

The FINGER

95p Issue 1, October 2005 *incorporating* STRANGE LISTINGS

The need to know BY ROBERT VINT

Town church doesn't quite celebrate gay icons - yet! by BOB MANN

ANYONE INTERESTED IN Totnes history probably knows that the Guildhall, behind St Mary's Church, was originally part of the Norman Priory, founded in 1088 by Judhel, the knight who became landlord of the town after the conquest. The Priory was a 'daughter' house to the Abbey of Saints Sergius and Bacchus at Angers, in Brittany. Judhel, who also built our castle, is believed to have been a Breton, and perhaps he felt a personal affinity with the two saints. Someone has recently placed a photograph of the Abbey Church on the north wall of St Mary's, with a notice explaining the ancient relationship between Totnes and Angers.

Unfortunately, the Abbey is described as being dedicated only to Saint Sergius - or, in French, St Serge - making no mention of St Bacchus (who shouldn't, of course, be confused with the Roman god of alcohol). This omission is not the fault of whoever wrote the label. According to Hugh R. Watkin's monumental *History of Totnes Priory and Medieval Town* (1917), Bacchus's name has been omitted for centuries. But Sergius and Bacchus, a couple of Roman soldiers horribly martyred together for their faith in the third century, were inseparable in the medieval mind, and in fact their inseparability was the whole point.



Although the two saints are totally forgotten today, being even more obscure than the South Hams' own St Ean (of whom more in future issues of *The Finger*), they were for centuries seen to exemplify the ideal of Christian knighthood, for their bravery, their loyalty, their willingness to die for their faith and, not least, their marriage. That's right - in the early Middle Ages, Sergius and Bacchus were the great gay role models.

It is not widely known (though I expect the present Pope is well aware of it) that, until the fourteenth century, when it was quietly dropped, the church had a ceremony for blessing same-sex unions, and the soldier-saints featured prominently in this (see *The Marriage of Likeness* by John Boswell for full details of the text and its uses - it really did happen).

I think that, in light of this, the information provided on the St Mary's wall should be altered, reuniting Bacchus with his partner, and perhaps saying something about what made them special.

TWO KEY ASSUMPTIONS have dominated recent government security policy in the US and UK. The first is that the threat of terror and international crime means that the government's right to know everything about us must outweigh our individual right to privacy. The second is that the rights of the government and major corporations to secrecy must outweigh our right to know about their activities.

Watching big brother

While our own rights to privacy dwindle, corporate rights to commercial confidentiality and intellectual property skyrocket. While we no longer know about many of the activities of our governments, our governments have the means to accumulate unprecedentedly vast banks of data about us. They can access the minute-by-minute geographical position of our mobile phones, whether switched on or off, on any day and time of their choice. The UK has more video surveillance than any other nation. In the UK, it is possible to piece together from archives almost continuous video footage from an incredible 4,000,000 CCTV cameras of any shopping trip by any individual to almost any city centre. You can be tracked by computers using facial recognition technology and these computers can analyse your behaviour, read your number plates and follow your car. Radio Frequency ID tags can broadcast the movement of selected products bought in supermarkets and a computer can link this to photographs taken of you as you picked the item off the shelf. Most telephone calls to large companies are recorded 'for training and security,' but you have no right to record the same call. The UK government has DNA samples from almost 3,000,000 UK citizens, including newborn children, anyone who has been arrested (whether or not prosecuted) and many public sector employees - and can analyse these to assess your propensity to particular hereditary illnesses, personality traits or behavioural patterns. They can identify every book you have ever ordered online and every credit card purchase you have ever made. The list is endless. None of the police states of Eastern Europe ever had surveillance powers on this scale.

On the other hand we are not entitled to know the gene sequence of genetically modified ingredients that may be in our food, nor may we see the corporate safety data that has convinced our governments that these ingredients are safe. We have no right to see the source code of Outlook Express, the software on which over half the world's online population relies for daily communication, or to know whether it contains a 'back door' to enable government snooping. We have no right to know the molecular structure of pharmaceuticals on which our health may depend. Governments and major corporations have converged to create a secret society in our midst.

