

pieces

Christ's College Newsletter



Issue 15 Michaelmas Term 2009



Making The Connection

College websites

A Letter From Hollywood

Miles Millar's life in film

Well Versed

Five Christ's poets in profile



Enjoying the Lady Margaret Beaufort celebrations in June

From The Master

Welcome to the Michaelmas edition of 'Pieces'. As I write, the College is alive with activity: the start of full term on October 6th saw the arrival of a new generation of students, embarking on their academic career at Christ's. Many of them would not be here were it not for the efforts of Senior Tutor Robert Hunt, Director of Admissions Paula Stirling and Access and Schools Liaison Officer Ed Sharpe: our College Open Day on September 29th saw over 100 students arriving to look round Christ's. Websites are another valuable means of access for us at Christ's, and in this issue, we have an article on two student-run websites, 'Darkness Visible' and 'Charles Darwin & Evolution' which have played such a vital role in encouraging applications as well as engaging a wider public with two of our most renowned alumni; you can read more on page 12.

We wish all the freshers a happy and successful time at Christ's. They'll be joining a vibrant community of students, fellows, alumni and staff whose achievements and recent activities are reviewed in 'What's New' on pages 3-5, including a recent appearance on BBC2 by four students. In this issue, we also look back on a busy summer: on page 6, Brian Lott (m. 1962) revisits The Lady Margaret celebrations of June 27th.

Christ's is not just a community in Cambridge, of course, but one that stretches around the world. In this issue we report on alumni events in Hong Kong, a forthcoming event in Delhi and feature articles from Sydney and from Los Angeles, including Miles Millar's account of his life in film on page 10. I hope that you enjoy the issue.

Professor Frank Kelly, FRS

Editor: Helen Mort (Publications Officer)

Cover image: Students in second court, by Ed Sharpe (m. 2004)

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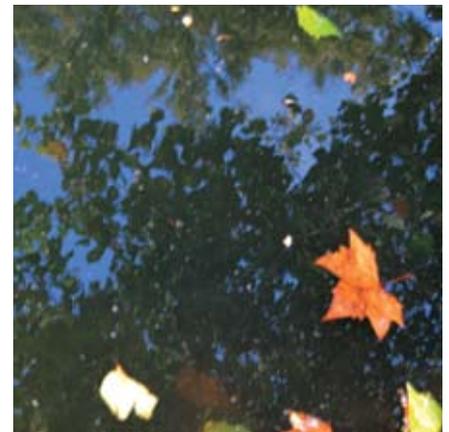
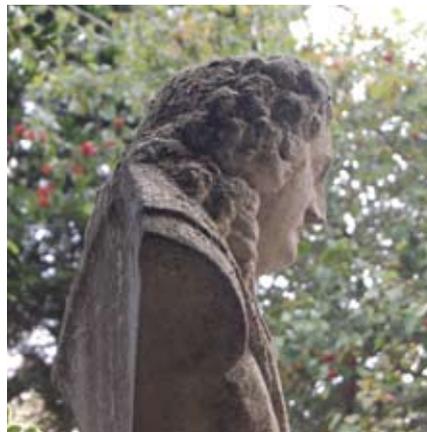
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Autumnal scenes from Christ's



Graduating students

Graduation 2009

Despite atrocious weather, General Admission on June 26th was a great success and graduands and their parents enjoyed a buffet lunch in the Fellows' Garden before they had to run for cover from the rain!



Moray MacLennan (left) and Rory Sutherland

Christ's Alumni at the IPA

Rory Sutherland (m. 1984) has been elected to succeed fellow Christ's alumnus, Moray MacLennan, (m. 1980) as President of the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA). He will be expected to serve a two-year term as President, although he will be formally re-elected at the IPA AGM on the 21st April 2010. The IPA is a leading trade and professional body for advertising, media and marketing communications agencies.

Rory read Classics at Christ's and went on to become Executive Creative Director at OgilvyOne Worldwide in London. He is the first creative director to be elected as President of the IPA, and also the first President from a direct marketing agency. Moray MacLennan read Law at Christ's and previously worked for Saatchi & Saatchi, becoming their managing director in 1994.



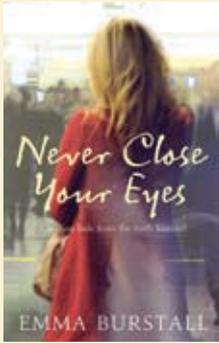
Spiderman in Hammersmith

Fans of the children's charity SPARKS dug deep in support of Christ's alumnus Mark Davies (m. 1990) in August when he was asked to abseil down the building of his company's head office in Hammersmith. Betfair's six-man Executive Board agreed to complete a challenge set by their Charity of the Year, for which they have committed to raise £75,000 by January. Donations flooded in so quickly that Mark agreed to go the whole hog and do it dressed as Spiderman. He raised just over £5,000 of a team total of £14,000, which Betfair then matched.



Nice weather for ducks

A spectacular thunderstorm at lunchtime on July 17th caused the amenities rooms and Basement Offices in Z basement to flood. The offices were out of action for several days. Following the tremendous clean up effort, with many dehumidifiers and driers working to make the rooms habitable, another storm took place on Thursday 6 August and it happened again. We are delighted to report that the problem appears to have been solved.



New Novel for Emma Burstall

Never Close Your Eyes, a new novel by Emma Burstall (m. 1980), was published by Random House on September 3rd, 2009. Described by the Telegraph as 'a

tense, fast-paced thriller', Emma's second novel focuses on the lives of three women who join a creative writing group. Whilst the friends struggle with their plots and grapple with their pacing, however, one is hiding a 30 year secret which is about to be revealed... Copies are available from Emma's website www.emmaburstall.com



Reunion Events

Christ's hosted two reunion dinners for alumni in September 2009. The first, on September 12th, for matriculation years 1948 and earlier and 1955 or 1956 saw nearly 90 alumni returning to College for an afternoon of entertainments, including tea, a lecture by Professor Jim Secord and a dinner in Hall. The second dinner on September 26th was for alumni who matriculated in 1957, 1958, 1959 or 1960, and over a hundred alumni attended. The event coincided with the University Alumni weekend and the College's Friends of the Old Library talk and lunch.



