



**THE FUTURE, TODAY.
(LAST MONTH)**

The NSC Christmas party celebrates the avant-garde and the moderne

PLUS:

Club tie immortalised on television

Callum Coates smuggles a symbol of style on to the set

Night of a Thousand Waistcoats

The second Grand Anarcho-Dandyist Ball

Exclusive tailoring offer

A free consultation and measuring service from A Suit That Fits

The New Sheridan Club

Newsletter

LI • January 2011



The New Sheridan Club traditionally meets in the upstairs room of The Wheatsheaf, just off Oxford Street. The Wheatsheaf is one of Fitzrovia's historic pubs, a one-time haunt of Dylan Thomas, George Orwell, Augustus John and Julian Maclaren-Ross. In fact Thomas met his wife Caitlin in The Wheatsheaf and, legend has it, he was known to flash at women there as well. Fitzrovia's associations with literature go back to the eighteenth century. In the twentieth century both Woolf and Shaw lived in Fitzroy Square; Pound and Lewis launched *Blast!* at the Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel in Percy Street. John Buchan lived in Portland Place and in *The Thirty-Nine Steps* Richard Hannay has a flat there. Both Lawrences (D.H. and T.E.) took rooms there, as did Aleister Crowley, Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke and Katherine Mansfield.

The Editor Writes

Welcome to the 51st Newsletter and the first of 2011. For many of us (myself included) 2010 was not a year that we'll remember fondly, as if the frigid economic climate has somehow frosted over other aspects of our lives and fortunes. But we should be proud that the NSC has continued on its noble course, like a cultural icebreaker with a precious cargo of style and bonhomie (*Mayday! Metaphor dangerously out of control!*), bringing together like-minded coves and showing the dumbed-down, disposable world around us that it is perfectly possible to live by higher sartorial and social values. And now that Christmas is out of the way we're got some exciting events lining up, including some more film nights, a tea tasting, a vodka tasting and more. Read on...

The Next Meeting

The next Club Meeting will take place on Wednesday 5th January in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 8pm until 11pm. The man known as Charles Henry Wolfenbloode, Duke of Tipa (Charles Tsua to his mother), will fill our ears with *Beautiful and Dignified: An Introduction to Academic Dress*. Points of discussion will include the history, practice and design of such schmutter, the gown, hood, cap and habit, how to put a hood on, etc. Members are invited to wear their academics on the night. (If you

don't have an academic gown, I'm sure a bin-liner will do.)

Please note that on this occasion the talk itself will begin at 8pm—rather than usual 9pm-ish of most meetings—and will run for some 40–50 minutes. (These meetings officially start at 8pm but in practice folk are gathering from 7pm or earlier, so feel free to do likewise.)

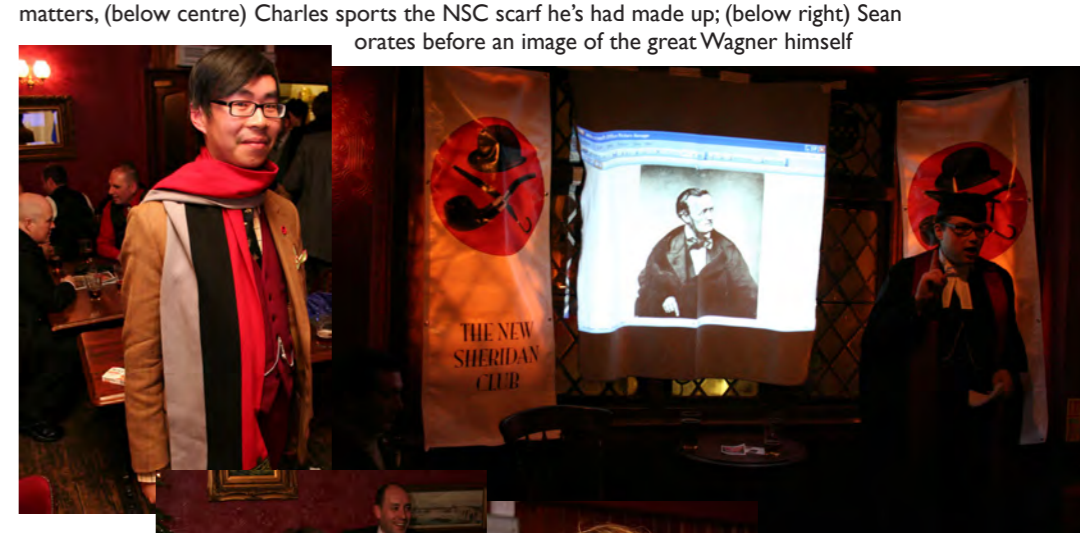
The Last Meeting

After a maelstrom of technical difficulties in getting the laptop to handle the strange file formats our speaker had brought along (and which saw him dashing home to fetch another computer), at our December meeting Sean Rillo Raczka eventually managed to tell us why he loves the work of Richard Wagner. This is a particularly salient question for leftist firebrand Sean, champion of the underdog, defender of the common man and paladin of justice and equality—because Wagner was clearly anti-Semitic, even if not as viciously so as the Nazis who “appropriated” his work. The same question was recently agonised over on television by Stephen Fry, and he's Jewish himself. Sean argued passionately that one can and should separate the beauty of the artwork from the ugliness of its creator's views, even perhaps views he might have had in mind as he created.

Many thanks to Comrade Raczka for a thought-provoking talk. For those unable to be there, I hope to offer a written version next issue.



(Far left) Sean adopts a relaxed, casual look; (left) his audience takes it in good humour; (below left) Neil focuses on what really



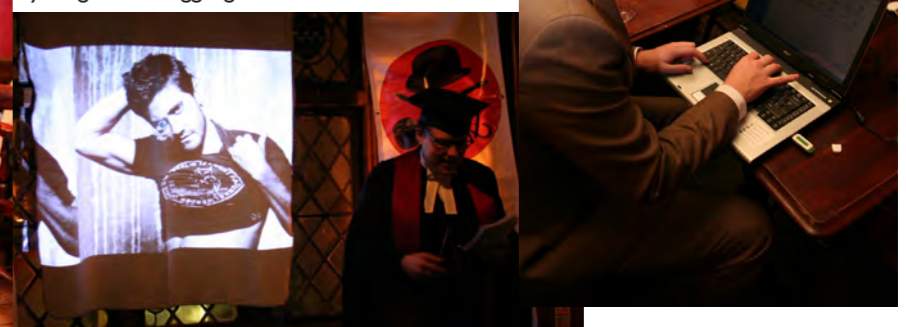
matters, (below centre) Charles sports the NSC scarf he's had made up; (below right) Sean orates before an image of the great Wagner himself



(Left, l-r) Matthew and C-B set the world to rights, Oliver shows off his Wellingtons, and a fellow forced to wear a Punishment Tie is struck by existential angst



(Below left) The Wheatsheaf had put in a sterling effort on the Christmas tree front; (right) Scarheart pretends he knows computers; (below) for some reason Sean's laptop kept throwing up this image of a young man struggling to dress himself





Ceci n'est
pas un
Christmas
party

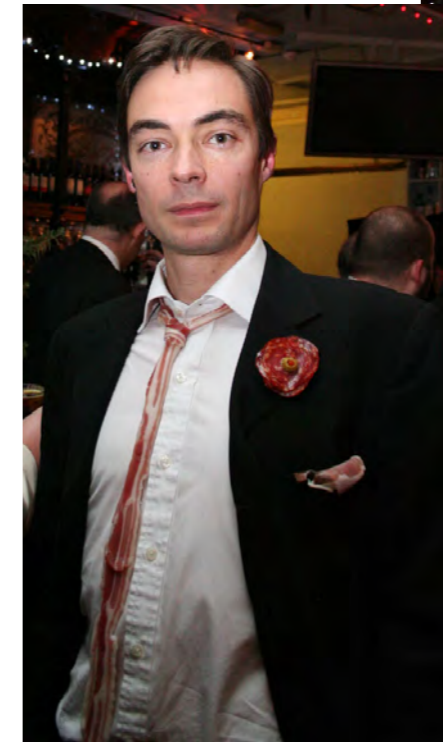
THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB'S CHRISTMAS PARTY WAS AN EXPRESSIONIST BALL TO CELEBRATE THE MODERN AGE WITH ALL THINGS AVANT-GARDE, A SMORGASBORD OF SURREALISM, EXPRESSIONISM, VORTICISM, ORPHISM, DADAISM, FUTURISM AND MANY MORE OF YOUR FAVOURITE ISMS.

IN HONOUR OF SPEED, machinery, electricity, mighty cities and all the other modern inventions of man that will surely make the 20th century an idyll of comfort, ease and universal harmony, we offered a blend of live performance, drunken revelry and silly games—a Shoot the Lobster Off the Telephone competition, a “Dear Dada” random agony aunt service, a priest-dragging contest, a Surrealist Lucky Dip, and of course our famous Grand Raffle.

