

pieces

Christ's College Newsletter



Issue 13 Lent Term 2009

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The start of the bicentenary

Mapping Christ's

Conversations with
artists and travellers



From The Master

If Charles Darwin had been able to return to Christ's on the occasion of his 200th birthday, I hope he would have found much to impress and delight him. The start of the Darwin bicentenary has been an exciting time for the College, and the celebrations on February 12th marked that in fitting style, with the unveiling of Anthony Smith's sculpture of the young Darwin (generously funded by alumnus Alan Smith) and a hugely successful fundraising dinner in conjunction with the Galapagos Conservation Trust. We are indebted to everyone who helped to make this such a wonderful event.

Our celebrations will be continuing apace throughout the year with a series of Lady Margaret lectures, displays of Darwin correspondence in the library and, of course, the Charles Darwin room in First Court. You can read more about the planned festivities on our website: www.christs.cam.ac.uk/darwin as well as seeing pictures from the February 12th event in this issue.

It is not just famous alumni like Milton and Darwin that the College should celebrate, of course. The success of the recent telephone campaign demonstrated how valuable the continued support of so many old members is to the life of the College: turn to page 13 for a full report on this year's campaign, and how it benefited the student callers involved.

Last issue, we profiled the refurbishment of the Yusuf Hamied Centre, enabled by the generosity of one such donor, Dr Yusuf Hamied, and I'm delighted to report that the Centre is already at the heart of College life. The new fitness suite is now open, and the theatre has hosted a number of successful events including the Bose symposium in December (more on page 5).

We do hope you enjoy the issue and that you are able to visit College again in the year of Darwin.

Professor Frank Kelly, FRs

Editor: Helen Mort
(Publications Officer)

Cover image: Photograph of Anthony Smith's Darwin sculpture by Dr Alan Winter

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Photo by Alison Maletz



Darwin in pictures



HRH The Duke of Edinburgh pictured with the Master, Professor Frank Kelly, shortly after unveiling Anthony Smith's bronze of the young Darwin

Darwin Unveiled!

The Darwin bicentenary celebrations got off to a flying start on February 12th, with HRH The Duke of Edinburgh unveiling Anthony Smith's sculpture of the young Darwin in First Court, watched by a huge crowd. Andrew Marr and Sarah Darwin were also in attendance for the festivities, which continued with a tour of Darwin's refurbished rooms in First Court and a fundraising dinner in the evening. The dinner, in conjunction with the Galapagos Conservation Trust, was preceded by a discussion between Sir David Attenborough and Felipe Cruz of the Charles Darwin Foundation, chaired by Andrew Marr.



Christ's College on Radio 4

To mark the Darwin bicentenary, Radio 4 commissioned a special series of 'In Our Time' with Melvyn Bragg in January to re-assess Darwin's life and work. We're proud to say that Christ's College, in particular Colin Higgins (Assistant Librarian) and Dr David Norman (Fellow) contributed strongly to the first programme which told the story of Darwin's early life in Shropshire and discussed the significance of the three years he spent at Cambridge. The programme was aired on Monday 5th January.



Darwin Playing Cards

A set of Darwin playing cards, designed by alumnus John White (m. 1977) was launched at a banquet at the Mansion House in January 2009. Dr John van Wyhe (Bye Fellow), pictured above, attended the occasion and reported: *"The event was a great delight. Not least to see playing cards dangling by thread from the silver candelabras with images from Darwin Online and the portrait of Darwin in the Hall of Christ's. An additional Christ's connection is of course that Darwin loved to play cards in his rooms while a student!"*

Restoration of Darwin's Room

Charles Darwin's restored rooms in G4, First Court, were opened to visitors from Saturday 21st February for the first time in 100 years. They bring to life a crucial chapter in Darwin's life, just before he set off on his historic Beagle voyage. Highlights include the original seat cushions and a beetle cabinet lent by Darwin's great-grandson Dr Milo Keynes which could be the original one Darwin had in his rooms. A full account of the restoration process and an essay by Jo Poole can be accessed via the College website: http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/alumni/distinguished-alumni/charles_darwin/darwin_room/. The rooms will be open to visitors at selected times on Wednesdays and Saturdays – please see the website for further information.

Darwin Colloquium

A successful one-day colloquium on Charles Darwin in Europe was held in College on February 26th to mark the launch of a new book on 'The Reception of Charles Darwin in Europe'.

Cooking Up A Storm

Medals for Christ's across a host of categories in the annual Chefs' Competition



The Cambridge Colleges Culinary Competition was held at Christ's College on Thursday 30th October 2008, and the medals were presented in the newly refurbished Yusuf Hamied Theatre on November 12th. The catering team at Christ's won accolades for their superb efforts across a range of classes. Butler Paul Davis (pictured above with Kevin Keohane) gained a gold medal in the Front of House competition, for excellent service.

The Steward's Cup was awarded to Sidney Sussex College, with Emmanuel placed second and Christ's in joint third place with St John's. With the competition held in College this year, Christ's staff had been hard at work behind the scenes too: Catering Manager Kevin Keohane was on the competition committee, and Beth Blakeman and Chris Austin were also involved in setting up the successful event. Here, Kevin Keohane talks to Helen Mort about the sweet taste of success...

