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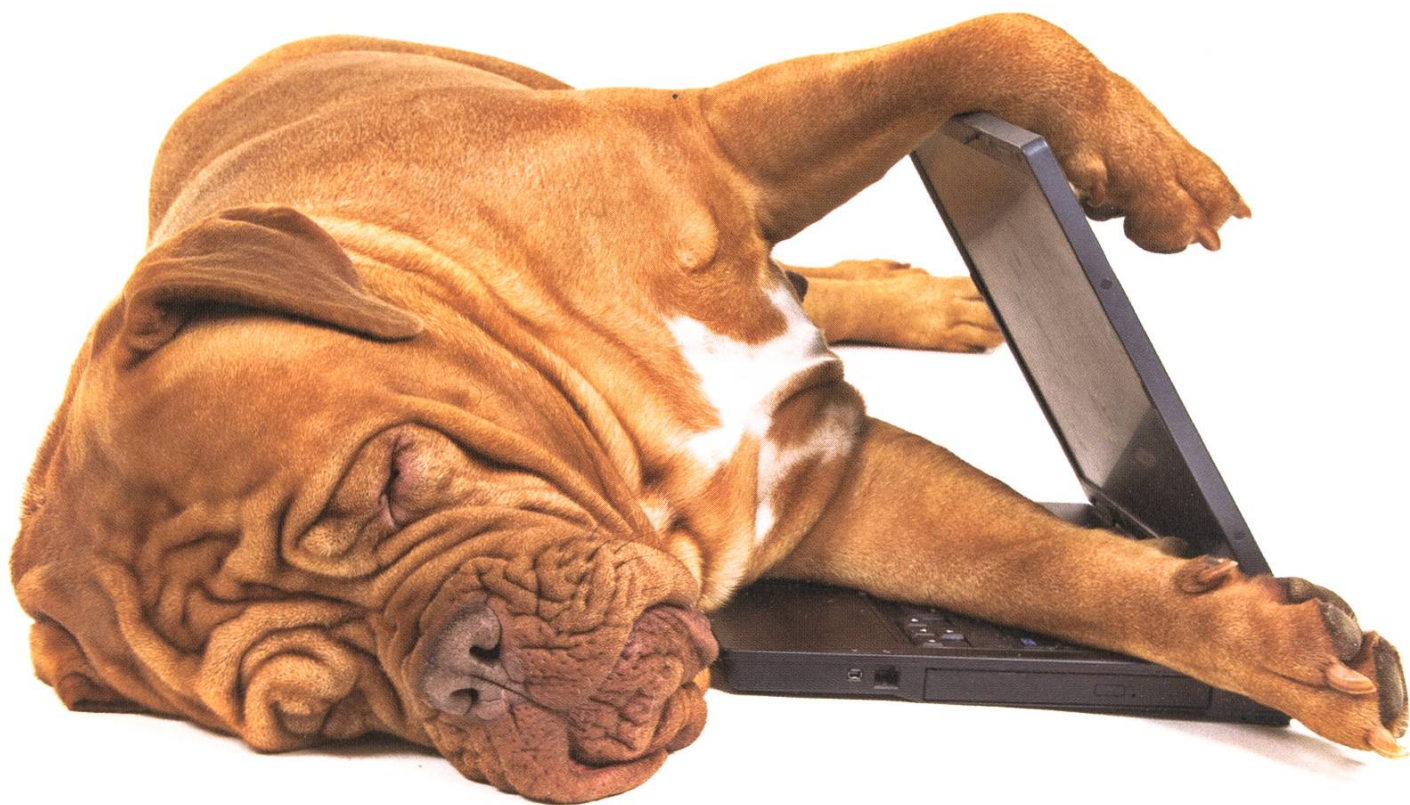


# VISIONEN

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Februar 2011

## Auszeit







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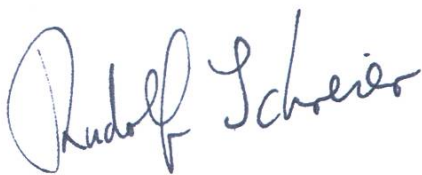
# Editorial

RUDOLF SCHREIER — GEHT DER UND DEM ZAHN DER ZEIT AUF DEN GEIST

„Sorry, ich hab' keine Zeit“ - für manche die pure Wahrheit, für andere die wahrscheinlich längste Ausrede der Welt. Aber wer kann schon überhaupt Zeit „haben“? Jemand, der sich Zeit „nehmen“ kann? Aber von wo kommt diese neue Zeit plötzlich? Zeit läuft davon, egal ob man sich für etwas Zeit nimmt, oder jemand anderem etwas von seiner Zeit abgibt. Das ist kein Plädoyer für Egoismus oder Altruismus: Es geht rein darum, die endliche Zeit, die einem jedem Menschen gegeben ist, bestmöglich zu nutzen. Was „gut“ ist, muss jeder Mensch wohl für sich selbst entscheiden, aber gerade in Zeiten von grosser Belastung darf man nie vergessen, dass es manchmal angebrachter ist, eine Auszeit zu nehmen, als sich in ein Problem fruchtlos hineinzusteigern.

Aber schon kommt das nächste Problem. Jetzt hat man endlich Zeit, all die Dinge zu tun, die einem schon immer auf der Seele brannten: Python oder Lua lernen, mal wieder seine Homepage aktualisieren, ein gutes Buch lesen... aber das ja wäre wieder Arbeit. Aber was ist die Alternative dazu? Nichtstun? Immerhin „vergeht“ die Zeit unglaublich langsam, wenn man sich langweilt und einfach mal über das sprichwörtliche „Gott und die Welt“ nachdenkt. Lieber eine Stunde proaktiv mit Freizeitaktivitäten verbringen, die sich anfühlt wie 15 Minuten, oder eine Stunde gezielt faulenzten, die sich anfühlt wie zwei Stunden? Plötzlich hat man die Chance auf doppelt so viel gefühlte Freizeit!

Hoffentlich findet der geneigte Leser in dieser Ausgabe ein paar Tipps, wie er seine Zeit am besten ver(sch)wenden kann. Und immerhin sollte das Lesen der Visionen auch immer zu den angenehmeren Momenten im Leben gehören. Also findet die Zeit und schmökert!



Euer Chefredakteur,  
Rudolf Schreier (rms)



# Inhalt

## Auszeit

|  |    |
|--|----|
| C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>10</sub> N <sub>4</sub> O <sub>2</sub> und glückliche Informatiker | 6  |
| Retro: LAN-Party   | 8  |
| Time of Eve (イヴの時間)  | 10 |
| Top of the Tube  | 14 |
| In the Grooves of 2010   | 22 |

## Berichte

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Internship report: Infosys | 31 |
| "...und deine VISIONen?"   | 34 |

## Studium

|                                       |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Gesucht: Redaktoren / Wanted: Editors | 35 |
|---------------------------------------|----|

## Spass

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Bearicature: Stefan Wolf | 37 |
| Puzzled                  | 39 |



**«Nur eines ist schöner als gute Software, die komplexe Aufgaben ganz einfach löst: Diese Software zu erfinden. Wir freuen uns auf deine Bewerbung.»**

Fabian Laubacher, Software Engineer bei BSI



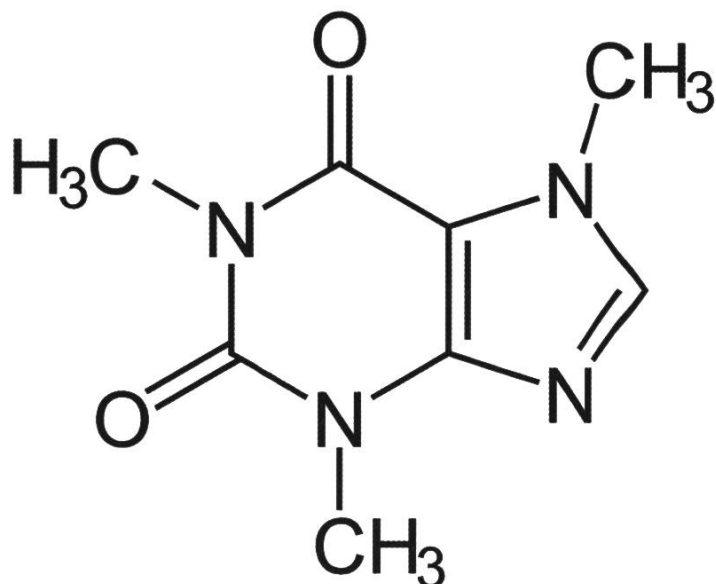
# $C_8H_{10}N_4O_2$ und glückliche Informatiker

JASCHA GRÜBEL — KOFFEIN-JUNKIE

Auch bekannt als 58-08-2, 2519 oder N06BC01 handelt es sich um einen farb- und geruchlosen Feststoff, der jeden Informatiker zu entzücken weiss. Bei einer Molaren Masse von 194.19g/mol und einer Dichte von 1.23g/cm<sup>3</sup> lässt es sich gut in Ethanol oder auch Chloroform lösen, bevorzugt aber in Wasser.

