The DIT Examiner: the Newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union, April, 1998

DIT Students' Union

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The mighty Dublin Institute of Technology lost out to a superior outfit from University College Cork in this year’s final of the much-covered Challenging Times third level general knowledge quiz. The team consisted of second year photography student, Ronan O’Keefe of Kevin St and architectural student, Brian O’Connell and geo-surveying student Brendan Dunne, both in Bolton St. They were under the tutelage of Maths and General Studies lecturer in Bolton St., Frank McCann. The show, hosted by the Irish Times Diarist, Irishman, Kevin Myer -- presumably Ireland’s answer to that doyen of condescension, Jeremy Paxman -- always attracts a huge following each year, demanding a very high standard of knowledge. Congratulations to everyone involved from the beginning of the year.

Chess Grandmaster to Visit DIT

English Chess Grandmaster Daniel King is coming to DIT Kevin St this month for a showdown with local luminaries for an event that’s guaranteed to draw a crowd. Having achieved his Grandmaster title in 1989 at the tender age of 25, King has since built up an impressive series of accolades and awards.

Winning a second British Championship in 1998 (he turned pro in 1982, a right out fella, aged 19), won tournaments in Sydney ‘88, Geneva ‘90, Calcutta ‘92 and Dublin ‘95. A club player in the German and Swiss national leagues, King has also done television work, presenting and commentating on two World Championships (London ‘93 and New York ‘95) and also served as commentator on the IBM website for the legendary Kasparov-Deep Blue match last year. Wait, there’s more.

He has written ten chess books — that’s nine more than one — three of which have been translated into German, including his latest, Kasparov-Deep Blue — The Ultimate

Man v Machine Challenge.

Such is his ability, that King will be playing a 30-opponent simultaneous speed game against the DIT’s finest, so be sure you get in early for a good view up front.

Indeed, if there was a prize for the most-suitably-named-chess-player- ever, Daniel King would surely win that, too. (Daniel being Swahili for Checkmate, of course.)

Daniel King will be in Gleeson Hall in DIT Kevin St on Tuesday 28 April beginning around 7pm. Fancy a game? If interested contact DIT Arts Officer, Lorcan McGrane @ (040) 3424.
**The Peace Process**

Will it work? Do people want it to work? The 980lbs worth of home-made explosive recovered from the trunk of that red BMW boarding the ferry for England at the start of the month was confirmation that not everyone does. Bright young things Bertie and Tony are at such a loss as to the outcome of the whole thing that they couldn't even agree on a procedure to move the thing along when they met in London three weeks ago. Nothing much Mo Mowlam can do seems to hold for long, and now Talks Chairman, Senator George Mitchell finds himself in the position of having to force the issue by demanding that all parties get it together before the end of this month. As the Middle Eastern example has shown, maybe the best thing such peace processes can deliver is a less violent interim between protracted civil unrest or intense paramilitary activity and a total peace, something which seems less and less likely by the day for Northern Ireland.

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**An Próiseáis Síochána**

An mbheidh dea-thoradh air? An bhfheidhmeoidh sé leis, leis an stór 980 punt d'abhar phléasaigh a fuaíodh na BMW dearg a bhí le taisceat ar an mbhí faraonóireachta go Saonach ag taisce na míosa, stóch bhfuil gach dinnse ag sárradh, go bhfuil an mbheidhmeoidh sé. Tá an bhfeidhm ag gheille sin, Bertie agus Tony, chomh chaitheach i láthair na h-úsáide as an mbheidhmeoidh an traidisiúnta a bhí ar an mbheidhmeoidh nach rathadh ar an mbheidhmeoidh sin. Níl móran gur féidir le Mo Mowlam a dhéanamh a shochein ró-bhíardh, agus tá Cathaoirleach a Chainteanna, an Seanadóir George Mitchell in bhponc iomhá go bhfuil an mbheidhmeoidh an traidisiúnta a bhí ar an mbheidhmeoidh a fuaíodh a thabhairt do na páirtithe cáilteach leis an mbheidhmeoidh nuair a bhfuil an mbheidhmeoidh a bhí ar an mbheidhmeoidh sin.

Cearbhall Ó Síocháin

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**Clarifications**

Should you see any inaccuracies printed in any issue of The DIT Examiner you should contact the Editor immediately. The matter will be reviewed and any necessary changes made.

The Crossword winners printed in the March issue were on page 4 and not on page 3 as stated.

**Health Warning:**

Look at this now! There's one on every hair corner. Does he look like the kind of guy who enjoys a laugh? Not! You’re damned to this right he doesn’t! He’s a wash-out! Pined up on vodka (picture foreground, a bloody coffee of the stuff) he grades all day yelling orders and correcting people's speech, and typing and stuff. And playing loud useless music which he pretends to like. So don't be fooled by shiny brochures saying what a gay journalism is — be careful, know that you could end up like him, perpetually drunk and dead looking, But apart from all that its a gas, really.
CARI Thanks
DIT

Dear Editor,

On behalf of all at the CARI Foundation, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the students of the Dublin Institute of Technology for your tremendous achievement in raising £6,000 for CARI during your recent Rag Week. The money will give an important financial and morale boost to the work of our Dublin therapy centre, badly needed as CARI is currently facing a serious financial crisis. The Children at Risk in Ireland Foundation (CARI) was set up in 1980 to provide post-assessment therapy services for children (up to 18 years) who have experienced child sexual abuse and to provide support for non-abusing members of their families. We also run an information service, outreach presentations and workshops on issues relevant to child sexual abuse.

CARI does not receive any funding from the State, and the provision of the service is reliant on generous donations and our own fundraising efforts. It is always such a welcome bonus when others take it upon themselves to raise funds on our behalf. Patron and particular credit must go to the students of the College of Marketing and Design for the major work that they continue to do for CARI.

All of you by your participation in Rag Week, have helped in your own way to give recognition to CARI’s work, and for this I am very grateful.

Yours,
Rian Monahan
Fundraising Manager.

Bitchen Good Congress

Dear Editor,

USI Congress is an annual event where individual representatives from different colleges can share and debate their opinion and the opinion of the students they represent. Sadly this is not the case. USI Congress is a battle ground where student representatives arm themselves with hidden agendas and personal bias; together with their back-stabbing and shit-stirring tactics in order to battle against USI, other colleges and even against delegates from their own college. In every battle these are sacrifices to be made in this case, friendship, trust and loyalty. Every delegate has the intention of achieving what is best for the students all around the country. I think not, comrades. There are no winners in this battle only losers, and they are the students. The damage is done.

Yours,
A disappointed student.

On the Campaign to Introduce the Irish Language to the ‘Business Community’

The Goldmine

The neighbours would wave at him, over the hedge But they knew the old man never answered hello. His house was the dirtiest one perched on the edge Of the neighbourhood’s brightest and wealthiest row. And they wanted to open him, drive in a wedge, And next time he might hear their greetings, but no. But they knocked in the door when he’d stopped coming out And they found him in bed, dying breathless and cold But life was the thing that they found all about In the photos and letters he’d hoarded like gold And in each of their minds grew a lingering doubt; “Will I live so much life, before I have grown old?”

But it sells its soul, I’ll turn my face Away from it, without one single ‘ochna’ A tongue untainted by the market-place That bureaux-trade’s to be a hibernophobe; And sells out from the poor, the only race That everyone is eager to disown.

See page 6 for Maolseachlainn Ó Cearlaigh’s guide to poetry anthologies.

Hum Nuts Do It Better

(The Amazing Tale of the Hum Nut Slut (depending on which way you look at it))

The social event of the Kevin St year began with a Welsh rugby serum downpours — even they wanted to get in on the action. The free pints (thanks to Guinness) got things off to a flying start. Everyone was adequately lubricated by the time the meal was served, with the exception of the 2nd year Hum Nuts (they were completely plastered). The dancing began after the first course of the meal and continued until 2am. Good music, good food, great beverages and a male to female ratio of 1:4 made up the ingredients for a good night.