How much work went into setting up this year's competition?

The committee started work a year ago, straight after last year's event at Girton. We met every fortnight; mainly the group of five of us, but other people stepped in to help closer to the time. The competition really took over the College on the day it happened: the bar and the dining room and several other rooms were in use. The entrants started getting here at seven o'clock in the morning. Each College had a particular time slot to bring their dishes in.

How was the judging organised?

We had two judges from the local Cambridge Regional College: David Carter and Ian Sparke. We also had the head chef from Trinity College, because Trinity didn't enter, and the catering manager from Selwyn College. The main judge was Peter Griffiths who organises all of the country's big events – he received an MBE for his work quite recently.

How does it feel to have such a talented kitchen team?

This is the first time everyone has got involved with the competition, and hopefully they'll build on that next year and do even more. The last couple of years, we've had one member of staff in the running, but this time every one of them got involved. It was great to see Paul Davis receiving a gold medal for service.

What was the highlight of the competition?

When all the stress of organising it was over! Seriously, the highlight was seeing the guys getting their medals and knowing that the event had been a success!



Above: the successful Christ's catering team, pictured with The Master at the awards ceremony

New Year Honours

The College was delighted to see two of its Honorary Fellows recognised in the New Year's Honours List in January 2009. David Cannadine, lately Professor at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, was knighted for his services to scholarship. Linda Colley, author and Professor of History at Princeton University, received a CBE for services to historical studies.

Vice Mastership No More

As of January 1st 2009, the statutory position of Vice Master of Christ's ceased to exist and the position of President came into existence. Professor Martin Johnson, who had occupied the post of Vice Master, was elected by the Governing Body to hold this new position until the end of 2010.

Celebrating Bose

The symposium at Christ's on December 5th to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of distinguished alumnus Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose was a great success, with scientists from across the UK and India in attendance. The programme included a range of talks on a variety of specialist and non-specialist subjects, a buffet lunch and the unveiling of a specially commissioned sculpture by Professor Biman Das. The event was the first to be held in the newly-refurbished Yusuf Hamied Centre. Bose (1858–1937) was a visionary and gifted experimentalist who publicly demonstrated wireless transmission of electromagnetic waves for the first time anywhere in the world. The anniversary celebration was a fitting tribute to his remarkable life.



Modelling Bose

by sculptor Professor Biman Das

"During my short visit to Cambridge in December, I reflected with nostalgia on my own days as a student at Portsmouth Polytechnic which I attended from 1973–74 as a British Council Scholar. I came to the United Kingdom to learn to the 'lost wax process' of bronze castings, the process which I used to make the effigy of Sir J.C. Bose. As a student, I also had the great privilege of meeting the esteemed sculptor Sir Henry Moore, and I found his guidance and his blessing truly inspirational as I began my own career.

The main aspect of any statue is the first phase of clay modeling. I started the clay modeling of Sir J.C. Bose based on photographs which were provided to me. After that I cast in bronze through my usual practice of mould, followed by the 'lost wax process'. The last application is called 'patination' and is used to get the artistic color. All these applications are chemical reactions based on formulae. Finally I polished it with transparent wax and finished it with permanent lacquer to get the natural effect.

It was a real pleasure to see the fruits of my labour unveiled at such a wonderful ceremony in the beautiful setting of Christ's College. It was fantastic to meet such renowned scientists and I feel honoured to have received encouragement from so many people as I prepared my bronze bust of Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose."



Choir in London

By Miles Coverdale (m. 2006)

On Monday 9th February, the Chaplain and members of the Chapel Choir travelled to the City of London to sing a special evensong for the Feast of Saint Vedast as the guests of Revd Dr Alan McCormack, Parish Priest of St Vedast and St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate.

Braving the pouring rain, the party met Revd McCormack for some very welcome warm drinks and doughnuts! We then met with Commodore Jonathan Cooke, Clerk of the Worshipful Company of Leathersellers, for an exclusive tour of the Leathersellers' Hall with the livery company's archivist Jerome Farrell. As well as looking around the stunning hall, we were also able to see some of the rare artefacts in the company's possession. These included examples of early leatherwork drinking vessels, some of the Company's magnificent silverware and a unique Incunabulum bible, printed before 1501 with hand-painted illustrations.

The Chaplain and Choir sung a special evensong at St Vedast-Alias-Foster to celebrate recent fabric renovations to the church which was rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren in 1670–1673, then restored in the 1960s. The service was followed by a drinks and canapés reception at St Vedast, which provided an opportunity to meet with some of the many Christ's alumni who attended the service. The trip was a great success and an excellent chance for Christ's Chapel to extend its links to churches outside of Cambridge – as well as reaffirming the well-deserved high reputation of Christ's College Chapel Choir.

More information about the College Chapel and Choir can be found on the College website: www.christs.cam.ac.uk/college-life/chapel-and-choir

Darkness Visible

Dr Gavin Alexander casts his eye back over a successful year of Miltonic celebrations...

