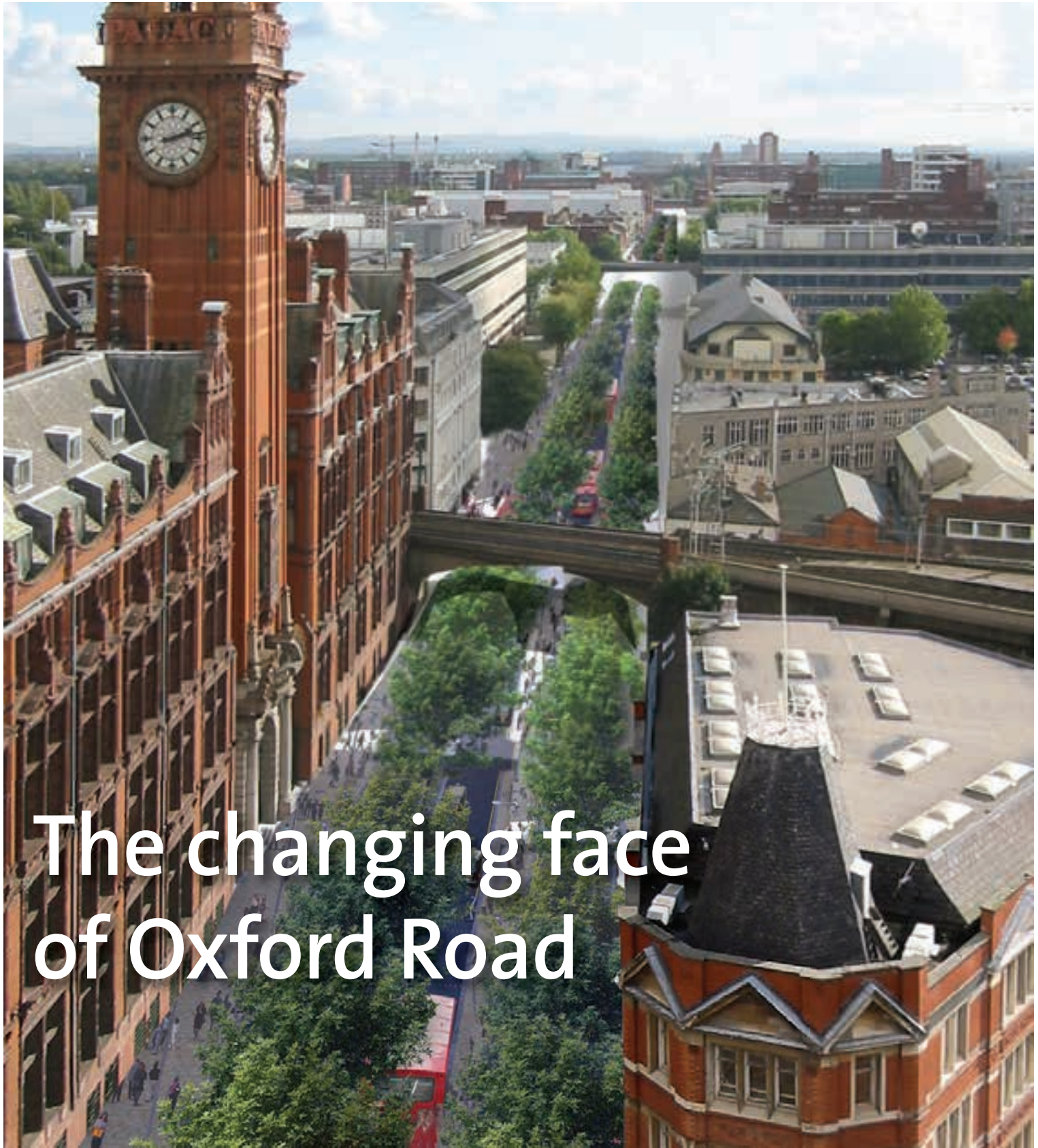


# UniLife

7 April 2008

Issue 6 Volume 5



The changing face  
of Oxford Road



## Features



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Front cover shows an artist impression of the Oxford Road corridor courtesy of the Manchester City South Partnership.

## Letter from the President



In an age of computer aided design and robotic manufacturing, some enterprises can envisage a future requiring only a small, residual human workforce. A university cannot.

Like other organisations seeking to improve their productivity, contemporary universities have embraced sophisticated technological solutions and introduced advanced information systems to manage many functions that were once highly labour-intensive. Essentially, however, universities are learning communities. They exist to add value to human lives. People are not just their most precious resources; people are the *raison d'être* of a university

Arcane academic traditions, gleaming laboratories, sophisticated research equipment, cutting-edge IT systems, deeply-considered curricula and pedagogies, exemplary strategic plans, carefully-managed finances, enviable endowments, exquisite risk management policies, state-of-the-art health and safety practices, reassuring stakeholder feedback and even high international league table rankings may have an important place in the life of a university community.

But such things are the means, not the ends, of higher learning.

The ends are all about the quintessentially human urge to learn, to discover truth, to create, extend, join up and apply knowledge, and, in the process, to better understand individual human nature and the social, cultural and natural worlds within which human experience unfolds. Such ends are entirely and essentially about adding value to individual human beings and, consequentially, to human communities.

Yet a narrowly egotistical emphasis on the interests of individuals misrepresents the essential idea of a university. The interests of the university community do not routinely coincide with the personal interests of any single student or cohort of students, nor do they always match the immediate concerns of individual members of academic or support staff. This is partly because the community itself comes first, but also because the current members of a university community are only a tiny sample of the many people who, generation after generation, define the institution and give it substance.

Because the university is an enduring institution, the enduring challenge is to build, nurture and continuously re-build an exemplary learning community. For anyone with a say in the development of a university, that is the essential task.

Sometimes the right thing to do is to say NO. Building an exemplary learning community sometimes means postponing an appointment until we are sure that we have got the right person; or not promoting someone whose premature promotion might misrepresent what the University stands for; or not

passing a student or awarding a First where doing so would compromise the scholarly integrity of all the degrees, diplomas and other awards that the institution grants.

Sometimes the best way to invest in existing staff is to appoint new people. There might be various reasons for appointing an "iconic" scholar close to the end of a distinguished career, but unless the decision enriches the scholarly community by attracting to it brilliant younger scholars who might not otherwise have come, or by enhancing the professional and intellectual development of those already here, the appointment is likely to have been in vain.

A prudent university invests in superb non-academic staff because without them it would be a poorer place to be a scholar, researcher or student. In the longer term, without the commitment and professionalism of outstanding support staff the life of the mind has no sustainable institutional framework within which to flourish.

Universities commonly invest in young people most of whom, it is reasonable to assume, will go elsewhere, and serve out their best years in the interests of some other community, academic or otherwise. They do so for the very good reason that the presence of brilliant students and young scholars, cohort after cohort, is the lifeblood of the institution, sustaining intellectual activity among those who spend much more of their intellectual lives as its members.

All universities wrestle with the conundrum of balancing the need to keep attracting outstanding new staff against the equally pressing imperative to provide an environment in which existing staff may grow intellectually and professionally and realise their full potential.

Like any university, we in The University of Manchester will rarely get these key decisions about people exactly right. Human beings are too complex, too full of surprises, and human experience too unpredictable, for choosing and managing people to be an exact science.

But this we do know. Of all the decisions we make in our University, it is choices about the appointment, promotion, professional development and management of people that are in the end the most important.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Alan Gilbert". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Professor Alan Gilbert,  
President and Vice-Chancellor**



## The future's bright for Oxford Road

**Proposals to transform the Oxford Road area have been unveiled by a new development agency – The Manchester City South Partnership.**

Under the plans, around 600 acres of land on the 'Oxford Road corridor' will be regenerated, creating up to 34,000 new jobs, as well as attracting new businesses and research facilities to the area. It is also hoped that thousands of offices and flats will be developed.

The proposals would also affect transport. Oxford Road could eventually become a 'green corridor' featuring new 'eco-buses' – a cross between a bus and a tram. And the way the area looks would be enhanced by new lines of trees, multi-coloured lighting and public art installations.

The Partnership, which was launched last month at an event at the Whitworth Art Gallery, has been set up to drive forward the knowledge economy in the

area surrounding the universities and NHS Trust on Oxford Road.

The University is a key player in the Partnership and will be working together with Manchester City Council, Manchester Metropolitan University, the Central Manchester and Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust and the North West Regional Development Agency, to realise the plans.

One of the reasons the Partnership has been set up is to make sure that the £1.5 billion of investment already taking place in the area is 'joined up' and that the universities and Health Trust work together to make the most of the massive investment already being made – and any future investment.

The University's President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alan Gilbert, has taken on the role of Chairman of the Manchester City South Partnership and said: "What we are embarking on is one of the most ambitious and exciting development initiatives

Manchester – and the region as a whole - has seen in a decade.

"It will encompass the huge university and hospital investment programmes that are already underway, creating iconic institutions that will not only advance education, science and innovation, but also more broadly enrich the culture, create jobs and enhance the economic and social wellbeing of the communities we serve," he added.

The Partnership's first major task will be to carry out an extensive consultation exercise on the proposed development plans with all stakeholders. This will involve people who live and work in and around the area, University staff and students, hospital staff and patients, the wider business community, the arts and cultural community, retailers and commuters.

For more information visit the website below.



[www.manchestercitysouth.com](http://www.manchestercitysouth.com)

## £35m Biomedical Research Centre to boost patient care

**Medical researchers at the University are celebrating the groundbreaking announcement by the Department of Health that the city will be home to a new £35 million Biomedical Research Centre (BRC).**

The BRC will be run by a partnership led by the Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust and the University, based at the Trust's Oxford Road site.

