office and in the party in general at having to fight an election in a climate like this. It's mutually assured destruction - Brown's boat may be sinking but backbenchers are all in with him. Secondly, although Brown may be seriously weakened he is still in charge of Labour's strongest faction. If the events of the last few days have taught us

anything, it's that the mythical Blairite wing is just that: a myth. James Purnell walked out and nobody followed. David Miliband presumably hid under his desk, as he has during every crisis of the last year.

Perhaps most important is the Faustian pact Brown has done with Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State for Dark Arts. Mandelson gets the new Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and virtual control of the government in return for doing whatever black magic does to rebels. Brown has traded his soul in return for eternal life. Or at least eternal until June 2010.

Finally, it is almost impossible to overstate the timidity of the cabinet. Say what you will about the House of Waxworks that made up Thatcher's final cabinet but at least they knew where the knives were kept and how to use them. The current lot's capacity for dithering is exceeded only by their abilities at hand-wringing. While we've seen fiery resignations from individuals, I would put the chances of an organised cabinet putsch at virtually nil.

By the time you read this on Tuesday I may have been proved spectacularly wrong. Gordon may have joined the back of Britain's growing dole queue and I will be deeply regretting this column. But, for the moment at least, I would bet Gordon is here to stay.

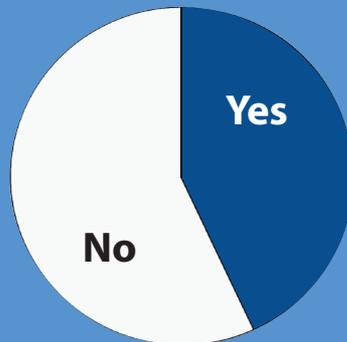
The Burning Question

This week, *Nouse* asked:

Should YUSU condemn extremist politics?

314 people voted, with the majority stating

No



136 people voted Yes (43%)

178 people voted No (57%)

To be a part of the debate and for exclusive web content go to www.nouse.co.uk/comment

Letters

Nouse welcomes your letters. Please indicate if they are not intended for publication.

Email letters@nouse.co.uk or write to:

Nouse, Grimston House, Vanbrugh College

Corrections and Clarifications

In the articles 'Campus lake raises further safety concerns' (News, Tuesday May 27) and 'Troubled waters ruining our campus' (Comment, Tuesday May 27), it was stated that an oil spillage by outside contractors had caused the Environmental Agency to impose regular fines on the University for the subsequent state of the campus lake.

Nouse would like to state that while there was a small leak of oil from a contractor's skip in September 2008, it was investigated by the University and the cost of cleaning it up was recovered. There was no involvement of the Environment Agency no fine imposed on the University.

Nouse takes great care to ensure the accuracy of all information printed and apologises for these mistakes.

Losers of the college lottery need to be catered for

Dear *Nouse*,

We're hurtling towards the end of our academic year here at York, and for me, the end of my Fresher Year. And it's definitely been an experience.

I have to say, it hasn't been overwhelming. I was promised the best year of my life, and while it's been good and I have enjoyed it, all the promises made in October seem a little empty from the other side.

It's been said before, but I can't help thinking that your first-year experience at York depends a lot on what college you end up in. Some people love their colleges and their events and get really involved, whereas others potter along, feeling anonymous and unenthused by the whole thing. If there isn't an effort made by the JCRs to integrate people, life can be lonely.

I've been lucky enough to get involved in some societies, and as such feel more part of

campus than my friends. Halifax is a trek from campus, both literally and figuratively. You can't help feeling adrift from stuff that happens in the core of our University. And the 20 minute walk in the rain really begins to drag after a while.

The failure both of STYCs and JCRs to do an adequate job will have repercussions throughout our university lives. I have a close circle of good friends, but when they aren't around, I feel a bit lost. If I hadn't got on with my housemates and those living immediately near me, York would be a miserable place for me.

Lessons need to be learned for next year's batch of freshers who lose the college lottery. Students are sociable creatures who are desperate to make friends. It shouldn't be as hard as it has proved to be.

Anonymous,
Halifax

You're fired

Dear *Nouse*,

After being harrassed by what seemed like hundreds of people desperately requiring me to buy jewellery from them when I was innocently on my way to the library, and even being propositioned with a massage, I'm quite fed up of The York Apprentice.

I love watching the programme but I think it should stay just that - on TV. It's a great idea but not to the extent that everyone on campus is fed up of being harrassed by the end of the week. Surely there are other tasks that could be set rather than just sales?

The York Apprentice should be reformed for next year, otherwise the organisers are in danger of alienating campus from what has the potential to be a highlight of our year.

Simon O'Doherty,
Second Year Biology Student, Alcuin



Nicky Woolf

If you're naughty, the Hoff-alike will get you

Moment of Zen

Cunningly charging current affairs to expenses under the guise of much-needed satire

Derwent Bar. 7:56 PM. A vast and inebriated crowd has gathered for the Mr. York. The contestants line up along the side of the bar for the first round, General Purpose Manliness.

Henry James Foy, Dan Taylor, Gruffudd Jones, Alex Fink and some random others are to lock horns in a series of challenges, judged by Diminutive Parliamentary Hopeful Claire Hazelgrove, TV Supremo Anna Bucks and Amusingly Named Dancer Harriet Waghorn.

At the starting whistle Gruffudd Jones immediately starts doing press-ups. Henry James Foy, the editor of this esteemed publication, is eliminated after lamentably failing in the fiendish challenge of imbibing a quantity of liquid.

Anna Bucks strikes Taylor smartly on the back of the head, causing a hollow boom to echo around the bar. For a second, silence reigns. Then, with a resounding crash, the Hoff-alike, YUSU's single and all-pervasive fetishistic obsession, crashes through the wall from the ornamental pond beyond. Water floods the room, ruining several hundred pairs of Ugg boots.

The broken remains of a mallard hang limply from the Hoff-alike's bloodstained jaws. Dropping it into the lake-water

sluicing around Derwent Dining Hall with a sad, gooey splash, he lets out a single, mournful roar.

The assembled audience, judges and man-petitors freeze in terror.

The Hoff-alike is hungry.

Only one figure is not rooted to the spot by sheer terror. It is Gruffudd Jones, sports-dwarf extraordinaire and Welsh national leek-tossing champion 2004, 2005 and 2006 - though the last competition was tragically called-off after 238 people were gored to death when an unmanacled leek ran amok among spectators.

Gruffudd does not freeze.

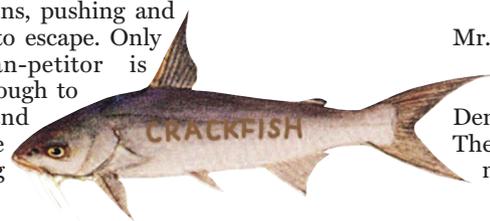
Gruffudd is not afraid of the Hoff-alike.

Gruffudd has not even noticed the Hoff-alike.

Gruffudd is still doing press-ups.

Wisps of steam are starting to emanate from his ears.

