

## Arts2006

## Tamsin Greig Actor

I chose to go back to theatre after 10 years of being away, and having had three children. I'd been titting about on the telly, and suddenly I was on stage in Stratford thinking, "Who made me do this?" We spent four and a half months rehearsing. You'd think that would've given me time to grow balls.

We talk about female comics, but I don't put myself in that box.



You put something in a box, then it turns into a jack-in-the-box and something extraordinary happens – you get Catherine Tate in the West End with David Schwimmer, or Bill Bailey and all those stand-ups doing Twelve Angry Men.

I missed my daughter's sixth birthday. My low points are the ordinary stuff, the little details. I don't really have a vision, to be honest. I just get up, and if there are bran flakes, then that's fantastic.

willfully prosaic – **The Arctic Monkeys** and **Lily Allen's** stark documentary songwriting – and at worst crushingly predictable. What sold was the ersatz alt-rock of **The Fratellis** and **The Kooks** (cruelly but accurately dubbed "ITV indie" by one commentator), **The Feeling's** unironic soft rock, the massed ranks of craven sub-Goldplay stadium-fillers and middle-of-the-road singer-songwriters.

But as ever, the most exciting things that happened were the most unexpected. Despite its "explicit lyrics" sticker, **Amy Winehouse's** 2003 debut album seemed the epitome of tastefully jazzy background music (it was advertised in the pages of *Living Etc.*, like aural soft furnishings). So it was startling to hear her swaggering return with the 60s soul-inspired *Back To Black* and accompanying single *Rehab*, a thrillingly effective two fingers to solipsistic celebrity culture.

With most of the major American urban producers intent on proving they would work with anyone who stumped up the cash, the usual chart-slaying hip-hop or R&B single of the year was not forthcoming. In its place, there was an unusual one: **Gnarls Barkley's** *Crazy*, a remarkable, eerie meditation on mental illness performed by two men who, in at least one photograph, dressed in Clockwork Orange makeup and vast nappies.

The year ended with the happy news that **Muse** would be the first band to perform at the new Wembley Stadium. Not something anyone would have predicted when they emerged six

years ago in Radiohead's shadow, but that now seems perfectly fitting: if you wanted a rock album that offered skyscraping ambition and could genuinely only have been made in 2006, not at any point in the past, **Black Holes and Revelations** was it. **Best – but alas false – rumour of the year:** That Keane's Priority-bound frontman Tom Chaplin was entering rehab to be treated for an addiction to port, apparently mischievously started by a member of Kasabian. **Best excuse for getting out of press commitments:** Matt Bellamy of Muse's announcement that he had heard a meteor was heading for America and that he must thus leave the country immediately.

**Quote of the year:** Noel Gallagher on his brother's non-appearance at an awards ceremony: "He's gone to the zoo."

## Will Alsop Architect

It's very sad that the British press are beginning to do to the Olympics what they did to the Millennium Dome. For me, the sad thing about the Olympics is that it isn't reflecting the genuine talent we have here in the capital, due to a severe dose

The monkeys are bringing their families along to have a look at him."

Dance  
Judith Mackrell

A rash of mixed marriages produced exotic results in 2006. No one could predict what **Sylvie Guillem** and **Akram Khan** would look like in their collaboration **Sacred Monsters**. Physically, Guillem is all rarefied verticals, Khan solid gravity; stylistically, she epitomises European classicism, he south Asian. Yet despite an element of self-conscious daring, **Sacred Monsters** took both dancers into new terrain. More than a dance partnership, it was a shared voyage of discovery.

In certain quarters, the pairing of the Royal Ballet and the **White Stripes** was deemed even more unlikely. Hold the front page: rock music at the Opera House! In fact, Joby Talbot's arrangement of three **Stripes** songs, spliced with his own music, provided an electrifying score, and elicited from choreographer Wayne McGregor some of the most thrilling dance the Royal has performed in ages.

Some matches didn't prove so heavenly. When the Kirov commissioned Noah Gelber, formerly a dancer with William Forsythe, to choreograph a new staging of Shostakovich's **Golden Age**, these drastically



Carlos Acosta



different tradition Nor did the experience advertised in **Dagmar Zelensky's** job at Sadler's Wells survive the even assorted choreography low-rent product

But sometime and predictability **Richard Alston**, in his own groove, to most powerful and frills dance, **Voluntari** Ligeti's organ music **the Detail**, set to piano rags. And when retired from 28 years **Dance Umbrella**, it was Gregory handed the job, and her legacy **Best outfits:** Gaspar in Busby Berkeley. Yippee!!!

