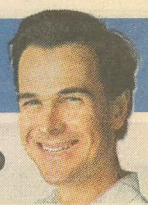


## Six degrees of separation of the week's news

By Peter Munro



**1.** Is it a ribbon? Dental floss? A demented tapeworm? Lord mayor **Clover Moore** unveiled plans for a cloud arch that will hover like a deranged paperclip over Sydney. The \$9 million art initiative also boasts several bronzed sparrows and a giant milk crate (milk not included). "Ten years from now, we'll have people marrying by the crate, they'll be making love in the arch," crowed the Committee for Sydney, in breach of OH&S regulations. The centrepiece is the 50-metre-high cloud sculpture, which Moore described as "awe-inspiring" — as opposed to other oversized monuments, such as James Packer's new casino.

**2.** Like two pretty boys scuffling over a can of hairspray, "singer" **Justin Bieber** and Orlando Bloom have come to blows. Sparking the tussle was not so much a love triangle as a love pentagon: Bieber is sweet on Bloom's ex, Miranda Kerr; who is reportedly seeing Baran-garoo baron James Packer; whose ex-wife Erica has been spotted with Bloom. The menage-a-cinq turned messy when Bieber accosted Bloom at a restaurant — yelling "What's up, bitch?" — and the pair ponced about before being separated by stylists. Kerr weighed in by posting a topless selfie in a bathtub, the latest in her photographic series "Kerr Unclothed: Heartbreaker/Homemaker".

**3.** Fellow singer **Keith Urban** was also embroiled in an ugly stoush when his country music concert went a little rock 'n' roll. Police arrested about 50 audience members and dozens were treated in hospital after the Boston gig, proving boozing and boot scootin' don't mix. Two hundred fans were reportedly injured in a mad rush for the exit, sparked when Urban started *You Look Good in My Shirt*. "Gosh, up on the lawn tonight, that was nutso," he tweeted later, before treating his followers to a medley of Bee Gees classics, including *Massachusetts* and *More Than a Woman*. Riots ensued.

**6.** "The world is a mess," reckons **Madeleine Albright**. The former US secretary of state suggested the planet had never been so troubled, including the conflict in Gaza. "These are huge game changers," she said, listing such tensions as Shia v Sunni, Russia v US, Sydney v The Cloud and Bieber v Bloom v Kerr v Packer v Packer. "There are things going on that need understanding and explanation," Albright said. She also said "a lot of Americans are trying to figure out where the countries are", vowing to fight for peace and free atlases for all.

**5.** Wags at the Australian Federal Police have been hamming it up with singer **Lily Allen**. When not protecting our borders from asylum seekers (read: "economic migrants"), officers found time to handcuff the touring British pop star, at her request, for a photo opportunity. Allen — whose legacy includes a charity song for Gaza and mentioning menstruation three times in a single track — posted the pic of her kneeling handcuffed online. Officers involved are being investigated for "breaching protocol". Rehearsals for a forthcoming stage show — *Les Miserables: Life in the AFP* — would continue regardless, a spokesman said.

**4.** Speaking of nutso, welcome inside **Scott Morrison**'s empty echo chamber. Taxpayers have forked out \$330,000 for the Immigration Minister's border protection media centre, which hasn't been used since its expensive fit-out 10 months ago. Untouched features of the high-tech theatrette include \$30,000 stage lights, \$10,000 in rented audio-visual equipment and an \$800 door knob, which is good only for keeping people out. The room was intended for Machine Gun Morrison's media briefings, held weekly, then monthly, then rarely at all. Instead, the minister has been granted exclusive access to the empty space, to practise saying nothing to himself.

degrees

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