Performing were juggler Mat Ricardo (I say “juggler” but most of what he did was actually feats of balancing) and Suri Sumatra’s dance performance based on the 1927 film *Metropolis*.

Once again our renowned free Snuff Bar was in evidence,

(Clockwise from right) Our Glorious Chairman Torquil Arbuthnot; my own outfit, on a Surrealist tip (yes, it's all real meat); Mrs H.'s gown is inspired by Dali's dream sequence for Hitchcock's *Spellbound*; Artemis Scarheart, a man with a vision. And you're not going to like it





(Above) Fleur de Guerre's outfit includes fairy lights in her hair (powered by a battery pack), reminiscent of the vision of the future in the "clothing in the year 2000" film (top left: click on image to play); (left) David Bridgman-Smith modeled his suit directly on the man's outfit in the film, including the dispenser for "candy for cuties"; (far left) Callum Coates' get-up is more aeronaut-of-the-future. Callum and David shared the prize for best costume; (below) Will Smith, seen here with Annika Caswell, sports a shuttlecock as a buttonhole

kindly supplied by Wilson's of Sharrow, and our raffle prizes included a hat from Atelier Millinery, tea from The Canton Tea Company, a voucher from tailors A Suit That Fits, plus bottles of delicious SW4 gin—"The Gin of Champions"—and the *Un Chien Andalou* Prize of a straight-razor shave from traditional barber Murdock of London.

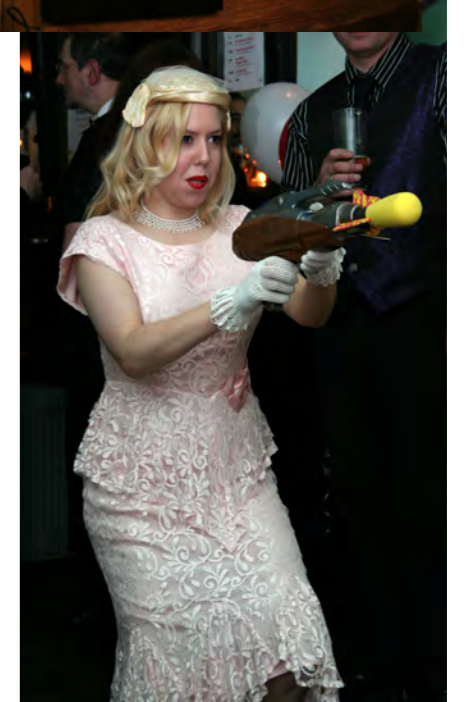
The dress code was simply "avant-garde", and the interpretations we witnessed ranged from 1980s "futurism" to fashionable Steampunk concepts, with much more besides...



Shoot the Lobster off the Telephone
An homage to Dali's sculpture, Hitting the small lobster scored more points (though in fact no one managed it)



(Clockwise from top) Seen here competing are Merrick, Andrew Harrison, Louise Taylor, James Francis Hester IV (who went on to win), Sara Bridgman-Smith and Brice Stratford





(Left, below left and front cover) Suri Sumatra's *Metropolis* routine; (below) Mat Ricardo balances nine cigar boxes and a glass of wine; (bottom right) here he shows how anyone can do a balancing act with just a few common kitchen implements; (bottom left) some comic business with a trick machete



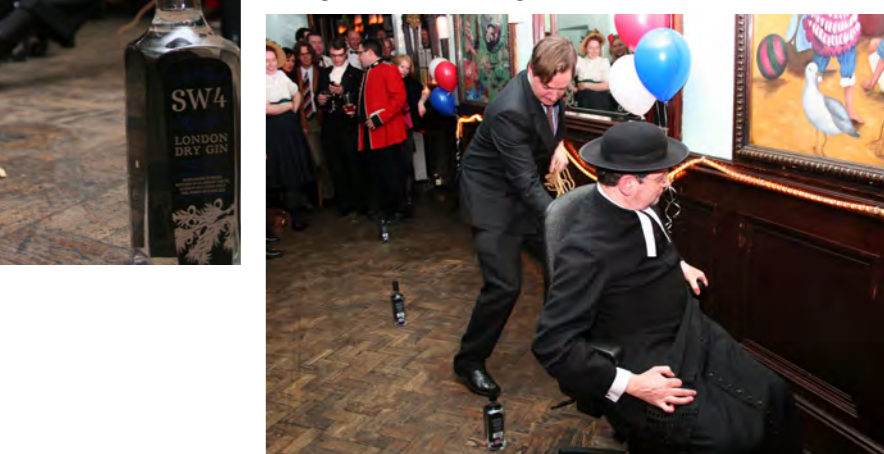
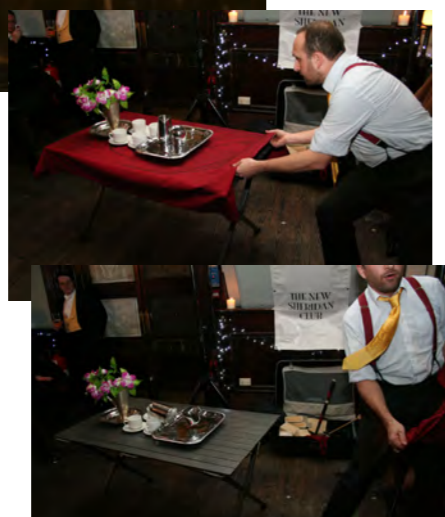
(Clockwise from far left) Giles Culpepper; Merrick; a suffragette whom I don't know; Robert Beckwith; I think this fellow's name was Sasha; the Curé's gritted teeth; and two shots of Acturius



(Below) Mat's finale was not just to whip the tablecloth from under the setting, but then somehow to whip it back under again



Priest-Dragging Contest Inspired by the Dali/Buñuel film *Un Chien Andalou*, in which a young man at one point symbolically drags a pair of priests behind him (along with a piano and a dead donkey), our game involves pulling a priest (played by our own Curé Michael Silver) through a slalom of SW4 gin bottles.





(Clockwise from top left) The rich spread of prizes in our grand raffle; this lady won a bottle of sloe gin donated by David Hollander; the Curé's prize for being our stunt priest for the evening; Eugenie admires young Gwendolyn Iggulden, seen here with mother Grace; Chuckles somehow wins Gwendolyn in the raffle; new member Adrienne, who not only won this tifter from Atelier hats but also won the Priest-Dragging

(Above) The vintage mafia with their raffle tickets at the ready; (left) Charles wins a splendid Dali colouring book; (below) Robert wins a Christmas hamper for his family



Dear Dada Based on genuine Surrealist games from the period, this amusement involved each contestant writing down an "agony aunt" style question then folding the paper so the question was hidden; then he or she would add an answer to another player's question—without, of course, knowing what the question is. The results can be amusing and sometimes unwittingly profound... Here are some examples (the answers are identified, but not the questioners)

Question: What do women want?

Answer: Keep your hands to yourself
Adrienne

Question: How do I tell my neighbours that their strenuous love-making is causing structural damage to my property?

Answer: Soak overnight, then squeeze dry
Andrew Harrison

Question: Will I have a chance with "Him"?

Answer: Ronnie Corbett
Claire Melvin

Question: My stockings appear to have stretched and keep wriggling restlessly on my thighs. What should I do to ease the discomfort?

Answer: Why can't I hit a lobster off a phone?
David Bridgman-Smith



Question: Where does one find a millionaire to fund my decadent lifestyle?

Answer: One solution: revolution
The People's Front of Judea

Question: Given that God is infinite and that the universe is also infinite, is an end to either possible?

Answer: Have another drink
Anon

(Above) Party-goers riffle through the Dear Dada answer sheets, to their apparent amusement; (right) a genuine Dali tie! (Below) Lord Rupert by the Snuff Bar. The bar is rather depleted by this stage but had contained a dozen snuffs kindly supplied by Wilson's of Sharrow



Question: Should I stay or should I go?

Answer: Like you are viewing the world from within a glass bauble
Sara Bridgman-Smith



Why I Am a Futurist



AND WHY IT IS STILL RELEVANT

In honour of our party's glib title, "Back to the Futurists", the club's resident Futurist explains what the movement was, and is, really all about. This was originally delivered as a lecture at the party itself.

By Actuarium

MY NAME IS ACTUARIUM and I am a Futurist.

I suppose the first question should be "What is Futurism?" Futurism is an artistic and philosophical movement that detonated on to the world stage with the publication of Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's manifesto in *Le Figaro* in 1909. It was launched as a kick back against the moribund Italian culture of the time that was still pining for the Renaissance—a movement that started in the 14th century!—culture in which only images of classical or religious subjects were deemed as being "art." By contrast Futurism championed the new emerging technologies and the sensations they produced, the dynamics of speed and power as well as the beauty of the machine aesthetic. Behind all this was an overriding drive for change. Most of you will probably be unaware of Futurism, it having been essentially written out of history after the Second World War. For those of you who do know something, what you know is probably wrong.