Then the Hoff-alike strikes. He snatches a second-year computer science student up by the laptop strap and consumes him whole. Pandemonium erupts. Screaming, the assembled crowd runs, pushing and shoving to escape. Only one man-petitor is brave enough to stand and face the terrifying monster.



Resolute, only his eyes betraying the fear in his heart, Alex Fink faces the Hoff-alike across the devastated dining hall, twirling Claire Hazelgrove about his head like David's sling. As the Goliath charges, his trademark red life-float stained a darker red with nerd-blood, Fink loses Hazelgrove, who flies true through the air, catching the Hoff-alike smartly between the eyes and spraying it with radioactive goo.

What happens next has been immortalised in song.

Blinded, the monstrous creature stumbles across the hall towards Gruffudd, who is by now glowing white-hot, too bright to look directly at, and is doing one press-up every ten-millionth of a second. The Hoff-alike stumbles towards him, trips over a broken table, topples towards Gruffudd, and...

A man doing press-ups at that sort of velocity is highly unstable at a molecular level.

There is a loud bang, a terrible ghastly sucking sound, and then nothing remains of either Hoff-alike or Gruffudd except a mess of molten rock.

Gruffudd is awarded the Mr. York title posthumously, and Alex Fink is now the President of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The use of Claire Hazelgrove is now banned in British military operations.



An insight into the grooming habits of everyone's favourite YUSU Presidential loser Charles Bushby. *MoZ* reveals that his Adonis-smooth beach bod is not entirely natural. *Nouse's* own Jim Bulley confronted him with the accusation that he flew to America to have his chest waxed. "That's not all I did," fumed an outraged but smooth-chested Bushby. To be frank, *MoZ* doesn't want to know what else he had waxed.

Spot the Strikey Difference, with an hilarious swap

James 'the Badger' Alexander, former YUSU Prez and Labour Candidate

Matt O'Connor, founder, Fathers 4 Justice and English Democrat

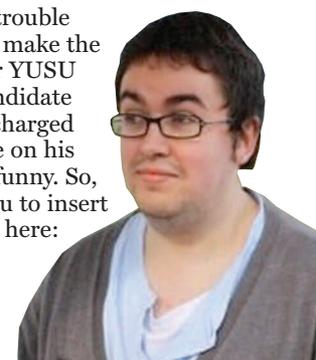
A Badger



London mayoral candidate



MoZ is having trouble finding ways to make the fact that former YUSU Presidential candidate Tom Langrish charged £48.90 for cake on his expenses form funny. So, we will leave you to insert your own funny here:



Nominations now open for the

NOUSE fifty09

We want you to nominate students that have made stand-out achievements in this academic year. Fifty nominees across five categories - **Philanthropy, Entrepreneurialism, Sport, Society and Politics** will be shortlisted in our July edition.

All submissions to top50@nouse.co.uk with a short paragraph explaining why your nomination deserves to be in our shortlist



GlobalFocus

1. RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL-----

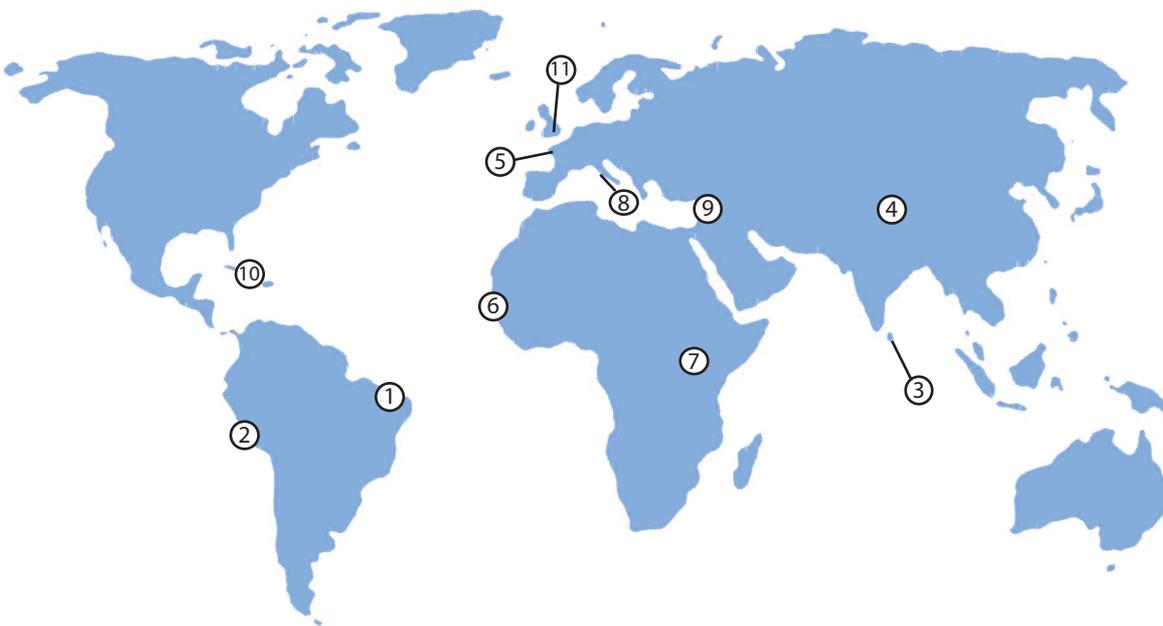
An Air France plane has disappeared on a flight from Rio to Paris, sparking a search by the Brazilian Navy and a French nuclear submarine. The last messages from the plane showed computer failure in the midst of an electrical storm. The Airbus A330, which disappeared last Monday, was carrying 228 passengers, the loss of whom is the largest civilian aviation disaster since an American Airline crash in New York which killed 260 people. Currently 16 survivors have been found.

2. BAGUA, PERU-----

Security forces have clashed with indigenous tribesmen in the culmination of a two-month fuel blockade. Currently 31 people have been killed in the incident, when police opened fire on demonstrators from a helicopter. The indigenous leaders were blocking the jungle highway over President Garcia's proposals to make communal jungle area available for logging, mining and oil exploration. Protestors claim that the demonstration and road block were peaceful.

3. COLOMBO, SRI LANKA-----

After three decades of resistance, Velupillai Prabhakaran, the leader of the Tamil Tigers, was ambushed and killed by government commandos. The Tigers reported a resulting massacre, although reporters were kept out of the area. The conflict between the group and the government has claimed over 70,000 lives. The Government took control of the entire country and declared it free of terrorism.



4. SWAT VALLEY, PAKISTAN-----

40 have been killed in a suicide attack during Friday prayers simultaneous to arrests of attempted suicide bombers in Islamabad and Rawalpindia. The Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani immediately resolved that the incident would not stop governmental attempts to eliminate all terrorism from Pakistan.

5. NORMANDY, FRANCE-----

Commemorations to mark the 65th anniversary of the D-Day landings saw 800 veterans returning to the Normandy beaches to witness reenactment jumps in the opening of an international ceremony. Amid various controversies over

invitations, guests who attended included the Prince of Wales, President Obama, and President Sarkozy.

