



FELIX

Founded in 1949

The Newspaper of Imperial College Union

SAFE ONCE AGAIN!

Mike, the 170lb micrometer mascot of Imperial College Union, has been found in the Union Office only a few feet from where it was last seen.

On the morning of June 28, incoming Hon Sec Mary Freeman discovered Mike in a corner of the Union Administrator's office hidden in a cardboard box which she and other Union Officers believed to be empty.

Prior to this, Mike had been missing since its presumed theft nearly six weeks previously. Its discovery so close to home has caused considerable embarrassment to both the old and the new Execs, who must either now accept that the security of the Union Office is extraordinarily lax since it has been broken into twice in two months, or else admit that their repeated searching for the micrometer was singularly ineffective.

Rumour

Indeed, the incoming Exec tried to suppress the story of where Mike was found, relating instead another rumour that it had been found elsewhere.

Mr Reeves, College Chief Security Officer, had suspected that Mike could still be in the Union Building, and the day before it was found he also searched the building but didn't look in the Union Office itself since he assumed it had been thoroughly searched by the Union staff.



Mike, back in the safe in the College Security Office.

Photo: Dave W Parry

Union still without DP as Greenstreet fails exams

Late in June the Union was thrown into turmoil when Deputy President-elect Phil Greenstreet failed his third year Physics exams. The Union Constitution requires its officers to achieve "academic standing" and so Mr Greenstreet is unable to take up the post.

It was hoped that Mr Greenstreet could register for a course next year, allowing him to stand for re-election early in the autumn term. Negotiations between Nick Morton, Steve Goulder and College resulted in the idea being accepted, and several departments were approached. Despite an initially hopeful response from the departments of Physics and Metallurgy, no department would accept him, since offering a place to someone who would immediately leave to take up a sabbatical appointment would in effect waste a vacancy for the new intake.

At present Nick Morton and Christine Teller are performing the Deputy President's duties, but there will have to be elections at the beginning of the session to find a permanent replacement for Mr Greenstreet. Papers will go up in the first week of next term, with hustings and elections in the third and fourth weeks. However, the poor turn out for the last elections and the likely inexperience of much of the electorate (about one third will be freshmen and have little experience of the Union, and may consequently not vote) begs the question of whether the elections will be quorate, and if so what sort of candidate will be successful.

The last time a sabbatical officer failed was three years ago when John Shuttleworth, FELIX Editor-elect, failed his second year maths exams. At that time it was not explicitly part of the Constitution that sabbaticals had to be of academic standing; Mr Shuttleworth took the Union to court, but lost his case.

Successes

The other sabbaticals did somewhat better; Martin Taylor, the new FELIX Editor, is a postgraduate and was declared of academic standing by his supervisor, while President Steve Goulder and Hon Sec Mary Freeman graduated with a lower second and a third respectively.



Phil Greenstreet

Photo: Ramzi Shannous

FELIX Car Rally

At 9:30 on the morning of Sunday June 20 seven teams of motorists and supporters scrambled out of the FELIX Office and took part in a frenzied drive around the streets of London on the annual FELIX Car Rally.

As last year, the Rally was in two sections: questions to answer; and, treasure to bring back. Answering the questions took the team to places as varied as the church of St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, the headquarters of the Magic Circle, and the

surgery of Dr Phang, a dentist in Hammersmith and in the other part of the test several teams enjoyed morning coffee at the Ritz, so that they would be able to present the receipt with their treasure.

At around 12:30 the teams sprinted back to the FELIX Office (all wearing McDonald's Happy Hats, as required) and the marking began. As last year it was a close finish, with the '21296' team winning by two points. Congratulations to them and to everyone who took part.



Mark Coleman, Kim Hales, Kate Davies and Norman Sheridan with the FELIX Car Rally pot.



"...and slap firmly between the shoulder blades until he burps." Outgoing President Nick Morton presents the Dave Chance Memorial Award for the biggest nuisance at Council to J Martin Taylor.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT:



A Tragi-Comi-Pastoral F A R C E.

By Mr. G A T.

—Spirat Tragicum sativ, & feliciter audit.
Hor.

Will be performed by ARTSOX
at 'The Place' Victoria St., off
George IV Bridge, being Venue 75

Performances commence at half past
2 o'clock in the afternoon

August 23, 25, 27, 29 and 31,
and also on September 2 and 4.

Admission prized at £1 for all
manner of persons.



THEATRE ALBA
AT 'THE PLACE'
PRESENT:

THE
ARTSOX
WIRE
GUIDED
REVUE

AT 'THE PLACE' VENUE 75,
VICTORIA ST. off George IV bridge.

AUGUST
24, 26, 28, 30
SEPTEMBER 1, 3, 5.
2:30pm
AMAZING VALUE AT £1

Five Star Tenancy

The Estates Section of College is currently negotiating with the owners of the Fremantle Hotel in Cromwell Road for the use of the hotel as a new Head Tenancy which will provide additional student accommodation for the next three years. Conversion of the building is expected to start during the next few weeks and it will be completed in time for the new intake in late September.