Futurism is generally decried for a number of reasons. Firstly the manifesto calls for the destruction of museums and galleries, and is often quoted as merely a call for wanton vandalism, but academics now think of it as a call for the removal of art from the rarefied "high brow" environments. It is actually an attempt to democratise art, making it accessible to all.

It is also usually claimed that they were misogynistic, but again the expert view now is that they were trying to destroy the unrealistic



Actuarium delivering his original lecture at the party

and restrictive pedestal that women were placed upon at the time. As it happens, Valentine de Saint rebuked Marinetti over this point and by return he encouraged her to write "The Manifesto of Futurist Woman". This was then adopted by the movement.

They were also pro-war, and this is something that I cannot defend or excuse. All I can suggest is that in 1909 they had no real idea of the true horrors of an industrialised war. For myself, I do recognise that war is the perfect Futurist tool with regard to sweeping away all that has gone before—but such recognition does not mean that I find it in any way desirable. Nor can I condone the pursuit of war for its own sake.

Yet another accusation is that Futurism is right wing. I would point out that when the movement was launched it was a time when both Germany and Italy were establishing themselves as cohesive nations and consequently a lot of people at the time were nationalists. I personally don't see the principles of Futurism as intrinsically being to either the right or the left. As regards to today, for a Futurist to be right wing purely because they are blindly following those who have gone before is oxymoronic—possibly without the "oxy" bit.

The final, and probably the biggest, reason for their being struck from history is that

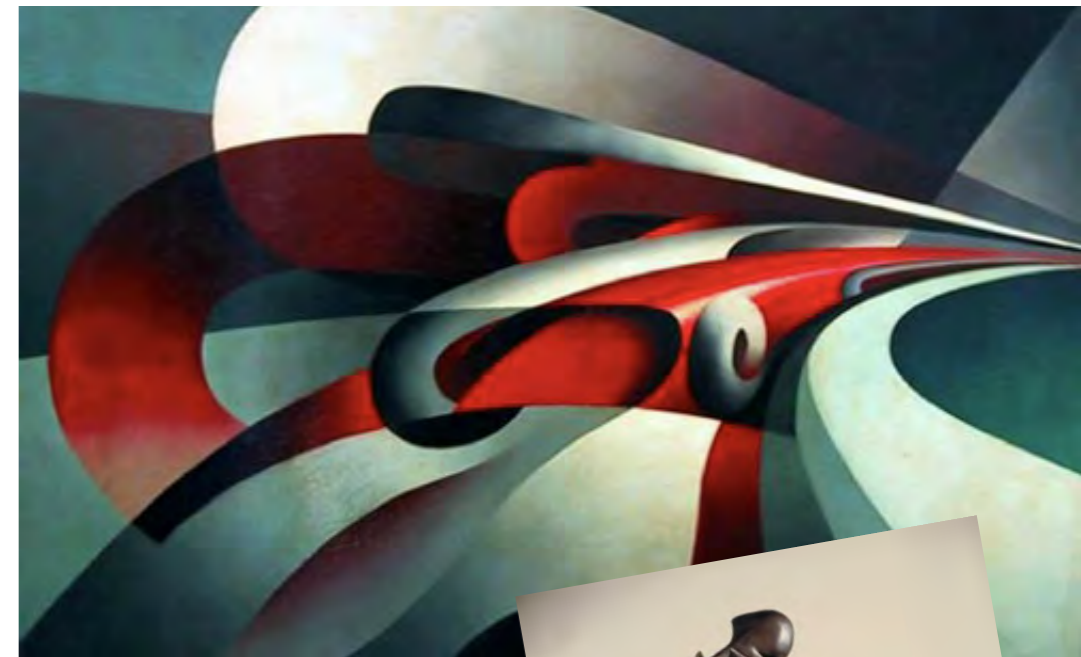
Futurism was seen as being aligned to the Fascists. During the 1920s and 1930s the Fascists were building a new world based on Modernism and promoting their values through funding motor racing and high speed aircraft. Given the core values of Futurism I think it would be surprising if the Futurists weren't rather taken with them! The truth of the matter is that Marinetti fell out with Mussolini in the late 1920s, long before the Second World War, because he saw the way that Fascism was developing as being a perversion of his dreams.

I have personally always read the manifesto as a trigger for ideas and feelings, rather than a literal decree. Apart from anything else it talks of crashing a car—and if you exhorted all your followers to go out and crash cars then you would pretty soon find yourself without any followers at all. Certainly whenever I do read Marinetti's manifesto I am always left with a feeling of excitement and enthusiasm for Futurism and its core values.

With the audience for this piece, and your knowledge of international and social history, we are perhaps in a unique situation for imagining ourselves back in 1909. So, I ask you to consider yourself to be sitting reading the manifesto on the day it was published. The Wright Brothers had successfully made the

first powered heavier-than-air flight a scant six years previously. It is the year of Bleriot's successful flight across the Channel, giving an idea of the phenomenal rate of technological development, although we do not know if Scott will perish in three years time trying to reach the South Pole. It also happens to be the year of birth for those two Chappist icons, James Mason and Errol Flynn. I would now like to present a

couple of excerpts from the manifesto and, as you read them, I would like you to bear in mind the society of the age and what we now know of the intent. Just imagine the impact!



(Top) *Le forze della curva*, 1930 (The Forces on a Curve), by Tullio Cralli; (above) *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913, by Umberto Boccioni; (left) Boccioni (l) and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti at the Salon des Futuristes in Rue Richepanse, Paris, circa 1910.



Then the silence increased. As we listened to the last faint prayer of the old canal and the crumbling of the bones of the moribund palaces with their green growth of beard, suddenly the hungry automobiles roared beneath our windows.

“Come, my friends!” I said. “Let us go! At last Mythology and the mystic cult of the ideal have been left behind. We are going to be present at the birth of the centaur and we shall soon see the first angels fly! We must break down the gates of life to test the bolts and the padlocks! Let us go! Here is the very first sunrise on earth! Nothing equals the splendour of its red sword which strikes for the first time in our millennial darkness.”

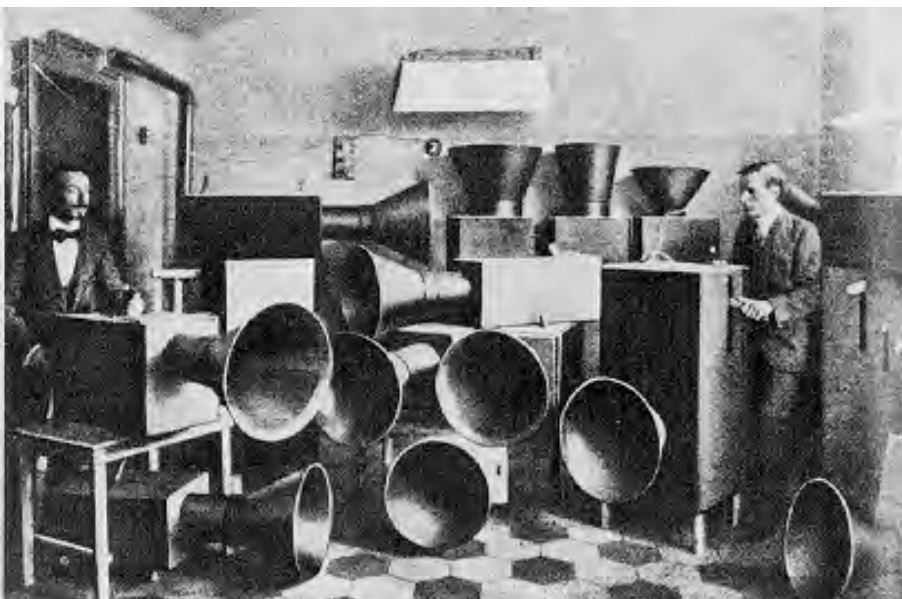
We went up to the three snorting machines to caress their breasts. I lay along mine like a corpse on its bier, but I suddenly revived again beneath the steering wheel—a guillotine knife—which threatened my stomach. A great sweep of madness brought us sharply back to ourselves and drove us through the streets, steep and deep, like dried up torrents. Here and there unhappy lamps in the windows taught us to despise our mathematical eyes. “Smell,” I exclaimed, “smell is good enough for wild beasts!”

And we hunted, like young lions, death with its black fur dappled with pale crosses, who ran before us in the vast violet sky, palpable and living.

And yet we had no ideal Mistress stretching her form up to the clouds, nor yet a cruel Queen to whom to offer our corpses twisted into the shape of Byzantine rings! No reason to die unless it is the desire to be rid of the too great weight of our courage!