The partnership has the support of Manchester City Council and the North West Development Agency (NWDA), plus leading healthcare businesses including AstraZeneca, Renovo and GlaxoSmithKline, and other partners such as the Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Facility.

Professor Alan Gilbert, President and Vice Chancellor of The University of Manchester, said: "This announcement

recognises the quality of the biomedical research currently being conducted in Manchester and the excellent partnership that has been forged between the University and the Trust to undertake world class clinical research."

Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust chief executive Mike Deegan said: "This momentous decision means we can now embark on the final phase of a massive transformation project. Alongside our £500 million investment in new hospital buildings and facilities, the Trust and University will be able to deliver world class research that benefits patients both locally and globally."

Research funded through the Manchester BRC will include projects that aid our understanding of health, development and disease, develop new therapies for a range of conditions including cardiovascular disease and mental health, and identify ways to alleviate chronic long-term disability.





## In brief

### Be Bold, Leaders Told

Leaders of local authorities are being encouraged to be bold in their decision making, according to feedback from a five-year Evaluating Local Governance (ELG) research study.

Five researchers based at the University's Institute for Political and Economic Governance (IPEG), in partnership with Goldsmiths College, carried out a five-year evaluation into the impact of the Local Government Act 2000 on local authorities.

### Italian Visitor

More than 200 staff and students from the University, Salford University and Manchester Metropolitan University packed into the Historic Reading Room at the John Rylands Library on Deansgate to hear an address by the Italian ambassador Gian Carlo Aragona.

The Ambassador talked about Italian foreign policy and transatlantic relations. He was welcomed by Professor Stephen Milner who is Serena Chair of Italian and Head of the University's Italian section, which hosted the Ambassador's visit.

The Ambassador is photographed (below) looking at a selection of Italian manuscripts.



### Sporting Success

Two of the University's sporting venues have been selected to appear in the official London 2012 pre-Games Training Camp Guide.

The Manchester Aquatics Centre and the Sugden Centre will both be available for use by athletes from all over the world in the lead up to the London 2012 Games.

The Aquatics Centre will be used for swimming, diving, synchronised swimming and water polo whilst the Sugden Centre will be used for badminton, basketball, fencing, taekwondo, indoor volleyball and wrestling.



## Manchester to host nuclear technology centre

**The University's Dalton Nuclear Institute has announced plans to establish a new Centre for Nuclear Energy Technology (C-NET).**

The new centre will develop professionals with the skills to work in the global nuclear industry and will provide access to high-quality, independent academic research.

The investment in C-NET will total £25 million in two phases over the next five years. The first phase of investment will start this year and will see a £16 million investment over three years.

The proposal has been endorsed by the Northwest Science Council, and funding is now being sought from the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA). The University will also be making a substantial investment in the Centre.

It is envisaged that further funding will come from research councils, income generated through the work of researchers and considerable investment from industry.

Regional and private sector investment in C-NET will see the re-establishment of critical capabilities required to support the nuclear industry and help attract and support nuclear build companies in the region.

The Centre will act as a beacon and link-in appropriate capabilities and research infrastructure nationally and internationally. In particular, it will collaborate with the other academic strengths in the region and help consolidate the Northwest's position as an internationally recognised region of excellence in nuclear energy.

C-NET is expected to start operating during 2008. As well as the science and engineering aspects of nuclear power, it will also develop capability in 'society and sustainability' aspects, covering important topics such as socio-economics, policy, regulation and public acceptability.

Professor Alan Gilbert, President and Vice Chancellor of The University of Manchester said: "For Manchester, C-NET is key to building a world leading academic capability in nuclear and related research.

"The Centre will not only support UK interests in nuclear energy, but will engage internationally at this critical time for establishing sustainable energy generation technologies."

Last year the Dalton Nuclear Institute announced it would be establishing a major £20m nuclear research facility in Cumbria in conjunction with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

## Manchester archaeologist remembered



**A new archaeology lab based in the Mansfield Cooper Building has been named after Robina McNeil - the former Director of the Greater Manchester Archaeology Unit who died last year aged 57.**

A plaque commemorating the opening of the Robina McNeil Archaeology Lab was unveiled last month.

Robina, (pictured right) joined the University in 1987 as Senior Field Archaeologist with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit and in 1994 became Director of the Unit and County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester.

She was an active member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists as a Council member, chairing the Buildings Group.

Her publications included important early work on the medieval salt industry of Nantwich, papers promoting Manchester as a good example of an industrial city and long-standing editorship of the Greater Manchester Heritage Atlas series.

Co-director of the University's Field Archaeology Centre Norman Redhead said: "Robina typified everything we strive for in the Unit: seeing archaeology as a community resource and a means of promoting a sense of heritage.

"She is still sorely missed and this is a fitting way to ensure her contribution is always remembered."



Dr Stuart Allan and pupils

## All aboard the Brain Bus

**Tots, teenagers and twilighters all got to learn about the beauty of the brain when University scientists took to the road for Brain Awareness Week.**

The researchers boarded their 'Brain Bus' in March for a two-day tour of schools and colleges across Greater Manchester to demonstrate the workings of the old grey matter.

"The main focus was on how the brain interprets what we see and feel around us in our environment," said Dr Stuart Allan, a lecturer in the Faculty of Life Sciences and one of the organisers.

"But we also illustrated how the brain functions, what goes wrong in diseases like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and what research is being done in Manchester to find treatments for these conditions."

The bus, which also visited an over-60s group, was manned by young researchers in the fields of neuroscience and psychological sciences and included activities to test and tease the senses of those taking part.

As well as the scheduled stops, Stuart and co-organiser Dr Ellen Poliakoff spread the brain awareness message to a wider audience during an appearance on Channel M's Breakfast Show.

As well as being a fun event, Stuart hopes the exercise encouraged some of the younger individuals taking part to think about careers in science.

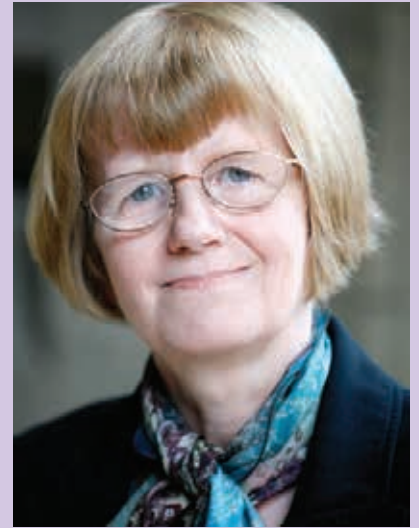
"Science does have an image problem but this event hopefully demonstrated that it's not all about white coats and grey beards," he said.

"In fact you don't even have to have a degree to get involved in science – you could become a laboratory technician or work in one of the many support roles, all of which are essential for progress to be made."

The tour finished with an open event for the public at the Printworks in the city centre.

Brain Awareness Week, which ran from March 10 to 16, was an international effort organised by the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives to advance public awareness about the progress and benefits of brain research.

## Margaret Brazier made honorary QC



**Professor of Law Margaret Brazier has been appointed an honorary Queen's Counsel for her work in medical law.**

The distinction follows her election to the Fellowship of the Academy of Medical Sciences last year - another major coup.

The honorary QC recognises lawyers who have made a major contribution to the law of England and Wales outside practice in the courts.

Professor Brazier chaired the Retained Organs Commission from 2001 to 2004. She also chaired a Nuffield Council Working Party on Critical Care Decisions in Fetal and Neonatal Medicine from 2004 -2006.

She has written widely on medical law and ethics, with a particular interest in problems of autonomy and consent, the use of human body parts, reproductive medicine and public health.

Professor Brazier, who also has an OBE, is co-director of the Centre for Social Ethics and Policy in the School of Law.



Jonathan Trigell

## Masters thesis is Britain's most discussed book

An acclaimed book written as a Masters thesis has been recognised as Britain's most discussed work of fiction for World Book Day.

Jonathan Trigell's novel 'Boy A' tells of what happened to a young man, guilty of a monstrous childhood crime, after release from prison.

The 34-year-old submitted the story as part of his University of Manchester creative writing degree in 2002.

The award is the latest in a series of achievements: the book was dramatised by Film 4, after

winning the prestigious John Llewellyn Rhys Prize for Commonwealth writers under 35.

The recent run-away success is a far cry from Trigell's days as a struggling writer: for ten years he worked as a holiday rep, barman, TV extra, out door pursuits instructor and door-to-door salesman - amongst other things.

He said: "I'm totally delighted that 'Boy A' has been named 'The Book To Talk About 2008', it's a real honour and I'd like to thank everyone who voted for it.

"But first and foremost I hope the day will spread the word that

novels are more relevant than ever today: they remain the best medium with which to examine complex and difficult subjects and we seem to have plenty of those.

"I started writing 'Boy A' several years before I took the Manchester MA in 2002. But the structure of the course really helped fine tune my skills and give me the confidence to finish the job.

"The degree also allowed me to prioritise my writing, instead of trying to squeeze it in around work."



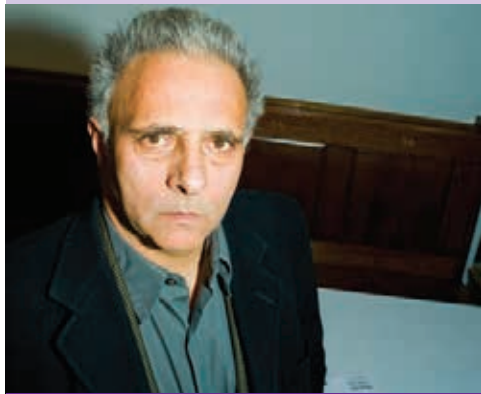
## In brief

### Up-front and personal

Leading novelist and screenwriter Hanif Kureishi gave the very first reading from his newly published novel *Something to Tell You* at the latest of the Literature Live events here at the University.