The imbalance between our accountability to the government and big business and their accountability to us is growing. Proposed UK legislation includes compulsory ID cards backed by a nationwide database linking together all the separate facts and files about individuals and making these available to any government person approved by government, and the creation of a national DNA database containing DNA samples from every UK citizen and visitor to the country.

The replacement of fuel tax proposals with a 'pay-as-you-go' proposal to tag every vehicle so that exact position can at every moment be logged by satellites will enable a tax to be charged for every mile travelled.

Raps and taps

Similarly illiberal laws have been passed in the US, in the form of the

Patriot Act, which attack the fundamental liberties enshrined in the US constitution. The act was brought in so swiftly Congressmen were not even able to read the Act before it was passed. Now the US government can tap your phone and email to protect you from terrorism. The government can also imprison you without trial and ignore the terms of the Geneva Convention - all in the defence of liberty. A second Patriot Act promises to be even more extreme. We may hypothesise that one day soon every child will have an RFID tag, barcode, webcam and microphone installed at birth in the name of patriotism and freedom....

The arguments to justify our governments' rights to total knowledge are all too familiar. Any fact, however obscure, could turn out to help solve a crime. Law abiding citizens should have nothing to fear from this knowledge. The government should have a right to all information because it is their job to act in the public interest.

In the atmosphere of media-generated hysteria following the 9/11 attacks it was possible to sell this argument and to denounce anyone who questioned it as an enemy of freedom. However, it is difficult to imagine that the public would accept its logical conclusion. Over fifty per cent of all crime is committed within the home, so surely we should have CCTV cameras installed in every living room and bedroom, on the assumption that law-abiding citizens would have nothing to fear. This would be unacceptable, of course, yet we allow the same arguments to be used to impinge on our daily freedoms.

The argument for unlimited government knowledge about us assumes that this information will only be used in the public interest. However, we know that almost every government agency or representative faces conflicts of interest. For instance, the majority of UK politicians are directors, consultants or major investors in private corporations. Since the Eighties, top UK businesses have been actively encouraged to 'lend' directors to the UK Civil Service, where they help draft the laws regulating their own companies. Much of the work of government departments, including data handling and security matters, is now passed out to private consultancies. Governments attract multinational businesses to invest in their nations by offering more attractive terms than other nations. In such a climate it seems inevitable that governments will offer these businesses almost total secrecy while giving them unrestricted access to all the data they have collected about their own citizens.

Open source government

Why should we not turn the logic of our governments' argument on its head? Most corporate money laundering and financial crime does not involve deals with private individuals, it involves deals with politicians, civil servants and government agencies. Why should we not, using the logic our leaders have used, be entitled to total knowledge about every politician and government agency? Why should we not tag all politicians and track them by satellite to ensure that they do not visit dubious foreign nations or the offices of suspect companies? Why should their bank statements not be posted on the internet so that we can all be reassured that they are not being bribed? Why should there not be webcams in every Civil Service office so that we can all see what they are up to? It would be possible were it not for the fact that laws are created by governments for their benefit rather than by the public for our benefit....

The Finger invites emailed submissions, articles 300 to 500 words, to inquiries@centrehousepress.co.uk.

No ID, no comment *by* POILLY

A FEW YEARS ago I found myself at the opening night of a new music venue in Sheffield. It was more formal than I'd anticipated. Everybody wore ID, except me, and it was this lack of official identity that led to misunderstandings.

I hadn't been at the bar long when I noticed a leggy young blonde eyeballing me intently. She flounced across with her clipboard, with an opening gambit that took me by surprise. 'Who are you?' she said, sparkling enthusiasm. I was wary, being unemployed, and sensitive to marketing ploys that threatened to dispel the few illusions I still retained about myself.

'Well,' I said, 'why don't you tell me who I'm supposed to be and I'll just go along with that.'

She shimmered a moment, drew closer and purred, 'I mean, *who* are you *with*?'