We drove on, crushing beneath our burning wheels,

Luigi Russolo (l) and some of his *intonarumori*, or “noise instruments”. In 1913 he did what any good Futurist does and published a manifesto, *The Art of Noise*, calling upon young artists to abandon traditional orchestral instruments and explore the sounds of the new urban world. In 1927 he actually left Italy due to his opposition to Fascism and later became a Realist painter



like shirt-collars under the iron, the watch dogs on the steps of the houses.

Death, tamed, went in front of me at each corner offering me his hand nicely, and sometimes lay on the ground with a noise of creaking jaws giving me velvet glances from the bottom of puddles. ...

We will sing of the great crowds agitated by work, pleasure and revolt; the multi-coloured and polyphonic surf of revolutions in modern capitals; the nocturnal vibration of the arsenals and the workshops beneath their violent electric moons; the gluttonous railway stations devouring smoking serpents; factories suspended from the clouds by the thread of their smoke; bridges with the leap of gymnasts flung across the diabolic cutlery of sunny rivers: adventurous steamers sniffing the horizon; great-breasted locomotives, puffing on the rails like enormous steel horses with long tubes for bridle, and the gliding flight of aeroplanes whose propellers sound like the flapping of a flag and the applause of enthusiastic crowds.

Of course Futurism covered all aspects of the arts but it also sought to combine them. There is one poem (“La Prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France” by Sonia Delaunay, 1913) about an artist travelling with a prostitute to Paris—I think you will agree, if nothing else, that there’s quite a bit of metaphor in there for a start! It is typed out in blocks of different coloured text, with a watercolour image down the side. It is as much to be looked at as read.

Of course the emergent and avant-garde was championed, but don’t be fooled into thinking that all of it may be dismissed as just bizarre. As regards the music, you may be familiar with the photograph of two men in a room with what

look like different sized packing crates with horns sticking out the front (see left). It must have made quite a sound and I should like to hear it one day.

However, “La Canzone Di Uriele” is also by a Futurist composer, Franco Casavola: click the button (left) to hear it performed by Daniele Lombardi



and Susanna Rigacci.

I must admit that I was also drawn to the Futurists because, like Chappists, they were sincere with regard to core principles but they also had a sense of fun. A tradition was quickly established



One of Marinetti's poems

of emptying grocery stores of their produce on the way to meetings so that, if there was a speaker who wasn’t very good, there was plenty of ammunition with which to pelt him. (On the night I originally delivered this talk I was grateful to note that this is one element of Futurism that had not been resurrected.)

“So,” you may ask, “how is Futurism relevant today?” I cannot help but think that we have lost our passion to strive for betterment and adventure. Concorde and the Space Shuttle are both gone without any discernable successors, or at least none that have captured the imagination like them. Yes, we have a duty to environment and a need to be responsible but we must reawaken mankind’s imperative to push onwards. Then there is the need for artistic change. We have to break the stranglehold of the Brit Art alumni with their lazy and self-reverential “works”.

If you will permit the impertinence, I would like to end with a couple of passages from my own manifesto. After all, every good Futurist should have a manifesto.

There are those who look on the Futurists as being a part of history, a fashion that has had its time and belongs now only to museums and textbooks. Surely this is directly contrary to the purpose of the Futurist movement? Just as those who do not see past the products of the Bauhaus and attribute a “style” to it, they only see the expression of the Futurist’s formative years and do not understand its deeper resonances. By default the Futurist is always now, the only tense is the present. The past tense is all that has gone. I reject the consignment of all that has passed to the bin, I look to those I admire for inspiration but I do not

slavishly follow. The future tense is invalid: it means that I see what may be but do not have the drive or the wit to achieve it; it is an admission of failure. Therefore it is always now. This document, if it is truly Futurist, is only the record of a Futurist’s act. The art is only valid during the act of creation, the painting or text or music is only its record, to show what has been achieved.

My first and most important proclamation is that the time is right for change. This is why the powerhouse of Futurism must once more come to the fore. With the heady cocktail that is my despite for the current and my love of the emergent I propose a toast to today’s fox, and today’s fox is the barren and bankrupt artistic endeavours that I see fêted around me. I find the tent of Tracey Emin, scrawled with the names of past sexual encounters ironic; it symbolises better than anything else the prostitution of ability for acclaim among the poseurs and self-promoters. No longer is shock value enough, it merely serves to emphasize the lack of dynamics. Move on! ...

The first wave of Futurists flourished within the hothouse fed by the mechanization of industry, the opening of the world to all, the widespread dissemination and proliferation of ideas. It is only fitting that the age of mass communication should give birth to the second wave. Here is the first major step forward for the expression of ideas and ideals since the printing press, though as with the press it is only a tool. Am I alone in seeing virtual reality as the opium of the new generations? The apparently benign flickering screen slowly and insidiously amputates the senses. We follow Lara Croft not into her but our own, numbing, oblivion. How can we hope to express the excitement of life if we experience it only in this anaemic third-hand variety? Death to virtual reality, long live real reality! And what of those who provide the tools? The danger I see in the likes of Microsoft is the danger of the tyranny of globalisation. There are infinite horizons but you can only see what they will let you. This is more subtle than the despots of the past—they only had politics with which to enforce their own views and morals—but it still remains that we are fed only the sanitised, sanctioned world that those in control wish us to see. Our only hope is to remain suspicious of that which we have not experienced first hand, to maintain the individual, to resist being drawn into the McDonald-eating, Coke-drinking, Disney-watching society that do not have, and do not deserve, any right to self-determination. Conformity is death.

Ladies, Gentlemen—Comrades! I put it to you that the time has come to re-awaken the chromium plated dragon. Join me in the continuing Futurist revolution!



Fighting the Good Fight



OUR STAUNCH SUPPORTERS WHO HELPED MAKE THE PARTY A CELEBRATION OF TRADITIONAL STYLE AND QUALITY

SW4 Gin

A friend of both the NSC and the Candlelight Club since the summer party, SW4 is an excellent fit with the Club—a gin that knows it’s a gin, a polished, high-quality execution of a traditional style, specifically formulated to make the perfect gin and tonic.

“SW4 London Distilled Gin, is a big and complex gin made in the style of the original London Dry Gins of the mid- to late-19th century,” explains Master Distiller Charles Maxwell. “It has twelve botanicals in its recipe, with juniper heavily predominant. Behind that come the citrus and spice notes, from botanicals such as lemon peel and cassia, giving fullness and complexity. The whole is brought together by the orris.

“Gins of this style pre-date the cocktail era of the early 20th century, which gave rise to the austere and less complex gins of that time. The older gins were made to show at their best when mixed with water, ginger beer and, most especially, tonic. SW4 has taken this heritage and brings you the



21st-century version of the classic gin style.”

You can buy SW4 at Gerry’s or The Vintage House (both on Old Compton St, London), or online from The DrinkShop.com, Drinkon or The Vodka Emporium.

Murdock of London

Murdock offer traditional gentleman’s grooming services and products at three established London barber shops, at Old Street, Stafford Street in Mayfair, and within Liberty near Oxford Circus—and now a new larger branch on Monmouth Street too. They describe themselves as having “a particular British sensibility” and were deemed

by *The Times* to be “a one-stop shop for the discerning dandy”. They kindly offered a wet shave voucher as a prize. See Newsletter 49 for Fruity’s write-up of the Murdock experience.

Wilson’s of Sharrow

The Snuff Bar has been a feature of our parties since the Last Gasper tobacco—(Below) the original water-driven snuff mill at Sharrow, now sadly no longer in use; (left) the product as it now presents itself



themed bash to mark the last night

of smoking in public places. Once again we were pleased to have as our sponsors Wilsons & Co. (Sharrow) Ltd, a firm who have been making snuff at Sharrow Mills near Sheffield since the mid-18th century and are still owned by the Wilson family, six generations on. In fact the precise recipes are known to only two members of the family in each generation. But there is nothing stuck-in-the-mud about their products, which include such exotic flavours as Apricot, Rosemary, Chocolate Orange, Sandalwood and Irish Coffee. They also sell snuff boxes, handkerchiefs, clay pipes and more.

Atelier Milliners

Founded by two milliners to realise their own wish list, Atelier provides both finished hats and fascinators and the raw materials if you fancy making your own, from their own shop in Kingly Court, near London’s Carnaby Street. They also offer a wealth of courses so you can learn the art of hatting. For those who think our raffle prizes are all too often primarily of interest just to men, we were delighted to be able to offer one of Atelier’s finished lady’s hats (see Adrienne



modelling it on page ten)—and delighted also to find that Atelier also sell Panamas, boaters and trilbies for chaps, as well as courses in how to fashion you own. Expect an official Club jaunt to one soon!