Kureishi, who was recently awarded a CBE for his services to literature and drama, has written novels including *The Black Album* and *The Buddha of Suburbia*, which won the Whitbread First Novel Award and was televised by the BBC. He is also well-known for his highly successful screenplays, which include *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *The Mother* and *Venus*.

The Literature Live events are organised by the Centre for New Writing.



[www.manchester.ac.uk/arts/newwriting](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/arts/newwriting)

### Honor for Pervez

**Professor Pervez Ghauri from Manchester Business School has been elected vice president for the US-based Academy of International Business (AIB-Worldwide).**

The AIB is the leading association of specialists in the field of international business – it has 2953 members, in 71 different countries around the world.

Professor Ghauri said: "I am honoured to be elected as vice president - the AIB is renowned across the world and this is only the third time that the role has been held by a UK scholar. International business is a key area of expertise at Manchester Business School, and I look forward to strengthening the relationship between the two organisations."



## Women's work

**One of the University's best known scientists has been included in a prestigious photographic exhibition showcasing some of the top women working in science, engineering and technology (SET).**

Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, who is the University's Deputy President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, has had her portrait included in the 'Women of Outstanding Achievement in SET' photographic exhibition.

The exhibition was set up in 2006 by the UK Resource Centre for Women in SET, (UKRC), with the aim of celebrating the exceptional achievements of women in these subject areas.

Six new portraits have been added to the exhibition this year, including Professor Rothwell, who was commended for her contribution to 'Communication of SET with a Contribution to Society'. She was selected for her work spearheading the University's campaign of public engagement in inner city schools across Manchester. Her research here at the University is helping to contribute to greater understanding of neurological conditions including stroke, head injury, MS and Alzheimer's disease.

Professor Rothwell has also given her support to the University's recent successful application for membership of the Athena SWAN Charter. This



Professor Rothwell's photograph from the exhibition

Charter aims to promote the careers of women in SET in higher education and research, with a particular focus on recruiting more women to leadership roles.

The SWAN (Scientific Women's Academic Network) Charter was launched in 2005. There are currently 29 members, including Oxford, Cambridge, University College London, Imperial and Edinburgh.

For more information on the Charter visit the website below.

[www.athenaswan.org.uk](http://www.athenaswan.org.uk)

## Top honour for Michelle

**RAF helicopter pilot and University alumni Flight Lieutenant Michelle Goodman (pictured right) has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) - the first time the honour has been awarded to a female pilot.**

The DFC is awarded for "an act or acts of valour, courage or devotion to duty whilst flying in active operations against the enemy". It was awarded to Michelle following a particular sortie last year when she had to fly her Merlin helicopter into the centre of Basra City, in Iraq, to pick up casualties who had been injured in a mortar attack on an isolated British location.

Even though she knew landing in this location was assessed to be 'very high risk' Flight Lieutenant Goodman flew to the location under intense enemy fire and landed her helicopter so that medics could load the casualties. She then successfully took off again and took the casualties to the British Field Hospital.

Flight Lieutenant Goodman completed a degree in Aerospace Engineering here at the University in 1999 before beginning her RAF career in 2000. She has completed three tours in Iraq.

Upon hearing the news of this historic award, Flight Lieutenant Goodman said: "I am truly honoured to be awarded a DFC, but without both my crew and all the engineering support personnel, the rescue of the casualty would not have been possible. This is not an award just for me, but recognizes all the soldiers, sailors and airmen, who, day in and day out put their lives on the line for the British public to remain safe."



## 'Digital 60' celebrates Manchester landmark

The 60th anniversary of a landmark moment in computing history will be celebrated by the University this summer.

On June 21 1948, the small-scale experimental machine, also known as the 'Baby', made its first successful run of a program. It was the first machine that had all the components now classically regarded as characteristic of the basic computer.

The program was written by Tom Kilburn who designed and built the machine at The University of Manchester with the late Freddie Williams.

To mark the historic event, schoolchildren and sixth form students in Greater Manchester and beyond are being challenged to unleash their creative talent.

The School of Computer Sciences has launched a computer animation competition with the winning entries being shown at a high-profile Animation Festival in Manchester later this year.

Students aged between seven and 19 are being challenged to create a short computer graphics film with a maximum running time of one minute using 'Alice', a free animation program that requires no knowledge of programming.

A second competition is challenging programmers to get back to basics by writing software for the famous sixty year old computer.

People are being invited to write their own program in The Baby's original code, using an interactive



simulator that runs on a normal computer.

The simulator can be programmed online or downloaded from the website below.

The closing date for both competitions is 1 May 2008.

## In brief

### Getting arty to save the planet

We can all help to cut carbon emissions by reducing energy usage and wastage, but most of us don't do nearly enough. Now an exciting competition for University of Manchester students seeks to raise environmental awareness, stimulate discussion and encourage eco-friendly behaviour.

The Cool It! competition, funded by BP, invites students to produce a piece of creative work that has real impact. The seriously eco-friendly prizes include £700 worth of organic, air-miles-free shopping, mountain bikes, outdoor clothing vouchers and others such as Rough Guides to Ethical Living.

If you're a student, why not have a go and enter the competition, but you'll have to be quick – the closing date is Friday 18 April.

Across the campus there is a need to ensure a high level of environmental awareness, including an appreciation of how every individual can make a contribution by minimising their carbon footprint. It is a matter of immediate concern that over the past couple of years the University's energy costs have almost doubled.

The competition challenge is for students to create something imaginative that turns heads, grabs people's attention and gets them thinking and talking; and most importantly works at both conscious and unconscious levels to persuade people to behave in a more environmentally sustainable way.

Students can submit a cartoon, poem, photo, sketch, painting, or small sculpture. Entries in digital or other media may be accepted providing that they are in a format that can be readily presented in a small exhibition.

For more information email [s.stubbs@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:s.stubbs@manchester.ac.uk) with 'Cool-it' in the message header, or visit the website.

[www.cs.manchester.ac.uk/Digital60/Baby](http://www.cs.manchester.ac.uk/Digital60/Baby)

## Queen pays tribute to University training partner

HRH The Queen has paid tribute to the work being carried out by an HIV and AIDS charity based in Uganda.

On a recent visit to Uganda, the Queen visited The Mildmay Centre, a registered charity which specialises in HIV and AIDS care and which is a training partner of the University. The School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work validates a BSc Honours degree in 'A Health Systems Approach to HIV+AIDS Care and Management' at Mildmay. The programme is delivered on site in Kampala, Uganda as well as in Kenya.

Following her visit to Mildmay, the Queen addressed the Ugandan parliament and said: "The Mildmay Centre sets a remarkable example in the provision of care and relief for those who are ill as well as in educating people about how to protect themselves and their families. The role of centres such as this, which the Government of Uganda has done so much to encourage, will be central to achieving our common aim of controlling this cruel disease."

If you would like further information on Mildmay or are thinking of collaborating with an external partner, contact Emma Hilton [emma.hilton-2@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:emma.hilton-2@manchester.ac.uk) on 0161 275 2047 or visit the website below.



[www.mildmay.org/mildmay.aspx?pg=mildmay-home](http://www.mildmay.org/mildmay.aspx?pg=mildmay-home)



## Cool it!

[www.manchester.ac.uk/coolit](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/coolit)



## In brief

### Technical textiles

The Textiles and Paper group in The School of Materials is set to benefit from a new cutting-edge nanofibre production facility.

The facility will create a technology pipeline to supply its own world leading weaving and knitting facilities with the raw material to engineer the next generation of technical textiles.

By incorporating the tailor-made fibres into sophisticated 3D woven and knitted fabrics, the group will reinforce its position as one of the major University textiles centres in the world.

The innovative new facility is being established with support from The Clothworkers' Livery Company.

Professor Chris Carr, Head of the Textiles and Paper group, expects this integrated approach to provide a global focus for industry to create revolutionary textile structures, composed of nanofibrous materials containing nanoparticles, which will offer a new level of performance in composites, filtration, personal protection, medical textiles and sportswear. Another aim is to present the first nanofibre fashion collection in the world, incorporating innovative design with groundbreaking aesthetics.

The Textiles and Paper Group is also backing the initiatives of The Gatsby Charitable Foundation in establishing a programme to develop the infrastructure of the Tanzanian textiles industry.

The University and the Foundation will support the local industry with new technology, improved fashion marketing and targeted educational training. In establishing this platform for change the industry will accordingly become more successful, not just benefiting the textiles industry, but all Tanzanians.

## Nature or nurture - why do some of us see red?

**A researcher at the School of Psychological Sciences is investigating why some people remain calm in the face of life's niggles, while others 'flip' with little provocation.**

Recent studies using new brain-imaging technology have discovered that a change in the brain's neurochemical activity may be related to increased impulsive aggression (when someone unexpectedly reacts violently with little provocation, as opposed to someone deliberately 'looking for trouble'). Now Angela Rylands wants to deploy the University's world-leading HRRT PET brain scanner, based at its Wolfson Molecular Imaging Centre (WMIC), as part of a project to find out more.

Angela says: "Positron emission tomography (PET) scanning has revealed that a deficit in brain serotonin neurotransmission may leave some people more prone to aggression and impulse control disorders. I want to establish to what extent such behaviours are rooted at a molecular level and how much does learning from the environment around us also play a part."

One of her case studies is Carl Hayes, a 39-year-old former professional bodyguard – who has looked after a former PM – turned retail manager, who hopes the study will help him understand and control his quick temper.

"I once set light to £800 in a row with my ex-wife just because she wouldn't apologise," Carl recalls.



"I found the study really interesting and informative and I think others will feel the same. I already do martial arts as the exercise helps me feel calmer and in difficult situations I try to ask myself, 'will this bother me next week?' The answer is usually 'no'. My partner Ruth has helped too by telling me to smile when there's a problem – it calms me and the other person involved down."