Cambridge Palimpsest now on sale

As part of the University's 800th celebrations, Artist-in-Residence

Issam Kourbaj has designed Cambridge Palimpsest, a multi-layered puzzle charting the development of Cambridge, and profiled in Pieces 13. Cambridge Palimpsest is now available from CUP bookshop:

www.cambridge.org/uk/bookshop



The stars of Economy Gastronomy outside the College Buttery

Lights, Camera....Christ's!

Five recent graduates from Christ's took part in filming for the BBC2 programme Economy Gastronomy, which was broadcast on Wednesday 2nd September. Filmed just after finals in June, the programme followed housemates (pictured left to right) Charlie Heron, Adam Southgate, Duncan Bull, Jonny Thompson and Didi Akinluyi through an entire week as they learned to shop, cook and eat in a new way – with expert tuition from celebrity chefs Paul Merrett and Allegra McEvedy. All other groups featured in the six-part series were families. The Christ's graduates – known for the purposes of the show as the "Cambridge Boys" – were selected from a number of student groups who applied to take part.

Duncan Bull (m. 2005) says: "The show was great fun to make and we all had a really good laugh during the week, although being followed around by a film crew took some getting used to! It was a really nice end to a great year that we all spent in Glisson Road and a fantastic way for us to remember our time at Christ's. The crew that followed us during the week were really good fun and we learned a lot about TV production (and the joys of putting things in and out of an oven 5 times to get different angle shots of it!). It was great to have the opportunity to portray an aspect of normal Cambridge student life that not many people get to see and we got our 15 minutes of fame to boot!"



L-R: Markus Shaw, C K Lau, Philip Snow, Amanda Whitmore Snow, Joyce Wong and David Beeves in Hong Kong

Hong Kong Lunch

A special lunch at the Hong Kong Club on Wednesday 2nd September was well attended by Christ's alumni. The event, hosted by Mr Markus Shaw (m. 1979), featured a talk by Christ's Fellow Dr Joyce Wong about her research in drug discovery in innate immunity.



Professor Martin Johnson, President

Mr President!

Peter Landshoff (Fellow) reports on a recent change to the College statutes

As a former Vice-Master, I was asked by Frank Kelly when he became Master to chair a committee that would examine the future of the Vice Master's office. Traditionally, it had fallen automatically on the most senior Fellow who had not yet taken on the job and who was still young enough to be eligible.

When I became Vice-Master, the then Master Alan Munro told me that, unless he were to fall under a bus, my only duties would be to preside over the election of his successor. This turned out to be almost true. But Archie Campbell, my successor as Vice-Master, found himself with a very much bigger job for a whole year. In addition to his very full University duties, he suddenly had visited on him all the responsibilities of the new Master Malcolm Bowie, who had become seriously ill.

The College has therefore made a number of changes to the 'Master's deputy'. First, instead of a Vice-Master we now have a President. This is to underline the prestige and the responsibilities we now attach to the post. In recent years the job of Master has become rather more onerous, if only because very significant fundraising duties are now included in it. Our Masters traditionally have had very distinguished internationally-significant research careers, and we want to make it easier for them to continue this work. So we now expect the Master to devolve some of his duties onto the President. Because the President has to do much more than watch out for dangerous buses, the choice of Fellow (or retired Fellow) to take it on is no longer automatic. Martin Johnson has become our first President because he is very

well qualified for the job and the Master feels that he can work well with him.

We have also changed the College statutes to allow us to elect an Acting Master, to take over all the responsibilities of the Master when he (or she) is likely to be out of action for an extended period. We are about to elect our first Acting Master, to allow Frank Kelly to devote himself entirely to research during the Lent Term 2010.

Running a College like Christ's with several hundred students, several thousand alumni, over 100 fellows and a similar number of staff has become a large undertaking, so these changes at the top aim to maintain strong intellectual leadership for the College by spreading the leadership load.

News In Brief

Twenty Five Years of the Nehru Trust

By Jugnu Jain

The Nehru Trust for Cambridge University (NTCU) was established in 1984 in the memory of India's first Prime Minister Mr Jawaharlal Nehru who studied at Cambridge University. Since then, 10 Nehru scholars have been selected and sponsored each year for their PhD studies at Cambridge. To celebrate 25 years of NTCU, Nehru Scholars and Nehru Trust are hosting a Reunion of all alumni and current scholars at Teen Murti Bhavan in Delhi from 18th-19th December. The vision for the Reunion is to build the professional and personal network among Nehru Scholars, to ensure sustainability of the Nehru Trust, to bring together the experience and skills of the Nehru Scholars as a think-tank for India and UK's long-term needs. A website and yearbook is planned to be launched at the Reunion. Please contact Jugnu Jain (jugnu@comcast.net), Arabinda Mitra (amitra@indousstf.org) or Nikhil Tandon (nikhil_tandon@hotmail.com) for more information and to register your interest.

Buried Treasure in Hall

There has been extensive improvement work taking place around Christ's this summer. Part of the maintenance work has involved re-wiring the electrics in Hall, finding new lights for the pictures and repairing the heating. A team of five from the maintenance department set about the task... but there was a surprise waiting for them when they did. Underneath the built-in benches in Hall, they found a foot of debris, compacted, which they had to spade out with a coal shovel. Amongst the debris were some unusual findings, including a dead mouse, a Swiss Army knife and, most alarming of all, a pair of false teeth. Jonathan Payne, working in the maintenance team on his summer break from University, said:

"They were a modern set of dentures, so they might belong to anyone. We wondered if they might be Darwin's teeth and we should put them in the exhibition..."