Baffled by this air of confidentiality, I guessed wires were getting seriously crossed. I admitted to being alone, adding I'd come to watch the band. She glanced indifferently towards the stage. 'Then you're *not* a delegate?'

I shook my head.

She studied me to make out if I was telling the truth, then explained I had walked into a funding event for the arts, where artists and corporate sponsors were given the opportunity to network. 'Hence the ID,' I said. She herself was a PR person, connected with a Sheffield media group.

The irony of the situation now struck me as amusing – being mistaken for a VIP. But when I made a joke about it she took offence. Instead of seeing the absurdity, she took it as a joke at her expense, which was not my intention. She squared up with eyes like microchips. She had to say she found it hard to believe I'd walked in clueless straight off the street. She braced her legs. Hadn't I read the press? She could not believe I *hadn't* read the press! The event had been front-page news for weeks! She swept back her hair over one shoulder.

I explained I was new to Sheffield. It seemed to placate her. She tossed off her wine and ordered another glass. Then she swept her hair back over the other shoulder and composed herself. I waited like an extra in a movie while she cast a critical eye over the set. Her manner softened as she expressed, in very professional terms, dissatisfaction with the organisers and noted the unsuitability of the place as a venue. As she talked I began to glimpse an astute local girl beneath the corporate trimmings, but before too long she was fast-tracking again, briefing me about European funding and local community regeneration. Then suddenly she broke off, vanishing into the crowd after a delegate.

Relieved to be on my own again, I glanced hopefully over to the stage where some Asian musicians were setting up. The place was heaving with people by now. The hum of voices got louder, more urgent. I noticed people checking their watches and glancing apprehensively up at the stage. Obviously, when the music started networking would be hard. You'd have to shout to be heard. But, there again, the band weren't hanging about either, having got word that record industry bigwigs had arrived.

A drop of condensation fell on my head, splat! A drunken Scot stumbled past, scowling at the few fat cats exchanging business cards. The band kicked off. The mingling intensified. People

Second Coming second coming

APPARENTLY THERE *WAS* a Second Coming, though we in the West were so busy with our millennium domes and stroke-of-midnight firework displays that it was only a lone reporter, looking for work, and destined, eventually, for the editorial board of *The Finger*, who marked the event.

The messiah was dressed modishly, and was breaking breadsticks and bibbing a glass of Bergerac in a wine bar off Leicester Square. He confessed this wasn't his first revisit,

diplomatic, I'm told, though did hint at certain problems the commercial West hadn't quite got to grips with. For example, when it tried to appropriate matter or material from ancient cultures preceding its own, its best way of selling these on to the masses was either as therapy, or a lifestyle, or both. There was, no doubt, merit in that evangelising process, and that sat well with the vending mentality generally. He was though aware that to a certain kind of Englishman – i.e., a sceptic – all this was highly distasteful, and he shared a certain sympathy with that position.

He was fair with us, however, and wouldn't really deny that all these efforts represented a desperate hanging on to something – anything – that served to mask the sheer brutishness of being, which he supposed was the same emollient process giving rise to all these books and films he'd sampled over the last quarter of a century. Every now and then you'd find one so well done that for the moment whatever it was that made the cosmos such a cold and indifferent place was momentarily forgotten. It reminded him that even he, once, very long ago, had hankerings after a thing called the human soul, a strange, discarnate mode of being, wherein experience was pure, and the exchange of ideas left no trace of effluence anywhere.

But now, he said, in all things he was agnostic.

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because, having got caught up himself in all the talk of the millennium, at least twenty-five years before the event, he'd frequently dropped in on the metropolis, to take in a few films here or there, or skim the odd title in the bookshops, or just get a feel for the life and culture of the common people.

So what did he make of it all? He remained polite and

jostled this way and that, twisting round to scan ID and faces in the heat.

I got another beer.