Angela adds: "If we can get to the root of impulsive aggressive behaviour – be it nature, nurture or a combination of the two – it could help us to identify how we can break the cycle of impulsive and aggressive behaviour and intervene with future generations at risk from losing control."

## Indian economic miracle bypasses rural poor

**A study of disadvantaged groups in rural India - which make up more than 24 per cent of the population - has shed light on why the country's economic success has largely passed them by.**

Researchers from The Universities of Manchester, Delhi, Harvard and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, used survey data to examine the plight of former "untouchable castes" and disadvantaged tribes.

Legislation in 1950 entitling untouchables - as well as a number of tribal communities - to places in educational institutions and government employment, was hailed as a major breakthrough in affirmative action.

But Dr Katsushi Imai from the School of Social Sciences said: "Despite glowing accounts of how well the Indian economy has performed in recent years, these traditionally disadvantaged groups - known as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes - remain mired in acute poverty.

"Indeed, our analysis confirms a higher incidence and a higher intensity of poverty among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes relative to the rest of India.

"This disparity shows poorer levels of education and land ownership as well as lower income gains resulting from land and education.

"While some of the disparity may be caused by elements of discrimination and lower quality of education; location in remote, inaccessible areas with limited infrastructure and limited market access cause poverty and inequity to persist.

"We find this worrying: it's clear that ethnic groups and castes remain mired in poverty."

Dr Imai added: "One issue that our analysis highlights is that identity could have a potentially important role in perpetuating deprivation.

"We suggest that policy cannot be limited to enhancing the endowments of the schedule castes, scheduled tribes, and other disadvantaged groups but must also address the issue of lower returns or income gains.

"The relative importance of caste and tribal affiliations, together with mistrust of the reward and belief systems, must be dealt with when designing any affirmative action."





# Study to focus on the ageing eye

**Scientists are to investigate the link between macular degeneration – an eye condition that can cause blindness – and a substance called lutein.**

The macula is an area of the retina at the back of the eye containing a large number of light-sensitive cells called photoreceptors. The dense packing of these cells in the macula allows us to see detail and colour as well as allowing us to read.

As we get older the retina is expected to lose some photoreceptors but in some cases the macular region becomes disorganised and a large number of photoreceptors are lost leading to the central fields of vision becoming fragmented – a condition called Age Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD).

Research suggests that lutein – a chemical found naturally in leafy vegetables like spinach and broccoli – may act to slow the progress of ARMD.

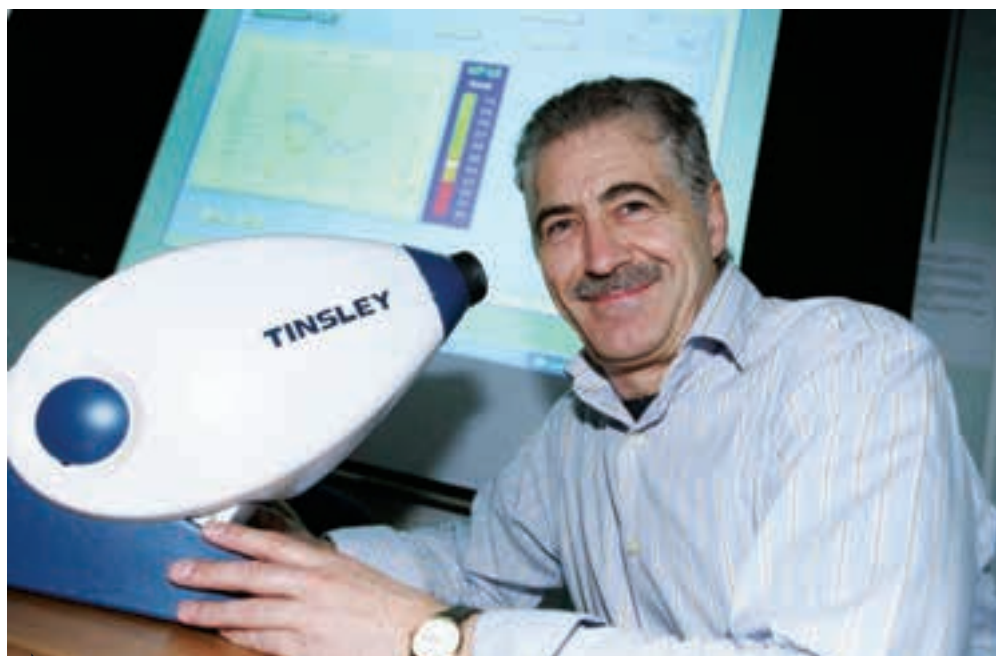
Some reports have even claimed that lutein supplements can, in some cases, improve the vision of someone with ARMD.

However, current evidence for significant benefits based on population studies remains circumstantial, so researchers in the Faculty of Life Sciences have launched a study to test the idea.

The research is aimed at people over 55 years old with early signs of macular disease.

“We are currently recruiting subjects for the study,” said Dr Ian Murray, (pictured below) who is leading the research. “If you have been diagnosed with early-stage macular disease and would like to participate, please get in touch.”

Additional information can be found at the websites below.



[www.Luteininfo.co.uk](http://www.Luteininfo.co.uk) and [www.armd.org.uk](http://www.armd.org.uk)

## A cracking idea

An innovative University project that aims to turn milk bottles into petrol has been recognised by The Royal Society.

Dr Arthur Garforth and his team in the School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science were the recipients of one of five Brian Mercer Awards for Feasibility.

The project will now receive £25,000 to fund development and assess its commercial possibilities.

Dr Garforth and his team hope to be able to use a process known as hydrocracking to break down polymer based waste, such as plastic bottles, into a liquid suitable for use as a liquid fuel.

Hydrocracking is normally used in refineries to help convert crude oil into fuels but Dr Garforth's work will use special catalysts to turn the process to recycling.



## In brief

### Can we speak without our hands?



[www.esrcfestival.ac.uk](http://www.esrcfestival.ac.uk)

University researchers helped the public to find out if they could speak without using their hands at last month's ESRC Festival of Social Science.

Dr Judith Holler, Dr Tanya Behne and Dr Simone Pika from the Manchester Gesture Centre gave children and adults the opportunity of experiencing gesture, an essential tool in communication, at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry.

Dr Holler, of the School of Psychological Sciences, said: “We all communicate with other people for large parts of the day, whether we are at work, at home with our families or socialising with our friends. Recent research has shown that when people talk they communicate not only using words but they convey large amounts of important information with what is called iconic hands gestures.

“For example, when saying ‘this morning I had difficulty crossing the road’, we might also be moving one hand quickly and repeatedly from left to right. In such a case, the hand is creating a gestural image which demonstrates the movement of several cars, one after the other, whizzing past in front of us on the road. Importantly, this information about the movement, its speed, direction, the position of the cars in relation to ourselves and the fact that numerous cars were driving past is not at all mentioned in the speech.

“Often, we produce several of such iconic hand movements with every sentence we say. Therefore, to fully understand what another person is communicating to us we usually need to perceive both the information in the speech and that contained in the accompanying iconic hand gestures. Despite iconic gestures playing such an important role in everyday talk, we are usually unaware of the fact that we produce these gestures, and that our brain picks up and understands the information gestures contain.”

The team's workshops aimed to raise awareness of gestural communication and to bring the public into direct contact with gesture research with a range of activities such as games with puppets, seeing movie clips of human and ape gestures.

## In brief



### Breakthrough in birth-defect research

Scientists have discovered how to prevent certain craniofacial disorders in what could ultimately lead to at-risk babies being treated in the womb.

University of Manchester researchers, working with colleagues at the Stowers Institute for Medical Research in Kansas, have successfully treated mice with Treacher Collins syndrome – a rare genetic disorder characterised by underdeveloped facial bones, absent or deformed ears and occasionally cleft palate.

The team had previously found that the condition, which affects one in 10,000 individuals, was caused by a mutation in a single gene called TCOF1. They later discovered that this mutation causes cells, known as neural crest cells, to die prematurely in the early stages of pregnancy resulting in the facial anomalies.

Now, writing in the journal *Nature Medicine*, the researchers have shown that preventing the neural crest cells from dying allowed mice with the Treacher Collins gene to develop normally. The principle, say the authors, could also be applied to other single-gene birth defects.

“This is the first time that a congenital defect has been successfully treated and provides genuine hope within a realistic timeframe of one day preventing these conditions in humans,” said Professor Mike Dixon from the Faculty of Life Sciences.

“The method we used to stop the cells dying had significant side-effects but there are other ways to prevent cell death and we are confident the next stage of our research will identify some safe methods.”

The anomalies caused by Treacher Collins syndrome, including underdeveloped jaw and cheek bones, occur during the first few weeks of pregnancy.

Since tests to identify the disorder in the unborn child can only be carried out at nine weeks, long after the damage has been done, any future treatment would have to target those babies most at risk.

“Treacher Collins is an inherited disorder, so the hope is we could use this method to prevent parents with the condition passing it on to their children,” said Professor Dixon.

“This is an exciting step in our investigations and, once we have found a safe method of stimulating the production of neural crest cells in mice, we can look at early clinical trials in humans.”

## What makes a scientist talk to the public?

Scientists who are publicly funded are duty-bound to explain their work to the community who pays them but it is a positive attitude toward public engagement that motivates them, according to a University researcher.

A previous study by the Royal Society showed that career recognition and time constraints were strong factors in whether scientists told the public about their work, in ways such as appearing in the media or talking to a school. It also showed that senior academics were more willing to talk to the public.

However a new study, published in *Science Communication*, has used a social psychology model and shown that academics are willing to talk to the public if they have a positive attitude, believe that they can do it successfully and perceive their peers to be doing it too.

Dr Ellen Poliakoff, at the School of Psychological Sciences, says: “The results are surprising. We found that career recognition and time constraints were not significant, when we were expecting them to be the biggest barriers.