Dr Frank Woodman in Chapel

A Splendid Celebration of the life of Lady Margaret

On 27 June the College celebrated the life and generosity of its foundress, Lady Margaret Beaufort, who died 500 years ago, almost to the day. The programme of events included talks given by Dr Frank Woodman, Professor Lisa Jardine, Dr Charles Saumarez Smith and Dr David Starkey, interpolated over lunch by exhibitions of plate, muniments, manuscripts and fabric, and the afternoon ended with a celebration and remembrance in music and words: 'Lady Margaret: a Good Life', compiled and produced by Dr Woodman with Dr Daniel Wakelin and performed by Penelope Keith as Lady Margaret, Professor Geoffrey Martin as John Fisher and John Barber as the Page with contributions by members of the choir conducted by Professor David Rowland. Lisa Jardine and four of our fellows: Dr Julia Shvets, Dr Carrie Vout, Dr Margaret Rigaud-Drayton and Mrs Paula Stirling, prefaced the performance with some period quotes about women. The Service of Solemn Evensong and Liturgy of Commemoration held in Chapel (preacher Professor Eamon Duffy) was followed by a Medieval Banquet in Hall at which Professor Quentin Skinner spoke.

Brian Lott (m. 1962) reports on a packed programme of events.

The College put on a magnificent programme to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the death on 29th June 1509 of our Foundress, Lady Margaret Beaufort, at the age of 66.

There were lectures and a short play in the Yusuf Hamied Theatre by eminent speakers, displays of books and plate in Mountbatten Room and the SCR, tours of the chapel and the Lodge oratory, followed by Solemn Evensong in chapel with music from the 16C Eton Choir book and finally a splendid banquet in Hall.

Lady Margaret's apartments on the first floor of what is now the Master's Lodge, with its oratory and oriel window into the chapel and separate access, were all designed to enable her to reside in the College and take part in the Chapel services without ever setting foot in the grounds which were strictly for men only.

Frank Woodman set the tone for the day with a masterly account of Lady Margaret's life from the birth of her only child, the future Henry VII, when she was just 13 years old, through three (or was it four?) husbands to her last days as the grandmother of Henry VIII ensuring that he funded the completion of Kings College. His vivid personal portrayal of Lady Margaret, her extended family, her advisers and courtiers, brought to life the power and persuasiveness which she wielded in the political landscape of the day. Her wealth, part inherited and part accumulated through marriage, her education and her influence were impressive and particularly remarkable for a woman of her times.

Lisa Jardine and Charles Saumarez Smith who followed with talks about her influence on the books and art of the 15th century had a hard act to follow. We heard how Lady Margaret used books, only recently popularised by Caxton's press, rather like the internet can be used today, for spreading information and influence to ensure Henry's succession.

The afternoon was no less exciting with a talk by Dr David Starkey on Lady Margaret's role as foundress of the Tudor dynasty and then a creative insight into the relationship between Lady Margaret, played by Penelope Keith and John Fisher played by Geoffrey Martin with David Rowland at the harpsichord and members of the College choir. Amusing readings on the role of women in a man's world concluded the afternoon's entertainment.

The evening started with Solemn Evensong and a Liturgy of Commemoration in the chapel at which Professor Eamon Duffy gave the address and ended appropriately with a splendid banquet in Hall. The menu comprised Potage Beaufort (a cream of cauliflower soup with Lancashire cheese), Smoked Eel, Trout and Oysters with Samphire, Venison Medallions Royale, followed by Gooseberry Fool and Beaufort Cheese and Oatcakes.

We all left feeling well fed, well entertained, better educated and somewhat humbled by what we had heard of the Lady Margaret's life and benefactions.

Podcasts of the talks, performance and chapel service, together with photographs are available via <http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk>



L-R: Julia Shvets, Lisa Jardine, Carrie Vout, Paula Stirling and Margaret Rigaud-Drayton

Dining with Darwin

Michael Foulsham (m. 1945) on an enjoyable dinner in Sydney.

Every year the Cambridge Society of New South Wales holds its "Winter Feast". To mark his bicentenary year, it was decided that the 2009 event should be used to remember one of Christ's most important alumni, Charles Darwin.

The dinner was held in the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's dining room which looks out onto Sydney Harbour. About 135 of us sat down to a fine dinner. In attendance were guests of all ages and the evening's speaker, Mr Paul Brunton, Senior Curator of the Mitchell Library, where much of the information on the history of New South Wales is kept.

Mr Brunton's speech focused on Darwin's travels as a young student at Christ's, particularly his visit to Australia. We heard how Darwin had planned to go to Tenerife with a friend and had made arrangements before he received the sad news that his friend had died. John Henslow was aware of Darwin's disappointment when his travel plans fell through and used his influence to have Darwin's name put forward for the opportunity to accompany the captain of HMS Beagle on a planned voyage to South America, and then on round the world calling at Australia, among many other places.

Charles Darwin was not the first on the list, but luckily for him the two ahead of him declined the opportunity, and his father agreed to give him the funds to pay for his passage. Throughout the voyage, Darwin kept up a steady correspondence with his sisters, with John Henslow, and with Charles Lyell. His sister's letters kept him well informed about political events at home, and he followed the slavery debate with great interest as he was strongly against this trade.

However, arriving in Sydney in January 1836 he found that there were no letters for him, and no correspondence caught up with him until his return to England nine months later. This left him rather dispirited, and, unsurprisingly he found the company in Sydney was not entirely to his taste. He deplored the conspicuous show of wealth, and he could not easily reconcile himself with the fact that most of the servants in the fine houses where he was entertained, were either convicts, or ex-convicts. The idea that the society had wealthy people among it who had not come voluntarily to these shores, was something that he found hard to accept.

From Sydney, which he had used as a base for exploring the fauna and flora of the surrounding countryside, he travelled over the Blue Mountains to Bathurst. There he stayed at a hotel which stands to this day, and struck up a friendship with the owner, whom he described as a very fine fellow and excellent company, little knowing that he was a successful ex-convict! The "landed gentry" invited him to ride on a hunt with them. This was undertaken with all the ceremony of a fox hunt in England, except that there were no foxes, so they hunted kangaroos. These he learnt had the unsporting habit of turning on the hounds and fighting back! That day they did not find a kangaroo to hunt, but Darwin did find a 'potaroo', a small marsupial which he noted had filled the same niche in nature as the rabbit filled in Europe.

