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Words@30p (min 10), display@£8/cm (min 3), all + VAT

Next issue Fri 2nd March  
Deadline 10am, Thur 1st March

**THURSDAY 1ST MARCH 2001 (7TH WEEK)**

**TODAY**

**The Oxford Gargoyles**  
not just a pretty face!  
8pm 01.03.01  
New College Chapel  
Tickets now available: £4 (concs) / £7 (full)  
07890 512022/www.oxfordgargoyles.co.uk/on the door

**LETTERS**

**Lent is alive and well! a reader comments**

Dear Daily Info,  
Thank you for your piece on Pancake Day and Lent, which was both interesting and enjoyable. I would like to add that the point of the Lenten fast, besides commemorating Christ's forty days in the wilderness, is to remember that all life is a gift. By doing away with some of our normal props, we perhaps get a clearer vision of our dependence on God for our existence. This in turn should help us to become more loving towards and tolerant towards others. (Fasting is not a good thing if it merely makes us bad tempered. S Basil the Great in the fourth century rebuked his monks for abstaining from meat but "devouring"; [emotionally] their brothers!).  
One thing that surprised me about your article was that it was cast in such historical terms, as though Lenten fasting is now a thing of the past, but Lent is actually alive and well in the Christian churches, even if ways of observing it have changed with the surrounding culture. While it is still customary to observe the traditional fast in some churches (particularly the eastern ones), many Christians nowadays do other things which express its basic meaning, such as spending more time in prayer or spiritual study, giving up extra time to help other people, or putting new effort into improving their relationships.  
Jessica Rose

**Are you giving up something for Lent?**

Daily Information is offering Easter eggs as prizes for the most innovative and original ideas for Lenten abstinence.

Write to us at 31 Warnborough Rd, OX2 6JA or email dailyinfo@dailinfo.co.uk

**PREVIEW: CONCERT**

The Oxford Gargoyles are six men and six women committed to giving Oxford's choral music scene a shake-up, and to expanding the boundaries of a cappella (unaccompanied) singing and repertoire. Singing an eclectic and invigorating mix of jazz, latin and pop, with some more unusual numbers thrown in, they are rapidly establishing themselves as one of the most innovative and exciting student musical groups in town.  
In the three short years since their genesis, the Gargoyles have been booked to perform at an enviable and ever-increasing list of functions, from dinners, to garden parties, to college balls, in addition to giving their own solo concerts. Somewhere along the line they have also found time to record two CDs, the second of which, *Not Just a Pretty Face* is due for release some time in the next few days. Next on the agenda is a trip to the States, where they will share their talents with audiences in Boston and New York, and also join forces with American College Barbershop giants the Harvard-Radcliffe Veritones and the Princeton Tigertiles and Tigertones.  
The secret of their success? Shrewd marketing is part of it. The design and professionalism of their promotional material leaves most other student groups bursting, and recently won the Gargoyles a £1500 subsidy from Citibank. The rest is due to a generous

**The New Oxford Plan**

Exhibition, questionnaires, make your suggestions.

St Hugh's College, St Margaret's Road.  
Saturday 3rd March 10am-5pm

**Working party discussions**

St Hugh's, Tuesday 6th March, 6.45-9pm

**REVIEW: THEATRE**

**THE SHIPS AT MYLAE, by Elizabeth Gately**  
Runner-up, OUDS New Writing Festival 2001  
Burton Taylor Theatre, 27th Feb-3rd March 2001

Elizabeth Gately's play is being shown as part of the OUDS new writing festival. It was one of the runners-up and it is easy to see why. Ambitious in scope and boldly plotted, it tells the intertwining stories of a group of soldiers sailing into almost certain death at the hands of the Roman fleet. In an atmosphere of hot and claustrophobic fear, these men act out their last dramas. They remember loved ones left behind and rekindle nightmares of previous wars. Their terror and grief makes them love and punish each other. One of the hubs of the play, which the writing simply and ably portrays, is the homoerotic pull amongst the men. Some mock, some are beguiled, some turn a blind eye. The writing is most assured when gripped by this sexual charge. It wandered a little pallidly however during some of the other scenes.  
The acting followed a similar pattern. Though there was great chemistry between pairs, larger groups became too uniform. It was difficult to make out individual characters. Only the clean shaven Spartan, repeatedly called faggot by the rest of the crew, stood out as a distinct person. Though the accents bounced off each other in a satisfying way (these were ordinary men from the many islands), the soldiers remained largely faceless. They were similarly dressed in T-shirts and stained trousers, which emphasised their youth and vulnerability. The sickly, death-fraught atmosphere of the ship was also well caught by the lighting, which drained the stage of all colour.  
Thankfully, it was not necessary to have much knowledge of ancient history to make sense of the piece. The playwright uses the background of the first Punic war, in which the Romans routed the Carthaginian fleet, as a basic arena in which to pit the weak against the strong. Roman victory is a foregone conclusion. The motley crew which sails to its doom consists of Carthaginian commanders, Libyan mercenaries, stray Spartans and other Greeks on their way to Mylae (Milaazzo) in northern Sicily. The rest was self-explanatory, a spirited attempt at understanding men skewered at the outer edges of endurance.  
Aruna Wittmann 27 / 2 / 01