By eleven the bar had become a raft you clung to. Beyond were the raging seas, the whirlwind spectacular, the stampede for funding, the rush-hour thunder, the lifebelt scramble for delegates – and never mind! women and children first! You just kept the smile clicked on and shifted for yourself. Robed figures danced and sang on stage, beat tambourines and played exotic stringed instruments. A gaunt young man bumped my shoulder as he surfaced amid the wreckage. He apologised. I made room on the raft.

His story was he'd been trying without success to locate an executive from a Bristol film company. But he wasn't sure of the man's name or even what he looked like! A blonde PR had assured him the chap was on the guest list and suspected I was he. He smiled weakly. I had to understand this was his last chance, his savings were all but gone. He had a business proposal and the script in his pocket. 'You see,' he added, 'the PR said sometimes delegates don't wear ID, they often remain incognito.'

I assured him I wasn't his Bristol contact.

'It's just...I mean...' he faltered. 'You *would* say you're not him, if you were.'

So this was corporate arts funding? I assured him the case of mistaken identity was genuine. Outside, admittedly woozy, it seemed to me the only positive outcome would be to the local economy, in the trade generated by all these punters who'd travelled from every conceivable part of the British Isles. I only hoped a few would find something more in the package than a badge with their name on it

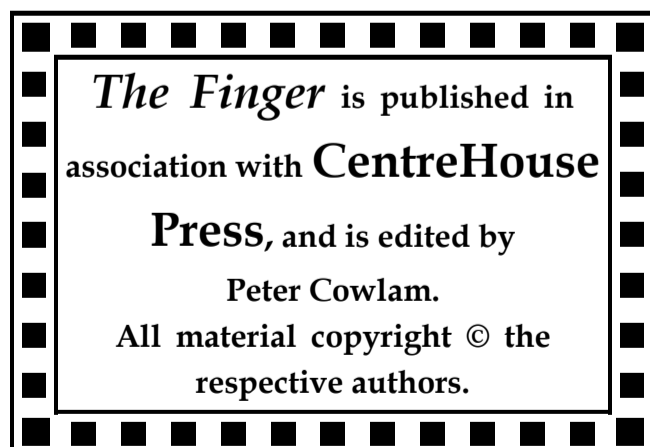
Or worse, no badge at all.

Westminster goss *by* JACK DEGREE

SOURCES CLOSE TO my own in and around the tearooms of Westminster guffawed into their saucers at the plight of Andrew Maybee. Maybee remained astonished on the morning of May the 6th, having found himself the newly installed Tory member for West Mursh East (politics a confusing compass). All that had so far fitted him for a stint in the House was a career as a High Street dentist – Mursh one of those middle-England constituencies blessed with wealth and a need for good odontology.

I have heard it said of Maybee that he was first gloomy then querulous when someone ushered him into the shoebox purportedly his office (gone those wide-open spaces back in Mursh). A Ms Blint introduced herself as a 'quarter-time' person available to type his letters, minutes, and agendas, and was also, she said, prepared to burn a disc. Maybee wasn't joking when he said he knew the place was famous for its pyrotechnics, but would he, so early in his new Commons life, be destroying incriminating information, and weren't computer discs these days resistant to fire anyway? Ms Blint smiled her sickly smile, and resisted a half-hearted laugh, as convinced as the rest of us that this was all deadpan.

More problematic than that, those who handled the dispatch box did so with headmasterly ease and authority, and all Maybee could think of was the exact cut of his very short trousers – indeed how all his garments might appear – once he'd decided to quiz whoever was standing there. The drawback was, as he'd learned from the hustings, those who formed his electorate were either ignorant, or full of spite, or so bullish in their opinions he couldn't possibly frame a question representative of anyone. I'm told he stewed on this for nearly two months, then with July the 7th he allowed it to slip somewhere, all unguarded, that he for one was finished with politics.



reviews

Sailing sadly beyond belief by BOB MANN *Clare's enclosure* by RICHARD HILLESLEY

ONE OF THE most individual books ever written about this area is *Under Sail Through Red Devon*, published in 1937. The author, a young man from Torquay who was born a century ago this year, describes in it his adventures around the South Devon coast and along the estuaries.