Milton is an extraordinary, if not quite an exemplary, figure. A difficult, proud man, but then a genius of quite amazing reach and scope. He is in many ways the complete humanities figure – a historian of Britain; a linguist who wrote verses in Greek, Latin, and Italian; a theorist of education, of religion, of politics; a defender of freedoms domestic and public – of expression, of conscience, and from tyranny. Oh, and the most influential poet in the English canon, beside Shakespeare. If Christ's College played a small part in making him what he was, we were certainly determined to play a large part in celebrating his achievements and lasting influence, and in bringing him back to prominence in the national memory.

Looking back through the archive I was impressed at the efforts made in 1908 by the College and others. Again, a major exhibition and other events, and a great deal of press activity. Our advantage this time round was the global reach of the internet, which



Jenni MacKenzie as the Attendant Spirit in Milton's 'Comus'

we harnessed with a success we could not have predicted. We set up two sites, which have had over 75,000 individual visitors in the past 12 months, and counting. The main Milton site includes a biography by Dr Sophie Read, an annotated bibliography and chronology of Milton's works, and information about the various events, together with related downloads. So visitors can download the catalogue of the Library exhibition – and will soon be able to visit a virtual exhibition to which we are putting the finishing touches – or the programmes for *Comus* and our anniversary concert;

and they can listen to recordings of our five lectures and the wonderful all-day reading of *Paradise Lost*. The other site is the more impressive, however. Designed and written by our own English students, *darkness visible* is aimed at those new to Milton – and especially year 12 and year 13 school students – and offers an inspiring and visually stunning glimpse into Milton's world and *Paradise Lost*. Both these sites remain as legacies of the year, and will continue to attract attention both to Milton and to the College.

For those able to come to our various events it has been a year of many and



The student cast of 'Comus' performed in the Fellows' Garden and Hall in June 2008

various pleasures. *Paradise Lost* was attended by hundreds and listened to online by nearly 5,000. Christ's English fellows featured prominently. I read Book I, in appropriately hellish darkness punctuated by a stunning light installation by our artist in residence, Issam Kourbaj; Dan Wakelin orchestrated a brilliant account of Book VII (which includes the Creation), with images in counterpoint to the text; and Sophie Read, at short notice, put together a team (including her two colleagues) to read the haunting account of future human history in Book XI. Each of the lectures – including performances by Honorary Fellow Christopher Ricks and the peerless poet Geoffrey Hill – was to a packed audience of more than 200, and in most cases we had to turn people away (hundreds more in the case of the opening lecture by Quentin Skinner). *Comus* was a triumph, showing what a fine dramatic sense this mostly non-dramatic poet had, how speakable and musical are his words. And the year ended with a beautiful concert of readings and music of Milton's day, with the celebrated viol consort Fretwork – together with Director of Music David Rowland – accompanying members of the College Choir and a former member, the superb soprano Ruth Provost. Music by Milton's father, his friends, and his contemporaries – some of it freshly edited for the occasion by Christ's alumnus Richard Rastall and by myself – was interspersed with readings from his works performed by the actor Michael Pennington. It was a moving evening which returned Milton's voice and the sounds he loved to the hall in which he performed as an undergraduate.

The year has also seen us engaged in various access and outreach activities, in an effort to find Milton new readers and add to the public's understanding of his significance. These have included a number of visits to the College by

“Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.”

Areopagitica

sixth-formers from local schools. With the exhibition as the basis we have put on a programme of talks and sample supervisions, with our own students on occasion getting to try their hand at teaching.

And it has been the efforts of our own students that have most impressed and inspired me this year. We are lucky that the anniversary coincided with the presence in College of a talented group of postgraduate students working on literature of Milton's day, all but one of whom studied here as undergraduates. Simon Jackson wrote the programme notes for the concert, and David Parry edited the programme for *Comus*, both substantial and useful publications in their own right. Katharine Fletcher proved a quite brilliant leader of the *darkness visible* project, writing key entries herself, and getting the very best out of our undergraduate contributors. And Sarah Howe deserves special mention. Not only did she design and code *darkness visible* but she also curated the superb Old Library exhibition, her outstanding scholarship and keen visual sense producing in both cases guides to Milton that draw the viewer in and cannot help but inspire. Milton's successors in College have played a vital role in making him accessible to his next generation of readers, and in showing just what we at Christ's are all about.

Visit the College's Milton sites:
<http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/milton400>
<http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/darknessvisible>

A Tribute To Arthur Peck

By Joe Boreham

Arthur Peck, 1902–1974, was a Fellow of Christ's College from 1926 until his death, and was its Librarian from 1945 until 1971.

Joe Boreham was a graduate in Cambridge from 1959–1962, reading Classics at Fitzwilliam College. The College, then Fitzwilliam House, did not have facilities for teaching Classics, so Joe was taught at Downing and Christ's, where he came to know Arthur Peck.