From Sydney, Darwin went to Tasmania, where he found much of interest, and said that there was an agreeable absence of the "conspicuous wealth" that had troubled him in Sydney. He then travelled on to Albany in Western Australia where he attended an Aboriginal Corroboree, and, of more importance to him, saw a platypus, and once again observed that here was an animal which was different in every respect from a European water rat, but that had adapted itself to fill the same functions in the Australian habitat.

At the end of Mr Brunton's talk, which also dealt with Darwin's return to England and his marriage to Emma Darwin, our speaker fielded many questions, many of a humorous nature, and dealt with them all with his customary charm, bringing a very enjoyable evening to a happy end.

Do you live outside the UK? Would you like to write for Pieces? We're looking for alumni from around the world to send us their news and views. Contact hm317@cam.ac.uk with your ideas.

"Chapel 500"

In 2010, Christ's College Cambridge celebrates the 500th anniversary of the consecration of the chapel in June 1510.

The chapel has always been at the centre of a tradition of developing theology which integrates with science, arts and technology. The task of religion in a College setting is to broaden and develop the intellect and learning and to improve the capacity and stability of the human race...

Change is, as ever, fertile within the traditions of the college, as much as spirituality has been and will continue to be a steadfast companion to the soul and mind.

"Chapel 500" is not simply about enjoying a functioning bit of history and tradition, neither is it a perfunctory nod to a ceremonial asset within the beautiful walls of the College. It is more of a celebration of change; the pioneering instinct and intellect of the mind, and of the spiritual wellbeing in which humankind finds support for its endeavours.

500 unexpected questions, answers, events, and happenings celebrating the beginning of the 501st year of Christ's College Chapel.

...and passing wonderful... seems to be a most fitting sentiment

Some dates for your diary:

6 June 2010, Quincentenary Celebration Service
13 November 2010, Choral Evensong followed by Gala Dinner and launch of Choir Association
Michaelmas 2010, launch of Chapel podcasts
December 2010, Quincentenary Commemoration of Benefactors' Service

Find out more at chapel500.co.uk

Well Versed – five Christ's poets in profile

It may be centuries since John Milton wrote his masterpieces beneath the mulberry tree (or so legend has it), but poetry is alive and well at Christ's in 2009. Our busy year of 'Milton 400' celebrations in 2008 included a one-off informal reading in Chapel, with alumni, fellows and students performing their own work. Christ's has a long tradition of fostering poetic talent which continues to thrive today: previous issues of *Pieces* have showcased new work by Matt Kirkham (m. 1984) and our current poet in residence, Ruth Padel. The Visual Arts Centre is now a venue for poetry performances as well as an exhibition space. Here, we profile just a few of the many writers Christ's has helped to support.



Joseph Gale Burns (m. 1972)

Gale read Social and Political Science at Christ's and now lives in London. He is visiting lecturer at the University of the Arts, London and this year was Poet in Residence at Lewisham Hospital and Sydenham Arts Festival. He co-runs the Shuffle, a vibrant poetry night in Covent Garden, and his first collection is due out next year.

The Cox

Before the sun exists, in a land
of stumbling shapes, I raise myself,
pulled, by a pact and an unmarked river
– which we carve.

As light blurts the horizon
the bow spurts – an impossible insect, parallel legs.
Eight men with raw thighs heave back,
stirring private pools; their scent streams by;
they render to me their eyes. I am mascot, queen.
My cat-size has weight, my will, muscle.

Mist hangs above water, is frozen
between stunted trees. I hunch forward,
the world speeds by.

Gale says: "At a recent Christ's Reunion Dinner I sat next to a contemporary who sounded like he spent much of his education on the river; a very different world to my 'alternative' student years. I was so inspired by his experience, as the port circulated, I slipped away and wrote this in my College bedroom."



Helen Mort (m. 2004)

Helen has published two pamphlets with tall-lighthouse press and is working on her first collection. She received an Eric Gregory Award in 2007, and won the Manchester-Young Writer Prize in 2008. Her work has appeared in various magazines including *The Spectator* and *The Manhattan Review*.

How to leave the stage

Dive through a letterbox. Burn your farewell note.
Ascend the hero's leg, jump down the villain's throat.
Slip underneath a doormat with the long-discarded post
or hitch your way out to the lonely coast.
Set down your wine bottle, then vanish down its neck
or shimmy through the floorboards of an old shipwreck.
Wear only black. Adopt a different name.
Travel in the pocket of your oldest flame.
Disguise yourself as someone who you haven't met.
Retrace old routes you swore that you'd forget.
Vanish through the holes in a white string vest
or ride the sun as it slinks down into the west.
And should you ever feel the urge to stay, be quick and deft-
discard your promises stage right, your heart stage left.

Helen says: "This piece was commissioned for the opening of the Yusuf Hamied Theatre in 2009. I'm fascinated by the relationship between artists and their art, and the idea of the stage offered an interesting metaphor. I often write in form – I see it as a key rather than a lock. As Don Paterson says, a poem is 'a little machine for remembering itself' and sound is a crucial aspect of memorability."



Tom Gilliver (m. 2007)

Tom is a second-year English student at Christ's and has been widely published in British poetry magazines including *Poetry Review*. In 2008 he was nominated for the Faber New Poets Award. He is currently working on a new sequence, entitled "Apocalypse".

(Le)Son/Net

breathe softer, or my lacquered face will crack.
the open curtains, sluice-like, drain away
the garish colours of the day: give back
an even drizzle, and this speechless grey,
this is Whistler-time: there is no line
between the rain and the stilled sea it feeds;
each shape is something else seen from behind
(on cobwebs salt forms strings of amnesiac beads).
asleep, your skull rests hard against my ribs:
two limp cadavers strewn in parody of loving;
and I watch formless hours pass our death-crib,
each chiming, "you are nothing if not nothing".
the clutch of fear seems childish come morning
warm water stirring in the pipes, you yawning.