6. BISSAU, GUINEA-BISSAU-----

A leading contender in the Presidential race has been killed by police who claim that he was plotting a coup. Baciro Dabo was shot while asleep at his home at the same time as a former defence minister was killed for alleged involvement in the same plot. The election, due to happen later this month, was called after the previous President was assassinated in March in response to the death of an army chief. The election is now more than likely to be delayed.

7. NAIROBI, KENYA-----

The first commercial flights between Kenya and America have been cancelled by the USA over security fears, sparking an angry reaction from the Kenyan government. The first flight, which would have been the only one in the last 20 years, was cancelled a week ago today despite Kenya claiming to have met the US security concerns.

8. COSTA SMERALDA, ITALY---

Naked photographs of the former Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek with topless women at the private villa of Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi were published in an Italian newspaper last Friday. The villa has played

host to many world leaders, including the Blairs in 2004. The controversy is expected to have limited effect on Berlusconi's current popularity.

9. BEIRUT, LEBANON-----

Elections were held in Lebanon on Sunday. The results, which by now have been announced, are expected to reduce the influence of the pro-Western Sunni coalition and give victory to an Iranian-backed coalition fronted by Hezbollah. The bloc also feature a secular Shia party, and Christian supporters of the Free Patriotic Movement.

10. HAVANA, CUBA-----

A retired US state department official and his wife have been charged for spying for Cuba on the US for over 30 years. Walter and Gwen Myers had previously met with Fidel Castro, such was the status of their achievements within the Cuban administration. The couple were caught after telling an undercover FBI agent about their work during a sting. If convicted, they will both get life sentences.

11. LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM---

Prime Minister Gordon Brown was forced to reshuffle his cabinet on Friday morning following the resignation of James Purnell upon the close of the European polls on Thursday night. The move, which many see as an attempt by Brown to maintain power at any cost, came at the end of a week in which four Cabinet ministers resigned from office. In the Council Elections, Labour lost over 250 Councillors and overall control of their only four Councils.

-----NOUSE.CO.UK/POLITICS

The day that hate won - at the expense of Gordon Brown



Peter Campbell
POLITICAL ANALYSIS

BY THE time you read this, Gordon Brown may no longer be Prime Minister. The election results from Sunday night were not only damning for the Labour Party, they were yet another nail in the coffin of Brown's leadership, one that has been fraught with slumping opinion polls and botched opportunities.

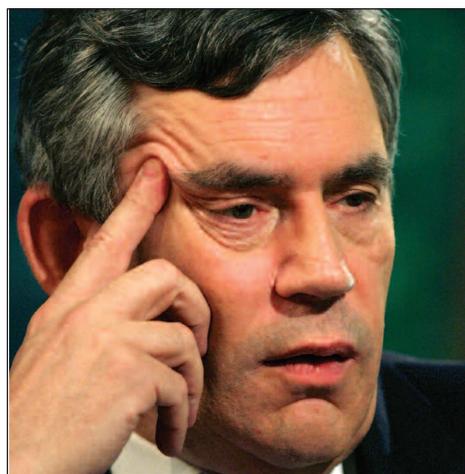
Consider the numbers: The only two parties to lose a percentage of the vote from 2004 were Labour, who lost 7%, and the Lib Dems, who lost 1.1%. Of the 8.1% of the vote that was available, it is surprising that the three parties to make the largest gains were not the Conservatives or UKIP. The Greens increased by 2.5% of the vote, The Christian Party "Proclaiming Christ's Lordship" gained 1.7%, and, worryingly, the BNP picked up 1.4%.

The Conservatives only gained 1.2%, and UKIP picked up a relatively miserly 0.5%. Translating into seats, however, the results are slightly different. The Greens

remain on exactly the same number of seats as in 2004, and the Christian Party are yet to gain a seat. In the two regions in which the BNP gained MEPs (the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber), the seats were taken at the expense of Labour, with all other seats remaining the same.

Whatever the reasons are for the advancement of this less-than-savoury party, one thing is clear; the seats they gained were as a direct result of the disenchantment of Labour voters. These voters would never consider voting for the Conservatives or UKIP, and abandonment by the Labour party, combined with the convincing and misleading campaign run by the BNP, led to them appearing a very attractive alternative.

Fingers will be pointed by many in an attempt to find someone on whom they can pin the blame. The truth is that there is only one direction in which they can be pointed. By persisting doggedly with his electorally untested leadership, by presiding over an erosion in the trust of Parliamentary honesty, and attempting to survive a week of high-profile resignations, Brown has succeeded in alienating those voters whom he most needed to attract in order to keep out the BNP.



Brown's time is up - he now has to go

Much anger has already been expressed in the short time following the elections, and rightly so. It is now time that this anger was directed at the right person, and the demands for departure will now be backed up by the stark evidence before the eyes of the Labour Party - that their weakness as a party played a crucial role in bringing about the election of the first fascists from Britain

to walk into the European Union Parliament with a mandate and a platform.

This leads directly to the question of what is wrong with the Labour party. Essentially nothing, except its leadership. With Johnson, or Miliband, or Purnell, or even (dare I say it) Balls in leadership, this would not have happened. Had a general election been held and the current government had a mandate, then the public opinion polls might tell quite a different story.

The very fact that Labour 'succeeded' in coming third rather than fourth nationally in this election, when they still retain a large majority as the governing party, speaks volumes about the vast gap between the public opinion and the current constitution of the House of Commons. The sooner that Brutus Miliband or Johnson plucks up their courage, the better the chances will be of a Labour recovery before next May.

If Brown is gone by the time that you read this, then all that has been said has come true and this article has proved prophetic. If he remains, having already played the cabinet reshuffle card, his only remaining ploy, then it is only a matter of time until the inevitable.

US tested as North Korea goes Nuclear

Peter Young
POLITICS EDITOR

TENSIONS ARE running high following North Korea's defiant decision to carry out a second nuclear test. According to sources in South Korea and China, strong tremors measuring around 4.7 on the Richter scale indicate that a bomb as powerful as those that landed on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was successfully detonated underground.

The test follows a diplomatic row surrounding North Korea's failed satellite launch in April which, rather conveniently, would have helped the country to develop technology very similar to that used in the production of intercontinental ballistic missiles. A UN resolution denounced the attempted launch and Kim Jong Il reacted strongly by pulling North Korea out of the 'six party' diplomatic talks and announcing that he will resume his nuclear weapons program.

This step was fairly typical of Jong-Il who has taken to using North Korea's military power as a bargaining chip with the US. In the past both the Clinton and Bush administrations have entered into deals with North Korea whereby resources such as oil and food have been offered in exchange for diplomatic cooperation and disarmament. These deals have been agreed but have all failed - North Korea has received aid and then broken the agreements, continuing to show a disregard for the rules of international behaviour.

President Obama has responded by saying that the US will take "stern" action to the launch which he described as "a blatant violation of international law." There has also been a strong verbal response from the international community, perhaps most importantly from the Russians and the Chinese who have issued statements of strong condemnation. Obama's Chief of staff, Raun Emmanuel, claims that the US administration will start being much tougher on North Korea. Nonetheless history has taught us that taking a hard line against the Jong-Il regime is notoriously difficult.