“Arthur Peck's teaching will stay with me for the rest of my life. He was a scatter brain, in the nicest sense possible. His room would have done any young batchelor proud – it was a complete tip. I remember we had a gas ring in the middle of the room, and I believe also there was a small telegraph in the room.

Mr Peck was an excellent teacher and I struck up a great relationship with him. We formed a little alliance, because the teaching at the time was very much against Plato's theory of ideas, or forms: we'd team up to defend Plato against the ‘whippersnappers’ (as we called them) who were slating Plato's philosophical theory and calling it ridiculous.

I passed through Christ's on a visit in November, and felt I owed it to the man to pay my respects. To most people, Peck is probably just a name in First Court. But I'd really like everyone to know what a thoroughly nice man and wonderful teacher he really was. I feel lucky to have crossed paths with him.”



Mapping Cambridge...

The University's 800th anniversary has prompted us all to look at Cambridge afresh. With recent changes to the buildings at Christ's, and with the Darwin Garden now installed, this seems more relevant than ever. Earlier this year, Dr Alan Winter began a series of panoramic views of the College, taken from the rooftops: the photos (pictured above) represent a different way of viewing Christ's.



A view of Issam Kourbaj's 'A Cambridge Palimpsest'

Our Artist-in-Residence, Issam Kourbaj, has been occupied with seeing Cambridge differently since he arrived here in the 1980s; whether through the camera obscura in his studio, or through aerial photography projects like 'Juxtaposition'.

Most recently, Issam has created 'A Cambridge Palimpsest': a multi-layered puzzle of Cambridge, part toy, part educational resource, to coincide with the University's 800th Anniversary. The puzzle overlays maps and images of the city past, present and future; surviving, lost and imagined. Issam was born in Syria, and studied in Damascus, Leningrad and St. Petersburg before moving to Cambridge. Here, he discusses his own journey to Christ's College and how his maps have changed along the way:

Cambridge Palimpsest and my artaeology map

"When I was learning to read, I remember the postman used to deliver letters to our house which were addressed in a way that is now lost:

To Mr Jamil Kourbaj (my father's name):

South of the Market Square, East of Hamad Al Hakim shop,

or

West of the Mill, near the Coffee Baker, or North of the Ashoush Dentist Surgery...

or

East of the Baker, North of the water tanks...

My people use the sun for light, time and directions. I was under the illusion that this system of navigation was only used only in my city, 'the Syrian Philipopolis'. I was delighted, when, much later, I moved to study art in Damascus, and realised that the Damascenes used it too. In order to find the way back to my room inside the walled Old City, I had to use graffiti as a guide for walking through the cobbled narrow streets. Old Damascus has seven gates, and Qasion Mountain was the last landmark I saw from the plane, flying for the first time.

Learning Russian was a challenge; a different 'mapping' to the script of my first tongue. And of all places, I learned it in Baku, the city of wind. The city has many old gates too, which contrast with the soviet-era buildings, and the background of The Caspian Sea with its enclosed body of water.

I read Dostoevsky in Arabic. Leningrad, with its islands and white nights, felt so familiar and had great charm. The River Neva was intended to be the 'main street of the city' and its open bridges prevented me from crossing back again after a long wait at the *Pochta*, (Post office) to be connected by telephone to talk to my family in Syria.

After Leningrad, Cambridge looked like a theatre set of pretty toys. Though I felt hugged by its Cam, greens and ease of orientation, after a while I recognized that it is a puzzle, a horizontal one. My paintings and sculptures moved around from a studio behind the Round Church,



Panorama of the College by Dr Alan Winter

to the Old Labs at Newnham College, to another one in an old bookbinder's shop and finally to Christ's College Visual Art Centre.

JUXTAPOSITION was a project in collaboration with the Cambridge University Collection of Aerial photographs. In its introduction I wrote: "An infra-red sea breaking across the floor; a heaven dangling from the roof, a city dissolving into a puzzle."

Cambridge Palimpsest is the offspring of *Cambridge is a puzzle*. A multi-layered vertical puzzle, it reads from the top:

- Modern vertical aerial image of Cambridge
- Wartime black-and-white vertical aerial image of Cambridge,
- Custance's 1798 map of the City
- Archaeological 'Lost and Hidden' Cambridge
- ...and finally, the City's underlying geology.

My *artaecology* map is work in progress that "googled" only in my head; it is an acoustic location that determines my distance from the Market Square, Al Hakim Shop, the Mill, the Coffee Baker, the Ashoush Dentist Surgery, the Baker, and the water tanks."

Issam's website is: www.issamkourbaj.co.uk. To read more about the Visual Arts Centre at Christ's, visit the College website: <http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/college-life/visual-performing-arts/> where you can see some of Issam's images of Christ's taken through camera obscura.

Drawing Life...

Tom de Freston is this year's Levy-Plumb Visual Art Student. Here, he talks to Helen Mort about his role at Christ's and the newly-formed College Visual Art Society.

What was your background in the arts before you came to Christ's?

I read Fine Art BA Hons at LMU and History of Art at Cambridge (St. Edmund's). I finished the latter in 2007 and spent the last year teaching and lecturing at the Warwickshire School of Arts.