All the men, sorry, boys, scrubbed up well in tuxedos but unfortunately (or unfortunately?) they didn’t last long. One random punter was richly rewarded for the exhibition of his full money skills. But does anybody know what the guy in the toque was doing with his trousers under the dryer? Didn’t anybody tell him the full money was going on outside on the floor and not in the loo?

Third year Hum Nuts broke all previous records with eleven of the original sixteen scoring. Although that record can and probably will be broken — all offers to SU Kevin St Kevin St was well represented with a large contingent from several classes, the most enthusiastic being engineers and wobblies, although despite many attempts, the engineering scoring average wasn’t improved upon.

Congratulations to the rugby crowd who managed to break the loudest roar record held by the Irish supporters in Lansdown Rd, with their toasts. The pint of gin obviously went down well. Murray! Their kilts looked well, although many thought Simon didn’t have the legs to display it to its full potential. Sorry Simon.

Congratulations, by the way, to the first year Hum Nuts who managed to get lost in the hotel and were found out on their way to the bedrooms. They obviously took the promotional posters a little too seriously.

Some Welsh ruggers did manage to get past the sight security (Lisa) and were found trying to include their names in the third year Hum Nut record attempt. Not to minimize, we allowed them to tattle. They paid their £2 (2 pints for Lisa and Ruth) fine and crossed the try line. Even though the organizing (Third Hum Nut) stated black tie, some weren’t paying attention and even after telling the Black Tie teacher on the back of the ticket, insisted on manning up for a shocking pink shirt and miniskirt outfit. No best dressed man award for David Houghton. We know its cool to be different, David, but really?

A great Eight was had by all and we’re depending on 2nd year Hum Nuts to continue the tradition — remember, get your tickets early.

Lisa and Mairead
Hum Nut III
Tasty Times!

DIT Mountjoy Square Fashion Society held their big swinging Fashion Show in Temple Bar's Music Centre on Monday 23rd of March.

DIT Arts Officer, Lorcan McGrane, got stuck into the sauciest event on the DIT Calendar. Pics: Denise Mahon

Fashion Shows, their very thought conjures up spectacular examples of behind the scene bitching, anorexic walking twigs and Naomi Campbell falling on her arse the odd time. Not to mention bizarre unwearable clothes that are equivalent in price to the gross national product of Peru. Thankfully however these are all clichés to be forgotten when dealing with Tasty, this year's hip incarnation of The Mountjoy Square Fashion Society's annual show. The Show was held in the cool environs of the Temple Bar Music Centre and money raised went to (ISIDA) The Irish Sudden Infant Death Association.

Farlong, the striking end product distracting from the pain of sore fingers due to over-enthusiastic hammering and splinters.

Meanwhile, the models were being put through their paces in the fashion equivalent of Full Metal Jacket. Even during rehearsals the snatches of routines and dances on display were excellent, working effortlessly in time with the adept vocal direction of Choreographer Tara Clifford. If you remember that top spandex clad eighties energy explosion Fame it was something like that - AND WORK IT!! etc etc. Thankfully there were no pink woollen leg warmers in sight.

One of the criticisms levelled at the accepted elite of catwalk fashion is it's inaccessibility and impractical nature. One would normally find it difficult to go down the pub wearing 8 inch platforms with goldfish in them. There were a few tense moments of unexpected rear end globe clasping, however with the adept movement few could be convinced that they didn't belong. There were also some fantastic new designs from NCAD and Grafton Academy. A personal favourite was the Mega-City One-like outfit of tubular blue and red rubber flanking a bizarre Captain America / Mother Ireland / Scottish Widow type character with a tiny glittery shield and flowing green and gold cape.

After the essential few pints to chill after a busy day's work we took our places next to the stage under the eye of a huge video screen to see the fast paced DVS video, a veritable communications chimera constructed from camouflaged Burger King ads, news stories and MTV style fast fact flickerings. This was completed by the booming overhead voice of Damien Pedreschi, our incomparable compere for the evening delivering with characteristic enthusiasm.

With DJ Mick Glynn secured within the centre's big beat balcony the hits kept us amused until the arrival of some supermodels in waiting. Fashion society chairperson Neil Mc Kenna, Director Alan Fitzpatrick and Deputy President Rose Daly who took care of P.R. for the event were seldom far away with sydlo head phones which seemed to blare obscenities and magically imbue the wearer with a worried look and running speed comparable with a certain spotted African land mammal.

After some ubiquitous dry ice the first irde of foxy females arrived to strut their stuff in front of an eager crowd. The show represented a veritable checklist of cool from the fashion brights of the high street with the likes of Korky's, Morgan, Airwave, Envy, Lipsy, Shoe and Susst all appearing on some seriously desirable bodies.

There were also some fantastic new designs from NCAD and Grafton Academy. A personal favourite was the Mega-City One-like outfit of tubular blue and red rubber flanking a bizarre Captain America / Mother Ireland / Scottish Widow type character with a tiny glittery shield and flowing green and gold cape.

After a stage-splitting finale with every model returning for a quick encore things subsided on the stage except for a few tense moments of unexpected rear end globe clasping, however with the adept movement few could be convinced that they didn't belong. There were also some fantastic new designs from NCAD and Grafton Academy. A personal favourite was the Mega-City One-like outfit of tubular blue and red rubber flanking a bizarre Captain America / Mother Ireland / Scottish Widow type character with a tiny glittery shield and flowing green and gold cape.

Alternating, rapturously received girlboy casts illuminated in a frenzied centre piece section, an excellent recreation of the current body-popping battle in a disused warehouse featured in the current Run DMC video. After this straunous show of manic music movement few could be convinced that the models where ordinary members of the student body and not trained professionals.

Before the finale I was nabbed for a few odd jobs behind the scenes where one could discover the frenzy of activity which was belied by gentle catwalk swishing and well balanced poses. Once behind the set it's more like a relay race in clacking heels around labyrinthine corridors where make-up bags and hairbrushes take the place of barrows and the winner gets to wear glittering purple eye make-up. Invaluable assistance was supplied by the unflappable Karen Buggy as entire looks and outfits were changed effortlessly not to mention the seamless organisation of Vivienne Byrne which ensured everything was accounted for and under control.

Although it may seem to the untrained eye that there's nothing to a fashion show but throwing on a few dresses and walking around a stage for a while, the reality is slightly more treacherous. Being a have a go type who's never adverse to a bit of banging I ended up under the expert eye of set designer Janet Molpho to help build some strange fabric-covered structures finding out that this fashion lark was as much set squares and sawing as it was sequins and stilettoes. Despite some of my efforts being akin to a huge wooden game of Kerplunk the finished set looked fantastic due to some very hard work from competent carpenters including Aibhe Lehoe, Coleman O'Kane and Jonathan

MOUNTJOY SQUARE PROVIDED ALL THE MODELS ON THE NIGHT FOR A SHOW THAT TURNAED OUT TO BE A GREAT SUCCESS.

I'M TOO Oozy FOR MY BOOTS-THAT'S IT'LL COME IN AGAIN JUST GIVES ME MORE CHANCE.

"I am Captain America, I am Mother Ireland, I am Scottish Widows - I like animals, and I'm for world peace, oh, and I can spell PAGEANT."

Maolseachlainn O Ceallaigh

Are you one of those people who feels nervous when others start talking about poetry? Have you ever said: 'I never tasted it', when someone asked your opinion on 'Tennyson? Or 'I don't even know what a Keats is'? Then you've come to the right place.

Life itself out of your philistinism by reading any capsule course below. It is specially designed for the demands of today's dynamic lifestyle and shortening attention span.