The weakness of the country's centrally planned economy, combined with its geographical location, puts it in a unique position whereby it can exercise a great deal of diplomatic power. The Chinese and

the Russians realise this more than anyone. Both countries have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo in the region and cannot afford the massive and uncontrolled influx of migrants which would result from the country's col-

"China and Russia both have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo"

lapse. North Korea also acts as a useful military buffer to the South in which around 29,000 US troops are stationed. The Russians and the Chinese would have to significantly increase their military presence on the North Korean border if the South were to take control which would stretch

their armed forces even further.

Any course of action that the US takes now will be incredibly costly. The might of the North Korean military is such that war is an almost inconceivable option. The imposition of economic sanctions would severely damage an already crippled economy and would likely lead to a humanitarian crisis in the area. Obama may well not have the option of waiting for the frail 67 year old Kim Jong-Il to pass away, and even when he does there is no reason to think that this will bring change. If the death of 'Eternal President' Kim Il Sung is anything to go by then the prospect any significant regime change when Jong Il dies does not seem likely. Jong Il's next successor has already been announced: his youngest son Jong Un.

Political
Edge



Tom Hobohm

HERE'S a question. What has everyone in Brown's new cabinet got in common? Answer- Not one of them is less than 45 years old. Is this really the refreshing new cabinet the party so urgently needs?

It seems like it's almost game over for Labour. After the Local Council results of last weekend coming in worse than even the harshest critic predicted, there's no saying whether a general election will be next year or next week.

The much anticipated cabinet reshuffle was probably Brown's last real chance to save himself and his party, and it seems like he's made some pretty awful calls. Sure, 45 is young in politics (let's not forget 47-year-old Obama's bad press over his own age), but filling a new cabinet with well known figures is just going to leave Labour looking a bit stale in the eyes of the electorate.

Labour is going to lose the next election. This much seems pretty certain. Knowing this, surely it makes more sense for Brown to fill the cabinet with relative unknowns? Nothing the cabinet can do could fix the financial crisis, and the situation can't exactly get worse for Labour, so Brown should

"Labour is going down and out, and Brown's decisions now should be for the preservation of the party."

have taken the chance to shape the party's future leadership and given some unknown MPs the chance to experience being in government.

And what is there to lose? He's all out of political capital, so why not appoint the people he really wants? Getting backbenchers who will attempt to implement the policies he really wants, even if they won't be the most popular, could be his last chance to achieve the things he really wanted to.

It will, after all, only be a 'new' New Labour that will give the party any chance of winning. Labour is going down and out, and Brown's decisions now should be for preservation of the party. A complete facelift is exactly what Labour needs. The appointments he makes will decide how long exactly the party will be down for.

The Tories had the same problem in the 90s. Leaving the same old figures in office meant the public couldn't see any hope for change, and the party was left flailing for a whole decade trying to get some new blood to re-invigorate.

Let's not pretend that a cabinet of experienced Labour ministers can change the mistakes of the past. Maybe Brown should have spent time thinking of ways to solve his problems for the future.

Beware Chinese development strategy



Steve Fuller
GUEST COLUMNIST

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON got it radically wrong when he imagined that the forthcoming major 'clash of civilisations' would be between Islam and the West. Yes, the world is still acting out George W. Bush's fantasy 'War on Terror' but from a world-historic perspective the difference between Islam and the West reflects little more than what Freud would call the 'narcissism of small differences'.

The so-called War on Terror is basically a family feud amongst the spiritual descendants of Abraham over who does the better job of upholding the sanctity of human life. The disagreement is serious but unfortunately it tends to be conducted by violent means. The bigger long-term problem concerns the China-oriented parts of Asia, for which the value of human life is itself so negotiable that it becomes a matter of intrinsic indifference. I speak from experience.

For the last five years, I have taught in a summer school at the Helsingborg campus of the



Hu Jintao has advocated state censorship

University of Lund in Sweden that George Soros has sponsored for the purpose of enlightening students from ex-Communist countries on the virtues of the 'open society', a phrase that Soros adopted from his former teacher at the LSE, Karl Popper. Those who teach in this school agree with Soros that free markets require free minds,

free press and the rule of law.

However, a striking but chilling feature of the student body is that those from mainland China, decked out in American sweatshirts and Americanised accents, regularly query their own need to repeat the undeniably divisive and violent period associated with democratisation in the West, in order to enjoy the fruits of a booming capitalist economy.

They seem quite comfortable operating within a 'survival of the fittest' framework associated with Social Darwinism - no doubt because they imagine themselves coming out on top. Government censorship, then, is simply a benign means that enables the fit to stay focussed on the prime objective, which is to make more money.

The Chinese may have devised a winning strategy, but only if the West adopts a *laissez-faire* attitude towards China, permitting it to engage in human rights violations within its own borders as long as it does not disrupt trade relations with the West. But this is no time to resort to relativism.

We need to keep up the pressure on China by both national and international means. Equally we need to shore up the resources of our major cultural allies in the region, India and Japan, who can provide a counterbalance to China.

Steve Fuller is Professor of Sociology at Warwick

The future of the Middle East

President Obama unveiled his progressive agenda for the Middle East in a speech at Cairo University. **Camilla Jenkins** discusses what was said and whether change is a likely possibility

WHITE HOUSE PHOTOSTREAM

ON THURSDAY 4 June, US President Barack Obama gave a speech at Cairo University in Egypt which was designed to reestablish and renew relations between America and the Muslim world.

A foreign affairs blogger Gideon Rachman described the speech as "an effort to call an end to the clash of civilizations". It was.

Obama combined lofty rhetoric with practical solutions and an impressive sensitivity about the previously distrustful relationship between the US and the Muslim world. Despite some remaining cautious about the practical possibilities of dealing with incredibly complex situations in the region, the speech was well received by most concerned.

In contrast to President Bush, the speech was aimed at the audience present instead of solely pandering to the conservative Right at home. The Daily Star of Beirut described it as: "Representing a country, through its innovative leader, speaking quietly and carrying a big stick."

However, some government officials and citizens in the region were disappointed with the lack of a coherent and detailed practical plan for bringing peace to the Middle East.

Head of the Centre for Dialogue and Cooperation among Civilizations in Indonesia, Din Syamsuddin commented: "We would like to see the realisations of these good ideas in the speech. Then we can judge US foreign policy."

There was no mention of Bush or the explicit phrase 'terrorism'. He invoked the traditional Muslim welcome of 'Assalaamu Alaykum' - peace be upon you - and drew heavily on his Muslim background and his time in Indonesia. He quoted the Koran four times and used quotes from the Bible and the Torah to back up his overall

message that people of different religions have more in common than then they do differences.

Obama was careful to acknowledge the errors of America's past leaders. He mentioned colonialism, the Cold War and the American part in the overthrow of the democratic government of Iran in the 1950s.

The audience was receptive and even began to applaud the more difficult passages designed to provoke thought as well as the ones designed to appease those in attendance.