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**EXHIBITIONS**

**DESIGN INTO ARCHITECTURE** / An exhibition of drawings selected by the editor of The Burlington Magazine. Ends 12th April / Christ Church Picture Gallery, Christ Church (entrance via Canterbury Gate / Oriol Square) Opening times: Mon-Sat 10.30-1.00, 2.00-4.30, Sun 2.00-4.30 (Easter-end Sept closes 5.30). Tel: 274172. Fax: 202429  
**ABOUT TIME** / Exploring the concept of time. Ends 1st April / Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street. Opening times: Tues-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2pm-5pm; Tel: 278000. Fax: 278018

**CONCERTS**

**Thursday 1st March**  
**MUSIC FOR HOLY WEEK & EASTER FROM THE RENAISSANCE AND THE 20TH CENTURY** / including works from Byrd, Victoria, Britten & Poulenc / E.5 / 8.15pm / The Queen's College, High St. OX1 4AW; Tel: 279194. Fax: 790819  
**OXFORD GARGOYLES** Not Just a Pretty Face / A Cappella vocal music / New College Chapel, 8pm / See preview

**GIGS + NIGHTLIFE**

**Thursday 1st March**  
**JAMES PRIEST JAZZ QUARTET** / Admission Free / 9pm-12am / Cricketers Arms, 43, 11fley Rd. Tel: 726264  
**THE BYTES** / Jazz / 11pm - 2am / Freud's, Walton Street: Tel: 311171, Fax: 311171  
**KING PRAWN** / ska punk terrorists/E6 / 8-2am / Backroom @ The Bully, 162 Cowley Road: Tel: 244516, Fax: 204257. Email: info@thebully.f9.co.uk  
**BEN CASTLE** / Jazz tenor sax/E4 / 9pm / Spin@The Wheatsheaf, Wheatsheaf Alley, 129 High Street: Tel: 243276  
**DISQUES VOGUES** / easy listening. £3.99 / 10.00pm / The Zodiac, 190 Cowley Road. Tel: 420042  
**THE JAMES GANG** / Jazz quartet / Cricketers Arms. 43, 11fley Rd. Tel: 726264  
**NORTICA** / DJ Set / 9pm-2am / Po Na Na, Magdalen Street: Tel: 249171, Fax: 790422. Email: dave@ponanaox.fsnet.co.uk  
**BIG BEAR BLUES-BENEFIT FOR BEARS'** TRUMPETER CLIVE WHITLOCK / £5.00. Fish & Chips £2.30. Ena 01235 765648 or 01993 850164 or 880279 / 8.00pm / Lairs Barn, 1 mile east of Wantage. off A417. Tel: 01993 811678/01235 648765

