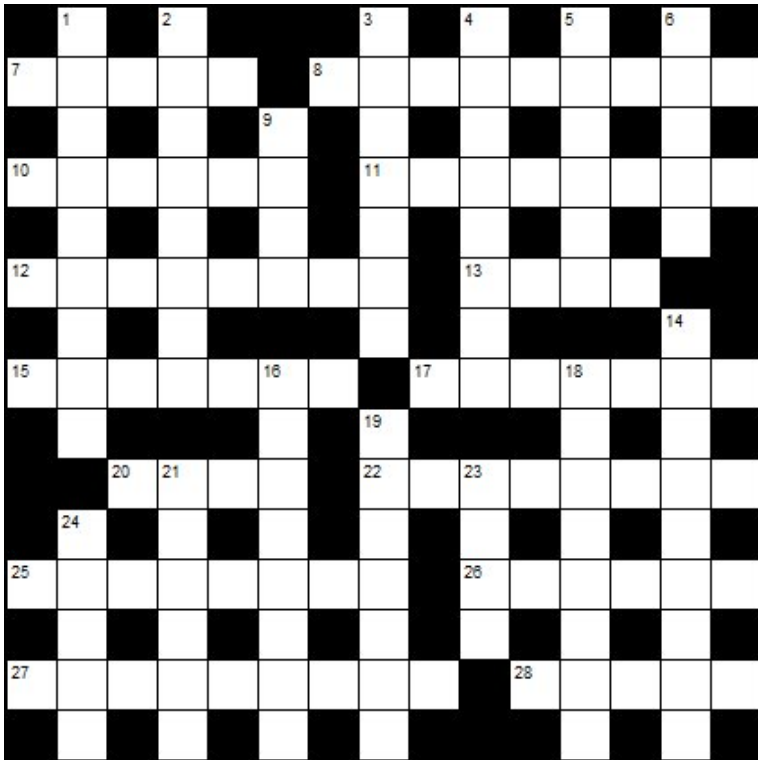


Puzzle by Whynot

This is a superb puzzle, brimming with interesting ideas for teasing the solver. The surface readings are exceptionally good too, making perfect sense as English sentences. My favourite is 17 across, which is one of the best clues I have seen for a long time.



ACROSS

- 7 Club in central Croydon fronted by beak (5)
 8 Fixed in time to mislead characters returning after school (9)
 10 Quiet Irish type not half getting annoyed (6)
 11 Whimsically, "the game" of deception (8)
 12 Writer's unction not entirely what binds (8)
 13 Appeal's collecting tin simply does not exist (4)
 15 What is itself indivisible divides any structure (7)
 17 One who does not tell the truth is a fool (7)
 20 A force reacting at a distance (4)
 22 The matter of the Mona Lisa's smile, say? (3,5)
 25 Dandy to visit formerly wanton woman (8)
 26 Stare unhappily at tiny portion of zabaglione substitute (6)
 27 Dash in and out with lump of metal (9)
 28 Reverse engineers man-made chromosome? That's hard stuff! (5)

DOWN

- 1 Opening in oesophagus? (9)
 2 In the style of film about start of revolution, provoking fear (8)
 3 Broadcast improvised vocals over short limited period (7)
 4 Fiendish sort talking slang, embracing depravity (8)
 5 Fabulous young creature having brush with crazy family (6)
 6 King's bird, really vacuous (5)
 9 Wacky atlas includes capital of Myanmar (4)
 14 Acknowledgement of time on staff? (9)
 16 Pot of jam nearly spoiled when left out (4,4)
 18 Once again adopt dubious measures (8)
 19 Man heading for prison is a mug (4,3)
 21 Pill in clenched hand, slight specimen of youth gets spirited (6)
 23 Place where one in possession escapes officer (4)
 24 Effeminate fellow to assuage rider disqualified (5)