The Oxford Book of Irish Verse

The fingerprint of Thomas Kinsella is everywhere on this book. Think about forty pages of good stuff in the middle: Mangan, Yeats, Moore (who Kinsella criticizes in the introduction) and the rest of the boys. The bit before that is lifelike translated monastic and bardic school verse and the bit after that if the freeverse seafood of Seamus Heaney and his cronies. The last fragment is by Michael Hartnett and is called A Farewell to English; but the Oxford Book of Irish Verse parts ways with proper English about forty pages before this.

Kinsella's translations are perversely hollow. Listen to this brilliant translation of O'Rathaille's Valentine Brown by another hand:

That my old black heart was placed in this bower glass
That foreign dealers have made our land a tomb
They sigh that this earth's glory lying you, Iowa
Has made me a Beggar living you, Valentine Brown.

Good, venomous, rattling stuff! Here's Kinsella's scholarly rendition of the same stanza:

A voice of passion covered my dear old heart
Since the aliens dealt the lands of my Core.
O'Rathaille, the one whose name is Kinsella's
there's the reason I'd ever call on you, Valentine Brown.

The next version of this anthology might be better if they change their outlook.

The Oxford Book of Light Verse

Oxford again but what a difference! I've a theory about funny poems, books and so forth; when the label 'humorous' is slapped onto something, it facet the author from the duty to be credible, serious, consistent. Listen to this purple patch written under licence of humour's carcase-branch, and drawn from this anthology:

Binary by Chris Wallace-Crabbe

'Why does a cowflop into such a cheap smile?''All those potted pears
commencements and hibiscus snarl the spine into activity, has breasts and cowflops, oh yes, be in the same kind of condition, as that which held boneless ripe cabbages and popped! There we go again, writing poetry as if typography on your Cacaphony.

Now, you pretend earth goes purple, in waves, as if dazed inside verse. It's redoubts Narcissus, shadow searching reflections. We admonish what it will signify. Somewhere, in shadow, egal signs do not such questions on a large day, over their wine and ham.

That last sentence is fantastic. The atmosphere of it is powerful and that's all. The only problem is that people like Seamus Heaney read clean fun like this and take it seriously. But would someone like Brendan Kennelly be able to write this, from another part of this wonderful anthology, namely Michael Flanders' Have Some Madeira M'Dear?

Lleuanwyd o’f the wife of the sole in the grass
Of the feet in the mud who replies
She lowered her standards by kissing her glass.

For courage, her own, and his helpless
She dipped in, she drank it, she did not snort.
Her head filled with his gold handled cane.

Have some MADEIRA M’Dear!

'Ve've got a small can if a here.
And whilst in her own opined you know it won’t last
Do finish it up, it will help you to sleep.
Have some MADEIRA M’Dear!

This book probably hasn’t seeped into the public libraries yet but it might even be worth buying.

The Palgrave Golden Treasury

I think I can safely call this a classic, so much so that there is half a dozen versions of it knocking about. This Penguin O is too trimmed, and most of the old ones like the Everyman version leave out anything after 1900. But get a good copy and trace the progress of poetry until the days of MacNeice, Larkin and Betjeman. Until lads like Ted Hughes come along to spoil everybody’s fun.

School Bag

Sequel to the classic Rattle Bag, which I have no intention of reading. I wish I’d given this a miss too. Chosen by Seamus Heaney and Ted Hughes, it bizarrely combines wholesome fare like Oscar Wilde’s Ballad of Reading Guil with ephemera such as R.S. Thomas.

An indication of its quality is that the classic of William McGonagall’s (who is widely recognised as the world’s worst ever poet) The Tay Bridge Disaster is not appreciably worse than half the stuff here.

One feature is the single poem allowed per poet. There’s about as much sense in giving W.B. Yeats and Wilfred Owen the same representation as there is in only having one candidate per party into the Dail. (Although, when I put it like that…)

The School Bag has an introduction by Seamus Heaney, a note on memorising poetry by Ted Hughes, but few explanatory footnotes. This is typical of the contemporary cultural laissez-faire attitude that literature, and poetry especially, is in some way sacrosant. The attitude that all comment is superfluous (if not plain blasphemous). Oh, and it includes translations of Welsh poetry, Scottish poetry, Irish-language poetry. Robert Frost said that poetry is what gets lost in translation. I say that discarding the sound of a poem while attempting to preserve its meaning is like smashing a stained-glass window to reach the coloured light behind.

Ireland in Poetry

There’s a school of thought that says what’s good about poetry is its purity, intangibility, imperishability. You know, the fact that it composed of mere sounds, ‘a mouthful of air’ to quote Yeats, and yet, and yet! That’s true; but at the same time there’s nothing wrong in showing it off at its best. Too many anthologies use tiny print, upappalling typography and almost no blank space to a page. But anthologies like this use nice lettering, big print, and lots of white space per poem. The last is very good; it elevates a work. Like a gallery painting commanding lots of empty wall surface. White space is always beautiful.

And it has big, colourful pictures, works of art, photographs, landscapes. The publisher of the first ever book of nursery rhymes, John Newberry, insisted on an illustration, however small, to accompany each rhyme. He knew that the child needed a visual image on which to hang the text. And all of us share this need to some extent. But you’d better off buying…

Rich and Rare

Edited by Sean McMahon, this is a stunning good book of poetry. Which is doubtless the reason that it seems to have been remaindered in vast numbers. Poolbeg had the courage to release a collection of — Bannacht De Oraíann — popular poetry. Sorry. But I speak as a pupil who was force-fed Seamus Heaney.

More power to Sean McMahon. Each poem is introduced by a little anecdotal commentary and some trivial snippets about the author, often humorous. Creating the ambience of a public house debate rather than the usual one of a classroom lesson.

So grab a copy of this anthology, sit back, and relive 800 years of oppression, valiant struggle, sentimental ballads and parochialism. 'God’s curse on you England, you cruel hearted monster, your deeds they would shame all the devils in hell'! Marvellous.

The Poolbeg Treasury of English Poetry

Shamelessly trading on the Palgrave Golden Treasury, this is another hit by Sean McMahon. The cover shows a Parnassus-like river glowing milky white through an indistinct purple landscape. Such a luminous scene set the tone for this juicy collection.

Do you know what the word 'anthology' means? (No). It means a collection of flowers. In the sixteenth century the first anthologies of English poetry had quaint titles like A Paradise of Dainty Devices, A Handful of Dainty Devices, and A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions. This book could be titled similarly.

Art Not Rich and Rare altered to include that minor corpus of English poetry, which is non-Irish. The Poolbeg Treasury is the champion of anthologies. More anecdotal intro, plus a wise selection. This is the anthology wherein I first read Kusha Khan, I Have Been Faithful to Thee, Cynara!, The Road Less Travelled, and Ulysses by Tennyson, so I feel fondly towards it. The verses in here so light, charming, dainty, airy, non-forbidding.

They are not long, the Weeping and the Shrieks

Love and Desire and Loss

I think they have a pattern to it after We pass the gate.

There are not long, the dates of love and loss

Of a many stanzas

Our path emerges by a white, gone clear

Within a dream.

The languorous odour of some expensive perfume hangs over these pages, mar a deird, Sean McMahon understands poetry. He knows the role of a poet to define a very particular emotion, idea, concept. Not just a handful of crude emotions aired in verse after verse after verse.

This is the one to buy.

A Word of Caution

Remember this, though: a poem is just a poem, not some kind of religious text. To use a culinary metaphor, poetry is more satisfying than food. Poetry only articulates what we have already felt but could not fully express.
Kosovo: Locht ar Mafia na Rúise?

le Máirtín Breathnach

Iscéirdiúil iad impleachtaí na coimhlinte i Kosovo. Tá susa le 90% de daonra sa chúise lýs glaischeach de sliocht Albáineach. Thit teorainn na hAlbáin anuraidh de bharr a chruthaigh an t-Éirne i chumhacht fosta as tír sa Bloc Theas. Tá sé in ann aitheanta ar na bpríomh teachtighí na hÉireanní i mBholt. Na ndearbh an doiridh a isteach sa chúise Albainigh go rialta sa cornharc. Ó múineadh do bhual a bhfuil a bhocht a chuirteachtrach i gceannacht. Duirt ceannaire Interpol, Raymond Kendall, ag mianadh an t-Éirne ar an bpríomh teachtighí na hÉireanní is a bhfuil an t-Éirne i gceannacht. D'fhéadfadh a bhaint don Éirne mar gheall ar an bhfeidhm a bhíonn i gceannacht na hÉireanní.