**Least justified travesty:** Tharp's Billy Joel in **Movin' Out**. Broad London didn't. **Biggest leap:** Carlene King just a tiny gold across the stage at

Architect  
Jonathan

The year's high point for the first time **Tower**, a 309ft high water tank fashion of Sienna's media **Pubblico**. Design one of the most dramatic British architects, Queen Victoria in building that has today's terms: too fashionable "iconic" year in which any new museum in D Libeskind to a pair



## Middlehaven deal sealed Quintain signs to develop 'iconic' Alstrop scheme

Plans for the largest carbon neutral development in the UK on Middlesbrough's waterfront are set to go ahead after a contract was signed this week. Developer Bioregional Quintain has agreed terms to build the Middlehaven

project, which includes 750 homes, office space, shops, bars, cafés and restaurants. Based largely on a masterplan by architect Will Alsop for urban regeneration company Tees Valley Regeneration, the scheme will be built on land owned by national

regeneration agency English Partnerships. It already has planning permission. TVR chief executive Joe Docherty said the scheme's "iconic" structures had been "conceived by the most talented and creative architects working today".

## City chief is mayor's skills deputy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
By Holly Sutton

London mayor Ken Livingstone has appointed Harvey McGrath as his vice-chair on the capital's new skills and employment board.

McGrath, chair of business organisation London First, will be deputy to the mayor, who chairs the board. He will be charged with ensuring that the new board meets its statutory duty to improve adult skills in the capital.

In July, communities secretary Ruth Kelly decided to transfer some responsibilities for skills development from the London Learning and Skills Council to the mayor via the new board (*R&R*, 4 August, p14).

McGrath is the first known appointment to the board. He will

help direct the creation of an adult skills strategy for London.

News of his appointment was leaked to the BBC this week ahead of the official announcement of the entire board's personnel, which the mayor said would be in early December.

McGrath is a prominent businessman in the City – he is both chair of city brokers the Man Group and city business group London First. He is also chair of regeneration and business network East London Business Alliance and a governor of Tower Hamlets College. Livingstone described him as "a highly respected leader of the London business community".

Following his appointment as vice-chair of the new board, McGrath has criticised the current



McGrath: he will lead creation of an adult skills strategy for London

skills training in London as "not fit for purpose".

He said: "London has the highest unemployment in the country and we need new measures to reconnect people to jobs. I'm looking forward to working with the mayor to tackle this challenge and get business re-engaged."

Institution of Economic Development spokesman Iain Mackinnon said McGrath would be invaluable in understanding what was needed to improve Londoners' skills due to his extensive business experience.

He added: "The board has a lot of potential and it's important to have employers at this high level [on the board] so they know what skills are there and can make the board work for them."

## Chiefs query Leeds city-region project

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Several council leaders involved in a cross-boundary economic development partnership centred on Leeds used the programme's official parliamentary launch this week to express varying degrees of concern about the project.

The Leeds City Regional Development Programme claims to unite 11 councils from around the economic hub of Leeds under "one vision". But the leader of one of the councils branded it "a fucking waste of time".

The 11 councils have worked informally together for the past two years on a package of transport and skills programmes. Following its formal launch, the LCRDP will elect a chair and board of local leaders and put in joint bids to government to fund its plans.

But the Tory leader of Bradford City Council, Kris Hopkins, said: "We have a long way to go to become a credible vehicle that is fit for purpose." He said that without effective leadership the LCRDP is incapable of making realistic bids for funding. The Government this week rejected a LCRDP bid for Transport Innovation Fund cash.

Another LCRDP member, Wakefield Council leader Peter Box, said the partnership could "become a talking shop".

But other council leaders were more positive. Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council leader Robert Light said that it would be an "influential body" in helping to address the city-region's needs.

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“An additional cost of £400 million has been spent to fund the delivery partner to ensure it meets its overriding responsibility to deliver on budget.”

Culture secretary Tessa Jowell clears things up for anyone confused by the complexities of the funding package for the 2012 London Olympics.