The hotel, which is about fifteen minutes walk from College, will house about 160 students in single and double rooms. Although it will be let under the Head Tenancy scheme, it is large enough to be run in the manner of a conventional Hall of Residence, with large kitchens and a launderette. There will also be a communal lounge and residents will have the use of the private garden at the back of the hotel. Rents for single rooms will be approximately the same as for Southside rooms.

The new residence will allow College to achieve a longstanding aim of offering all first years a room in Hall.

Student Sues LST

London Student Travel have agreed to pay out £28.75 in settlement of a summons issued against them by an ex-IC student.

According to Paul Charlton, the tickets he was sold at LST's Imperial branch were over £20 more expensive than advertised. This, he was told, was because of the fluctuations in the rate of exchange. When he later discovered that he has simply been sold more expensive tickets he asked LST to refund the difference. They refused saying the position had been made clear to Mr Charlton when he bought the tickets. Since he had a witness to the transaction, Mr Charlton decided to sue, and shortly after the summons was issued LST offered to settle out of court.

The Association of British Travel Agents, a body which protects consumers' interests in such matters, has been informed of the summons, and Mr Charlton has expressed his concern that LST is not a member of the Association.



To let: v des res in W Ken 160 bdrms, h&c, ch, private gdn at rear 15 mins commtg frm IC.

Photo: Dave W Parry

200,000 Babies

Professor Scorer of the Department of Mathematics was on the panel at a press conference to launch 'The Shape of Things to Come', a booklet published by the pressure group Population Concern to bring home the implications of the current rate of population growth.

The booklet consists mainly of a compilation of frightening statistics (did you realise the population of the world is increasing by 200,000 every day?) and stresses the importance of sound education in the Third World, particularly with regard to birth control, the benefits of an efficient health service, and women's rights.

Boat Trip to Austria

IC student Tors Anderson, Mech Eng 2, was a member of the British Rowing team at the world championships in Vienna last week, where his boat finished fourth. Union President Steve Goulder and College Secretary John Smith had agreed to contribute towards Mr Anderson's expenses, and the Union and the College each paid £125.

Floats Like a Brick

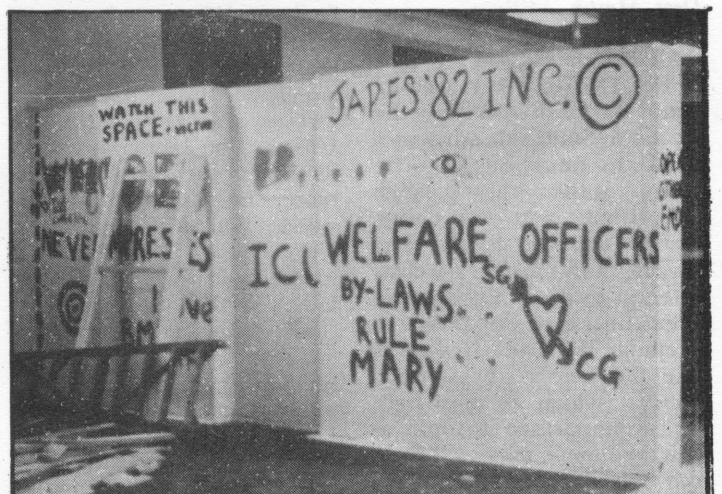
IC took two of the design awards in the Concrete Canoe championships held at Thorpe Park on 20 June. The IC canoe, designed by Mike Rowley, Civ Eng 3, as part of his final year project, was made of high-alumina cement on a fine glass fibre base. These materials were chosen to combine flexibility with strength, and consequently it was possible to keep the weight of the canoe down to about 30kg which is almost as light as many fibreglass canoes.

When it came to actually paddling it though, IC did not

do so well, and most of the top racing awards went to teams from Manchester and RAF Shrewsbury.

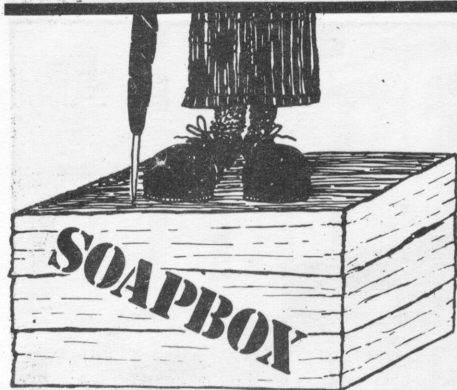
What Goes Up.....

The infamous Lower Lounge partition was demolished last week after a life of less than a year, to make way for the new catering outlet which is to open next session. It is hoped that the new outlet will offer a different and more relevant selection of foods than the present refectory.