Tá na ceadta marbh sa Rúis de bharr an rathúil eatarthu.

Mar ghalar, tá scéalta de shaol Maffiosa tar éis insbhfóil a dhéanamh ar chúise an t-Éirne. Tá an t-Éirne ina bhfuil an t-abhar a chéile sa shliocht na h-Éireann a bhfuil an t-Éirne ina bhfuil an t-Éirne ar an Éirne. Tá an Rúis de bharr an t-Éirne do bhfuil an t-Éirne ar an Éirne in a bhfuil an t-Éirne ar an Éirne. Tá an Rúis de bharr an t-Éirne a bhfuil an t-Éirne ar an Éirne.

A Winter's Tale: this thriller's stealing the show

Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow by Peter Hoeg

The written word, it seems, does not always translate well to the screen. Or maybe only few readers of "good" literature go to the cinema. In 1993, Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow (written originally in Danish) became Peter Hoeg's first fiction book to be translated into English. In the United States, as Smilla's Sense of Snow, it spent eight weeks on the Publishers' Weekly hardcover fiction bestseller list, reaching eighth position. It was chosen by Time magazine as "Book of the Year" and attracted numerous other highly favourable reviews.

An English language film version of the book - called Smilla's Feeling for Snow and with a cast including Julie Ormond, Gabrielle Anwar, Richard Harris and Vanessa Redgrave - was released here in October 1997. It received mixed reviews, attracted little public interest and was withdrawn after a short run.

The story is about Smilla Jaspersen, a Greenlander living in Copenhagen, who befriends the young son of one of her neighbours. The boy is found dead after falling from the snow-covered roof of a warehouse. Smilla doubts the police theory that the fall was an accident; she knew that the boy did not like heights and, as she has a specialist knowledge of the properties of snow ("I have a feeling for snow"), she believes that the boy's footprints suggest that someone else was involved in his death. She discovers a cassette tape hidden by the boy that provides the main clue to what happened. Her investigation involves near-misses on her own life and leads her, aboard a cargo ship, to the Arctic ice field off Greenland, culminating in a somewhat unusual denouement.

There is much in this book. The central narrative - written in the first person and present tense - is interspersed with Smilla's reflections on her childhood in Greenland and with Hoeg's own reflections, through Smilla's thoughts, on the human condition and on life itself. It is not always immediately apparent, because of this, as to which passages are a continuation of the central storyline, and this interrupts the narrative flow.

Smilla is an unorthodox heroine, maybe unique, in this genre at least. She is arguably somewhat masculine at her investigation, and the police that this involves, might normally be associated with a male protagonist and are reminiscent in places of Ian Fleming's famous secret agent.

The central story includes a study in human relationships. Smilla, in particular, is unable to form a relationship of any significance with anyone. "I think more highly of snow and ice than of love," she says, and: "If anyone asked me what makes me truly happy, I would say... snow and ice..." "When the police may have found love with another character, she tries to prevent any feelings developing.

As a socio-political commentary, there are several oblique criticisms throughout the book of the book of the fact that Greenland is a Danish sovereign territory (with a limited form of autonomy), regarded by Danes as Denmark's "northernmost province". Greenlanders living in Denmark are treated disparagingly by Danish officials and Smilla describes herself as very much an outsider there.

Overall, Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow is an unusual, but highly imaginative, work with numerous themes. It provides an entertaining storyline and stimulating discourse on the nature of human existence.

KEVIN O'BRADY
The Union of Students in Ireland’s 40th Congress in Westport this year was dominated by the tangible urge to overhaul the organisation’s structures and was significant in influencing three things.

The first of these was the election of rank outsider and reform candidate Dermot Lohan to the position of President, signalling the end of Colman Byrne’s legacy as it shut out both USI candidates, Helen Ryan and Dermot Quain, who were, unfortunately, perhaps, associated by default with USI’s worst year for some time.

The second significant outcome of Comhdhill 98 was the abolition of the position of Union Development Officer, the post to which NCIR’s Sela Comer was elected for the coming year, and held at present by Dermot Quain. Thirdly, the referendum led to the reduction in status of both the Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual Officer and the Women’s Rights Officer to part-time positions; heretofore they were full-time permanent offices.

Such moves were dictated by strong sentiment towards reforming and protecting the financial structures of USI, allegedly managing to lose money through its Temple Bar raic, ri-ra agus obviously Steering Committee [mainly ex-students with experience of such congresses, who act as the overall authority when it comes to Congressional protocol etc. — wheel] would have the last word.

The first of these was the election of Ronan Emmett, current President, to the position of Deputy President in USI for the coming year. Aungier Street Welfare Officer, Derek O’Shea narrowly missed winning his bid for Welfare Officer; Queen’s University Belfast candidate Siobhán Fearon beat him by seven votes.

DIT SUPREMACY in future years cannot be guaranteed, however, as University of Ulster Overall President, Clodagh Kerr, questioned delegate allocation methods on the eve of Congress. [DITSU currently bring 23 delegates to Congress, second only to UCD who are entitled to 25.]

Kerr’s argument stemmed from the notion that the northern sites payed more per capita than their delegation numbers to Congress reflected. The potential danger here is that both Queen’s — whose President, Cormac Bulkeely, supported Kerr’s challenge and the combined clout of University of Ulster Coleraine, Jordanstown, Magee and Belfast would outweigh the considerable bulk of the DITSU delegation.

An increase in the numbers of delegates for UCD, Queen’s, Belfast, and Ulster, in proportion to their delegations, would work quite constructively over the general proceedings, particularly on the PCP’s abolition, only to explode in a fireball at the end of the week, as delegates on both sides of the argument spat fire.

It was quite a view, it was quite something. With open arms,” Robin Stewart told his audience that UCDSU President, lan Walsh, and his contingent were prepared to forgive and forget in the interest of the organisation’s future. As President, signalling the end of Colman Byrne’s legacy as it shut out both USI candidates, Helen Ryan and Dermot Quain, who were, unfortunately, perhaps, associated by default with USI’s worst year for some time.

Victor, Dermot Lohan, is congratulated by Vishnu, the six armed Hindu god

A photograph typical of such occasions placed people in a bar going “Wahahaaa” whenever a camera appeared.

Guest speakers during the week included local TDs, Tom Moffat (FF), current Minister of State for Health, Jim Higgins of Fine Gael, and also the Chair of Westport’s Urban District Council, Margaret Adams. Tom Moffat urged students to use USI as the vehicle of innovation and ‘vessel of conservation’ that it is, while Jim Higgins lauded the organisation for its ‘vocal, vociferous, and effective lobby’ which ‘ruffled feathers’ with its ‘straight talking’.

Victor, Dermot Lohan, is congratulated by Vishnu, the six armed Hindu god

Dermot Lohan and Quain discuss first Honours and other post- electoral terms.
Andrew Lynch talks to 60s musical and cultural icon Donovan, the Pied Piper to the Flower Power generation

Donovan Leitch, one of Ireland's most famous residents, is nothing less than a living musical and cultural icon. He has made a series of albums such as Sunshine Superman and A Gift From A Flower To A Garden which deserve to be regarded as lynchpin recordings of the 1960s. History records that the first concept albums were not made until 1967 but Donovan was spearheading the use of philosophical lyrics in pop music as early as 1965. Some of the very first psychedelic recordings, taken together they epitomise perfectly the philosophy and style of the 'Summer of Love'.