Trotz seiner hohen Beliebtheit ist es in seinen Varianten 1,3,7-Trimethyl-3,7-dihydro-2H-purin-2,6-dion und 1,3,7-Trimethyl-3,7-dihydro-1H-purin-2,6-dion und 1,3,7-Trimethyl-2,6(1H,3H)-purindion nach EU-Gefahrenstoffkennzeichnung RL 67/548/EWG, Anh. 1 gesundheitsschädlich (Xn). Oral verabreicht entfaltet es irgendwo zwischen 50mg und 400mg pro Kilo

eine für einen Informatiker tödliche Dosis – oder mit anderen Worten, der Informatiker, der 10g schluckt, stirbt. Weder dies noch die Klassifizierung als psychoaktive Droge halten Informatiker jedoch vom Konsum ab. Denn der Grund, warum wir Informatiker uns alle um dieses chemische Produkt reissen, sind seine pharmakologischen Wirkungen:



- Anregung des Zentralnervensystems
- Erhöhung der Kontraktionskraft des Herzens
- Steigerung der Herzfrequenz (Pulssteigerung)
- Bronchialdilatation (Erweiterung)
- verringerte Blutflussgeschwindigkeit im Gehirn
- geringfügige Erhöhung des Blutdrucks
- Verdauungsförderung
- erhöhter Harndrang (leider)

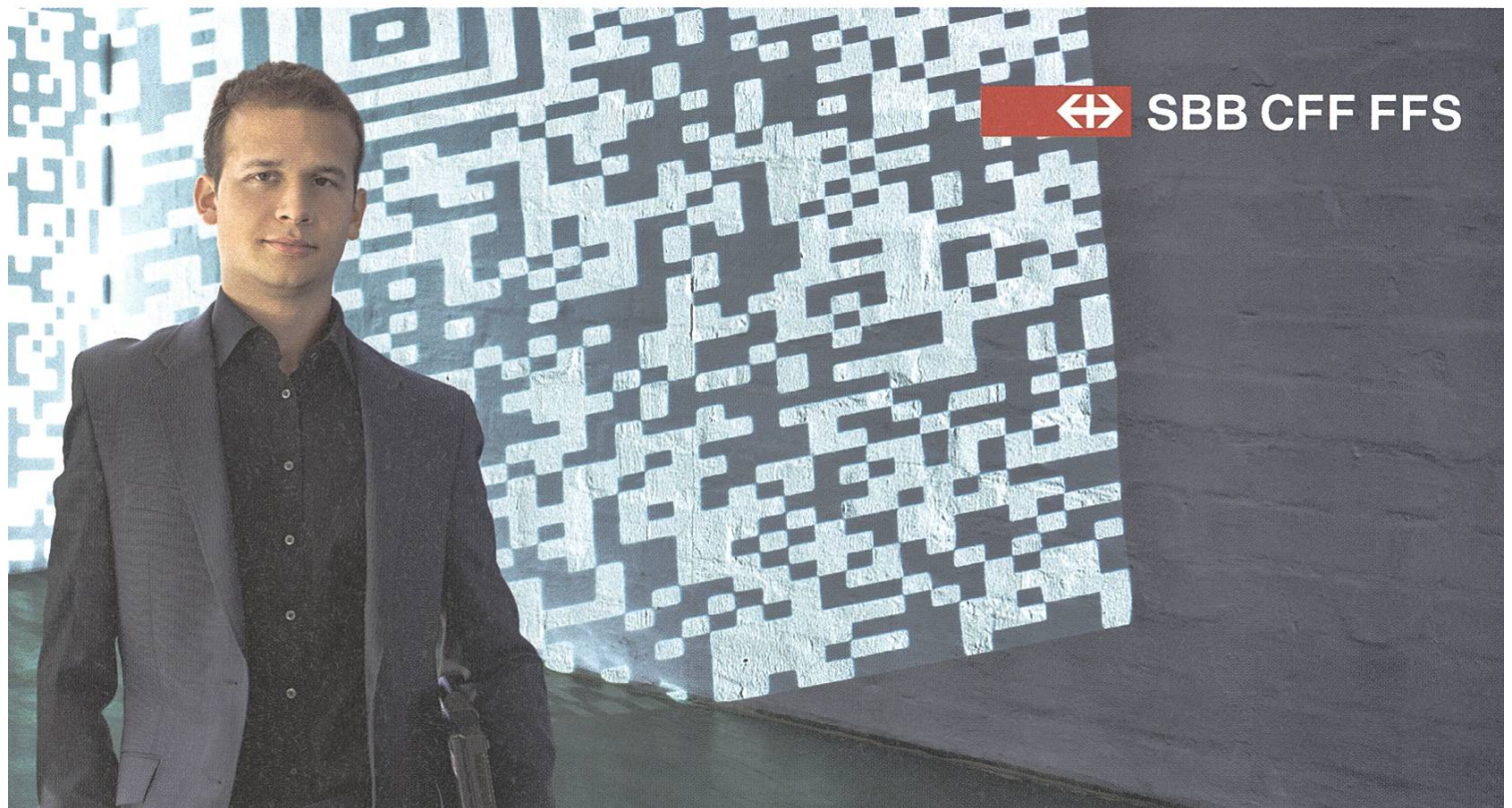
Einziges Problem des Wirkstoffes ist, dass schon nach kürzester Zeit ein Informatiker eine Toleranz dagegen entwickelt. Nach einem kalten Entzug ist ein Informatiker jedoch spätes-

tens nach 9 Tagen wieder normal auf den Beinen. Die WHO hat sich daher – zum Wohle aller Informatiker – dafür entschieden, den Wirkstoff nicht als süchtig machende Droge zu klassifizieren.

Unter anderem kann der Wirkstoff aus *Camellia sinensis*, *Paullinia cupana*, *Ilex paraguayensis* und *Erythroxylum coca* extrahiert werden. Jede Quelle hat eine andere Verarbeitung zur Folge und es wird häufig darüber gestritten, welche Form die beste sein möge. Die Hauptquelle dieses heiss begehrten Wirkstoffes ist jedoch die *Coffea*-Gattung. ⌚

Zusammengetragen mit Hilfe von Wikipedia.

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# Retro: LAN-Party

OLIVER PROBST — HAT LAN-TASTISCHE IDEEN

Durch schnelles Internet und immer mehr Online-(Rollen)Spiele sind LAN-Partys nicht mehr wirklich modern. Doch eigentlich eignen sich die Wintersemesterferien ideal für eine LAN. Klingt langweilig? Nicht mit diesen Tipps.

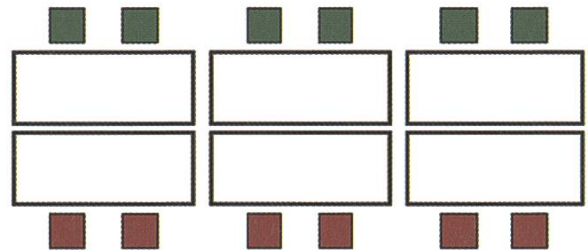
## Location & Datum

Aus Erfahrungen ist die erste Woche im Januar perfekt. Weihnachten und Silvester sind vorbei und die Prüfungen liegen noch in weiter Ferne. Da es Winter ist, fällt die klassische Garagen-LAN flach, eine Alternative muss her. Da der Keller im heimischen Hause nicht wirklich attraktiv ist, hier ein paar kreative Ideen:

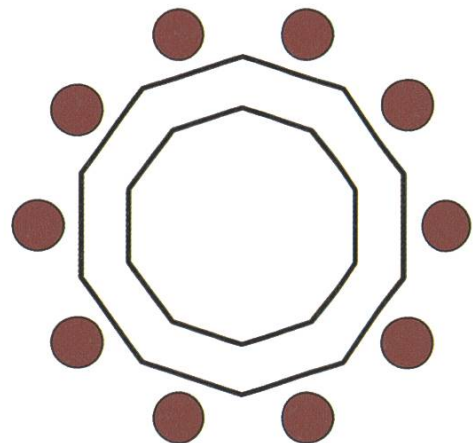
- Konferenzraum eines Unternehmens (geht meist gut am Wochenende)
- Haus mit Sauna oder Whirlpool (sehr entspannend)
- ETH/Uni (nachts lernt (fast) keiner, tagsüber nicht zu empfehlen)
- Im LAN-Tram (rechtzeitig reservieren)

## Sitzplan

Je nach dem wie gross der Raum ist und nach Anzahl der Notebooks/Desktop-PCs können verschiedene Varianten von Vorteil sein. Hier die 2 Klassiker:



Eignet sich gut für wenig Platz und man kann gleich auch Teams bilden.



Ein Traum für jeden LAN-Party-Besucher – keiner schaut auf den Monitor, jeder hat seinen eigenen Tisch.

## Games

Hier tendiere ich ganz klar zu den Klassikern, denn diese brauchen nicht extrem hohe Anforderungen und können somit auch auf Standard-Notebooks gespielt werden. Aber eigentlich soll der Spass-Faktor im Vordergrund stehen. Auch hier können die Klassiker mithalten. Meist ist man während der LAN auf der Suche nach „dem Game des Abends“. Hat man es einmal gefunden wird meist nur noch dieses eine gezockt. Hier nun meine persönliche Auswahl:

- **CS:** Funmaps only! Gut für den Anfang und den Wiedereinstieg nach einer Pause (Whirlpool, Sauna, Essen, Kollision der Tram, etc.)
- **Warcraft 3: TFT:** Funmaps only! Hier eignet sich ein gutes Tower Defense oder je nach Besucher natürlich auch ein Dota.
- **Command & Conquer: Alarmstufe Rot 2:** StrategieNostalgie mit den netten Hündchen und dem Eisernen Vorhang.
- **Soldat:** Lust auf Worms, CS und Unreal Tournament in einem Game?

## Sonstiges

Meistens ist immer jemand noch am installieren seines Betriebssystems. Schon mal an

einen Scanner für funktionierende Betriebssysteme am Eingang der LAN gedacht?

Irgendwann bekommt man Hunger. Was nun? Auch hier kann man zum Klassiker greifen und eine Pizza bestellen. Als Alternative ist auch eine gemeinsame Kochaktion denkbar. Wichtig: Nicht vor dem Rechner essen. Irgendwann in der Nacht schlafen gehen (muss sein, nur LAN-Party-Anfänger spielen die ganze Nacht durch und sind am Tag danach nicht mehr fähig, im CS die CT's von den Terroristen zu unterscheiden) und am nächsten Morgen gemeinsam frühstücken bringt Lust und Laune auf eine weitere Runde.