The Writing on the Wall for McCabe's Folly

Photo: Dave W Parry



Captains of Industry?

by Nick Pyne

Following the Finniston Report four years ago Imperial College started on an ambitious plan to introduce four year courses, combining many of the good points of a three year BSc with an MSc in management to follow, and with a greater leaning towards the needs of manufacturing industry. In June the first graduates in chemical engineering left College. This is a personal appraisal of the successes and failures of the course, written from the point of view of a chemical engineer. I apologise for any generalisations or inaccuracies.

Commitment

The commitment of departments to these courses has always been somewhat suspect. A

sizeable minority of academics were against the idea from the start (even if not vocally so), and there seems to have arisen a conflict of interest fairly early on. Some academics saw the 4YC as a chance to cram more technical knowledge in to the poor students. Whilst this was one aim, it was not to be a major part; most of the extra time was intended to be taken up with management and DSES courses. However, the departments seem to have considered these to be definitely subsidiary subjects (a glance at the subject examination weightings will confirm this), something to be done in "spare time" and have thus set workloads accordingly. The DMS and DSES, faced with this, attempt to set courses with sufficient work to give a good understanding, but find that students who are short of time simply ignored them. The low turn out at lectures and tutorials reflects not only the attitude of the students, but that of the departments.

The commitment of the students must also be questioned. At the point of leaving school the choice of course is somewhat arbitrary, and four years does not seem as daunting as it might. Yet four years of all study and no play (what most people find necessary to stay on top of work) is more than most students can face. The result? A high drop out rate leaving only the more academically inclined and able to complete the course. Those who chose to stick it out against the odds are likely to come out disillusioned and with a poor class of degree.

Industry

Let us look, then, at the main aim of the exercise. Are graduates really going to be of more help to industry? Here chemical engineering differs from the other departments in that it does not run a purely sandwich

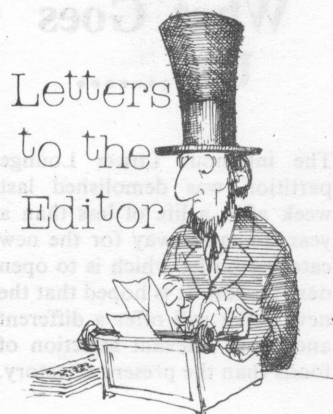
course. For Chem Eng the periods of the summer spent in industry seem to serve mainly to point out how little of the theory derived at College we are ever likely to use and to erode our motivation even further.

Industry, too, is beginning to question the validity of the course. Amongst this year's graduates it seemed that a BEng was no significant advantage, and the decreasing number of firms prepared to sponsor students for the course suggests that no-one is fooled by the reality behind the aim.

One of the major criticisms in the Finniston Report was that courses were designed to turn out academics, and that courses should be designed with much more practical application. Yet the promise that "there is nothing in the three year course that isn't in the four year course" clearly indicates that there has been little attempt to modify the core material, and that the extra courses are simply a cosmetic icing to give the show of greater applicability.

The future of four year courses is somewhat in doubt. It is already rumoured that one department is to drop the four year course altogether, and chemical engineering is introducing a different 4YC which will just be a super-academic all-technical wonder (one asks if this is really what they wanted all along?). Could it be that soon 4YC graduates will be of less use to industry rather than more?

Yet surely there must be some good to these courses? Indeed there is. The departments have been able to use the 4YC to maintain their prestigious positions with respect to other institutions in the country, and a considerable amount of extra investment has been forthcoming. For the students? Well, there's the different letters after your name, and another year at the state's expense.... But then who cares about us anyway?



Dear Martin

The author of the "We shall not be moved?" article of FELIX 618, when writing about the possible move of the Union to Southside advocates a "firm decision (by the Union) at the earliest possible opportunity, even if the College does not give further details." The biasing of this article is a clear attempt to stir us into opposition. But can we afford to prejudge the issue? In spite of the College's obsessional secrecy (which we must fight on as important a topic as this) the move may well be in our best interest and demands careful attention.

The only criteria on which we should judge are:

1. The quality and quantity of facilities that the Union will be able to provide its members (including any diminution due to the move's appropriation of finance).
2. The quality and quantity of academic facilities which the College will provide Union members, ie improved first year Life Sciences laboratories.
3. The working conditions of Union employees.

Nostalgia and tradition stand for nothing. The opinions of a few (or 'many') furious life members are totally irrelevant. It is with reason that they are explicitly prevented from having any voting power within the Union. The Union is for us, its student members. Furthermore, nostalgia within the student body is also irrelevant. Very few of us will still be members in three years time. What will future students think if they are deprived of facilities merely because we remember affectionately the many pints we supped in the Union Bar.

I do not support the move; I have insufficient information at my disposal, I object to the conservatism mingled with

supposition with which the article's author is trying to prompt us into an ill-conceived, premature judgement.