The style is a little self-indulgent for today's tastes, but those hot, sultry 1930s' summers in the sub-tropical South Hams are beautifully evoked, with the river towns and creekside villages full of beautiful young women, leaning over ancient bridges or sitting complacently on rocks, engaging the author in dalliance, intellectual discourse, or both at once. It's a joyous, youthful book, speaking vividly of a long-vanished, innocent world, and I have quarried from it for my own books and articles, relishing his descriptions of places and his debate with the schoolmaster of Aveton Gifford – who at the time would have been teaching my father – over the pronunciation of the village's name.

But all is not lovable. There is an anti-Semitic element, which, though hardly unusual for the time, is jarring. The author expresses a boringly predictable desire to blow up people's homes along the coast because they spoil his view. And he does rather harp on the need for the more intelligent of us to breed lots of children, which seems cranky, if not a little sinister. So who was he, and what was he about?

Raymond B. Cattell (1905–98) was regarded as one of the great behavioural psychologists of the twentieth century. At the time he published *Red Devon*, he was best known for devising 'culture free' intelligence tests. He lived in Dartington for a while, and taught at the famous progressive school. In the late 1930s he moved to the USA, where he remained for the rest of his long life, holding distinguished academic posts, publishing numerous books and papers, winning awards. He married three times, fathered several children, and lived surrounded by admiring students and disciples. He was proud of being a Devon man, giving the county's name to one of his offspring. He retired to Hawaii because, he said, there was nowhere else in America good enough for a Devonian. He was courteous and gentle in manner, and retained his eye for a pretty girl, always ready to charm and flirt.

Cattell's psychology was the sort that seeks to reduce everything to a mathematical formula. This would be enough to put many of us off, but it gets far darker, because he was a lifelong proponent of the dubious science of eugenics. He openly admired Nazism, and from the 1940s onwards developed his ideas into a new religion called Beyondism. This is a social and political philosophy so crude and callous as to make the selfish individualism of Ayn Rand look positively altruistic, and the policies of Thatcher seem actively benign.

Beyondism is old-fashioned social Darwinism with a vengeance. The rich and successful are obviously the highest types of humanity, and should be rewarded and encouraged to breed. The poor and incompetent are failures, and will have to go to the wall. Rich countries should stop helping poor countries, leaving them to perish in anarchy and chaos. Concepts like humanism, equality, respect, compassion and dignity are sentimental and obsolete, as, indeed, are most human beings. While Cattell doesn't actually advocate genocide, there's a need, he says, to think about 'phasing out' incompetent populations.

These are not the ravings of an isolated fanatic, remember, but a world-famous academic who has taught at Harvard. Yet Cattell's obnoxious doctrines provoked little scholarly dissent. True, he never made much effort to propagate them widely: as most of us are too stupid to understand them anyway, there was no point. The local publisher who reissued *Red Devon* in two volumes in the 1980s knew nothing about Beyondism, and didn't thank me for telling him. But the decades of silence from academe regarding these ideas is disturbing.

Raymond B's boat was finally scuttled, however, in 1997, when he was scheduled to receive a lifetime achievement award from the American Psychological Foundation. There was immediate uproar, on the perfectly reasonable grounds that he was a fascist and racist. Tired and ill, the ninety-two-year-old Cattell responded by saying that he'd never wanted the award anyway, he'd grown up in a very different world, and all he'd ever done was encourage his brightest young friends to have babies.

All very sad. And what do I do now with *Under Sail Through Red Devon*? Banish it from my shelves and expunge all references to it from my writings? I haven't, though I'll never enjoy it as I did. But patriotic Devonians can be glad of one thing: Cattell lied about being one. He was actually born in Staffordshire.

Why Finger?
by BOB MANN

GOTTFRIED FINGER (c.1660–1725) was a composer of Moravian origin who worked at the court of James II, anglicising his name to Godfrey. He also wrote for the theatre. After coming only fourth in a competition for a new work, he returned to Europe in disgust at English Philistinism.