“It seems to reflect an American concept, the ‘civic scientist’ – someone who wants to do well for society and not just their career. They see speaking to the public about their work as volunteer work and not as part of their job. It is goodwill not because they are being forced.”

Dr Poliakoff’s report says public engagement is important because science is at the core of many of the issues facing global society today – terrorism and violence, economic productivity, sustainable development and health. Secondly, there may be a discrepancy between the way

that the media portrays science and actual scientific findings. Thirdly, public engagement activities are important because they can change the public’s perception of scientists and may lead to the public being more supportive of scientific research. Finally, public engagement activities can be enjoyable and may enrich peoples’ lives.

She adds: “I found the results heartening and true to my own experience. Many of my peers are very positive about talking to the public about their work for reasons greater than their own career advancement. A lesson from our findings is that a more strategic approach, that fosters obligation to engage with the public, may clash with this personal motivation.”

## World-class biomedical imaging institute launched

A new research institute has been established which will unite all of the University’s medical imaging facilities and expertise to create an international centre of excellence.

The Biomedical Imaging Institute (BII) brings together academics from across the University with the aim of developing new imaging methods and their application to important biomedical problems. It’s also hoped that the BII will enable lab-based research to eventually be used within hospital settings to benefit patients.

The term “biomedical imaging” covers a range of techniques with an impact on biological and medical sciences.

The BII will make use of the cutting-edge facilities at the Wolfson Molecular Imaging Centre, the Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Facility, the Stopford Building, and Hope Hospital.

Professor Geoff Parker, the Director of the BII said: “The new Institute is destined to provide a world-leading environment for the best research in the area of biomedical imaging.”

The research which will take place at the BII will play a big part in answering scientific questions in areas such as neuroscience, oncology, musculoskeletal disease and cardiovascular disease.

A launch event is taking place on Thursday 1 May at MANDEC (Manchester Dental Education Centre). For more details visit the BII website or register your details at: [www.forms.manchester.ac.uk/surveys/BII](http://www.forms.manchester.ac.uk/surveys/BII)

For further information on the BII contact Professor Geoff Parker, BII Director [geoff.parker@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:geoff.parker@manchester.ac.uk) or Vicky Catterall, BII Coordinator [v.catterall@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:v.catterall@manchester.ac.uk)







## Getting wild about conservation

**TV wildlife presenter Chris Packham gave a talk to would-be conservationists at the University last month.**

Chris, who first came to prominence on the BBC's award-winning *The Really Wild Show* in the mid-1980s, discussed his career in conservation communication.

The event, part of a three-month series of seminars in the fields of ecology and conservation, was organised by Dr Richard Preziosi, a lecturer in the University's Faculty of Life Sciences.

"Many of our students are interested in working in conservation but very few of them know what job opportunities are available to them," said Dr Preziosi, an evolutionary biologist.

"The conservation and ecology seminar series provides students with guidance in areas they get little formal course training and allows them to meet people with active careers in conservation and ecology.

"Chris talked about his experiences of communicating the work of a conservationist, focusing on how he became involved in presenting wildlife programmes like *The Really Wild Show*."

Other conservation experts involved in the seminar programme include Laura Fogg, a presenter on the BBC's *Countryfile* programme, Paul Pearce-Kelly, Curator of Invertebrates and Lower Vertebrates at London Zoo, and Gillian Stevens, UK Biodiversity Coordinator at the Natural History Museum.

The seminars, which are also open to members of the public through prior booking, run until May 21. Anyone who would like to reserve a place can do so by emailing Dr Preziosi at [preziosi@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:preziosi@manchester.ac.uk)

## Some cheaters *can* keep it in their genes

**A new study examining social behaviour suggests certain individuals are genetically programmed to cheat and often will do... providing they can get away with it.**

Researchers here at the University looked at slime moulds – microscopic single-cell organisms or amoebae that are forced to cooperate with one another when food is in short supply. Studying slime moulds at the cellular level provides the scientists with a unique insight into the genes that may also influence human behaviour.

The international team found that some amoebae have the ability to use cheating tactics to give them a better chance of survival. The research – published in the journal *Nature* – not only demonstrates that cheating is a natural phenomenon governed by our genes but that it may be widespread among social creatures.

"Slime mould amoebae feed off bacteria in the soil but when food becomes scarce they aggregate to form a fruiting body of some 100,000 cells," explained Dr Chris Thompson, from the Faculty of Life Sciences.

"Some cells become the spore, while about one-quarter form a stalk. The stalk cells die – they appear to sacrifice themselves to allow the spore cells to be dispersed on the wind to new feeding grounds."

The team's earlier work had focused on this remarkable level of cooperation in the hope of gaining an insight into why some cells demonstrated such altruistic behaviour. They concluded that the selfless acts were due to the unacceptable cost of non-cooperation – without a stalk, no amoebae would escape to new feeding grounds and all would perish.

But this latest research has uncovered a dark and complex subplot where some cells cheat the system to give themselves a better chance of survival.

Commented Dr Thompson: "An analogy can be drawn from people in a sinking boat. If some people cheat by refusing to bail out water they benefit by conserving energy and will last longer as a result. But if not enough people bail water, or those that do become too exhausted, then everyone, including the cheaters, will drown.

"Interestingly, we noted that cheats only cheated in the presence of non-cheaters – when they could get away with not 'bailing water'. When surrounded by other cheaters, they contribute to the group effort again, 'aware' that if no one does, all of them will die."

# Protheroe's Progress



Leading researcher, wife, mother of two, general practitioner in a deprived inner-city practice, Jo Protheroe, still in her thirties ("just") is a woman of purpose – and she has a clear mission: to enable and encourage patients, especially women who do not have the advantages of education, literacy and a middle-class lifestyle, to play a full part in deciding on the treatment for any illness.

"Patient choice is very much part of the current political agenda, but that tends to favour the middle classes," she says. "I want to increase the participation of more disadvantaged groups in making decisions about their treatment and being involved in their health care."

Jo has developed a system which helps patients to make an informed choice suited to their individual needs – and she has tested it out in the homes of women in low socio-economic areas of Greater Manchester with dramatic success. "Empowering is an over-used word, but it is justified here," she says. "The women I worked with found that it made a massive difference – they were far better informed, really involved and became very eloquent in their decision making." The scores of 'thank you' letters she has received from them bear testimony to the success of her work.

The system, developed from what is known as The Clinical Guidance Tree, is an interactive computer programme which enables patients to match their own values – likes and dislikes, anxieties and preferences – with the medical treatments available for their particular condition, assessing the potential benefits and risks.

As RCUK Post Doctoral Academic Fellow in the National Primary Care Research and Development Centre (NPCRDC), Jo is centrally involved in a holistic approach to involve patients in decision making, which will also include health literacy and making sure that information can be easily understood.

"It is vitally important that people know what's going on and what's available, so that they can make an informed choice, if they want to," she says. "Essentially, decision making is a shared experience between patients and professionals. People like to have a choice, but there is no pressure for those who prefer to let the doctor decide."

In an ideal world, there would be a resource centre in every general practice, she believes, a place where patients could routinely go to find information and to use available decision support tools. This is already happening in the United States. As a result of her most recent award, a funded Fellowship to the Summer Institute for Informed Patient Choice, Jo was able to see such a system working at Dartmouth, New Hampshire. "In the hospital there, patients are sent off automatically to use decision aids – and it works extremely well," she says.

Her own interest started nearly ten years ago. After graduating from Bristol Medical School, she spent seven years working in the NHS, in hospitals and general practice, but then responded to the urge to move into research whilst still practising. She turned to her professors at Bristol, who encouraged her to try



**Name**

Dr Joanne Protheroe

**Position**

RCUK Post Doctoral Academic Fellow in the National Primary Care Research and Development Centre (NPCRDC)

**Education**

- 1991 MB ChB, University of Bristol
- 1997 MRCGP Royal College of General Practitioners
- 2002 Masters in Research, MRes, The University of Manchester
- 2004 Diploma of Family Planning; Royal College of Obs and Gynae
- 2005 Doctor of Philosophy, PhD, The University of Manchester

**Career**

Present RCUK Post Doctoral Academic Fellow in the National Primary Care Research and Development Centre (NPCRDC)

GP Salaried Partner in West Gorton Medical Centre, Manchester

- 2001-2005 MRC Research Training Fellow, The University of Manchester
- 1998-2000 Special Lecturer in Primary Health Care, University of Bristol
- 1998-1999 Wellcome Research Training Fellowship, University of Bristol
- 1997-1998 Clinical Assistant at St Peter's Hospice, Bristol
- 1996-1997 GP Registrar, St Mary's Surgery, Thornbury
- 1993-1996 Senior House Officer in: Obs & Gynae, Psychiatry, Accident & Emergency, ENT, Care of the Elderly
- 1993 GP Trainee, Castle Garden Surgery, Torrington, Devon

for a Wellcome Trust Entry Level Training Fellowship. She was successful – and that started her off on her still-parallel track of research and clinical practice. “I enjoy my research very much, but I wouldn't want to give up my practice,” she says.

In 1998, she began her research into decision analysis, a new field in the UK at that time. And she pays tribute to the encouragement she received from Professor Tom Fahey. She looked at the impact of patients' preferences in the treatment of atrial fibrillation (irregular heart rhythm). This resulted in her first paper in 2000 – and, remarkably, it was published in the BMJ. “It was a good start,” she says with true understatement.

So “good” was it that it was named the Royal College of General Practitioners' and Boots the Chemist Research Paper of the Year, awarded annually for an exceptional piece of published research relating to general practice.

She was also continuing her practice, doing sessions as a GP and hospice sessions in palliative care – and looking after her two young children. But her research had put her on the map.