## Ende

Wann ist der richtige Zeitpunkt, die LAN zu beenden? Auch hier zum Schluss ein paar Vorschläge:

- Man ist immer noch auf der Suche nach „dem Game des Abends“.
- Das Spiel des Abends geht jedem auf die Nerven.
- Es ist 13.37 Uhr.

Im Zweifel: Eine Runde geht immer.



# Time of Eve (イヴの時間)

RMS — ACTUALLY PREFERS A NICE EARL GREY, THANK YOU VERY MUCH

**“Asimov's laws and coffee” – Rarely have I ever heard something be described so attractively yet succinctly, and so imagine my elation when the statement was about an anime to boot! So coffee lovers, geeks, and otakus everywhere beware: this show is going to rock your world.**

## Evolution

First of all, let's talk about modern anime distribution methods: First you have your traditionally commissioned TV series, like you would get for American live-action shows. With set season schedules, a producer is told to fit their plot into the standard 13, 26, or 52 (if scheduled for both the summer and winter seasons) episodes, and many a show has ended rather abruptly because the writers noticed too late that there was just not enough air time left to fit in the rest of the plot.

## Revolution

But at the start of the century, with the rise of the Internet and bandwidth for multimedia access widely becoming affordable, some clever distributors dared to go another way: instead of flogging their pilots to a production company, who decide which series gets axed and which will see the light of day, artists and writers get the chance to produce shorter clips at a low budget; these so-called Original Net Animations (ONAs) are then watched on line and through ad revenue finance the continuation of the show.

Now this is understandably a more tedious and slow process than straight-out giving an animation office a million-dollar budget beforehand. As *Time of Eve* started out as an ONA (or this aside would have been very pointless indeed), the delay between episodes varied between two and five months. Were it not for ONAs though, I doubt any major corporation would have signed on for a TV series about androids and coffee - not even in Japan. You've gotten curious about the ONA phenomenon? Take a look at *Candy Boy*<sup>(1)</sup> (if you can stomach yuri, that is.) for another prime example of the format working out.

## Plot? What plot?

The premise of *Time of Eve* is simple: In the future, humanoid androids have become commonplace, and are indeed so lifelike that they could not be told apart from humans if not for the rings of ownership that they are legally required to display above their heads, underlining both their roles as slaves to the humans and their near-angelic appearance due to being manufactured with an uncanny aesthetic perfection. One day, while looking through his fa-



mily android Sammy's (Rie Tanaka) movement logs, young high school student Rikuo (Jun Fukuyama) finds a curious entry: "Are you enjoying the Time of EVE?". Tracing back her steps with his best friend Masaki (Kenji Nojima), they come across an inconspicuous backyard café called the Time of Eve, a place beyond the law with only one rule: No discrimination between humans and androids. Violators of this rule will find themselves thrown out by the charming barista Nagi, who introduces our protagonists to all the patrons during the run of the series. Both humans and androids, these characters and their walks of life make up the plots of the single episodes, each being a mystery anew for the viewer to uncover and relate to. These (both human and android) characters and their walks of life make up the central plot of the show, each

episode bringing with it a mystery anew for the viewer to uncover. Can a human fall in love with an android? Or vice versa? Step by step, the audience is led to the egalitarian side through interactions that often show that androids may be better humans than humans themselves.

### Three dimensions of gorgeous

To have a butcher's at the visuals: Never before have I seen the superposition of rendered three-dimensional backgrounds and hand-drawn two-dimensional foregrounds work so seamlessly and to so aesthetically pleasing results before. Beyond short snippets such as the opening to the recommendable *Maria Holic*, this method has not seen much screen time, and what a shame that is: Well-tracked shots of the Time of Eve introduce a sense of homeliness







with a cinematography matched by nothing save high-budget Hollywood films. Never distracting, but always supporting, the visuals of the show are stunning beyond belief, especially if you are lucky enough to find a 1080p version of the show.

### **I know that voice...**

Even though the budget of an ONA is limited, the producers were able to splash out on several greats of the voice acting business, employing such stars as Rie Tanaka, who fans will recognize as Chii from *Chobits*, and Jun Fukuyama, the voice of wonderfully flirtatious yet restrained Kraft Lawrence from the equally wonderful *Spice and Wolf* – but that one is worth a review all of its own, the romance being one of the finest of not only the anime business, but all media.

While not completely lacking background music, *Time of Eve* is light in its use of it, using it like the visual effects, only to support, but not carry, the atmosphere. When the audience are

introduced to a new character, he or she is not assigned a fixed tune, but rather silence, to give them ample room to rather characterize themselves by their words and actions.

### **I need my fix, and now!**

The good news: *Time of Eve* is completely accessible on Crunchyroll<sup>[2]</sup>, nowadays even with an IP address in Switzerland; thanks to whoever bought a license that for once includes the European countries! For the best viewing experience, though, you will either have to import the Blu-Ray from Amazon Japan, or wait for a US or UK re-release of the single episodes or the “gekijouban”, the re-cut movie version totaling about 100 minutes.



### **Links**

[1] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candy\\_Boy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candy_Boy)

[2] <http://www.crunchyroll.com/time-of-eve/>





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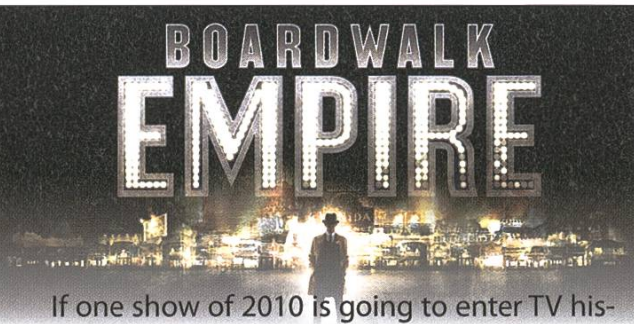
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# Top of the Tube

DANIEL SANER — THE SCREEN WAS GLUED, I SWEAR

Like every year, 2010 has seen a considerable number of high-budget TV shows première in the U.S. and U.K.. Few of them survive their first couple of episodes, even fewer are worth watching at all. Just for you, I have bribed my state-side relatives, fired up my Slingbox<sup>[1]</sup>, and selflessly taken the time to screen every single pilot episode of a scripted (i.e. non-reality) series that aired last year. The following is an overview of the shows that have not only convinced me to keep watching past episode one, but also kept delivering excellent entertainment value during their run so far. These are tried and tested, some of them even with a real potential of becoming future cult hits—the ones you'll hate not having discovered sooner if you miss giving them a chance now. Check them out when, or if, they hit local stations in the upcoming months.



If one show of 2010 is going to enter TV history, this will be the one. Airing on premium channel HBO and produced by Mark Wahlberg and Martin Scorsese, it pulls all the stops. Taking place in the Atlantic City of the 1920s, the first thing to blow your mind is how authentically the period has been reproduced, from the sets to the wardrobes to the music. Steve Buscemi (*Fargo*, *The Big Lebowski*, *The Sopranos*) stars as Enoch Thompson, county treasurer and unofficial ruler of Atlantic City, based on the real-world persona of Enoch L. Johnson. *Boardwalk Empire* dives into the political, social, and criminal underworld of the Sin City of the Roaring Twenties,

in the thick of Prohibition (which was virtually ineffective in Atlantic City), and before the casinos of Las Vegas. Supported by great scriptwriting and an excellent cast, including famous real-world characters such as Alphonse "Al" Capone (Stephen Graham), Arnold Rothstein (Michael Stuhlbarg) and Charles "Lucky" Luciano (Vincent Piazza), this is one trip back in time that you shouldn't miss. *Boardwalk Empire* has already been picked up for a February 2011 première by cable channel TNT Serie<sup>[2]</sup>, and will definitely hit free TV later. A second season has been confirmed.

*Drama, HBO*

**Episodes:** 12

**Future:** renewed for a 2<sup>nd</sup> season

**Watch it if you liked:** *The Sopranos*, *Carnivàle*

**Trailer:** <http://dai.ly/aXQo2A>





With an established cast, CBS' *Blue Bloods* sets out to reinvent the police drama. The stories revolve around the Reagan family, where upholding the law in New York City is a family tradition. Francis Reagan (Tom Selleck, *Magnum P.I.*) is the current Police Commissioner, a position once held by his father Henry (Len Cariou). The third generation consists of Daniel (Donnie Wahlberg), a detective, Erin (Bridget Moynahan), an assistant district attorney, and Jamison (Will Estes), a former Harvard law student turned rookie beat cop. With such diverse yet closely related characters, *Blue Bloods* does not only manage to touch on law enforcement from all sides, from the streets to the courts and even the political and business end of manag-

ing a whole police force; the weekly family dinners also provide ample opportunity to let the different perspectives clash. Substituting for real-world standpoints, each character not only makes a point, but is also allowed to support it with arguments. And it's not an empty promise. While other shows like to conclude with a raised-finger morale of the story (certain *Law & Order* spin-offs come to mind), *Blue Bloods* actually remains largely impartial, leaving non-trivial questions as food for thought. It's a great cop show that can be enjoyed by those who want entertainment, not social criticism, but the excellent scripts also touch on the big issues of life, for those who care. It is certainly among the best crime dramas of the last decades.