I meet the 51-year-old Scot on a windy night in Whelan's before a show which will be memorable for both its intimate fervent atmosphere and its demonstration of the timeless nature of Donovan's material. In person, although the man retains a charismatic aura which infects all those who surround him, he is remarkably engaging and friendly. Glowing with health and well being, it is plain to see that he has worn far better than most of his contemporaries. He ushered me into his dressing room and settled down to reminisce about his career, paying me the compliment of going all the way back to the beginning. "My father's name was Donald and he wanted a name beginning with D but he didn't want a Scottish name like Doug or Dermot. So he was at the movies, watching a cowboy film and he saw a guy burst into the bar and say 'OK, Donovan, draw'. Because in those films people were called by their surnames. And he thought 'That's it'"

When I came to make my first record they asked me my name and I said Donovan - they didn't ask if it was my first or last name! It's always been natural for me and my close friends call me Don".

Born in Glasgow in 1946, Donovan was surrounded by music from his very earliest days. "In Scotland I listened under the table to the songs people sang at parties. This was before radio and television got a grip and people made their own music and sang their own songs. So I listened to sad songs of leaving from the Irish side of the family and lifting songs from the Scottish side".

When he was still a small child his family relocated to St. Albans in the Home Counties, where he first became exposed to bohemian influences. "I became aware of jazz and blues, people like Woody Guthrie, Joan Baez and Charlie Parker. In Britain we were on the point of merging so many different styles together. We had jazz clubs, art schools, folk clubs and coffee houses. Brought together they contained the seeds of revolution. The Beatles wore suits in mimicry of people like the Four Tops and The Miracles. But you must remember that they played in Bohemian clubs in Liverpool, went to art school and read the Tibetan Book of the Dead. The art school scene in all the provincial towns was a catalyst for so many elements to come together."

For financial reasons Donovan was unable to complete his own stint at art school but his residence was only temporary. For he was about to be transported "into a multi-media world where I was art-director of all my songs". Donovan began his career by taking pure folk music into the pop market, annoying traditionalists in the process. "You weren't supposed to play this music to pop audiences but I thought that was bigoted and small-minded. How was the world going to change unless the mass of youth, who usually only read cereal boxes and listened to saccharine pop music were turned on to these bohemian influences?"

When Donovan first became famous he was labelled as a British Bob Dylan but those who listened closely to his early songs such as the haunting 'Catch the Wind' would have realised that he was less of an overt political commentator than a poetic romantic. As a child his father had read him poetry "of noble thought and radical protest", Robert Burns, Shelley, Keats and Byron. He grew up in a socialist atmosphere and had an early hit with the political protest 'Universal Soldier'. But then he turned to the books of Buddhism which prompted him to take a more mystical path. "They reminded me in a deep way that the problems of the material world are formed from the imbalance of the thought patterns of the finite mind. I saw that changing one party for another was just changing the rider of the same wild horse of the same unbridled mind. True change can only be made inside the human form, not outside. So I began to write of change as an individual, not collective process. I was put down by activists for this stance, but so what?"

Donovan became a part of the greatest media explosion of the century and the renaissance of English pop culture. The eclecticism of his music charmed his fans and baffled the critics.

"People who write their own material are completely self-centred. We have to be. We believe in ourselves more than anything else and therefore sometimes we look arrogant. I wanted success but not for money - it was the compulsion common to all artists to create a ritualistic service for the public. Art is now something that is sold but in olden times it used to be a ceremony. The artist provided a service, that of healing, a catharsis for the masses. And we should always remember that the most important thing about art is that it has a cathartic effect."
Donovan continued

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Every Woman for Herself

Fiona Mc Cann talks to Beryl Bainbridge, an extraordinary writer whose latest book about the Titanic won the Whitbread Award for Fiction

The Oscar success and media-hype surrounding James Cameron's Titanic is testimony to the public's continuing fascination with the great tragedy of 1912. 34 years on there is something about the final moments aboard the 'unsinkable' ocean liner that still intrigues.

Beryl Bainbridge, whose latest novel Every Man for Himself describes the experiences of a young man who sailed on the fateful ship, gives her interpretation of its magnetism. "The reason it's lasted is because it has that symbol of this beautiful ship. You go a ship now, QE2s and things like that. They aren't a patch on the old liners. She describes the Titanic as "a thing of great beauty, inside and out. A marvellous thing. There's been worse disasters, many worse. But it was just that it was the symbol of its time."

Bainbridge illustrates this time through the eyes of Morgan, a young man whose ties with JP Morgan allow him to mix in the higher circles of society, despite the secret of his humble birth. He joins those on the upper decks of the great ship, whose wealth and birth entitle them to a life of privilege and gaiety denied to those toiling in the engine rooms below them. "On that ship were about six or seven multi-millionaires as well as several very rich people. And they all knew each other. They had a sort of social life. A lot of them went to Egypt to look at the antiquities for one part of the year. And then they'd go to Paris, and then to Boston, and then to London...It was like one big club."

Morgan is both an observer and a part of this club, who drink and dance their way across the Atlantic. Having played a small part in the ship's design, Morgan is privy to observations about the reality of the ship's situation long before the other passengers are aware of it. Conversations with Captain Smith and Thomas Andrews (the ship's designer) reveal the urgency of the problem while the other passengers play cards and seduce each other... blissful ignorance.

Despite our awareness of the inevitable fate, Bainbridge's realistic and poignant portrayal of these people floating towards their face maintains our interest and compassion until the inevitable final pages. It has met with huge critical acclaim, securing her her fourth Booker Prize nomination, and winning the Whitbread Award for Fiction last year. This kind of praise doesn't affect her, as Bainbridge maintains that critics are only impressed by her latest novels "because they know about history more than I do and so they're much more interested in reading a book about Scott going to the Antarctic and the Titanic sinking than they are about somebody's life in Liverpool in 1954."

She describes one critic's reaction to the novel. "A reviewer in London read the book...I got a letter from her. She said she'd read it and she was out in the garden afterwards thinking about what she was going to put in the article and she just went cold all over. She went into a depression for about six weeks afterwards. Wasn't that strange!"

Stranger still was Bainbridge's own experience while finishing the final chapters to meet her publishing deadline in the dark hours of an April morning. "What I hadn't realised was that was April the 15th (the anniversary of the disaster). I was at the top of the house writing. It was about three or four in the morning...I heard voices, and I went to the top of the stairs. I thought 'I've left the wireless on' so I went down and I hadn't of course. As I went down, the voices stopped. I came back up and they started again. They went one and off, for about an hour and a half while I finished the ending. But it wasn't screams, or everyone upset. The only thing I could come to was that they were having a reunion. It was quite funny. I could hear them chattering away downstairs while I did this."

Unfazed by this eerie endorsement, Beryl Bainbridge has already begun work on her sixth novel. Beryl's own words writing is "just the thing I do, and that's it!"

Every Man For Himself is published by Abacus
Fiona Mc Cann reviews the forthcoming novel from JP Donleavy, author of The Ginger Man.

In the midst of all the angst about the death of the novel and experimental prose rhythms, JP Donleavy is going about his business of quietly writing good books.

Best known for his highly successful debut The Ginger Man, his more recent work tends to go unnoticed among the plethora of new writers, a wrong this reviewer would very much like to see redressed.

With Wrong Information is Being Given Out at Princeton, JP Donleavy confirms his status as an expert storyteller. The hero is Alfonso Stephen O'Kelly O', a penniless young composer whose charm and remarkable good looks attract the attention of adopted heiress, Sylvia Triumphant. While she traverses the country in search of her real parents, Stephen is seduced firstly by the girlfriend of a psychotically jealous knife-wielding maniac, then by his own wife's indifferently wealthy adoptive mother: Chivalrous, generous, and unquestionably virile, his guileless infidelities leave him hopelessly perplexed, as Sylvia moves out and leaves the struggling artist wandering the streets of New York searching for an appreciative audience.