In 2000, her husband, Richard, an intensive care specialist, got the opportunity to go to Australia – and Jo and their two young children, William (then four-years old) and Elizabeth, aged two, went with him to spend the best part of a year in Adelaide.

Of course, being the sort of woman she is, Jo took the opportunity of using her “year off” to do some voluntary teaching at Flinders University and to get involved in problem-based learning (PBL), becoming a tutor. “It was quite fun,” she says light-heartedly, which is her way.

Richard returned to take up a post as an Intensive Care Consultant at Hope Hospital and, with the approval of the MRC, Jo moved to the NPCRDC, bringing a new five-year MRC Research Training Fellowship with her.

By this time she was applying her decision analysis system to women suffering from menorrhagia (excessive bleeding). “It was a valuable topic, because there are several different treatments and which one you use is a matter of individual choice,” she says.

Her trail-blazing work on menorrhagia and atrial fibrillation have continued. And she has developed her research into the effectiveness of a computerised decision aid in primary care, evaluating complex interventions.

Her next project is to expand into the field of health literacy, a relatively new concept in the UK. Working with colleagues from the University of Chicago, the University of London South Bank and Blackpool Primary Care Trust, the aim is “to assess and find interventions to improve health literacy, the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.”

In the meantime, she is also a salaried GP partner in a busy general practice in West Gorton, where she is happily in regular contact with patients from all socio-economic groups.

She is enthusiastic – and good humoured – about what might appear to be a dauntingly demanding life. She seems to manage it all with equanimity, whilst working to help us towards self-management when it comes to treatments for our ills.

## In brief

### MA turns a new page

The University is about to launch a new MA in Contemporary Literature and Culture.

The course will be run by the Centre for New Writing and will begin this September. It will be one of only a handful of MA programmes in the UK to focus on contemporary, post 1970s literature and culture.

Convenor Dr Kaye Mitchell said: "Most 'modern and contemporary' MAs pay only cursory attention to the post-war period. Not only will this course redress that balance, it will offer a range of exciting options covering British, American, Irish and Postcolonial fiction and film, and it will bring practitioners and critics together in what I'm sure will be a hugely stimulating and productive way."

Students on the MA will be taught by experts in contemporary literature, and will benefit from tuition from the Centre's published authors, including M.J. Hyland, Geoff Ryman, Vona Groarke and Patricia Duncker. They will also be eligible to attend an exclusive master class by Professor of Creative Writing Martin Amis.

### The Geography of Learning

The University has been successful in its application for an Erasmus University Charter. This new charter will facilitate participation in the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

The LLP is the umbrella for a number of European mobility schemes, including Erasmus. The Charter entitles the University to take part in both the 'Work Placement' and 'Study' components of the Erasmus scheme, which enables our students to undertake European Commission funded mobility around Europe.

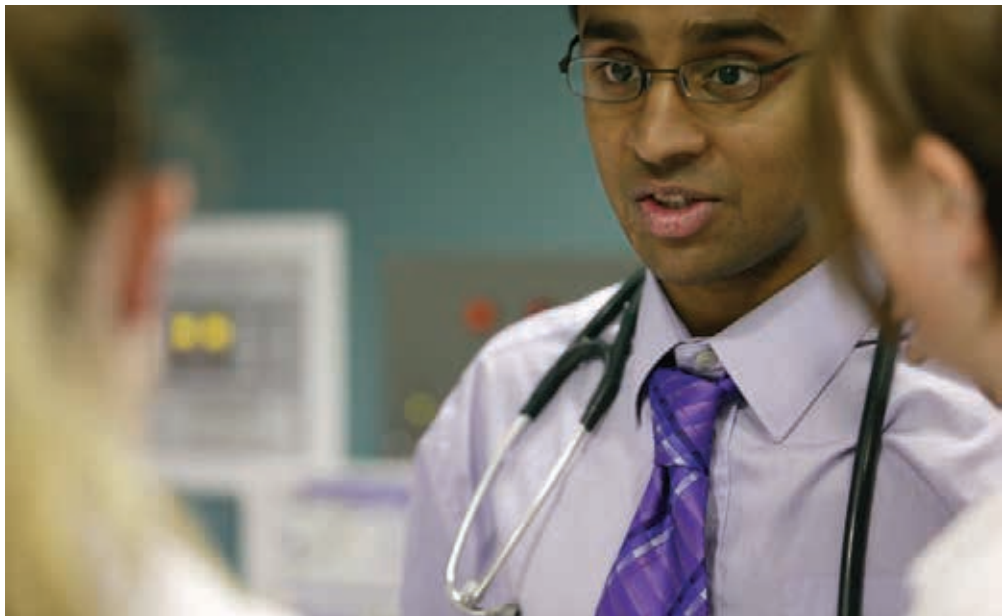
By the end of 2007/08, 424 Manchester student placements will have taken place in the new programme. More than £780,000 of grant funds have been distributed by the University's Study Abroad Unit in 2007/08.

The benefits of the Erasmus scheme are not limited to students - academic and administrative staff can also participate in mobility within Europe to one of our 150 partner universities, or to a business in Europe where there are opportunities for teaching, training and job shadowing.

To find out more about Erasmus contact the Study Abroad Unit:

jenny.hogg@manchester.ac.uk for student mobility to partner universities or helen.mchugh@manchester.ac.uk for work placement and staff mobility

## Youngsters look forward to healthy prospects



**Would-be doctors, nurses, dentists and chemists got a taste of what it's like to be a real healthcare professional at a special event held at the University last month.**

About 70 15-year-olds from across Manchester and Salford took part in the action-packed day, which included hands-on activities such as stitching up wounds on dummy patients.

The University-led initiative was launched in response to the low number of pupils in Greater Manchester achieving the qualifications necessary to enter these professions. The vast majority of high-level jobs in healthcare require a university

degree, yet research shows that less than a quarter of the city's young people actually go on to study at university.

Leading surgeons, midwives, anaesthetists and dentists therefore aimed to inspire the youngsters to progress on to university by letting them see first hand what they do for a living.

The pupils also teamed up with current University of Manchester students, who told them what it's like to study the subjects. Some of these students will also mentor the youngsters on a one-to-one basis for the next three years while they work their way towards university.

## Pathways to Law

**Lawyers of the future were given a taste of what it's really like in a court of law, thanks to a 'mock trial' which was held in the University's Council Chamber last month.**

Barristers from Kings Chambers and 9 St John Street Chambers joined forces with solicitors from Hempsons and District Judge Gosnell to re-enact a trial for the benefit of students on the 'Pathways to Law' programme, who acted as members of the jury. Once they had reached a verdict, the students took part in a question and answer session with the legal professionals.

'Pathways to Law' is a programme run at five universities, including Manchester, to give potential law students a taste of what it's really like to pursue a legal career. All of the students on the programme attend state schools and, if they make it to university, will be the first in their families to go on to higher education.

The scheme is funded by The Sutton Trust and The College of Law. The Year 12 students taking part get the chance to gain legal work placements, visit



Chambers and receive mentoring from qualified solicitors and barristers. All of the legal experts who took part in the 'mock trial' gave their time free of charge and special thanks goes to Jayne Popplewell, a Law alumni from the University, who wrote the script for the trial.

For further information about Pathways to Law, contact katie.howley@manchester.ac.uk



## Blue is the colour

**The University is bringing 1,600 school children to the city this month as part of the UK tour of The Blue Planet Live! - one of the most breathtaking shows to hit the city.**

The University will deliver a brand new educational event, based on the award-winning BBC documentary series, to children from all over the North West later this month at Manchester Central.

Head of Widening Participation at the University Julian Skyrme said: "The Blue Planet Live! has the potential to inspire children to find out more about our oceans and how best to care for them."

Manchester is the only university in the country to be invited into partnership with The Blue Planet Live!

Outreach Officer Dr Emm Barnes said: "All of the sessions have been designed to work within the National Curriculum framework and cover a variety of topics including science, music, geography and creative writing. The theme of sustainability runs through all of the activities we are putting on."

This unique education event and the online resources are supported by BBC Worldwide and World Class Service. The dramatic underwater world of the oceans will be brought to life on one of the largest screens ever used in the UK.



• To attend the workshop sessions call the Bridgewater Hall box office on 0161 907 9000

• Tickets for The Blue Planet Live! are available on 0844 847 1665 or through the website.

[www.theblueplanetlive.com](http://www.theblueplanetlive.com)

## Family likenesses go on show

**An exhibition exploring the impact of family resemblances on our lives took place at the Zion Arts Centre in Manchester last month.**

The show was part of a unique University project researching the social significance of family likenesses.

Katherine Davies and Professor Jennifer Mason from the School of Social Sciences wanted to know why resemblances seem to matter so much to people and what they mean.

The "Living Resemblances" project investigated physical resemblances as well as similarities in

character, temperament, talents, health and other factors.

It was one of many events held around the country for the Economic and Social Research Council's Festival of Social Science.

Part of the project was a photography competition and some of the winning entries were on display, including one from Social Anthropology student Rosanna Farrell, who won first prize in the adult category of the competition for a photo of her mother and grandmother (below).



## Relay For Life launched

'Relay for Life' – a 24-hour fundraising relay event has been officially launched at the University.

The event, which is supported by Cancer Research UK (CRUK), will be taking place on 19 and 20 April and will involve both students and staff.

President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Gilbert became the official Patron of the event at a recent lunchtime launch event held at the MLP, Careers & Employability Division.

Professor Gilbert commended the University's ongoing relationship with Cancer Research UK through the Manchester Cancer Research Centre, adding that the Relay for Life event highlights the importance of volunteering and the difference students can make within the community.

University staff are invited to take part in the relay. For details contact Andrea Rannard on 0161 275 2828 / [andrea.rannard@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:andrea.rannard@manchester.ac.uk)

## Youngsters go potty over plants

Budding scientists from Rochdale learned about plants from around the world during a visit to the University's botanical gardens recently.