Although to many people all Baroque composers sound the same, Finger's voice is distinctive; you only have to hear a couple of his pieces to recognise the personality. His music has a gentle lilt, and an almost Mozartian lightness and charm, and he can say a lot in a few bars. His four-movement C major Sonata is a dialogue between oboe and trumpet that becomes almost epic, though it lasts less than five minutes (the result is a draw). You can hear it on DHM 05472 77454 2. A few years ago, Charivari Agreeable played a programme for Totnes Early Music Society, which included two of his works, and Finger was the only composer being talked about in the interval; they are available on SIGCD007. The only other work I know of that has been recorded is his Sonata No 5 by Concertante (Karuna 105).

Finger's time is coming. He's going to replace Vivaldi (no one can possibly object to that), and you heard about him from us.

Manifesto, by Peter Cowlam,
reviewed by JACK DEGREE

'OBVERSE' IS A newly invented short form, which in this collection of poems makes ingenious use of urban guerrilla warfare as a metaphor for the art wars raging around us. Naturally, the establishment has got the upper hand, where we as consumers are instructed which books to read and authors to uphold, all through the self-legitimising processes of media hype and profiling. *Manifesto's* hundred-odd poems represent the 'obverse' to all that, offering themselves as a counterthrust to the daily doses of establishment propaganda.

Manifesto is a CentreHouse Press pocketbook, 101pp, ISBN 1-898030-20-0, £4.99.

'You don't have to conquer time
to slide around the centuries
and see the wildest things.'

THE POET JOHN Clare died in the Northampton General Lunatic Asylum in 1864. During his lifetime he was known as 'the peasant poet,' though he was not, strictly speaking, a peasant, and lived in an era of social upheaval, enclosures and landless labour, when a landless labourer had even fewer rights than a peasant.

Clare was from a rural labouring family, and had little education, but is now recognised as the greatest English poet of nature. His first book sold well by the standards of his time, and outsold Keats by some margin, but his commercial success was short-lived, and he depended for his income on patrons, who over-edited and censored his material. Much of his best poetry was written during the twenty-three years he spent in the lunatic asylum. At the time of his death 2,700 of his poems remained unpublished, and he was all but forgotten, despite the best efforts of his publisher, John Taylor.

But due to a quirk in English copyright law, 140 years after Clare's death, the ownership of the copyright to Clare's unpublished writings is still claimed as the sole property of one individual, Professor Eric Robinson, who purchased the 'rights' for £1 in July, 1965.

At the time of Clare's death the ownership of Clare's unpublished work was passed to James Whitaker, the creator of *Whitaker's Almanac*, with the intention of producing a posthu-

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mous collection of Clare's unpublished work. Whitaker made a 'provisional bargain,' presumably verbal, with the dying John Taylor in May 1864, to pay Clare's widow, who could neither read nor write, £10 a year for Clare's manuscripts, copyrights and publication rights. This agreement, discovered in 1932, was destroyed during the London blitz eight years later. Whitaker's edition of Clare never appeared, and he transferred the bulk of the surviving manuscripts to the care of the Peterborough Museum Society before his death in 1895. No edition of Clare published between Whitaker's death and Robinson's purchase of 'all rights whatsoever possessed by the company in the published and unpublished works of John Clare' in 1965, acknowledged any copyright holder.

Robinson's claim to the ownership of Clare's legacy has caused much controversy. According to John Goodridge, a Clare scholar, he has demanded 'acknowledgement and often payment from anyone who wishes to publish Clare material.' In the view of Tim Chilcott, another Clare scholar, the effect has been 'the impoverishment of editorial debate compared with other Romantic writers, the absence of challenging alternative views, the deadening hand of the authorised definitive version.'

A core concern of Clare's poetry was the disruption to the traditional patterns of life caused by the enclosures of the English commons. Like Gerard Winstanley, Clare believed the earth to be a 'common treasury for all.' It seems unlikely that Clare would approve of a situation where the rights to his work were enclosed and claimed as the property of one individual 140 years after his death. 'And me they turned me inside out / For sand and grit and stones / And turned my old green hills about / And pickt my very bones.'