A Suit That Fits

The idea of “virtual” tailors—where you are measured near where you live or work, or measure yourself and order online, then the suit is made up in another country—is now increasingly common, but A Suit That Fits was in there at the beginning. The idea came to co-founder Warren Bennett when he had some suits made while doing voluntary work in Nepal in 2005; the business he then started with David Hathiramani has since won multiple awards, for the quality of its service, its innovative use of webular technology and the ethics of its relationship with the Nepalese tailors who make the suits up. We were delighted to be able to offer a voucher for a bespoke shirt as a raffle prize.

Moreover, A Suit That Fits are also offering NSC Members a special discount: see page 18 for details.

The Canton Tea Co.

In Newsletter 49 we revealed how tea-guru NSC Member Lainie Petersen had arranged a Club discount with high-end tea merchants The Canton Tea Co. Further to that they also offered a package of tea as a raffle prize. The Canton Tea Co is a London-based firm trading in high grade, whole leaf Chinese tea. They have exclusive access to some of the best jasmine, white, green, oolong, black and authentic puerh teas available. In their first year they scooped six Golds at the 2009 Guild of Fine Food Great Taste Awards. Their Jasmine Pearls won the top three-star Gold award, endorsing it as the best available in the UK. Lainie herself said it was the best jasmine tea she had ever tasted.





A SUIT THAT FITS

New Year, New Whistle



EXCLUSIVE OFFER TO NSC MEMBERS

AWARD-WINNING TAILORING company, A Suit That Fits, has a special offer for New Sheridan Club members—when you visit one of their 26 locations nationwide before the end of March, you'll receive a free measurement and style consultation worth £25*. A Suit That Fits offers individually hand tailored suits to fit your frame, budget and personal style perfectly—starting from £200. You can book an appointment at any of their locations by visiting www.aSuitThatFits.com or by telephoning 0203 006 7999.



Club Tie Immortalised on the Small Screen



MEMBER SNEAKS NSC COLOURS
ON TO SKY SPORTS "IDENT"

Club Member Mr Callum Coates, a thespian by trade, sent me a strange email recently, asking if he could buy a Club tie (normal enough) but also borrow another one. He was shooting an "ident" for the Sky Sports television station, promoting its coverage of some men playing darts ("the new rock and roll", they claim). The scene is set in a gentleman's club and the New Sheridan Club ties were to stand in for the establishment's tie.

Callum was kind enough to send me a video of the end result and I think it's rather jolly, though I don't know who the darts personality

in question is so I suspect the joke is partly lost on me, but I get the picture. I was also told that Stephen Fry was "in it", which is perhaps stretching the truth... Still, clearly a big step towards global brand recognition and, ultimately, global domination. Click on the image above to view the video.

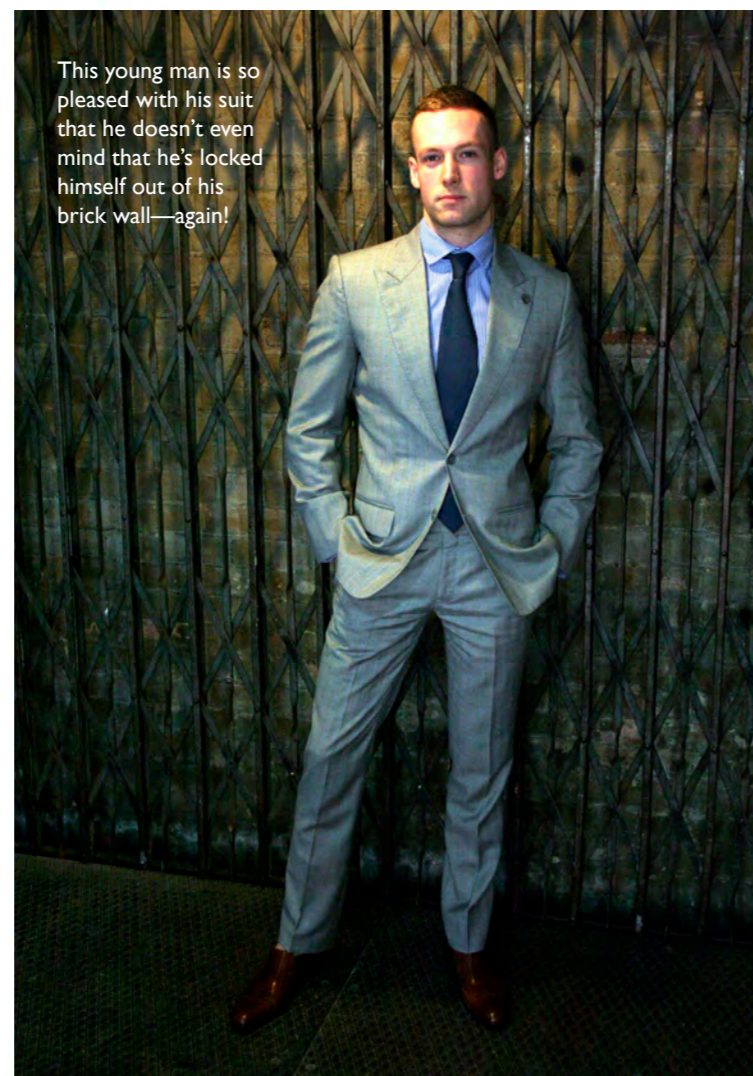
Club Member Identified as Dissident Ringleader

OUR OWN SEAN RILLO RACZKA made it into the semi-respectable press last month when he appeared in a moody photo in the *London Evening Standard*, in his role as chair of Birkbeck Students Union and NUS NEC mature students' rep. In his typical flamboyantly retro elegant attire he actually looks much less out of place than you would expect, resembling a 1930s political bully-boy of one stripe or another. Read the full story here.



*TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- Offer applies to The New Sheridan Club members that quote "sheridancluboffer" to their Style Advisor in branch
- Offer can only be used in an A Suit That Fits branch or TailorStop
- Measurement appointments usually cost £25
- Offer can only be used once
- Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer or promotion
- Offer cannot be used in retrospect
- There is no cash alternative in whole or in part
- A Suit That Fits have the right to change or amend the offer and/or these Terms and Conditions at any time
- Offer ends 31.03.2011





Night of a Thousand Waistcoats

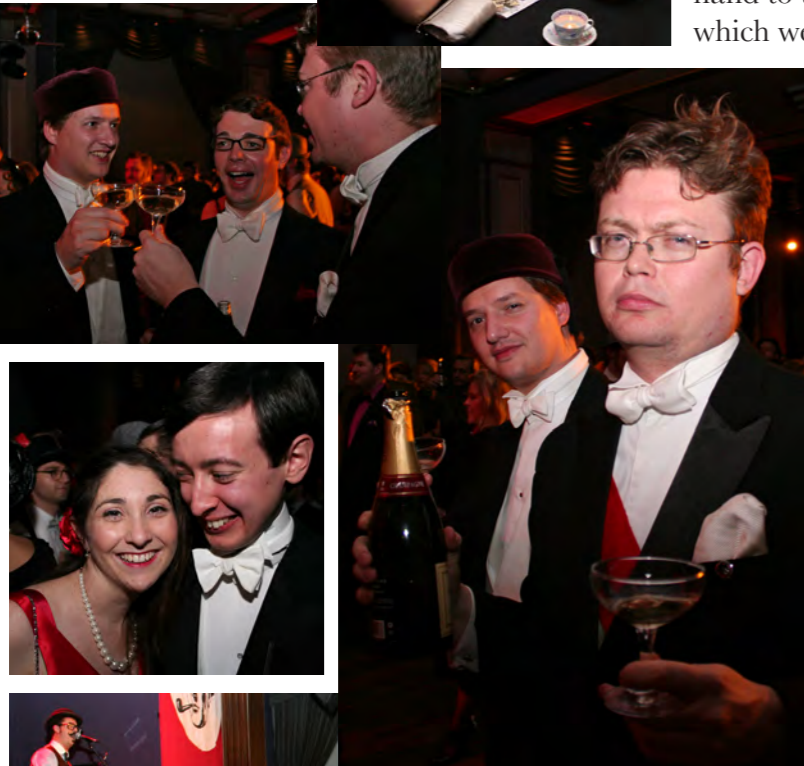
THE SUCCESS OF last year's Anarcho-Dandyist ball has prompted The Chap editor Gustav Temple to make it an annual event. The venue this time was the Bloomsbury Ballrooms, an Art Deco ballroom in Bloomsbury Square that clearly finds regular use these days for rock bands, judging by the size of the PA.

Mr B. headlined, promoting his new album and Top Shelf Jazz were also in evidence. In the back room Viv the Spiv was running a tabletop horse race, while a secretary was on hand to type your messages to other guests, which were then delivered by our own Lord

Rupert—though when I spoke to him he was distinctly cheesed off with it all, not least because people were using it to send rude messages, prompting the recipients to take it out on the messenger!