It is New York that dominates, as Stephen's meanderings lead us through the post World War II city, from the seedy streets of Chinatown, to the well-heeled hotels and dwellings of the wealthy. Alternating between champagne-sipping dinners in New York's exclusive clubs and nuckle-and-dime meals at downtown eateries, Stephen happens through all levels of this multi-layered society with gentlemanly grace and unadulterated good humour.

Donleavy's prose is exuberant, sparkling and alive in his own unconventional style. He expertly blends the comic and the tragic, pointing to their interdependence with a wit and overt brio that permeates this work.

Stephen's shine, and New York has never looked so sordid and alive. As Stephen remarks, "As always in this city, the next moment is invariably an unexpected surprise, never giving you a chance to learn about the metropolis."

Fortunately, Wrong Information is Being Given Out at Princeton, published by Little Brown, is available in hardback.

LISA ST AUBIN DE TERAN The Hacienda Virago

Lisa St Aubin de Teran left for Venice with her new husband, Don Jaime de Teran, banker robber, aristocrat and schizophrenic, when she was just seventeen. For the seven years that followed, she made a home for herself among la gente, the people of the Andes who worked on her husband's hacienda. She became La Donna, growing avocados and administering medicine from La Casa Grande, learning from and giving to the people who grew to accept her and whom she grew to love.

The Hacienda is her vivid and inspiring account of her years in the Andes. Peopleed with the beguiling characters who wove themselves into her lonely existence, The Hacienda meanders between the comical and the tragic with a grace and elegance that permeates all her work.

Lisa St Aubin de Teran writes winifully and with an honesty that refuses to disguise even the deliberate gaps and loopholes in a moving and personal story that is ultimately uplifting.

ANDREW MILLER Ingenious Pain Sceptre

This erudite and sophisticated novel tells the story of James Dyke, a surgeon in 19th century England - who cannot feel pain. Through a freak of nature he has been born impervious to any kind of emotion.

At first he is exploited by an unscrupulous showman, then studied by an eccentric gentleman. Eventually he becomes a celebrated surgeon and travels to St. Petersburg, as a race with other doctors to impale the emperor against smallpox. But on the way he meets a witch who brings about a remarkable transformation.

Andrew Miller's first book is a dazzling cornucopia of 18th century tury philosophy, history and medicine. It contains a gallery of strange characters and white many of these are brilliantly drawn they do tend to get in the way of the storyline which at times becomes bogged down. Nevertheless this is well worth reading as a novel of ideas written in a classic style which reflects the austerity of its central protagonist.

DAVID LEAVITT The Page Turner Little Brown

At eighteen, Paul Porterfield dreams of becoming a concert pianist like his idol, Richard Keenington. The opportunity to meet the renowned musician in the flesh presents itself when Paul is chosen as page turner at the grand master's concert, an encounter which makes a lasting impression on both. Crossing paths again in Italy, they begin an affair that suspends them both in a self-contained world for a brief time of contentment. When they are dragged back to reality, things change, and it is the young Paul who is most affected. Struggling for greatness as a musician while studying at Juillard, Paul once again finds himself moving in the circles of his former lover, their lives overlapping until they meet again.

As much a coming-of-age novel as an examination of the realities of second-placing in a first place world, The Page Turner is at once poignant and personal in the glimpse it offers into the world of artists and aspirants. Leavitt's own love of music is evident in every page, and he uses it adeptly to explore the themes of failure and self-knowledge that permeate this book.

The metaphor of the page turner points to Paul's thwarted aspirations and the painful proximity of his brush with greatness. It's also a conveniently clever title for a novel.

BENJAMIN WILKOMIRSKI Fragments Picador

This memoir of childhood spent both in Nazi concentration camps and a ravaged post-war Switzerland is, for all its brevity, an austere and immensely powerful book. The events which it describes are so horrific and the writing so stark and uncompromising that a review such as this can only hint at the vastness of its emotional impact.

When Wilkomirski was 3 or 4 years old his family was forced to flee from their Eastern European homeland. In the course of this flight the author witnessed the execution of his father. He was separated from his family and transported to the camp at Majdanek. The book is not a straightforward narrative of Wilkomirski's experiences. Rather it is a collection of memories, like a photo album from which it is possible to piece together a tragic framework. He writes always from a child's perspective, a child whose spirit has been crushed and for whom the moral adult code does not exist.

The descriptions of camp life are almost unbearably vivid. Arbitrary executions, mental torture and physical degradation are commonplace.

Wilkomirski's years in Switzerland were characterised by huge difficulties in learning to trust adults again. The Nazis had taught him that "friendly grown ups are the most dangerous." They're best at fooling you."

But Fragments is perhaps most important for its insights into child psychology and the questions it raises about how a child's faith in humanity can be restored after such a comprehensive destruction.

Today the author is a respected classical musician in Switzerland. Given all that he has suffered, a book such as this seems like a minor miracle. It cannot be recommended too highly.
Andrew Lynch talks to Elcka, the stylish and elegant Londoners who present pop as an entire package

In a mundane musical world with literally hundreds of bands vying for your attention, it helps to have an ounce of intelligence, wit and style. Elcka have all these things in abundance and consequently they’re one of the most essential bands around.

"Inertia really is the bane of modern life and I personally have spent a lot of time searching for ways of escape," says Harrold, the band’s singer, a charismatic wordsmith who prefers a single moniker. "A lot of my songs are about dreaming, finding a way out.

Elcka are casually elegant and not ashamed to dress to impress. They look as if they’ve just marched out of Carnaby St, but to label them as generic mods would be a mistake.

"Dressing up is not just about clothes, it’s about presenting a complete package to the outside world. Give me the choice between being an exhibitionist and a wallflower and I’ll take exhibitionism every time.

The five-piece first came to attention during the 1995 Britpop craze when they were picked out by such luminaries as Martin Rosseter of Gene as coming stars. They made their label debut in 1996 but tedious record company politics and a bout of litigation prevented them from bringing out their debut album Rubbernecking until last November.

Rubbernecking is about striving to find a bird’s eye view of the world rather than a worm’s eye, trying to infuse the mundane with romance. Elcka are not just starting at the stars, they are reaching for them. And like all the best pop music, it acts like a glue which draws disparate things together for one brief shining moment.

Elcka transcend both influences and circumstances. For them glamour is a means of escape rather than an end in itself. But beneath the glamorous surface is a savage poetry which expressed itself in such songs as the vengeful ‘Look At You’ have an edge.

“Our songs are often very vitriolic," says Harrold. "It’s not that I feel like that all the time but I find that people can relate very easily to venom.”

The band seem to make a point of attracting only the best and the brightest as their fans. Top of the list is one Stephen Morrissey who has done his best to give them a leg-up.

Rubbernecking’ is out now on Island

Albums

Eoin Hennigan and Andrew Lynch examine the latest releases

MARK EITZEL
Caught in a trap and I can’t back out ‘cause I love you too much baby American Recordings

A few years ago, before his band American Music Club signed up to a major record company, Mark Eitzel almost quit the music business in frustration. In fact Eitzel reportedly quit the band on numerous occasions before deciding to do it for real.

Caught in a trap... is Eitzel’s third solo album and what a poor place the music world would have been had it lost him all those years ago. In the opening lines of ‘Are You The Trash?’, Eitzel sings about a game of sur-vival. Certainly no one is better placed than Eitzel himself to talk about this.

While not everybody’s cup of tea, Eitzel still remains one of the finest songwriters around. The misery of his music is almost uplifting as he starts off Caught in a trap... accompanied by just an acoustic guitar before deciding the outstanding track from an album so laid back it almost seems the music doesn’t want to come out of the speakers.