The students, from Balderstone Technology College, followed a puzzle trail around the grounds and got to see the plants growing under different climatic conditions, from tropical to desert, Mediterranean to alpine.

The event, organised by Dr Amanda Bamford, a lecturer in the Faculty of Life Sciences, also allowed the young visitors to see and learn about commercial plants such as tea, coffee and cotton.

The one-day event was funded by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC).

# What's On

## Contact Theatre

### The Almond and the Seahorse

Fri 11 April to Sat 12 April 8pm, £10/£6

The Almond and The Seahorse is a new play by Kaite O'Reilly (writer of Contact's award-winning production 'Perfect') that takes a fascinating look at the fragility of memory and the power of devotion.

### Lilya

Tues 15 April to Sat 19 April 7.30pm, £10/£6

Lilya is a play based on the award winning film 'Lilya 4-Ever' and explores the world of sex trafficking.

Ben Mellor presents: **Voices of Dissent**

Wed 23 April to Sat 26 April - 7.30pm £10/£6

Part of the Changing Cycles Project, supported by ACE

### Zameen

Wed 23 April to Sat 26 April 8pm, £10/£6

This beautifully written and moving new play, set in the cotton fields of Punjab, tells of the disastrous environmental damage and devastating effect on real human lives triggered when the forces of nature, tradition and globalisation collide.

Oxford Road, Manchester

Tickets/Info 0161 274 0600

[www.contact-theatre.org](http://www.contact-theatre.org)

## Courses for the Public

The Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) runs a large and varied programme of courses designed for adults studying part-time, whether for pleasure or personal/professional development. Most are open to beginners and no prior knowledge is assumed unless stated. Concessions are available to staff and graduates of The University of Manchester.

CCE, 1st Floor, Humanities Devas Street

0161 275 3275

[www.manchester.ac.uk/continuingeducation](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/continuingeducation)

## Centre for New Writing

Our unique events bring the best-known contemporary novelists and poets to Manchester to discuss and read from their work. Everyone is welcome, and ticket prices include a complementary glass of wine or soft drink (except Martin Amis public events)

### Literature Live

John Thaw Studio Theatre, 6.30pm,

Monday 14 April 2008

'Poetry Review' spring issue launch

**FREE** launch event for the spring issue of Poetry Review magazine, including readings and discussion with editor Fiona Sampson and guest poets Sarah Corbett and Michael Murphy.

## Tabley House

Small conference and meeting rooms available year-round. Licensed for weddings and baby-naming ceremonies.

Tabley House

Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 0HB

01565 750151

email [enquiries@tableyhouse.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@tableyhouse.co.uk)

[www.tableyhouse.co.uk](http://www.tableyhouse.co.uk)

## International Society

### SPRING TRIPS

Sunday 6 April

**Peak District visiting the Heights of Abraham and Bakewell**

Saturday 12 April

**Lake District visiting Keswick**

### OVERNIGHT TRIPS!

Saturday 12 to Sunday 13 April

**Edinburgh (with guided tour of the city)**

Sunday 13 April

**Peak District visiting Castleton's Peak Cavern, Lyme Hall and Park**

### Opening hours

Mon-Fri 9.30am – 7pm (during term time)

Mon-Fri 9.30am – 5pm (during vacation)

327 Oxford Road (next to Krobar)

0161 275 4959

email [int.soc@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:int.soc@manchester.ac.uk)

[www.internationalsociety.org.uk](http://www.internationalsociety.org.uk)

## Chaplaincies

### St Peter's House Chaplaincy

#### SUNDAY WORSHIP

11am Holy Communion

12.15pm Bible Study

12.45pm Lunch (1st Sunday)

6.30pm Evening Worship (term-time only)

**FOYER** 10am - 5pm

An area where students and staff can relax and meet friends. A tea/coffee machine is available.

### Precinct Centre

0161 275 2894

email [sph.reception@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:sph.reception@manchester.ac.uk)

### RC Chaplaincy, Avila House

Open daily (Mon-Fri) 8.30am-10pm

Mass Times (Term-time only)

SUNDAY 7pm (in the Holy Name Church)

Next door to Chaplaincy

Mon, Wed, Fri, 6pm in the Chaplaincy Chapel

Tues, Thurs, 12.15 pm in the Chaplaincy Chapel

Oxford Road (opposite the Students' Union)

0161 273 1456

email [info@rc-chaplaincy-um.org.uk](mailto:info@rc-chaplaincy-um.org.uk)

[www.rc-chaplaincy-um.org.uk](http://www.rc-chaplaincy-um.org.uk)

### The Jewish Student Centre and Synagogue

Hillel House, Greenheys Lane.

0161 226 1139

email [rabiyy@hotmail.com](mailto:rabiyy@hotmail.com)

[www.rabiyy.com](http://www.rabiyy.com)

## Burlington Society

The Society of Mature Students and Postgraduates in the Universities of Greater Manchester.

Burlington Rooms, Schunck Building,

Burlington Street (next to JRUL)

0161 275 2392

[www.burlington.man.ac.uk](http://www.burlington.man.ac.uk)



## John Rylands Library (Deansgate)

Visit the historic John Rylands Library on Deansgate, central Manchester, home to one of the country's greatest collections of printed books, manuscripts and archives. Regarded as one of the city's most beautiful buildings, the Library has just been voted Manchester's Best Iconic Building in the MCR Awards 2007. Permanent exhibitions tell the story of the Library, display treasures from the collections and include interactive exhibits to engage visitors.

### NEW FOR 2008

**Close-Up Session:** Every Thursday 12.15-3pm

Enjoy a closer look at selected items from the Library's outstanding collections and find out more about the building every Thursday lunchtime.

### EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

**Enriqueta Rylands: Who Do You Think She Was?**

Discovering the founder of The John Rylands Library until 19 May 2008. This exhibition celebrates the life of the Library's founder, Enriqueta Rylands.

### EVENTS

**Close-Up Session** Sat 12 Apr 11-11.45am

Enjoy a closer look at items from the collections which tell the story of Enriqueta Rylands as a book collector, with exhibition curator Elizabeth Gow. Tickets £2.50, available from Visitor Services on 0161 306 0555 or [jrl.events@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:jrl.events@manchester.ac.uk).

**Return From Exile: The Life And Times of George**

**Gissing** until 19 May 2008

An exhibition of manuscripts and printed books from The George Gissing / Kohler Collection.

### Public opening hours

Mon and Wed-Sat 10am-5pm

Tues and Sun 12pm-5pm

### Reader opening hours

Mon-Sat 10am-5pm

FREE ADMISSION

### The John Rylands Library

150 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 3EH

0161 275 3764

email [jrl.special-collections@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:jrl.special-collections@manchester.ac.uk)

[www.manchester.ac.uk/library](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library)

## Jodrell Bank

Wednesday 7 May

**Trees in Spring, 10 am**

Join the Arboretum Curator for a talk on Trees in Spring followed by a guided walk of the Arboretum and lunch. Booking is essential. Tickets £19.50

27 to 30 May

**Ask an Astronomer, 2pm**

Ask a Jodrell Bank Astronomer all those burning questions about stars, planets or the telescope. No extra charge.

Thursday 5 June

**World Environment Day: Skies Eye View**

Take a walk around the Arboretum with a GPS to record your path. On your return download your walk onto our computer system and find out what pattern your walk took. Enter your pattern in our competition.

**Jodrell Bank Observatory Visitor Centre,**

Macclesfield, Cheshire

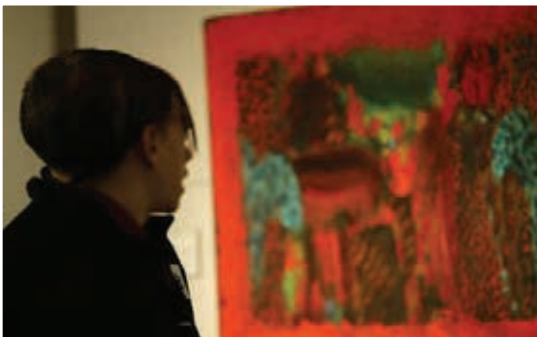
01477 571339

[www.manchester.ac.uk/jodrellbank](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/jodrellbank)

### Summer opening hours

Every day 10:30am to 5:30pm, until Sun 28 Oct. Closed on Thur 4 Oct.





## The Whitworth Art Gallery

### DISPLAYS/COLLECTIONS

**Blake's Shadow: William Blake and his Artistic Legacy** until 20 April 2008

This exhibition will explore the influence of Blake in the development of the visual arts from the eighteenth century to the present day.

**Trade and Empire: Remembering Slavery** until 27 April 2008

The exhibition explores slavery and its impact on trade and empire through objects picked from the Gallery's collection. These range from a pair of 18th century watercolours by Thomas Hearne that show day-to-day life in the Leeward Islands.

**CityVisions** until August 2008

This exhibition looks at how artists have represented the experience of urban living in the last 150 years.

**Flights of Fancy: Select decorative schemes of the 1920s & 30s**, until to Mid Oct 2008

In the early 20th century the influence of Modernism encouraged a move away from highly patterned walls. This change in fashion affected wallpaper production as a whole and manufacturers, keen to retain their customers, produced numerous fancy paper decorations to add interest to plain or textured backgrounds.

**Flights of Fancy Tours**

Tues 8 April, 1.15pm and Sat 12 April, 2pm

**Anne Desmet: Urban Evolution**

12 April – September 2008

Urban Evolution features work made by Desmet in the last 10 years, including images based on the deterioration and regeneration of Manchester's Victoria Baths.