There was a huge turn-out and plenty of ecstatic dancing and all that. Only real problem was Bourne and Hollingsworth (who also run the Blitz, Prohibition and Green Fairy events) were hopelessly unable to serve the thirsty punters fast enough—queuing times at the bar were apparently over 20 minutes (I confess I took one look and decided not even to try).

The NSC was out in force and a good time was had by all.



(Above l-r) Gustav and MC Nickolas Grace; yours truly; Sean Rillo Raczka; Miss Siggs types messages; (left) Viv the Spiv; (far left) this camera looked the part but I never saw it working



(Clockwise from above) The dance floor was packed; two of the more stylish lady guests; this sort of maelstrom was typical—somewhere between George Grosz, Hieronymus Bosch and Richard Dadd; a more mainstream artist is on hand to take likenesses; Annika selects a cupcake; this couple rather dominated the dancefloor; (opposite page, top to bottom) the seething main room; the only Japonaise lady in the house but a welcome addition; the NSC crew quaff champers; Compton-Bassett and Jo Webster-Burgess; Mr B. excites the revellers to dancing...and cane-waving



The Cocktail Cabinet

Wherein Members do some primal screaming about their one true love

The Alexander

by David Bridgman-Smith

One of my favourite cocktails to give to people who “don’t like cocktails” is The Brandy Alexander. But this drink is about more than just Brandy—there is the original gin-based Alexander, these days more obscure than it’s grape-based cousin. I first came across this dinosaur in Ian Fleming’s *Risico* when James Bond recognises his contact not by a carnation in his buttonhole, but by the cocktail he is enjoying, an Alexander.

Alexander

1 part gin
1 part crème de cacao
1 part double cream (original recipes call for “sweet” cream)

Shake with ice

One of the first recorded references to the Alexander is in *Recipes for Mixed Drinks* by Hugo Ensslin from 1915. The story of its origin was that it was created by bartender Troy Alexander as a special drink for a party at Rector’s Bar celebrating the continued success of Phoebe Snow. Miss Snow, a fictional character, used to promote the DL&W railroad company. She always wore a white dress on their trains to illustrate the point that, as their trains burned anthracite instead of coal, your clothes would not end up sooty. Mr Alexander’s pure-white cocktail, a mixture of gin, sweet cream and white crème de cacao, reflected the essence of the campaign. I think it’s rather clever.

But what about the brandy, I hear you cry? Well the “Panama”, the “Alexander Cocktail #2” or the “Brandy Alexander” came a bit later. The first recorded recipe I found was in *Burke’s Complete Cocktail & Tastybite Recipes* from 1936. Origins are less certain although there is some (by no



A classic Alexander made with brown crème de cacao (left) and with white (right). Mozart Chocolate Spirit is also worth a try

means definitive) indication that this variety was created at the time of the wedding of Mary, Princess Royal and Countess of Harewood, and Viscount Lascelles in 1922.

So we have two spirit bases used and, in fact, crème de cacao is available in two varieties; brown and white. I think with some brands the difference between the two is just colour but with Giffard, the brand I used for this article, there was a noticeable difference: the white was lighter and sweeter and almost white-chocolate light, while the brown was a little more bitter and had a faint cocoa bean flavour. With these variations in mind I set about a four-way taste test. (See table of results opposite.)

I think my favourite here was certainly the Brandy Alexander with brown crème de cacao—it was the most balanced and I liked the slightly bitter notes. What I did notice in doing this tasting was that these drinks are exceptionally rich, I think writer David Embury (author of the classic 1948 work *The Fine Art of Mixing Drinks*) was right when he alluded

to their being appetite killers—“a nice mid-afternoon snack in place of a half pound of bonbons, but deadly as a pre-prandial drink”.

Try varying the proportions: *The Savoy Cocktail Book* (1930) raises the gin to 2 parts while Embury suggests that by boosting it to 4 parts you produce something that “can be consumed with reasonable safety before a meal”. But if you would like a slightly drier drink I would suggest replacing the crème de cacao with Mozart Dry Chocolate Spirit. This works particularly well with the gin, creating a drink with the dryness of a Martini, some creaminess and a little chocolate—unusual but worth giving a go.

Given that the original Alexander was created for its snow-white qualities it would seem sensible to forgo the usual dusting of nutmeg as a garnish. For an extra-clean drink I’d suggest using vodka instead of gin.

For more musings on booze, see the NSC’s **Institute for Alcoholic Experimentation**

WHITE CRÈME
DE CACAO

GIN

Very easy to drink and silky smooth. Could use a bit more flavour. Rather delicate and reminiscent of white chocolate

BRANDY

Sweet chocolate: neither brandy nor cacao dominates. A soft flavour and quite easy to drink due to its silk texture

BROWN CRÈME
DE CACAO

Creamy, chocolate and delicious. Dessert-like—a nice alternative to a pudding. Subtle hints of juniper, but still balanced. Biscotti flavours on the finish

A warm and rounded drink; less chocolatey than the others but the flavour is still there. A sophisticated feel and more of a cocktail than a pudding

Going on holiday by mistake

NSC Film Night, Thursday 20th January, *Withnail and I*

It was at Laurence Bennon's country pile for New Year that the conversation turned, as it so often does to Bruce Robinson's 1987 *meisterwerk Withnail and I*. I guess we'd reached just the stage of inebriation equilibrium where we could amuse ourselves almost indefinitely just by quoting lines at each other. In fact I'll warrant it's one of the most quoted and quotable films of all time, surpassing even Monty Python's parrot sketch. So we decided—what better way to welcome in a new year of Chappist raffishness than to make this film our first Film Night presentation?

The semi-autobiographical story is actually one in which very little happens: it is 1969 and two out-of-work actors, Marwood (essentially Robinson himself, played by Paul McGann) and Withnail (Robinson's old mucker Vivian



MacKerrell, portrayed with career-defining elan by Richard E. Grant) decide to flee their damp flat and the monotonous cycle of drug abuse, the labour exchange and tedium by persuading Withnail's uncle Monty to lend them the keys to his country farmhouse. But neither the place nor the locals are about to create a rural idyll for them. As Marwood comments in voiceover, "Not the attitude I'd been led to

expect from the H. E. Bates novel I'd read..."

Of course the drinking is legendary, and there is even a *Withnail and I* drinking game, in which players attempt to keep up with the characters, drink for drink—though you may want to skip the lighter fuel. Ironically Grant is teetotal, being allergic to alcohol, though Robinson made him drink a bottle of Champagne and half a bottle of vodka in one night so he would know the sensation of drunkenness. And in the scene where *Withnail* desperately swigs lighter fuel, the crew apparently sneaked real lighter fuel into the can—so Grant's reaction is entirely genuine.

Of course we're not encouraging anyone to attempt this game at the NSC Film Night, and I'm sure the staff don't fancy mopping up afterwards. But The Compass has plenty of booze for sale and is also something of a gastro-pub if you fancy a bite to eat, though they prefer it if people eat downstairs beforehand rather than up in the screening room.

The feature will be preceded by the 25-minute documentary *Withnail and Us* (1999).

Thursday 20th January, 7pm–11pm (screening from 8pm), *The Compass*, 58 Penton St (corner of Chapel Market), London N1 9PZ (020 7837 3891), Angel tube station



Monty: "And here we are. We three. Perhaps the last island of beauty in the world."



CLUB NOTES

New Members

ON THE ROCKY, and sometimes slippery, slope of self-improvement, I would like to throw a tow-rope from the passing ski-lift of civilised bonhomie to the following initiates, all of whom have made it a New Year's Resolution to be in the New Sheridan Club: Robert Bagley, Adrienne Jodasso, James Francis Hester IV, Darci Debrett, Brice Stratford, J. M. Fitzwilliam-Gerard-Boydell, Madeleine de Ste-Colombe, Lydia Adamant, Jennifer Siggs, Bethan Gwenllian Garland, Ellie Halley, Matt Birch, Nicole Melotte, Claire Solomon, Callum Coates and Captain Richard "Richie" Paradise.

More Things to Taste

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS of the Institute for Alcoholic Experimentation's mammoth sloe gin tasting last month and earlier tonic water tasting, we have another coming up, and you may be interested in taking part.

The date is **Monday 17th January** and the subject this time is ginger ale: we'll be tasting eight commercially available varieties. Then the most popular three, as voted for by those present, will be tested in a Gin Buck (gin, lemon juice and ginger ale) to see how they mix. The venue will once again be the Graphic Bar in Golden Square, near Piccadilly Circus. It's free to attend but places are limited so it's best to register your interest by emailing info@graphicbar.com or picking up the telephone and dialling Piccadilly 020 7287 9241.