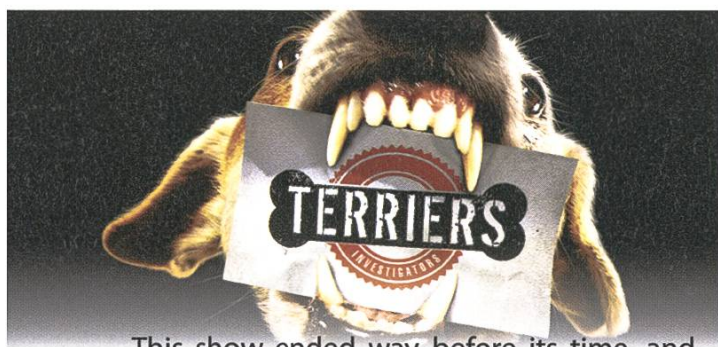
Drama / Police procedural, CBS

**Episodes:** 24

**Future:** undetermined

**Watch it if you liked:** *The Wire*, *The Sopranos*

**Trailer:** <http://bit.ly/adMi1r>



This show ended way before its time, and one of its quality comes along rarely. The main protagonists: Hank Dolworth (Donal Logue), former cop, left the force with a severe drinking problem which also ruined his marriage. Britt Pollack (Michael Raymond-James), former thief who went (mostly) straight after finding the love of his life, teams up with Hank to form an

unlicensed private investigation agency. Supported by their attorney and Hank's few remaining contacts at the police, they barely scrape by with lowest-level assignments. As the law of drama dictates, one of those will have them dive headlong into something much bigger, a conspiracy that seems to reach into highest administrative offices. The characters are great, the acting top-notch, the plot masterfully written. But most of all, you haven't heard dialogues this witty since *Veronica Mars* went off the air. It also evokes memories of that show's film-noir feel, despite the perfectly captured sunny San Diego atmosphere. It's the struggling, demon-haunt-





ed, but so very likeable characters that let *Terriers* achieve true greatness. Thankfully, the 13 produced episodes wrap up very nicely, and although it could and should have continued, the show doesn't feel unfinished when simply taken as a single-season miniseries. Even more reason to check it out. *Terriers* might yet go down in TV

history as one of those almost perfect shows that no one knew about until it was too late.

Noir / Thriller / Comedy, FX Networks

**Episodes:** 13

**Future:** show ended

**Watch it if you liked:** Veronica Mars

## RUBICON

A true old-school conspiracy thriller like they used to make them. It feels like conspiracy thrillers in the vein of *All the President's Men* have all but disappeared. The ones that are actually "thrilling" in terms of leaving you in the dark and fearing for the worst, rather than bawling at you with second-by-second shoot-outs, screaming, chases, and explosions. *Rubicon* is a lesson in expert pacing and atmosphere. It's low-key and moves along at a very moderate pace, and through that lets you dive into and explore its mythology, and draw your own conclusions. Call the national conspiracy plot cliché, but haven't they always been, and doesn't it still hit pretty close to home? And does it really matter if it is told well? Unfortunately, *Rubicon* won't return for a second season. On the other hand, the

story is eventually pretty much told by the end of the first. What I regret, then, is not so much that the plot is not going to be continued, but that it might be a while before a similar show comes along again. Is it true after all, that the psycho-stimulant generation lacks the patience or ability to focus on a story and actually follow what's happening on screen, declaring anything that doesn't constantly spell out its intention or generate sensory overload "dull" or "boring"? Let's hope not, and instead look forward to the next show or film that is going to carry *Rubicon's* torch. Something to sit down to and watch, and that goes well with a nice dram of single malt.

Conspiracy thriller, AMC

**Episodes:** 13

**Future:** show ended

**Watch it if you liked:** All the President's Men, Three Days of the Condor

**Trailer:** <http://bit.ly/cKGOEX>



## DETROIT 1-8-7

A commendable effort as far as traditional cop shows go. As has been a recurring phenomenon this year, it started out with a rather weak pilot episode, but soon after began adding depth to its characters and becoming more interesting. It commits its fair share of storytelling blunders, occasional pushing of stereotypes, and forgetting about its cross-episode plot lines for awfully long – but nothing inexcusably wrong. It always recuperates with engrossing plots, and characters that feel quite a bit more real than the average TV officers. And the city it takes place in is not just a stopgap scenario.

The stories intertwine with Detroit's turbulent history, and the mostly excellent soundtrack pays tribute to the city's deeply rooted musical past and present. The overwhelmingly stirring moments of *Detroit 1-8-7* far outnumber and outweigh the few weak ones. If you don't like cop shows, this isn't the genre revolution that will make you change your mind. Anyone else might find this to be one of the best procedurals presented this past decade. This reviewer, for one, would certainly hope for ABC to give it a second season.

*Police procedural / Drama, ABC*

**Episodes:** 18

**Future:** undetermined

**Watch it if you liked:** any classic cop show

**Trailers:** <http://bit.ly/bMn5N7/>  
<http://bit.ly/9BKmXN>



## NIKITA

LOOKS DO KILL

A U.S. remake of a Canadian TV adaptation of a French cult movie, on a network targeting mostly teenagers—can this go down well? Surprisingly, yes. If you are not familiar with Luc Besson's classic, this is what it's all about: Nikita, convicted of murder and facing a life in prison,

is taken in by a secret government organisation, given a new identity, and trained as a political assassin. But this life of secrecy and killing is taking its toll. The new series takes place after Nikita has managed to escape the clutches of her handlers, and made it her life's goal to take down the whole organisation for good. It's one woman against the most corrupt, well-organised, secured, and deadly conspiracy operation imaginable. If that isn't prime material





for an all-out action show, I don't know what is. But how much of that potential can be tapped into on a teenie network? Quite a lot, as I was pleasantly surprised to find out. The show is nicely dark, cinematography and lighting are excellent, and I've seen a lot cheaper looking sets in theatrical films. Maggie Q gives a good performance as Nikita, and some episodes into the story starts to give her character depths that are not often seen in action flicks. The new *Nikita*

is classic, bad-ass espionage action done right, feels very high-grade, and is an all around entertaining rendition of the femme fatale's story.

*Action / Espionage, The CW*

**Episodes:** 22

**Future:** undetermined

**Watch it if you liked:** Alias, Dollhouse

**Trailer:** <http://bit.ly/9st3Ss>

## THE DEFENDERS

When police shows bother following a crime right into the courts, they are the bad guys: the defence attorneys. They try to get the criminals, that you have just watched unyielding detectives hunt down for an intense hour, discharged and back on the streets. But there's always at least two sides to a story. *The Defenders* follows two unconventional but successful Las Vegas defence lawyers from day-to-day struggle to big-case success. The clear highlight: James Be-

lushi and Jerry O'Connell as the suave/slippery lead characters. As you might have deduced from the cast, the show is at least as much comedy as it is legal procedural. Given the serious nature of most other shows in this selection, a much-needed lighter counterbalance, and worth it for the dialogues alone.

*Court procedural / Comedy, CBS*

**Episodes:** 18

**Future:** undetermined

**Watch it if you liked:** Shark, Boston Legal, Las Vegas

**Trailer:** <http://bit.ly/d3yeRm>

# Honorary mentions

## Raising Hope

This little half-hour comedy nugget by the creator of *My Name Is Earl* is too good to be passed up. Its setting, characters, and constant hilarious exaggerations of everyday life and troubles reminded me heavily of *Malcolm in the Middle*, an old favourite. Lead actor Lucas Neff is a great discovery. Definitely an exception in the bleaker-than-ever scripted comedy landscape.

Comedy, FOX

**Episodes:** 22

**Future:** renewed for a 2<sup>nd</sup> season

**Watch it if you liked:** *Malcolm in the Middle*, *My Name Is Earl*

## Rizzoli & Isles

Jane Rizzoli, tough as nails police detective, and Dr. Maura Isles, socialite and medical examiner. All it takes to create a great show is two sufficiently interesting characters (vide *Terriers*). This might be a crime show, but it's not like any you've seen before. It's hard to pinpoint what exactly makes this cop drama work so well, but it just does. Give it a try.

Police procedural / Drama, TNT

**Episodes:** 10

**Future:** renewed for a 2<sup>nd</sup> season

**Watch it if you liked:** *Bones*, *The Closer*

## Outlaw

Jimmy Smits (*L.A. Law*) stars as Cyrus Garza, who resigns from his post as a supreme court justice to go back to being a lawyer. There, he vows to take on cases where he feels the justice system has failed. A very weak pilot, 5 very fine further episodes before the plug got pulled by NBC. A cynic might assume that certain audiences considered criticising the justice system too "anti-patriotic".

Court procedural, NBC

**Episodes:** pulled after 6 episodes

**Future:** cancelled

**Watch it if you liked:** *L.A. Law*





## Hawaii Five-0

Remember the good old days of *The A-Team*, *MacGyver*, or *Knight Rider*? When the good guys fought the good fight against the visibly bad guys? That kind of pure, straight-forward action spectacle seems to be at low tide. This rehash of the same-titled 1968 show proves that the formula can still work. Nothing spectacular, but good for a bit of brainless fun and action.