What has been the most interesting aspect of the studentship so far?

Primarily just having the time and space to paint that the position affords me. More broadly it's been people. Cambridge has an incredible density of interesting people, so having their input and opinions has been great. As a rule, most of them seem to find my paintings of naked figures chucking themselves about various spaces disturbing. Recently my work has required me to photograph myself naked, in various dynamic poses, which reference works by Caravaggio and Jacques Louis David. The fear is that someone will walk in and see my elaborate explanation, however honest, as a cover up for some narcissistic fetish.

You've set up the Christ's College Visual Arts Society. Can you tell us a bit more about what it's for?

The Visual Arts Centre is a fabulous space; the Society is primarily to raise access and awareness of this. We still run Life Drawing classes every Wednesday. On the 7th of March we have an exhibition of the students work from this year. This will be one of a series of exhibitions the Society organises this academic year. I think it is important that the holder of the Levy-Plumb Studentship finds ways to actively engage College members with the arts. The Society will hopefully provide a platform for this.

What do you hope to achieve by the end of the year?

I'm currently working on the production of a large series of characters and images; often drawn from Art Historical Sources. By the end of the year I want to have produced a few large multi figured paintings which find methods to unite these various elements.

www.whalecrow.co.uk





A view of Rio

Travellers' Tales

Tyler Hung (m. 2006) talks to country-hopping Soc Anth students Lucy Guile (m. 2006) and Katie Shrubbs (m. 2006) about hidden jungle cities, drugs, tarantulas and realising their ambitions with help from the College.

Fieldwork in Fiji

Tyler Hung interviews Lucy Guile

Could you tell me a bit about your dissertation research and how you came to select your title?

Fiji has been the site of a lot of civil unrest since gaining its independence in 1970, largely as a result of its population's unusual composition – the two major communities are very culturally distinct, one comprising of the descendants of Indian indentured labourers brought over by British colonial authorities around 100 years ago and the other being the indigenous pre-colonial population. The result is a strongly politically- and economically-divided society.

My dissertation focuses upon the idea of being 'native' to a place. The Fijian situation is particularly interesting because political protagonists employ the rhetoric of being vulnerable indigenes whilst simultaneously maintaining (sometimes coercive) political control and demographic dominance.

As part of my research I spent three weeks in Fiji's capital city, Suva, volunteering at a school in the outskirts.

What other projects have you done, and what did you bring from those experiences to this one?

The best project I've been involved in was part of an effort to assess biodiversity and the impact of logging and poaching in the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve in North-East Peru. I was part of a month-long expedition to the Peruvian Amazon in 2006. We flew into Iquitos, a jungle city only accessible by river and air because the rainforest is so dense, and travelled upriver for five days until we were in pristine forest, totally uninhabited apart from the small guard stations which try to deter poachers. There were fifty of us crammed into a boat that was meant to hold about half the amount – my group was sleeping in the hold with the rats!

The work in the reserve was stunning, we surveyed freshwater dolphins which swam around our boats, huge caimans, howler monkeys, tarantulas and anything else we found. The trip made me realise how much I wanted to see the world, and more importantly that it was possible.

What is most challenging about a project like this?

For me, it's getting homesick, but it's always worth it.

The flip side of visiting these amazing places is the worry that something might go wrong when you're on your own somewhere unfamiliar; in the last couple of years I've been to Peru and Borneo as well, so have learnt a bit about travelling safely and always try to find someone to visit places with – this time I was lucky enough to meet some great people on my volunteer project.

It's also sometimes difficult being in a different culture because you don't know what to expect and that can make you feel unsafe – you just have to take all the precautions you can and I've found people to generally be very friendly. I find the most appealing thing to be the chance to visit unusual places and the challenge that involves.

How did you fund your trip to Fiji and was going about this a difficult process?

The College was incredibly helpful with funding, I'm very grateful for them keeping me out of massive debt!

Where are you going next and why?

I haven't decided yet, I'm considering going on a similar expedition to the Peru one but as a leader this time. I'm really interested in the anthropology of Latin America and indigenous rights issues there so it would be great to go back to that region. Nothing's planned yet though!

What's your dream destination?

The Amazon! I'd live with a nomadic indigenous community. I hope to do it one day, perhaps as PhD research.

Research in Rio

"One day a young boy in the streets was shot down and killed by the police because they thought he was involved with the drug trade." So begins Social Anthropologist Katie Shrubbs's account of her fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro. For Katie (m. 2006), Brazil's capital is not only a hub of violence, but a source of fascination.

Rio is a city of startling contrasts; from the affluent *Zona Sul*, to the favelas on the hill, where you encounter some of the worst levels of poverty in the world. Take Rocinha, the largest favela in the whole of South America, home to 60,000 to 150,000 people (depending on whose estimates you believe). Its neighbour, São Conrado, by contrast, is one of the richest areas of Rio: home to nightclubs, a golf course, and an enormous shopping mall.