In a marked change from the United States' usual approach to the Israel-Palestine

"This is sure to send a strong message that the US is changing direction."

conflict, Obama insisted that Hamas recognize Israel and renounce the undertaking of violence. He described the situation of the Palestinian people as "intolerable." Obama was careful to clarify that he intended to "personally pursue" a solution and backed this up with the statement that "the United States does not accept the legitimacy of the continued Israeli settlements."

This is sure to send a strong message that the US is changing direction to the powerful Israeli pressure groups that exist in America at present.

Obama renewed his commitment to Afghanistan by pledging to invest \$1.5 billion each year in infrastructure and another \$2.8 billion to help the Afghans develop their economy.

He emphasised the difference between the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq by stating that the US "did not go by choice, we went because of



President Obama gives speech at Cairo University

necessity." In contrast, "Iraq was a war of choice."

He emphasized that the spirit of the Arab Peace Initiative must be continually supported and that it is time to "choose progress over a focus on the past." However, it will be difficult to convince more moderate Arabs that Washington is finally willing to set aside their historic Israeli bias. Furthermore, in the upcoming Presidential Election, all candidates support the Islamic Revolution.

Although the subject of democracy was slightly glossed over, he insisted that "no system of government can be imposed upon one nation by another." Obama skirted the usual American imperialism criticisms by stating that these were not "just American ideas,

they are human rights."

He pledged to support the rebuilding of trust between Iran and America especially with regards to preventing a nuclear arms race. His statement that "no single nation should pick and choose which nations hold nuclear weapons," was refreshing and much-needed for a region that feels they have been considered too irresponsible to invest in nuclear technology while Western countries continue to hold nuclear weapons.

The last part of the speech included proposals for grassroots action designed to repair and reinvigorate links between citizens of the Middle East and the US. Obama promised to increase scholarships, host a summit of entrepreneurship and launch a fund to support technological development. Obama intends to ensure that: "A teenager in Kansas can communicate with a teenager in Cairo." This is a unique and crucial way to ensure that the peace process continues and lasts.

Perhaps the true effectiveness of the speech can be measured by extremists groups' worried reactions. The former President and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the 'supreme leader of Iran' put out a statement saying America was "deeply hated" in the region and no amount of "beautiful and sweet" words could change this. Osama Bin Laden broadcasted a rare audio bulletin before the talk accusing Obama of planting the seed of revenge and hatred."

The speech was not one given by a coward or someone unaware of the task lying before them. The audience was pre-selected by the US and included both supporters and enemies of America. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood, the banned although democratically elected Egyptian opposition group prevented from talks by the Bush administration, were invited and greeted Obama's remarks with applause.

Essam El Erian, a senior member of the Muslim Brotherhood, said: "I think he has succeeded by 70 to 80 per cent. But if he doesn't follow up with action it will be a disaster."

Edward Luce and Daniel Dombey of the *Financial Times* described the speech as: "setting his foreign policy on a course that will put his democratic agenda on the backburner."

Noble oratory and uplifting metaphors about the wonders of democracy are important but are not enough to solve the Middle East's problems alone. Obama's speech managed to combine democratic ideology with practical and rational procedures that allowed him to win over his audience and watchers around the world.

While it is not, and should not be, a 12 step plan to bring about global peace, Obama has achieved what so many world leaders have failed to - he has opened the gateways of communication and that can only be a good thing.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S SEVEN TENSIONS

Violent Extremism
The US will never be at war with Islam but Obama must protect Americans. They will continue to support the Afghan economy and aim to withdraw all combat brigades from Iraq by next August. However, military power alone is not sufficient to reduce extremism in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan.

Arab-Israel Peace
Obama believes that a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine is the only practical solution. He has called on Hamas to end the violence and for both sides to come together.

Nuclear Technology
A arms race in the Middle East would be dangerous for all concerned. However, no nation should be allowed to dictate which countries can hold nuclear weapons. Nuclear technology should only be used for non-military purposes and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty should be upheld.

Democracy
The US will continue to support freedom and the protection of human rights in other countries but "no system of government can be imposed by one nation to another."

Women's Equality
Obama pledged to support female literacy programmes in other countries and work to expand the education and equal treatment of women.

Religious Freedom
The similarities between various religions were emphasised throughout the speech and Obama called on all countries and groups to be more accommodating of different religious groups.

Economic Development
Countries must work together to ensure economic prosperity and create a better environment for economic opportunities.

Sailing and Windsurfing Club

Sports Editor **Adam Shergold** spends a day learning the ropes with a club which looks after members past and present and has positioned itself for an assault on honours in the future

COURTESY OF YUSWC

COASTING AWAY from the wooden jetty, the boat skimming along gently and caressing every undulation of the placid surface, I could fully appreciate the enduring appeal of sailing as the sunshine briefly pierced the leaden, grey skies.

However, there is good reason why Stephen Smith, my experienced and immensely patient tutor for the day, has just been elected Race Captain of the University Sailing and Windsurfing Club. Juggling the blue main sail rope and the cumbersome tiller like an old master of multi-tasking, he soon has us scorching along in broad sweeps of the Beaver Sailing Club, frequently swooping beneath the unpredictable metal sail boom as the boat executes sharp 180° turns and races on once more.

Throughout, I clutch the white jib sail rope, vainly trying to detect changes in the wind and harness the shifting, random gusts. Each change of direction demands a quick shift of balance to keep us afloat and free of the grim, silty water. It keeps you on your toes and is tremendous fun.

The Beaver Sailing Club, the venue for this beginners' session, is an idyllic watersports oasis nestled in the Drax power station triangle between Selby and Goole. While the grim cooling towers on the horizon belch out environmental damage, a gaggle of club members strike up the barbecue.

It's just another attraction of this taster day; which offers transport, wetsuits, food, good company and unlimited opportunities to try

your hand at sailing or windsurfing under experienced tutorage. All for the value price of £7.

As child sailors - the next generation - compete in races across the lake supported by parents who are refreshingly mutually supportive, the members reflect on past glories at this pleasant venue.

Ben Crossland, on the club's website, describes how a York squad 'incapacitated, inebriated, or in various stages of undress' battered a woeful Lancaster out of the podium finishes at Roses last month, plundering six points for the overall cause.

Meanwhile, the club's Firefly boats are wheeled past, back into storage, as the day winds down. Immaculate and still exuding the shine of newness, they bare names including 'Pell' and 'Millard.' Alastair Gott, the club's bosun, or equipment manager, who has a penchant for the more peculiar sports offered at York, explains how generous alumni contributions help keep the club competitive. Self-financing, self-reciprocating, self-sustaining: the named boats are the perfect tribute to the names of the past.

The annual Beaver Bash is approaching in a week's time, an opportunity for club members old and new to come together for fun and crucial fundraising. The effect of last year's donations has been immediate, as the club finished within a whisker of qualifying for the British University Sailing Association (BUSA, confusingly) nationals.

On a day when sub-zero tem-



Action from Roses 2009, where York completed a clean sweep of the podium places in all events

peratures meant the rigging had to be thawed out by kettle-loads of steaming water, York were first out on the water when other university squads sought warmth and shelter, ending up ninth when the top seven progressed.