Action / Crime, CBS

**Episodes:** 22

**Future:** undetermined

**Watch it if you liked:** Hawaii Five-O (1968), any 1980s action show

## Haven

A very typical Stephen King adaptation, even though it is only very loosely based on his book *The Colorado Kid*. You have to really accept the supernatural universe it takes place in if you want to enjoy it. This is no *X-Files* – the stuff that goes on here is way, way out there, no attempt to relativise or keep things vague. Your willingness to suspend disbelief is sustained by intriguing characters and an overarching plot that moves from shocking revelation to shocking revelation. ⌚

Thriller / Horror, SyFy

**Episodes:** 13

**Future:** renewed for a 2<sup>nd</sup> season

**Watch it if you liked:** anything Stephen King ever made

## References

[1] The Slingbox hooks up to both a TV signal and a broadband Internet connection, and streams live TV to anywhere in the world. The built-in infrared transmitter allows it to control other devices such as PVRs. This allows you to remotely schedule and play back recordings using the Slingplayer software.  
<http://www.slingbox.com/>

[2] <http://www.tnt-serie.de/shows/boardwalk-empire>



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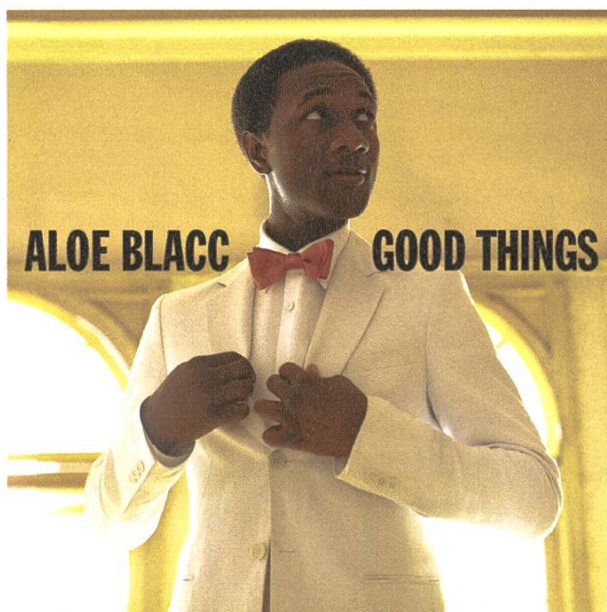
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# In the Grooves of 2010

DANIEL SANER — HEADPHONES ON

As wildly diverging as people's tastes in music are, given that they have spent enough time to form their own, there are albums that seem to cross over. Music that is so good, it has the potential of enticing others to explore a style completely alien to them. In this alarmingly subjective article that I'd like to bother you with, I hope to have identified a couple of them among last year's releases. In my humble opinion, they represent the absolute best that music has to offer, and will be played and enjoyed for many years to come. Among my numerous purchases last year, I set out to select the 5 albums that I would recommend to anyone, regardless of what kind of music they are usually into. As these things go, I ended up with a couple more—7 essentials, and a dozen further recommendations. Give them a try! In the worst case, you'll prove me wrong by not liking what you hear.



Stones Throw



<http://www.stonesthrow.net/>

**Clip:** <http://bit.ly/bmejrY>

## Aloe Blacc – Good Things

Just a few weeks ago, I noticed that local mainstream radio had actually caught on to the fact that Aloe Blacc's *I Need a Dollar* is a great track. About a year after everyone else (U.S. premium TV channel HBO chose it as the title track for their comedy "How to Make It in America" that premiered in February 2010), but the important thing is that apparently sometimes, good music can still reach the charts. *Good Things* is the second solo album for Aloe Blacc, who represents one half of the Hip-Hop formation Emanon. It is a pure Soul record with not a weak minute from the first groove to the last. For once, comparisons with titans the likes of Gaye, Hayes, Green or Redding are not in the least presumptuous. From driving *Hey Brother*, to grave commentary *Life So Hard*, to tear-inducing *If I*, Blacc and The Grand Scheme bring to perfection whatever they touch. This is the very definition of Soul, the stuff that sees you through life, that you will

*«Stop bailing out the banks  
and give the Franklins  
to me; I guess my piece  
of the pie ain't free.»*

still enjoy 50 years from now, and that you buy two copies of simply because you're afraid that you're going to wear the first one out. Aptly, his live appearances resemble more of a sermon than just a concert. This is music with spirit and meaning.



Supow Music



<http://www.patrice.net/>

Clip: <http://bit.ly/fLcPr3>

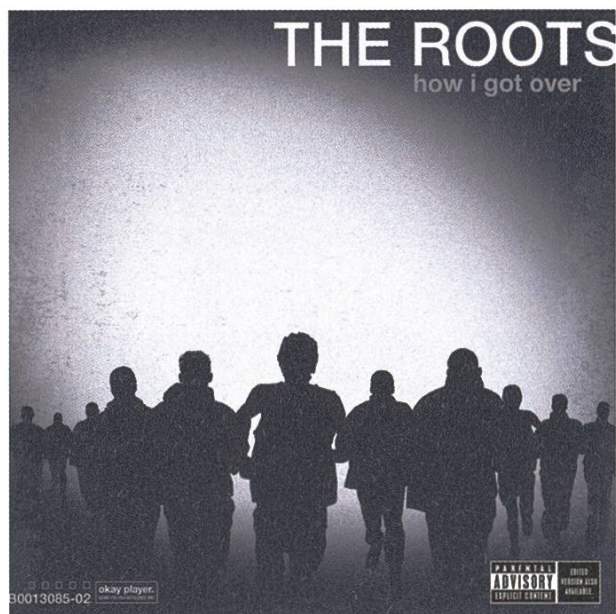
*«When I am up, they are  
around; but where are they  
now? I am walking alone.»*

## Patrice – One

*One* is Patrice's seventh studio album, but it was my first encounter with the Afro-German musician and his unmistakeable voice. It was one of those cases: hearing the first couple of seconds of every track were enough to make the purchase decision. Patrice shows an amazing range over the 13 Reggae-influenced Soul titles. Starting out with successful single *The Maker*, the album continues through the inspirational (*Ain't Got No, New Day*), the melancholic (*Walking Alone*), and the heartbreaking (*Don't Cry*). It has titles to kickstart a hot summer day, and titles to get you through a long bleak night, while still flowing nicely as "one" album. Diverse influences, beautiful violin support by Izzi and the Demon Strings, and great mastering (reviewed: CD edition) together form an album that is so spellbinding that I expect I will not be able to escape it for quite some time to come.







Def Jam Records

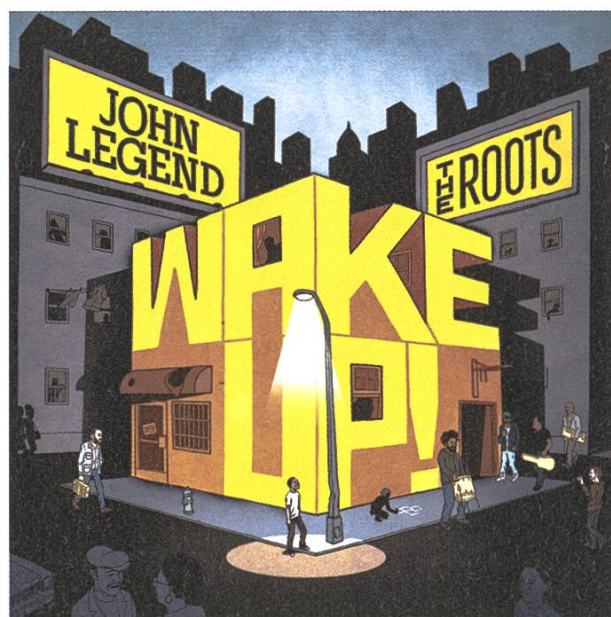


<http://www.theroots.com/>

Clip: <http://bit.ly/5AC1fA>

Clip: <http://bit.ly/cwlt1v>

*«You came to celebrate, I came to cerebrate; I hate losing, I refuse to make the same mistake.»*



## The Roots – How I Got Over

This is what Hip-Hop is all about. Don't stop reading just yet, if you're one of the many who are put off from the genre due to all the auditory pollution mainstream media applies its name to. The Legendary Roots Crew is back to remind us of what made this such an influential and meaningful genre in its heyday of the 80s and early 90s, and proves once again that it won't tolerate being ousted. No posturing and self-conceit, but smart lyrics, poetry in every respect. No cheap cellphone mastering, but live instrumentation, especially noticeable in ?uestlove's vibrant, organic drumming. An album of masterfully produced beats and profound words, reminding of the classics (see first clip), but also taking a very pop-oriented direction with some guests contributing a veritable chorus. It is more suited than most albums to correct people's opinions on what this style of music is all about. Don't make up your mind before you have listened to it. A definite entry into the hall of most important Hip-Hop albums of the new century.

## John Legend & The Roots – Wake Up!

The Roots, again? Frankly, I don't know how they do it. A 4-days-a-week engagement as the studio band of a late night show, still touring Europe almost every weekend, writing, performing, and producing one of the best Hip-Hop albums of the past year, and still finding time to collaborate with rising star John Legend on this collection of classic Soul covers. The titles, written at the time of the U.S. civil rights movement, have been chosen due to their continued or renewed relevance regarding the current state



G.O.O.D. Music



<http://www.johnlegend.com/>

Clip: <http://bit.ly/b9jrJw>

Clip: <http://bit.ly/9FygtA>

*«The President, he's got his war, folks don't know just what it's for; nobody gives us rhyme or reason, have one doubt, they call it treason.»*



Daptone Records



(FLAC, MP3)

<http://www.daptonerecords.com/>

Clip: <http://bit.ly/9urmx9>

Clip: <http://bit.ly/b0L21K>

of the world we live in. Still, there are moments that feel eerily prophetic, if not woeful considering how little we seem to learn from history. The question on whether these new renditions reach the level of their originals is not meaningful. They both exist on their own terms, and the covers have to be seen as such. What counts is that the combination of Legend's smooth voice and the musical prowess of The Roots makes for a great listening experience. It's therefore disappointing that a few of the tracks on the CD are very poorly mastered.