Tim Pigden

Dear Martin

A matter has recently come to my attention which I feel must be raised with your readers. Namely the perpetration of a massive fraud on Imperial College Union.

Last week it transpired that the man known to us for many years as "Nick Morton" is none other than the notorious "Ralph Incognito". I discovered this when in the Union Bar "Nick" or rather, Ralph, told me: "Morton isn't my real name, it isn't on my birth certificate. Never has been."

In consideration of such revelations I must demand that Mary Freeman be positively vetted immediately, and at regular intervals thereafter; say about twice a week.

Yours sincerely Jon Barnett
Welfare Officer, ICU

PS: I should not like to offer my services for the above task.

Dear Martin

Why is it that the owners of the Head Tenancies of Lexham and Hamlet Gardens show a distressing lack of initiative when dealing with students' mail that arrives after the end of term?

The Students' Services assure us that these conscientious owners dutifully return all mail to sender (if possible). Of what use is that? Surely it would be easier (and of greater benefit to us) for the mail to be collected and sent en masse to IC.

Yours faithfully,
Alison G Fraser

Dear Martin

Congratulations on your first 'new look' FELIX. We could not however help but notice that the Victorian gentleman typing on this page bears an uncanny resemblance to yourself. Just one question. Does the head go all the way up to the crown of the hat?

Best wishes
Pallab Ghosh
Peter Rodgers

REVIEWS

Film

July customarily heralds the release of the major distributors' big summer films. However, the best offering of the month comes from a small independent distributor and is only showing at one cinema.

Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo* (A, Camden Plaza) is remarkable in many ways. It continues this director's long association with the extraordinary Klaus Kinski who stars as Brian Sweeny Fitzgerald (known as Fitzcarraldo because nobody can pronounce his name), an Irishman attempting to make his fortune in Peru at the turn of the century. He has one lifelong obsession: to build an opera house in the jungle and bring his beloved opera to the Indians, but first he must obtain the money.

After several unsuccessful enterprises, Fitzcarraldo hits upon a fantastic scheme which involves dragging a massive riverboat over a hill between two rivers. This unlikely event provides the centrepiece of an epic film which chronicles one man's obsessive struggle against nature to achieve his goal.

It is beautifully filmed, with Herzog making great use of his South American locations. To add to this Kinski gives another great performance in the lead role, with strong support from the rest of the cast (including the Amazonian Indians). An interesting, awe-inspiring story completes the creative cycle.

I can't say that the film is exciting (in the 'action' sense at least), but it's strong images held my attention and interest for the full two and a half hour running time.

The fact that Herzog actually moved a full-size riverboat over a hill makes it an even more impressive and fascinating achievement.

Grotesque caricatures drawn from the mind of Pink Floyd's Roger Waters populate the screen adaptation of their hugely successful double album *The Wall* (AA, Empire Leicester Square). Pink (Bob Geldof) is Waters' depressed rock star whose disturbed



Fitzcarraldo (Klaus Kinski) moves mountains.

life story is told in flashback while he sits, isolated, in a hotel room.

Director Alan Parker, whose other credits include *Midnight Express* and *Fame*, has used the opportunity to present a complex and demanding film without dialogue. Floyd's music is left to tell the story while a combination of live action and occasional piece of Gerald Scarfe's excellent animation give flesh to the ideas contained therein.

Pink's life seems to have been one of continual hardship; he loses his father, is smothered by his loving mother, gets humiliated at school and ends up losing his wife to another man. In desperation he locks himself into his room and attempts to retract from the real world until he verges on insanity.

Needless to say all this sounds pretty standard rockstar fare, but Alan Parker and Gerald Scarfe manage to create real nightmares

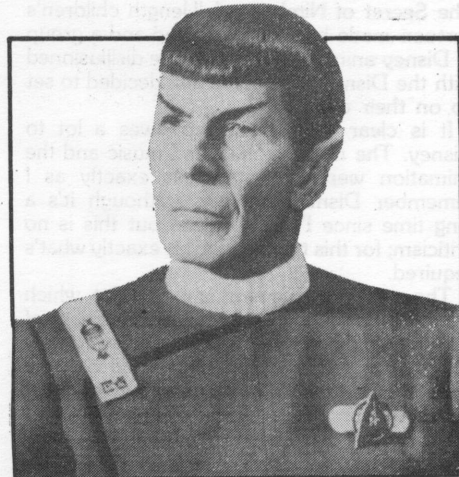
on the screen which succeed in making *The Wall* a dynamic (and occasionally breathtaking) film. If you enjoyed the album you'll probably love it and if not, it may change your mind.

The first of the batch of science fiction biggies which will descend on the country in the next few months is *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (A, selected ABCs).

Khan (Ricardo Montalban) is a genetic superman left stranded on a planet by Captain Kirk in one of the TV episodes. He is unwittingly discovered by Commander Chekov and commandeers his ship to seek revenge on Kirk, who is now an Admiral.