STRANGE LISTINGS

Emerging from the earth Music in and around – the return of *Strange Listings* Totnes, October 2005

STRANGE LISTINGS, FOR those who don't know, was a monthly guide to music in Totnes, which died in the summer of 2004, after running for just under two years. Conceived, written and edited by Sam Richards (idea and name) and me (typing and much else), it died not from lack of love, because it was greatly loved, but simply through circumstances. It was always my aim to try to re-launch it, though, and when Peter offered the back page of *The Finger* it seemed the ideal solution.

The aim is to cover dance and theatre as well as music, and to go wider than just Totnes and its contiguous parishes, but in order to do this I do need help. So please let me know of all arts events in the South Hams so they can be included – listing is free. All you have to do is get the information to me, which you can do by phone, email or old-fashioned post. For inclusion in the November issue, the deadline is October the 12th.

Thanks to all who have been supportive in this rebirth, especially John Skelton, Peter Cowlam, Sam Richards, George Hill and the rest of the guys.

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Sweelinck for starters

ST MARY'S CHURCH, High Street, is the venue for the first concert of the Totnes Early Music Society's new season on Saturday October the 1st, given by the Sweelinck Ensemble.

The highly acclaimed group have performed and broadcast widely, and were finalists in the 1999 Early Music Network Competition. Their Totnes programme is entitled *Sorrow and Joy*, and features works by Monteverdi, Schutz, Castello, Rosenmuller and Bassani. The players are Johann Linderoth (tenor), Debbie Diamond and Sarah Moffat (violins), Francisco del Amo (viola da gamba) and the ensemble's founder, Martin Knizia (director/organ).

The concert is at 7.30 p.m. TEMS members free, tickets for non-members at the door: £12, students and juniors £5.

Ariel Limbics

TOTNES JAZZ COLLECTIVE embraces a new venue on Saturday October the 1st, when popular saxophonist Harry S. Fulcher brings his band The Limbic System to the Ariel Centre, on the KEVICC's college campus in Ashburton Road.

The Limbic System's 2004 CD *The Limbic System*, featuring six compositions by Harry and one by guitarist Richard Thorn, received rave reviews: Nick Lea in *Jazz Views* called it one of the best ten albums of the year, while *CD Baby, USA* reckoned it to be 'jazz fusion in the best possible sense.'

Harry writes:

The Limbic System needs to be a band going in two directions at once; there is a deep, dark groove to be mined in some of the material as well as a joy in very simple, diatonic melody in other tunes. Some of the latter material reminds me of an English version of the unashamed tunes that Pat Metheny and Carla Bley have written, some of the former reminds me of Weather Report getting into bed with Steps Ahead. One thing is for sure: this band is a band, not a wall-to-wall tenor sax high-wire circus act.

The line-up for the gig is Harry S. Fulcher (reeds), Dhevdas Nair (keyboards), Andy Christie (guitar), Kevin Sanders (bass) and Sean Willmott (drums). It begins at 8 p.m., admission £5.

Seeing the hole, and grabbing it by ZAPF DINGBAT

MEGASTAR NEMO JONES IS IN town, and already having a tangible effect on the musical scene here. *Strange Listings* Diplomatic Correspondent Zapf Dingbat found him feverishly manoeuvring the riffs, lyrics and assorted miscellanea of his trade, the better to lull you awake should you happen to mosey into the Barrel House on October the 27th. So who is this Nemo? Zapf began with a traditional question.

ZAPF: What was the inspiration for the title of your new, homemade and yet rather classy album, *Superfruity*?

NEMO: It's well known that, upon completion of the Universe, the Queen Of All Creation in Her Infinite Wisdom accidentally left a few bits and pieces scattered around – the snippets on the cutting-room floor, so to speak; the Placenta and Umbilicus of the Heavens; the inedible outer skin of the great big onion that the world allegedly just is: Superfruit. I have for many lifetimes been preparing a direct connection with these mysterious elemental immaterials, 100.00356 per cent certain that magic might result. This Earth Album is the cause.