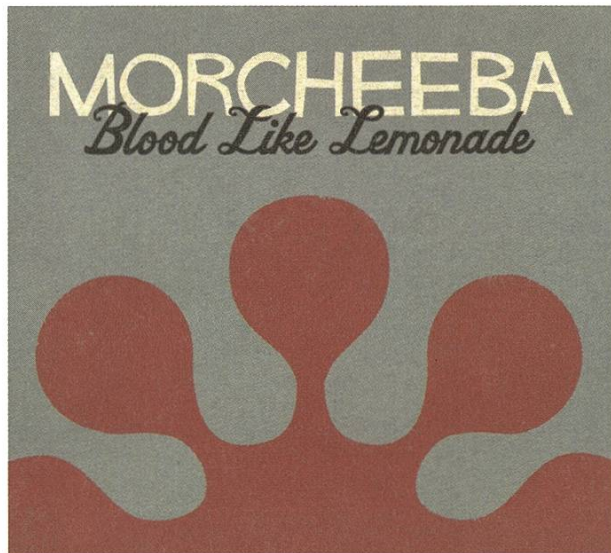
## Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings – I Learned the Hard Way

2010 has indeed been a great year for all lovers of classic R&B and Soul music. Miss Sharon Jones, an energetic woman if there ever was one, and The Dap-Kings bring along their fourth album, *I Learned the Hard Way*. It is baffling how Jones' voice did not get her discovered when she was trying to start a career in singing in the 1970s. After some time working as a correctional officer, she was finally able to realise her dream in 1996 when she impressed Gabriel Roth, now head of Daptone Records, with her talents. Listen to a few tracks of the album, and you'll be thankful that it all worked out eventually. This is a true, acoustic Soul album the way they ought to be made. Daptone Records does not employ any digital equipment in their recording studio. No computer-generated after effects, just a live recording of great artists performing. And it sounds right. So right that several tracks for Amy Winehouse's *Back to Black* were recorded at the Daptone studios—all the digital wizardry in the world couldn't help Universal fake "real mu-





*«We scrimp, we save,  
like to keep you around;  
when you're needed,  
you're nowhere to be  
found; money, why won't  
you stay a while?»*



[PIAS] Recordings



<http://www.morcheeba.co.uk/>

**Clip:** <http://bit.ly/b0nXqG>

**Clip:** <http://bit.ly/9Fc0EI>

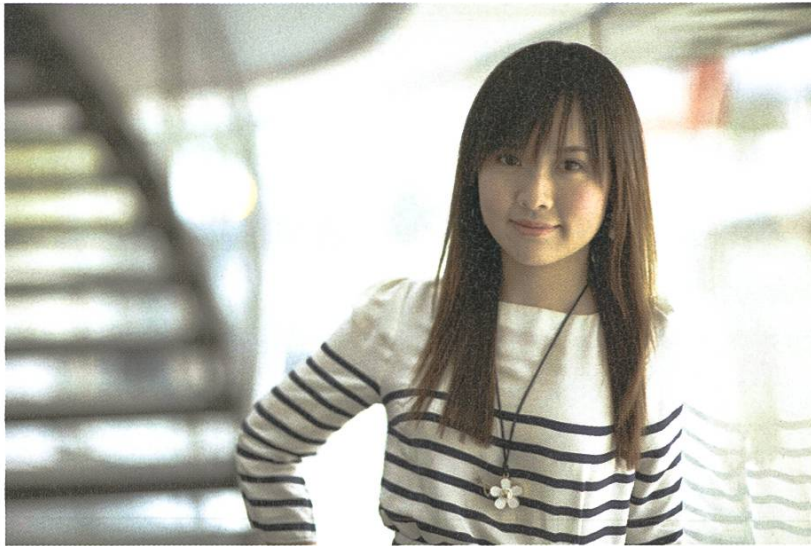
*«Wanna know why  
there's a dead guy in  
my dining room?»*

sic", it had to be done the proper way. *I Learned the Hard Way* is one excellent example of how for some music, Vinyl is still the preferable format (at one point, customers who purchased Daptone's music from their website in digital form were consoled: "It's O.K., we won't tell."<sup>(1)</sup>) Check for stickers at your record store—the Vinyl release usually contains a coupon code for the MP3 version of the album for your portable listening pleasure.

## **Morcheeba – Blood Like Lemonade**

Last year we have also seen the return of Skye Edwards to downtempo formation Morcheeba, after 7 years of distance and uneasiness between her and the Godfrey brothers. Although I personally really enjoyed a lot of the material released in that period, it is undeniable that there is a special chemistry when the three of them perform together. There is a noticeable change in approach after the reunion. Even more so than on 2008's *Dive Deep*, the Godfreys focus on their mellow, spaced-out, reverb-heavy sound, reminiscing more of their trippy debut album than of the increasingly upbeat tracks they have produced since (which were very pleasing as well, make no mistake). Their Country music influences, which already reappeared on *Dive Deep*, are back as well. Skye's ethereal voice wafts in, and you can't help but think that this is what it was meant to be like. Hearing the album reminded me of how I first discovered Morcheeba—somehow looking for words to describe the beauty, but immediately giving up and just sitting back to dive in. Even if Morcheeba's style diverged from your taste over the years, this one is essential listening.



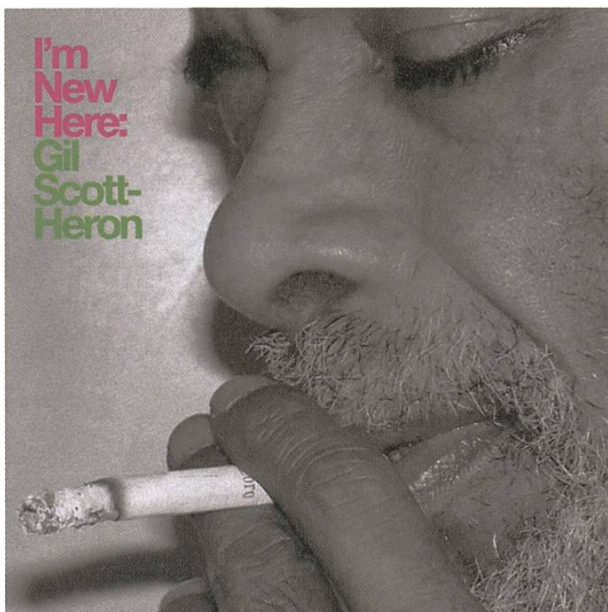


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XL Recordings



<http://www.gilscottheron.net/>

**Clip:** <http://bit.ly/8FO9hf>

**Clip:** <http://bit.ly/dmQmgt>

*«I always feel like running;  
not away, because there  
is no such place; because  
if there was I would  
have found it by now.»*

## Gil-Scott Heron – I'm New Here

Gil Scott-Heron is a true legend of the 70s and 80s, influential not only through his social criticism in poetry, lyrics, and spoken word performances, but also for the whole of Jazz and R&B music through the very distinct styles he developed; titles like *The Bottle* and *Winter in America* are recognised even among generations that weren't around in the day, and *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* should ring a bell for most of you as well. After 28 years of only very sporadic releases, Mr. Scott-Heron is now back in full effect, with the aptly titled album *I'm New Here*. It's still unmistakably Gil. His eye for life and the world, his wisdom, still very present, joined by perhaps surprisingly humoristic and also very personal elements. The music ranging from minimal blues to glitchy electronic—but of course he always invented his own style as he went along. The album oozes cultural significance, you'll find layer upon layer to unpeel. This is as far away as you can get from "easy listening". It's music to sit down to, to listen to very attentively, and to think about. It was somehow overlooked, but it seems pretty inevitable that it is going to turn into one of those forgotten classics.

### Links

[1] <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/07/magazine/07daptone-t.html>



# In brief

## Solomon Burke – *Nothing's Impossible*

With Solomon Burke, the world lost one of the most important R&B artists of all times. His final album is a collaboration with legendary writer and producer Willie Mitchell, who reportedly tried to get Burke to record an album with him for decades. Sadly, Mitchell passed away before the album was released. A wonderful parting gift by these two unforgettable artists.

*E1 Music/Ear Music; LP, CD, FLAC, AIFF, MP3*

<http://www.hdtracks.net/> (digital release)

## Daft Punk – *Tron Legacy*

ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK

A showpiece on how to fuse symphonic and electronic music, by the masters of French Electro. You should check this out, irrespective of whether you care for the film. It might be one of the best soundtracks ever made.

*Walt Disney Records; CD*

<http://www.tronsoundtrack.com/>

## Bonobo – *Black Sands*

Nu Jazz whiz Bonobo is at it again after his extended album break, and obviously just cannot go wrong. There's a little more Ambient and a little less Jazz this time. The tracks with Andriya Triana on vocals are especially notable.

*Ninja Tune; LP, CD, FLAC, WAV, MP3*

<http://www.bleep.com> (digital release)

## Marcus D and Substantial are Bop Alloy

Jazz-Rap at its very best, with not a bad track in sight. Another absolutely essential listen for both the Hip-Hop-o-philes and Hip-Hop-o-phobes. Instant buy.

*elevation; CD*

[www.cdbaby.com/cd/substantialmarcusd](http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/substantialmarcusd)

## Nas & Damian Marley – *Distant Relatives*

Rapper Nas and Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley, youngest son of the late Bob Marley, team up for this exciting and remarkably well-working genre mix. Paying tribute to African heritage, and raising awareness for the rampant poverty on the continent.

*Def Jam Recordings; LP, CD*

<http://www.distantrelatives.com/>

## Hanggai – *He Who Travels Far*

These men from Beijing explore, revel in, and honour traditional Mongolian music. At times mixing it with contemporary rock elements, they are never disrespectful of its heritage. The music is most touching, though, in its more traditional, calm moments, such as *Hairan Hairan* and *Borulai's Lullaby*.

*World Connection; CD*

**Teaser:** <http://bit.ly/6rtKOU>

**Clip:** <http://bit.ly/dEMq1s>



### The Black Keys – Brothers

What to call this memorable sound? Nu Blues Roots? It doesn't really matter—this has been all about the radio and TV, so you probably have made up your mind by now.

*Nonesuch; LP, CD, MP3*

<http://www.theblackkeys.com/>

**this album is  
Brothers.**

### Dr. Rubberfunk – Hot Stone

Underrated Electro-Funk and Trip-Hop producer Dr. Rubberfunk joins the Jalapeno Records family with this mellow, soulful selection of jazzy beats.

*Jalapeno Records; LP, CD, WAV, MP3*

<http://www.jalapenorecords.com/>

### The Budos Band – The Budos Band III

The very simply titled third album by the Budos Band, released by the audiophiles at Daptone Records, is an exciting Funk/Jazz record with African and Latin flavours. Highly recommended.