Illegal drugs are sold in every major city in the world. Why, then, do none of these cities generate anywhere near the levels of armed violence that surround the drug trade in Rio? In 2005, 5048 Brazilian children were killed by firearms. A figure made even more startling when you compare it to the overall UK child mortality rate of roughly 360 deaths per year. Most of Rio's violence occurs in favelas – and there are around 750 of them in the city alone. These are some of the issues Katie is trying to tackle in her dissertation.

I'm curious to hear about how Katie's fascination with the city began. Katie first visited Brazil in summer 2007, volunteering with Brazilian NGO Iko Poran. Having spent



Katie Shrubbs in Rio

two years studying Brazilian Portuguese, she returned to Rio in 2008 ready to conduct her research. "Men in the drug trade are not doing it solely for economic necessity. They're searching for dignity, fulfilment and for their place in a social hierarchy." The average life expectancy of a male in the drug trade, Katie spells out, "is 22 years of age." Naturally, I ask, why not walk away from this lifestyle?

Luke Dowdney's book, *Children of the Drug Trade*, provides a little insight. The children of the favelas encounter violence at a young age. "What's the worse thing about your job?" Dowdney asks a child operating as a "soldado", someone responsible for armed security in a drug faction: "Having to kill someone." Such events happen on a frighteningly frequent basis. Usually children are called upon to kill when one member of a faction becomes a police informant. Such people are labelled "X-9": which, Katie tells me, is essentially a "wanted" sign.

"No one in the drug trade trusts each other," affirms Katie. "For instance, if you're told to punish a guy who's labelled as X-9 - say, to cut his hand off - and you don't do it, automatically you're assumed to be protecting him. And that will endanger your life."

And what of the police? "They operate as if engaged in an ongoing war against the traffickers," and the traffickers respond alike, using their firearms, also designed for war. The result is that residents feel they are constantly caught in the middle of a military occupation. They've come to fear, distrust and hate the police. Policemen that live within the favelas are seen as traitors." Katie elaborates, "I would never have thought of going up to a police man if I was in trouble; everything about them terrified me, but it is the favela residents who experience their violence mostly".

So what is being done? Katie points me to *Luta Pela Paz*, or in English, "Fight for Peace", an NGO with a twist. Founded by the aforementioned Luke Dowdney, the combination of boxing, martial arts and citizenship classes with capoeira aims to get the average child in Rio out of a life of crime. Bringing children together like this provides more than just a relief from life in the favela; it shows the kids that there are alternate options in such a life.

As Katie concludes, the situation is so complex that there is no one solution. What I do know is that if you start with Katie's passion and combine it with her dedication to field work, I'm sure something really can be done. Katie aims to study a Masters in Rio next year, and something tells me there'll be more adventures for her in Brazil to come.

Viva South America!

Oliver Balch studied for an MPhil in History at Christ's from 1999 to 2000. He now works as a freelance journalist for The Guardian and other UK newspapers from his base in Buenos Aires. His first book, 'Viva South America!' is due from Faber in March. Here, Oliver explains the route to its inception...

A carnival mood brightened the rain-soaked skies above Mar del Plata's football stadium. Squeezed between a student anarchist and a vocal group of Falklands veterans, I watched the warm-up acts come and go on stage. We were all there to see one man, Hugo Chávez. The 'firebrand' president of Venezuela, sitting between Argentine football legend Diego Maradona and Evo Morales, soon to become the first ever indigenous president of Bolivia.

"Viva el pueblo!", Chávez roared when he eventually took the podium. "Long live the people!"

"Viva!" a football crowd of voices shouted back, the echo rebounding around the stadium like a war cry.

Chávez went on to speak for over two hours. Part history lesson, part political jeremiad and large part cheer-raising sloganeering, the South American showman kept us all rapt. It began to rain, heavily. As a baptism into the contemporary political scene of the continent, it felt appropriate.

The event was arranged as an 'anti-summit' in opposition to a presidential shindig across town. The Argentine seaside resort was playing host to America's 34 heads of state who were getting together to discuss the possibility of a pan-regional free trade agreement.

Venezuela's self-styled "21st Century Socialist" had other plans. "Each one of us has brought a gravedigger's spade", he yelled from the stage. The crowd lapped it up and the media had their soundbite. Just to make sure the message got through, later the protesters set about trashing the town. I got caught in a stand-off between

a group of masked militants and the riot police. It was my first taste of tear gas.

I rushed back to my hotel to call the newspaper I was filing for. The editor turned out to be uninterested in either the speech or the riot. They had enough real wars to cover, he told me. They didn't need a rhetorical one.

In a land of despots and dictators, another loudmouth revolutionary was hardly news. Street skirmishes in South America didn't do it for them either: Coups and kidnappings were what the newspaper really wanted. On quiet weeks, perhaps a gun battle in the slums of Brazil. Or a grizzly drugs murder in Colombia. But a continent simmering in discontent. A leader with the people's touch promising change. No, they were sorry, but that wouldn't cut it. Wouldn't cut it at all.

I'd moved to Buenos Aires several months before to try my hand as a freelance correspondent. It didn't take very long to realise that the newspaper foreign desks in London weren't as fascinated by South America as I was.