Tom says: "I find much contemporary poetry unambitious, an exercise in the creation of cadences which provide only the illusion of profundity. So I've recently begun playing with traditional formal structures in the hope that this will lead to denser and more muscular patterns of thought and language. So far, I've shown very little ability to write within formal constraints; and the poem above is no exception. I will, however, reserve my right to be bloody-minded, and persevere."



Sarah Howe (m. 2001)

Sarah is reading for a PhD in English at Christ's and was the Levy Plumb Artist-in-Residence from 2004 to 2005, as well as curating the Milton exhibition in the Old Library in 2008 and designing the 'Darkness Visible' website. Sarah's first pamphlet, 'a certain chinese encyclopaedia' was published by tall-lighthouse in 2009.

The walled garden

Across the road, the girls quit school in threes
and fours, tripping off at speed to stations

or familiar cars, their silhouettes, slung
with shoulder bags and hockey sticks, like mules.

Remember, says the afternoon; the shut
door shudders brassily beneath my hand.

It is already dark, or darkening
that sky above the dimming terraced rows

goes far beyond a child's imagining.
I tread along the backstreet where the cabs

cut through behind the luminous science labs
their sills of spider plants in yoghurt pots

among the outsize glassware cylinders
like pygmies contemplating monoliths.

You cannot walk the other side because
the walled garden meets the road direct

in pools of glistening tarmac after rain,
the open gutter choking up with leaves.

As though to listen, the colossal trees
lean out into the tungsten-haloed street.

I meet another on the road this snails
slow ribbon turns the asphalt into gold.

Sarah says: *This is the only poem in my pamphlet set in Cambridge. It follows the route of a walk I used to do every day, from my house on Bateman Street towards the English Faculty. It stems, I suppose, from the feeling that Cambridge is really two places at once which look very different depending on which side of the colossal walls you are standing. This struck me recently,*

when showing a group of local sixth formers around college and our beautiful gardens. They had passed Great Gate countless times on their way from the bus station, but before that day had no idea what was inside. We had been reading Paradise Lost together; one girl asked me if I thought the Fellows' Garden was a bit like Eden.'



Jaya Savige (m. 2009)

Jaya is the current Gates Scholar at Christ's, studying for a PhD in English Literature. His collection 'Latecomers' was awarded the Kenneth Slessor Prize for poetry and the Thomas Shapcott Poetry prize. In 2007, he held a poetry residency at the B.R. Whiting Studio, Rome.

Play, Monkey

Let me do that thing for you,
You know, that thing
You said you liked in bed.
Yes, with the door open.

Let me do that trick I do,
Be your little acrobat again.
Together we can spark
The room up like a circuit –

We know how to work it.
I know you remember
The cold nights in November
We scalded the walls

With our bleach-hot lust.
Oh, but you must.
Upside down, I became
Your pliant Polyphemous,

Your pet Cyclops,
A vulnerable strumpet –
Grotesque herald mid-arabesque
With a Dantean trumpet.

Hush, be still, forget
Your complicated dramas –
Here I am, your silly lamb,
Your monkey, sans pyjamas.

Come back to bed! Know
Again the body's declaration.
I rest my weight, exiled, waiting
For you to teach me how to fall
When this game begins to pall.

Jaya says: *"This poem was written in response to Tom de Freston's painting 'A Lover's Discourse', shown at Christ's as part of 'Reflections': an exhibition of Tom's work as Levy Plumb Artist in Residence from 2008 to 2009."*



A Letter From Hollywood

Screenwriter Miles Millar (m. 1987) studied English at Christ's. Here, he shares some of the highlights of his career in film and his life in the USA.

"I've lived in Los Angeles for 17 years. I can see the Hollywood sign from my bathroom window. Paramount Studios is three blocks away, and every day I jog past the house where Bette Davis and Joan Crawford sharpened their claws in the classic "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?" Movies have always been my passion. The fact that I get to make them for a living still amazes me.

I wish I could say that I was inspired to become a screenwriter because of a brilliant lecture I heard or a revolutionary student production I saw when I was at Cambridge. But I think it was watching "Die Hard" on a white sheet haphazardly stretched across the stage of the Corn Exchange that cemented my career choice. "Die Hard" seems quaint now, but when I saw it in 1989, its macho blend of action and humor was a revelation.

I work with an American partner I met when I was studying at the University of Southern California where we were both doing a MFA degree at the School of Cinematic Arts. Over the years he has helped me bridge the "wider-than-you'd-think" cultural and linguistic gap between the U.S. and the U.K. It's been great to have someone to share the roller-coaster highs and lows of the business. Dealing with directors, actors and studio executives can be soul-crushing, homicide-inducing hell. But it's worth it. We wouldn't do anything else.

Being engaged in student politics at Cambridge has certainly served me well navigating the treacherous, agent-infested waters of Hollywood. I've hedged my bets and worked in film and television. Some of my credits include "Spiderman 2" starring Tobey Maguire, "Shanghai Noon" and "Shanghai Knights" starring Jackie Chan and Owen Wilson, and most recently "The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor" starring Brendan Fraser and Jet Li. I also created the television show "Smallville". It is in its ninth season and charts the teenage years of Clark Kent aka Superman.

As their titles suggest, my films do not ignite deep intellectual debate and are best enjoyed with a supersize tub of popcorn. If they share a common thread, I guess they are unapologetically optimistic. I think it is reaction to the relentlessly depressing, kitchen-sink British dramas that I endured growing up. I'm drawn to stories where the hero gets the girl, the bad guy dies, and people live happily ever after.