*Daptone Records; LP, CD, FLAC, MP3*

<http://www.daptonerecords.com/>

### Basement Freaks – Something Freaky

This is 21<sup>st</sup> century disco! Funky house, broken beats and electric jazz. The golden mix of messed-up synthesizers, organic sounds, and hollering divas.

*Jalapeno Records; CD, WAV, MP3*

<http://www.jalapenorecords.com/>

### Ólafur Arnalds – ...And They Have Escaped the Weight of Darkness

Music on the fringe between neo-classical and electronic ambient. Magnificently soothing music from Iceland.

*Erased Tapes Records; LP, CD, MP3*

<http://www.erasedtapes.com/>

### N\*E\*R\*D – Nothing

This artist name just resonates too well with this publication to leave their 2010 album unmentioned. "No one Ever Really Dies" further develop their very own blend of Disco, Funk, and Soul, and come up with quite a few convincing tracks in the process.

*Star Trak Entertainment; LP, CD*

<http://www.n-e-r-d.com/>



# Internship report: Infosys

HANNES ROTH — THE ITINERANT

**I spent three months in Bangalore working for Infosys, one of the largest IT companies in India with over 120,000 employees.**

## A summer in India

After sending in my resume and being interviewed by several employees I found a position in their R&D department "SETLabs" (Software Engineering and Technology Labs). For my project there were several choices, I was given time to choose one during the first week, having the chance to review them with the help of my project mentor. He was, together with my student mentors, responsible for our well-being. They helped us set up our bank accounts and phones, find our way around the campus and regularly checked our progress. I decided to develop a tool to test applications for mobile devices, the other choices were to research ideas for performance testing of websites and an application to visualize the output of a network testing tool, which my project mentor's team was working on.

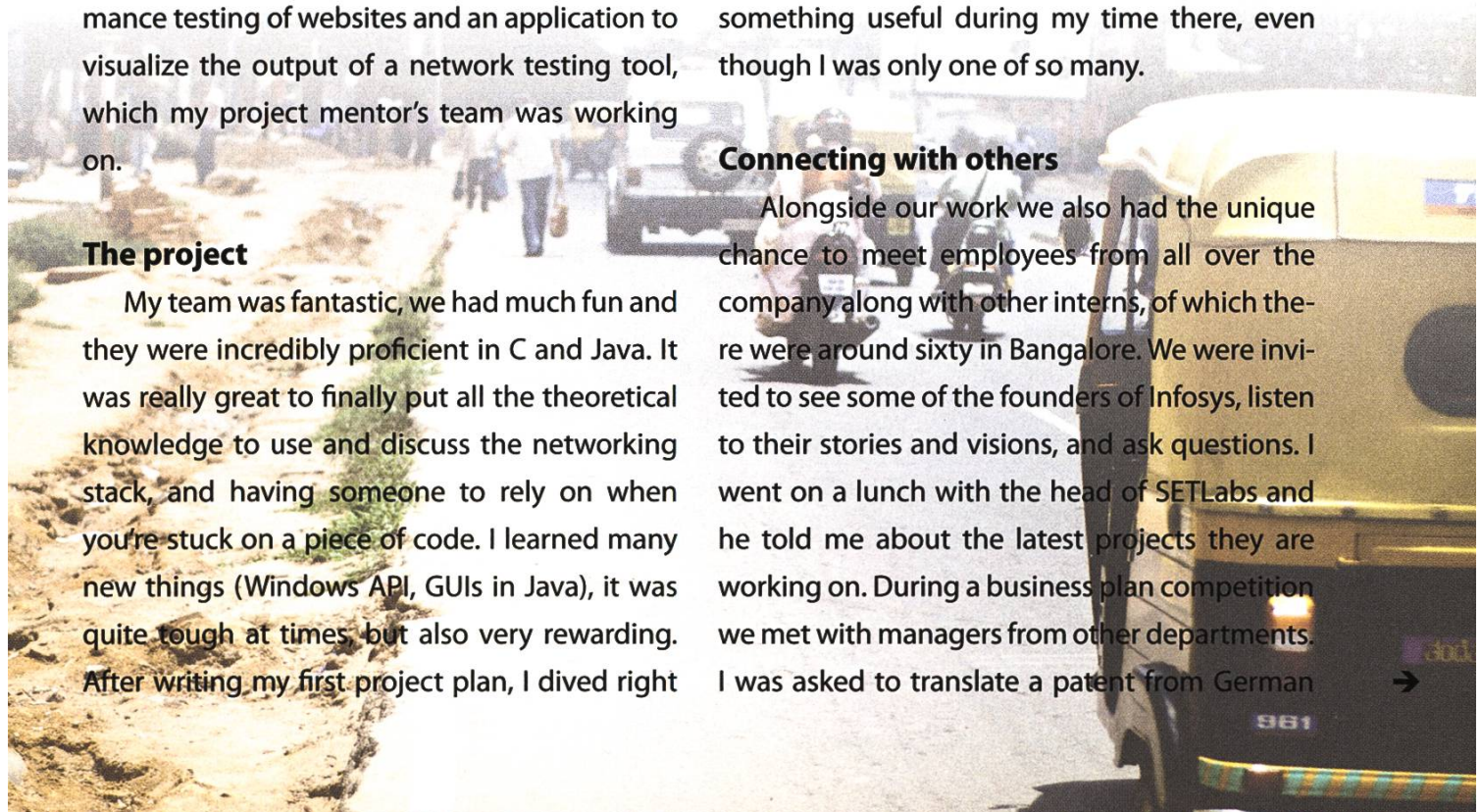
## The project

My team was fantastic, we had much fun and they were incredibly proficient in C and Java. It was really great to finally put all the theoretical knowledge to use and discuss the networking stack, and having someone to rely on when you're stuck on a piece of code. I learned many new things (Windows API, GUIs in Java), it was quite tough at times, but also very rewarding. After writing my first project plan, I dived right

in. We defined a couple of milestones, but everything was flexible since we didn't really know how it would work out, it was new territory and we had to integrate a lot of existing software. A couple of weeks later I had built a proof of concept and we were able to run some simple demos. My mentor gave me time to refactor and do extensive testing, which you often cannot do in those homework exercises, and I wrote documentation for the employee who will take over my work after me. I finished my project with a presentation and a demonstration in front of interested employees from the department. It was very gratifying to see them take a real interest in my effort, and I felt like I had contributed something useful during my time there, even though I was only one of so many.

## Connecting with others

Alongside our work we also had the unique chance to meet employees from all over the company along with other interns, of which there were around sixty in Bangalore. We were invited to see some of the founders of Infosys, listen to their stories and visions, and ask questions. I went on a lunch with the head of SETLabs and he told me about the latest projects they are working on. During a business plan competition we met with managers from other departments. I was asked to translate a patent from German





to English, and participated in coding and photography competitions. The British prime minister, David Cameron, came for a visit. I listened to guest talks from researchers coming from Europe and the States. A favorite of mine were the "Cultural Presentations" given by other interns

## Traveling

I stayed on campus in their employee accommodation, which is a little outside Bangalore. On weekdays over 20,000 people come to work there, it is quite unbelievable. We worked Monday to Friday, giving us Saturday and Sun-



about their country, and the final presentations about their projects. I connected with other students from all over the world, it was especially interesting to talk with MBA students and learn about their careers. On one weekend we went to Infosys' campus in Mysore where new employees are trained. It is a huge "corporate university" that can hold 12,000 people, there is housing and even a cinema (it shows actual movies). It is hard to describe those campuses without having seen one, especially when you have seen how it looks outside the walls, the contrast is stark.

day off. I wanted to see as much as possible of India, so I went traveling on nearly all the weekends. The cities in India are really something, I much preferred the countryside though. One of my first trips was to climb a huge solid rock outside of Bangalore, called "Savandurga". In Kerala we rented a houseboat and spent two days cruising through the backwaters. I visited the unavoidable cities of Delhi, Jaipur and Agra, and took photos in front of the Taj Mahal. I was lucky enough to see Chandigarh with an urban planning student. Chandigarh was one of Le Corbusier's projects, it is the first planned city in



India and such a contrast to the other cities I've seen, definitely one of my favorite places there. A coworker invited us to a wedding in Hyderabad, which really was like in the movies! My last two trips were to Kolkata and Mumbai, where I tried to find some of the places mentioned in Shantaram. For the first couple weeks I was really enthusiastic and sampled all the Indian food I could get my hands on, for breakfast, lunch and dinner. That didn't work out too well, I had to avoid Curry and Chapathi for a while to let my stomach settle, but then I recovered and even tried some street food, it was well worth it. During the week we had free taxi rides available to take us from the campus to downtown Bangalore, which isn't very far, but the traffic changes everything—I have never seen such traffic in my life and the cows and dogs certainly don't help! And everything closes at 11:30pm in the state of Karnataka, even the bars. It helped to be back in time, that's for sure.

### **Back at home**

When I came back to Switzerland, the first thing I noticed was how neatly everything was lined up on the runway at the airport. And then, how clean the air was. It took me a few weeks, but I really started to miss the colors, flavors and sights of India. And all the friendly people I met there. I can't wait to go back!

### **Are you intrigued?**

Infosys will be recruiting again this summer, students from all levels are welcome. If you are interested, I will be happy to give you all the information you need. I know that they got rid of the mandatory internship and that it's hard with the exams, but the experience is well worth it. I can guarantee that you won't regret it. ⑦





# «...und deine VISionen?»

REMO GISI

In der Kanti war ich immer ein leidlicher Schriftsteller. Bei Aufsätzen beschränkte sich mein Talent meist darauf, von der verfügbaren Auswahl dasjenige Thema zu wählen, welches sich am einfachsten mit Platitüden und Trivialitäten abhandeln liess. Nicht, dass ich schlecht gewesen wäre, nur halt eben auch nicht gut. Ich schrieb regelmässig meine Fünf, ab und zu drunter, seltener drüber.