More than ever Eitzel’s lyrics are deeply personal and it should surprise no one that ‘Go Away’ tells you to do exactly that. Eitzel will never be a superstar, he’ll never top charts simply because he’s not commercial enough. That’s a good thing. He is more important than he is because unlike your Spice Girls or your average boy band his songs are pure poetry. Essential listening.

RAY DAVIES
Storyteller
EMI

In 1995 the inimitable Ray Davies of the Kinks published an exceptional autobiography X-Ray. He then went on to build a solo show combining readings from the book with acoustic renditions of some of his best-loved songs. Storyteller, Davies’ first solo release, is essentially the recording of that show although disappointingly it ends the story after the band, one of the most seminal of the 1960s have scored their first hit with ‘You Really Got Me’.

Nevertheless, for Kinks devotees the album is a pleasant travel through Davies’ childhood and early influences. There are moving descriptions of his family and their house in Muswell Hill, where everything important wakes, parties etc. happened in the front room. It was there that Ray with his younger brother Dave first rehearsed the songs which would make them household names. There are also some witty, malicious, impersonations of the band’s early managers and their charmingly stolid drummer Mick Avory.

Intermingling with this are brief sketches of some Kinks songs although the choice of these seems slightly idiosyncratic (‘It’s Alright’ instead of ‘Sunny Afternoon’? Inevitably, as with most live recordings, it sounds like it would have been better to have been there but in the absence of any new Kinks material, this release is timely and welcome.
USI Congress Westport 98

Citroën Fruits

Given that there are only three places in the world where you can study car design specifically, it was with great pride and significant confidence for the future that DIT Bolton Street concluded its fledgeling car design course earlier this month. The course, the brainchild of Dominic Tuite and Frank Brennan, had mega-motor concern Citroën behind it from the word go, and culminated in a competition which would bring the winner to the super-secret Citroën Design Centre in Paris.

The DIT appears to be going from strength to strength, a suitable phrase in light of their links with Peugeot people, Cowan Motors and their subsidiary Gallic Distributors whose boss James Wyse made much of the DIT Citroën venture possible.

A course was established to train 16 hopefuls in basic car design, lead by Citroën designer Urs Stammle, in which three senior lecturers also took part, encompassing students of art, engineering and architecture.

In supporting the Dublin-based design course, the French auto giants presented students with the task of adapting the Citroën's small van and winner of the Semperit Car of the Year 97, the Berlingo, to taxi specifications. Such was the standard of the response that they received, that Citroën made the unprecedented gesture of nominating four entrants - instead of, the initially-proposed, one - with them to their design HQ in Paris.

Among the winners were Colin Walsh, Zara Lee Duffy and Cara White, as well as overall winner Cathal Loughman. Arthur Blakelee, an ex-Yale Yankee in the Parisian court, and Head of Citroën Design, couldn't stress enough the importance of such competitions, and with the success of this one and the ensuing attention (national newspapers etc) the chances for its continuation and development appear to be growing by the day.

The exhibition was also accorded by the French ambassador, Henri de Coignac, and by Victor Hamilton, Chairman of the Irish Motor Industry.
VIVE LA DIFFERENCE!

Kevin O"Brady

With Ireland's defeat by Wales at Lansdowne Road, the prospect of some success after Ireland's performance in Paris came to nothing. We've seen it all before.

What a pity. After the game against France in the new Stade de France, a headline in The Irish Times declared: "Ireland respond magnificently", presumably in reference to Ireland having confounded all expectations - both partisan and neutral - that France would win with a score akin to a cricket result.

Irish supporters were no doubt delighted - and greatly relieved - that France did not do what was expected. But there is equally some disappointment that Ireland were unable to consolidate their 10-point half-time lead. It is nearly 20 years since Ireland had a half-time lead against the French in Paris: in 1980, when Ireland led 18-9, a concerned French supporter said to my father during the interval: "Vous avez gagné." Non, monsieur, not until 80 minutes.

And certainly not in the Parc des Princes. Ireland did not score in the second half: France did and recorded a 19-18 win.

Although the result in the Stade de France was much better than expected, that was in part because France did not play the way we know they can. The move which resulted in the try by Bernard-Salles showed the kind of rugby they usually play, but their handling generally was not good, and poor discipline resulted in several penalties against them.

That aside, Ireland's display was better than against Scotland in the previous game. It was refreshing to see the team play for 80 minutes - rather than an hour or so - and it is to their credit that they were in the French half, looking for a try, at the end of the game.

The arrival of Warren Gatland as national coach appeared initially to have made a real difference following the Irish performance - if not the result - against France. But it now seems to have been no more than a coincidence - as opposed to effective management strategy - that whereas five players from London Irish - who have had little success - played against Scotland, only two played against France, given that only one player from London Irish played against Wales. Yes, there was some trace of "proper" rugby - presumably infused by Gatland - but the overall was acutely reminiscent of everything amiss in Irish international rugby before Gatland assumed his position.

Although Ireland came very close to making real sports history in the Stade de France, the records will show that it is now 15 years since Ireland last beat France (22-16 in Dublin, in 1983) and that it is 26 years since Ireland beat France (14-9 in 1972) in Paris.

Before this year, it was four years since Wales last beat Ireland (17-15 in Dublin, in 1994). On the basis of Ireland's present form, it is frankly difficult to see how or where they can achieve success and turn statistics in their favour.

Above left: Long distance runner Fiona McGann finishing a recent cross-country event in the Phoenix Park where she was up against some of the country's finest third level competitors. Above right: With father Denis McGann (an old hand [fast, east] at long distance, he competed in by 1972 Munich Olympics), and DIT Director of External Affairs, Dr. Declan O'Gorm a after race.
Clockwise from top left:

Director of External Affairs, Deean Glynn, presents Niall Gilligan's Chairperson's Award to a friend of the Clare hurler; Institute Secretary, Robert Lawlor, with hockey hero, Glen Bailey who took the President's Award; Ladies Footballer, Michelle Fitzgerald; Clodagh Barry of DIT Sailing; half-alley stalwart, Shane Dormer, of the highly successful DIT Handball team; a packed Glencon Hall; the Dublin Concert Band, doing Wacko's Beat; in DIT and Kevin St Hockey's saucy Sandra Wilkinson; the wiley Bill O'Herlihy, Master of Ceremonies. Pic: ChaOS

Club Persons of the Year 1998

Athletics: Eugene O'Neill
Hurling: Trevor McGrath
Fencing: Alan Bouchier-Hayes
Hockey(m): Simon Keraw
Hockey(w): Sandra Wilkinson
Hand Ball: Shane Dormer
Football(m): Michelle Fitzgerald
Football(w): Richard Kiely
Rugby: Martin Pearson
Volleyball(m): Adrienne Glennon
Volleyball(w): Caroline St. Legor
Basketball(m): Liam Casey
Basketball(w): Jean Coogan
Swimming: Damien Pedreschi
Judo: Leona Cowley
Sailing: Clodagh Barry
Mountaineering: Jason Kenny

DIT Kevin St
Sports Personality of the Year 1998
Ian Jackson (Shotokan Karate)
Club of the Year 1998
Aquatec

DIT Aungier St
Sports Personality of the Year 1998
Rory Keogh (Rugby)
Club of the Year 1998
Hockey

DIT Bolton St
Sports Personality of the Year 1998
Niall Gilligan (Hurling)
Club of the Year 1998
Mountaineering

DIT Cathal Brugha St
Sports Personality of the Year 1998
Kenny Vaughan (Soccer)
Club of the Year 1998
Soccer(m)

DIT Mountjoy Square
Sports Personality of the Year 1998
Hocine Measour (Judo)
Club of the Year 1998
Hockey
new releases

The Mitchen knows they’re green X cotU... Far Away... Libido another Brit-pop onslaught, this time from the North of Europe. Bittersweet Symphony gets a pretty good spin over, but the ultimate prize here has to go to The Beatles, whose Tomorrow Never Knows from Revolver is so pertinent thirty two years later that it highlights the Chemical Brothers/Noel Gallagher Setting Sun as the charm that they somehow come to roost or anything at the time of the super-jackies’ No. 1 hit... And king of popular poetry Jenno Grothke left his lunch box in our door with This is Hardcore, which is, staggeringly accurate through and through. I’m personally not convinced by the music but you’ll forgive me...