Then, all of a sudden, things changed. The continent was going to the polls. Over a twelve-month period, only Paraguay and Argentina found themselves in mid-terms. More than that, left-wing populists were winning. Every month, the BBC's political map was painted a little redder. At the centre was Chávez. He took his Chomsky to the United Nations and his revolution to the people. The press pack swarmed to Caracas to cover the Bush-baiting star of the moment.

The media circus suited me just fine. It left me room to explore the story behind the story: the people and their revolution. South America was angry. I'd seen it on the streets of Mar del Plata. I'd felt it rumbling somewhere deep beneath the turf in the football stadium. People wanted someone or something to blame. But why? What was it that fuelled their fury? What was making them so eager to tread the perilous path of revolution?

In an attempt to answer those questions, I mapped out a route around the continent and bought a one-way bus ticket to Bolivia. My journey took me to South America's nine largest countries, with a stop-over at

the end in Cuba to witness Fidel's hand-over from power. In each country I chose a theme related to the *lucha* ('fight') of the people; race in Brazil, women in Chile, human rights in Paraguay, etcetera. In the stories of everyday people that I met, I hoped to find what it was that Chávez and his acolytes were tapping into.



A mixture of travelogue and first-hand journalism, the account of that journey takes readers from the barricades to the breakfast tables of a continent. On the way, it unearths the passion and the problems that are sending up the visceral battle cry of "viva!" across South America.

Oliver hopes to hold a launch event for 'Viva South America!' at Christ's in March. For more information about this event, please contact the Development Office via alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk.

In other travel news....

National Transport Information Incubator

Towards the end of 2008, College Fellow Professor Peter Landshoff was involved with a pilot study for the Department of Transport, commissioned by the Cabinet Office. The consortium (led by Cambridge University and involving companies such as Deloitte) recommended the creation of a National Transport Innovation Incubator (NaTII) to give advice on technical issues and on appropriate business models.



Student callers at work in the Lloyd Room

Christ's College Calling...

An annual telephone campaign doesn't just enable Christ's to raise money for teaching, learning and support; it offers an unprecedented opportunity for current students to chat to alumni about their experiences of College too. Here, Helen Mort talks to student callers about the experience of working on the second annual campaign.

After the success of the inaugural telephone campaign in 2007, it was no surprise that many students involved in last year's calling wanted to take part again. Sixteen second to fourth year students from a range of different subject areas participated in the campaign, which took place over one week in December, and a second week in January, with some 850 alumni being called in total. We are pleased to report that, thanks to the generosity of alumni from a number of different vintages, the campaign has raised more than £190,000.

The telephone campaign is part of an endeavour to bring past generations of College members together in support of our fundraising priorities and to engage alumni more actively in College life. In particular, the student callers were seeking support to enable Christ's to endow teaching fellowships to maintain and improve quality education for undergraduates, expand graduate support and promote creative opportunities both within the fabric and the intellectual life of College.

The total raised will be directed to support projects such as the appointment of a College teaching officer in English and the expansion of graduate bursaries and scholarships as well as book grants, travel grants, support for students clubs and societies and refurbishment projects.

Such projects will, in time, indicate the tangible benefits of this year's campaign, but what's more difficult to quantify is the benefit of contact between students and alumni.

Conversations with alumni gave current students a rare chance to compare their experiences of life at Christ's and, in some cases, obtain invaluable career advice. For many alumni, the conversations presented a chance to reminisce and, perhaps more importantly, to find out about recent developments and forthcoming events in College.

Third year historian Jo Hardley (m. 2006) thoroughly enjoyed her first experience of calling, and the stories she encountered:

"Talking to former students, young and old, I realised how little changes over the years. People still remember having showers in First Court or staying up until stupid o'clock to finish work. The best stories ranged from alumni having a variety of objects thrown at them during their undergrad interviews to several men who claimed to have scaled the wall of the Master's Lodge after the main doors had closed! It was particularly interesting for me to hear memories of the first women being admitted to College.

I learned a lot from my work on the telephone campaign, including how awake one could still be at 2.30am when calling alumni in America. I owe great thanks to one particular man who kept me challenged post-midnight through our discussion of philosophy and history. Telling him that I studied German history, I was then faced with the somewhat unanswerable question "Was Hitler a bad man?" Some of our Alumni clearly want to be back at Cambridge and writing essays..."

And students like Olivia Marshall (m. 2006), reading Music, also benefited from careers advice:

"It was particularly helpful to speak to people who studied the same subject as me, because it made me realise just how many options I will have after I leave Christ's, and many of them had plenty of good advice."

We would like to thank the students, Fellows, staff and alumni who participated in this year's telephone campaign for making it such a rewarding experience for all concerned.



Fairbairns Dinner

Tom Swallow (m. 1965) reports on the annual Crustaceans event...

Miltonian celebrations in College meant that the Crustacean's Dinner in the Mountbatten Room had to be brought forward to the pre-race evening, so celebrations were both muted and premature. Nevertheless 10 crew members and their wives enjoyed superb catering and excellent company.