In the best traditions of the series Admiral Kirk has coincidentally left his desk on earth and is accompanying Captain Spock on a training mission aboard *The Enterprise*. When Khan steals a deadly device named Project Genesis, *The Enterprise*, with its largely inexperienced crew, is sent to the rescue once more.

The comic book storyline is, unfortunately, not accompanied by a well paced and exciting screenplay. The film drags at times and the direction is a little flat, but despite this (or perhaps because of this) the magic of the television show, as embodied in all the main characters, shines through. Dr McCoy,



Mr Spock, preparing to boldly go etc.



Undergraduates at a 9:30 lecture, as portrayed in Pink Floyd's *The Wall*.

Scotty, Sulu and Uhura exchange dialogue and meaningful stares in the normal manner, but I can't help feeling that the director has let the stars rest on their TV laurels rather than push for a bigger and better *Star Trek* movie.

Anyway, the escape from the inescapable and the final scenes of Spock's death (the most over-hyped 'secret' of the year) almost moved me to tears. All of you who have fond memories of *Star Trek* from your childhood will probably feel the same.

Talking of hype, Clint Eastwood's latest vehicle *Firefox* (AA, showing just about everywhere) must have the largest advertising budget for years. Not only did the posters go up months in advance, but pictures of Clint with CCCP emblazoned on his chest seem to leap out of every newspaper, TV and film screen around. "Why all the fuss?" I hear you ask.

Well, what the ad men call 'hard sell' can be commonly translated as flogging a dead horse. The *Firefox* of the title turns out to be a deadly Russian aircraft which Clint is sent behind the

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REVIEWS

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lines to steal. In a peculiarly dated cold war thriller he mouths predictable clichés and ends up doing a boring twenty minute runner (or should it be flyer?) at the end. Even the flying scenes are pretty rosey—not recommended.

The re-release of *Fantasia* (U, Odeon Haymarket) with a completely new digital soundtrack is a welcome move. This was Disney at his best: creative, innovative and entertaining. The film is actually quite shallow, being no more than a series of pretty pictures go with some marvellous music, but it's meant to be nothing more.

The new soundtrack is beautifully clear—sit back and enjoy it.

One of the biggest money earners of the month was the "raunchiest movie about growing up", *Porky's* (X, selected Odeons). This film resembles a more explicit version of *Animal House*, and concerns the sexual misadventures of a group of American teenagers. There are a few laughs here and there but never anything which could be termed clever. Twentieth Century Fox are now releasing a second teenage film called *Puberty Blues*. What next?

Mark Smith

The Secret of Nimh (Cert U)

The Secret of Nimh is a full-length children's cartoon made by Don Bluth and a group of Disney animators who became disillusioned with the Disney stereotype and decided to set up on their own.

It is clear that the group owes a lot to Disney. The use of colour and music and the animation were more or less exactly as I remember Disney cartoons (although it's a long time since I've seen one) but this is no criticism; for this type of film it is exactly what's required.

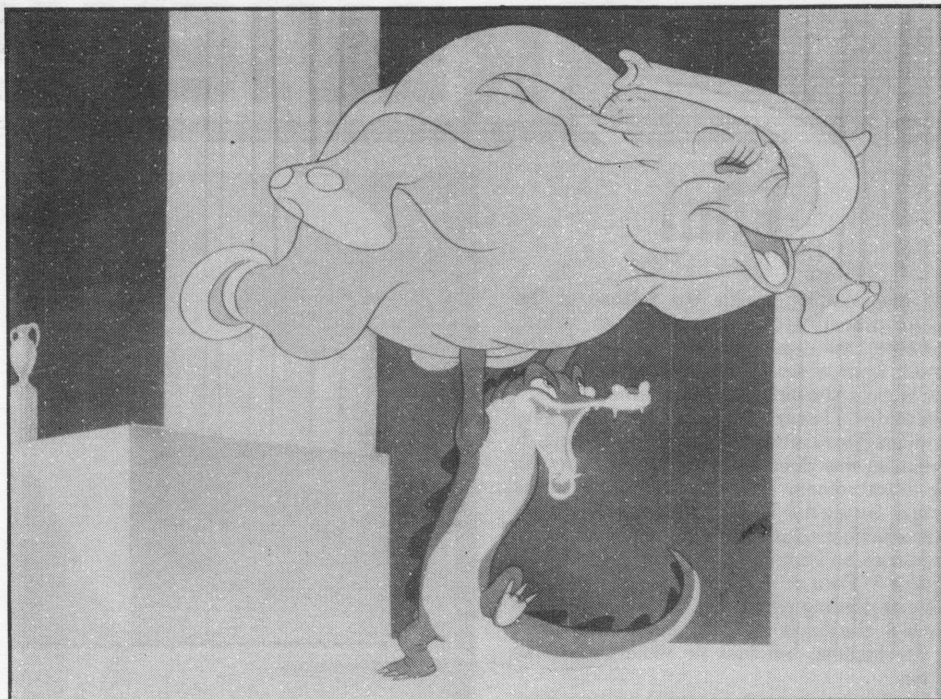
The main improvement is in the plot, which manages to avoid the awful predictability of Disney. Mrs Brisby, a recently widowed lady mouse, has to move her house and children from the field which is about to be ploughed. While enlisting help from Jeremy, the over-enthusiastic crow and the cantankerous Auntie Shrew she begins to realise there is another, much bigger concern which keeps posing all kinds of awkward questions: Who are the Rats of Nimh? Why is the chemist mouse, Mr Ages, so secretive about his work? And why does everyone revere her late husband so greatly and how did he die? It is only as Mrs B begins to investigate the rats and eventually meets the awesome Nicodemus (with a superb voice supplied by Derek Jacobi) that she learns the answers to her questions and realises the magic power of her husband's amulet.