But the club find themselves in a good position: their new equipment puts them amongst the leading student clubs, and they are ready to expand. The burden of delivering now rests on Smith,

Commodore Jamie Barber and the other committee members.

The optimism stretches into the windsurfing factions of the club also, where lessons in the sport are offered at bargain prices. While professional coaching would command prices of £50 for a couple of hours, let alone the equipment hire, the York club welcome students of any ability to have a go for one-tenth of that price.

The club's website carries a

disclaimer, warning about the dangers of sailing addictions - the chronic monitoring of cloud movements and an unhealthy obsession with the Beaufort scale. Just from my few hours on the water, I could see why.

For further information on the York University Sailing and Windsurfing Club, or to join them on a beginners' day, e-mail sailing@yusu.org

Optimism for rowers after double-header

Natasha Tranter
Leigh Clarke

THE UNIVERSITY of York Boat Club experienced mixed fortunes this weekend at the Peterborough Regatta, where they were unable to win any categories outright but did manage to achieve two podium finishes.

On Saturday two York teams found themselves pitted against each other in the women's eights heat. The "white crew", coxed by Ngaio Simpson, were the better of the two - coming second in the race - but this was insufficient to earn progress through their semi-final.

The novice men's fours, however, were able to advance to the final, winning their heat by three lengths. Returning to the water the following day, the crew came second in the semi-final with a time of one minute 45 seconds. They were three seconds quicker in the final, thus achieving the same position and York's best result of the weekend.

In the day's other races, the women's quads crew progressed to the final, where they came third, but both the women's fours and the men's eights narrowly missed out on qualification. There was additional disappointment for the men's fours, who finished third in their heat, ending their interest in the competition.

York had more success in last month's Doncaster regatta, where they dominated the opposition to win four of the five categories.

An excellent display from the senior men's fours, using their new WinTech 4 boat bought with money from the York Alumni Fund, saw them beat Hull in the semi-final to set up a race with

Cambois Rowing Club. The crew - consisting of Jack Savage, Dan Steele, Will Lawrence and Ben Coverdale - saw their intense training regimes pay off as they won the final by two lengths.

The senior men's eights were also successful, beating Hull in their final with a time of one minute 43 seconds - the fastest

IRENE SIEBERGER



The York women's senior eights, pictured here leading Sheffield Boat Club in the Doncaster regatta

time of the day. The women's teams also performed excellently, with the novice eights beating Sheffield Hallam University comfortably - at one stage in the race pulling three lengths ahead.

The senior eights also beat Sheffield Boat Club in their final, with the ever consistent Lara Wainwright performing particularly impressively. There was disappointment, however, for the women's novice fours in their race against York St John, as mistakes in the boat meant that they lost by just half a length.

Therefore York were unable to achieve their aim of winning in all five of the categories, a rare blemish in a hugely successful weekend.

Cox Ngaio Simpson commented that she was pleased that York were able to "entirely dominate the weekend" at Doncaster and added that the club would endeavour to enter their next event with "a lot more confidence." This regatta, combined with the club's Roses success, cap a largely successful term for York rowing.

TheMixer @ THE COLLEGE CUP

Reffed off and missed butts galore

What a spectacle! *TM* has been in, around, underneath and inside (no not in that way) the college cup action this past four weeks and must admit to being slightly perturbed. Mostly by that oaf Matt Butter. Or is that Bowyer? Either way there's no place for Moullet-bashing in the beautiful game - just ask Roy Keane. He never used his head - just went in with studs showing.

The boy complained afterwards of foul play on the part of Goodricke captain fantastic 'I used to play for Leeds' Leadbeater, who said he was "going for the ball" when he viciously scythed down the Alcuin man. The ref really should've shoved them both off to the showers for a cool down but somehow they stayed on the pitch.

Talking of refs, you can't just walk out in the middle of a game, yourself - like that Wenty Twos chap did a few weeks back! It's a sacred duty, don't you know, refer-



eing. Sure, Dan Taylor is a prat, a prot, a pudding-muching mad mouth on the sidelines, but don't let him get to you, fellow - he's only made of hot (and pretty stinky) air. Of course you're "not a real ref" - we can see that - but you've got a bloody loud whistle there, matey, specially made to sting sensitive Taylor-shaped ears.

And haven't there have been

some cracking misses so far, too? Goodricke Twos boss Sneddon cheekily brought himself on for a cameo run-out against Vanbrugh but scuffed a simple one-on-one. Awful. Worse, though, was Ed Lacaille's earth-shattering miss against Langwith Seconds. Miss of the cup...no, season...goddamn it, that miss made Sneddon look like Raul. Take a bow, son, take a bow.

(N.B. all data correct on Sunday Week 6)

Group 1 Team	Pl.	W.	D.	L.	GD.	Pts.
Goodricke 1s	3	3	0	0	6	9
Halifax 2s	3	2	0	1	5	6
Alcuin 2s	3	1	1	1	0	4
Langwith 1s	3	1	0	2	0	3
Derwent 3s	4	0	1	3	-13	1

Group 2 Team	Pl.	W.	D.	L.	GD.	Pts.
Derwent 1s	3	3	0	0	10	9
Vanbrugh 1s	3	2	0	1	4	6
Goodricke 2s	3	2	0	1	-2	6
Langwith 2s	3	0	1	2	-5	1
Halifax 3s	4	0	1	3	-7	1

Group 3 Team	Pl.	W.	D.	L.	GD.	Pts.
Alcuin 1s	3	3	0	0	12	9
James 1s	3	2	1	0	10	7
Vanbrugh 2s	3	1	1	1	1	4
Wentw'th 2s	3	1	0	2	-7	3
Goodricke 3s	4	0	0	4	-16	0

** (Halifax deducted 1 point for fielding an ineligible player)

Group 4 Team	Pl.	W.	D.	L.	GD.	Pts.
Halifax 1s	3	2	1	0	11	6**
James 2s	3	2	0	1	1	6
Derwent 2s	3	1	2	0	2	5
Wentw'th 1s	3	1	1	1	3	4
Vanbrugh 3s	4	0	0	4	-16	0

Flying High

Goodricke Seconds outplayed Vanbrugh Firsts in the one of the biggest ever cup upsets a couple of weeks back to give themselves a fantastic shot at reaching the quarter-finals. The way that 'Tank' had University Firsts captain Matt Witherwick in his back pocket all game was a sight to behold.

Mid-Table Safety

Alex Cooper put in a decent performance against Halifax Thirds but has struggled for Fantasy Points so far and his reputation demands greater input. The man with the wizardly left foot has so much class that if he raises his game, he could dominate the knockout stages.

Relegation Zone

That's right, you guessed it, **Vanbrugh Firsts** are in the relegation zone this week...the whole lot of them. Witherwick is joined by the rest of his underperforming team-mates - sluggish at the back and in the midfield and bumbling up top. They can still rescue their Cup, but it'll be jolly hard work.



Start em Sit em Fantasy Football in depth with Dan Hyde

Fresh from the web, Dan Hyde takes a closer look at the best buys from the world of Fantasy Football as the Transfer Window edges ever nearer this week...