I have met or worked with many of my cinematic heroes. Some have lived up to my personal hype and others have disappointed. Right now I'm adapting a book for Steven

Spielberg. For me, he's the Hollywood equivalent of Zeus. Fingers crossed it will become a movie. Unfortunately, that decision is never in the hands of the screenwriter.

In an effort to gain more control, I recently ventured into film producing. My first project was the subtly titled "Hannah Montana: The Movie" starring American teenage phenomenon Miley Cyrus. I have two young daughters, so it was fun for them to see a film of mine that didn't have ear-numbing explosions, demonic mummies, or angst-ridden alien teenagers.

What's next? I have no idea. The strange and mysterious reality of the film business is that the project I think will come together fastest is usually overtaken by one I thought didn't stand a chance. Whatever it is, until I'm sitting next to my wife at the premiere watching it flicker on a silver screen, I won't believe it's real.

Thanks to the Master, Professor Frank Kelly, for nudging me to write this and to Dr John Rathmell for his kindness and unwavering encouragement during my time at Christ's."



Elsewhere in LA...

On 6th September, the day before Labor Day, a number of Christ's alumni living in California gathered in Los Angeles at the home of Brendan Gallaher (Law 1976) and Mrs Rebecca Gallaher to greet the Master of Christ's, Professor Frank Kelly and Mrs Jackie Kelly. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by all who managed to fight the holiday weekend traffic to catch up with the other old members of Christ's from various generations and walks of life. Many thanks to the Gallaher family for their generous hospitality.



Life in Colour

Helen Mort talks to artist Dee Ferris (m. 1992) about landscape and inspiration

You studied MML at Christ's – how did your experiences as a student feed into your life as an artist?

The solitary nature of study at Cambridge prepared me well for the long days I have spent in the studio, with only my paintings for company! Of course it wasn't all work, and I made lasting friends during my time as a student, especially through my involvement with Christ's Film Society and the Jesus College Art Society. My involvement in these societies also expanded my cultural horizons considerably, giving me access to an experimental cinema of which I had previously only had limited experience, as well as direct access to some really quite eminent artists.

When did your love of visual art begin?

In some ways it feels like painting has always been part of my way of relating to the world. I can't remember a time when I didn't paint. I continued to make work while I was at Cambridge, although most of it was pretty awful. Part II of my Tripos was History of Art, and I remember feeling utterly discouraged and overwhelmed by the wealth of art that had gone before. Luckily that feeling passed!

I suppose the first time I became aware of the emotional power of Art, was on a family trip to Washington State when I was a teenager. I still remember vividly the excitement I felt on seeing a huge canvas by the American artist Morris Louis at the Hirshhorn Museum. It was an extremely simple work, with just a few bands of colour, and I was amazed at the emotional impact it had on me. I think that must have been the moment when my love of Colour Field painting really took began.

Where do you work?

My studio is on a grotty east end industrial estate – the antithesis of the aspirational visions that provide the source material for my paintings. My work very much deals with the idea of escape and escapism, so I often wonder how it might be affected if I lived somewhere more bucolic.

Many of your paintings explore nebulous, abstracted landscapes. Which landscapes and places have influenced you the most?

I've always been drawn to extreme landscape in all its forms. I think I'd find it hard to pick out a particular location that has had an impact on my work. The bizarre rock formations of Cappadocia in Turkey maybe, where I went during my time at Cambridge? Or the hills of the Knoydart Peninsula – the closest I've come to experiencing the vertiginous landscapes of the Romantic artists that I've always loved. Not to forget my childhood memories of the autumnal glow of the trees at Westonbirt Arboretum. Don't get me started!

These days, however, the places that feed most directly into my work are the 'created' landscapes found in magazines and the media at large. I take great pleasure (and pain!) in eroding, or 'painting out', the aspirational visions of holiday resorts, nightclubs, shop windows...



What is your most enduring memory of Cambridge?

The beautiful and terrifying noise of the dawn chorus as I struggled to get my essays in on time! I also remember the perversely exciting experience of ascending the tiny lifts in the University Library to squeeze between the stacks, in search of some unprepossessing pamphlet. Clearly, the thrill was in the chase.

What has been the high point of your artistic career so far?

My solo show in Tokyo in 2007. The experience walking through an urban landscape so alien to my own was exhilarating.

Dee Ferris' solo show Dressing Up For The Comedown runs at Corvi-Mora Gallery, London from 28 October – 22 December, 2009.

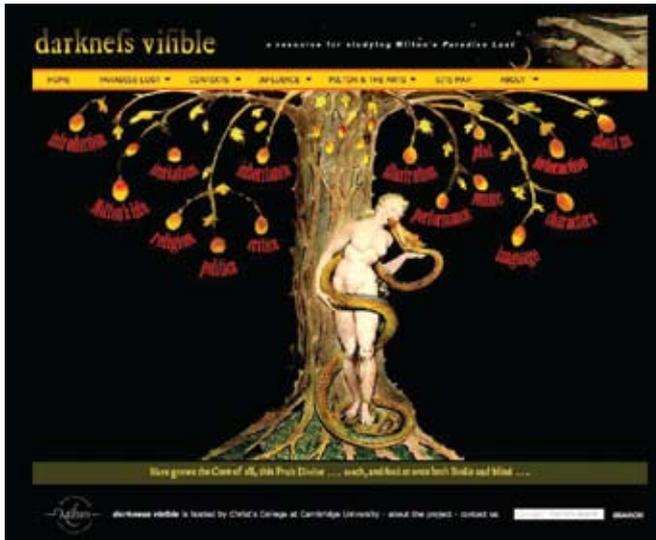
Arts News in Brief

Life Drawing Workshops

Christ's College Visual Arts Centre hosts unique and friendly life drawing sessions every Wednesday from 7–9pm during term time, open to members of the College and University. For more information about this, and other events taking place in the Visual Arts Centre, visit <http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/college-life/visual-performing-arts/>

In With the New

This year's Levy Plumb Visual Arts studentship holder is Naomi Watts. Naomi read English at Jesus College (2005–2008) before studying painting and drawing at the Jerusalem Studio School in Israel (2008–2009). She studied with the painter Israel Zohar in London and trained under the direction of Israel Hershberg in Jerusalem. She works primarily in oils.