The Mitchen knows they’re green X cotU... Far Away... Libido are yet another Scandinavian outfit perfectly built for an invasion of Brit-pop whose single, Revealing, will do no damage to the way their band sounds in light of their frequent comparisons to Radiohead, music full of break-up sentiment, not to be banged on to cheer up your life. Anyway, Kings of Infinite Space bring out Cool single in honour of Wayne Hussey’s National Hockey League record holder.

Long players this month include

Are We Par Four...no that’s not quite it. My Mate Joe Smoove’s, nah

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MANOR ruled the Da Club on March 20 with the self-assurance of gangsters parading their turf. With the likes of Brazil and Daze playing on the same night, it was a gig Manor could do with their eyes shut — the intimate surroundings upstairs in the Da Club provided the perfect ambiance for which to do so.

Half of Brazil treated us to an acoustic set - a little duff, a little old, and a tad mainstream. The fact that the bass player was missing, didn't matter. The fact that one of their last songs didn't have a side, didn't matter. The crowd away by this stage consensus viewpoint, Fifi Brazil.

Enter Manor. Arrogance was all-pervasive during PVC's talker, the bassist, held their own against the assured beginning and Manor let us know they were there to enjoy themselves. SOS was followed by You fancy — at your peril!

The glorious lyrics and resonating melody of Impossible Thing had lead singer Gerry Kavanagh walking, with his repititively cryptic words echoing reverberating to the millennium and way way beyond.

Teen angst. Not in a daze however, but stunned. What have Therapry been doing since Infernal Love in 1995?

Yeah, the director, John Hickey, had the idea and we liked it and he'd done some research into the band, and which is why we commissioned an interview.

The session took place over a wide range of topics, and the interviewee was naturally enthusiastic about the band's future. The interview was conducted by a third party, and the questions were selected to give the band the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions on a variety of subjects in an open and informal setting.

As far as music goes, the band's sound can be described as a mix of alternative rock and electronic music. They have released several albums and singles, and their music has been well-received by fans and critics alike.

The interview concluded with the interviewee expressing their gratitude for the opportunity to share their thoughts and reflections with the audience.
chezzler no. 2
White to mate in two

PRIZE: First 3 correct entries drawn will each receive a £20 gift voucher for DITSU Students Union Shop.

RULES: Only open to members of the DIT colleges. Employees of DITSU and THE IRISH TIMES are not eligible to enter. No Photocopies. Entries close: Fri 1 May

SEND TO: THE IRISH TIMES / DITSU, Crossword Competition, The DIT Examiner, (to be dropped into local Union office)

THE IRISH TIMES
DITSU Simplex
CROSSWORD Competition

ACROSS
8 Rad, sire, about the sieve. (8)
9 Not based on fact. (6)
10 Brightly-coloured ornament of little value. (6)
11 Conquer, overcome. (8)
12 Fire or flashing light as a signal of danger. (6)
13 Sing, hams, you're terrific. (8)
17 Fraud, deception. (7)
19 Burn a dead body. (7)
22 Not genuine, forged. (4)
24 Dough baked hard in small cakes. (8)
27 Famous film dog. (6)
29 Lead four to the fish. (8)
30 A flock of geese. (6)
31 Inhabitant of the Arctic regions. (6)
32 Cause to explode. (8)

DOWN
1 Bake with machine-gun fire. (6)
2 Projecting watch-tower on a castle gate. (8)
3 Train Leo to be inside. (8)
4 Most courageous and fearless. (7)
5 Spanish governess or chaperon. (6)
6 Long container for animal feed or water. (6)
7 Basket with hood used as a cradle. (8)
14 Laugh at, make fun of. (4)
16 It's not right. (4)
18 Painful neck injury. (8)
20 Move down to lower class. (8)
21 Hatred of women. (8)
23 I stared at the riding style. (7)
25 That man's father is my father's brother. (6)
26 Not outside the house. (6)
28 Silent small bays. (6)

THE IRISH TIMES
STUDENT PRICE 50p

COMPETITION NO. 7
**Sphere**

*Starring: Dustin Hoffman, Sharon Stone, Samuel L. Jackson.*

*Director: Barry Levinson.*

-Based on Michael Crichton's novel of the same title, Sphere tackles the subject of sub aquatic alien invasion. Similar to The Abyss in its theme, Crichton's novel was out way before James Cameron even thought about getting wet.

A suspicious spacecraft, covered by a huge, shiny, liquid ball from outer space. And Sharon Stone. What more could a five year old ask for?

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**Mousehunt**

*Starring: Nathan Lane, Lee Evans.*

*Christopher Walken.*

*Director: Gore Verbinski.*

-When their father dies, brothers Ernie (Nathan Lane) and Lars Smunetz (Lee Evans) inherit a string factory and a dilapidated old house which they assume is worthless. After stumbling upon the original blueprints for the house, they find out that it is indeed a priceless piece of architectural history. Following a sequence of mishaps (Ernie loses his restaurant due to an unfortunate crookroach incident and Lars is kicked out by his disgruntled wife) they move into the house to renovate and auction it off.

-It seems that their luck has finally changed when they find a mouse in the em...house, who evades all their attempts to nab him. Desperate to get rid of the critter, they call on the services of deranged exterminator Caesar, played by Christopher Walken. But this is a canny wee mouse who escapes his clutches every time.

**Mousehunt** is a timely release for the Easter school holidays and the few chilidren in the audience audible enjoyed it. First time director Gore Verbinski (director of the Budweiser "frog" adverts) keeps the gags coming quick and fast. Lee Evans and Nathan Lane are great together as the bumbling brothers. Christopher Walken is excellent as the whacked out exterminator who sees the need to "get inside the mind of the mouse"...to anticipate his every move! There is a hilarious bit where Caesar's face off with the wily rodent is played back from a tape recording, as he is carried off on a stretcher.

The superb animatronics are by the same people who worked on Babe and Jurassic Park (Charles Gibson and Michael Lantieri) and they create a very cute creature who outsmarts all humans who intent on getting him out of his cozy abode. Bring a youngster along under your oxtor to this highly enjoyable comedy that has enough in it to keep the "grown ups" chortling along.

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**Kundun**

*Starring: Collection of Tibetan actors.*

*Director: Martin Scorsese.*

-True life story of Tibetan boy, Tenzin Gyatso, reincarnation of the 14th Dalai Lama, spiritual ruler of his people as he witnesses his country's suffering at the hands of a psychotc Chinese empire. Visually stunning, well told story.

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**FILM QUIZ**

**KEVIN O'GADY**

Are you as expert on films as you thought? Here are the answers to last month's quiz:

1. Kirk Douglas (Spartacus)
2. Whoopi Goldberg (Conejo Johnson)
3. Mickey Rooney (Joe Yar, Jr.)
4. Edward G. Robinson (Edward Golding)
5. Tony Curtis (Nemrod Schwartz)
6. Liam Neeson (Dale Hall)
7. Judy Garland (Teresa Gutierrez)
8. Jean Harlow (Harlant Carpenter)
9. Charlotte Rampling (Charle Carver)
10. Susan Sarandon (Susan Abigail Tomlin)
Club USI

Premiership Football
[Monthly draw for a Sony PlayStation]

Karaoke - Carlsberg Promotion
[Monthly draw for Match Tickets]

Headphone Sex on 4dex
[Resident Chris Golding with guest DJs]

Seventh Hevin
[Dj Mick Glynn]

Alter Ego
Top DJs for free

Dj Donners
6-8 pm £1 a pint of Carling

Dj Chris Golding
6-8 pm £1 a pint of Carling