If Fantasy Football has tickled the footballing sensibilities across York's eight colleges so far this summer, just wait for Thursday evening.

From 6.00pm sharp - and all through the weekend - fantasy fans will be able to make up to four crucial changes to their teams in preparation for the quarter-finals. But while it might seem pretty darn obvious who you should take out - all Langwith and Wentworth players for starters - there are some little-known steals lurking in the bargain basement.

Miles McDermott and **Parris Williams** look criminally undervalued at £3.9m and £4.1m, respectively, after rising from regular substitutes to nailed-on starters in Alcuin's first team. Meanwhile, though, Jake Delaney (£8m) is almost certainly out for the rest of the tournament with cruciate ligament damage. There could be no better trade for the hundreds of teams that have made Delaney the most-picked midfielder in the

game than switching him for a bit-part player from favourites Derwent or Goodricke - **Nav Jakarkhly** (£4m) or **Sam Lewis** (£4.7m), for example - and using the spare cash elsewhere.

Chris Barnett (£6.3m) and **Mark Johnson** (£6.6m) are expensive but proven performers and it's important at this stage to pick players in teams expected, at least, to make the semis. Derwent are as good as certainties and James, who will probably face Halifax Firsts in the quarters, should join them.

Elsewhere, **Ben Smith** (£5.8m) is due a goal for Goodricke and next year's university second team captain would be a fitting replacement for Mark Goulard (£8.1m) should Vanbrugh face elimination at the hands of Derwent today. Goal-a-game striker **Dom Green** has also shown excellent value for Halifax Firsts at £4.6m. If absent medics Joe Brennan and Ian McKellow show their esteemed faces for the 'Fax, they could go all the way, making

Green a perfect addition.

Thus far, defenders have been the surprise source of plenteous group stage points - particularly Halifax's Shaun Evans - but don't expect any stunning hat-trick performances from rearguard battering-rams in the latter stages. If you're feeling lucky, though, look no further than **Chris Grayland** (£5.6m): a towering figure at corners for Goodricke. With the delivery coming from two of the best deal-ball operators at York in Remi Remington and Tom Wilson, Grayland is odds-on to bag.

Adlou may have dominated the league table since Matchweek 1, but his victory is by no means assured. Some insightful picks this weekend could see those as far back as 200th jump into the top three: it all comes down to window wranglings now. Remember to change things around by 9.00am on Monday morning in order for transfers to take effect, and check my *Start em Sit em* blog online at nouse.co.uk for the latest titbits.



Mark Johnson has been in top fantasy form thus far for James

ARRAN BOWEN-LA GRANGE

The College Cup: Your team-by-team guide

GOODRICKE

Formation: 4-4-1-1 with a roaming second striker in the 'hole'.

Strengths: Dom O'Shea is the best player at this University and, especially on Astroturf, can take hold of a game by the scruff of the neck and shake the living daylights out of it. Scary.

Weaknesses: A very powerful but slightly sluggish back four with a susceptibility to pace; and an overreliance on O'Shea for both creativity and goals.

Key Man: Adam Leadbeater is the heartbeat of the team, dictating play with Xavi-style distribution from his deep-lying position in the centre-midfield.

BNOC (Biggest Name on Campus): Remi "Remi" Remington is rumoured to have "never, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever...ever" missed a heavily inebriated Ziggy's appearance in three years. Fact.

Tasha Tranter's Top Torso: Dave Coupland and his sumptuous locks.

If they were a chocolate bar they would be: Classic Yorkie. Very little wrong here: chunky from back to front and hard to break down; but, if anything, could use something a little more exotic in the middle.

Chances of winning: **** (out of 5)

DERWENT

Formation: A defensive 4-5-1 based around a strong target man.

Strengths: Pick any four from Amiry, Henney, Gardner, Worrall and Slater: impregnable. Derwent's defensive unit is yet to concede going into today's game against Vanbrugh.

Weaknesses: Relying heavily on the hold-up play of Dreamz Murphy, who claimed (albeit falsely) that "94% of goals so far have gone through me," questions surround the latter-stage potential of the 451

Key Man: Chris Barnett has top-scored for Derwent and leads the team in Fantasy Points so far.

BNOC: "Dreamz" has become a household name since wowing audiences with his ear-soothing musical talents this year. Having hit the big time in spite of a terrible drinking problem, it seems dreams really can come true. www.myspace.com/clown

Tasha Tranter's Top Torso: Ben Smith - a cutey pie to die for.

If they were a chocolate bar they would be: Twix. The bling of the shiny (w)rapper disguises a solid biscuit base.

Chances of winning: *****



ALCUIN

Formation: 3-5-2 with wingbacks and Ed Murrills behind a front two.

Strengths: Defenders beware: this Alcuin team has goals in it. Attack has been the strong point so far and Alcuin will continue to rely on their dangerous midfield and strikers in the latter stages.

Weaknesses: Width. Despite playing the same formation, the team has failed to emulate the vaunted wing-back dominance that propelled Alcuin to a back-to-back league double last year.

Key Man: Barnstorming midfielder Ed Murrills has the running ability to undo even the best of defences.

BNOC: Jake Delaney. Big hair, big loss. You can't miss the imposing Delaney around campus, but after he suffered a worrying cruciate ligament injury playing six-a-side, Alcuin will certainly miss his presence in midfield.

Tasha Tranter's Top Torso: Dan Hyde...and his piercing eyes.

If they were a chocolate bar they would be: Empty Kinder Egg, lacking a delightful Delaney-surprise in the middle.

Chances of winning: ****

HALIFAX

Formation: 4-4-2 with flying wingers and target man.

Strengths: With Conor 'Conorleeza Rice' Brennan and the leading goalscorer in the history of College football, wide-headed jewellery magnate Dom Green, up front, Halifax certainly have goals in them.

Weaknesses: In the absence of Joe Brennan and McKellow, perhaps lacking a real superstar to intimidate opposition. If those two turn up in the quarter-finals, though, Goodricke, Derwent, and Alcuin will be quaking in their esteemed astroturf boots.

Key man: Conor 'Conan the Barbarian' Brennan has pace and pure finishing ability and has been on a goal-scoring tear bagging for the Firsts and Seconds in numerous games.

BNOC: Alex Richards - He is the uber-mensch of campus. He labels himself an 'HBNOC' with H standing for 'Humongously'. He has model Amy Browne on his arm and 984 friends on Facebook.

Tasha Tranter's top torso: Dom Green - an angel on bed of gorgeousness.

If they were a chocolate bar, they would be: Revels. You never know what you're going to get.

Chances of winning: ***

VANBRUGH

Formation: 4-4-2. Captain Tom Sheldrick employs a standard 4-4-2 suppling main goal-threat Mark Goulard.

Strengths: A very strong team unit built around the core of college stalwarts that won the league last term.

Weaknesses: They may not even make the quarter finals. After a poor start, a defeat to Derwent today would see to an early exit. Music-man Dreamz Murphy has started an early War of the Words, too: "They're already out. Of course we'll beat them". Spicy.