Making The Connection

Websites are a crucial means of outreach for the College, a vital way of engaging with the next generation of prospective students. To celebrate the lives of Milton and Darwin, two educational websites were created by Christ's students to help make their work accessible to everyone. Here, Katherine Fletcher and Sarah Gardner discuss the process of setting the websites up.

Darkness Visible – Katherine Fletcher (m. 2002)

"In spring 2007, Dr Gavin Alexander called for volunteers to create an educational website about *Paradise Lost*, and from the belly of Christ's English, a full 13 of us came forward. From first year undergraduates up to then Junior Research Fellow, Sophie Read, everyone was keen to be involved. As a graduate student working on Milton, I was asked to project manage and edit the website, while Sarah Howe, PhD student and previous Artist in Residence, headed up the design work.

The team started with a brainstorming session where everything from glossaries to interactive games was considered. We felt that most online Milton resources, while academically sound, weren't visually engaging, and were often pitched at academics with little way in for the A Level or first year student new to Milton. These were to be the most interesting challenges; presenting a predominantly verbal subject through the mixed media of the internet, and making Milton accessible without dumbing him down.

I set everyone an initial task of writing briefly about their favourite lines of Milton, why they liked him, and how they had come to read him. There would be scope for scholarly writing later; but this was to be something personal, something an intimidated 17 year old struggling through an A Level class could connect with. The real strength of the website is its many voices, all of them very human, and all of them students who could remember recently sweating through their own initiation into the world of man's first disobedience.

Throughout the year, we wrote and edited character descriptions, plot summaries, essays on the poem's themes, its language, its relation to the arts. Meanwhile, Sarah designed a visually astounding website to house our content, based on

a William Blake illustration of the Tree of Knowledge from which you pluck apples to navigate (pictured left).

Soon after the website went live in January 2008, we started receiving emails of thanks from teachers and students, and even had an enquiry about applying to Christ's to read English. A year and a half on, we are still getting emails from grateful and interested readers."

<http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/darknessvisible>

The Darwin Website – Sarah Gardner (m. 2006)

"A group of Christ's Natural Scientists helped to commemorate the Darwin bicentenary with an educational outreach website aimed at getting 16–18 year olds interested in science and boost applications to study science in Cambridge. Through a variety of different sections, students can follow the story of Darwin's life, learn about his theories and see how they apply to the world today. Writers produced individually researched chapters, which were overseen by editors, then put together by a design team. We followed Darwin's progression from indulged schoolboy to distracted scholar; naive traveller; newfound celebrity and finally eminent academic, focusing on key discoveries across the timeline. His projects and observations covered a wide range of flora and fauna such as his Beagle voyage notes on Galapagos finches, work on barnacles and late interest in climbing plants. Many of his ideas are directly relevant to today, particularly in the study of the effects of climate change and infectious disease.

It was an ambitious project bringing together students from across the undergraduate and graduate years and proved to be both enjoyable and a great success. Local schools and sixth forms received leaflets about the site, more were put inside prospectuses given out to potential applicants, and the scientists involved contacted their old schools to spread the word. The level of information was aimed at providing a more in-depth look at evolution than is found in the national curriculum, whilst remaining easy to read and understand. There was a lot of positive feedback about both the content and the design, with the monkey header (pictured below) proving particularly popular!"

<http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/darwin200>





Open House!

Access and Schools Liaison Officer Ed Sharpe (m. 2004) reports on a successful College Open Day:

On September 29th, the college held the last of this year's open days; over 100 prospective students took the opportunity to visit the college and talk to current students and Directors of Study. The day was a great success, starting with a talk on the admissions process from Paula Stirling (Admissions Director) and progressing to tours of the college led by current students and the Schools Liaison Officer. The buffet lunch in Hall was as popular as ever, with the chocolate brownies disappearing particularly fast! After lunch, the sixth formers dispersed to talk to the Directors of Study in their subjects of interest, as their parents attended a presentation on admissions and had their own tours of the college. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and many attendees have already applied to Christ's.

"The hospitality and warmth we received from the current students, staff and others were terrific and made me feel reassured that Christ's would be a wonderful place in which to study and live." – Max, Tadcaster

"I was already applying to Cambridge but this Open Day has definitely made Christ's the College I am applying to." – Emma, Dereham

"I had a lovely day and it was by far the best Open Day I have attended." – Hattie, Tonbridge

"The open day really sold the college to me and I shall be applying there this year." – Tom, Sleaford



Down memory lane...

Has a feature in Pieces sparked a memory of your time at Christ's? If so, write to the editor and let us know: you might see your recollections in print!

A Steetcar Named Desire

Malcolm Hollick (m. 1963) says:

"The account of the opening of the Yusuf Hamied Centre in Pieces Issue 14 sparked long-dormant memories of helping, in a very small way, to stage A Streetcar Named Desire in my first year at Christ's. In those far-distant days, our only theatre was the Hall, where it fell to me to find ways to make the scenery stand up securely in a tight space without attachments to wall or floor – and with a student tool kit that consisted of one small screwdriver. At every performance, I was on tenterhooks lest, in the heat of the moment, the thrown cup should miss the floor or fridge and go through – or knock down – the wall!

A theatre wasn't the only thing missing in those days. As a male-only College, the producer had to import the two female leads. In the middle of our short run there was a crisis as both leading ladies fell for the same student. Perhaps this was good training for the producer – a Divinity student destined for the Ministry.

After the last night, we celebrated in a nearby student house. In those days the College gates were locked at night, and woe betide you if you were on the wrong side of the wall after hours. I recall returning a bit the worse for wear, with a couple of us trying to silence a friend determinedly singing at the top of his voice as he reeled from side to side of the street. Somehow, we all made it over the wall behind third court without injury or detection!"