It is this intrigue in the film, the idea that there are always questions which 'we don't know the answer to yet' together with the fact that the comedy in the film is not slapstick but comes more from interaction of the animals' characters, which makes it so enjoyable.

One criticism: I found the ending a little too incredible, even within the fantasy context of the film as a whole. And I was surprised at a couple of sequences whose only purpose seemed to be as anti-vivisection propaganda.

To sum up then, it is really a children's film, albeit a fine one and not really worth going out of your way to see. On the other hand if you can find an excuse to take a group of eight-year-olds to the cinema, don't hesitate.

Martin S Taylor



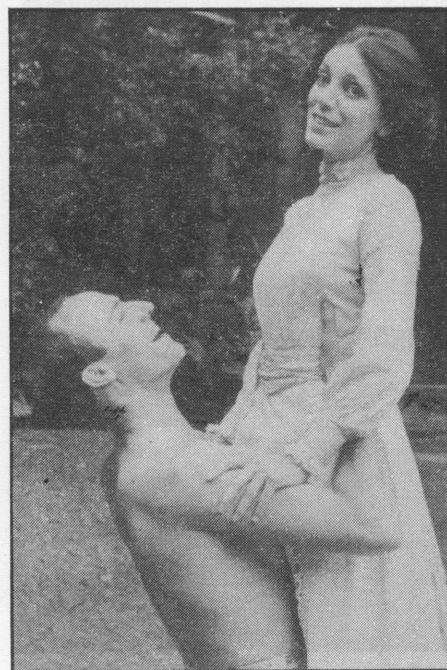
A still from *Fantasia*

Copyright MCMLXXXI Walt Disney Productions

Theatre

The Admirable Bashville, The Dark Lady of the Sonnets and a Midsummer Night's Dream, presented by the New Shakespeare Company at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park.

The Admirable Bashville is an unusually pure distillation of Shavian silliness. A romantic squib set in the old empire days, it concerns a refined lady of letters who instantly falls in love with a boxer jogging through the grounds of her house. Plots rarely come as silly as this. Among elements featured in the plot are: the lady's butler, Bashville, whose love of his mistress secretly pent up in his breast is vented in an eruption of anguish and disgust on realising his lady's passion for a mere boxer (silly), a boxing match that continues long after the contestants have left the ring (slightly silly), and a head-on collision between some African



A silly scene from Shaw's *The Admirable Bashville*.

savages and members of the English aristocracy (incredibly silly).

Bernard Shaw wrote *The Admirable Bashville* to prove a point. He boasts: "I took the opportunity of producing a masterpiece to show that I had the Shakespeare technique at my fingers' ends" if I chose to use it. Also, I wanted to give a practical proof of what I had so often alleged—that it is the easiest technique in the world." The result is a ridiculous but amusing orgy of words. Fine performances are given by Emily Richard and Peter Woodward as the lady and boxer respectively. And by Douglas Hodge as the poor butler.

The silliness of *The Admirable Bashville* is surpassed only by the cheekiness of *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* (the two plays are presented as a double-bill). This play is even more liable to upset lovers of Shakespeare. In this short work, Shakespeare (David Whitworth) intrudes upon the premises of Queen Elizabeth I (Helen Ryan), and makes an appeal for an establishment of a National Theatre. But Shaw's portrayal of Shakespeare is definitely not gratifying; the great dramatist seizes upon and ecstatically jots down the most banal phrases lightly uttered by the Queen, in the way a dishevelled tramp would stoop down and gleefully pick up odd fag ends.

A 'dark lady' also appears in this humorous play (played by Janet Spencer-Turner)—the Dark Lady so often referred to in Shakespeare's sonnets and who causes much unhappiness.