An advance team of David Walden, who flew over from the USA specially for the event, expecting to row at 7, and Tom Swallow, 6, met at the boathouse on the previous afternoon. They watched the Novices race very successfully (NW2 being top 2nd Novice and beating many Novice Women's 1st Vills). Thus inspired, they moved to a try-out on the Erg machines.

Some of the crew had the "huge" benefit of the sole training outing, at the Reunion Row in June 2008, or even the previous Fairbairn's race in 2008, when our time was 19:55 and we were overtaken three times. Spare a thought, however, for the brave last-minute substitute, Stefan Dixon (1985), who arrived at 11:00 a.m. on race day, straight from a work appointment. His previous

outing in an VIII was over 15 years earlier, and that was on Bow-side. Stefan was replacing Ed Corrigan at 2, who had suffered an injury the previous weekend. Cue a quick reshuffle of positions...

On race day, a startling starting pace was a painful surprise; no-one had breath or brazenness to suggest a moderation, but it's advantage soon became apparent. Charlie Heron's enthusiastic coaching, later supplemented by Kat Astley's precise guidance, encouraged the crew to make Fitzwilliam II work hard and have to wait until the end of Plough Reach to draw level; Fitz II finished 1:30 ahead. Contrary to last year, we never saw the other two crews who started behind us; Leys School II beat us by only 0:06. We actually beat X-Press by 0:26, and two non-finishers, Anglia Ruskin and First and Third Trinity IV.

The jubilant crew finished tired, blistered, and bloodied, but this was mainly due to rowing all the way back to the boathouse at what had been the intended racing speed! At the time of writing, your correspondent is looking forward to the day when the stiffness subsides and he will once again be able to lift a leg high enough to put on his socks. But the glow remains.

Sport In Brief

Rowing

Congratulations to Christ's W1 Christ's Rowing team who won the Pembroke Regatta.

Waterpolo

Christ's waterpolo are currently unbeaten and Nick McLoughlin (m. 2007) is Blues waterpolo captain. Nick is grateful for the support from Christ's where in one match, "I can safely say that at 5-8 down in the 3rd quarter, there would have been no way back without such a huge crowd there to cheer us on."

Atlantic Attempt

Danny Longman's (m. 2005) valiant attempt to row across the Atlantic for charity was cut short when a whale hit the boat and a rudder broke. Just 12 days into the challenge Danny was left adrift in gale-force winds and 26ft high seas near the Cape Verde islands, off the coast of West Africa. Danny said of the ordeal: "When it happened we were around three-and-a-half days within the world record. Getting onto the cargo ship was probably the most traumatic thing... we had to scramble up onto the 40,000 tonne vessel and try not to fall into the water below."

College Fitness Suite

The new Fitness Suite in the Yusuf Hamied Centre (pictured below) opened in February, equipped with treadmills, cross trainers, static bikes and a range of weights.



Making a Gift

Christ's College



Personal Details

Name _____ Matric Year _____
 Address _____
 _____ Postcode _____

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

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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 _____ payments 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.

Single gift

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

Please charge £ _____ to my :

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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, e-mail 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
 e-mail: campaign@christs.cam.ac.uk

More information about any of the events listed below is available from the Development Office: 01223 334937, or email alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk. For more details about events, please check the website: www.christs.cam.ac.uk/alumni.

Wednesday 11th March 2009

Lady Margaret Lecture

A lecture by Marsha Richmond on 'Darwin and Genetics'
Yusuf Hamied Theatre, 5.15pm, open to all.

Saturday 21st March 2009

MA Congregation

For alumni who matriculated in 2002.

Wednesday 22nd April 2009

Lady Margaret Lecture

A lecture by Professor Richard Fortey on 'Charles Darwin and the pattern of evolution'.
Yusuf Hamied Theatre, 5.15pm, open to all.

Wednesday 6th May 2009

Lady Margaret Lecture

A lecture by Professor David Sedley on 'Socrates v. Darwin'.
Yusuf Hamied Theatre, 5.15pm, open to all.

Saturday 13th June 2009

May Bumps Picnic

Saturday 20th June 2009

Garden Party and Buffet Lunch

For alumni who matriculated in years 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001.

Saturday 27th June 2009

Lady Margaret Beaufort Celebrations

An event to celebrate the life and generosity of our foundress.

During the day there will be a range of talks and dramatic performances with Dr David Starkey and Miss Penelope Keith, amongst others. The event aims to raise funds for College History Teaching. There will also be a Chapel Service and a Beaufort Banquet.

Saturday 12th September 2009

Reunion Dinner

For alumni who matriculated in years 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1955 or 1956.

Saturday 26th September 2009

Reunion Dinner

For alumni who matriculated in years 1957, 1958 or 1959.



A Parting Shot....

Sculptor Anthony Smith and Sir David Attenborough admire Anthony's young Darwin sculpture in snowy First Court, on the evening of the Darwin Dinner. You can see more pictures of the College in snow on the gallery pages of the website: <http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/college-life/college-galleries>

Photo by Richard Lewisohn