**MEETINGS**

**Organisation / Subject / Speaker / Place / Time / Contact**  
**Thursday 1st March**  
**SOME OF BRITAIN'S RARE WILD PLANTS** - BRIAN LANEY / Rare Plants Group Lecture / 1.10pm / Large Lecture Theatre, Plant Sciences Dept, Parks Rd, Oxford  
**PACIFIC NORTHWEST GARDENING STYLE** / Botanic garden winter lecture / £7.50 / 8pm / St. John's Auditorium, St. John's College, St. Giles. Tel: 277307  
**OXFORD UNIVERSITY SPECIAL LECTURE - WE DO THIS AT COMMON LAW BUT THAT IN EQUITY** / Prof. A.S. Burrows / 5.30pm / St Cross Building  
**OXFORD UNIVERSITY SPECIAL LECTURE - VOLTAIRE AFTER BESTERMAN** / Prof. W. H. Barber / 5pm / Taylor Institution  
**PIETRO AARON'S TOSCANELLO IN MUSICA** / AN ANNOTATED MUSIC TREATISE FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY / A.-E. Ceulemanns / 5pm / All Souls College, High St  
**ORAL LITERATURE OF YESTERDAY : GREEK POPULAR SONGS** / Prof. Alexis Politis / 5.00pm / 47, Wellington Square.  
**GEOGRAPHICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY QUESTIONS** / Prof. G. Blake / 2.00pm / School of Geography, Mansfield Rd  
**THE ROLE OF CORPORATE LEADERSHIP** / Sir John Brown / 5.30pm / Zoology/Psychology Building, Corner of South Parks & St Cross Rds  
**OXFORD VEGETARIANS INFORMAL GET-TOGETHER** / Details: Edward 762563 / 6.30-8.30pm / Museum of Modern Art, 30 Pembroke Street. Opening times: Tues-Sun 11am-6pm, Thurs 11am-9pm; Tel: 722733, Fax: 722573, Email: generalenquiries@oma.oxon.ac.uk  
**SCHREIBEN AN DER GRENZE (WRITING IN THE MARGINS)** / Part of the Oxford Austrian Cultural Festival. Writers Janko Ferk, Sabine Gruber & Alois Hotschnig read and discuss informally. Admission free. / 7pm / Taylor Institution  
**WORLD BOOK DAY** / Music, wine tasting, mime and book signing by Camilla Gibb / Waterside's Bookshop, Broad St. Tel: 790212. Fax: 794258  
**GENERAL ELECTION DEBATE** / 8.30pm. Emergency debate 7.45pm / Oxford Union, Frewin Court

**AUDITIONS**

**AUDITIONS FOR** Magdalen Garden Show. 'The Rivals'. 12.30pm, Thur-Fri 7th week. Lower Oscar Wilde Room. Production team also needed. Please contact Laura Murray 0774646834 for further information.

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**REVIEW: THEATRE**

**The Myth of Prometheus, by John Bohannon**  
Winner, OUDS New Writing Festival 2001  
Old Fire Station until Saturday 3rd March

'Theatre isn't entertainment, it's war' blasts the producer of this recent winner of the Oxford New Writing Festival. Prometheus, stealer of fire from the Gods and victim of liver-pecking torture for his troubles, has inspired many a literary adaptation over the ages. But this performance - the myth transposed to the confines of a clinical white-cube ward - seems determined that no audience member should leave unscathed.  
The story is the complex intermingling of hallucination and reality as experienced by a modern day 'prisoner of conscience', a manic David Smith, at the hands of the US military represented by Alex Burghart - the Bach-loving doctor who gradually transcends his stereotype into a sinister embodiment of "the purity of truth" - and Stephen Karam as the soldier who... no I won't give it away, go and see for yourself.  
Drawing on contemporary sources such as Ariel Dorfman's *Death and the Maiden* or Orwell's *1984* as well as layers of classical and mythological metaphors, an intriguing war of truth, memory, power and sadism is played out with finesse and occasional black humour. This piece relies on an intelligent script and strong performances, rather than any extravagant gestures, for its intensity.  
As torture, or rather its constant threat, hangs over the multiple truths of David's recollections, the audience is implicated in a war of information waged over the body. This constant threat serves to avoid identifying with the loftier ideals of its justification. Better than a night in a Turkish jail, I'd say.  
Andy Weir, 27 / 2 / 01

**TO LET**

**Paid entries head the column, and appear in larger type. Free entries appear space permitting.**  
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**REVIEW: THEATRE**

**Sophistry, by Richard Murphy**  
Runner-up, OUDS New Writing Festival 2001  
Burton Taylor Theatre until Saturday 3rd March

The intimate atmosphere of the Burton Taylor Theatre is the ideal setting for Richard Murphy's new play *Sophistry*, one of the three runners-up in this year's OUDS new writing festival.  
Eight members of an investment banking team are on a training workshop in order to increase the "synergy" of their work. The programme, consisting of some strange party games, is "dictated" by Larry Winchanski (Brian Stewart, great indoctrination), who is for most of the play only present acoustically. Simple tasks like the "envisaging" and impersonation of animals lay the nerves of the group bare. But the real task is still to come: Billy, a fish, lives in a bucket with a hole and has to be saved. This time members of the team who exhibit weakness are removed from the room. First is secretary Sue Peep (Rachel Fishwick, a convincing nervous wreck), since Billy reminds her of her late goldfish.  
The team continues to fail to find a solution, and as they do so all their social inadequacies are revealed: second to go, or rather to be dragged out, is the cool Jim Matiland (Franco Woolfe), who turns out to be an alcoholic; he is closely followed by the erratic Tibbington-Wells (John Washington, a stunning performance). Jack Turnbull (Steven Mould) is next to go, a little bit surprisingly as he exhibited the first bit of common sense by just stopping the leak with a finger. After Michelle (Kathryn White), the team manager's private secretary has left, the audience expects some sort of showdown from the cold Kerry Fisher (Claudia Renton, very convincing) and team manager Nick Kent (Tom Eastcott). Yet apart from the fact that she is a lesbian with a lot of common sense, and he's got an inferiority complex, not much emerges. There is no solution to the problem as there is no real end to the play: Billy's dead, Kerry's gone and Nick will have to go soon.  
Director Luca Giberti has done a good job, teasing out the strengths of her actors. There are some quite funny moments in this psychological endurance test, which make it worth a look.  
Michael Sommer, 27 / 2 / 01