Mit dem ETH-Eintritt war das Thema dann gegessen. Für wissenschaftliche Berichte und Dokumentationen scheinen rudimentäre Anforderungen an Sprache und Stil zu genügen. Erst dank meiner VIS-Tätigkeit werde ich immer wieder mit mehr oder weniger Nachdruck genötigt, richtige Texte zu schreiben. Meist handeln sie von VIS-Events, Amiv-Anfeindungen, billigen Witzen und sonstigem Leichtverdaulichem. Eben Dinge, die mir Spass machen. Und wer hätte das gedacht: Ich stelle plötzlich fest, dass mir das Schreiben Freude bereitet. Vielleicht liegt's an der ungewohnten Freiheit, Zeit, Ort und Thema selbst zu bestimmen. Vielleicht auch nur am Wissen, dass mein Text im Visionen gedruckt und gelesen wird. Dafür übrigens: Danke, Visionen.

Zurück zum Thema. Dieser Artikel ist wohl der erste, den ich komplett aus eigenem Antrieb schreibe. Kein Druck von aussen, keinen Anlass oder Vorwand. Obwohl man meinen bevorstehenden Rücktritt vielleicht als Anlass durchgehen lassen kann. Ja, liebe Gefolgsleute, ich räume – passend zum Titelthema – den Präsidentenposten. Langsam wirds auch für mich Zeit, mein Studium und somit meine VIS-Karriere abzuschliessen.

Bald stellt sich also auch mir die Frage, mit der sich VIS-Präsidenten seit langem unbeliebt machen: "Was sind eigentlich meine VISionen?"

Klar: Meine Masterarbeit. Schwerlich eine grossartige Vision. Dann mit dem ETH-Diplom in der Tasche aufbrechen, um die Welt zu erobern. Da beginnen schon die schwierigen Fragen: Soll's ein Job in Zürich sein, oder lieber im Ausland? Will ich überhaupt einen Vollzeitjob? Oder doch lieber Fremdenführer in Mexico, Skilehrer in Kanada, Surflehrer in Australien? Auf Reisen mein Geld verschleudern, in Billigländern der Dekadenz frönen?

Irgendwie kann das doch nicht alles sein. Bin ich jetzt wirklich schon bald erwachsen, berufstätig und all die anderen Dinge, die ich nie werden wollte? Nein, Freunde, so nicht! Ich sags euch: ich werde zum verspieltesten Jungunternehmer, zum verschwenderischsten Grossverdiener, zum einzigen in einer WG lebenden CEO und zum Grossaktionär von Bars und Brauereien.

Vielleicht beginnen wir einfach hier und jetzt mit einem Glas Bier. Zum Wohl. Und machts gut.



## Gesucht: Redaktoren


Du studierst oder arbeitest im Bereich der Informatik? Du interessierst dich für das aktuelle Geschehen im Studium, der Industrie, und du schreibst gerne? Zum Frühlingssemester suchen wir neue Redaktoren, die zum Visionen 1-2 Artikel pro Ausgabe beisteuern. Wir freuen uns über Beiträge auf hochdeutsch, englisch, schweizerdeutsch, und auch französisch und italienisch!

Melde dich doch bei der nächsten MV (am 7. März 2011) oder direkt unter [chefredaktor@vis.ethz.ch](mailto:chefredaktor@vis.ethz.ch)!

## Wanted: Editors

You are studying or working in Computer Science or a related subject? You are interested in current affairs in the field of study or industry, and you like to write? For the spring semester, we are looking for editors who can contribute 1-2 articles per edition to the Visionen.

We're especially interested in English-speaking editors to bring up the quota of articles in English. As we already have an editorial office in place to correct any potential spelling or grammar mistakes, you really don't have to worry much about your English skills.

If you feel up to the job, volunteer at the next general meeting (March 7th 2011) or contact us directly at [chefredaktor@vis.ethz.ch](mailto:chefredaktor@vis.ethz.ch)! 

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## Bearicatures

ALEX MEUCHLE — ROAR



# Stefan Wolf

«Wolf»

Alex

### QUOTE:

Transitiver Abschluss: "Das is so ein Facebook-Phänomen."

### HAPPENING:

(packt Ananas aus): zum Beispiel hier, in den Spiralen der Ananas, sind die Fibonacci-Zahlen zu erkennen.

### RATING:

★★★★★★★☆☆

Standing Ovation und doch kein bQm-Besuch \*grummel\*



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# Puzzled

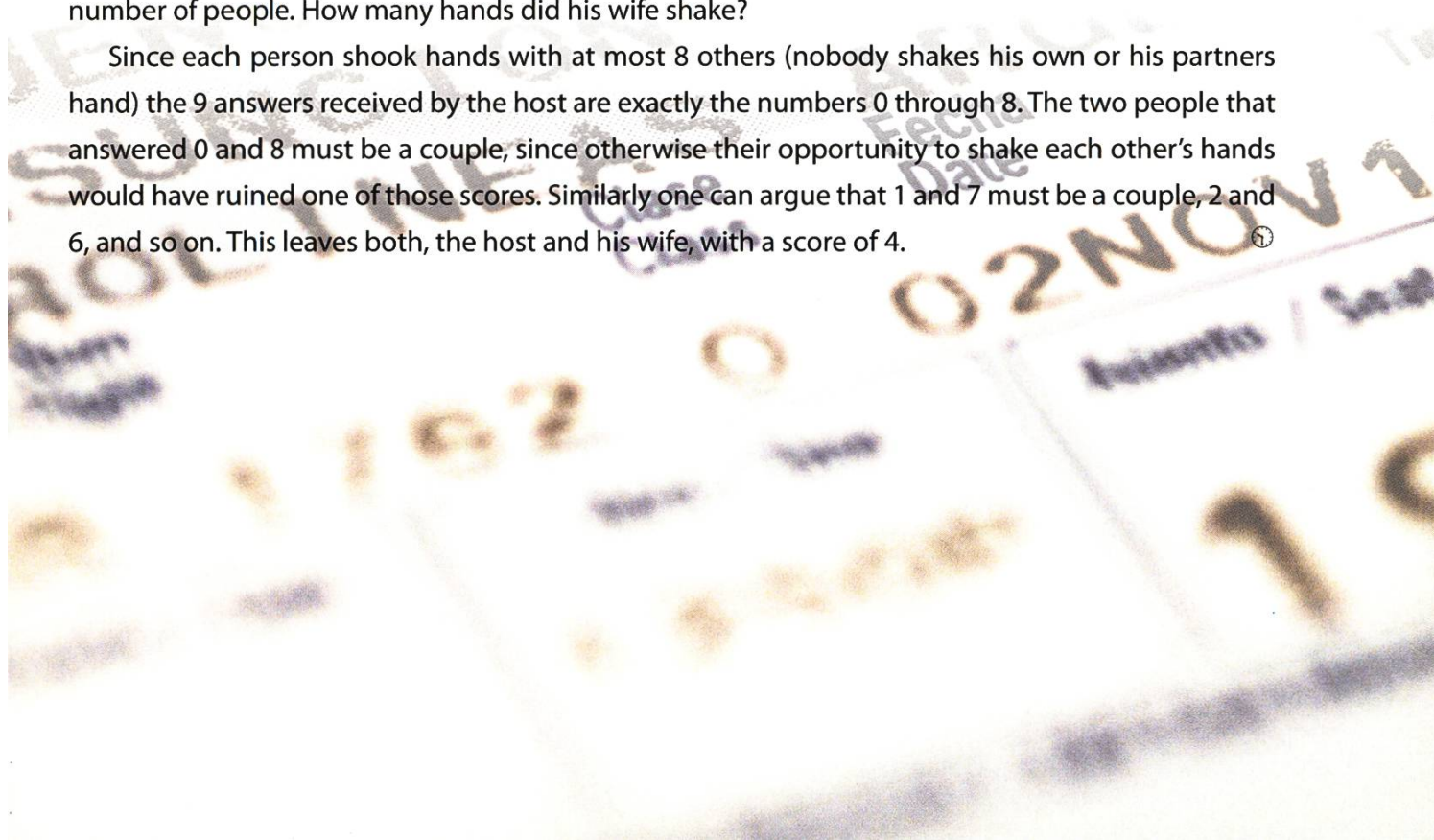
BARBARA KELLER — IS FASCINATED BY AIRPLANES BUT LIKES GLIDERS EVEN MORE  
 ROGER WATTENHOFER — ONCE ALMOST WROTE A RESEARCH PAPER ON HOW TO  
 EFFICIENTLY BOARD PLANES

The first puzzle presented in the last issue is known as “crazy guy on a plane”. We have a fully booked aircraft, and the passenger that first enters the plane just chooses a seat randomly. Each other passenger takes the designated seat, unless it is already occupied, in which case he/she randomly takes any empty seat. What is the probability that the last person boarding the plane finds his/her own seat empty?

The invariant of the process is that at any time only two seats must be considered, the designated seats of the first resp. the last passenger. If anybody (randomly) sits on any of these two seats, the random process stops, and all remaining passengers will find their designated seat empty. Until this moment, both seats have the same probability to be taken, and hence the probability of the last passenger to sit in his/her own seat is  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

The second puzzle is known as “handshakes at a party”. A couple invites 4 other couples to a party. Each person shakes hands with every previously unknown person. Later the host does a survey and discovers that all guests including himself (but excluding his wife) shook hands with a different number of people. How many hands did his wife shake?

Since each person shook hands with at most 8 others (nobody shakes his own or his partners hand) the 9 answers received by the host are exactly the numbers 0 through 8. The two people that answered 0 and 8 must be a couple, since otherwise their opportunity to shake each other's hands would have ruined one of those scores. Similarly one can argue that 1 and 7 must be a couple, 2 and 6, and so on. This leaves both, the host and his wife, with a score of 4.



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