Sport in Brief

Varsity Rugby Match

On December 10th, Cambridge will take on Oxford in the 127th Varsity Rugby Match at Twickenham Stadium. We have a number of tickets available for the match, which promises to be an exciting game. Kick-off is at 2.00pm, and the match is scheduled to finish at 5.00pm.

To register your interest in attending or for further information please contact alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk

Race To The Sea

In June, a crew of intrepid rowers from the 60s sculled a coxed coastal IV from Christ's College Boathouse to Downham Market, and back, on the Great Ouse and the River Cam, raising seed-corn funds for the renovation and extension of the College Boathouse. They covered 60 miles in two days, with about 6 hours 30 minutes of actual rowing time on each day (June 18 & 19 2009). Congratulations to the successful crew: Tom Swallow (m. 1962), Gavin Suggett (m. 1962), Robin Kerr (m. 1965), Peter Nelson (m. 1962) and Chris Lloyd (m. 1968) and Cox, Debbie Lloyd.

...and Race From The Sea!

Inspired by Robin Kerr and the 'older' generation's 'Row to the Sea' a group of Fellows and 'assistants' took part in a 'Race from the Sea' on 6th September. This was the Great Ouse Marathon from Denver sluice near Downham Market to Ely, a distance of 22km. Crew members ranged in age from 17 to 54. They completed the race in the fastest time of 1 hour 39 minutes, beating 25 other crews. After refreshments in Ely they rowed on to Cambridge, covering about 55 km in total. The crew, rowing as 'Champion of Thames' was: cox Guy Naylor, str Mike Housden (2008 MCR President), 7 Derek Taylor (Clare Hall), 6 Ian Leslie, 5 Nikon Rasumov (Darwin), 4 Nick Gay, 3 Duncan Bull (2009 Boat Club Captain), 2 Peter Batley, bow Luke Skinner.

LinkedIn New way to connect professionally

Hot on the heels of the Christ's College Alumni Facebook Group, we are pleased to announce that following several requests from alumni, Christ's College now has an official Linked In group. We hope this will provide you with a useful opportunity to engage with each other professionally. If you have any feedback, thoughts or queries, contact the Development Team at alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk

The group can be found by searching for *Christ's College, University of Cambridge Alumni Group*:
<http://www.linkedin.com/>

The year's sport in pictures



A Sporting Year

Top to bottom: Christ's College netball team, who finished their season clear at the top of Division 2 this year; Nick McLoughlin who captained the winning Cambridge Waterpolo team in the Varsity match as well as winning 8 Junior International Caps for Great Britain; Christ's College Football Club beat Trinity and St Catharine's last season to cement their place at in the top division. Reports from student sport societies are covered in full in the 2009 College Magazine.



Christ's College

Making a Gift

Personal Details

Name _____ Matric Year _____
 Address _____
 _____ Postcode _____
 Email _____

Gift Aid Declaration

I am a UK tax-payer and would like Christ's College to treat all donations I made on or after 6 April 2000 as Gift Aid donations.

Signature _____ Date _____

Regular Gift

Standing order mandate
 Name of your bank _____
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 Sort Code _____
 Account No _____
 Account Name _____

Please pay the sum of £ _____ on the same day each month / quarter / year (delete as appropriate) on the _____ (day) of _____ (month) _____ (year) until further notice OR until payment have been made (delete as appropriate)

For Office Use: Please make the payment to
 Christ's College Acc No 03322253 at Lloyds TSB,
 3 Sidney Street, Cambridge, CB2 1BQ
 Sort code 30-91-56 quoting reference no. _____

Online Giving

Christ's College website now carries online facilities for single and regular gifts. If you would like to make a gift online please visit www.christs.cam.ac.uk/alumni/supporting-christs/donations and follow the appropriate link.

Legacy

- I would like information about leaving a bequest to the College
- I have included a bequest to the College in my will

Single Gift

- I enclose a cheque / CAF donation payable to Christ's College Cambridge for £ _____

Please charge £ _____ to my:
 Visa Mastercard Maestro

Card Number _____
 Expiry Date _____
 3-digit Security Number* _____
 Signature _____
 Date _____

*Located on the signature strip on the back of the card. For security reasons you may wish to phone, email or send separately.

Please return this form and direct any enquiries to:

The Development Office
 Christ's College
 Cambridge CB2 3BU
 UK

Tel: +44 (0)1223 766710
 Fax: +44 (0)1223 766711
 email: campaign@christs.cam.ac.uk

For more information about any of these events, please contact
Rosie Applin, Alumni Officer: e-mail: ra371@cam.ac.uk; phone: 01223 768276

Wednesday 18 November

Lady Margaret Lecture by Lord Runciman on 'The Resistance of Neo-Darwinian Sociology' in the Yusuf Hamied Theatre

Friday 4 December

Drinks Reception in New York, USA

Saturday 5 December

Cambridge in America 800th Anniversary Gala, New York.
See <http://www.cantab.org> for more information

Thursday 10 December

Varsity Rugby Match, Twickenham stadium and Cambridge in America 800th Anniversary Reception, San Francisco.
See <http://www.cantab.org> for more information

Saturday 13 February

Law dinner (open to alumni who studied or practiced law)

Wednesday 3 March 2010

Lady Margaret Lecture by Professor Tanya Luhmann in the Yusuf Hamied Centre

Tuesday 16 March 2010

College Open Day for Prospective Students (all subjects)

Saturday 27 March 2010

MA Congregation for alumni who matriculated in 2003.
Lunch, tea and dinner in Hall

Saturday 10 April 2010

Meeting of Christ's College Medical Alumni Association (open to all Christ's graduates and members in the Medical and Veterinary Sciences and allied Natural Sciences)

June 2010

Garden Party and buffet lunch for alumni who matriculated in 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963 or 1964

Penelope Keith as Lady Margaret and John Barber as the Page in a splendid performance of 'A Good Life' in the Yusuf Hamied Theatre, June 27th 2009.