Key Man: Matt Witherwick has underperformed so far, even outplayed even by the relatively unknown 'Tank' from Goodricke Seconds. If the University Firsts captain starts putting his veritable stamp on games, Vanbrugh could spring a surprise in Week 8.

BNOC: Chris Shultz - 1,155 Facebook friends and one of the friendliest faces on campus.

Tasha Tranter's Top Torso: Tristan Buckley. One stallion we'd love to tame.

If they were a chocolate bar they would be: Flake. Seemingly solid at first, but very crumbly on closer examination.

Chances of winning: **



JAMES

Formation: 4-4-2 Standard.

Strengths: Impressive midfield axis of Marks - McLeod and Johnson - and class on the right flank in Matt Vermeulen.

Weaknesses: Towering pair of Smith and Loftus at the back lack a bit of pace. Lacking the finishing to challenge the top teams, but strikers Offord and Rolf aren't half quick.

Key Man: Mark Johnson. He's already snaffled a hattrick and is known to be pathologically dependent on goals. A great Fantasy pick too.

BNOC: Mark McLeod. To impress the ladies on a Thursday Gallery night he unleashes that legendary "I played with ex-Reading goal-king Julian Joachim" line.

With 532 friends on Facebook in just his first year, by the time he is 82, he will have 30,000.

Tasha Tranter's Top Torso: Rafael Gindre - a French delight for all to share.

If they were a chocolate bar they would be: A Dime bar. Very strong in the middle: they might look a little tasty, but try to bite them and you'll break your teeth.

Chances of winning: ***

LANGWITH

Formation: 4-4-2.

Strengths: A smattering of quality defenders in Liam Condron and captain Bruce 'Ringo' Starkey.

Weaknesses: Disorganised. Struggle to get enough players together for games and can't defend set pieces or long balls in general.

Quick Fantasy tip: Get rid of your Langwith players before they go out.

Key man: Luka Modric-a-like Jez 'solo' Hann has picked up two Man of the Match awards and - big bonus for a Langwith player - is able to control the ball with the inside AND outside of his foot.

BNOC: Since the hated 'Langwith Shaun' retired, BNOCs have been a collector's item in Langwith. All 11 members of their team added together have only 127 friends on Facebook, just one tenth of Goodricke's Remington.

Tasha Tranter's Top Torso: Andy McCormick - Sweet and sensuous, yum!

If they were a chocolate bar they would be: Poppets. Easily rattled in the box.

Chances of winning: *



WENTWORTH

Formation: 4-4-2. Set in their old fashioned ways.

Strengths: The wisdom of an excessive number of years in education and an ever-evolving range of skin-preservation products on the shelves of Boots offer a glimmer of hope for Wenty boys.

Weaknesses: Aged legs grow weary in the baking weather.

Key man: Striker Dave White has found the scoresheet with regularity.

BNOC: Isolated from the rest of the throbbing virile heart of the York campus, Wentworth lack a certifiable BNOC. Chris Mulligan creeps into the MNOC (Medium Name on Campus) category as he has his own Facebook Appreciation Society. (The group's actually for a Chris Mulligan at the University of Hull, but that's honestly as good as it gets.)

If they were a chocolate bar they would be: Colonel Kitchener's Chocco Spitfires. Out of date in 1953.

Tasha Tranter's top torso: Luke Fleet- big triple decker goodness.

Chances of winning: *

WATERSPORTS

Adam Shergold takes to the water with the York University Sailing and Windsurfing Club in the latest of his club features
PROFILE >> P17



MCC prove too strong for York in prestige end-of-season match

GEORGE LOWTHER



After the visiting MCC reached 266-4 batting first, as custom dictates, York struggled to gain enough momentum against slow bowlers, eventually falling 32 runs short

Dan Hyde
Nabeel Moosa

MCC 266-4dec
University of York 234 all out

AFTER A DISAPPOINTING season, featuring both relegation from BUCS League 2B and a premature cup exit, a fixture against the world-famous Marylebone Cricket Club bought some cheer to the bedraggled first team faces out on the 22 Acres last Sunday.

Superb, uncompromising batting and tactical nous won the day for the MCC and, although Andrew Emmerson hit a rip-roaring 87, York strained in vain against a

mammoth 266 target and were eventually bowled out for 234.

Securing a fixture against the world's most famous cricket club was a considerable coup for a first team beset by organisational problems this year - two matches forfeited due to a lack of available players saw slip a division three weeks ago.

"It was a game played in a fantastic spirit," said York captain Nick Vanner. "But really we could have been out there all day, they batted so well." With customary honour, the toss had been sacrificed to the MCC, who duly chose to bat first: and what an innings they forged.

Given that, the early signs weren't so bad for York, with Sean

Martin and Anthony Butterfield bowling with the same telling accuracy and pace they've shown throughout the season; the opening spell showcased a decent rhythm despite blustery conditions uncondusive to swing.

With the MCC on 13, a flying one-handed Emmerson catch at mid-wicket saw York's hopes soar, but the joy would be short lived and York's bowlers were then treated to some harsh punishment.

The MCC's total owed much to opening batsman Musgrave's 135 before he was unceremoniously dispatched - top edging Kash Memon straight into Ed Wilson's hands.

The MCC's huge 266-4 off 52.2

overs provided York's batters with a veritable mountain to climb, but Emmerson, keen on exacting a little revenge, put up quite a fight. After Ed Murrills had seen off some decent medium-pacers, the MCC - in classic timed-match style - brought on their slow bowlers, aiming to frustrate York's middle order into risky shots. Emmerson was in uncompromising style, though, and hit four sixes on the way to his first - and last - university half-century. His 87 included a stunning straight-drive over the sight screen.

"That was probably the best shot I've ever played," effused Emmerson after the game, "but it was so frustrating to lose my wicket

thirteen runs short of a century."

The end of his 114 run partnership with Townson (66) concurrently put paid to York's chances as the middle order and tail-end proceeded into collapse. Needing 43 off 10 overs, Remi Remington was harshly adjudged leg-before after edging an arm ball onto his pads, and Kash Memon's misjudgement saw him clean-bowled soon after. York whimpered to a rather disappointing final score of 234 all out.

Vanner, for his part, was dumped head first into the freezing water of an anachronistic paddling-pool by his teammates: a fitting conclusion to a season at odds with this term's scorching weather.

College Cup Team-by-Team Analysis

As the College Cup builds up to the quarter-final stages, *Nouse* examines each of the teams for their tactical, technical and aesthetic qualities in our comprehensive guide.

FOOTBALL >> P19

Latest news and views in *TheMixer*

An ever-so-slightly warped look at the College Cup tournament, including mangled moulets, refereeing rigmarole and some unforgiving team assessments.

THE MIXER >> P18



Start em Sit em Special Edition

Sports Editor Dan Hyde offers his wisdom on the best player picks, as the Collge Cup fantasy football transfer window approaches this week.

FANTASY FOOTBALL >> P18

Boat Club dominate Doncaster Regatta

After taking delivery of their new boat, the UYBC tasted tremendous success in the Doncaster Regatta, winning four of five categories, before moving on to Peterborough this weekend.

ROWING >> P17