The production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is now reviewed (for those Shakespeare lovers who have managed to read this far). The very best Puck in the land has been secured for this production: Christopher Biggins. Biggins is best known to the public for the big brand of villain he has created after his appearance as Nero in BBC TV's award-winning *I Claudius*. Possessing the appearance of an overgrown schoolboy slob, he plays a rotund, mischievous, mushroom-chomping Puck.

The Dream is a complex play which has inspired many, including seekers of the supernatural. The fairies, sprites and spirits (or elementals as they are called by present day respectability-seeking mystics) have always amused or tantalised people down the ages.

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The play is essentially about human love in its various forms, but especially in that sudden, almost unreal, love that results in mutual fascination and infatuation from the very first glance.

The Open Air Theatre is of course a superb place to stage this play, what with its trees and flowery banks, winding paths, grotto and tunnel. Well-placed loudspeakers among the trees and in an old tree stump on the grassy stage are used to good effect to recreate the superbly fleeting and ethereal substance of fairies (whizzing sounds are generated that seem to the ear to fly over the audience). An imaginative use of light after the sun has set adds to the dream quality of the play, producing in the viewer confusion as to what is real and unreal, what is a dream and what isn't.

The element of visual humour in the play is strong, and whilst this delighted children in the audience, it did perhaps upset the balance of the play, especially towards the end. Dialogue from the loudspeakers was often unclear.

The Shaw doublebill, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Taming of the Shrew* (reviewed in FELIX 618) are in repertoire until the end of the season on 28 August.

Nick Bedding



Puck (Christopher Biggins) and Hermia (Janet Spencer-Turner) in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

WALKABOUT-LOOKSEE

by Mobile Optics Inc.



Descended from both Tamburlaine the Great and Genghis Khan, the 'Grand Mughals' conjure up visions of fairy-tale wealth and splendour. The greatest of these Muslim emperors ruled India, father and son, for nearly two centuries. They were soldiers, scholars, and patrons of the arts. Under Akbar, a contemporary of Elizabeth I, their empire covered the whole of Northern India and part of the Deccan. They created an administrative system which stabilized India, made it a major world power of its day and was capable of projecting, even in its eventual dissolution, an ideal of unity: administrative devices developed by the Mughals retained their influence, and were taken over by the British.

.....hold on, just a minute.....what's a paragraph like the one above doing in FELIX? And, maybe more to the point, what is "walkabout-looksee"? Perhaps a word of explanation is in order, before we proceed. If my feet can be relied on to perform their allotted task, and the editor is kind enough to put up with my highly erratic punctuation, I hope that a London walkabout column will become a regular feature of FELIX this year. The articles will be written after visiting a current exhibition or seeing an interesting part of a museum's permanent collection (say the Egyptian mummies at the British Museum); and so, some will be about the slightly touristy things one never quite seems to get round to, when one's actually living in London; and some will be a bit more specialist—that means there'll be an admission charge (!) but with a discount for flashing a student's card. I hope that the articles will be entertaining to read and that you, like me, will find walkabout-looksee an enjoyable alternative to the umpteenth lab report or problem sheet.

.....to resume: The 'Indian Heritage' exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum sets out to recapture the spectacular opulence of the sixteenth and seventeenth

century courts of the 'Grand Mughal', as he was known throughout Europe. As well as being a survey of the decorative and fine arts of India before the Raj, the exhibition looks at the lifestyle of the emperors themselves and of the Maharajas of Hindu India, and the Nawabs, lesser rulers who rose to power as the Mughal Empire declined, in the eighteenth century.

The design of the opening section gives the impression of walking through a building in Akbar's Royal City of Fatehpur Sikri; you look out through 'windows' whose openwork sandstone screens are carved in ingenious geometric patterns, each one different. A series of watercolours shows how, during the two centuries of Mughal rule, Hindu and Muslim architectural styles fused and developed

together; from Akbar's sandstone palaces with their traditionally Indian beams and brackets, to the monuments of his grandson, Shah Jahan (the builder of the Taj Mahal), glittering white marble, bejewelled with decorative inlay, and the characteristic outlines of domes and arches.

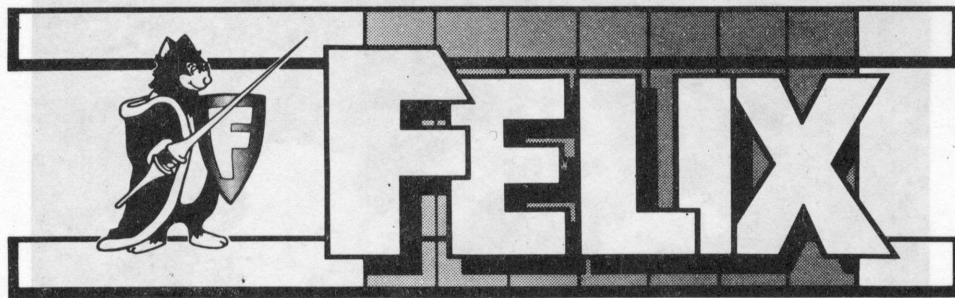
The exhibition is extremely well laid out and each part suggests a different atmosphere as well as displaying a collection of beautiful objects. The ceremony of the magnificent daily Durbār—when the emperor sat out 'to see and to be seen'—is illustrated with the 'Golden Throne of Rangit Singh' set on a splendid carpet, surrounded by bright tent hangings, a peacock feather fan, ceremonial fly whisk (!) and gilded spears and standards. When the imagination fails, details can be found in the exquisite miniatures painted by court artists. There's a charming one of a lady in the imperial 'zenana' (harem) playing with a yoyo!