Then, on the afternoon of **Saturday 5th February** we have arranged a tea tasting with the splendid **Canton Tea Co**, one of the sponsors of our Christmas party Grand Raffle. We'll be meeting at 3.30 in the upstairs room of our usual haunt The Wheatsheaf. Canton Tea Co specialise in loose teas from China and Taiwan: if you've only ever drunk tea from tea



The tonic tasting, with Mrs Bridgman-Smith in the foreground and, in the background, Compton-Bassett hitting on the laydeez

bags and have never experience the glorious subtleties of loose-leaf tea you really should attend this session!

Finally, if, like Bond, you prefer your Martini made with vodka, you may be interested in a tasting we will be setting up with **Holodny Ukrainian vodka**. Their range is new to these shores and includes Standard, Premium and (from February) Lux expressions. A date has yet to be finalised, but keep your vodka-drinking trousers to hand.

The Wages of NSC Membership Is...Free Stuff

I JUST THOUGHT I'd do a round-up of all the special discounts that have been arranged for members of the New Sheridan Club:

A Suit That Fits Free measurement and style consultation: see page 18.

Huality Tailoring A 5% discount on all purchases. Mention the discount when you book your appointment and show your membership card when you visit. See Newsletter 45.

The Canton Tea Co A one-time 15% discount plus free postage and packing. Just enter the discount code SHERIDAN. See Newsletter 49.

Jing Tea A one-time 10% discount. Just enter the code 9128345

Baron Solf's restaurant, Lazonby, near Penrith (the Baron is an NSC Member) 10% discount on food upon production of your Membership card. Email cpwsolf@hotmail.com.



Forthcoming Events



**BOTH OFFICIAL NSC JAUNTS (🎪)
AND THIRD-PARTY WHEEZES WE
THINK YOU MIGHT ENJOY**

FOR THE LATEST developments, see the Events page at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk.

🎪 NSC Club Night

Wednesday 5th January
8pm–11pm

Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place,
London W1T 1JB

Members: Free

Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)

See page 2.

Wilton's Free Cinema Club presents
The London That Nobody Knows

Thursday 6th January
8–11pm

Wilton's Music Hall, 1 Grace's Alley,
London E1 8JB

Admission: £4 (£3 concs)

The only surviving grand music hall in the world presents, as part of its programme of regular free film nights, this 1967 documentary, narrated by James Mason. It's a mournful paean to aspects of the city that were fading even then. Mason wanders around Spitalfields asking housewives if he can nose around their gardens for the remains of a Victorian courtyard where Jack the Ripper gutted a victim.

Saturday Night Swing Club

Saturday 8th January

7.30pm–2am

City Firefly Bar, 18 Old Bailey, London
EC4M 7EP

(Nearest tube: St Pauls; overground: City Thameslink)

Admission: £12/£11 LSDS members

Dress: Glamorous retro or modern but an effort appreciated!

52nd Street Jump and the London Swing Dance Society present three floors of dancing to DJs including residents Dr Swing and Mr Kicks. In the Alhambra Lounge you'll find rhythm and blues, jump jive, boogie woogie and swing; in the Savoy Club you can receive taster classes in dances from the 1920s and 1930s; and in the Rendezvous Ballroom you will be treated to the dance music of the 1920s to the 1950s. All guests also get a free £3 drinks voucher. More at 52ndstreetjump.co.uk.

The Fitzrovia Radio Hour

Tuesday 11th January–Saturday 5th February
10.30pm

Trafalgar Studios, 14 Whitehall, London
SW1A 2DY

Admission: £20

More from the 1940s-style live radio broadcast, featuring cut-glass accents and much comic business from the production of live sound effects. Great fun and highly recommended. More at fitzroviaradio.co.uk.

The Candlelight Club

Saturday 15th January
7.30–12am

A secret central London location (venue will be revealed when you buy your ticket)

Admission: £15 in advance

Dress: 1920s dandies and swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

The Candlelight Club is a clandestine pop-up cocktail bar, in a stunning, tucked-away, candlelit den with a 1920s speakeasy flavour. Each event offers a



Music 'the new old-fashioned way'



Those who slid along to the Candlelight Club in December will know that all guests received a free 26-track CD of period music on a disc lovingly designed to look just like an old 78 shellac platter. We've still got a few of these left which we are offering for sale at a modest £5 including UK delivery (overseas by arrangement). If you fancy one, the easiest thing is to make a PayPal payment to whowantstoknow@thecandlelightclub.com.

1. *There's Too Many Eyes* Ted Weems Orchestra
2. *I Found a Million Dollar Baby* Frank Auburn Orchestra
3. *I Wanna Be Loved By You* Broadway Nitelites
4. *Shine* Jesse Stafford Orchestra
5. *Crazy Feet* Ray Noble & His Orchestra
6. *Happy Days Are Here Again* Casa Loma Orchestra
7. *What Do I Care What Somebody Said* Jan Garber Orchestra
8. *Keep Young And Beautiful* Harry Roy And His Orchestra
9. *Let's Do It* Bunny Berigan
10. *Okay Toots* Harry Roy
11. *Hot Feet* Wendell Hall
12. *Black Bottom* Johnny Hamp's Kentucky Serenaders
13. *Black Bottom Stomp* Jelly Roll Morton

14. *Happy Feet* Jack Hylton & His Orchestra
15. *Let's Misbehave* Irving Aaronson and His Commanders
16. *I 2th Steet Rag* Harry Roy
17. *Shakin' That African* Don Redman And His Orchestra
18. *Wall Street Wail* Duke Ellington
19. *Quality Shout* Paul Howard
20. *You Drink Too Much* State Street Swingers with Mary Mack
21. *Who's Sorry Now?* Bob Crosby & The Bobcats
22. *Rumba Negro* Bennie Moten
23. *Shout 'Em Aunt Tillie* Duke Ellington
24. *Market Street Stomp* The Missourians
25. *I Wanna Go Places And Do Things* Lud Gluskin
26. *I Don't Want to Go to Bed* Ambrose & His Orchestra

one-off bespoke cocktail menu and there will be special themes, guest mixologists and featured ingredients, with food and drink masterminded by Will Sprunt, formerly of the Salon d'Été, plus vintage DJing and live performances.

This time we have a special absinthe-themed event. In addition to our usual range of still and sparkling wines and toothsome cocktails, we'll be showcasing two of the new wave of premium real absinthes, complex to make and complex in flavour. One is Butterfly, made to an American recipe from 1905, a classic green colour with a minty taste. The other is Clandestine, a colourless style with an amazingly

fresh, sweet, floral flavour, made in Switzerland, the birthplace of absinthe.

You'll be able to try these nectars in classic turn-of-the-century cocktails, plus some new ones that our mixology *meister* Will has cooked up. You can also try them served in the traditional way, simply diluted to your taste from old-fashioned ornate glass "absinthe fountains".

Your ticket also gets you:

- A buffet supper of our famous exotic sandwiches: precise menu to follow.
- Live 1920s New Orleans ragtime jazz from the Dixie Ticklers. The opulent fleshpots of New Orleans were the home of absinthe in America

before the drink was outlawed.

- Period shellac spun all night by MC Fruity, London's premier vintage DJ.
- A sprinkling of Green Fairy dust, in the form of magician Ian Rowland, whose illusions and mind-reading feats will confound your senses and mess with your head long before the absinthe does. Even Uri Geller admits he's pretty cool.
- To celebrate absinthe's association with creativity, we'll be having a tablecloth art competition with a prize for the winner. More details and photos from past events at www.thecandlelightclub.com

The Three-Pipe Problem

Tuesday 18th

January

8-11pm

The

Selkirk,

60

Selkirk

Road,

Tooting,

London SW17 0ES

Admission: £2

A monthly comedy storytelling night organized by the NSC's own Tabitha Maynard-Addersley (aka Helena Stroud). For this inaugural night you are offered:

Bec Hill "A joy to behold" ***** (Three Weeks Edinburgh)

Jackson Voorhaar "Streams of pure awesome leak from his mouth and vomit all over the stage! Ew!"

Andrea Hubert "A thoroughly engaging presence... you are drawn instinctively into her world" (Chortle)

We Are Goose "A pair of dandy highwaymen if I ever saw one."

Alan Spooner "Purveyor of zingy, abrasive brilliance. Expect shouting."

Elena Procopiu "The horse-riding, ass-kicking stand-up legend!"

Chris Coltrane "Stand-up by night, writer by day, thorn in politician's arses whenever the opportunity arises."

Helena Stroud herself "Loves silly stories, heavy metal and red squirrels."

There will also be biscuits.

NSC Film Night

Thursday 20th January

6pm-11pm

The Compass, 58 Penton Road (corner of Chapel Market), Islington, London N1 9PZ (020 7837 3891), nearest tube: Angel

Admission: Free, but you'll need to pay for your yummy food and drinks

The Compass is a busy, tastefully decorated gastro-pub and we've secured the upstairs room where there is a DVD player and projector. The food is recommended, though the venue would rather we ate downstairs before the screening starts: I imagine the films won't start before 8pm.