**Urban Evolution Tour** – Sat 26 April, 2pm, FREE

### FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENTS

#### Colourful Sundays

Every Sunday 1.30 - 3.30pm, Free no need to book

Every Sunday is Colourful Sunday. Join friends, family and artists for our popular Sunday drop-in creative workshops. There are new exciting arty activities to take part in every week, which explore creative techniques from drawing to creating your own punk peg dolls and robot head masks! Suitable for all ages.

#### Toddlerstastic Art Adventures!

Workshops, every second Monday of the month 10.30 - 11.30am

Free, please book on 0161 275 7450

Come and enjoy a story adventure around the gallery while creating your own mini masterpiece! Especially for those budding artists under five.

### Collection Exhibitions Archive Now Online

The Whitworth's online 'Collections Catalogue' now allows you to browse and search selected exhibitions held at the Gallery over the past 10 years. Follow the link from homepage at:

[www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk)

**The Whitworth Art Gallery**

Oxford Road, Manchester

0161 275 7450

email [whitworth@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:whitworth@manchester.ac.uk)



## The Manchester Museum

### FAMILY EVENTS

**April Big Saturday**

Saturday 12 April 11am-4pm

**The Blue Planet day**

Explore the depths of the oceans with BBC's The Blue Planet team. See projections of whales and get up close to the Museum's collections of marine and plant life and oceanic societies. Listen to some watery music and help us create a giant collage of marine and mermaid life.

11am-4pm: **Art and craft activities**

Drop-in, Free, All ages

11.30am, 2pm: **Coral reef coaster**

Learn about coral reefs and make a coaster using recycled pots.

**Magic Carpet: Under the sea**

Friday 25 April, 11am-12noon

Look for sea creatures on the galleries and join us for a story, rhymes and craft in the Play + Learn gallery.

Book on 0161 275 2648, £1, Under 5s

### ADULT EVENTS

**Revealing Histories**

Friday 4 April, 1.30, 3.30pm

**This Accursed Thing**

A powerful promenade performance around the Museum looking into the transatlantic slave trade through the eyes of the people who were there.

Book on 0161 275 2648, Free, 8+

1.30pm: Audio Described

3.30pm: BSL

**Café Scientifique: Grave secrets of dinosaurs: soft tissue and hard science**

Monday 7 April, 6.30-8pm

Dr Phil Manning, Palaeontologist at The Manchester Museum and The University of Manchester will talk about mummified dinosaurs.

Book at [www.cafescientifique.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.cafescientifique.manchester.ac.uk), Free

**Revealing Histories: Myths about Race debate**

Wednesday 9 April, 2.30pm

Drop in to discuss some of the issues raised in the Myths about Race gallery. Drop-in, Free

### SHOWCASE

**The Manchester Museum Research Seminar**

**Authenticity and icon: Exhibiting Egypt at The Manchester Museum**

Wednesday 9 April, 3-5pm

Dr Karen Exell, Curator of Egyptology at The Manchester Museum will discuss past and future practices in Ancient Egypt displays in Manchester.

**Well-being week**

Tuesday 22-Thursday 24 April, 12noon-2pm

Everything you need to find out how to be healthy at both work and leisure. Activities include belly dancing, blood pressure checks, massages and food tasting.

Drop-in (booking optional at [www.sport.manchester.ac.uk/healthfitness/](http://www.sport.manchester.ac.uk/healthfitness/)), Free

**Alchemy**

**Ideas Café: The geology of volcanoes and caves**

Monday 28 April, 6.30-8pm

Find out about the geology of volcanoes and caves and see some of The Manchester Museum's extensive geological collection. Book on 0161 275 2648, Free

**Opening hours**

Open: Tues-Sat 10 - 5pm

Sun-Mon (and Bank Holidays) 11- 4 pm

FREE Admission

**The Manchester Museum**

Oxford Road, Manchester

0161 275 2634

[www.manchester.ac.uk/museum](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/museum)



## Music and Drama at Manchester

Thurs 24 April 2008, 1.10pm, Free

**Quatuor Danel**

The Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall

**Haydn** Quartet in D flat, Op.76 No.5

**Weinberg** Quartet No.12, Op.103 – UK première

Thurs 24 April 2008, 2.15pm, Free

**Quatuor Danel Seminar**

The Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall

**Electronics and the String Quartet**

Fri 25 April 2008, 7pm

**Quatuor Danel Friday Series**

The Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall

**Eric Lyon** Quartet No.3, (2007)

**Kaija Saariaho** Nymphae (1987)

**Helmut Lachenmann** Gran Torso

**Jonathan Harvey** String Quartet No.4 (2003)

Sat 19 April, 7.30pm

**The University of Manchester Chorus and Symphony Orchestra**

Whitworth Hall, The University of Manchester

A performance of Elgar's magnificent oratorio

*The Dream of Gerontius*.

Sat 26 April, 7pm

**Manchester University Wind Orchestra with Guest**

**Conductor Edward Gregson**

The Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall

Fri 2 May, 1.10pm & 7pm

**New Music Ensemble: Composers' Showcase**

The Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall

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from our endlessly inventive student composers, to

include film music specially composed for the event.

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email [boxoffice@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:boxoffice@manchester.ac.uk)

[www.manchester.ac.uk/martinharriscentre](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/martinharriscentre)

## Gig Guide

### MANCHESTER ACADEMY 1, 2 & 3

Thurs 10 April - £16.50 Adv

**Angels & Airwaves**

Sat 12 April - £16 Adv

**Down**

Sun 13 April - £15 Adv

**Elbow**

Tues 15 April - £14 Adv

**We Are Scientists + Oxford Collapse**

Wed 16 April - £14 Adv

**Simple Plan**

Fri 18 April - £17.50 Adv

**Supergrass**

Sat 19 April - £11.50 Adv

**The Courteeners**

Thurs 24 April - £10 Adv

**Mindless Self Indulgence + Robots In Disguise**

Sat 26 April - £15 Adv

**Alabama 3**

**Tickets from:**

Students' Union, Oxford Road  
Piccadilly Box Office @ easy Internet Cafe (c/c) 0871  
2200260

Royal Court (Liverpool) 0151 709 4321 (c/c)

**Students' Union**

Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL

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[www.manchesteracademy.net](http://www.manchesteracademy.net)

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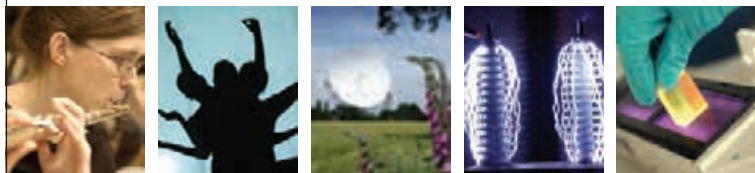
UMIP's Best Practice Commercialisation Seminars  
Free for all staff and Postgraduates

The University of Manchester Intellectual Property Limited's (UMIP) **free** seminar this month will focus on Research Contracts - Intellectual Property & Licensing to Industry.

The seminar takes place on:

**Thursday 8 May, 9:30am** to 12pm (registration from 9:10 with tea and coffee) followed by lunch at the Core Technology Facility (CTF), 46 Grafton Street (off Oxford Rd) Manchester, M13 9NT

Please book online at [www.umip.com/events](http://www.umip.com/events)



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# MANCHESTER



*would like to invite all employees of the  
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for lunch and a glass of wine  
on Sunday 4th May 2008  
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## View from a bridge

This month *UniLife* has invited **Dr Samantha Lackey, Curatorial Research Fellow at The Whitworth Art Gallery**, to talk about her favourite piece – ‘**Utagawa Hiroshige, 100 Famous Views of Edo: Firework Display over the Ryogoku Bridge**’.

Said Dr Lackey: “I started working at the Whitworth Gallery recently and I’ve been lucky enough to work on the ‘City Visions’ exhibition, part of the new print gallery refurbishment funded by the DCMS Wolfson scheme. We’re having new units built which will explain the different types of printmaking. These units will also show films of artists at work, and have print-blocks to make rubbings from.

“‘City Visions’ is all about experiencing the city, it features loads of fantastic prints from the Gallery’s renowned collection. The scope of ‘City Visions’ ranges from architecture like the Lloyds building in London through to nightlife - from Victorian prostitutes to Mick Jagger and the art dealer Robert Fraser in the back of a police van after being arrested on a drugs bust. There’s expressionist works showing the dynamism of the city, the hassle of commuting, and the feelings of isolation and loneliness that living in a city sometimes produces.

“My favourite work is this exquisite Japanese Hiroshige print (right) that shows the idea of the city as a site for celebration. It reminds me of the Millennium fireworks that took place in cities across the world. I also love that, if you look carefully, you can see in the sky the marks made by the grain of the wood used in the printing process. As 2008 marks the point in history when more people are living in urban than rural areas, it’s good to think about the relationship of inhabitants to the city, which can be one of excitement and pleasure, rather than problems of overcrowding, poverty and isolation.”



[www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)

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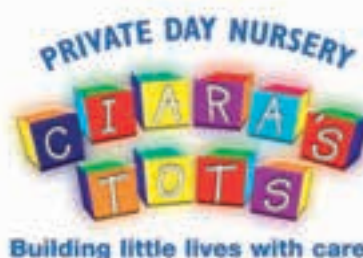
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## News Contact

### News and story ideas

Internal Communications Office

tel 0161 275 2112

email [uninews@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:uninews@manchester.ac.uk)

online [www.manchester.ac.uk/staffnet/news](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/staffnet/news)

Deadline 12 noon Thursday, 17 April

## Events Contact

### Events and listings information

Philippa Adshead

tel 0161 275 2922

email [unievents@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:unievents@manchester.ac.uk)

Deadline 12 noon Thursday, 17 April

## Adverts Contact

### Ads and distribution queries

Janice Brown

tel 0161 275 2113

email [uniads@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:uniads@manchester.ac.uk)

Deadline 12 noon Thursday, 17 April