Great luxury must have been taken for granted at court, but the overwhelming impression of this exhibition is not so much of self-indulgence, as of delight for being surrounded by beautiful things. A love of fresh, bright colours and of nature obviously went hand-in-hand with high standards of craftsmanship. Intricate floral designs are to be found everywhere: on cotton floorspreads and Kashmir shawls, in the semi-precious inlay of marble panels, in the painted enamel decoration of a flintlock gun, even on the barrel of a small bronze cannon. Akbar's biographer described the interiors of the imperial pavilions as 'beautiful flower beds'; if the objects on display on anything to go by, I can well believe him!

The exhibition continues until 15 August, admission 50p for students (otherwise £1.50). The V&A is open on weekdays from 10:00 till 17:30, Sundays 14:30 till 17:30, and closed every Friday.



Silver Huqqa base—for smoking through!



The Newspaper of Imperial College Union

Hello, Good Evening and Welcome

to FELIX 619, the first I have produced. This is the first of two postgrad issues this summer; the second will follow on 21 August. After that, the Freshers' issue will be published on Monday 4 October and then FELIX will appear every Friday as usual.

What's New?

I feel it's very easy to make change for change's sake when editing a newspaper—and since it's about the only thing that is very easy, that's what I'm going to do! Already the more observant of you will have noticed that the news pages are in a different typeface, Times, which is both clearer and easier to print than Baskerville which we used before.

The FELIX Advertising Manager Nick Thexton has been designing a new masthead (the bit at the top of the front page) and this will head the next issue. But so as not to keep you in suspense, a black and white version is reproduced on this page.

Mike

The mascot is now returned and the Union are still clueless as to who 'borrowed' it. May I use

this column to offer him (her?) my congratulations. I have found the whole escapade very funny, and I wish others had the wit to highlight the Union's failings in such amusing ways.

Soapbox

Golly! I hope all the soapboxes this year are as hard-hitting and controversial as Nick Pyne's. And I'm sure lots of people will want to take issue with Nick's views—copy deadline for the next FELIX is Friday 13 August.

Impossible without.....

Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Peter, Peter, Steve, Steve, Mark, Dave, Pallab (for trying), Chris, Linda, Maz, all the people who took me at my word and actually got round to telling me the interesting things which were happening around College, Izy and the collators, and the folding machine which has promised to behave itself tonight, since this is my first issue.

Martin S Taylor

POETRY CORNER

On the departure of the Lower Lounge and Nick Morton

So, farewell then
Union
Lower Lounge Partition
Demolished
While still
In your prime

You were
Big and
Thick
And wooden and
Lasted barely a year
Just like Nick

E J Smith (17)

PINOCCHIO

Richard, Steve and Tim are three mathematicians of whom you will hear a great deal more in the future. One is a pure mathematician, one a statistician and the third an applied mathematician. I'm sure you know the situation by now—the pure mathematician tells only the strict, rigorous truth, the statistician tells alternately lies and the truth and the applied mathematician always lies.

I was sitting in the Maths Common Room the other day the three of them came in. Len had recently retired from the lecturing staff,

and a dispute arose as to how long Len, Michael, Norman, Oliver and Peter had been on the staff.

Richard spoke first. "Norman has been here the longest," he said.

"That's as may be," said Tim, "but Peter definitely arrived before Oliver."

"I know Norman arrived before Michael, anyway," continued Richard, ignoring Tim as usual.

"Michael arrived after Peter," said Tim.

Steve shook himself out of his post-lecture sleep to mutter, "Michael arrived before Len."

"And Len arrived before Oliver," said Richard.

"Oliver wasn't the last to arrive, though," Steve replied.

I knew which discipline each belonged to, I

knew that the first statement the statistician had made was true, and this knowledge, coupled with the fact that no two lecturers had arrived simultaneously enabled me to determine with complete certainty the order in which the staff had arrived.

What was that order?

Solutions, comments and criticisms to me at the FELIX Office, please. There is a prize of £5 (donated by Mend-a-Bike) for the correct entry randomly selected at 1:00pm on Wednesday.

Welcome to the first puzzle that I've set. I shall, as this coming year's Puzzles Editor, be making a full statement in the first FELIX of next term. This one should keep you going, however, so good luck everyone!

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