ZAPF: Okay, so how would you describe this, your debut album?

Saturday 1st Totnes Early Music Society presents The Sweelinck Ensemble in *Sorrow and Joy*. TEMS members free, non-members £12, students/juniors £5, 7.30 p.m., St Mary's Church, High Street.

Totnes Jazz Collective presents Harry S. Fulcher's The Limbic System. £5, 8 p.m., Ariel Centre, KEVICC, Ashburton Road.

Sunday 2nd Gregg plays folk/pop in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Tuesday 4th Traditional folk/Irish music in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Wednesday 5th Open mic evening, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Thursday 6th Simon Scott (no further details available), Kingsbridge Inn.

Friday 7th Tee Marcheur (folk/rock), 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Contemporary jazz with Mick Green (sax), Sam Richards (piano) and David Barrow (bass), 8 p.m., Maltsters Arms, Tuckenhay.

Saturday 8th Harberton Folk presents Kevin Dempsey (guitar) and Joe Broughton (fiddle), with support from Thinking Jack. 7.30 p.m. Tickets £6.50. Ring 01803 863468 to reserve. Ariel Centre, KEVICC, Ashburton Road.

Sunday 9th Bluegrass in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Tuesday 11th Traditional folk/Irish music in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Wednesday 12th Open mic evening, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Thursday 13th One Night Stanza – poetry, performance etc. 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

The Music of Morton Feldman, performed by Frank Denyer. 7.30 p.m. Tickets free, but please reserve in advance from the Box Office, 01803 847070. Great Hall, Dartington.

Friday 14th Behind the Sun – Nicky Swann (vocals) and Nick Bayes (guitar/bass), 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Sunday 16th Gregg plays folk/pop in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Tuesday 18th Traditional folk/Irish music in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Wednesday 19th Open mic evening, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Thursday 20th Piano Circus, including music by Steve Reich, Nancarrow, Terry Riley and others. More information and booking from Dartington Arts, 01803 847070. £10, concessions £8, students/young people £5. 7.30 p.m. Ariel Centre, KEVICC, Ashburton Road.

Friday 21st Colin and Smudger, folk/rock, 8 p.m. Kingsbridge Inn.

Sunday 23rd Bluegrass in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Tuesday 25th Traditional folk/Irish music in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Wednesday 26th Open mic evening, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Thursday 27th Nemo Jones with Josh Geffin and Bird, 8 p.m. Tickets £5, £4 concessions. On the door or in advance from the venue. Barrel House, High Street.

Friday 28th Joanne Low (pop/rock), 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Sunday 30th Gregg plays folk/pop in the bar, 8 p.m., Kingsbridge Inn.

Monday 31st SWAP – The Du Da Tour (Anglo-Scandinaviam folk), 8.30 p.m. Tickets £10, concessions £9, students/young people £5. Dartington Arts: 01803 847070. Great Hall, Dartington.

NEMO: Well, Zapf, as you must be aware in your own work, it's of the utmost importance to correspond diplomatically to the needs of a person. After all, haha, we are one, right?

ZAPF: Haha, yes.

NEMO: Seeing the hole in music, I realised I'd better grab it, stick it in the shop and practise non-attachment. Ya see, Zapf, I only want to see you bathing in the purple rain...sorry, what was the question?

ZAPF: Er, your music has been described as English Soul. Would that be fair?

NEMO: Fair, yes. Mine, no. I get out the way like a bullfighter; air traffic control. I live to be tangled in the brambles of weight and weightlessness through song – an inescapable and poignant raw lust ever bubbling within. To be grooved softly like a mist from heaven, while tiny cute but real devils snap at our ankles and passers-by quickly look away, hair aflame, their ghostlike existence and pace unfazed. Figuratively speaking, of course.

ZAPF: Of course. Why Totnes?

NEMO: Exactly.

Superfruity will be available relatively soon on Magpie Records.