This time we present Bruce Robinson's evergreen *Withnail and I*, the tale of two out-of-work actors (based on Robinson himself and his friend Vivian MacKerrell) in 1969 who

decide to escape the cycle of dole and drug abuse in their damp Camden flat by borrowing the keys to Withnail's uncle Monty's country farmhouse.

The countryside turns out to be not as welcoming as our hero had been led to expect by the H. E. Bates novel he had read.

Then Monty himself turns up with amorous intentions...

The film will be preceded by the short 1999 documentary *Withnail and Us*.

Pearl Bang's Prohibition Club

Friday 21st January

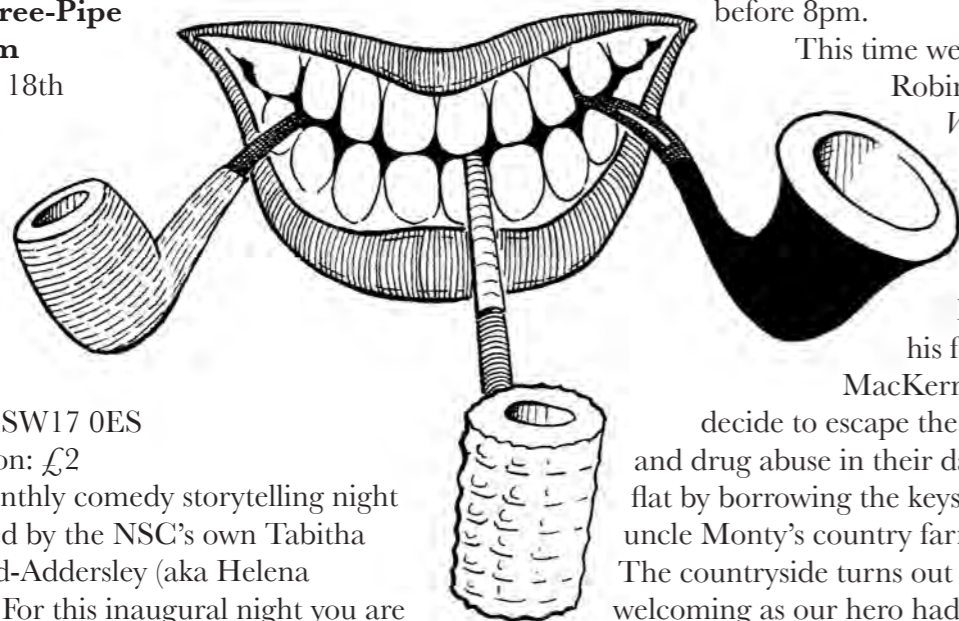
9pm-3am

The George Tavern, 373 Commercial Road, London E1 0AL

Admission £5 in advance (wegottickets), £7 on the door

Dress: 1920s encouraged

Clearly a pale imitation of the Candlelight Club, but I do like the George Tavern—a beat-up Victorian boozier that always looks like it's closed from the outside—and tonight they are featuring our own Marmaduke Dando (see below), along with Dakota Jim and Boxcar Joe Stouzer.



Marmaduke Dando's Vinyl Album Launch

Friday 28th January

7-10pm

Flashback Records, 50 Essex Road, London

Admission: Free

To celebrate the release of *Heathcliffian Surly* on limited edition 12" vinyl record. Marmaduke Dando and his band will be playing a free, stripped down acoustic set at Flashback Records. There will be free drink (port?), free merchandise (bags with the album artwork on and various other trinketies), and heavily discounted copies of the album on vinyl and CD, not to mention a well chosen stock of classic records in the rest of the shop. Afterwards, to the Mucky Pup nearby to continue the revelry.

The New Sheridan Club presents

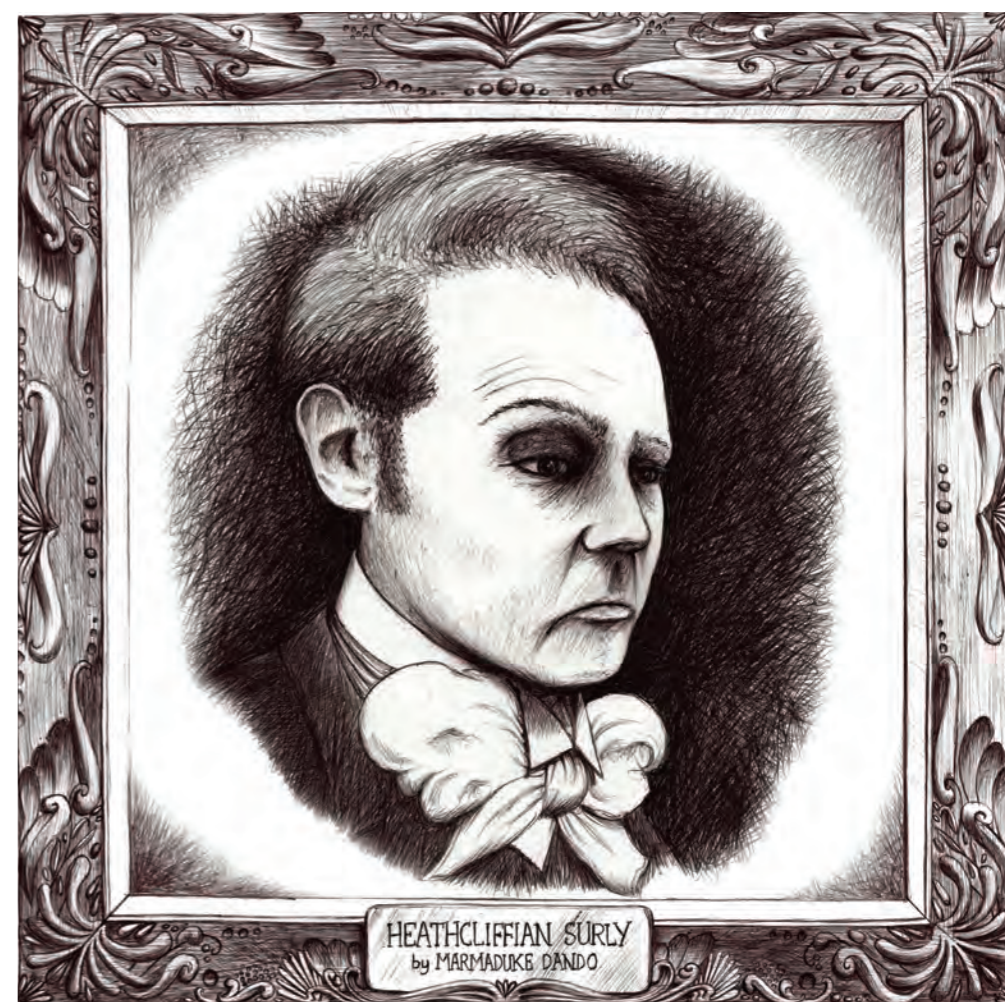
A Tea Tasting With The Canton Tea Co.

Saturday 5th February

3.30-5pm

Upstairs, The Wheat-sheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB
Admission: Free

The Canton Tea Co, who specialise in loose-leaf teas from China and Taiwan (and who provided one of the raffle prizes at our Christmas party), have generously offered to give NSC Members a talk about who they are and what they offer plus a chance to



'HEATHCLIFFIAN SURLY'

the debut album by

Marmaduke Dando

"...the perfect antidote to the dystopia we find ourselves in" - Paul Kingsnorth, author of *Real England*
"...distinctively haunting..." - Steve Lamacz, BBC 6 Music
"...poetry in motion..." - Charlie Ashcroft, *Artrucker*

Available on 12" Vinyl, Compact Disc, and Download, order online at

www.marmadukedando.com

20% discount if you enter the code "nsc"

sample some of their exquisite, award-winning jasmine, white, green, black, oolong and puerh teas, to many of which the company has exclusive access. They buy direct from farmers and are the only specialist tea company with full-time buyers in China and Taiwan.

If your experience of tea has only ever been limited to tea bags you are strongly advised to come along and see just how different loose tea can be. If you would like to come please email telegrams@newsheridanclub.co.uk so we can gauge numbers.

INDISCRETIONS AT THE CANDLELIGHT CLUB

The NSC's Curè Michael Silver caught in a clinch with a foxy brunette at a speakeasy! Of course my publication of this photo will doubtless get him in trouble with his bishop—again!—but as a responsible journalist I feel the public have a right to know. More snaps from December's Candlelight Club here.

The January event is an absinthe special: come and let the Green Fairy be your muse! More details here.



FOR THE LATEST information on what the Club is up to, who has been arrested, etc., have a squizz at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk. For more photos of Club events go to www.flickr.com/sheridanclub. Those of a technological bent can befriend us electrically at www.myspace.com/newsheridanclub or indeed www.facebook.com.

CONTACTING US

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