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**WANTED**

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**THEATRE**

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**HAMLET** Fri 23rd Feb-Thur 1st Mar 7.30; Sat mat. 2.30; No perf. Sun  
Until 10th March. See review: www.dailyinfo.co.uk  
**Magdalen College Auditorium**  
**THE WEIR** Thur 1st-Sat 3rd Mar 7.30  
Conor McPherson explores the healing power of storytelling.  
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**JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOUR DREAMCOAT**  
Tue 27th-Thur 1st 2.30, 7.30; Fri 2nd 5pm, 8pm; Sat 3rd 2pm, 8pm  
Webber and Rice's tuneful biblical classic.  
**Old Fire Station** 794490  
**THE MYTH OF PROMETHIUS** Sat mat. 2.30  
Winner OUDS New Writing Festival. See review.  
**Playhouse** 798600  
**NAKED JUSTICE** Mon 26th Feb-Sat 3rd Mar 7.30 (Fri 8pm); Thur & Sat mats. 2.30  
John Mortimer's new satirical court room drama.  
**Burton Taylor Theatre** 798600  
**THE SHIPS AT MYLAE** Tue 27th Feb-Fri 2nd Mar 7.30; Sat 3rd 5.30  
Runner-up, OUDS New Writing Festival. See review.  
**SOPHISTRY** Tue 27th Feb-Fri 2nd Mar 9.30; Sat 3rd 8.00  
Runner-up, OUDS New Writing Festival. See review.  
**Pegasus Theatre** 722851  
**THE GREATEST ACTS ON VAUDEVILLE** Thur 1st 8pm  
**Moser Theatre, Wadham**  
**ROB PHONED** Tue 27th Feb-Fri 2nd Mar 7.30  
Runner-up, OUDS New Writing Festival 2001.

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**CINEMA**

Until Thursday 1st March  
**The Phoenix, Walton Street 512526**  
**STATE AND MAIN (15)** Daily 2.00, 6.45  
Mamet's farce about a doomed movie production.  
**ALMOST FAMOUS (15)** Daily 4.15, 9.00  
Coming of age via the 70's music scene.  
**SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE (15)** Daily 2.15, 7.10  
Unusual meta-vampire film horror comedy.  
**THE CLAIM (15)** Daily 4.30, 9.10  
Tragedy of conscience in the snowy west.  
**LATE SHOWS:**  
**TWIN PEAKS: FIRE WALK WITH ME (18)** The prequel. Thur 1st March 11.30pm  
**BLACK & WHITE (18)** Thur 1st March 11.30pm  
No-holds-barred look at American society.  
**ABC Magdalen Street** 251998  
Bookings 0870 3339663 / Enquiries 725305  
**HANNIBAL (18)** Daily: 1.45, 5.00, 8.20  
Hopkins is hungry. See review: www.dailyinfo.co.uk  
**ABC George Street** 251998  
Bookings 0870 3339664 / Enquiries 723911  
**THE EMPEROR'S NEW GROOVE (U)** Disney animation. Daily 1.15, 3.30, 5.40  
**WHAT WOMEN WANT (12)** Daily 1.35, 5.05, 8.10  
Mel Gibson listens in on women's thoughts.  
**CASTAWAY (12)** Daily 7.40  
A skeletal Tom Hanks braves the elements.  
**THE ADVENTURES OF ROCKY AND BULLWINKLE (U)** Daily 12.15, 2.30  
Ringer Rabbit-like mix of actors & animation.  
**TRAFFIC (18)** Daily 4.45, 7.50  
The Frustrations of drug law enforcement.  
**Ultimate Picture Palace** 245288  
**Jeune St**  
**IRMA VEP (15)** Tue-Thu 6.00  
Maggie Cheung comes to Paris as a jewel thief.  
**CHOPPER (18)** Tue-Thu 8.00  
Australian psycho.  
**AI NO CORRIIDA (18)** Tue-Thu 10.15pm  
Controversial Japanese erotic drama.